



Birchwood High School

Sixth Form

Course Outlines

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

6 in Maths & 5 in English

Assessment

All content is assessed by formal written examinations at the end of the course.

ACCOUNTING

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A qualification in accounting will always be helpful – whether it's used professionally or personally. This course helps students to understand the responsibilities of the accountant and the impacts of their recommendations on the business and the wider environment. Over the two years, students will build knowledge and understanding of key concepts, principles, and techniques that they can apply to real-life scenarios, developing the ability to solve problems logically, analyse data methodically, make reasoned choices and communicate effectively.

Course content

The specification emphasises both **financial accounting** and the recording of past events, and **management accounting** as a means of planning and decision making. Students will also develop an understanding of the principles of ethical behaviour which inform the actions of all those working within an accounting environment. Topics covered include:

- The double entry model
- Accounting concepts
- Preparation of financial accounts for sole traders, partnerships, and limited companies
- Analysis of financial information
- Budgeting
- Costing approaches
- Investment appraisal
- Interpretation, analysis and communication of accounting information
- The impact of ethical considerations.

The final examinations will assess students' understanding of the principles of both financial and management accounting as well as their ability to apply these to financial data and business scenarios and communicate recommendations.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The qualification naturally lends itself to further study in accounting at university or through professional accountancy qualifications sponsored by a specialist accountancy practice or other employer. Equally, the insights into the accounting principles and confidence in analysing and communicating financial data will be welcome additions to the finance function within a range of a business organisations.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/accounting/a-level/accounting-7127>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

OCR

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Art, Textiles or Graphics.

Assessment

Component 1: Advanced level Art and Design Coursework Portfolio Personal investigation 60%.

Submission of an essay study of a minimum of 1000 words. Linked to the Personal Investigation and the practical outcomes.

Component 2: Advanced level Art and Design Externally Set task (15-hour exam) 40%.

ART & DESIGN (Fine Art)

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The Advanced GCE in Art and Design Fine Art course consists of two components. Component 1, the Personal Investigation, is 60% of the total qualification and Component 2, the Externally Set task, is 40% of the total qualification.

Component 1 incorporates three major elements: supporting studies, practical work and a personal study of a minimum 1000 words of continuous prose. Work produced will be based around themes developed from given starting points and personal starting points. The purpose of the Personal Investigation is to develop a portfolio of practical work and an essay of a minimum 1000 words of continuous prose that shows critical understanding in relation to the practical portfolio.

The course begins with given starting points set by the school, building on skills acquired during GCSE. As the course develops so does the student's ability to work on areas of personal interest and in a more independent fashion. The focus of the personal study can be any concept, movement, person, people, artefact(s), or other source of reference. However, it must be related to their own ideas, investigations, and practical work.

Component 2 students can choose a starting point from any of the seven given themes for which they will generate an appropriate personal response for assessment. They will carry out preparatory work to research, plan and develop their ideas, before engaging in 15 hours of supervised time to complete their work.

Special Requirements

The course requires an enthusiasm for the Visual Arts, imagination, and an enquiring mind. Students are encouraged to express their own artistic identity and are expected to work with a high degree of independence and creativity, taking creative risks and exploring their own interests. There is a distinct step up from GCSE in terms of content and skills to study Art and Design at A level.

Students will be required to make frequent trips to museums and galleries making links between their own work and that of relevant professional artists and to record first-hand information using sketchbooks and cameras. Students are also expected to make research trips to explore their themes through photography and drawing and capturing ideas and images first hand. Students are expected to commit to four hours a week working independently on their coursework. This may include making visits and time spent in the department developing coursework.

All work submitted will be marked by the course teacher and moderated by the examining board.

Career and Progression Opportunities

With a qualification in Art students could go on to higher education, Art Foundation or work in the Art industry. This could include a career in Graphic Design, Product Design, Fashion, Textiles, Ceramics, Glass, Theatre Design, Animation, Computer Aided Design, Architecture, Furniture Design, 3D Design, Digital Media, Fine Art, Photography, Advertising, Interior Design, Prop design and making, set design and many more.

Link to specification: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/art-and-design-h200-h600-from-2015/specification-at-a-glance/>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Triple Science – Grade 6 in Biology
Trilogy Science – 2 x Grade 6

Assessment

Internal AS Biology mock examinations at the end of Year 12 (two examinations 1 hour 30 minutes each).

A level Biology = Three examinations (2 hours each) including more 'higher demand' questions and essay style questions.

There is no longer coursework in Biology, instead we complete 12 required practicals which will be assessed in the final written exam. All of these practical activities will lead towards a 'practical endorsement'.

BIOLOGY

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Why study Biology?

By studying Biology at A Level students will learn to understand the living world, to sense the wonder of evolution, to catch the excitement of genetic engineering, to think independently, to challenge widely held beliefs, to appreciate the delicate ecological balance that sustains life on Earth, and to answer fundamental questions like "what is life?" If students enjoyed Biology at GCSE, and would like to delve into it in more depth, then A Level Biology is the course for them. They will be taught by two different teachers, and teaching will consist of taught sessions, investigations, practical work, discussions and debate, essays, presentations, and a compilation of Independent Learning Tasks (ILT) done during self-study. We want students to thrive in this subject, and as such additionally teach them study tips and exam skills throughout the Biology course.

What will students study on the AQA Biology course?

A Level Biology is a linear course and is assessed at the end of the course. There are three examinations that assess eight topics which include more 'higher demand' questions. There is no longer coursework in Biology, instead we complete twelve required practicals which will be assessed in the final written examination. All of these practical activities will lead towards a 'practical endorsement'.

Where does A Level Biology lead?

The A Level Biology course enables students to develop a wide range of skills including:

- How to collect data and evaluate it.
- How to investigate facts and use deduction.
- How to put over your point of view effectively.
- How to take responsibility for your own learning.

These skills enable students to enter a wide range of courses in different fields. Biology students often go on to study courses such as: Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Radiography, Nursing, Chiropody, Psychology, Forensic Science, Archaeology, Marine Biology, Biological Science, Ecology, Sports Studies, Biochemistry, Zoology and even Teacher training!

Don't worry if you don't yet know what you want to do. A Level Biology provides a useful background to a wide variety of further and higher education courses, and we certainly don't expect everyone who takes the course to become a professional biologist.

What are the Entry Requirements?

We recommend two Grade 6's in GCSE Combined Science, or Triple Science including a Grade 6 in Biology. You will also need self-discipline and motivation to succeed. A Level Biology is not an 'easy option'; it requires mathematical skill equivalent to higher tier GCSE Mathematics, together with a good working knowledge of Physics and Chemistry. We recommend that students have a Grade 6 in Maths and English to cope with the demands of the course. However, the most important requirement is an interest in the subject and a desire to learn more. We will provide the rest.

Special requirements

Biology field work at the end of Year 12 with the possibility of a trip to the Epping Forest Field Centre.

Link to specification: https://cdn.sanity.io/files/p28bar15/green/98cdb01fb651d63df2ab345a2547774092b43bbc.pdf?_gl=1*107404e*_gcl_au*MjE0NjI0ODUxOS4xNzYwNTMxNTky

Course Level

BTEC Level 3

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Point Score: 34

Assessment

Assessment is criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes. Each unit has specified criteria which are used for grading. A summative unit grade can be awarded at pass, merit or distinction, distinction star.

The Certificate is equivalent to one A Level.

BUSINESS (BTEC Extended Certificate)

The Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Extended Certificate in Business consists of three mandatory units, plus one additional optional unit to be completed over two years.

The mandatory units are:

Unit 1: Exploring Business

Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign

Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance

There are a wide range of optional units, of which one needs to be completed to gain the diploma. These are related to Accounting, Marketing, Human Resources, Management, Law, Administration, Retail and Logistics. Optional units to be studied will be chosen according to the needs and abilities of the students.

Assignment	Task	Written Exam
Selected mandatory and all optional units. Programme team creates assignment brief and students carry out set tasks, creating evidence to support a work-related scenario.	Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign Pre-released material includes information about a business for research. Learners will need to apply their knowledge, ideas and skills to plan a marketing campaign, linking its success to the impact on the business.	Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance The written test will cover the purpose and importance of personal and business finance, including the skills and knowledge needed to understand, analyse and prepare financial information.

Special Requirements

Appropriate work experience, while not a requirement of the course, does enable the learning to be as active, practical, and work-related as possible.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The BTEC Nationals in Business have been developed in the business sector and are appropriate for career qualifications in these employment areas. It gives students the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised vocational specific qualification to enter employment in the business sectors or to progress to higher education vocational qualifications such as the Edexcel Levels 4 - 7 BTEC Higher National in Business.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-nationals/business-2016.html>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

5 in English and Maths

Assessment

3 Externally Examined Papers:

Paper 1: Marketing, people, and global businesses (35%)

Paper 2: Business activities, decisions and strategy (35%)

Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment (30%)

BUSINESS

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Business is structured into four themes and consists of three externally examined papers. Students are introduced to business in Themes 1 and 2 through building knowledge of core business concepts and applying them to business contexts to develop a broad understanding of how businesses work. Breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, with applications to a wider range of contexts and more complex business information, are developed in Themes 3 and 4, requiring students to take a more strategic view of business opportunities and issues. Students are encouraged to use an enquiring, critical and thoughtful approach to the study of business, to understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives and to challenge assumptions.

Paper 1 - will assess marketing, people, and global businesses. Questions will be drawn from Themes 1 and 4, and from local, national, and global contexts.

Paper 2 - will assess business finance and operations, business decisions and strategy. Questions will be drawn from Themes 2 and 3, and from local, national, and global contexts.

Paper 3 - will assess content across all four themes. Questions will be drawn from local, national, and global contexts. For Paper 3, there will be a pre-released context document issued in November of the previous year. The context will focus on a broad context, such as an industry or market in which businesses operate. The question paper will be in two sections. The first section will focus on the broad context provided. This will be outlined to centres through the pre-released document. Questions will focus on the board context.

