



**WALLINGTON**  
COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**A guide to AS and A2 Courses,**

**2011 – 2012**

## Introduction to the Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Wallington County Grammar School provides a range of opportunities for students to continue their education in a number of academic subjects. The Sixth Form allows students to develop into well-rounded men and women through a variety of extra-curricular activities and, under expert tuition and guidance, prepares them for higher education or employment.

Staff and students pursue excellence through a curriculum which keeps pace with the demands of contemporary society, as well as satisfying and developing the interests and talents of all, whilst respecting the traditions and values of the past. Self-disciplined in their approach to their studies, Sixth Form students explore their chosen subjects with commitment and enthusiasm, read widely and balance successfully the respective demands of their academic, extra-curricular and social lives.

Whatever their chosen areas of study and their future careers, those who enter the Sixth Form emerge as educated young men and women, capable of playing a happy and worthwhile part in society. They are aware not only of what their education may enable them to derive from it, but of their responsibility towards it.

This booklet explains the process of choosing Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced Level (A2) subjects, indicates what advice is available and from whom and outlines the courses available, in order to aid the process of choosing a coherent programme of study in the Sixth Form.

### Admission Criteria for external applicants to enter the Sixth Form in September 2011

The School admits both young men and women based on their performance in GCSE examinations. The minimum entry requirements are:

- Average Point Score of 47.8 at GCSE using the best 8 GCSE results.
- Either at least a Grade A at GCSE in the subjects to be studied at AS Level, or the special entry requirements have been met for specific subjects;
- Subjects chosen at AS/A Level must form a coherent two year course.

A minimum of twenty boys or girls, depending upon the uptake of places by internal candidates, may be admitted to the Sixth Form from outside the School.

Students who meet the minimum entry requirement are selected according to the following criteria:

- a. Looked After Children;
- b. Those who have medical or social grounds for admission supported by appropriate professional evidence;
- c. Those progressing from Year 11 at WCGS;
- d. Those progressing from Year 11 at other schools in rank order of performance at GCSE.

**It is important for external applicants to note that places are offered in rank order and that meeting the minimum entry requirement does not automatically mean that a place will be offered.** The Admission Criteria include a minimum standard of entry but in practice, given the level of competition, most applicants achieve considerably higher.

Students of Sixth Form age may make their own application for a place.

Once provisional AS choices have been made, changes to proposed AS subjects may only be made in agreement with the Head of Sixth Form or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. **Students will not be permitted to change more than two of their provisional AS choices once GCSE results have been published.**

Continued enrolment in the Sixth Form at Wallington County Grammar School is conditional upon achieving a minimum of grade C at AS Level in the subjects studied at A2 Level, which together form a coherent programme of study.

### **Special entry requirements for specific subjects**

**Business Studies:** either an A or above in GCSE Business Studies, or if Business Studies has not been studied at GCSE, at least an A in Mathematics and a B in English Language or English Literature at GCSE.

**Classics:** an A or above in GCSE Classics or History or English Literature.

**Economics:** either a B or above in GCSE Economics, or if Economics has not been studied at GCSE, at least an A in Mathematics and a B in English Language or English Literature at GCSE.

**Further Mathematics:** an A\* in GCSE Mathematics.

**Government and Politics:** an A or above in GCSE History or Classics.

**History:** either an A or above in GCSE History or an A or above in GCSE English Literature.

**Music:** either Grade 5 or above in an instrument and Grade 5 or above in Music Theory, or the ability to show progression towards achieving these qualifications.

**Philosophy:** an A or above in GCSE Religious Studies, or History or Classics if Religious Studies has not been studied.

**Physical Education:** either an A or above in GCSE Physical Education and a B or above in GCSE Biology, or an A or above in GCSE Biology if GCSE Physical Education has not been studied.

**Sciences:** An A or above at GCSE in the relevant single science or A\* grades in Dual Award Science.

### **Sixth Form Application Arrangements**

External applicants to the Sixth Form are advised to complete the Application Form and return it to the School by February half term. Confirmation of predicted grades must be submitted and this can take the form of 'mock' GCSE examination results or a document confirming predicted grades from a member of staff. No other information is required. External applicants expected to meet the grade for entry will be invited to a meeting in March/April when further information and advice will be provided regarding subject choices.

On publication of GCSE results in August, places will be offered in accordance with the Admissions Criteria. Applicants must confirm results following publication of GCSE grades if they intend to proceed with their application, when they will receive either a firm offer or be placed on a waiting list

Unsuccessful applicants have the right of appeal.

## Curriculum structure in the Sixth Form

It is the School's intention to offer the following AS and A2 Level subjects for 2011 – 2012:

|                    |                     |                         |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Art and Design     | Economics           | Government and Politics |
| Biology            | English Literature  | History                 |
| Business Studies   | French              | Mathematics             |
| Chemistry          | Further Mathematics | Music                   |
| Classics           | General Studies     | Philosophy              |
| Critical Thinking  | Geography           | Physical Education      |
| DT: Product Design | German              | Physics                 |
|                    |                     | Religious Studies       |

It is expected that students will choose four subjects in the Lower Sixth, excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking. Advanced Supplementary (AS) Level examinations will be sat in January and at the end of the year and then, typically, three of these subjects will be studied in the Upper Sixth to Advanced (A2) Level.

In addition to their main courses of study, all Sixth Form students follow the Sixth Form Enrichment Programme and PSHEE, which consists of a series of academic and non-academic courses and talks. These courses relate to a variety of general subjects, University specific issues and personal and social issues relevant to Sixth Form students. In addition, all Lower Sixth students currently take examinations in AS General Studies and a good number of these students will continue to A2 General Studies in the Upper Sixth. AS Critical Thinking is taught as part of the Enrichment Programme

A small number of students take 5 subjects at AS Level and 4 at A2, in addition to General Studies or Critical Thinking. Typically, these students will be studying Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

### **Making choices: a timetable of events**

Students will undoubtedly have begun to consider what subjects they wish to study in the Sixth Form. The formal process has now begun and, for our own pupils, will continue as outlined below:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| November 10 <sup>th</sup> 2010 | Sixth Form Open Evening   |
| November 2010                  | Y11 mock examinations   |
| December 2010                  | Y11 Options evening<br>Publication of Y11 mock examination results<br>Y11 Parents Evening                                 |
| February 2011                  | Individual Options Counselling with Senior members of staff   |
| March 2011                     | Provisional AS choices submitted and blocking structure constructed   |
| May to June 2011               | GCSE examinations sat   |
| August 2011                    | GCSE results published. AS options checked against GCSE results and students seen who have not met the admission criteria |
| September 2011                 | Teaching of AS subjects begins. Subjects may be changed until the end of September  |

*External Applicants to the Sixth Form should refer to the Application Arrangements as published in the 'A Brief Guide to the Sixth Form' booklet.*

When deciding upon what subjects to study at AS and A2 Level, students should utilise the expertise of their Form Tutors, Teachers and Subject Leaders, the Sixth Form pastoral staff, the Senior Leadership Team and the Careers Department in School. In addition, external support and advice is readily available from, amongst others, Connexions.

### **The importance of making the right choices**

Unlike some schools, the blocking structure will accommodate wherever possible all provisional choices made by our Year 11 students. Any possible combination of subjects is permitted and, given sufficient numbers, all subjects will run from 2011, although the School reserves the right to not offer subjects if this is deemed appropriate.

Students must ensure their choice of subjects is considered, appropriately researched and justified, such that the subjects form a coherent course at both AS and A2 Level. Advice should be sought from the people and organisations named above in the first instance. In addition, students should research the entry requirements of potential degrees they wish to read at university and qualifications required for possible careers.

When researching the entrance requirements of degrees, students should use the UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) website ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)) and the departmental websites of potential universities. On the UCAS website, the 'Course Search' facility provides information on every subject offered at every university and college in the UK. Every subject has an 'Entry Profile' that can be viewed online, which provides the required subjects and grades at A2 to read that degree at university, as well as the recommended or suggested subjects and skills.

