

OPTIONS &
SUBJECTS
OFFERED

2026 ENTRY



THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL

6th

FORM

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT ACADEMIC COURSES

Choosing the right combination of courses is vitally important if you are to enjoy your time in the Sixth Form and achieve success.

At TBSHS we offer a great range of subjects to choose from. When we come to create our timetable, we listen to what you want to study and try to ensure that as many subject combinations as possible can be accommodated. It is not uncommon for students to combine Sciences and Languages, or Mathematics and Humanities, for example.

Clearly, you need to choose a course that you will enjoy and one that will be useful to you in the future – some degree courses require certain A-Levels or BTEC courses. You may choose a subject that you have been good at in the past, or a new subject. You should consider where your strengths lie – which subjects you like, the skills you have and how you prefer to be assessed.

We are very pleased to be able to offer a range of subjects at Post-16 not available at GCSE. We suggest that you read through all the course details enclosed in this prospectus before you make your provisional choice. If you would like any further guidance then please feel free to contact the Sixth Form Management Team at the school.

Please note that A-Level courses are linear and students will be expected to continue their chosen courses for two years, with final examinations taking place at the end of Year 13. Students will be assessed throughout their Sixth Form career to measure their progress and they are expected to achieve grades in line with their potential in the end of Year 12 Post-18 Gateway Exams.

THE TWO ROUTES TO SUCCESS AT THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL

A-LEVEL PATHWAY

Students study three linear A-Level subjects over their two years in the Sixth Form. Students with exceptional GCSE grades may study four linear A-Level subjects.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A total points score of at least 44 from your best eight GCSEs (and at least grade 5 in Mathematics and English Language or Literature). You must also fulfil each chosen subject's entry criteria.

At least Grade 8s are expected for students wishing to study four A-Levels.

BTEC + 1 A-LEVEL PATHWAY

Students study the Level 3 BTEC Sport in addition to one linear A-Level subject. The majority of the assessment on the BTEC route is via non-exam assessment, however, approximately 45% will be via examination.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A total points score of at least 36 from your best eight GCSEs with at least grade 5 in Mathematics and English Language or Literature and a minimum of 5 GCSEs grades 4-9.

You must also fulfil the specific entrance criteria for your BTEC and A-Level course. See summary on page 33.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT OPTIONS

In addition to the pathway choice above, all students are expected to follow an additional qualification to acquire further skills and experiences that will serve them well in the future. Please see the Curriculum Enhancement section for further information about each course.

- Extended Project
- Level 3 Qualification in Sports Leadership
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Core Mathematics
- Fundamentals of Financial Services

ART AND DESIGN

"Art is not what you see, but what you make others see."

Edgar Degas

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE ART

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs S Maulin

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 9FA0

EXAMINATIONS: 40%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 60%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL ART AND DESIGN?

A-Level Art and Design offers students opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of visual problem solving skills through personalised learning, which is underpinned by artist research and analysis. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with a wide range of materials and are encouraged to take risks with their work. The course follows a rigid structure that will ensure all the assessment objectives are met, but is designed to allow each individual to flourish by producing rich, meaningful and exciting outcomes that will push their creative thinking skills.

Sketchbooks are crucial in succeeding, and will provide evidence of a student's ability to address the four assessment objectives outlined below:

Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.

Experiment with and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.

Record in visual and/or other forms, ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, demonstrating an ability to reflect on work and progress.

Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, oral or other elements.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ARTIST?

A successful A-Level Art student will have fully addressed the assessment objectives. Their work will reflect a great deal of enthusiasm, effort, ambition, independent learning and an adventurous and enquiring mind over a range of concepts and ideas. A developing personal style, creative confidence and independence in the use of visual language to communicate ideas, feelings and meanings will become evident.

A good artist will be expected to come to lessons with a clear idea of what they intend to achieve, and be able to take on board constructive criticism as well as share their points of view on others' work and ideas. Passion, risk taking and resilience are imperative to success.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN ART?

The fundamental skills of drawing and painting are vital in forming the basis on which to develop ideas. Recording from direct observation and personal experiences will feature heavily throughout the course; this will allow students to express themselves through experimenting with an expanded range of materials. Students are encouraged to innovate through the inventive use of materials, tools, techniques and processes.

Students will develop technical competence and manipulative skills necessary to form, compose and communicate in two and three dimensions to solve problems in visual and tactile forms.

Art and artists throughout history will be studied and analysed in order to enrich own ideas and underpin development.

WHERE COULD ART TAKE ME?

Many of the careers of the future will require people with creative and imaginative learning skills. The study of Art encourages students to question their own values, aesthetic perceptions and philosophy of thinking. Students are often challenged by this critical way of thinking. The subject is unique within the curriculum in developing a particularly expressive and experimental way of working when engaging with the visual and tactile world.

All universities and industries are looking beyond just academic success. They are looking for candidates who can offer something more. A confidence in Art and a fluent understanding of thinking laterally in order to solve problems will give students a strong footing when applying for Further and Higher Education.

Art Workshops and other extra-curricular opportunities are available within the department. There are also regular visits to Art galleries, museums and places of interest. We have regular success in shows and competitions, and the department has a recognised reputation in the area for success.

Many of our students go on to further their Art studies at highly regarded institutions.

BIOLOGY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE BIOLOGY SEPARATE SCIENCE OR A 6 IN ALL OF YOUR BIOLOGY MODULES IN A COMBINED SCIENCE GCSE QUALIFICATION. GRADE 6 IN GCSE MATHS IS RECOMMENDED. IF YOU HAVE A GRADE 5 YOU WILL NEED TO TAKE CORE MATHS AS YOUR ENHANCEMENT OPTION

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr M Smith

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7402

EXAMINATIONS: 100% (also included is a practical endorsement award)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL BIOLOGY?

In the first year, Biology covers the biology of cells and how they are specialised for different functions. Transport and gas exchange systems rely on these specialised cells to function efficiently. The membranes both within and surrounding the cells are studded with proteins, and students will learn how these are involved in cell communication and defending against disease.

Organisms show variation and the second unit looks at the genetic and environmental factors which cause variation. Similarities and differences are looked at both on a biochemical basis and at a cellular level.

The second year of the Biology course covers populations and environment and control in cells and organisms. The course is very broad based and students are expected to apply their knowledge to new situations.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BIOLOGIST?

A good biologist is expected to appreciate that Biology is a developing science, which has huge numbers of variables. Organisms are complex and as a result are difficult to study. A biologist must be willing to look at a variety of evidence (similar to a historian) and appreciate that there is not always a simple explanation.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN BIOLOGY?

Whilst studying A-Level Biology you will be taught in a variety of styles, both teacher-led and individual study-based. You will be encouraged to think for yourself throughout and to develop your own research and study skills.

You will learn how to analyse situations from a biological perspective and will be encouraged to back up your class work with your own research.

You will learn to be confident in referring to a variety of texts when making notes. You will need to keep up-to-date and be aware of the applications of the subject in modern society. This will be achieved through your own reading - both of the press and journals - and through viewing relevant video and television broadcasts.

Biology is a practical science and consequently much of the work is studied by the use of a wide variety of practical techniques and laboratory procedures, for example microscopy and culture of micro-organisms. There is a series of twelve standard practical tasks that all A-Level students undertake (six in Year 12 and six in Year 13). Students have to design and carry out careful experiments and have to interpret and analyse data to reach reliable conclusions. Candidates are awarded with a practical endorsement at the end of the A-Level course.

WHERE COULD BIOLOGY TAKE ME?

A-Level Biology may lead to a wide variety of subjects for further study, which, in recent years, have included Medicine, Dentistry, Physiotherapy, Psychology, Ophthalmology, Biochemistry and Microbiology. Biology combines well with Chemistry, Geography, Psychology and PE.

BTEC LEVEL 3 SPORT

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: AT LEAST 36 POINTS FROM YOUR BEST EIGHT GCSES WITH A MINIMUM OF FIVE GCSES GRADES 4-9; GRADE 5 IN GCSE MATHS AND GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR GCSE LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr P J Harris

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson

EXAMINATIONS: 3 Externally Assessed Units (45%)

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 6 Internally Assessed Units (55%)

WHAT IS BTEC DIPLOMA IN SPORT?

A BTEC Diploma in Sport offers an exciting opportunity for students who have a passion for sport and want to understand how to improve performance through theory and practical work. The course is broken down into 9 contrasting units and each student will be expected to complete a number of specific assignments in order to demonstrate a clear understanding of the course content and assessment criteria. Students are able to gain either a Pass, Merit or Distinction in each assignment and this will then be collated to provide a subsequent final mark. There are 3 externally assessed units which take the form of written examinations, in two of which you are allowed to take in prepared notes, and 6 internally assessed units.

There are also a wide range of competitive opportunities in athletics, cricket, cross-country, football, golf, netball and rugby all of which we compete at on a local and national level.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BTEC DIPLOMA IN SPORT STUDENT?

The successful BTEC student will possess a passion for all sports and the drive to improve their knowledge further. As the course is varied in terms of the theoretical side, the student should also have an interest in science as well as all aspects of current sporting affairs. The course requires students to be well organised in terms of independent learning and to be able to meet deadlines.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN BTEC DIPLOMA IN SPORT?

Specific subject knowledge is valuable in its own right, but the BTEC also has strong transferable links with Biology and Psychology. During the course students will develop their time management skills, the ability to work independently and within groups, further develop confidence and presentation skills, teach lessons to year 7 and 8 students and hone their essay writing and practical skills. All of the above will lead to students developing their confidence for a career in the sports profession or further study at university.

WHERE COULD A BTEC DIPLOMA IN SPORT TAKE ME?

There are a range of exit routes for students studying BTEC Sport and in recent years many have gone on to further education at institutions such as Loughborough University, Leeds Beckett and University of Northumbria to study a range of sports courses. Several students have chosen to follow a career upon finishing the course which have included sports coaching, personal training and training as an airline pilot. Therefore, there are a whole range of opportunities available to a student studying BTEC Sport with many of the skills they develop being highly transferable to the workplace and further education.