Special Requirements:

5 in English and Maths

Career and Progression Opportunities

The A Level Business course gives students the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification to enter employment in the business sector or progress to higher education settings studying any business-related degrees at university such as Human Resources, Management, Finance and Marketing.

Link to specification

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Business%20Studies/2015/specification-and-sample-assessment-materials/9781446914694-gce2015-a-bus-web.pdf>

Theme 1: Marketing and people

Students will develop an understanding of:

- meeting customer needs
- the market
- marketing mix and strategy
- managing people
- entrepreneurs and leaders.

Theme 2: Managing business activities

Students will develop an understanding of:

- raising finance
- financial planning
- managing finance
- resource management
- external influences.

Theme 3: Business decisions and strategy

This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 2. Students will develop an understanding of:

- business objectives and strategy
- business growth
- decision-making techniques
- influences on business decisions
- assessing competitiveness
- managing change.

Theme 4: Global business

This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 1. Students will develop an understanding of:

- globalisation
- global markets and business expansion
- global marketing
- global industries and companies (multinational corporations).

6th form

Course Level

BTEC Level 3

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Point Score: 34

Assessment

Assessment is criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes. Each unit has specified criteria which are used for grading. A summative unit grade can be awarded at pass, merit or distinction, distinction star.

The Diploma is equivalent to two A levels.

BUSINESS (BTEC Diploma)

The Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Business consists of six mandatory units, plus a selection of two additional optional units to be completed over two years.

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|---|----------------------------------|
| Unit 1: Exploring Business | Unit 4: Managing an Event |
| Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign | Unit 5: Internal Business |
| Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance | Unit 6: Principles of Management |

There are a wide range of optional units, of which eight have to be completed to gain the diploma. These are related to Accounting, Marketing, Human Resources, Management, Law, Administration, Retail, Logistics and there is also a range of general units, actual optional units to be studied will be chosen according to the needs and abilities of the students.

Assignment	Task	Written Exam
Selected mandatory and all optional units. Programme team creates assignment brief and students carry out set tasks, creating evidence to support a work-related scenario.	Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign Pre-released material includes information about a business for research. Learners will need to apply their knowledge, ideas and skills to plan a marketing campaign, linking its success to the impact on the business.	Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance The written test will cover the purpose and importance of personal and business finance, including the skills and knowledge needed to understand, analyse and prepare financial information.
	Unit 6: Principles of Management Pre-released task-based assessment. Students must synthesise and evaluate information from a business scenario and relate it to how management and leadership practices can create a more effective business and workforce.	

Special Requirements

Appropriate work experience, while not a requirement of the course, does enable the learning to be as active, practical and work-related as possible.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The BTEC Nationals in Business have been developed in the business sector and are appropriate for career qualifications in these employment areas. They give students the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised vocational specific qualification to enter employment in the business sectors or to progress to higher education vocational qualifications such as the Edexcel Levels 4 - 7 BTEC Higher National in Business.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-nationals/business-2016.html>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Triple Science – Grade 6 in Chemistry

Trilogy Science – 2 x Grade 6

Assessment

Practical Endorsement in Chemistry
(non-exam assessment)

12 compulsory practical coursework activities – pass/fail

The A level consists of three written 120-minute papers assessing all content from both years of teaching.

CHEMISTRY

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This course will try to give students the skills and understanding to determine the way Chemistry affects their everyday life by applying concepts into contemporary areas of Chemistry including: climate change, green Chemistry, pharmaceuticals and Chemistry research.

- Development of practical skills
- Foundations in Chemistry
- Physical Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Inorganic Chemistry

To be suitable, students need to:

- Have an interest in and enjoy Chemistry
- Want to find out about how things work in the real world
- Enjoy applying your mind to solving problems

Trips

There are two Chemistry trips on offer to students. The Chemistry lectures trip to the London University, Faculty of Education, gives students an insight into the applications of Chemistry. The overseas trip to The Large Hadron Collider built by the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), in Geneva, provides an amazing experience to see science in action and links to many aspects of the A Level course.

Career and Progression Opportunities

Whilst many job opportunities specifically using Chemistry require higher qualifications, most laboratory-based jobs benefit from a Chemistry qualification, for instance Dental Assistant or Veterinary Assistant. UK Higher Education institutions currently offer over 200 courses where Chemistry is the primary subject. Often these courses can include an additional year's study, either in industry or at a university abroad. Some courses can include study in other related areas.

Examples include:

- Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry
- Chemistry with Forensic Science and Toxicology
- Chemistry with Pharmacology

Over 500 additional courses contain a notable element of Chemistry as well as allowing a degree of breadth of study. These include:

- Chemistry and Sports Science
- Chemistry and Politics
- Chemistry with Computer Science

In addition, a number of other courses either specifically require or find it desirable to have a GCE in Chemistry. These include courses such as Chemical Engineering, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Biological Sciences, Environmental Science, Pharmacy and Dentistry.

Link to specification: <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/chemistry/specifications/AQA-7404-7405-SP-2015.PDF>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

OCR

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in Computer Science

Assessment

The A Level in Computer Science is a linear qualification with 100% external assessment. This qualification consists of two examined components (01 and 02), externally assessed by OCR and one internally assessed and moderated non-exam assessment component (Programming project). Both examinations are of 2 hours and 30 minutes duration, each with a 40% weighting. The non-exam assessment component weighted at 20%.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

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Computer Science is a practical subject where you can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It is an intensely creative subject that combines invention and excitement and can look at the natural world through a digital prism. The A Level in Computer Science will value computational thinking, helping learners to develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand the power and limits of human and machine intelligence.

The aims of this qualification are to enable learners to develop:

- An understanding and ability to apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including: abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation.
- The ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including writing programs to do so.
- The capacity to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically, and critically.
- Mathematical skills.

Special Requirements

You are required to have a minimum grade of 6 in Computer Science, this is due to the complexity of the course. It is essential that you are a keen programmer to access the content within the algorithms and programming part of the course.

Computer systems (01) 140 marks 2 hours and 30 minutes written paper 40% of overall grade

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices
- Software and software development
- Exchanging data
- Data types, data structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues

Algorithms and programming (02) 140 marks 2 hours and 30 minutes written paper 40 % of overall grade

- Elements of computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms

Programming project 20% of overall grade

- You will choose a computing problem to work through according to the guidance set by the exam board.
- Analysis of the problem
- Design of the solution
- Developing the solution
- Evaluation

Career and Progression Opportunities

This course will enable learners to progress to higher education or to progress directly to employment. This qualification is suitable for students intending to pursue any career in which an understanding of technology is needed. It will provide students with a range of transferable skills which will facilitate personal growth and foster cross curriculum links in areas such as maths, science and design and technology.

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Eduqas

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Drama. If GCSE Drama has not been taken, it is a requirement to have Grade 5 in either English Language or Literature.

Assessment

Component 1: Devising

Internally examined performance and Coursework

20% of the qualification

60 marks

Component 2: Text in performance

Externally examined performance

40% of the qualification

120 marks

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination: 2 hours and 30 minutes

40% of the qualification

120 marks

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

A Level Drama and Theatre Studies is a two-year course that consists of three units and is structured similarly to the GCSE. Throughout the course students will study a variety of texts and will be exposed to as much live theatre as possible. There are opportunities to devise their own work and to work with challenging and engaging texts. Students who choose Drama and Theatre Studies as an option must be clear that although some of the course is practically based, there is a significant amount of theory, with written coursework and an exam making up 64% of the marks. Throughout the course, students will develop a multitude of skills, including collaboration, communication and an understanding of how to amend and refine work in order to make a smooth transition in to their next level of study or employment.

Component 1: Theatre Workshop 20%

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. You will participate in the creation, development, and performance of a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract. You will produce: A creative log of based on the rehearsal process A performance lasting between 5-16 minutes (depending on the number of actors in your group) Teacher assessed, and externally moderated

Component 2: Text in Action 40%

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. You will participate in the creation, development, and performance of two pieces of theatre: a devised piece using the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or company an extract from a text in a different style You will also produce a written Process and Evaluation Report. Externally assessed by a visiting examiner

Component 3: Text in Performance 40%

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes You will answer: A series of questions based on your chosen set texts. You will also discuss and reflect upon live productions seen during the year. Externally assessed examination

Career Progression

With a qualification in Drama and Theatre Studies students could go on to higher education, study a Drama related course or work in the Theatre industry. The skills we develop in Drama feed in to almost every single job and studying Drama does not limit your future in terms of your career path. Many people who study Drama then go on to enter the world of marketing, telecommunication, management, teaching, sales, therapy, social work; your opportunities are boundless. You could choose a career more specifically related to Drama and become an actor, presenter, director, stage manager, community arts worker or perhaps a drama therapist.

Link to specification: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/wuldiact/eduqas-a-level-drama-spec-from-2016-e-201124.pdf>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics and Grade 5 in English Language/Literature

OR

Grade 5 in GCSE Mathematics and Grade 6 in English Language/Literature.

Assessment

There are three externally assessed examinations at the end of Year 13.

Paper 1 assesses knowledge of microeconomics.

Paper 2 assesses knowledge of macroeconomics.

Paper 3 assesses both microeconomics and macroeconomics.

All papers require students to apply their understanding to economic information presented in numerical and written forms.

ECONOMICS

The study of Economics emphasises the importance of economic issues in a modern industrial society and seeks to encourage the development of a thorough economic competence which will help to prepare the student to play a full part in society. Economics is a good subject for developing personal transferable skills.