What follows is general and specific advice that the School provides to all students to aid them in their process of deciding upon what subjects to study at AS and A2. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list and, when in doubt, students should seek help from the appropriate people or organisations:

- **Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science:** Chemistry and Biology are required to study Medicine at university, with greater emphasis placed upon Chemistry than Biology. It is not important as far as university admissions tutors are concerned what the other subjects studied at AS and A2 are. However, applicants to these degrees must have demonstrated commitment to the profession through a variety of relevant work experience placements and voluntary work;
- **Maths and Economics:** students intending to study AS or A2 Economics are strongly advised to study Mathematics as well. Students who intend to read Economics, or a related degree, at university may well be disadvantaged in their application if they have not studied A2 Mathematics and, for the most competitive courses and institutions, AS or A2 Further Mathematics would be very beneficial;
- **Maths and Physics:** students intending to study AS or A2 Physics are strongly advised to study Mathematics as well. Students who intend to read Physics, or a related degree, at university may well be disadvantaged in their application if they have not studied A2 Mathematics and, for the most competitive courses and institutions, AS or A2 Further Mathematics would be very beneficial in successfully reading Physics and related degrees at university;
- **Engineering:** students intending to read any form of Engineering at university should research the requirements of the course carefully before choosing their AS and A2 subjects. As a rule, A2 Mathematics will be required or, at the least, strongly preferred for any Engineering degree. Civil and Manufacturing Engineering will typically require A2 Physics as well and some universities may recommend A2 Design and Technology. For Chemical Engineering, A2 Chemistry is also needed;
- **2/2 split and single Science subjects:** the School advises students against opting for 2 Humanities and 2 science subjects at AS Level, such as Biology, Chemistry, English and Religious Studies. Students intending to predominantly study Science subjects are advised to study at least 3 at AS Level, which may include Mathematics. Students are also advised against studying one of the three Science subjects on their own: Biology and Chemistry complement each other and Physics and Mathematics likewise;
- **Diversity versus complementary:** following on from the above point, students are advised to choose at least 3 subjects that are complementary or mutually supportive and, at the most, one subject that is a contrast to their main subjects. Students predominantly studying the Sciences and Maths may find a fourth subject outside of the Sciences gives a broader curriculum in the Sixth Form than studying all 3 Sciences and Mathematics. Likewise, studying 4 complementary essay based subjects may not provide as broad a curriculum as some may prefer.
- **4 or 5 AS subjects?:** typically, students who study 5 AS Levels study Mathematics, Further Mathematics and 3 other subjects. Depending upon GCSE performance and the subjects chosen, a very small number of students will study 5 AS subjects, excluding Further Mathematics. Students intending to study 5 subjects should be aware that this will leave them with very little time in the School day outside of lessons, which may affect their ability to be successful in all of their subjects.

## AS and A2 Subjects available in the Sixth Form

### Art and Design

Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level: 8AD01

Edexcel Advanced Level: 9AD01

#### What is Art and Design at A Level?

Advanced Level Art and Design is often taken as an additional subject complementary to two or three other Advanced Level courses. Art should attract anyone who is fascinated by the forms and structures of natural and man made objects around us and who finds satisfaction in making visual and analytical representations of these objects. Much pleasure may be derived from developing the skills of image making with the wide variety of materials and equipment available in the Art Department. The need for designers is evident from the enormous range of everyday things that are designed for wide ranging purposes.

#### What does the course involve?

The unendorsed route in Art and Design will enable students to explore a range of two- or three-dimensional approaches to their studies, either as freestanding or related experiences. Work produced for this qualification will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and give visual form to individual thoughts, feelings, observations and ideas. Students will show evidence of trying to extend their own and others' ways of seeing the world. Students will use the visual language of the discipline sensitively and thoughtfully to support their intentions.

The disciplines associated with the unendorsed route are painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture, alternative media, theatre design, interior design, product design, constructed textiles, dyed textiles, printed textiles, fine art textiles, fashion textiles, photography, digital photography, film and video, advertising, illustration, packaging, typography and multimedia. Students can work in one or more of the disciplines in Unit 1 and Unit 3. Candidates may choose to produce work in **one** discipline only for Units 2 and 4.

For all disciplines, students must:

- record observations, experiences, ideas, information and insights appropriate to intentions;
- analyse and critically evaluate art and design practices, demonstrating an understanding of purposes, meanings and contexts;
- use art and design practice to develop ideas through sustained investigations and exploration, selecting and using materials, processes and resources, identifying and interpreting relationships and analysing methods and outcomes;
- use art and design practice to present a personal, coherent and informed response, realising intentions, and showing connections with the work of others;
- demonstrate an understanding of continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions;
- identify issues relevant to art and design;
- research and collect relevant information;
- visualise possible solutions and evaluate their effectiveness;
- synthesise and develop appropriate ideas;
- use a variety of materials and techniques appropriately;
- illustrate the value of a cross-disciplinary approach;
- show an understanding of differing applications of visual language as appropriate when working in different disciplines.

At both AS and A2, assessment is through one piece of internally set, internally marked and externally moderated coursework and one externally set assignment, that is internally marked and externally moderated.

### **Why study Art and Design?**

Advanced Level Art and Design is a vital course for those intending to study the subject in Higher Education. It could be amongst the Advanced Level subjects of those going on to degrees in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, History of Art, Fine Art and many other fields of study whose other academic subjects are of prime importance. Of course, it is always valid to study a subject for pure personal satisfaction. Careers which may interest the student of Art at this level may be commercial artist, designer, painter, teaching, occupational therapy, art restoration, cartography, photography, window display, retail management, animation, printing, publishing and advertising to name but a few. Art can also be a complement to science subjects for students applying for medical degrees.

In order to assist in their development throughout the course, students are encouraged to enrol for life-drawing classes at Sutton College of Liberal Arts. The classes are usually booked from 4.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. on Thursdays and run in the Autumn Term. In addition, students are required to visit art galleries, museums and places of interest, such as the Imperial War Museum, Eden Project, Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, as part of their research work. Appreciation of a wide range of artistic styles is vital for progression in this subject.

## **Biology**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1411**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2411**

### **What is Biology at A Level?**

A Level Biology builds upon the content and skills in GCSE Biology and Science (Double Award). Students are expected to have achieved at least a GCSE grade A in Biology or AA in Science (Double Award). Students will be assessed in three units at AS level and a further three at A2 Level. The first two units at each level are content-based and assessed by examination, whilst the third unit at each level is a centre-assessed unit comprising a Practical Skills Assessment (PSA) and an Externally Marked Practical Assessment (EMPA)

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Biology and Disease**

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute written examination.

Students will study the following topics:

- How digestive and gas exchange systems may be affected by communicable and non-communicable diseases;
- How a knowledge of basic biology allows us to understand the symptoms of disease and interpret data relating to risk factors.

#### **AS Unit 2: The Variety of Living Organisms**

Assessment is in the form of a 105 minute written examination.

Students will study the following topics:

- The influence of genetic and environmental factors on intraspecific variation;
- How the variety of life is reflected in similarities and differences in its biochemical basis and cellular organisation;
- How size and metabolic rate affect an organism's requirements and give rise to adaptations.

### **AS Unit 3: Investigative and Practical skills in AS Biology**

Assessment is in the form of an externally assessed practical investigation.

Students will cover the following:

- Practical work in the contexts of Units 1 and 2;
- Assessment of implementing skills on practical work as a whole;
- Assessment by AQA-set tasks.

### **A2 Unit 4: Populations and Environment**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

Students will study the following topics:

- How living organisms form ecosystems through which energy is transferred and chemical elements cycled;
- How human activity affects ecological balance in a variety of ways;
- How genetic variation and isolation may lead to the formation of new species.

### **A2 Unit 5: Control in Cells and Organisms**

Assessment is in the form of a 135 minute written examination.

Students will study the following topics:

- Stimulus and responses - the biology of the nervous and endocrine systems;
- Homeostasis and the maintenance of a constant internal environment;
- Genes and genetic expression.

### **A2 Unit 6: Investigative and Practical skills in A2 Biology**

Assessment is in the form of an externally assessed practical investigation.

Students will cover the following:

- Practical work in the contexts of Units 4 and 5;
- Assessment of implementing skills on practical work as a whole;
- Assessment by AQA-set tasks.

### **Why study Biology?**

Biology as an A Level can lead to the opportunity to read a wide variety of subjects at university, either focussed primarily on biological concepts or in conjunction with content from Chemistry. It is required, along with Chemistry, for the study of Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science. As an A Level, it complements the study of Physical Education and Geography.