BUSINESS STUDIES

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 5 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND, IF STUDIED, GRADE 6 IN GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

SUBJECT LEADER: Miss K Todd

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDUQAS

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: A510QS
(three papers end of Year 13)

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

“So much of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to work.”

Peter Drucker (American-Austrian Management Consultant and Educator)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL BUSINESS STUDIES?

The A-Level Business Studies course introduces you to all you need to know about working in business. You will also have the chance to take part in competitions such as the Stockmarket Challenge and ICAEW’s BASE competitions that offer careers advice on Business and Accountancy careers. They focus on helping you to become a good decision-maker and you will learn essential managerial skills, alongside techniques to help you become an analytical problem solver. These skills are all highly sought after and valued in a wide range of careers.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BUSINESS STUDIES STUDENT?

A good Business Studies student has to be able to cope with a wide range of subjects and skills. They are numerate to deftly handle financial issues, keen problem-solvers in the operational issues and marketing arenas and able to understand people through psychology in human resources. They will use theory to explore how organisations work and the challenges managers face in leading people, and they will learn to analyse business environments.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN BUSINESS STUDIES?

The course is split into three components. In Year 12 you will learn about the four main functions in a business: marketing, finance, human resources and operations. Alongside this you will study the opportunities businesses have available to them, including business plans.

Year 13 will build upon the knowledge that you learned in Year 12. You will investigate business strategy and decision making, as well as how to assess the competitive and financial stability of a business. You will also learn about how businesses operate in a

changing world, including globalisation and PESTLE analysis.’

There are three papers all sat in the summer of Year 13. Paper 1 will assess your understanding of Component 1: Business Opportunities and Functions. Paper 2 will assess your understanding of Component 2: Business Analysis and Strategy. The final paper is a holistic paper and will assess component 1, 2 and 3 (Business in a Changing World). All three papers are 2 hours and 15 minutes in length and consist of multiple real life business case studies.

WHERE COULD BUSINESS STUDIES TAKE ME?

If you would like to study business, finance or management at university, A-Level Business provides an excellent foundation. The skills you learn are also transferable across a broad range of subjects and careers. Whatever you choose to do in the future, you will find that the things you learn in this course will help. For example, you will probably work with lots of different people, so knowledge of motivational theory will help you to work well with others and help them achieve their potential. You might have ambitious plans to start your own business. If that is the case, you will find the marketing and finance topics particularly useful.

CHEMISTRY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT: GRADE 6 IN GCSE CHEMISTRY SEPARATE SCIENCE OR A 6 IN ALL OF YOUR CHEMISTRY MODULES IN A COMBINED SCIENCE GCSE QUALIFICATION. GRADE 6 IN GCSE MATHS IS RECOMMENDED. IF YOU HAVE A GRADE 5 YOU WILL NEED TO TAKE CORE MATHS AS YOUR ENHANCEMENT OPTION

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr J Blake

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7405

EXAMINATIONS: 100% (also included is a practical endorsement award)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL CHEMISTRY?

Chemistry is an exciting and challenging subject which helps us understand the world in which we live. It occupies a central and pivotal position in the sciences and its study develops an appreciation of many aspects of our complex and technical society. Chemists provide many of the materials of everyday life, together with the knowledge to improve healthcare and to appreciate and tackle major environmental problems that face us all. Studying A-Level Chemistry allows the opportunity to understand these chemical reactions and explore the new innovations of material science.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD CHEMIST?

A good chemist must, first and foremost, enjoy and be enthusiastic about the subject. Chemistry will suit anyone who has an inquiring mind, an ability to analyse and evaluate data, and who possesses good practical skills. Attention to detail is a must along with strong mathematical skills. It is also advantageous to be studying complementary subjects such as Biology, Physics, Mathematics, or Product Design.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN CHEMISTRY?

A-Level Chemistry (7405):

- Paper 1: Physical and Inorganic Chemistry (35% of exam – 105 marks – a mixture of long and short questions)
- Paper 2: Physical and Organic Chemistry (35% of exam – 105 marks – a mixture of long and short questions)

- Paper 3: Any content and any practical skills from the two year course (30% of exam - 60 marks on any topic with a focus on practical skills and 30 marks of multiple choice)
- Practical endorsement award.

Practical assessment:

There is a series of twelve standard practical tasks that all A-Level students undertake (six in Year 12 and six in Year 13). Students have to design and carry out careful experiments and have to interpret and analyse data to reach reliable conclusions. Candidates are awarded with a practical endorsement at the end of the A-Level course.

WHERE COULD CHEMISTRY TAKE ME?

Chemistry is essential for anyone wishing to pursue a career in Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Biomedical Sciences, Pharmacology, Pharmacy, Natural Sciences, Biochemistry, Physiotherapy and Sports Science. An A-Level in Chemistry can lead into a multitude of careers. The skills of analysis, logical thinking, planning, an ability to perform calculations, modelling and evaluation can be used in all fields from business and finance through to law.

Chemistry is very highly regarded by universities and employers. It is thought of as a very academic subject and success shows students have significant independent learning skills.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE OR, IF NOT STUDIED, GRADE 5 IN GCSE MATHS

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr A Mullen

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7517

EXAMINATIONS:

A2 Paper 1: On screen exam 2.5 hours (40%)

A2 Paper 2: Written exam 2.5 hours (40%)

Non-exam Assessment: 75 Marks (20%)

"A computer would deserve to be called intelligent if it could deceive a human into believing that it was human." Alan Turing

WHAT IS A-LEVEL COMPUTER SCIENCE?

The Computer Science specification has been designed for students who wish to go on to Higher Education or into employment where knowledge of Computer Science would be beneficial.

Computer Science is not concerned with simply learning how to use applications or programming languages. Instead, abstract thinking, general problem-solving, algorithmic and mathematical reasoning, scientific and engineering-based thinking are emphasised.

The Visual Basic.NET programming language is taught in lessons and used to answer questions and complete tasks for examinations and coursework.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD COMPUTER SCIENTIST?

The ability to think in a rational way is a good start. A computer scientist will approach problems in an organised and methodical way, using their insight and mathematical skills to break the problem down into steps which can be solved or expressed using a computer program.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN COMPUTER SCIENCE?

A2 Level topics unit 1:

- Fundamentals of programming
- Fundamentals of data structures
- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Theory of computation

A2 Level Topics Unit 2:

- Fundamentals of data representation
- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer organisation and architecture
- Consequences of uses of computing
- Fundamentals of communication and networking
- Fundamentals of databases
- Big Data
- Fundamentals of functional programming

Non-exam assessment:

The non-exam assessment assesses a student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a practical problem.

WHERE COULD COMPUTER SCIENCE TAKE ME?

Computer Science is a traditional and academically rigorous subject which combines well with Maths and the Sciences. A-Level Computer Science students can go on to further studies in Computer Science, Game Design or any number of disciplines where analysis and problem solving are required.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr Glyn Reynolds

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7552

EXAMINATIONS: Paper 1 30% (2.5 hours)
Paper 2 20% (1.5 hours)

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 50%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL DESIGN TECHNOLOGY?

Product Design allows students to be creative, to take a broad view of design and use innovative techniques and materials, keeping up with new technology whilst being environmentally aware. The course is suitable for students who have worked in any material at GCSE but knowledge and practical experience of woods, metals and polymers is an advantage.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRODUCT DESIGNER?

A good designer is someone who can visualise the potential of a given product, to achieve maximum impact within society and a targeted audience. It is also someone who can blend true form and function. Students must be extremely committed and have a keen interest in how technology has been influenced by past designers, is progressing today and how it is projected to develop in the future.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN DESIGN TECHNOLOGY?

Over the two years, students will learn how products are designed and manufactured using a variety of materials and components through both practical and theory lessons. There is considerable flexibility with regard to the final NEA outcome; any material may be used, provided that outcome is three dimensional and has commercial potential. Possible outcomes include innovative homeware, furniture, sports equipment, aids for people with disabilities, a product that addresses sustainability or energy issues, etc, etc. When evaluating their product, students will also need to consider ethical issues such as potential socio-economic and cultural impacts. There are various opportunities within the department to take part in competitions and events, take on leadership opportunities and work with younger students.

WHERE COULD DESIGN TECHNOLOGY TAKE ME?

Product Design allows students to go on to university where they can study courses such as BA Product Design, BA Design Technology, BA Interior and Spatial Design, and various Engineering courses. Alternatively, Product Design is a desirable qualification for many excellent degree apprenticeships. Looking further into the future, possible careers which can arise from this course include Engineering, Automotive Design, Graphic Designing and many more. Subjects which combine well with Product Design would include Sciences, Art, Maths, Business Studies and Media Studies.

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

“Theatre is simply what cannot be expressed by any other means; a complexity of words, movements, gestures that convey a vision of the world inexpressible in any other way.” Eugene Ionesco

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs H Bart-Williams

EXAMINATION BOARD: WJEC / Eduqas

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: A690QS

EXAMINATIONS:

Component 3 Text in Performance
Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes (40%)

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT:

Component 1 Theatre Workshop - Internally assessed and externally moderated by WJEC (20%)

Component 2 Text in Action - externally assessed by a visiting examiner (40%)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES?

The WJEC Eduqas A-Level in Drama and Theatre is an exciting and inspiring course which prepares learners for further study in Higher Education. This highly practical specification provides learners with the opportunity to work as either performers and/ or designers on **three** different performances.

In Component 1, learners reinterpret a text to create a piece of theatre which is a combination of the selected text and original ideas completing a written portfolio of the process.

In Component 2, learners engage with a stimulus to create two pieces of theatre; one an interpretation of a text of their own choice and the other a devised piece. A written document evaluating your process is then completed at the end of the performance process using the notes you have made along the way.

Both Components 1 and 2 are designed to encourage learners to make connections between dramatic theory and their own practice. While preparing their practical work, learners will explore the work of two theatre practitioners (individuals or companies) of their own choice and then apply their research to their performances or designs. Learners are also required to watch at least **two** live theatre productions and learn about the processes and practices involved in interpreting and performing theatre.

In Component 3, learners explore **two** complete performance texts and one extract from a third text and complete a written exam at the end of the course. There is an exciting and diverse list of texts to choose from; centres must select **one** which was written before 1956 and **one** which was written after 1956.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES STUDENT?