The mandatory units are:

Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure	This theme introduces students to the microeconomic nature of economics, looking at economic problems and the ways economists think and work. Students will consider how markets work, looking at how supply and demand interact to allocate resources and determine prices in local, national and international markets. They will look at the nature and causes of market failure before considering the strengths and weaknesses of possible government intervention to remedy market failures.
Theme 2: The UK national economy	This theme introduces the key measures of economic performance and the main instruments of economic policy primarily in a UK context. Students will be introduced to the aggregate demand/ aggregate supply model so that they can use it to analyse changes in real output and the price level. They will examine the use of demand-side policies, supply-side policies and direct controls as means of improving an economy's performance.
Theme 3: Business behaviour and labour markets	This theme examines how the number and size of market participants, and the level of contestability, affect the pricing and nature of competition among firms. Revenues, costs, and profits are explored before linking these ideas to different market structures. Supply and demand analysis is specifically applied to the labour market to see how wages are determined in competitive and non-competitive markets.
Theme 4: Global economy	Students will consider the significance of globalisation, international trade, the balance of payments and exchange rates. They will examine public finance, macroeconomic policies, and the role of the financial sector in a global context. Students will consider the factors influencing the growth and development of emerging and developing countries.

Career and Progression Opportunities

Employers and higher education value the content, questioning attitudes and methods which are acquired through studying Economics. Many students go on to careers in financial services, accountancy, and management, whilst for others it provides a valuable background to any degree or career.

Special Requirements

Students intending to pursue a pure Economics degree at university are strongly advised to take A Level Mathematics as it is an entry requirement for many universities.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/economics-a-2015.html>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature.

Assessment

Continuous assessment will be undertaken through tasks designed to test and develop skills for the exam units and in preparation for the coursework folder. The exam units are worth 80% of the total A Level and the coursework is worth 20%.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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A2 Unit 1: Literary Genres

The aim of this unit is to explore how texts are connected, contrasted and how they have evolved across a literary genre. Students will study aspects of comedy and will cover four texts from the chosen literary genre. The unit spans Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night*), drama (Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*), pre-1900 prose fiction (Jane Austen's, *Emma*) and a range of both contemporary and pre-1900 poetry). This unit of the course encourages students to develop analytical and academic writing skills, as well as the ability to debate and develop personal opinion.

Linear Exam - 2 hours 30 minutes - Closed Book - 40% of A Level

A2 Unit 2: Texts and Genres

The second unit introduces students to more modern genres; specifically, crime writing. Students will focus on how culture influences these evolving genres and will study three texts including pre-1900 poetry (Oscar Wilde, Robert Browning and George Crabbe), early 20th century crime prose (Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*) and post-2000 prose (Ian McEwan's *Atonement*). The unit also aims to prepare students for unseen texts, imbuing skills of independent analysis.

Linear Exam - 3 hours - Open Book - 40% of A Level

A2 Unit 3: Theory and Independence

The aim of this coursework-based unit is to allow students to read widely, to choose their own texts and study how different theoretical and critical methods can be applied to literature. From feminist to narrative theory, the students shape their own study, resulting in two pieces of writing (1500 words each), one based on a collection of poetry, and one based on a prose text. The coursework unit is worth 20% of the A Level.

Assessment

Continuous assessment will be undertaken through tasks designed to test and develop skills for the exam units and in preparation for the coursework. The exam units are worth 80% of the total A Level and the coursework is worth 20%.

Career and Progression Opportunities

English Literature offers a wide choice of career options as it is a subject that demands the ability to write well, to think critically and to have personal opinions. It is a subject that mixes easily with other subjects in both Sciences and Arts. Among others, it can form part of entry into Business and Management opportunities, Law, Accountancy and many other careers. English Literature is classified as a 'facilitating' subject; universities regard it as a course that supports and improves your other qualifications.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-literature-b-7716-7717>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Triple Science - Grade 5 in any science & Grade 5 in an English

Trilogy Science - 2 x Grade 5s

Assessment

100% externally examined modules.

The A Level consists of two written 180-minute papers assessing all content from both years of teaching. Both papers contain a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing questions.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

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Environmental Science is a multi-disciplined subject that will allow you to investigate the cause and effects of 21st century challenges on the natural environment. The course will allow you to develop the skills and knowledge to understand how our environment works and how people are changing it, be it for better or for worse!

The course is split into sections which include;

The Physical Environment, Energy Resources, Pollution, The Living Environment, Biological Resources and Sustainability. The course looks at how life on Earth has developed over time and how humans have had a significant impact on the changes that have taken place. The topics look at the implications of mining, fishing, farming, and use of resources to provide for the population. There will be numerous opportunities for debates surrounding issues that are at the forefront of UN and scientific discussions.

There will be an opportunity for a field trip to complete practical investigations relating to different case studies during the A Level course.

Where can the study of Environmental Science at A Level take students?

Suitable degrees once you have successfully completed your A Level Environmental Science course include Environmental Science, Ecology, Microbiology, Law, Geography, and Conservation to name a few.

Future Career Options

Beyond university, potential future careers for A Level Environmental Science students include in-demand careers such as:

Environmental specialists, landfill engineers, nuclear waste management, hydrogeologist, geologist

Environmental Science also counts as a science qualification when applying for medicine or dentistry degrees.

Special Requirements

To be suitable students need to:

- Have an interest in, and a love of the environment, the world and science.
- Want to find out about how things work in the real world.
- Enjoy applying their minds to solving complex global problems.
- Have gained two Grade 5's in GCSE Combined Science or a grade 5 in any Triple Science subject.

How does Birchwood support students?

The A Level course is very practical, and students will spend a lot of time in labs developing their practical skills in a structured way. The teaching staff provide help as required both in person and by email or even using collaborative tools online.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/environmental-science/a-level/environmental-science-7447/specification>

6th form

Course Level

Equivalent to half an A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

The EPQ runs from the spring term of Year 12 to the spring term of Year 13.

Students are required to be on track in each of their other subjects in order to start this optional course.

Assessment

Students meet with their teacher on a regular basis to ensure that they are on target in terms of meeting the various deadlines throughout the year.

Students are timetabled for one hour a week and the project is assessed on four main areas:

- Ability to manage the project.
- Ability to research and evaluate sources found.
- The project itself.
- Evaluation of the project once it is complete including a presentation.

EPQ

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The Extended Project is a qualification that is completely different from other studies in the Sixth Form. This is because the student chooses their project from an area of personal interest or activity outside their main programme of study. It will be based on a topic chosen by the student and agreed as appropriate by the student's teacher. While there will be some teaching, this will mostly be comprised of generic skills such as research and referencing. The teacher is not allowed to deliver any of the subject content and, as such, no part of the project can be based on any area that is being taught or has been taught for a current or previous qualification. It will require in total 120 guided learning hours, 30 of which are taught skills with the remainder being the students to use as they think appropriate.

Students are required, with appropriate supervision, to:

- Choose an area of interest.
- Draft a title and aims of the project for formal approval.
- Plan, research and carry out the project.
- Deliver a presentation on the management of the project.
- Provide evidence of all stages of project development and production for assessment.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The Extended Project Qualification offers opportunities for students to:

- Develop and improve their own learning and performance as critical, reflective and independent students.
- Develop and apply decision-making and, where appropriate, problem-solving skills.
- Extend their planning, research, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, evaluation and presentation skills.
- Where appropriate, develop confidence in applying new technologies in their studies.
- Develop and apply skills creatively, demonstrating initiative and enterprise.
- Use their learning experiences to support their aspirations for higher education and/or career development.

Some of the benefits of an EPQ include:

- Supporting an application to university.
- Reducing the level/points of a university's offer.
- Giving an application preference on highly selective or over-subscribed courses.
- Providing valued content for a personal statement.
- Generating a point of interest and evidence for interview discussions.

As such, the project is very much welcomed by universities and prospective employers as any student who has completed one is able to demonstrate significant skills in terms of managing their own time and independence of learning. EPQ does not count as one of the option choices but is an additional subject that runs from the spring term of Year 12 to the spring term of Year 13.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/projects/project-qualifications/EPQ-7993>

6th form

Course Level

BTEC Level 3

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Points Score 34

Assessment

Assessment is criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes. Each unit has specified criteria which are to be used for grading. A summative unit grade can be awarded at pass, merit, distinction, or distinction star. The Extended Certificate is equivalent to one A level.

ESPORTS

This course has been developed to meet the upcoming demand for skills in esports. The qualification includes a breadth of transferable skills that enable learners to experience different areas of esports to aid their progression to employment, either directly or via further study. Esports offers a unique opportunity to study a sector that crosses over multiple subject areas such as sport, marketing, enterprise, IT and the creatives. It provides an opportunity for alignment of social, physical, mental and financial skills into one qualification to deepen and expand learning. These are skills that are highly valued in the changing and fluid workplace. Learners must apply strategy, skill and teamwork to be successful. The course consists of 4 mandatory units, to be completed over two years.

Unit 1: Introduction to Esports

Unit 2: Esports skills, strategies and analysis

Unit 3: Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in the Esports industry

Unit 4: Health, wellbeing and fitness for Esports player

Unit 1 - 60 Credits	Unit 2 - 120 Credits
Internally assessed unit Coursework In this unit, students will learn about organisations of esports industries, the genres of games played and career pathways.	Internally assessed synoptic unit Coursework Students will explore strategies and gaming requirements, tactics, and best practice as well as the importance of analysis to improve performance.
Unit 3 - 90 Credits	Unit 4 - 90 credits
Internally assessed unit Coursework In this unit students will conduct market research and develop a plan to pitch a start-up enterprise idea in the esports industry.	Internally assessed unit Coursework In this unit learners will look explore the importance and impact of physical, social, and psychological well-being for players.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The qualification is aimed at learners who want to progress to employment in the esports industry, possibly via an apprenticeship, or who may aspire to enter higher education. The qualification is endorsed by the British Esports Association as being suitable for learners who want to work in the industry. This means that it will be recognised by employers and will support entry into the industry in a range of roles.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Nationals/esports/2020/specification-and-sample-assessments/btec-l3-nat-esports.pdf>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

5 in D&T or 5 in Art.

Assessment

Exam and Coursework 50/50

Paper 1 - Technical principles

Written exam: 2.5 hrs 30% of A Level

Mixture of short answer and extended response questions

Paper 2 - Designing and making principles.