## **Business Studies**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1131**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2131**

### **What is Business Studies at A Level?**

The Business Studies course aims to develop a critical understanding of organisations, the markets they serve and the process of adding value. It will involve consideration of the internal workings and management of organisations and the process of decision-making in an ever changing world. The course promotes active, rather than passive, learning with an emphasis on a problem solving approach.

It is not necessary to have studied Business Studies at GCSE in order to take it at AS or A2 Level. It is, however, important that you have an interest in current affairs. Students will be expected to read the Business section of a quality newspaper, as much of the material will be studied through a variety of real business contexts.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Planning and Financing a Business**

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute written examination.

This unit covers two core themes: Starting a Business and Financial Planning. Students will be expected to have an understanding of the range of activities involved in setting up a small business and an understanding of key financial concepts essential for the planning of small businesses. Students will be expected to carry out calculations and to be able to interpret their results.

#### **AS Unit 2: Managing a Business**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

In the study of this unit, students will examine Finance, People in Business, Operations Management, Marketing and the Competitive Environment in relation to the core theme of improving the effectiveness of a business. Students should be able to calculate and be able to interpret data measuring the effectiveness of the business. These measurements should include: profitability, labour productivity, labour turnover, unit costs and market share.

#### **A2 Unit 3: Strategies for Success**

Assessment is in the form of a 105 minute written examination.

In the study of this unit, students should examine the AS topics in relation to the core themes of setting objectives, measuring performance and devising strategy. Both A2 units are synoptic.

#### **A2 Unit 4: The Business Environment and Managing Change**

Assessment is in the form of a 105 minute written examination, including the requirement to undertake pre-release research tasks.

This unit considers the relationship between businesses and external factors. It examines how external factors can impact upon businesses, and the responses they may take. The unit also examines a number of themes which are important in the strategic management of businesses, for example, leadership and

corporate culture. Students should consider how businesses can manage change successfully. This unit will be studied through a variety of real business contexts. Both A2 units are synoptic.

### **Why study Business Studies?**

Students with AS or A level Business Studies have access to a wide range of possible career and higher education opportunities. You will develop a range of personal transferable skills including:

- interpreting and analysing data;
- applying knowledge to unfamiliar situations;
- developing and presenting arguments;
- challenging assumptions.

These skills are in great demand and are recognised by employers, universities and colleges as being of great value. Business Studies combines well with a range of Social Sciences, Science, Mathematics and Humanities to lead to University courses in such areas as Law, Economics, Accounting, Politics, International Relations and, of course, Business Management.

### **Chemistry**

**OCR Advanced Subsidiary Level: H034**

**OCR Advanced Level: H434**

#### **What is Chemistry at A Level?**

This is a modern and relevant Chemistry course which has been designed to reflect the success and popularity of the existing A Level specification. The teaching style is fast-paced and exciting and the new streamlined progression through units is appropriate for all learners, yet it remains rigorous and challenging for higher achievers. Extended writing is encouraged in the 'Stretch and Challenge' style questions. These allow learners the opportunity to access the A\* grade which more of the elite universities are now demanding for entry into their more popular courses. As a student considering Chemistry at Advanced Level, you should have an enjoyment of practical laboratory work, be able to cope fairly easily with Maths and use number work in problem solving. If you are intrigued by the science you have studied so far and are prepared to work hard to find out more, then Advanced Level Chemistry would be a suitable subject to study.

#### **What does the course involve?**

##### **AS Unit 1: Atoms, Bonds and Groups**

Assessment: 1 hour written exam taken in January of the first year. Topics include Atoms and Reactions, Electrons, Bonding, Structure and the Periodic Table.

##### **AS Unit 2: Chains, Energy and Resources**

Assessment: 1 hour and 45 minute written exam taken in June of the first year. Topics include Hydrocarbons, Alcohols, Halogenoalkanes and Analysis.

##### **AS Unit 3: Practical Skills in Chemistry 1**

This is an internally assessed practical unit covering a qualitative, quantitative and evaluative task.

##### **A2 Unit 4: Rings, Polymers and Analysis**

Assessment: 1 hour written exam taken in January of the second year. Topics include Rings, Acids, Amines, Polymers and Synthesis

### **A2 Unit 5: Equilibria, Energetics and Elements**

Assessment: 1 hour and 45 minute written exam taken in June of the second year. Topics include Rates, Equilibrium and pH, Energy and Transition Elements.

### **A2 Unit 6: Practical Skills in Chemistry 2**

This is an internally assessed practical unit covering a qualitative, quantitative and evaluative task.

### **Why study Chemistry?**

The chemical industry is central to modern world economy, converting raw materials (oil, natural gas, air, water, metals, minerals) into more than 70,000 different products and there is a high demand for Chemistry graduates to work in pharmaceutical and petroleum companies. Chemistry is an essential qualification for a large number of careers and many of our students move on into areas such as Analytical Chemistry, Engineering, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Biochemistry and Biotechnology. If you want any science-based career, then Chemistry keeps your options open. Chemistry AS in itself is certain to be a very useful qualification. A degree in Chemistry is also the basis for many other careers including teaching and accountancy. Interestingly, research has shown that Chemistry graduates are better paid over a lifetime than graduates of almost any other discipline.

### **Classics**

**OCR Advanced Subsidiary Level: H038**

**OCR Advanced Level: H438**

### **What is Classics at A Level?**

Classics provides the opportunity to study the literature (in translation) and archaeology of Ancient Greece and Rome. These societies were instrumental in the shaping of modern western culture and have traditionally been studied as part of a rounded academic education. Students should note that a good grade in GCSE English or History is required and that no previous knowledge of Classics, Latin or Greek is required: all material is studied in English!

### **What does the course involve?**

The course will be assessed with four exam papers covering different aspects of the study of classical civilisation: Greek Tragedy, Spartan History, Greek and Roman Epic, and Roman Britain.

### **AS Unit 1: Greek Tragedy in its context**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

Students will study works by the three great tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides that were not only influential in forming the literary, artistic and philosophical culture of ancient Greece and Rome but also of the entire western world. Students will study the stories of *Agamemnon*, *Oedipus* and *Medea* as well as the infamous *Bacchae* in their social, political and dramatic context.

### **AS Unit 2: Greek History from original sources: Politics and Society of Ancient Sparta**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

Students will study the Politics and Society of Ancient Sparta, learning about the fascinating and, at times, sinister history of the most powerful city state in Classical Greece. Students will find out how the Spartan army were moulded into the most effective killing force of their day and how society was rigidly controlled to make sure only the toughest citizens would survive. Fascinating episodes, such as the titanic struggle between the Greeks and the Persians will be studied, as well as the bitter conflict between Sparta and Athens, through some of the first and greatest historians such as Herodotus and Thucydides.

### **A2 Unit 3: Virgil and the world of the hero**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

Through a close study of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Homer's *Illiad*, students will discover how the defeated and dejected Aeneas left the burning city of Troy to go on to found the Roman nation, experiencing his adventures and wars, driven by the embittered Juno and protective Venus, and discover the great love affair between our hero and the ill fated Dido.

### **A2 Unit 4: Roman Britain: Life in the outpost of the Empire**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

Students will discover the fascinating history of the conquest and occupation of Britannia by the mighty Roman Empire, learning about characters such as Julius Caesar, Boudicca and Constantine, in order to find out what role they played in our country's history. They will also engage in an in depth analysis of the art, religion, society and administration of the province.

### **Why study Classics?**

The units chosen for study are designed to encourage candidates to:

- Acquire, through studying literature in translation and material evidence, knowledge and understanding of Classical Greek and Roman civilisation;
- Develop awareness of the similarities and differences between the Classical world and later times;
- Apply critical and evaluative skills to evidence of different kinds including literature and material finds.

The course can lead to a university degree in its own right or as part of a joint honours course with subjects such as History or Archaeology. It also contains elements of Philosophy, Theology, Geography and Drama.

### **Critical Thinking**

#### **OCR Advanced Subsidiary Level: H052**

#### **What is Critical Thinking at A Level?**

As an A Level, Critical Thinking is the study of academic arguments in terms of their structure, the strengths and weaknesses of arguments, the credibility of reports and sources and the development of one's own arguments.

#### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Introduction to Critical Thinking**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, covering the following two areas of study:

- **The Language of Reasoning:** You will study the structure of arguments, in terms of reasons, conclusions, intermediate conclusions, assertions, counter-assertions and so on. In doing so, you

will learn to assess the strengths and weaknesses of arguments, as well as assessing the use and misuse of statistical information within arguments.