The successful Drama and Theatre Studies student will possess an enthusiasm, love and passion for the theatre that surpasses the confines of the course of study. A typical Drama student will be driven and never shirk from hard work, aiming for layers of detail and striving for perfection in their performances. Drama and Theatre Studies requires students to have a thirst for knowledge and understanding of the political, social and cultural context of plays, playwrights, practitioners and their place in theatre history, so a love of

reading would be a distinct advantage. A successful Drama and Theatre Studies student will be committed to being involved in every aspect of the rich extra-curricular programme at TBSHS, dedicated to rehearsing in their own time, mentoring younger students, going to the theatre and attending practical workshops.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES?

Drama and Theatre Studies aims to provide students with transferable skills that will equip them to function in their everyday working lives. Skills such as readiness, resourcefulness, resilience, responsibility, reflection, research, analysis, team-work, leadership, negotiation, collaboration, using vocal techniques, reading body language and production management. Drama also builds confidence and creativity enabling students to surpass their expectations and achieve their goals.

WHERE COULD DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES TAKE ME?

Drama and Theatre Studies is a subject that is easily combined with a number of subjects at TBSHS and beyond at university. English Literature, English Language, History, Politics, Law, Film Studies, Media Studies, Art, Music and Psychology are some of the many possible complementary subjects. Past students have gone on to study theatre related subjects at university and some have gone to study Politics, Film, Psychology, Media and Law at Oxford, Cambridge and Russell Group Universities. Some students are members of The National Youth Theatre/ National Youth Music Theatre and have gone to study their craft at prestigious London Drama Schools.

ECONOMICS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE MATHEMATICS AND, IF STUDIED, GRADE 6 IN GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

SUBJECT LEADER: Miss K Todd

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 9ECO (Micro and Macro plus Business and Labour Economics and Global Economy)

EXAMINATIONS: 100% (3 papers)

“Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer.”

Adam Smith (The Wealth of Nations Book II, 1776)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL ECONOMICS?

Economics is about choice and the impact of our choices on each other. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families to the structures created by governments and firms. An economic way of thinking can help you make better choices.

Economics is the most powerful of the social sciences. Its principles provide us with unparalleled analytical tools to interpret the world around us and to shine a light on all of the great challenges that face humanity – how to grow economies, tackle unemployment, grapple with environmental issues, reduce crime and even understand demographic change. “If you are interested in current affairs, politics, history, business or finance, you must study economics.” Allister Heath, Deputy Editor, The Daily Telegraph.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ECONOMICS STUDENT?

A good Economics student needs to be able to cope with logic, complexity and contradictions in theory and to be able to cope with discrepancies between reality and theory. There are a series of theories which require the representation of complex systems in abstract terms using graphs and statistics. The best economists are also seriously interested in the real world and want to understand how things work and why people, business, government and other institutions behave in the way they do. Having this interest means you are more likely to invest time in reading about what is going on in the news.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN ECONOMICS?

In Theme 1 and Theme 2, you will be introduced to the nature of economics, how markets work and why they fail. You will also consider the role of government and the UK economy.

In Theme 3 and Theme 4, you will explore how businesses grow and compete, the labour market and how the government intervenes to make markets work better. You will also explore international trade, inequality within and between countries, emerging and developing economies, and the public finances. You will also have an opportunity to consider the role and impact of the financial sector.

You will sit three exam papers at the end of Year 13. Paper 1 will examine Themes 1 and 3, Paper 2 will examine Themes 2 and 4 and Paper 3 will examine knowledge of the whole course.

WHERE COULD ECONOMICS TAKE ME?

Studying Economics will help you develop transferable skills that will prepare you for studying at university or moving into the world of work. These include skills in data interpretation and essay writing. Suitable higher education courses include economics degrees or degrees in applied economics such as environmental economics, labour economics, public sector economics or monetary economics.

You might choose to study business economics, econometrics or a business and management degree. Economics students can follow a wide range of careers in industry, commerce, finance and the Civil Service.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

SUBJECT LEADER: Ms H Matharu

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7702

EXAMINATIONS: 80%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 20%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

English Language will introduce you to the ways in which the English language is formed, developed and delivered in both our modern society and in your own life.

A-Level is assessed through two examinations and two pieces of coursework. You will study how children acquire language, the development of English across the centuries and around the world, and the diverse way in which English is influenced by gender, age, class, region, occupation, ethnicity and personal values.

For NEA, you will have the opportunity to complete a piece of research on a language topic of your choice. You also produce a piece of creative writing of your own for which you will write a commentary.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LINGUIST?

A good linguist is excited by the way that the English language is constantly moving; a good linguist will always be on the search for ways in which the English language is both used and abused. A good linguist will read widely (books, magazines, cereal packets, train tickets); a good linguist will enjoy writing and will want to discuss what others have written too. A good linguist loves arguing about language!

"The more we know about the language the more chance we shall have of success, whether we are advertisers, politicians, priests, journalists, doctors, lawyers - or just ordinary people at home, trying to understand and be understood." Professor David Crystal

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

The variety of assessment styles used, such as data analysis, discursive essays, directed writing, original writing and research-based investigative writing, allows you to develop a wide range of skills. These include critical reading, data analysis, evaluation, the ability to develop and sustain arguments and a number of different writing skills which are invaluable for both further study and future employment.

WHERE COULD ENGLISH LANGUAGE TAKE ME?

English Language creates students who are aware of how language can represent the world, and influence it. The course is ideal for budding journalists and politicians, for advertising and business, for working with the police as a forensic linguist or working with children in developing their speech or becoming a teacher. Because of the variety of skills learned, English Language is ideal as a foundation for degree level research and study.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Ms H Matharu

EXAMINATION BOARD: Eduqas

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: A720QS

EXAMINATIONS: 80%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 20%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE?

Taking English Literature to A-Level involves the study of four units, all four knitting together to form a varied and invigorating tapestry of complementary and contrasting genres and authors. There is a coursework study of two modern novels which allows students some choice over what they write about.

In English Literature the students study literature from Shakespeare to the present day covering the three genres: in poetry, this may range from Chaucer and Keats through to Ted Hughes and Carol Ann Duffy; in drama, students may look at playwrights as diverse as John Webster, Tennessee Williams and Lucy Prebble whilst the modern novel may be written by F Scott Fitzgerald or E M Forster or may go further back to some of the nineteenth century greats like Thomas Hardy or Jane Austen.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LITERATEUR*?

Someone who loves to read, and loves to read widely – both across author, genre and time. They are also someone who likes to discuss what they have read and are not short of an opinion.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN ENGLISH LITERATURE?

About the world. About how people think and feel. About why people behave in the way they do. Indeed, this is where students learn what it is to be alive before they have the opportunity to find out what it is to be alive. Students will also, of course, learn how to critique a text and then write about that text.

WHERE COULD ENGLISH LITERATURE TAKE ME?

The English Literature course will not only provide all students with a superb grounding for further study at university but will also give them a taste of the wealth of literature out there to be discovered.

“George Eliot said that the function of the novel is to extend sympathy: to make you feel other people’s pain, or to make you capable of feeling other people’s pain. Literature doesn’t make you a better person. It doesn’t necessarily make you a happy person. But it does refine your feelings.”

John Sutherland, Professor of English Literature, University College London

* One who is extremely well acquainted with literature and takes every opportunity to remind the world of this fact.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

“Plans to protect air and water, wilderness are in fact plans to protect man.” Stewart Udall

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 GCSE IN ANY SCIENCE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr L Blake

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7447

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE?

A-Level Environmental Science is a dynamic subject that explores the systems shaping our planet. It combines concepts from biology, chemistry, physics, geography, and earth science to understand how natural processes interact and how human activity influences them. You will learn how to analyse information from many sources and disciplines to form workable solutions to human and environmental problems. You will also learn how changes in one part of the environment can have wide-reaching effects.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST?

A good environmental scientist needs to have a passion for the environment and the ability to analyse data and evaluate case studies. Students who enjoy a multi-disciplinary approach to learning and want to make a difference to how society extracts what it needs from the environment and subsequently how to reduce human impact on the environment they must exploit.

A background in geography and biology will be helpful but not essential. Students studying this subject should be interested in reading the news daily to be able to relate to global environmental and sustainability issues. This is a great accompaniment to A-Levels in geography, biology, physics and maths and develops key skills including communication, teamwork and critical thinking.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE?

The course covers a wide range of topics including:

- Atmospheric and hydrospheric systems
- Geology, mining and soil science
- Conservation planning
- Agriculture and forestry
- Fishing and aquaculture
- Energy extraction technologies
- Pollution
- Sustainability

You'll also develop skills in statistics and data analysis, evidence evaluation, and proposing solutions to environmental challenges.

WHERE COULD ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE TAKE ME?

A qualification in environmental science is a great foundation to whole host of different pursuits. With a growing consciousness around the world regarding the impact that we have on our environment, we are seeing more and more people looking to

make a difference in the world and pursue a career in environment sector. Alongside jobs with the environment at their core, most companies now employ people to guide them to a more sustainable future. A good understanding of how humans interact with the natural environment ultimately makes you more employable. An A-Level in Environment Science will be a huge help to university courses in geography, sustainability, biological sciences, ecological sciences, marine biology and many other scientific fields. There are many careers that environmental science can lead to.

They include:

- Environmental Scientist
- Environmental Consultant
- Water Quality Scientist
- Environmental Engineer
- Recycling Officer
- Environmental Education Officer
- Marine Biologist
- Nature Conservation Officer
- Sustainability Consultant
- Sustainability Coordinator

Ultimately a degree or A-Level in Environmental Science provides a range of transferable skills - so really it is up to you which area of work you choose to go into afterwards.

FRENCH

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE FRENCH

HEAD OF MFL: Mr W Alexander

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: French 9FR0;

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL FRENCH?

A Level French involves studying not only the French language at a deeper level, but involves study of the arts, culture, politics and society of the French-speaking world. At A Level, there are three examination papers:

Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation into English

Paper 2: Written response to film and literary work and translation into French

Paper 3: Speaking

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LINGUIST?