Written exam: 1.5hrs 20% of A Level

Mixture of short answer and extended response questions

Non-exam assessment

Practical application of core technical principles, core designing and making principles and additional specialist knowledge
50% of A Level

Written or digital design portfolio and photographic evidence of final prototype

FASHION & TEXTILES D&T

Students will develop technical and design understanding of a wide range of materials and processes to develop the skills to be an effective fashion designer. A range of practical skills will be developed in order to design and produce a prototype product for their NEA (Non exam assessment).

Special Requirements

A Level Design and Technology: Fashion and Textiles requires students to engage in both practical and theoretical study. This specification requires students to cover design and technology skills and knowledge as set out below. These have been separated into:

- Technical principles
- Designing and making principles

Students should develop the ability to draw on and apply a range of skills and knowledge from other subject areas to inform their decisions in design and the application or development of technology.

Students must also demonstrate maths and science skills.

Career and Progression Opportunities

University courses in design, especially Fashion and Textiles related courses.

Textile design, fashion merchandising, buyer, fashion design, pattern maker, costume designer, print design, tailor, illustrator, interior designer.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/a-level/art-and-design-7204/specification/subject-content>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

EDUQAS

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Film or Media Studies, or Grade 5 in GCSE English Language or Literature.

Assessment

70% from two external examinations.

30% from non-exam assessment (comprising of a production and a written evaluative analysis).

FILM STUDIES

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Aims and Objectives

Many consider film to be the main cultural innovation of the 20th century and a major art form of the last hundred years. Those who study it characteristically bring with them a high degree of enthusiasm and excitement for what is a powerful and culturally significant medium, inspiring a range of responses from the emotional to the reflective. Film Studies consequently makes an important contribution to the curriculum, offering the opportunity to investigate how film works both as a powerful medium of representation and as an aesthetic medium.

The course is designed to introduce A Level learners to a wide variety of films in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of film and the range of responses films can generate. Film Studies A Level offers opportunities to study mainstream and independent American and British films from the past and the present as well as more recent global films, both non-English language and English language. The historical range of film represented in those films is extended by the study of silent film and significant film movements (such as European avant-garde and new wave cinemas in Europe and Asia) so that learners can gain a sense of the development of film from its early years to its still emerging digital future. Studies in documentary, experimental and short films add to the breadth of the learning experience.

Production work is a crucial part of this course and is integral to learners' study of film. Studying a diverse range of films from several different contexts is designed to give learners the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding of how films are constructed to their own filmmaking and screenwriting. This is intended to enable learners to create high quality film and screenplay work as well as provide an informed filmmaker's perspective on their own study of film.

Film Studies aims to enable learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- a diverse range of film styles and movements, including documentary, film from the silent era, experimental film and short film
- the significance of film and film practice in national, global and historical contexts
- film and its key contexts (including social, cultural, political, historical and technological contexts)
- how films generate meanings and responses
- film as an aesthetic medium
- the different ways in which spectators respond to film

It also aims to enable learners to:

- apply critical approaches to film
- apply knowledge and understanding of film through either filmmaking or screenwriting
- develop practical skills in filmmaking, including how to use camera and lighting equipment and editing software, such as Adobe Premiere Pro

Students do not need to have studied Film Studies at GCSE, but an avid interest in a wide range of film, the ability to be creative and use digital equipment to create their own film texts is a necessity. Not only will they be creating films, but they will also be writing about them so students will need to be able to meet strict deadlines.

Career and Progression Opportunities

This course is appropriate for students wanting to study film at higher academic levels and can provide a useful "taster" for those considering more specialised vocational courses. In addition, knowledge of the film industry is increasingly valued and is becoming an important aspect of work in many institutions in our media saturated society, so the course can suit anyone with an interest in film who wants to go to university.

Link to specification: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/sxdcwvck/eduqas-a-level-film-studies-spec-from-2017-e-04-02-2021-1.pdf>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 or above in GCSE French, or the ability to study French to the equivalent level.

Assessment

Two year linear A Level — 100% exam

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation.

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation.

Paper 3: Speaking.

FRENCH

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Students will be required to have achieved at least a GCSE Grade 6 in French before taking this course. It is also strongly advised that students have also achieved at least a Grade 6 in English Language / Literature as many of these analytical skills are used during A level study of French. Students will need to feel confident at this level in the four language skills of Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Students must also have some knowledge and understanding of the culture and way of life of France and the French-speaking world. Students need to be interested in developing this understanding and in exploring in much more depth the topic areas that students will have covered at GCSE.

What will the student learn on this A Level course?

The course will help students to develop their general study skills, but most of all students will learn to communicate at a higher level in the language. Students will also learn much more about a wide range of aspects of the society or societies in which French is spoken. Students will develop their ability to work independently to research effectively, be able to approach issues from multiple perspectives and become sensitive to different cultural contexts. Students will also study two authentic works: one film (Au Revoir Les Enfants) and one short novel (No et Moi).

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

If students are interested in languages and communication and enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life, then the French course would be suitable for them. Similarly, if students are interested in the business world, in travel or tourism, in literature, in journalism, in history and politics, then students are also likely to find the course appropriate. There are a number of options in the course where students can choose a topic or question to suit their interests and passions. Whether students want to use language for work, for further study, training or for leisure, this course will equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Course Description

French is an exciting and diverse subject which offers students the opportunity to follow their interests as well as developing great knowledge about France and French speaking countries. At A Level, great importance is placed on the ability to communicate and by the end of the course it is expected that linguistic skills will be highly developed. Students will have access to a wide variety of authentic French media in order to enhance their language skills and develop intercultural awareness. Students will be exposed to authentic texts: newspaper and magazine articles, brochures, blogs, websites and up to date articles, originally designed for native speakers. All materials will be firmly rooted in the culture of France and French speaking countries. Various cinema, theatre and external revision sessions are arranged from time to time as the opportunity for such cultural language activities occurs in this area. A great deal of emphasis is placed on independent learning. Consequently, students are expected to be pro-active in developing their language skills; reading around the subject and learning vocabulary are integral parts of the A Level course. Students will also have access to French native speakers so they can practise their speaking on a regular basis.

Career and Progression Opportunities

It is very popular to combine languages with non-language subjects at university. Examples include: French with Science, French with Media Studies, Engineering with French, Architecture with French, French with Politics or International Studies, French with International Business or Law; the range is infinite. Previous French A level students have combined French with Maths, with English Literature, with Geography, History and many more. Many non-language programmes allow optional study of language modules which may be tailored to the professional requirements e.g. French for Scientists. Specialists will be able to take a year abroad to study their language of choice. Languages at A Level really do make people highly employable with such an advanced skill set.

Link to Syllabus: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/french-2016.html>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

OCR

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE Geography

Assessment

Unit 1: Physical systems = 1 hour 30-minute exam worth 22% of A level.

Unit 2: Human interactions = 1 hour 30-minute exam worth 22% of A level.

Unit 3: Geographical debates = 2-hour 30-minute exam worth 36% of A level.

Unit 4: Independent Investigation (non-examined coursework) worth 20% of A level.

GEOGRAPHY

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Geography is an exciting and dynamic subject that addresses key issues in our world today. Geography allows students to enjoy learning about the complexities of people and their societies, economies, cultures, and the environment. During the two years students will develop and apply their understanding of geographical concepts and processes to help them interpret our rapidly changing world. The course develops students as global citizens who recognise the challenges of sustainability and the implications for their own lives and others.

Aims and learning outcomes

- Develop their knowledge of locations, places, processes and environments, at all geographical scales from local to global across the specification as a whole.
- Recognise and be able to analyse the complexity of people-environment interactions at all geographical scales and appreciate how these underpin understanding of some of the key issues facing the world today.
- Gain understanding of specialised concepts. These must include the concepts of causality, systems, equilibrium, feedback, inequality, representation, identity, globalisation, interdependence, mitigation and adaptation, sustainability, risk, resilience and thresholds.
- Improve their understanding of the ways in which values, attitudes and circumstances have an impact on the relationships between people, place and environment, and develop the knowledge and ability to engage, as citizens, with the questions and issues arising.
- Become confident and competent in selecting, using and evaluating a range of quantitative and qualitative skills and approaches, (including observing, collecting and analysing geo-located data) and applying them as an integral part of their studies.
- Understand the fundamental role of fieldwork as a tool to generate new knowledge about the real world, and become skilled at planning, undertaking and evaluating fieldwork in appropriate situations.
- Apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches in a rigorous way to a range of geographical questions and issues, including those identified in fieldwork, recognising both the contributions and limitations of geography.
- Develop as critical and reflective learners, able to articulate opinions, suggest relevant new ideas and provide evidenced arguments in a range of situations.

Special Requirements

There is a compulsory fieldwork element to the A Level Geography course as fieldwork is an integral part of Geography. This involves four days of fieldwork in the UK.

Career and Progression Opportunities

Geography is a key 'facilitating' or 'hard' subject in a guide compiled by the Russell Group (20 leading UK universities) so it is a highly recommended A Level to study. Geography can lead to a huge range of career or university course possibilities because of the numerous valuable skills gained throughout the course and the important and varied subject content learnt.

Students will develop intellectual skills, such as critically evaluating theories and judging evidence in order to make informed decisions and to develop reasoned arguments. Students will learn to competently use a range of technical methods for the collection and analysis of spatial and environmental data and undertake four days of fieldwork to accurately collect this data. They will also learn to use and evaluate a range of quantitative and qualitative skills which are looked upon very favourably by employers and universities. The independent investigation has been designed specifically to prepare students for university and the world of work through developing a number of geographical and study skills. Writing essays is an important part of Geography A Level and therefore studying geography compliments other option choices, giving the breadth which universities require. All of the skills learnt through studying Geography are transferable and therefore will ensure students are prepared for their next steps beyond A Level.

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 or above in GCSE German or the ability to study German to the equivalent level.

Assessment

Two year linear A Level—100% exam

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation.