- **Credibility:** You will develop your abilities to assess the credibility of claims, sources and witnesses, by identifying, amongst others, the extent to which they are reputable, neutral, have any vested interests and so on. You will be able to make reasoned judgements of an incident, based on your assessment of the credibility of the various sources.

## **AS Unit 2: Assessing and Developing Argument:**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, which includes a multiple choice section, covering the following three areas of study:

- **Analysis of Argument:** Following the introductory topic in Unit 1, you will develop your ability to identify a variety of specific flaws in arguments, as well as deepening your awareness of a variety of techniques employed within arguments.
- **Evaluating Arguments:** From the deeper understanding developed above, you will be able to assess arguments using a variety of criteria.
- **Developing one's own Reasoned Arguments:** You will improve your ability to present your own reasoned arguments, through an awareness of what makes an argument flawed and what strengthens an argument.

## **Why study Critical Thinking?**

Critical Thinking is very different to the other subjects you will study, in that it focuses on developing your skills, rather than being centred on learning content. The skills of Critical Thinking are essential to success in all of your studies within the Sixth Form and at university. Through studying the subject, you will develop your analytical and evaluative skills to a very high level. These skills are essential to your development academically and, most importantly, intellectually.

All Sixth Form students will follow an enrichment programme of lessons, lectures and seminars during their Sixth Form career. AS Critical Thinking is an option within this programme, and priority will be given to those who are intending to apply to Oxbridge or to read Law, Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science at university, as the skills of Critical Thinking directly relate to the admission tests for these universities and subjects.

## **Design and Technology: Product Design**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1551**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2551**

## **What is Design and Technology at A Level?**

This course has been designed to provide opportunities for students to develop their creativity, capability and entrepreneurial skills, to apply knowledge and understanding to a range of technological activities and to develop critical thinking and collaborative skills.

This course is an extension of the skills gained from any of the following GCSE D&T courses:

- D&T: Product Design;
- D&T: Electronic Products;
- D&T: Graphical Products;
- D&T: Resistant Materials Technology.

The department is equipped with the latest cutting edge ICT, including CAD software packages and hardware & CAM facilities.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Materials, Components & Application**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of materials and components, including: electronics; metals; alloys; polymers; woods; composites; systems & control, modelling and prototyping. Design in practice issues include: sustainability of products and environmental concerns; their manufacture; life cycles; ergonomics; aesthetics and consumer safety.

#### **AS Unit 2: Learning through Designing and making**

Assessment is in the form of a coursework project, undertaken over 50 hours.

Students learn about the use of Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture. Students select their own context, from which they design and make a product that matches its specification.

The use of ICT is required at all stages of the Design Process to enhance Technological Capability, such as sourcing and communicating information, data handling and modelling. Students will learn to use a suite of the latest software packages to support these activities.

This unit results in the development of an appropriate product supported by a design portfolio, which must include ICT generated images and be presented either electronically or on A3 paper and be approximately 30 pages long.

#### **A2 Unit 3: Designing and Manufacture**

Assessment is in the form of 120 minute written examination.

Students develop further their study of materials and components. This includes Design & Market influences, major developments in Technology, the influence of D&T in society, markets, legislation, information handling, ICT applications, illustration, selection and the use of appropriate 2D/3D techniques.

#### **A2 Unit 4: Design and Making Practice**

Assessment is in the form of a coursework project, undertaken over 60 hours.

Students make use of the subject content learnt thus far to develop and sustain their creativity and innovative design practice. Students design and make a functioning product, in accordance with the six assessment criteria, including ICT modelling. Through technological activities, students develop critical evaluation skills in technical, aesthetic, ethical, economic, environmental, social, cultural and entrepreneurial contexts.

### **Why study Design and Technology?**

Design and Technology allows students to contrast their other studies with a practical, creative subject that utilises cutting edge technology to further the learning process. Students who wish to read Engineering at university will find the practical skills developed by Design and Technology invaluable, whilst students who wish to work in an industry that requires manual dexterity, such as Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry will find the practical skills and coordination developed by the subject equally beneficial.

## **Economics**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level: 8EC01**

**Edexcel Advanced Level: 9EC01**

### **What is Economics at A Level?**

Economics is the study of choice and decision-making in a world with limited resources. It offers a way of thinking about the world that enables us to make the best of what we have. Economics affects our everyday lives from our jobs, our wealth, the public services with which we are provided, right down to the cost of taking out a mortgage and the price of a pint of beer.

It is not necessary to have studied Economics at GCSE in order to study it at AS or A2 Level. It is however, important that you have an interest in current affairs. Students will be expected to read the Business and International sections of a quality newspaper and read periodicals such as The Economist, as much of the material will be studied through a variety of real-world scenarios.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Competitive Markets — How They Work and Why They Fail**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

This unit examines how the price mechanism allocates scarce resources in markets. It analyses the nature of market failure, its causes and possible policy remedies. Students should be able to apply supply and demand analysis to real-world situations.

#### **AS Unit 2: Managing the Economy**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

This unit introduces the key measures of economic performance and explains how the Government achieves its macroeconomic objectives of economic growth, full employment, low and stable inflation and balance of payments equilibrium. Students should be able to use a basic AD/AS model.

#### **A2 Unit 3: Business Economics and Economic Efficiency**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination.

This unit examines how the pricing and nature of competition between firms is affected by the number and size of market participants. At the end of this unit, students should be able to analyse the pricing and output decisions of firms in different contexts.

#### **A2 Unit 4: The Global Economy**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

This unit develops the knowledge and skills developed in Unit 2 so that they can be applied in a global context. An awareness of trends and developments in the global economy over the last 10 years is required.

### **Why study Economics?**

Students with AS or A level Economics have access to a wide range of possible career and higher education opportunities. You will develop a range of personal transferable skills including:

- Analytical and problem solving skills;
- Communication skills;
- Team working skills;
- Political Awareness.

These skills are in great demand and are recognised by employers, universities and colleges as being of great value. Economics combines well with a range of Social Sciences, Science, Mathematics and Humanities to lead to University courses in such areas as Law, Business Management, Accounting, Politics, International Relations and, of course, Economics.

## **English Literature**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level Specification B: 1746**

**AQA Advanced Level Specification B: 2746**

### **What is English Literature at A Level?**

At AS, Unit 1 introduces aspects of narrative and the ways in which different literary texts work, including pre- and post- 1990 novels and poetry. Unit 2 introduces aspects of the tragic genre through the study of Shakespeare and 20<sup>th</sup> century American drama. At A2, Unit 3 encourages the development of ideas on the significance of genre with particular focus on Pastoral poetry. In Unit 4, it is possible to study a wide range of texts of the students' choice and consider how texts can be subjected to different types of critical approaches.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Aspects of Narrative**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute, open book written examination.

Students will study four texts: Two novels (at least one post 1990) and two poetry texts 1800-1945.

#### **AS Unit 2: Dramatic Genres**

Assessment is in the form of two coursework pieces, both 1200-1500 words in length.

A minimum of two texts will be studied, within the dramatic genre of Tragedy. A portfolio of two pieces of written coursework will be produced, of which one may be re-creative. The first piece is on an aspect of dramatic/tragic genre with regard to a Shakespeare play and the second piece is on an aspect of dramatic/tragic genre with regard to another play.

#### **A2 Unit 3: Texts and Genres**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute, closed book written examination.

A minimum of three texts will be studied from the Pastoral genre, including at least one text from 1300-1800.

#### **A2 Unit 4: Further and Independent Reading**

Assessment is in the form of two coursework pieces, one 1500-2000 words in length and one 1200-1500 words in length.

A minimum of three texts will be studied, including one pre-released anthology of critical material. A portfolio of two pieces of written coursework will be produced, the first piece a comparative study of an aspect of two texts and the second piece an application of an aspect of pre-released critical anthology to a literary text.

### **Why study English Literature?**

English Literature at A level is a dynamic course that enables the students to articulate creative, informed and relevant responses to literary texts. Students are taught to develop appropriate critical terminology and to appreciate moral, philosophical, historical and literary concepts. Students are offered opportunities to demonstrate their detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in literary texts by exploring the connections and comparisons between different textual sources.