The basic criterion is a good grade at GCSE. The language that you will be reading and hearing at AS is significantly more difficult than at GCSE, so it is essential that you have a solid

base from which to work. The second criterion is enthusiasm. To be a really successful linguist, you have to go beyond the work that you will do in class, and make every effort to hear and see as much of your chosen language as you can. Luckily, there are lots of ways in which you can do this. The school runs exchange programmes for students in Year 12, so you will have the opportunity to spend some time in France or in Germany. You will have a regular individual lesson with the French or German assistant, and there are also lots of resources available on the Internet which you will be able to use in your own time. The third criterion is a capacity for hard work. You will need to be prepared to spend time at home learning vocabulary, practising grammar, preparing oral presentations, and writing essays.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN FRENCH?

As more than 200 million people speak French on the five continents, our aim is to share with students our passion for French and the French-speaking world. In a globalised world where French is the second most widely learned language after English, the ability to speak French is a huge advantage on the international job market.

We encourage our students to communicate with one another in French, to engage with authentic materials, to understand native speakers and write and speak in extended sequences to express themselves. You will study a film and a work of literature, and look in detail at a period of history (the Occupation and Resistance in the second World War). As you cover these cultural topics, you will continue to broaden your vocabulary and deepen your knowledge of grammar. By the end of the two-year course, you should be able to understand and communicate with native speakers of your chosen language speaking at their normal speed.

WHERE COULD LANGUAGES TAKE ME?

Languages count as enabling or facilitating subjects, according to Russell Group Universities. They are always a valuable thing to have on your CV, as employers respect them just as much as university admissions tutors do. The skills which you will develop include competent communication and presentation skills, the ability to gather information, assess and interpret it, analysis, evaluation and research skills, apply problem solving strategies, use critical thinking, creativity, to name but a few. All this fosters a more developed cultural awareness and global mindedness, useful perspectives to have in today's globalised world. According to the government's own statistics, Britain's economy is being seriously harmed because of a shortage of foreign language skills: it costs the country 3.5% of GDP every year. Therefore, an applicant with a good grasp of a language is much more desirable than his or her monolingual counterpart.

Our A Level French students play an active role as Language Ambassadors, acquiring very useful soft skills. They run clubs and competitions, support younger year groups in lessons and in lunchtime sessions - another exciting opportunity for our A Level French students at The Bishop's Stortford High School.

The rewards for all your hard work are significant. There are few more satisfying experiences than being able to travel to a foreign country and communicate naturally and easily with the people there. If you wish to go to university, you will find that, in addition to degrees in languages, there are opportunities to combine languages with almost every other subject. Languages open up the world, and as a linguist, you will find that your experiences of foreign travel, and your job opportunities, are immeasurably enhanced.

GEOGRAPHY

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future.”

Michael Palin, Former President of the Royal Geographical Society.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE GEOGRAPHY.

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs Lisa Butwell

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS CODE: 601/8417/6 (9GEO)

EXAMINATIONS: 80%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 20%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL GEOGRAPHY?

The world in which we live is rapidly changing. A-Level Geography allows us to understand how and why it is changing and how we can respond and adapt to such change, through examination of contemporary case studies and ideas. Geographical issues are increasingly part of local, national and international news agendas and debates; issues such as geophysical hazards, climate change, globalisation, migration, urbanisation, extreme weather, energy security, water conflicts, global superpowers, and development, to name but a few! During this A-Level Geography course you will study all the above issues – and many more besides. There has never been a better, nor more relevant time, to study Geography.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD GEOGRAPHER?

Whilst studying Geography, you will develop communication skills, literacy and numeracy, IT literacy, spatial awareness, team working, problem solving and environmental awareness. To be a good geographer, you need to be curious; to be open to having your preconceptions about the world challenged; to want to develop an opinion and to be keen to engage in debate about the future. Through this course, you will grow as an independent thinker and as an informed and engaged citizen, who understands the role and importance of geography as one of the key disciplines relevant to understanding the world's changing peoples, places and environments.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN GEOGRAPHY?

The A-Level will be examined through 4 components: 3 papers and 1 non-examination assessment.

1: Dynamic Landscapes, Physical Systems and Sustainability (30%)

Tectonic Processes and Hazards; Coastal Landscapes; the Water Cycle and Water Insecurity; the Carbon Cycle and Energy Security; Climate Change Futures

2: Dynamic Places, Human Systems and Geopolitics (30%)

Globalisation; Shaping Places; Superpowers; Global Development and Connections

3: Synoptic Assessment (20%)

This paper brings together your understanding of geography from across the course to examine a specified place. It will link to themes e.g. players, attitudes and actions; futures and uncertainties.

4: Independent Investigation (Coursework 20%)

This involves 4 days of fieldwork over two years (we visit London and Dorset) and is an opportunity for you to specialise in an area that interests you. You will define and investigate a question of your choice, then collect qualitative and quantitative data, and present, analyse and evaluate it, in order to develop your geographical understanding.

WHERE COULD GEOGRAPHY TAKE ME?

A successful A-Level geographer will leave with a broad and detailed understanding of key national and global issues, as well as the capability to successfully acquire, present and analyse data and write academic essays. As well as conducting fieldwork investigations at the coast, we regularly visit the Royal Geographical Society to attend workshops and public debates.

It is often said that Geography 'opens doors' as its multidisciplinary nature enhances understanding in many academic fields and it complements subjects including Politics, History, Economics, Business Studies, and Biology to name a few. Its subject matter offers a sound basis for a variety of career opportunities and the particular skills acquired in the study of Geography are highly sought after by employers in Research & Consultancy, Finance & Business, Modern Industry, Government & The Civil Service (across all departments, in the UK and overseas), Law, Journalism and Science. There are also a wide variety of geography-related careers; please speak to your teachers for further information.

GERMAN

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE GERMAN

HEAD OF MFL: Mr W Alexander

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: German 9GN0

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL GERMAN?

A Level German involves studying not only the German language at a much deeper level, but involves study of the arts, culture, politics and society of the German-speaking world. At A Level, there are three examination papers:

Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation into English

Paper 2: Written response to film and literary work and translation into German

Paper 3: Speaking

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LINGUIST?

The basic criterion is a good grade at GCSE. The language that you will be reading and hearing at AS is significantly more

difficult than at GCSE, so it is essential that you have a solid base from which to work. The second criterion is enthusiasm. To be a really successful linguist, you have to go beyond the work that you will do in class, and make every effort to hear and see as much of your chosen language as you can. Luckily, there are lots of ways in which you can do this. The school runs exchange programmes for students in Year 12, so you will have the opportunity to spend some time in France or in Germany. You will have a regular individual lesson with the French or German assistant, and there are also lots of resources available on the Internet which you will be able to use in your own time. The third criterion is a capacity for hard work. You will need to be prepared to spend time at home learning vocabulary, practising grammar, preparing oral presentations, and writing essays.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN GERMAN?

With the German-speaking world's significant role on the world stage, our aim is to share with students our passion for these fascinating places. In a recent CBI survey published in The Telegraph, UK business managers rated German the most useful foreign language in a future job. We encourage our students to communicate with one another in German, to engage with authentic materials, to understand native speakers and write and speak in extended sequences to express themselves. You will study a film and a work of literature, and look in detail at a period of history (the German Democratic Republic and the Reunification of Germany). As you cover these cultural topics, you will continue to broaden your vocabulary and deepen your knowledge of grammar. By the end of the two-year course, you should be able to understand and communicate with native speakers of your chosen language speaking at their normal speed.

WHERE COULD LANGUAGES TAKE ME?

Languages count as enabling or facilitating subjects, according to Russell Group Universities. They are always a valuable thing to have on your CV, as employers respect them just as much as university admissions tutors do. The skills which you will develop include competent communication and presentation skills, the ability to gather information, assess and interpret it, analysis, evaluation and research skills, apply problem solving strategies, use critical thinking, creativity, to name but a few. All this fosters a more developed cultural awareness and global mindedness, useful perspectives to have in today's globalised world. According to the government's own statistics, Britain's economy is being seriously harmed because of a shortage of foreign language skills: it costs the country 3.5% of GDP every year. Therefore, an applicant with a good grasp of a language is much more desirable than his or her monolingual counterpart.

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HISTORY

“If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and its development.” Aristotle

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE HISTORY

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs E Ellen

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: H505

EXAMINATIONS: 80%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: A Personal Study in Year 13 makes up 20% of overall A-Level grade

WHAT IS A-LEVEL HISTORY?

Over the two-year course students complete four modules, which not only focus on different topics but also develop different historical skills. These are likely to include the following units:

Unit 1: British Period Study and Enquiry – 25%
Y101 - Alfred and the Making of England 871-1016
(Specific Document Enquiry on Alfred the Great)

Unit 2: Non British Period Study – 15%
Y212 – The American Revolution 1740–1796

Unit 3: Thematic Study and Historical Interpretations – 40%
Y318 - Russia and its Rulers 1855–1964

Unit 4: Coursework – 20%
Y4 - A Personal Study on a topic of the student's choice
 (A single 3000-4000 word essay which must include the use of primary evidence and historical interpretations)

In short, History is a way of thinking about the world – a subject which combines academic rigour and hard work with genuine fun and intrigue! It offers the opportunity to study fascinating characters and events from the past, allowing students to immerse themselves in periods and places that are both completely different, yet fundamentally similar, to today.

In Year 12, students analyse two contrasting nations from two contrasting periods – both vital in understanding our modern world, and fundamental human ideas about ethnicity, power and liberty. We delve into the concept of revolution, exploring the fascinating story of the American War of Independence, and the birth of the United States as we know it today. At the same time, we also investigate the late Anglo-Saxon period, and the bloody conflict with the Vikings from Scandinavia – a story that offers a unique perspective on the emergence of English identity and England as a nation, both pertinent issues in the modern British political landscape.

In Year 13, we then study one of the most pivotal events in the C20th – the Russian Revolution, from the fervour in St Petersburg in the early C20th to the intrigues of the Cold War and Nikita Khrushchev's fall from power. We explore the impact of the Bolshevik seizure of power in shaping events and ideologies across the world, a critical topic in the modern geopolitical landscape. There is also the opportunity to choose an individual enquiry on a historical topic entirely of the student's choice, as part of our coursework unit. Past foci have ranged from the Spartans, to the slave trade, to the Suffragettes – the choice is yours.