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation.

Paper 3: Speaking.

GERMAN

.....

Students will be required to have achieved at least a GCSE Grade 6 in German before taking this course. It is also strongly advised that students have also achieved at least a Grade 6 in English Language / Literature as many of these analytical skills are used during A level study of German. Students will need to feel confident at this level in the four language skills of Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Students must also have some knowledge and understanding of the culture and way of life of Germany and other German-speaking countries. Students need to be interested in developing this understanding and in exploring in much more depth the topic areas that they will have covered at GCSE.

What will the student learn on this A Level course?

The course will help students to develop their general study skills, but most of all students will learn to communicate at a higher level in the language. Students will also learn much more about a wide range of aspects of the society or societies in which German is spoken. Students will develop their ability to work independently to research effectively, be able to approach issues from multiple perspectives and become sensitive to different cultural contexts. Students will also study two authentic works; one film (Good Bye, Lenin!) and one novel (Der Vorleser)

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

If students are interested in languages and communication and enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life, then the German course would be suitable for them. Similarly, if students are interested in the business world, in travel or tourism, in literature, in journalism, in history and politics, then students are also likely to find the course appropriate. There are a number of options in the course where students can choose a topic or question to suit their interests and passions. Whether students want to use language for work, for further study, training, or for leisure, this course will equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Course Description

German is an exciting and diverse subject which offers students the opportunity to follow their interests as well as developing great knowledge about Germany and German speaking countries. At A Level, great importance is placed on the ability to communicate and by the end of the course it is expected that linguistic skills will be highly developed. Students will have access to a wide variety of authentic German media in order to enhance their language skills and develop intercultural awareness. Students will be exposed to authentic texts: newspaper and magazine articles, brochures, blogs, websites and up to date articles originally designed for native speakers. All materials will be firmly rooted in the culture of German and German speaking countries. Various cinema, theatre and external revision sessions are arranged from time to time as the opportunity for such cultural language activities occurs in this area. A great deal of emphasis is placed on independent learning. Consequently, students are expected to be pro-active in developing their language skills; reading around the subject and learning vocabulary is an integral part of the A Level course. Students will also have regular access to a German Language Assistant to practise their speaking skills with a native speaker on a regular basis.

Career and Progression Opportunities

It is very popular to combine languages with non-language subjects at university. Examples include: German with Science, German with Media Studies, Engineering with German, Architecture with German, German with Politics or International Studies, German with International Business or Law; the range is infinite. Previous A Level students have combined German with Maths, with English Literature, with French, with science subjects, with History, Geography, Psychology etc. Many non-language programmes allow optional study of language modules which may be tailored to the professional requirements e.g. German for Scientists. Specialists will be able to take a year abroad to study their language of choice. Languages at A Level really do make people highly employable with such an advanced skill set.

Link to Syllabus: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/german-2016.html>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

OCR (H505)

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE History

Assessment

Units 1, 2 & 3 are externally assessed by separate written papers at the end of the two-year course. Unit 4 is internally assessed by centres and externally moderated by OCR.

HISTORY

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History is a very well-regarded facilitating subject which allows students to learn about periods and develop a wide range of eminently transferable skills. Our course aims to allow students access to both breadth and depth in their learning whilst helping students think for themselves, to form judgements and to train themselves to research, evaluate and analyse historical problems. Students develop the skills to express themselves coherently through reasoned argument.

Unit 1 Y107 England 1547–1603: The Later Tudors

This unit contains an enquiry topic examining the Mid Tudor Crisis under Edward VI and Mary as well as the religious changes and rebellions enacted by these rulers. This focuses on the analysis of contemporary sources. The unit then follows a period of study looking at Elizabeth's reign and examining her approaches to religion and parliament as well as her management of financial, economic and social affairs.

Unit 2 Y216 The USA in the 19th Century: Westward expansion and Civil War 1803-c.1890

This unit looks at the formation of Modern America, firstly examining the westward expansion of America and the relationship between the settlers and Native Americans and their culture. The unit then examines the tensions leading to the American Civil War and the Civil War itself, including analysis of how and why the North won.

Unit 3 Y312 Popular Culture and the Witchcraze of the 16th and 17th Centuries

This unit focuses on the rise and decline in witchcraft during the 16th and 17th centuries and how far it emerged out of the popular culture of the time. We will examine the reasons for the increase and subsequent decline in persecutions, the nature of the Witchcraze, the reactions of the authorities and its impact on society. We look across Europe and America and think about how and why people were treated differently.

Unit 4 Y100 Topic based essay

This essay is an exciting opportunity to engage in genuinely independent historical research. Students will investigate and analyse different perspectives on a historical issue, drawing on a range of primary and secondary material. It will use the skills and understanding developed elsewhere in the course. As an independent enquiry using a range of sources and interpretations, the essay will require students to develop an understanding of how historians work. The essay must be based on the independent investigation of historical issue. The issue may arise from the study of a period or topic we've studied, or it may be on a topic, or from a period, that the learner has not studied as part of the A Level course but is interested in.

Special Requirements

There is an expectation that students will carry out substantial wider reading around the topics being studied. Reading lists will be provided and there is significant support available. It is also expected that students will endeavour to attend trips and lectures as they are offered.

Career and Progression Opportunities

A Level History can lead to a range of career and university education possibilities including Law, Teaching, Journalism, Media, Broadcasting, Archaeology, Research, Advertising, Heritage / Conservation, Tourism, Economics and Museum services. It also complements a range of other courses and career paths as the skills of analytical thinking, argument and source analysis are widely prized.

Link to specification: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-history-a-h105-h505-from-2015/>

Course Level

BTEC Level 3 (AAQ)

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Point Score 34

Assessment

Assessment is criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes. Each unit has specified criteria which are to be used for grading. A summative unit grade can be awarded at pass, merit, distinction, or distinction star. The Extended Certificate is equivalent to one A Level.

IT COMPUTING (BTEC Extended Certificate)

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The course is designed to give students the technical knowledge, skills and understanding they need to use computer systems competently and to equip students with some of the skills they will need in the workplace or in further education or training. It will promote teaching and learning through work-related contexts, provide a range of teaching, learning and assessment styles to motivate learners to achieve their full potential. The course consists of three mandatory units, plus students can select one additional optional unit to be completed over two years.

The mandatory units are:

Unit 1: Information Technology Systems

Unit 2: Cyber Security and Incident Management

Unit 3: Website Development

Unit 6: Relational database development.

Special Requirements

Appropriate work experience while not a requirement of the course, would be useful as it enables the learning to be as active, practical and work-related as possible.

Unit 1 - 120 Credits

Externally assessed unit

2-hour written exam

This unit looks into different information technology systems, some of the units that learners study are:

- Hardware and software
- Networking
- Network security

Unit 3 - 60 Credits

Internally assessed unit

Coursework

In this unit learners will look at website design principles

- Students will then take these design principles and create a website that is based around a scenario.
- Students will create the website using HTML, CSS and JavaScript

Career and Progression Opportunities

The BTEC has been developed in the Information Technology industry and is appropriate for career qualifications in this very wide employment area. It gives students the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised vocational specific qualification to enter employment in the Information Technology industry or to progress to higher education vocational qualifications such as the Edexcel Levels 4 - 7 BTEC Higher National in Information Technology or Computing.

Unit 2 - 120 Credits

Externally assessed unit

2-hour written exam

This unit looks into different information technology systems, some of the units that learners study are:

- Network security
- Security protocols
- Preventing attacks

Unit 4 - 60 credits

Internally assessed unit

Coursework

In this unit learners will look at database design and how to create a relational database.

- Students will learn how databases exchange information and they will set up a RDDBS.
- Students will create input forms, produce reports and run queries and their database.

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE English Language

Assessment

Continuous assessment will be undertaken through tasks designed to test and develop skills for the exam units and in preparation for the coursework folder. The exam units are worth 80% of the total A level and the coursework is worth 20%.

LINGUISTICS (English Language)

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A2 Unit 1: Language, the Individual and Society

The aim of this unit is to introduce students to language study, exploring textual variety and children's language development. It explores how children learn language and how they are able to understand and express themselves. It also enables students to learn new methods of language analysis to explore concepts of audience, purpose, genre, mode and representation. The unit culminates in an exam worth 40% of the A Level.

A2 Unit 2: Language Diversity and Change

The second unit allows students to explore language diversity and change over time, studying texts from 1600 to the present day. Students will explore language in its wider social, geographical and temporal contexts across the key concepts of audience, purpose, genre and mode. Students are also required to study social attitudes to the diversity of language and how it has developed. This unit encourages students to develop their writing skills, writing discursively about language issues. The unit culminates in an exam worth 40% of the A Level.

A2 Unit 3: Language in Action

The aim of this unit is to enable students to explore and analyse language data independently and develop and reflect upon their own writing expertise. It is coursework based and it requires students to conduct their own language investigation (2,000 words) and a piece of original writing and commentary (750 words each). The coursework allows them to explore their own writing as well as produce a rigorous data analysis. This coursework unit is worth 20% of the A Level.

Career Progression Opportunities

English Language is a flexible and adaptable subject that opens up a wide range of career choices. Those students with qualifications in English possess skills in written and spoken communication, working independently and thinking critically, which are highly valued by employers. It can form part of entry into General Management, Research and Consultancy, Public Services, Publishing, Law and Accountancy. It is also a subject which naturally overlaps with many others in both the sciences and the arts.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-7701-7702>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics

Assessment

Paper 1 (Core Pure Mathematics 1)

Paper 2 (Core Pure Mathematics 2)

Paper 3 (Further Mathematics Option 1:

Further Pure Mathematics 1, Further

Statistics 1, Further Mechanics 1,

Decision Mathematics 1)

Paper 4 (Further Mathematics Option 2:

Further Pure Mathematics 1, 2, Further

Statistics 1, 2, Further Mechanics 1, 2,

Decision Mathematics 1, 2)

All unit examinations are 1 hour 30 minutes in Summer of Year 13.