The English department expect our students to be independent learners, capable of leading lesson discussions and offering presentations to their peers. Students will be expected to undertake research projects and to frame their own learning through continuous wider critical reading. Studying English Literature enhances a student's ability to analyse, synthesise and eloquently articulate their own, independent interpretations of literary material; a skill highly sought after by Universities and employers alike.

### **French**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level: 8FR01**

**Edexcel Advanced Level: 9FR01**

### **What is French at A Level?**

Developed in consultation with practitioners and students, the Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE in French specification rewards advanced level French-language skills and knowledge through student-focussed assessment. With appealing content and opportunities to gain greater understanding of other cultures, it can prepare students to become well-informed and effective communicators.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Spoken Expression and Response in French**

Assessment is in the form of an 8-10 minute conversation in French, on a general topic chosen in advance from the following options:

- Youth culture and concerns;
- Lifestyle: health and fitness;
- The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the French-speaking world;
- Education and employment.

#### **AS Unit 2: Understanding and Written Response in French**

Assessment is in the form of a 150 minute examination, in three sections that require students to listen, read and write French. Topics examined will be drawn from the following options:

- Youth culture and concerns;
- Lifestyle: health and fitness;

- The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the French-speaking world;
- Education and employment.

### **A2 Unit 3: Understanding and Spoken Response in French**

Assessment is in the form of an 11-13 minute conversation in French, during which students prepare an issue of their choice and take a clear stance towards it, defending and arguing their point of view. A further spontaneous discussion will then follow with a minimum of two unknown issues covered.

### **A2 Unit 5: Research, Understanding and Written Response in French**

Assessment is in the form of a 150 minute examination, in three sections, that require students to A) undertake a short written translation from English into French effectively, B) write a French discursive or creative essay on one of the following topics & C) write a 240-270 word research-based essay. This essay would relate to the culture and/or society of a French language country, countries or community (three bottom topics only). Students have freedom to determine the content of their research (potentially in negotiation with their teacher) but it must relate to the four research-based essay topic areas for this unit.

Topics examined will be drawn from the following options:

- Youth culture and concerns;
- Lifestyle: health and fitness;
- The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the French-speaking world;
- Education and employment;
- Customs, traditions, beliefs and religions;
- National and international events: past, present and future;
- Literature and the arts.

### **Why study French?**

With increasing contact between countries and the growth of the European Union, the value of language studies to Higher Education and employment is evident in ever widening career areas. Having a language at AS or A level will certainly improve your employability. At Higher Education level, there has been a proliferation of new degree courses combining Language with Business Studies, Economics, I.T., Engineering and Sciences. We encourage students to spend some time abroad, either as part of a work experience programme or as part of an exchange programme with our contacts in France.

### **General Studies**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level Specification B: 1766**

**AQA Advanced Level Specification B: 2766**

### **What is General Studies at A Level?**

General Studies is the study of contemporary issues across 5 areas of study. It is a subject that allows students to demonstrate their general knowledge and awareness of contemporary issues, without requiring them to learn specific content, which is in contrast to the majority of A Levels. The A Level in General Studies considers four themes across the four units at AS and A2, in application to 5 areas of study: Science and Technology; Society and Politics; Arts and Media; Business and Industry; Beliefs and Values.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Conflict**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, answering three questions from a choice of five.

In application to the five areas of study, students will consider questions on the nature of aggression, the positives and negatives of scientific advances, the relation between politics and tensions in society, the role of Arts and Media to challenge opinions and represent majority views, the ethics of businesses and the levels of rights and tolerance in society.

### **AS Unit 2: Space**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, answering a variety of differently weighted questions.

In application to the five areas of study, students will consider questions on the nature of space exploration and climate change, the advantages and disadvantages of a migrating population and changing demographic structure of society, the impact of the media on developed and developing countries, the concepts of consumerism and land use and the advantages and disadvantages of multiculturalism and 'green values'.

### **A2 Unit 3: Power**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute examination, answering two questions and utilising source material.

In application to the five areas of study, students will consider questions on the nature of the use and abuse of fossil fuels, the relation between medicine and health and the ethical responsibilities of scientists. In addition, consideration will be given to the concepts of power, equal opportunities and the limits of the police force and legal system, the relation between the presentation and content of the media and the impact it has, the responsibilities of corporations to consumers and producers and the concepts of authority, rights and responsibilities and nationalism and internationalism.

### **A2 Unit 4: Change**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 examination, answering two questions and utilising source material.

In application to the five areas of study, students will consider the nature of science, the public's understanding of science and progress within science, ways in which political change occurs and the impact of political change in society, the concept of beauty and representation within the media, issues surrounding growth, consumerism and conservation and the notions of ideology, religious belief and norms and values.

### **Why study General Studies?**

General Studies provides students with an opportunity to enrich their Sixth Form curriculum through considering and being examined on a variety of contemporary issues that are relevant to a student's daily life. All L6<sup>th</sup> students sit the AS examination and specific lessons are devoted to the subject within the PSHEE programme. Depending upon performance at AS, students will sit A2 examinations in the U6<sup>th</sup>, with specific lessons devoted to the examinations as part of the PSHEE programme.

## **Geography**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1031**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2031**

### **What is Geography at A-Level?**

AQA Geography offers a natural progression from GCSE Geography, ensuring that there is minimal repetition of content, and provides the scope for us to choose what topics we would like to study. Geography is a subject which explicitly engages with the relationship of humans to each other over space and time and their relationship with their physical environment at a variety of scales from the local to the global. It considers the social, environmental, economic, historical and political factors of change (on all scales) with a range of contemporary case studies. All units specified in AQA GCE Geography offer opportunities for students to consider:

- their own roles, values and attitudes in relation to themes and issues being studied
- the roles, values and attitudes of others including decision makers.

Pupils own insight and values are considered in the AS and A2 courses. In examinations, it is always likely that relevant and measured expressions and evaluations of such values and attitudes outlined above will be creditworthy and, on occasions, may be explicitly required by examination questions and tasks.

The subject content follows an 'issues and impacts' approach throughout. It has a developmental structure designed to facilitate progression through the course and beyond to link with the demands of higher level study. Geography encourages pupils to use and improve upon a wide range of skills, many of which are integral to degree qualification and the world of work.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Physical and Human Geography**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination – sat in May/June

In Core Physical, students' subject knowledge and understanding in key environments is developed. The compulsory Rivers and Flood Managements unit relates to environments familiar with most, if not all, students and engages them in the study of the central role of water in landscape development and its management for human welfare purposes. The other three contrasting physical environments of Cold, Coastal or Desert Environments each present opportunities for studying distinctive sets of processes, raising common themes of environmental impact, management, sustainability and citizenship.

In Core Human, fundamentals of population in Human Geography are addressed with an emphasis on change and development, over space and time, and their geographical implications. Optional elements are specified to give students the opportunity to engage with key themes of contemporary relevance, with an emphasis on human action, welfare and issues for sustainability. The optional lesson topics cover issues of Food Supply, Energy and Health.

#### **AS Unit 2: Geographical Skills**

Assessment is in the form of a 60 minute written examination – sat in January, with May/June resit available.

The core skills required of an AS Geography student are developed through the study of AS Unit 1 and examined in Unit 2. These skills are specified and examined in such a way as to engage students with a range of basic and more sophisticated geographical skills appropriate to the AS specification content. All AS

Geographers will spend a residential week at a sustainable farm and field studies centre in Somerset in order to carry out fieldwork and practice skills necessary for this module.

### **A2 Unit 3: Contemporary Geographical Issues**

Assessment is in the form of a 150 minute written examination – sat in May/June.

Students are required to study 3 topics from the following 6, ensuring that at least one Physical and one Human topic is studied:

- Plate Tectonics and associated hazards;
- Weather and Climate and associated hazards;
- Ecosystems;
- World Cities;
- Development and Globalization;
- Contemporary Conflicts and Challenges.

At WCGS, we presently study towards the Plate Tectonics; World Cities; Development and Globalisation; and, Ecosystems topics.

**A2 Unit 4: Geographical Fieldwork Investigation or Geographical Issue Evaluation** – sat in January with May/June resit available.

Assessment for both options is in the form of a 90 minute written examination. For the Geographical Fieldwork Investigation, questions will be in reference to students' previously conducted fieldwork. For the Geographical Issue Evaluation, questions will be in reference to a booklet of pre-release material.