We also offer a range of additional opportunities including a Sixth Form Discussion group, an ever-growing range of day trips, e.g. to the musical 'Hamilton' or the British Library and the chance to attend lectures by eminent academic historians from Cambridge and London.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD HISTORIAN?

The successful History student will combine a thirst for knowledge with an inquisitive and questioning mind.

They will be excited by unravelling the mysteries of the past. They should be willing to read around the subject and must enjoy challenging ideas and developing their own arguments. Ideally, they should enjoy the process of writing essays – embracing them as opportunities to develop an analytical response to a complex issue. Above all a good historian is someone who wants to ask “why?”

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN HISTORY?

As well as an insight into the past, and therefore a greater understanding of the present, History aims to provide students with analytical skills which can be applied in many varied contexts. A good historian will learn to understand, appreciate and evaluate different perspectives and interpretations. They will also learn to research and think independently, develop their own arguments and justify their opinions with both evidence and reason.

WHERE COULD HISTORY TAKE ME?

History is easily combinable with a number of subjects at TBSHS and beyond, including Politics, English Literature, or Psychology. However, many students also combine History with STEM subjects, as the use of evidence, logical thinking and academic approach are very similar. Careers that can follow a History degree are hugely varied, including Law, Journalism, Business Management (10% of the directors of FTSE 100 companies have History degrees), PR/Marketing, Politics, the Civil Service, Diplomatic Services and Consultancy. However, as a highly valued academic discipline, a strong History degree opens many doors in unexpected areas.

MATHEMATICS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE MATHEMATICS (A GRADE 7 IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED; EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS CAN SUCCEED WITH A GRADE 6 AT GCSE BUT THIS IS UNUSUAL)

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr B Boxall

EXAMINATION BOARD: (OCR) MEI

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: H640

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL MATHEMATICS?

The course covers topics from Pure Mathematics (61% - 67%) and both Mechanics (15% - 17%) and Statistics (18% - 22%). Students are also required to become familiar with a specific large data set which will be made available in advance of the final examinations.

Throughout the course students are required to demonstrate the following overarching knowledge and skills: mathematical argument, language and proof and mathematical problem solving, using a problem solving cycle and modelling. Knowledge is developed of the methods of how to do Mathematics. Calculators and formula books will not provide easy answers but understanding how we can use technology, in particular graphing tools and spreadsheets, will permeate the subject.

The course is assessed via three 2 hour exams:

Paper 1: Pure + Mechanics	100 Marks
Paper 2: Pure + Statistics	100 Marks
Paper 3: Pure + Comprehension	75 Marks

Papers 1 & 2 have a section A of shorter questions with minimal reading and interpretation.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MATHEMATICIAN?

Successful A-Level mathematicians are prepared to persevere at problems, using other textbooks and web based resources outside of lessons when they need further guidance. Questions are multi-stage and it is essential to develop the ability to produce a logically progressive answer. The ability to manipulate fractions and algebraic expressions successfully is a key requirement at A-Level, so students selecting the course will need to be competent at this. Students studying the course having achieved a GCSE grade 6 would **need to be extremely confident in their algebra skills**. All students are expected to complete our "Bridging Unit" towards the end of their summer holiday and show their work to their new teacher during the first week of A-Level study. This work forms part of the preparation for an early Algebra Test in September.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN MATHEMATICS?

Pure Mathematics is the methods and techniques which underpin the study of all other areas of mathematics. This includes proof, algebra, trigonometry, calculus, and vectors. Mechanics is the mathematics used to study the physical world, modelling the motion of objects and the forces acting on them. This includes moments, where the turning effect of a force is considered. Statistics involves statistical sampling, data presentation and probability, all of which follow on from topics

met at GCSE, leading to the study of statistical distributions with special properties, such as the Binomial Distribution.

Sixth Form mathematicians are encouraged to attend conferences; for example, the University of London's 'Maths in Action'. Here students learn about topics varying from the mathematical modelling behind juggling to the maths in quantum physics' string theory. A broader understanding of the subject is also encouraged by way of a reading list.

WHERE COULD MATHEMATICS TAKE ME?

A-Level Mathematics is an excellent basis for a wide range of university courses. The skills developed through the study of Mathematics are in high demand from employers and universities. In addition to developing the ability to solve problems and think logically, the study of Mathematics provides opportunities to develop team-working skills, resilience, effective communication of complex ideas and the ability to use your own initiative.

A-Level Mathematics supports the study of a wide range of other A-Level subjects. Physics, Chemistry and Biology rely on good algebraic and graphical skills, statistical techniques and the use of a range of functions including logarithms and trigonometry. In addition, Economics, Psychology, Business, Computing and Geography all benefit from students having fluent and confident numerical, algebraic, graphical and statistical skills.

A good number of students have gone on to study Mathematics at university, including both Oxford and Cambridge. Other destinations include Mathematics and Engineering at Nottingham, as well as Economics, Biology, Law and French at various other universities. Please look also at Further Maths especially if you may want to study a Maths-based degree.

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 8 IN GCSE MATHEMATICS

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr B Boxall

EXAMINATION BOARD: (OCR) MEI

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: H645

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL FURTHER MATHEMATICS?

The Mathematics A-Level covers topics from Pure Mathematics (66²/₃%) and both Mechanics (16²/₃%) and Statistics (16²/₃%). The course is assessed via four exams:

Paper 1: Core Pure	160 mins	144 Marks
Paper 2: Mechanics	75 mins	60 Marks
Paper 3: Statistics	75 mins	60 Marks
Paper 4: Extra Pure	75 mins	60 Marks

WHAT MAKES A GOOD FURTHER MATHEMATICIAN?

A good further mathematician has all the skills of a normal mathematician but is likely to be sharper at picking up new skills as well as being able to recall a wide range of skills and select the best method to solve a complicated problem. The student will also have a wide range of other interests to which to relate the abstract skills, such as string theory, number theory, computer programming or economics, to name but a few possibilities. A practical and logical mind, together with a willingness to persevere, is essential.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN FURTHER MATHEMATICS?

Topic areas studied within Pure Mathematics include complex numbers, which allow the solution of a range of equations that would otherwise have no solutions, through the introduction of 'imaginary' numbers, and matrices which consist of grids of numbers that can be used to represent transformations and are used to solve simultaneous equations amongst many other uses.

Other areas of Pure Mathematics are also covered such as polar co-ordinates, differential equations and hyperbolic functions. Each of these builds on earlier topics and encourages the development of a wider understanding of the ways in which mathematical topics are interconnected.

In Mechanics students will learn basic principles of forces and their moments, work and energy, impulse and momentum and centres of mass. These are used to model various situations including: rigid bodies in equilibrium; particles moving under gravity on a surface: bodies colliding with direct impact.

In Statistics situations are modelled by discrete random variables; the suitability of models is tested using χ^2 tests. Bivariate data are investigated, with tests for correlation and association and modelling using regression.

Extra Pure Mathematics offers the chance to take ones understanding of matrices further, explore multivariable calculus, learn the fundamentals of group theory and see how differential equations methods can help setup and solve recurrence relations.

WHERE COULD FURTHER MATHEMATICS TAKE ME?

Further Mathematics provides a great opportunity for enthusiastic mathematicians to broaden and deepen their subject knowledge. It is also a fantastic qualification for those students who love mathematics and want to devote more time to the studying wider aspects of the subject.

Further Mathematics can lead wherever you want, but some top universities are increasingly preferring students to study Further Maths for courses such as Physics, Engineering and other Maths-related subjects as well as the obvious choice of Maths itself. We offer STEP Maths support for students considering Oxbridge, Warwick or other top universities.

MEDIA STUDIES

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE MEDIA STUDIES OR, IF NOT STUDIED, GRADE 5 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr C MacLeod

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDUQAS

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: A690QS

EXAMINATIONS: 70% (2 x 2hrs)

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 30%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES?

The mass media bombards us with messages every minute of our waking lives. It is also one of the modern world's growth employment sectors. Media students analyse the media; develop and formulate their understanding of the media and its influential role in today's society. Students study the relationship between producers and consumers of media. Knowledge and understanding of this relationship is gained through close examination of ten media forms: film, magazines, television, radio, online media, newspapers, advertising, marketing, music videos and video games. By applying theories and their concepts to the media framework of language, representation and audience, over time, students gain a wider appreciation of the power and impact of the media in today's society. In practical production coursework, students learn how to use creative software (web design and Photoshop) to create their own media products.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MEDIA STUDENT?

A good Media student will be an avid consumer of contemporary and older media texts and will be keen to develop opinions on relevant topics and deepen that with academic research. They will also be an active producer of Media texts, developing a personal creative Media portfolio as the course develops. A willingness to question the status quo and explore modern culture and society will be very useful.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN MEDIA STUDIES?

You will develop your essay writing ability by moving towards much greater independence in research and, by bringing secondary academic expert opinion into your work, you will advance your own writing towards undergraduate standard. You will also have to learn to work well in teams. You will learn much about practical Media production, and have the chance to create using video, online software and print.

WHERE COULD MEDIA STUDIES TAKE ME?

Media Studies is a subject that is easily combinable with a number of subjects at TBSHS and beyond. English Literature, History, Psychology, Drama, Music, DT and Business Studies are some of the possible complementary subjects. The possibilities at university are almost infinite, allowing access to all straight Media and Film Studies degrees, but also to areas like Advertising/Marketing, PR, Cultural Studies, Sociology and many more. Students who want to do practical production degrees are also able to do so with Media A-Level. Past TBSHS Media students' names now appear regularly in TV programme credits. You will also have many extra opportunities to add to your own portfolio with whole school film projects.

"The media is the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses."

Malcom X

MUSIC

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE MUSIC

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr J Emery

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 9MU0

EXAMINATIONS: 40%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 60%

Performing 35%

Composing 25%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL MUSIC?

A-Level Music involves studying music at a deeper level. It consists of three elements: Performance, Composition, and Appraising. You will plan and perform a 10-minute recital on your chosen instrument, write your own compositions, learn how to write in the styles of other composers, and study several key pieces of music in diverse styles and from a wide historical period. The listening exam will have a focus on the Western Classical Tradition, alongside Pop Music and another area of study of your choice, from a given selection including Jazz, Film Music and Music for Theatre.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MUSICIAN?