MATHEMATICS FURTHER

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Further Mathematics is a subject for those who have an aptitude in Mathematics at Advanced level. Those who intend to study Mathematics at university would find it particularly beneficial.

The Further Maths course comprises four modules – Core Pure 1 & 2, and two options. In recent years, we have studied Further Pure 1 and Decision 1. There is scope to alter the modules studied depending on the interests of the students involved.

Core Pure Mathematics 1 contains work on Complex Numbers and Matrices. Core Pure Mathematics 2 involves Polar Coordinates and Differential Equations. Further Pure Mathematics 1 contains Further Calculus and Vectors. Further Pure Mathematics 2 contains work on Groups and Number Theory.

The Further Statistics options contain work on Statistical Distributions and Hypothesis Tests. The Further Mechanics options include Collisions and Centres of Mass. The Decision Mathematics options include Algorithms and Linear Programming.

Special Requirements

No coursework is necessary for A Level Further Mathematics.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The objective of the course is to include a sufficient range of mathematical topics so that when students successfully complete the course, they will have the necessary basis for progressing to further study in Economics, Geography, Mathematics, related subjects such as Physics or Engineering, Risk Analysis, Global Climate Modeller, Actuary, Biometrics Officer, working for the Aerospace industry or directly into employment.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Mathematics/2017/specification-and-sample-assesment/a-level-13-further-mathematics-specification.pdf>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics (although a Grade 7 is highly recommended).

Assessment

Paper 1
(Pure Mathematics 1 - 2 hours)

Paper 2
(Pure Mathematics 2 - 2 hours)

Paper 3
(Statistics & Mechanics - 2 hours) in
Summer of Year 13.

MATHEMATICS

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Paper 1 and Paper 2 build on GCSE knowledge of Indices and Surds, Algebraic Proof, Quadratic Equations, Simultaneous Equations, Inequalities, Functions, Transformations of Graphs, Equation of a Straight Line, Trigonometry and Vectors. The Equation of a Circle, the Binomial Expansion, Differentiation, Integration and Logarithms are introduced.

Paper 3 covers Statistical Sampling, Presentation and Interpretation of Data, Probability Distributions, Hypotheses, Kinematics, Forces and Newton's Laws.

Special Requirements

No coursework is necessary for A Level Mathematics.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The objective of the course is to include a sufficient range of mathematical topics so that when students successfully complete the course they will have the necessary basis for progressing to further study in Economics, Geography, Mathematics, related subjects such as Physics or Engineering, Risk Analysis, Global Climate Modeller, Actuary, Biometrics Officer, working for the Aerospace industry or directly into employment.

Link to specification: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Mathematics/2017/specification-and-sample-assesment/a-level-l3-mathematics-specification-issue4.pdf>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

EDUQAS

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Media or Film. If not taken at GCSE, Grade 5 in English Language or English Literature.

Assessment

70% from two external examinations.

30% from non-exam assessment (comprising of a production and a written evaluative analysis).

MEDIA STUDIES

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Aims and Objectives

The media is the most dynamic, innovative, and influential method of mass communication of modern times. It has been reported that adults in Great Britain are consuming media for almost eight hours a day. That's eight hours a day watching films and television, reading newspapers, and sifting through online media. Within that time, we are bombarded by other people's representations of the world and how we respond to these representations can affect our perceptions of people, places and society, of politics and culture, of ourselves and of our place in the world. Media Studies is a vital tool necessary to understanding the media's significance and its power.

As a GCE Media Studies student, you will analyse how media products use language and representations to create meaning. You will learn about the media industry and how the industry affects how media products are made. You will investigate media audiences, exploring who are the people who watch, read and consume the products and considering how different people might respond to products differently, and why. You will study many different media forms, including Television, Online Media, Advertising and Marketing, Film Marketing, Magazines, Newspapers, Social and Participatory Media, Music Video, Radio & Video Games.

What skills will I develop?

Media Studies will help you to develop valuable transferable skills such as critical thinking, analysis, research, planning, skills of enquiry and evaluation, practical skills, creativity, time management, essay writing skills and more. Your studies will complement and assist your learning in other subjects such as English Language and Literature, Humanities, Sociology, Film, Business Studies and ICT (including how to use video editing software Adobe Premiere Pro and desktop publishing software Photoshop and Indesign for the Extended Project).

Course Content

You will explore and apply critical perspectives including those of world-renowned media and cultural theorists, and will examine how social, historical, political and economic contexts affect media production. You will also have the opportunity to apply what you have learned through the production of your own media texts, exploring and creating media forms such as music videos, magazines, television, websites and film marketing.

Career and Progression Opportunities

Over one hundred universities offer courses in Media, Communications and Cultural Studies in the UK. A GCE in Media Studies helps you to progress to these courses, as well as to those in other areas such as English, Humanities and Social Sciences. There is a huge array of career opportunities in the media, which is an industry that is growing at an exponential rate. According to accountancy giant PWC's latest Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2018-2022, the entertainment and media sector was worth £76 billion in 2022 and the video games sector is currently valued at more than half the UK's whole entertainment industry. If you are looking for a job in this area, studying Media at GCE and at degree level is a route into careers such as TV and film production, advertising, journalism, interactive media, and digital marketing. It could help to provide you with the foundation to secure roles in technical production, special effects, web design and post-production.

This course is appropriate for students who would like to progress onto further study or work placements which could lead to a career in the Media Industry, such as Web Design, Journalism or one of the many roles in the TV and Film industry. Media Studies can also lead to careers in Marketing, Advertising or Public Relations. However, an awareness of how the world of media works can also support other careers, such as Social Work, Law and Education. By knowing how the media operates students will be able to decode messages more skilfully and engage with topics that interest them. In addition, knowledge of the media is increasingly valued and is becoming an important aspect of work in most institutions in our media saturated society.

Link to specification: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/d3fbs2s3/eduqas-a-level-media-studies-spec-from-2017-e-27-05-2021.pdf>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Eduqas

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Music or Grade 5 in an instrument/voice if GCSE Music has not been taken.

Assessment

See table opposite.

MUSIC

The WJEC Eduqas A Level Music course offers a broad and exciting mix of styles, giving students the opportunity to explore both classical and popular music in depth. You'll study the development of the symphony through key orchestral works, helping you understand how musical elements and language have evolved over time. Alongside this, you'll compose your own piece of music inspired by the techniques and styles of the period. You'll also have the chance to personalise your studies by choosing from areas such as Pop and Rock, Musical Theatre, or Jazz, as well as exploring music from the early twentieth century or the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This course is perfect for students who enjoy performing, composing, and discovering how different styles of music connect and influence one another.

Performing A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing or singing solo (compulsory) or in an ensemble or realising music through music technology – the focus is on a live performance.• At least 3 contrasting pieces.• Recital - minimum 10- 12 minutes (visiting examiner)	35%
Composing A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composing 2 separate pieces of music.• One to a brief set by Educas (in the West Classical tradition).• One 'free' composition.• At least 4-6 mins.	25%
Performing B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing or singing solo (compulsory) or in an ensemble or realising music through music technology – the focus is on a live performance.• At least 2 contrasting pieces.• Recital - minimum 6-8 minutes (visiting examiner)	25%
Composing B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composing 3 separate pieces of music.• One to a brief set by Educas (in the West Classical tradition).• Two 'free' composition. One must reflect a different Area of study.• At least 8-10 mins.	35%
Listening and Appraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening exam including; aural awareness, set work analysis using scores and historical context essay questions.	40%

Learners will choose **Performing A and Composing A** **OR** **Performing B and Composing B**

Special Requirements

Students will be expected to have weekly instrumental/vocal lessons (25% reduced fees at Birchwood) either in or outside of school and to take part in extra ensembles and concerts. A good GCSE Music grade along with Grade 5, or equivalent in performing and theory, is desirable to access this course. Please speak to the Music staff to discuss this further if you have any queries.

Career and progression opportunities

This A Level in Music can lead to further study in Music or Performing Arts in Higher Education at degree or HND level. Music may lead to a career in the music industry.

Link to specification: [AS and A Level Music | Eduqas](#)

6th form

Course Level

BTEC Extended Certificate

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Points Score 34

Grade 5 in GCSE Dance or equivalent performance experience.

Assessment

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners work
(90 GLH)

Unit 2: Developing Skills and
Techniques for Live Performance
(90 GLH)

Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop
(120 GLH)

Unit 4: Optional Unit
(60 GLH)

- Jazz Dance Technique
- Contemporary Dance Techniques
- Classical Ballet
- Tap Dance Technique

PERFORMING ARTS DANCE (BTEC Extended Certificate)

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Students can opt to choose Performing Arts BTEC which will allow them to follow a creative pathway in Dance. The nature of the BTEC qualification makes it much more practical and vocational rather than written and theoretical. Throughout the course students are encouraged to see and be involved in a wide variety of live performance work. Students will need to show commitment, focus and a desire to work independently and as a member of an ensemble. They will need to constantly demonstrate creativity, imagination and collaboration skills. The course aims to prepare students for further study or employment.

Assessment

The new BTEC Nationals in Performing Arts use a combination of assessment styles to give students confidence to apply their knowledge to succeed in the workplace and have the study skills to continue learning on higher education courses and throughout their career. The range of vocational assessments, both practical and written, means students can showcase their learning and achievements to best effect when they take the next step, whether that's supporting applications to higher education courses or potential employers.

BTEC performing arts students have practical experience from real world assignments, take responsibility for their own learning and develop interpersonal and practical thinking skills. Students have a strong core base of knowledge and have real experience of effective teamwork. They know how to work to a brief with set deadlines and effectively manage time to complete tasks and processes.

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work

Students are required to research two practitioners and a theme; they will investigate and critically analyse the contextual influences on their selected practitioners and performers work with focus on how these are related to the identified theme.