The Geography Fieldwork Investigation casts students as active researchers with responsibility for managing and reflecting on their own learning activities in relation to a topic of particular interest and/or for which there are particular study opportunities. In addition, students will be assessed on fieldwork skills.

The Geographical Issue Evaluation relates to pre-released material made available two months before the examination date. The Geographical Issue Evaluation casts students as active researchers and evaluators of information using geographical knowledge and understanding and skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation to form measured views on complex issues which may be of considerable significance locally, regionally or globally.

### **Why study Geography?**

There has never been a better or more important time to study Geography. With growing interest in issues such as migration, environmental degradation, climate change and social cohesion, Geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. Combining economic, social, political and environmental elements, Geographers are also highly employable. Whatever your passion for the world - fascination with landscapes or concerns about inequality - Geography will provide you with knowledge and transferable skills that will reward you personally and support you professionally, lending itself to a wide range of careers and future prospects – be it working in the city, on an oil rig or in the field abroad!

## **German**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level: 8GN01**

**Edexcel Advanced Level: 9GN01**

### **What is German at A Level?**

German at A Level uses as 'communicative' an approach as possible, focusing on all 4 language skill areas, encouraging confidence and real competence amongst students. These skill areas are developed through studying social and political issues relating to past, contemporary and future German society. We encourage students to spend some time abroad, either as part of a work experience programme or as part of an exchange programme with our contacts in Germany.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Spoken Expression and Response in German**

Assessment is in the form of an 8-10 minute conversation in German, on a general topic chosen in advance from the following options:

- Youth culture and concerns;
- Lifestyle: health and fitness;
- The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the German-speaking world;
- Education and employment.

#### **AS Unit 2: Understanding and Written Response in German**

Assessment is in the form of a 150 minute examination, in three sections that require students to listen, read and write German. Topics examined will be drawn from the following options:

- Youth culture and concerns;
- Lifestyle: health and fitness;
- The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the German-speaking world;
- Education and employment.

#### **A2 Unit 3: Understanding and Spoken Response in German**

Assessment is in the form of an 11-13 minute conversation in German, during which students prepare an issue of their choice and take a clear stance towards it, defending and arguing their point of view. A further spontaneous discussion will then follow with a minimum of two unknown issues covered.

#### **A2 Unit 4: Research, Understanding and Written Response in German**

Assessment is in the form of a 150 minute examination, in three sections

- i) A written translation from English to German of approximately 80 words (10 marks)
- ii) A German-language essay from a choice of several options, of either a discursive or creative nature. The length is between 240-270 words, revealing organisation of arguments and ideas. (45 marks)
- iii) A research-based essay in German (240-270 words) linked to a particular area of interest to the student and relating to the culture or society of a German speaking country. (45 marks)

## **Why study German?**

With increasing contact between countries and the growth of the European Union the value of language studies to Higher Education and employment is evident in ever widening career areas. Having a language at AS or A2 level will certainly improve your employability. At Higher Education level there has been a proliferation of new degree courses combining Languages with Business Studies, Economics, I.T., Engineering and Sciences.

## **Government and Politics**

### **Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level**

### **Edexcel Advanced Level**

### **What is Government and Politics at A Level?**

Government and Politics is a dynamic and varied A-Level course. The topics you will study range from the evolution and workings of Britain's key political institutions, through to the major political ideologies and bodies of ideas that have inspired revolutions, started wars and transformed societies.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1:**

Assessment is in the form of a one hour 20 minutes written paper, requiring two questions to be answered from a choice of four, covering the following themes:

- Democracy and Political Participation.
- Party Policies and Ideas
- Elections
- Pressure Groups

#### **AS Unit 2: Governing the UK**

Assessment is in the form of a one hour 20 minutes written paper, requiring two questions to be answered from a choice of four, covering the following themes:

- The Constitution
- Parliament
- The Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Judges and Civil Liberties

#### **A2 Unit 3: Introducing Political Ideologies**

Assessment is in the form of a one hour 30 minutes written paper, requiring students to answer three short answer questions from a choice of five (15 marks each) and then one essay question from a choice of three (45 marks). The following topics are covered:

- Liberalism;
- Conservatism
- Socialism
- Anarchism

#### **A2 Unit 4: Other Ideological Traditions**

Assessment is in the form of a one hour 30 minutes written paper requiring students to answer three short answer questions from a choice of five (15 marks each) and then one essay question from a choice of three (45 marks). The following topics are covered:

- Nationalism
- Ecologism
- Feminism
- Multiculturalism

### **Why study Government and Politics?**

Government and Politics is a highly regarded subject. Themes to be studied within the subject will combine with those in Economics, Geography and Philosophy and there are a large number of undergraduate degrees that are related to A Level Government and Politics, especially in the areas of Economics, Politics, International Relations and Philosophy, to name but a few.

### **History**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary: 8HI01**

**Edexcel Advanced Level: 9HI01**

### **What is History at A Level?**

History in the Sixth Form is available for those who may not have previously studied GCSE History and it focuses on events from 1740 to the present day. Students may study Classics in addition to one of the History courses.

The course will appeal to students who:

- Have an interest in the way the world has developed;
- Enjoy investigation and discovery;
- Enjoy debate and putting forward a well argued case;
- Want to improve their skills of analysis and expression;
- Want to study a subject that will prepare them for a wide range of careers.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Historical Themes in Breadth**

#### **Option C: The British Empire – Colonisation and Decolonisation**

Assessment is in the form of an 80 minute written examination, answering two essay based questions on the following topics:

Relations with the American Colonies and the War of Independence, c.1740-89:

- Relations between America and the 'Mother Country' 1740-63;
- Rivalry with the French;
- Why did opposition to Britain increase in the American Colonies?;
- Why and how did America win its independence?

Britain and the Scramble for Africa 1875-1914:

- How did Africa become so much more important to Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?;
- How did Britain acquire 40% of Africa in just 20 years – when they were apparently reluctant to do so?;
- Conflict in Southern Africa – fighting Zulus and Boers;
- How did British people feel about their Empire?

## **AS Unit 2: British History Depth Studies**

### **Option C: Conflict and Change in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain**

Assessment is in the form of an 80 minute written examination, answering two source based questions on the following topic:

The Experience of Warfare in Britain: Crimea, Boer and the First World War, 1854 -1929:

- How did the media become involved in reporting war and forming opinions at home?;
- The effect of the Boer War on attitudes towards the British Empire;
- New developments in weaponry, tactics, strategy and medicine in the 3 major conflicts studied;
- Assessment of generals and military leadership;
- The effects of World War I on Britain: recruitment and retention, propaganda, work, the beginning of total war.

### **A2 Unit 3: *Depth Studies* and Associated Historical Controversies**

Students will have a choice of studying one of the two options listed below. Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination, answering two questions on the chosen topic.

#### **Option B: Politics, Protest and Revolution**

France, 1786-1830: Revolution, Empire and Restoration:

- Why did the absolute monarchy fall to the Revolutionaries in 1789?;
- The Terror: why did Robespierre and Marat send so many to meet Madame Guillotine?;
- How did an obscure Corsican nobleman, Napoleon Bonaparte, become Emperor of France – and, having had it so good, why did he fall from power?;
- Did Napoleon make France better?;
- How did the monarchy come back?

#### **Option D: The Challenge of Fascism**

From Kaiser to Führer: Germany 1900-45:

- The Second Reich: the Kaiser, his government and the effects of the First World War;
- The democratic experiment: why did Weimar fail?;
- How did Hitler become Chancellor – and then Führer – of Germany?;
- Germany during World War II – total war;
- The Final Solution – why and how?

### **A2 Unit 4: Historical Enquiry**

Assessment is in the form of 2 coursework essays totalling 4000 words, with titles chosen to focus on the topics below:

Expansion, Conflict and Civil Rights in the USA, 1820-1981:

- The 'Wild West' – the great westward expansion in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century;
- Why did the USA descend into Civil War in the 1860s – and what were the consequences of this?;
- Emancipation: the end of slavery – but with the KKK, Sharecropping and Segregation did life get any better for African Americans?;
- Immigration in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, social tensions and paranoia about the 'Red threat'.
- The Impact of WWI and WWII on race relations;
- The path to Civil Rights 1945-81: the roles of Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson.