A keen and open ear is required if you are to get the most out of A-Level Music; a willingness to listen to music that may be alien to you; an urge to analyse a variety of music and use this creatively for your own compositions; and most importantly, to avail yourself of every playing opportunity in and out of school. It is recommended that those students embarking on this course have achieved at least Grade 5 or equivalent on their instrument and have a good understanding of music theory up to and including Grade 5 content.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN MUSIC?

The set works are in a variety of styles and from a range of different periods in music history. The study of these pieces will inform and nurture you as both composer and performer. The course is essentially creative, develops analytical skills, demands excellent time-management skills, requires dedication to practising an instrument, and fosters talent.

WHERE COULD MUSIC TAKE ME?

The school has many high-level extra-curricular ensembles through which to further your performing experience. These include Chamber Choir, Concert Band, Swing band, String Ensemble, Brass Group, and various smaller ensembles. There are at least two concerts per term including a two-week Music Festival, where the coveted prize of Musician of the Year is awarded. Music naturally combines well with any other selection of A Levels, regardless of your intended focus for post-18 study or employment. Many past students have gone on to read Music or Popular Music at university or music college, whilst others have left to study Medicine, Law and other seemingly unrelated degrees. An A-Level in Music demands a wide variety of transferable skills, all of which universities and employers regard very highly. The academic excellence, vast extra-curricular programme and varied musical life at The Bishop's Stortford High School ideally prepares students for these exciting options.

"Your ears will always lead you correctly, but you must know why."
Anton Webern (1883-1945)

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE MUSIC

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr J Emery

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 9MT0

EXAMINATIONS: 60%

Listening & Analysing Examination 25%
Producing & Analysing Examination 35%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 40%

Recording 20%
Technology-based Composition 20%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL MUSIC TECHNOLOGY?

This subject provides an excellent opportunity for creative musicians to develop their composition, production and performance skills. The syllabus includes arrangement, composition, recording, midi, synthesis, sequencing, sampling, and session based performance. Students will also develop mixing and mastering skills for different production scenarios and target audiences.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MUSIC TECHNOLOGIST?

The successful Music Technologist will be a self-motivated and creative musician who is open to new musical ideas and genres. They will be musical, inquisitive, resourceful and organised as well as having an interest in how technology has shaped modern music. Music Technology develops a strong sense of team learning, communication, cooperation and creativity amongst its cohort.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN MUSIC TECHNOLOGY?

Many of the key skills any musician, engineer or producer will need in the workplace. You will learn how to use a wide range of equipment and software including Cubase and Reason, using a range of virtual synthesisers, samplers and drum machines. Our studio is equipped with an Allen & Heath ZED16R desk and a full range of software synthesisers, effects and dynamic processing applications. You will become proficient in the use of all of the equipment along with our new music technology suite. Students will also study the workings of the music industry along with contract and business skills that will benefit the working musician.

WHERE COULD MUSIC TECHNOLOGY TAKE ME?

Music Technology can be combined with Music, Physics, Maths, Drama and/or Media Studies providing students with a broad skill set for the next stage of their career path. TBSHS Music Technology students have gained employment in the fields of composition, production, lighting, session work, acoustic design, theatre, studio and broadcasting. This course is an ideal route to Higher Education and a potential career in this field.

"After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music."

Aldous Huxley

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION OR, IF NOT STUDIED AT GCSE, A 5 IN GCSE BIOLOGY SEPARATE SCIENCE OR A 5 IN ALL OF YOUR BIOLOGY MODULES IN A COMBINED SCIENCE GCSE QUALIFICATION

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr P J Harris

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: H555

EXAMINATIONS: 70%

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 30% Practical Assessment

WHAT IS A-LEVEL PHYSICAL EDUCATION?

Physical Education offers an exciting opportunity for students who have a passion for sport and want to understand how to improve performance through theory. The theory aspect of the course is broken down into 6 main areas which are examined through two written papers. The areas of study are: Applied Anatomy & Physiology, Exercise Physiology, Biomechanics including Technology, Skill Acquisition, Sport Psychology and Sport and Society. As a result of studying the above sections of the course, you will gain an understanding of how the body works during sport, how skills and techniques are acquired and utilised within sport and also the current issues surrounding sport. For the practical assessment you will be expected to perform one sport and an oral piece of coursework about your sport which has 30% weighting of the overall course.

There are also a wide range of competitive opportunities in athletics, cricket, cross-country, football, golf, netball and rugby all of which we compete at on a local and national level.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENT?

The successful Physical Education student will possess a passion for all sports and drive to improve their knowledge further. As the course is varied in terms of the theoretical side, the student should also have an interest in science and also in all aspects of current sporting affairs. The student should also be able to perform at a high level in at least two sports/activities ideally competing outside of school on a regular basis for a club. The student should also be self-motivated and strive to challenge themselves as there are aspects of the course which will be completely new concepts.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION?

Specific subject knowledge is valuable in its own right, but Physical Education has strong transferable links with Biology, Physics and Psychology. Students will develop a wide range of subject knowledge from a range of disciplines and improve their exam technique as a result of regular testing.

There are also many opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. At TBSHS we run an extensive extra-curricular programme for the Sixth Form including enrichment on a Wednesday afternoon which gives students the opportunity to develop sporting skills further in a range of sports. There are also a wide range of competitive opportunities in basketball, cricket, cross-country, football, netball, rugby, squash and swimming all of which we compete at on a local and national level.

WHERE COULD PHYSICAL EDUCATION TAKE ME?

There are a range of opportunities for students studying A-Level PE. In recent years many have gone on to further education at institutions such as Loughborough University, Leeds Beckett, Nottingham Trent and University of Northumbria to study a range of sports courses. Several students have chosen to pursue a career upon finishing the course; sports coaching and sports management are popular choices, although some students choose career paths that are not directly related to sports, for example, quantity surveying. There are a whole range of opportunities available to a student studying A-Level PE with many of the skills they develop being highly transferable to both the workplace and further education.

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science.” Albert Einstein

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN PHYSICS (SEPARATE SCIENCE) OR A 6 IN ALL OF YOUR PHYSICS MODULES IN A COMBINED SCIENCE GCSE QUALIFICATION. GRADE 6 IN GCSE MATHEMATICS

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr D J Hows

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7408

EXAMINATIONS: 100% (also included is a practical endorsement award)

WHAT IS A-LEVEL PHYSICS?

Physics provides the perfect opportunity to experience the mysterious; A-Level Physics explores everything from the very smallest to the very biggest; it is, quite simply, the study of the universe. The AQA specification has been written in consultation with universities to ensure that it allows students to develop the skills that the universities want to see. The course is designed to support and inspire students, nurture a passion for physics and lay the groundwork for further study in science or engineering.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PHYSICIST?

Successful physics students are those who heed the advice of Albert Einstein: ‘The important thing is not to stop questioning.’ Physics is a subject that requires a vivid imagination, a sense of wonder and the ability to ask ‘why?’ A good physicist will never expect answers but instead will always be thinking of the next question they can ask. In addition, physicists need to be able to describe with accuracy and elegance what they observe; often this is most easily achieved using the language of mathematics, so a good physicist needs to be confident with basic mathematical techniques. Practical skills are also extremely important; the ability to devise, carry out and reproduce experiments is at the very heart of what makes a good physicist.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN PHYSICS?

The course will take you from the fundamental building blocks of matter – electrons and quarks – through the larger scale physics of the situations of every-day life, and out into the depths of the universe in astrophysics.

AREAS OF STUDY:

Year 12:

1. Measurements and their Errors
2. Particles and Radiation
3. Waves
4. Mechanics and Materials
5. Electricity

Year 13:

6. Further Mechanics and Thermal Physics
7. Fields and their Consequences
8. Nuclear Physics
9. Astrophysics

Practical Assessment

There is a series of twelve standard practical tasks that all A-Level students undertake (six in Year 12 and six in Year 13). Students have to design and carry out careful experiments and have to interpret and analyse data to reach reliable conclusions. Candidates are awarded with a practical endorsement at the end of the A-Level course.

WHERE COULD PHYSICS TAKE ME?

Take Physics at A-Level if you are ready to ask questions about the way our universe works. Be prepared to be challenged – there are some very difficult ideas to think about. Physics combines well with any number of subjects; the obvious ones like the other sciences and Mathematics, and the not so obvious – Geography, Design Technology, Music Technology and Theatre Studies. Many of our students go on to study Physics and related subjects at university – Durham, York, Leeds, Exeter, Lancaster, Oxford and Cambridge have all hosted TBSHS Physics students in recent years. And our physicists have ended up in a wide variety of careers; university lecturers and researchers, Formula One engineers, TV cameramen, doctors, lighting designers and even teachers.

POLITICS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 5 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr R D Conquest

EXAMINATION BOARD: Pearson Edexcel

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 9PLO

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

Component 1: UK Politics (Paper code: 9PLO/01)

Component 2: UK Government (Paper code: 9PLO/02)

Component 3: US Comparative Politics

(Paper code: 9PLO/3A)

"In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics.' All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia." George Orwell

WHAT IS A-LEVEL POLITICS?

Politics is the study of how the mechanics of government work and how competing ideas affect the decisions made in our interest. For example, we study the ideas of the main political parties as well as looking at the importance of parliament within the political system.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD POLITICS STUDENT?

A good Politics student is someone who has strong interest in current affairs and has a desire to further that knowledge. You will be interested in the fundamental choices that are made which shape our society.

You may have a particular interest in a certain area (e.g. law and order, environment, health, the economy). You will also enjoy putting your own views forward and being challenged by those who disagree.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN POLITICS?

Component 1: UK Politics

1. Political Participation: democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media.
2. Core Political Ideas: conservatism, liberalism, socialism.

Component 2: UK Government

1. UK Government: the Constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and Executive, relationships between the branches.
2. Optional Political Ideas: feminism.

Component 3: Comparative Politics

US Politics: the US Constitution and federalism, US congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court, democracy and participation, civil rights.