Unit 2: Developing Skills and techniques for Live Performance

In this unit students will understand the role and skills of a performer. They will develop performance skills and techniques for live performance, apply performance skills and techniques in selected styles and review and reflect on development of skills and techniques for live performance.

Unit 3: Group Performance Work

Students are required to work in groups to respond to a brief and develop a performance for an intended audience. Students are required to submit a digital process log that must be completed at four different stages during the process.

Unit 4: Optional

Students are able to select their own style and major within this.

Link to specification: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Nationals/Performing-Arts/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/9781446938362_BTEC_Nat_ExtCert_PA_Spec_Iss2C.pdf

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

EDUQAS

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE RS or Grade 6 in GCSE Geography, GCSE History or GCSE English Language.

Assessment

Component 1: An introduction to the Study of Religion (Christianity)

Written examination: 2 hours, 33.3% of qualification.

Component 2: An introduction to Philosophy of Religion

Written examination: 2 hours, 33.3% of qualification.

Component 1: An introduction to Religion and Ethics

Written examination: 2 hours, 33.3% of qualification.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS (RS)

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The study of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics at A Level is engaging, academically rigorous and excellent preparation for a wide range of courses at degree level. The subject involves a study of philosophical, theological and ethical theories which underpin and structure our world today. Philosophy explores the nature of reality and meaning. Ethics is the branch of Philosophy that examines how we should live. An understanding of these ideas is essential to an informed and nuanced engagement with key themes in politics, law, medicine, education, human rights and religion. Through the study of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics students will develop the ability to formulate and structure an argument, identify and draw out weaknesses and to express themselves logically and with precision.

Projected course content

The A Level will be made up of three components: The Study of Religion, Philosophy of Religion and Religion and Ethics. Each component will be assessed through a written exam. Component 1 (The Study of Religion) will involve a study of Christianity and will focus on the following topics; religious figures and sacred texts; religious concepts and religious life; significant social and historical developments in religious thought; religious practices and religious identity. Component 2 (Philosophy of Religion) will involve a study of; arguments for the existence of God; challenges to religious belief; religious experience; religious language. Component 3 (Religion and Ethics) will involve a study of; ethical language and thought; deontological ethics; teleological ethics; freewill and determinism.

Aims and objectives

- Develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to the individual, communities and society.
- Adopt an enquiring, critical, and reflective approach to the study of religion, philosophy and ethics.
- Reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

By the end of the A Level course students will have developed the ability to

- Construct well informed and reasoned arguments substantiated by relevant evidence
- Understand, interpret and evaluate critically religious concepts, texts and other sources
- Present responses to questions which are clear and coherent
- Use specialist language and terminology appropriately
- Identify, investigate and critically analyse questions, arguments, ideas and issues arising from the chosen approaches
- Engage in debate in a way that is respectful of the right of others to hold a different view
- Critically analyse and evaluate the views and arguments of scholars / academics
- Account for the influence of social, religious and historical factors on developments in the study of religions and beliefs
- Analyse the nature of connections between the various elements of their course of study
- Develop breadth and depth in their understanding of the connections between the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the specification as a whole

Special Requirements

There is an expectation that students will carry out independent learning tasks linked to the topics being studied. Suggested tasks will be provided.

Career and Progression Opportunities

An A Level in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics is highly regarded by universities and is excellent preparation for degrees in Philosophy, Theology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Anthropology and Law. Graduates in these subjects may go on to careers in Law, Civil Service, Foreign Office and Teaching. The Ethical theories studied are also highly relevant to degrees in Medicine, Science and Business.

Link to specification: https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies-as-a-level/#tab_overview

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

OCR

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE PE or Grade 6 in Science including Biology.

Assessment

Three written exams – (1 x 2 hour & 2 x 1 hour)

Practical assessment in one activity

Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement (EAPI) for chosen practical activity.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The A Level encourages students to:

- Foster an understanding of the historical, cultural and sociological factors underpinning sport and physical education.
- Gain an understanding of the physiological and mechanical basis of sport and physical education.
- Develop an understanding of psychological factors influencing behaviour.
- Develop knowledge and skills in selected physical activities.

The three sections for the written exam are:

- Applied Anatomy & Physiology / Exercise Physiology / Biomechanics
- Skill acquisition / Sports Psychology
- Socio-cultural issues / Sport & Society / Contemporary issues

Special Requirements

Students are expected to be participating in physical activities at an appropriate level outside of school.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The specifications provide a suitable foundation for specialist study in both Physical Education and Sports Studies in higher education and are also suitable qualifications for other areas of study. The specifications provide an excellent foundation for students intending to pursue careers in Teaching and Coaching, Sports Development, the Leisure Industry, Recreational Management, Health, Leisure and Fitness and Professional Sport.

Link to specification: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-physical-education-h155-h555-from-2016/>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Triple Science – Grade 6 in Physics

Trilogy Science – 2 x Grade 6s

Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics

Assessment

100% externally examined modules, including 15% of the total A level marks will be for practical knowledge and understanding.

The A Level consists of three written 120 minute papers assessing all content from both years of teaching.

PHYSICS

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This course will give students the skills and understanding to determine the way Physics affects everyday life by applying concepts into real life situations such as: car crashes, temperature probes and timekeeping. In addition, a GCE in Physics allows students to develop a range of highly desirable skills requested by both employers and universities. For instance, a successful A Level physicist will be an effective problem-solver using a wide range of maths-based calculation methods as well as applying methodical practical skills to a problem. Students will learn to use fundamental principles of Physics to explain more complex real-life phenomena. They will also learn to communicate these ideas efficiently both orally and with the written word. Handling data will be a key part of their work, allowing them to demonstrate information retrieval skills as well as the use of numeracy and IT. Students will build up a range of practical skills that require creativity and accuracy as well as developing a firm understanding of health and safety issues. As students become more skilled, they will take responsibility for selecting appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods, recording their observations and findings accurately and precisely as well as critically analysing and evaluating the methodology, results and impact of their own and others' experimental and investigative activities. The course also includes an option topic which allows students to learn more detail about a specific area of physics as part of the A Level course.

Where can the study of Physics at A Level take students?

Whilst many job opportunities specifically using Physics require higher qualifications, the mathematical and problem-solving skills used in Physics can benefit a huge range of jobs. Many employers' view success at A Level Physics as a clear indication of sound academic ability. UK Higher Education institutions currently offer many courses where Physics is the primary subject. Often these courses can include an additional year's study, either in industry or at a university abroad. Some courses can include study in other related areas. Examples include:

- Physics with Astrophysics
- Physics with Biophysics
- Physics with Audio and Optical Physics
- Medical Physics
- Astronomy

In addition, a large number of other courses either specifically require or find it desirable to have an A Level in Physics. These include courses that cover all fields of Engineering, Mathematics and Architecture.

Special Requirements

To be suitable students need to:

- Have an interest in, and a love of Physics.
- Want to find out about how things work in the real world.
- Enjoy applying their minds to solving complex problems.

How does Birchwood support students?

The A Level course is practical-based and students will spend time developing their practical skills in a structured way. The teaching staff provide help as required both in person and electronically.

Link to specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physics/as-level/physics-7407/specification/specification-at-a-glance>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE English Language or English Literature.

Assessment

Units are each assessed with a two hour written exam, at the end of the two-year course.

Components 1 and 2 both have two 30-mark essay questions, one source based and one non-source. In addition, they each have a 24-mark ideology essay question. Component 3 has two 30-mark non-source essay questions and two shorter 12 mark essay questions.

POLITICS

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Students will develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the political systems of Britain, political ideologies and global politics, vital for helping to understand the world in which we live. Students will also develop a wide range of skills including the ability to comprehend and interpret political information. They will have to think for themselves, form judgements and evaluate and analyse political issues, through reasoned argument, using appropriate political vocabulary.

Component 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideologies

This component explores the nature of politics and how people engage in the political process in the UK. Students investigate how people and politics interact and explore the emergence and development of the UK's democratic system. There is a focus on the role and scope of political parties central to contemporary politics. Students examine the role of the individual in the political process and their relationship with the state and fellow citizens. They also examine how electoral systems in the UK operate and influences of voting behaviour and political actions. An understanding of the role of the media in contemporary politics and of voting patterns and voting behaviour will also be gained.

The Core Political Ideologies section allows students to explore the three traditional political ideas of conservatism, liberalism and socialism. Core ideas and principles are examined and how they apply in practice to human nature, the state, society and the economy, the divisions within each idea and their key thinkers.

Component 2: UK Government and Non-Core Political Ideology

This component enables students to understand where, how and by whom political decisions are made. It introduces students to the set of rules governing politics in the UK and the UK constitution. It examines the specific roles and powers of the different major branches of the government – legislative, executive, and judiciary – as well as the relationships and balance of power between them and considers where sovereignty now lies within this system.

The Non-Core Political Ideology section allows students to explore the political ideas of nationalism. Students will learn about the differences and similarities of the ideology and its principles, the effects of nationalism, the divisions within it and its key thinkers.

Component 3: Comparative Politics - Global Politics

Global politics gives students an opportunity to develop an understanding of the local, national, international, and global dimensions of political activity. It also gives them the opportunity to explore the political issues that affect all of us. Students will gain understanding of abstract political concepts through grounding them in contemporary real-world examples and case studies that will develop an international awareness and knowledge of multiple perspectives. Global politics encourages discussion and debate and requires students to study and present different global perspectives, as well as interpreting competing and contestable claims. The key mainstream perspectives on global politics are liberalism and realism, and students will be expected to understand how these perspectives are applied throughout all elements of the qualification.

Special Requirements

In the examinations credit is given for appropriate references to contemporary developments, issues and debates in the areas covered.

Therefore, it is an expectation that students carry out substantial and varied wider reading around the topics being studied. It will be necessary for students to keep up to date with current affairs and contemporary issues of politics, both British and global.

Career and Progression Opportunities

A Level Politics can lead to a wide range of career and university education possibilities including Politics, Law, Teaching, Journalism, Media, Broadcasting, Research and Advertising.