## **Why study History?**

History is regarded as good preparation for a number of courses at degree level including, in particular, History, History of Art, Archaeology, Anthropology and Classics, plus more specific courses such as American Studies and Modern Studies. Additionally, the skills and content will be useful for degrees in International Relations, Politics, Economics, Social Science, Law, Journalism, English Literature and Philosophy, to name but a few.

Many courses will have a historical content, or will require you to use skills developed in History, particularly the analysis and interpretation of a wide range of source materials. Scientists will find that AS or A2 History will provide excellent evidence of breadth in their ability.

## **Mathematics and Further Mathematics**

### **Mathematics:**

**OCR (MEI) Advanced Subsidiary Level: 3895**

**OCR (MEI) Advanced Level: 7895**

### **Further Mathematics:**

**OCR (MEI) Advanced Subsidiary Level: 3896**

**OCR (MEI) Advanced Level: 7896**

## **What is A Level Mathematics like?**

A Level Mathematics builds on the techniques learnt at GCSE, particularly algebraic skills, but very quickly branches into new areas such as calculus. It is necessary to study both 'pure' and 'applied' mathematics. The 'pure' modules will extend your knowledge of familiar topics, such as algebra and trigonometry, as well as introducing you to new, more abstract, areas of the subject.

Applied modules are available in Mechanics (M), Statistics (S) and Decision Mathematics (D). Mechanics is the study of force, motion and change and, as such, is particularly useful for those who intend to study Physics or Engineering. Statistics is concerned with making sense of data and has practical applications in a wide range of disciplines including Economics, Biology and Geography. Decision Mathematics is a relatively new area of Mathematics that has grown in significance as computers have become more powerful and more easily available. In this module a number of well-known 'algorithms' are studied. Algorithms can be thought of as precise sets of step-by-step instructions, like computer programs, that achieve a given objective. This module would be of particular interest to anyone considering a career in computer science or business.

Mathematics is the most popular A Level choice at WCGS with around 75% of each year group choosing to study the subject. While A Level Mathematics is considerably more challenging than GCSE Mathematics, most students find that it is also much more interesting!

## **What does the course involve?**

AS Mathematics, students will study 2 AS Level Pure Units (C1 and C2) plus either Mechanics 1 or Statistics 1. For Advanced Level Mathematics, students must have completed 3 AS Level units and in addition study C3 and C4 which are compulsory Pure A2 units. In addition, they must also take another Applied module which could be either an AS or A2 unit.

Some of the possible combinations for A2 Mathematics are listed overleaf:

|    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | M1 | S1 |
| C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | M1 | D1 |
| C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | M1 | M2 |
| C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | S1 | D1 |
| C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | S1 | S2 |

Further Mathematics is a separate A Level that builds on the foundations laid in a single Mathematics A Level. Therefore, it is considered to be more challenging than single Mathematics and much of the content would not usually be encountered until the first year of university.

If you wish to pursue a STEM subject (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) or Economics at degree level, it is advisable to take Further Mathematics, particularly if you are considering an application to one of the better universities, such as Oxbridge, Imperial, Warwick, UCL etc. In addition to all of the modules offered to A Level Mathematics students, those studying Further Mathematics take an additional two pure modules (FP1 and FP2) and one applied module (S3 or M3) making a total of 12 modules in all. A number of students each year choose to study extra modules on their own, for example M4 or FP3.

### **Why study Mathematics and Further Mathematics?**

While many students choose Mathematics because it supports other disciplines they intend to study at A Level or degree level, such as Physics, Engineering, Economics, Computing or Business Studies, many study Mathematics simply because they find the subject interesting, challenging and enjoyable. Mathematics combines easily with all other subjects and in recent years an increasing number of students have opted to study Mathematics alongside non-science subjects such as Humanities or Modern Foreign Languages.

An A Level in Mathematics is highly regarded by universities and employers alike, even for courses or occupations that seem to have little direct connection with the subject. The skills of logical thought, problem solving and statistical analysis developed in A level Mathematics match closely the skills needed to succeed at university and in the workplace.

### **Music**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary Level: 8MU01**

**Edexcel Advanced Level: 9MU01**

### **What is music at A Level?**

The Edexcel A Level specification in Music should enable students to:

- Extend the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to communicate through music and take part in music making;
- Engage in, and extend the appreciation of the diverse and dynamic heritage of music, promoting spiritual and cultural development;
- Develop particular strengths and interests encouraging life-long learning and providing access to music-related and other careers;
- Recognise the interdependence of musical skills, knowledge and understanding the links between the activities of performing/realising, composing and appraising.

Ideally, students will have gained a GCSE in Music with an A grade or higher. Alternatively, if a student has passed Grade 5 Theory, this will be accepted in lieu of GCSE Music. The ability to play a musical instrument or sing to at least Grade 5 standard is essential and pupils must be receiving private tuition on their chosen instrument. It will be expected that pupils taking A Level Music will be involved in at least one of the School's ensembles, as this accounts for a significant amount of the marks awarded. It is important to have a good grounding in music and to enjoy all elements: performing, composing, listening and appraising.

## **What does the course involve?**

### **AS Unit 1: Performing Music**

Assessment is in the form of internal assessment and students are required to perform for 5-6 minutes, either as soloists or as an ensemble, on any instrument or voice(s).

### **AS Unit 2: Composing**

Assessment is in the form of external assessment.

Students are required to compose a 3 minute piece in response to one of four previously available performance briefs, as well as submit a series of responses to three questions that could be used as the basis of sleeve notes to accompany their composition.

### **AS Unit 3: Developing Musical Understanding**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute externally assessed examination.

Students are required to provide responses to the following three skill areas:

- Listening, including instrumental and vocal music;
- Investigating musical styles, *either* instrumental music *or* vocal music;
- Understanding chords and lines, requiring analysis of an unfamiliar score and harmonising a simple SATB texture.

### **A2 Unit 4: Extended Performance**

Assessment is in the form of an internally assessed piece, lasting 12-15 minutes and performed either as a soloist or part of an ensemble, using any instrument or voice and in any style of music.

### **A2 Unit 5: Composition and Technical Study**

Assessment is in the form of an externally assessed composition, lasting 3 minutes and in response to a chosen performance brief. In addition, a Technical study must be undertaken of a Baroque counterpoint, Chorale or Popular song. 2 tasks must be undertaken, which could be both compositions, both technical studies or one of each.

### **A2 Unit 6: Further Musical Understanding**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute externally assessed examination.

Students are required to provide responses to the following three skill areas:

- Aural Analysis, including Instrumental and Applied music;
- Music in Context, answering two questions relating to Applied Music;
- Continuity and Change in Instrumental Music, consisting of one essay question, from a choice of two, relating to Instrumental Music.

## **Why study Music?**

Studying Music encourages active involvement in different forms of music-making, both individually and communal, helping to develop a sense of group identity and togetherness. Music can influence pupils' development in and out of school by fostering personal development and maturity, creating a sense of achievement and self-worth, and increasing pupils' ability to work with others in a group context. Learning

Music develops pupils' critical skills: their ability to listen, to appreciate a wide variety of music, and to make judgements about musical quality. It also increases self-discipline, creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.

## Philosophy

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1171**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2171**

### What is Philosophy at A Level?

Literally, Philosophy is the “Love of knowledge” and is the critical study of some of the ‘big questions’ in life. As an A Level, the course covers the themes of Epistemology (the Theory of Knowledge), the Philosophy of Mind and questions relating to morality, God, reason, freedom, reality, doubt and truth.

### What does the course involve?

#### AS Unit 1: An Introduction to Philosophy 1

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, with two compulsory questions on Reason and Experience and two further questions on the theme of Personhood.

- **Reason and experience:** What is the source of our knowledge? It is through experience or through rational thought?
- **Persons:** What is a person? What characteristics are required to be a person? Can non-humans be persons, for example Artificial Intelligence? What makes me the same person over time?

#### AS Unit 2: An Introduction to Philosophy 2

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, with two questions to be answered on each of the following two areas of study:

- **Knowledge of the external world:** How do I gain knowledge of the external world? Do I ‘access’ the world directly, through my senses, or indirectly? Can I be sure that my sense-data is an accurate representation of the external world?
- **Free will and determinism:** Do we possess free will or are we determined to act, due to factors internal and external to us? Can I be both free and determined to act? If I am determined to act in a certain way, to what extent am I praise and blame worthy?