WHERE COULD POLITICS TAKE ME?

A wide variety of career opportunities are available to those who study Politics at a higher level. A degree in Politics will allow you to seek employment in a range of politically related environments including the Civil Service, Local Government, the European Commission or working for a political party, pressure group or think tank. Politics is a highly attractive qualification for entering education to teach core subjects such as Citizenship at primary and secondary level or Politics at A-Level. A popular route for Politics graduates is to work for the print or broadcast media.

However, a degree in Politics does not exclude you from pursuing a career that is not directly related to what you have studied. The study of Politics will allow you to acquire a range of key skills and attributes that will be highly prized by employers in management, marketing, public relations, retail, accountancy or banking.

PSYCHOLOGY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE PSYCHOLOGY OR, IF NOT STUDIED, A 6 IN GCSE ENGLISH (LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE)

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs M Kelly

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7182

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

“Free will is just an illusion.”

Sigmund Freud

WHAT IS A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY?

Psychology is often defined as “the scientific study of mind and behaviour”. A level Psychology examines behaviour from a range of perspectives: what is the stimulus, what is the response and what are the mediational thought processes that motivated that behaviour. It requires extensive analytical skills and encourages learners to question, rather than label human behaviour, supporting those arguments using a range of scientific evidence.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PSYCHOLOGIST?

A good Psychologist is a critical thinker. They are not individuals who accept everything at face value, but will question the motives and rationale of human decision making. They are motivated to learn new and complex terminology and apply their learning to real life scenarios on a daily basis. They are also trained to be good listeners.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN PSYCHOLOGY?

The A-Level will be examined through 3 components

Paper1: Social Psychology, Memory, Attachment and Clinical Psychology and Mental Health, (33%)

Paper2: Approaches to Psychology, Biopsychology and Research Methods (33%)

Paper 3: Issues and Debates, Relationships, Schizophrenia and Forensics Psychology (33%)

WHERE COULD PSYCHOLOGY TAKE ME?

Psychology complements many subjects, especially science-based ones such as Biology. Due to the heavy focus on literacy skills, it can also be studied alongside Social Science subjects such as Sociology, Religious Studies and Government and Politics.

A degree in Psychology is one of the most popular options at university. It can be studied alone or with a range of subjects such as Criminology or Sociology.

It can lead to many career options such as Clinical Psychology, Educational Psychology, Occupational Psychology, Forensic Psychology and Sports Psychology

If you do not wish to pursue a career, you will learn a lot of skills which can improve your employability ratings such as debating, analytical and literacy skills.

“Dreams are the royal road to the unconscious mind.” Sigmund Freud

"I loved Religious Studies at GCSE. I studied Philosophy at A-Level. I looked for a degree that would combine the subjects of Philosophy and Theology because they were thinking, "ethics" and moral subjects, which I really found interesting. My Politics and Theology degree from Bristol University has stood me in good stead for my job. Religious Studies really encourages critical thinking, which is important to you as a person and also as a member of society. It is a fantastic subject. Humanity is at the heart of Religious Studies and what guides us and helps us makes life-changing decisions." Isabel Webster, message to TBSHS when working on Sky News.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES, IF STUDIED, AND GRADE 5 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr S G Etheridge

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: H573

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

WHAT IS A-LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS?

In Religious Studies: Theology, Philosophy & Ethics, ethicists, philosophers, religious believers, agnostics and atheists debate, discuss and write about "The Big Questions" of the world, life and beyond.

"This subject is an amazing subject to take as it challenges your thinking and outlook on life in an unexpected but positive way. Such a way of thinking is advanced and can most likely be applied to your other subjects making this such a valuable yet rewarding subject."

Brittany, Year 13 student.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD STUDENT IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS?

A good Religious Studies: Theology, Philosophy & Ethics student will be a student who is interested in life, society and the world, asking deep and meaningful questions. They will wish to engage with influential and inspirational cultures, ideas and thinkers. They will discuss, read, make notes about and write essays on these engaging and timeless aspects as they develop the key skills of knowledge, understanding and evaluation.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS?

Assessment occurs in three examinations of two hours each where each student chooses three questions from a possible four:

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion: Classical and modern arguments for and against God's existence and life after death from philosophers, theologians, scientists and psychologists

Paper 2: Ethics and Religion: Ethical, non-religious, political and religious moral theories and issues such as: sexual ethics; euthanasia; business ethics; and conscience

Paper 3: Developments in Christian Thought: Christian beliefs, practices and thinkers in history and today; the revolutionary life of Jesus; how Christianity has responded to atheism, feminism, marxism, politics, psychology and secularism; how Christianity links to different religions; and how Christian theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer took a stand against Nazi evil

WHERE COULD RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS?

Religious Studies: Theology, Philosophy & Ethics, is a respected academic discipline both at university, where it is the oldest subject, and also in the work place for it explores "The Big Questions" of life and people. It naturally connects to all other subjects as it reflects on those subjects explicitly and implicitly. As an accountant at an international company said in an e-mail to the school: *"In a prospective candidate, I look for the ability to work in a team. My company believes a diverse group of people working together enhances performance as a business. The collective skills, knowledge and background of our people are the strength behind our success. Religious Studies Advanced Level, with its understanding of different cultures, peoples and ethical decisions, would be a very good preparation to develop such skills of the workplace."*

"An understanding of morality and religion provides us all with a sense of right and wrong in the decisions we take later in life. Most religions enjoy a version of the Ten Commandments and these form an excellent basis by which to live. Whether God is involved is to me is an optional extra." Jon Snow, Channel 4 News Presenter & journalist - E-mail to TBSHS

SOCIOLOGY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 6 IN GCSE SOCIOLOGY IF STUDIED, AND GRADE 5 IN GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mrs M Kelly

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

A-LEVEL SYLLABUS: 7192

EXAMINATIONS: 100%

"We are social creatures to the inmost centre of our being. The notion that one can begin anything at all from scratch, free from the past, or unindebted to others, could not conceivably be more wrong." Karl Popper

WHAT IS A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY?

Sociology is the study of society - how people interact in groups. A-Level Sociology examines social behaviour from a variety of perspectives: how it originates and then develops, and the ways people are organised into groups according to distinctions such as class, gender and race.

A-Level Sociology also looks at the institutions and forces which shape and are shaped by groups within a society, such as the media, religion and education.

A-Level Sociology focuses on contemporary society, providing an awareness of the importance of social structure and actions in explaining social forces and issues.

Some questions A-Level Sociology covers include:

- Why do boys underachieve in the education system?
- Why are black people five time more likely to be stopped and searched?
- Why are women more religious when religion oppresses them?

A-Level Sociology helps you to develop knowledge and understanding of the essential sociological theories and methods (such as Functionalism, Marxism and Feminism) with which sociologists make sense of the diversity of societies, and of the forces which have and will continue to shape social change.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SOCIOLOGIST?

A good sociologist needs an outward-looking perspective on the world, and should be prepared to 'walk in another person's shoes'. They should be interested in reading the news on a daily basis to be able to relate the topics learnt in class to the outside world. Above all they should be able to think critically and independently about society and the diversity which its citizens experience. They should be passionate about understanding our rapidly changing world, as well as their place within it.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN SOCIOLOGY?

The A-Level will be examined through 3 examinable components

- 1: Education with Theory and Methods (33%)
- 2: Topics in Sociology (33%) - Family, Households & Beliefs In Society
- 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods (33%)

WHERE COULD SOCIOLOGY TAKE ME?

Sociology provides an excellent starting point for any social science degree from Economics, Psychology, and Politics to Criminology and Philosophy. You do not need to have an A-Level in Sociology to take Sociology at university, though it helps.

Sociology A-Level complements a wide range of other A-Level subjects. Many students choose degrees which combine Sociology with Psychology as the two subjects complement one another. While Sociology studies the influences society has upon individual behaviour, Psychology examines the impact of the individual mind.

Another popular combined degree is the study of Sociology with Criminology. While Sociology covers the study of crime, Criminology goes into greater depth thereby making the two subjects an ideal combination.

A degree in Sociology can lead to many career options including teaching, advertising, research, marketing and business. Sociology is an academic subject teaching you transferable skills so really it is up to you which area of work you choose to go into afterwards.

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT OPTION

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: NONE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr J Dickens & Mrs E Ellen

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 100% (with assessed presentation)

WHAT IS THE EXTENDED PROJECT?

The Extended Project is best understood as a mini dissertation – students identify a topic, set their own question, carry out a piece of academic research and finally produce an extended piece of writing (c. 5000 words) on their chosen subject. Alternatively, they can produce an artefact accompanied by a shorter essay (c.2000 words).

This opportunity will prepare you for study at the top universities as well as providing an exciting chance to escape from the standard routine of A-Level study. It will enable you to focus, in depth, on a subject or subjects that you enjoy and wish to study to a higher level. It carries UCAS points (it counts as 60% of an A-Level) and is graded with students able to achieve up to an A* qualification. It will strengthen your personal study skills and help you to develop greater independence in your learning.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

- In total you will be expected to spend approximately 120 guided learner hours producing your EPQ.
- Between 25-30 hours will be “directed time”. This is either made up of “taught lessons” at the start of the process or in the form of 5-6 meetings with your supervisor over the course.

These meetings will allow the supervisor to check your progress as well as giving you advice on where to go next.

- Once you have identified your topic and question, the centre co-ordinator comments on your project proposal – this must be approved before you continue your research.
- You must record the process in a formal project log which is submitted alongside your final essay.
- At the end of the project, learners are required to give a live presentation, which must include a Q&A session.
- All work is assessed by the centre but is moderated by the chosen exam board.

THE TAUGHT ELEMENT

In order to study for the Extended Project Qualification we also need to study Critical Thinking.

Critical Thinking is a skill that involves understanding and evaluating reasoning. “Reasoning” is often defined as “the act or process of drawing conclusions from facts, evidence, etc.” In Critical Thinking, the word “critical” is used to mean assessing strengths as well as weaknesses, rather than “being critical” in the everyday sense.