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 GCSE in any Design and Technology subject, or Art.

Assessment

50% Examination (two papers).

50% Non-Examined Assessment/Coursework.

PRODUCT DESIGN D&T

A Level: Three Components

Product Design A Level comprises three main components: two examinations and a coursework unit (NEA). The course provides in depth study of modern Product Design and gives students the chance to stretch and explore their designing and manufacturing skills, as well as their theoretical understanding of the subject.

Papers 1 & 2: Examinations

Students will learn about the core principles of modern Product Design. They will analyse and evaluate design decisions and outcomes against technical principles. They will look at design and technology's wider issues including social, moral, ethical, and environmental concerns. The exam is predominantly Design and Technology based with links to Mathematical and Scientific principles within Product Design.

Non-Examined Assessments (NEA) (Coursework)

Students will design and make high quality and substantial products through identifying a real-world problem. Through exploring materials and processes, students will design, prototype, manufacture and evaluate contemporary products.

Paper 1: Technical Principles (Exam)	Paper 2: Designing and Making Principles (Exam)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Written Exam, externally assessed · 2 hours 30 minutes · 30% of qualification · 120 marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Written Exam, externally assessed · 1 hour 30 minutes · 20% of qualification · 80 marks
NEA: Practical Application of Technical Principles, Designing and Making Principles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Non-examined assessment, internally assessed and externally moderated · Coursework - approximately 60 hours · 50% of qualification · 100 marks 	

Career and Progression Opportunities

This qualification supports progression into further education, training, or employment in any design related field such as Product Design, Industrial Design, Engineering, Interior Design, Architecture, Surveying or Teaching.

Links to specification:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/as-and-a-level/design-and-technology-product-design-7552/specification-at-a-glance>

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/as-and-a-level/design-and-technology-product-design-7552/subject-content>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE Mathematics and Grade 5 in English Language or English Literature and Grade 5 in GCSE Science (5:5 in Combined Science or 5 in an individual science subject if studying Triple Science)

Assessment

All content is assessed by formal written examinations at the end of the course.

PSYCHOLOGY

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Psychology is an engaging subject in which students will explore different approaches to explaining human behaviour and the research methods that underlie psychological research. During the two years, students will look at the main approaches in psychology (the learning approaches: behaviourism and social learning theory, the cognitive approach, the biological approach, the psychodynamic approach and the humanistic approach). Students will have the opportunity to explore topics such as social influence, memory, attachment, biopsychology, psychopathology, forensic psychology, schizophrenia and gender.

Unit	Topics	Assessment
Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Social influence· Memory· Attachment· Psychopathology	2 hour written exam
Paper 2: Psychology in Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Approaches in Psychology· Biopsychology· Research Methods	2 hour written exam
Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Issues and debates in psychology· Forensic Psychology· Schizophrenia· Gender	2 hour written exam

Career and Progression Opportunities

A Level Psychology provides students with a broad range of skills which are valued by Higher Education and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research.

Research skills are an essential part of the Psychology A Level and students will develop skills such as understanding how to design and carry out research using a variety of different research methods, the strengths and weaknesses of various research methods and techniques of data handling and analysis. Students also gain transferable skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, IT skills and communication skills (presentation, writing, debating).

Link to Syllabus

A level - <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-level/psychology-7181>

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

AQA

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE English Language or English Literature

Assessment

Two year linear A Level

All units assessed through formal written examination.

SOCIOLOGY

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“The difficulty in Sociology is to manage to think in a completely astonished way about things you thought you had always understood” Pierre Bourdieu.

Ever wondered how we developed into the society we are today? How much society shapes our behaviour? How much of our identity and behaviour is shaped by our families, peer groups, education or the media? Why there is inequality in society? If students are curious about why people behave the way they do, then sociology is for them. Sociology is an enjoyable and illuminating subject which helps students to understand the world around them. It trains learners to answer the ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about human societies. If students enjoy a good debate, listening to alternative viewpoints and learning in small groups then this subject will suit them.

Sociology is fundamentally about the study of social relationships and institutions. It is a diverse subject, ranging from crime to religion, from the family to the state, from the divisions of race and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture and from social stability to radical change in whole societies. Sociology can help us make sense of the society we live in, and we aim to make its study exciting and illuminating to our students, encouraging both their curiosity and social responsibility.

At Birchwood we study the AQA Sociology A Level specification which is very well respected and known for keeping up to date with sociological developments allowing students to develop a clear and valid understanding of Sociology. Students will learn the fundamentals of the subject and develop skills valued by higher education and employers including critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills.

By the end of Key Stage 5 students will be able to demonstrate a complex understanding of sociological theories for analysing society such as conflict theory (Marxism, feminism), functionalism, interpretivism and research methods. They will be able to analyse and evaluate theories of, and approaches to, the study of behaviour in society, including their practical application to the functioning of institutions in society such as the family, the media, the criminal justice system and education.

Course Requirements

This is an exam-based subject, with high levels of terminology and independent research required to succeed. As it is a new subject which is not taught at GCSE it will be a requirement of students embarking on this course to have a strong academic base in English. Students should also be comfortable interpreting data.

Career and Progression Opportunities

The subject is of particular use for those considering careers in the media, education, social work, nursing or research. Students may go on to take a degree in the subject or in a related area such as Social Policy, Criminology or Social Work. Others find it useful in their applications for a range of other subjects including Business, English, Journalism, Nursing, Teacher Training and History.

Link to specification and useful website:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-level/sociology-7191/specification>

6th form

Course Level

A Level

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Spanish or the ability to study Spanish to the equivalent level

Assessment

Two year linear A Level - 100% exam

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation.

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation.

Paper 3: Speaking.

SPANISH

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Students will be required to have achieved at least a GCSE Grade 6 in Spanish before taking this course. It is also strongly advised that students have also achieved at least a Grade 6 in English Language / Literature as many of these analytical skills are used during A level study of Spanish. Students will need to feel confident at this level in the four language skills of Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Students must also have some knowledge and understanding of the culture and way of life in Spain and the Spanish-speaking world. Students need to be interested in developing this understanding and in exploring in much more depth the topic areas that students will have covered at GCSE.

What will the student learn on this A Level course?

The course will help students to develop their general study skills, but most of all students will learn to communicate at a higher level in the language. Students will also learn much more about a wide range of aspects of the society or societies in which Spanish is spoken. Students will develop their ability to work independently, to research effectively, be able to approach issues from multiple perspectives and become sensitive to different cultural contexts. Students will also study two authentic works; one film (VOLVER) and one play (La Casa de Bernarda Alba).

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

If students are interested in languages and communication and enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life, then the Spanish course would be suitable for them. Similarly, if students are interested in the business world, in travel or tourism, in literature, in journalism, in history and politics, then students are also likely to find the course appropriate. There are a number of options in the course where students can choose a topic or question to suit their interests and passions. Whether students want to use language for work, for further study, training, or for leisure, this course will equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Course Description

Spanish is an exciting and diverse subject which offers students the opportunity to follow their interests as well as developing great knowledge about Spain and the Spanish-speaking world. At A Level, great importance is placed on the ability to communicate and by the end of the course it is expected that linguistic skills will be highly developed. Students will have access to a wide variety of authentic Spanish media in order to enhance their language skills and develop intercultural awareness. Students will be exposed to authentic texts: newspaper and magazine articles, brochures, blogs, websites and up to date articles, originally designed for native speakers. All materials will be firmly rooted in the culture of Spain and Spanish speaking countries. Various cinema, theatre and external revision sessions are arranged from time to time as the opportunity for such cultural language activities occurs in this area. A great deal of emphasis is placed on independent learning. Consequently, students are expected to be pro-active in developing their language skills; reading around the subject and learning vocabulary are integral parts of the A Level course. Students will also be able to practise their speaking skills with a native speaker on a regular basis.

Career and Progression Opportunities

It is very popular to combine languages with non-language subjects at university. Examples include: Spanish with Science, Spanish with Media Studies, Engineering with Spanish, Architecture with Spanish, Spanish with Politics or International Studies, Spanish with International Business or Law; the range is infinite. Previous A Level Spanish students have combined Spanish with Maths, with French, with English Literature, with History, with Psychology, with Sociology, with Product Design and with Chemistry. Many non-languages programmes allow optional study of language modules which may be tailored to the professional requirements e.g. Spanish for Scientists. Specialists will be able to take a year abroad to study their language of choice. Languages at A Level really do make people highly employable with such an advanced skill set.

Link to Syllabus

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/spanish-2016.html>

Course Level

BTEC National Level 3

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Entry Requirements

Total Points Score 34

Assessment

Diploma:

Nine units to complete in total three which are externally assessed:

Anatomy and Physiology (exam)

Fitness, Training and Programming (controlled assessment)

Business in Sport (controlled assessment)

Extended Diploma:

Fourteen units to complete in total, four which are externally assessed (as above, but with the addition of:

Development and Provision of Sport (controlled assessment)

SPORT (BTEC Diploma/Extended Diploma)

This course encourages students to:

- Gain an understanding of many areas related to sport, including physiological factors, sports injuries, fitness testing, sports nutrition and analysis of performance.
- Develop an understanding of psychological factors influencing behaviour in sport.
- Develop awareness of coaching styles and the influence of different leadership styles on performance in sport.
- Students have the opportunity to resubmit work once only. Under new government guidelines for BTEC the decision to approve a resubmission of work is solely at the discretion of the teacher.
- Students will study nine units across the two years for the Diploma or fourteen across the two years if studying the Extended Diploma.

Career and Progression Opportunities

This qualification provides a suitable foundation for specialist study in both Physical Education and Sports Studies in higher education and is also a suitable qualification for other areas of study. The specification provides an excellent foundation for students intending to pursue careers in Teaching and Coaching, Sports Development, the Leisure Industry, Recreational Management, Health, Leisure and Fitness and Professional Sport.

Link to specification: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-nationals/sport-2016.html#tab-3>