This may sound remote from everyday life. In reality, we are reasoning every time we think about why, whether and how to do something, or whether to believe what someone is telling us. You may feel that your previous study along with your own abilities already enable you to think critically without you needing to study it further. However, practising Critical Thinking skills is like preparing for a sports event or training as a musician: however strong your natural ability, the right practice will enable you to perform better.

Studying Critical Thinking will enable you to:

- Understand and analyse what other people say and write
- Decide whether other people’s reasoning is strong or weak
- Assert your own point of view and argue convincingly

This will help in your studies and your life to:

- Evaluate the evidence and arguments that you read (crucial for your EPQ)
- Make rational decisions
- Give reasons for your own beliefs and actions
- Plan your research by thinking – “what else do I need to know to justify my conclusions?”
- Write logical, structured essays

In addition to critical thinking, you will also have the chance to attend sessions on research skills, giving a presentation, footnoting and referencing and avoiding plagiarism – all vital if you are to proceed to higher education.

PREVIOUS TOPICS

A few of the topics that have been chosen for the Extended Project by students at TBSHS include String Theory, The Black Hole Paradox, the English Reformation, Censorship, The Rwandan Genocide, The Causes of the 2008 Economic Crash, The Fall of the Roman Republic, The 2012 Olympics, Epigenetics, Asperger’s Syndrome, Space Travel and many many more.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD GOLD LEVEL

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT OPTION

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: NONE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr G Mead

WHAT IS GOLD DofE?

A DofE Award recognises the completion of a 'Programme' of activities in five 'Sections': **Volunteering, Physical, Skill, Residential and Expedition**.

The first three Sections require a commitment over at least 12 months to an activity you choose that falls into each category. It can be something you have not done before (such as taking up a new sport for your **Physical**, or learning to cook for your **Skill**) or something you already do that you wish to take further (such as developing your coaching skills or your level of proficiency in an instrument you play for **Skill**, or continuing to volunteer as a Scout or Brownie leader for **Volunteering**). The emphasis is on commitment, self-development and fun.

The **Residential** section requires you to go away somewhere unfamiliar with people you do not know for a week to do something together – this can be all sorts of things, such as a course of outdoor activities, learning something or perhaps volunteering of some kind.

The **Expedition** Section is what everyone pictures when they think of DofE; planning and carrying out a four day journey in one of the UK's amazing mountainous areas, being self-sufficient by carrying all your own food and equipment, and working together as a team to navigate and complete your journey safely.

There may be a cost to DofE. The cost does vary each year, and different elements of the DofE may have additional fees (EG. Taking music lessons and learning to bake are two options for skills, which have additional costs.) Financial support can be made available if this is a barrier to completing the DofE Award.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DofE PARTICIPANT?

Anyone can start a DofE programme – you do not need to be physically fit or good with a map, just willing to get stuck in, push yourself, show commitment, and develop the skills of teamwork, communication, independence and confidence that DofE will bring out in you. You do not need to have completed the Bronze or Silver Award to take part, but if you have completed Silver, this can reduce how long you need to participate in one of your activities.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN IN DofE?

Whatever you want to – you design your Award Programme, so the possibilities are endless, however you are bound to develop your confidence, teamwork and problem solving skills immeasurably, and learn just how limitless your own potential is. The sessions in school will focus on teaching you vital skills for the **Expedition** section that will also be useful elsewhere, such as First Aid, menu planning and cooking, navigation, campcraft, and an awareness of how to work safely together as a group in the outdoors. There will be opportunities to work with and lead younger students completing Bronze Awards if you wish. Hopefully you will also make some lasting friendships, and build a love of the outdoors that will stay with you and enrich your life.

WHERE COULD DofE TAKE ME?

Anywhere and everywhere, and maybe Buckingham Palace! A Duke of Edinburgh's Award is one of the most sought-after non-academic qualifications for employers, as they know anyone with a Gold Award has developed all sorts of valuable skills as well as the resourcefulness and resilience needed to face myriad challenges. As much as a DofE Award will enhance your CV or university application in its own right, the capabilities and qualities you will build up through the experience will make you happier and more successful as well as more employable. Plus you get to pick up your Award at one of the royal palaces from a celebrity or member of the Royal Family. Most importantly, DofE is great fun!

"DofE is not just an award, but training for life." Gold Award participant

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT OPTION

CORE MATHEMATICS (LEVEL 3 MATHEMATICAL STUDIES)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: GRADE 5 IN GCSE MATHEMATICS (IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU HAVE STUDIED THE HIGHER TIER)

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr B Boxall

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

EXAMINATIONS: 100%
Paper 1 (1.5hr), Paper 2 (1.5hr)

WHAT IS CORE MATHEMATICS?

Please note this is a 1 year AS Course

Core Mathematics is a relatively new qualification which has been setup to encourage more students to study some form of mathematics beyond GCSE. It has been designed to maintain and develop real-life mathematics skills. What you study is not purely theoretical or abstract; it can be applied on a day-to-day basis in work, study or life and most courses will include a financial mathematics element. It is worth the equivalent of an AS-Level qualification.

Core Mathematics is aimed at students who have achieved at least a grade 5 in their Mathematics GCSE, and have studied the Higher tier. Students who do not take A-Level Mathematics, but choose other A-Levels with a substantial mathematical requirement, would greatly benefit from studying the course, in particular it would support the Sciences, Business Studies, Psychology and Economics.

LEVEL 3 QUALIFICATION IN SPORTS LEADERSHIP (HSL3)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: NONE

SUBJECT LEADER: Mr P J Harris

EXAMINATION BOARD: Sports Leaders UK

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: 100%

WHAT IS THE LEVEL 3 QUALIFICATION IN SPORTS LEADERSHIP?

The Level 3 qualification is a nationally recognised qualification that enables successful candidates to independently lead small groups of people in sport and recreational activities. The qualification teaches generic leadership skills such as organisation, planning, communication and teamwork through the medium of sport. It is a fun and practical qualification, which provides the students the opportunity to work at local sports festivals, local clubs and primary schools within the area.

The course is broken down into six units and the students are assessed throughout the programme. This is to ensure they receive the required support to achieve success and to confirm that they have the required commitment to become a Sports Leader.

The qualification will take a minimum of 126 Guided Learning Hours. The final qualification requires a minimum 30 hours of leadership to be completed by the candidate away from the centre.

This course will suit students with an interest in sports participation but more importantly those who enjoy working with younger children and/or have ambitions to extend their coaching, teaching and leadership skills through higher education. The skills that are developed are applicable throughout all walks of life as this course will improve communication skills, interpersonal skills, organisation and leadership all of which are sought after skills in the business world.

FUNDAMENTALS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT OPTION

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: NONE

SUBJECT LEADER: Miss K Todd

EXAMINATION BOARD: Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments

EXAMINATIONS: Online multiple choice exam

WHAT IS FUNDAMENTALS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES?

This qualification is an important first step in developing the essential basic knowledge required for working in financial services.

Students will gain a broad overview of the industry and will learn about the types of banking, commonly used financial products, such as shares, bonds and insurance and gain an understanding of financial terminology.

The course has 7 elements, these are:

- 1: Ethics and Integrity in Financial Services** - Explores the key principles of ethical behaviour in financial services
- 2: Introduction - saving and borrowing** - Defines key financial services terms and principles including savers, borrowers, equity, bonds, risk and reward, insurance and foreign exchange
- 3: Banking** - Identifies the difference between retail and commercial banking and explains the functions of each banking type and their customers – individuals or corporates. Explains loans, mortgages and overdrafts, credit cards, interest rates and how they are calculated
- 4: Equities/Shares/Stocks** - Explores the reasons for issuing shares to finance a company and the return that can be gained – dividend/capital gain. Provides an understanding of shares, what they are for, and the risks involved in owning them
- 5: Bonds** - Identifies the two main issuers of bonds – companies and governments. Covers the features of bonds and the advantages and disadvantages of investing in bonds
- 6: Markets** - Explains how a stock exchange operates, the purpose of a stock exchange index, and compares different stock markets around the world
- 7: Other areas of Financial Services** - Highlights other key areas including: Fund Management, Foreign Exchange, Insurance and Retirement Planning

SUMMARY OF POST-16 COURSE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS 2026

ART & DESIGN	6 in Art	GERMAN	6 in German
BIOLOGY	6 in Biology Separate Science or 6 in all Biology modules of combined Science qualification; 6 in Maths recommended; if 5 in Maths have to take Core Maths for enhancement option	HISTORY	6 in History
BTEC LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA IN SPORT	At least 36 points from best 8 GCSEs; 5 in Mathematics and English Language or Literature	MATHEMATICS	6 Mathematics – but a grade 7 is highly recommended
BUSINESS STUDIES	6 in Business Studies, if studied, and 5 in English Language	CORE MATHEMATICS	5 in Mathematics (recommended that this is at Higher Tier)
CHEMISTRY	6 in Chemistry Separate Science or 6 in all Chemistry modules of combined Science qualification; 6 in Mathematics recommended; if 5 in Mathematics have to take Core Maths for enhancement option	FURTHER MATHEMATICS	8 in Mathematics
COMPUTER SCIENCE	6 in Computing or, if not studied, 5 in Mathematics	MEDIA STUDIES	6 in Media studies or, if not studied, 5 in English Language or Literature
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN	6 in Design Technology	MUSIC	6 in Music
DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES	6 in Drama and Theatre Studies	MUSIC TECHNOLOGY	6 in Music
ECONOMICS	6 in Mathematics and, if studied, 6 in Business Studies	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	6 in PE or, if not studied, 5 in Biology Separate Science or 5 in all Biology modules of combined Science qualification
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	6 in English Language	PHYSICS	6 in Physics Separate Science or 6 in all Physics modules of combined Science qualification; 6 in Mathematics
ENGLISH LITERATURE	6 in English Literature	POLITICS	5 in English Language or Literature
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE	6 in any Science	PSYCHOLOGY	6 in Psychology or, if not studied, 6 in English Language or Literature
FRENCH	6 in French	RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS	6 in RS if studied, 5 in English Language or Literature
GEOGRAPHY	6 in Geography	SOCIOLOGY	6 in Sociology if studied, 5 in English Language or Literature

ALL COURSES REQUIRE 5s IN ENGLISH LITERATURE, LANGUAGE AND MATHEMATICS



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