#### A2 Unit 3: Key Themes in Philosophy

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination, with two questions to be answered on each of the following two areas of study:

- **Philosophy of Mind:** What is the mind? What is the relation between the mind and the body? Is the mind a ‘ghostly’, immaterial soul, the brain or something else? If I can be sure that I have a mind, can I be sure that others have minds?
- **Moral Philosophy:** Are there moral truths and if so what is their nature? Can we deny moral truth altogether? Should moral decisions be made in terms of consequences alone, or do moral rights, duties and principles have intrinsic value independent of consequences?

## **A2 Unit 4: Philosophical Problems**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute written examination, with two questions to be answered on the following area of study:

- Descartes' *Meditations*, with specific reference to his Method of Doubt and arguments for Certainty, the nature and existence of God and the nature and relation between Mind and Body.

### **Why study Philosophy?**

Philosophy develops your analytical and evaluative skills through both studying what philosophers have said about the 'big questions' in life and, more importantly, through assessing their responses to these questions. The skills developed in the course are invaluable to success at both A2 and degree level in any academic discipline.

Successful students will be naturally inquisitive and eager to challenge their preconceptions, whilst enjoying expressing their own opinions and justifying them with evidence from various sources. Furthermore, they will be willing to work independently, read both primary and secondary philosophical texts and be able to organise themselves to complete large pieces of work over several weeks.

AS and A2 Philosophy does not ally itself exclusively to any one other subject, but students will find it at times links with Religious Studies, Politics and Government, Modern and Medieval History, Classical Civilisation and English Literature, as well as offering a contrast to more mathematical or scientific subjects.

### **Physical Education**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1580**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2580**

### **What is Physical Education at A Level?**

At AS, this specification will develop knowledge and skills to help understand the opportunities for, and effects of, leading a healthy and active lifestyle. Students will be given the opportunity to build on their experience and improve their personal skills/techniques across a variety of roles in a sport of their choice to improve performance.

At A2, the specification enables students to further develop their understanding of key psychological concepts, themes, texts and techniques. Students will be given the opportunity to specialise further, selecting 2 themes to study in depth and focusing on psychological problems through the study of a key text. Problem areas relate directly to other areas of the specification and students will be able to draw on, develop and apply material from both AS and A2 modules.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Opportunities for and the Effects of Leading a Healthy and Active Lifestyle**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

Students will study the:

- Physiological effects of adopting a healthy lifestyle;
- Short term effect of exercise/performance and the long term effects of training;
- Analysis of movement across a range of sporting actions;
- Acquisition of skills and the impact of psychological factors on performance;

- Opportunities for physical activity, benefits to the individual and society and the potential barriers faced by minority groups.

### **AS Unit 2: Analysis and Evaluation of Physical Activity as Performer and/or in an Adopted Role/s**

Assessment is in the form of internal assessment with external moderation.

Students will study and demonstrate the:

- Execution of skills/techniques in 2 roles, including performer, official, referee, judge, leader or coach, in a chosen physical activity;
- Analysis of their own performance;
- Application of theoretical knowledge to achieve effective performance.

### **A2 Unit 3: Optimising Performance and Evaluating Contemporary Issues Within Sport**

Assessment is in the form of a 120 minute written examination.

Students will study:

- Energy sources and systems;
- Elite preparation and training;
- Specialised training and sports injuries;
- Psychological theories and techniques to optimise performance;
- Concepts and characteristics of World Games and their impact on the state and the individual;
- Development and impact of sports technology on performers, equipment and facilities;
- The development of sport from rational recreation to its modern day format.

### **A2 Unit 4: Psychological Problems**

Assessment is in the form of internal assessment with external moderation.

Students will study and demonstrate the:

- Process of optimising performance in competitive or performance conditions in 1 role;
- Evaluation of their own performance in identifying weaknesses;
- Process of suggesting the cause of their own weakness and an appropriate corrective measure.

### **Why study Physical Education?**

Physical Education at A Level will provide you with the effects of exercise and allow you to acquire skills in sports. You will be able to analyse and evaluate sport performance, optimise sport performance and study important topical issues in sport. The topics you learn about will be invaluable at a personal level and will help you to be better at sport, no matter what your standard.

Sport & Fitness is a huge industry and you can be part of it: if you're keen on sport you can make a healthy living from your passion. The UK is sports mad: every year more and more people take up sport. We are hosting the 2012 Olympic Games and Physical Education has never played such an important part in our society. This A Level also opens up a whole number of career options such as Sports Science, Physiotherapy, or even working for a National Governing Body.

### **Physics**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1451**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2451**

## What is Physics at A level?

The qualification builds on the knowledge, understanding and process skills developed in GCSE Science. Students are expected to have achieved at least a GCSE grade A in Physics or AA in Science (Double Award). It will be very helpful to have at least a grade B in GCSE Mathematics as numeracy and mathematical skills are important in Physics.

A Level Physics is suitable for students who:

- have an interest in, and enjoy Physics;
- want to find out about how things in the physical world work;
- enjoy applying their mind to solving problems;
- enjoy carrying out investigations by the application of imaginative, logical thinking;
- want to use Physics to support other qualifications or progress onto further studies or employment.

## What does the course involve?

### AS Unit 1: Particles, Quantum Phenomena and Electricity

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute written examination.

Students will study:

- The nucleus including particles, antiparticles and photons; hadrons and leptons; the quark model;
- Quantum phenomena including photoelectricity, energy levels and photon emission, wave particle duality;
- Electricity including electrical quantities, resistivity, circuits and components, alternating current.

### AS Unit 2: Mechanics, Materials and Waves

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute written examination.

Students will study:

- Mechanics, including motion along a straight line, projectile motion, Newton's laws of motion, energy and power;
- Properties of materials, including density and the Young modulus;
- Waves, including longitudinal and transverse waves, progressive and stationary waves, refraction, diffraction and interference.

### AS Unit 3: Investigative and Practical Skills in AS Physics

Assessment is in the form of a practical skills assessment.

Students will be required to show evidence of the processing of data, making observations and measurements and analysing and the evaluation of results.

### A2 Unit 4: Fields and Further Mechanics

Assessment is in the form of a 105 minute written examination.

Students will study:

- Further mechanics, including momentum, circular motion and simple harmonic motion;
- Fields, including gravitational fields, electric fields, capacitors, magnetic fields, electromagnetic induction.

## **A2 Unit 5: Nuclear Physics, Thermal Physics and an Optional Topic**

Assessment is in the form of a 105 minute written examination.

Students will build on key ideas about particles and energy from AS Physics, including probing the nucleus, radioactivity, nuclear instability and nuclear energy, as well as the thermal properties of materials, ideal gases and the kinetic theory of gases.

In addition, students will study one of the following areas:

- AstroPhysics: lenses and telescopes, nonoptical telescopes, classification of stars, cosmology;
- Medical Physics: Physics of the eye, Physics of the ear, biological measurements, nonionising imaging, X-ray imaging;
- Applied Physics: rotational dynamics, thermodynamics, engines;
- Turning points in Physics: the discovery of the electron, wave-particle duality, special relativity.

## **A2 Unit 6: Investigative and Practical Skills in A2 Physics**

Assessment is in the form of a practical skills assessment.

Students will be required to show selection and use of a variety of appropriate equipment, evidence of the processing of data, making observations and measurements and analysing and the evaluation of results.

### **Why study Physics?**

Physics leads on to an extremely wide range of courses and careers. You could go on to use Physics to support other qualifications or progress onto further studies or employment. This could be:

- From a Higher National programme (HNC & HND) to degree level;
- Courses ranging from Physics, the Sciences, Medicine to Engineering;
- Chemical Engineering and related programmes;
- Employment in the area of radiography, and biotechnology as possible examples;
- Indeed, Physics is recognised as an entry qualification for a vast range of Higher Education courses and employment.

## **Religious Studies**

**AQA Advanced Subsidiary Level: 1061**

**AQA Advanced Level: 2061**

### **What is Religious Studies at A Level?**

A Level Religious Studies is recognised as a formal academic A Level and will require the students to write essays, prepare seminars and generally prepare for and participate fully in classroom discussions. It is a demanding course, but it provides all students with the opportunity to formulate and express their own opinions on a wide range of issues. Pupils will have to be prepared to do wider reading and to stay up to date with current affairs. The course follows on from work already covered in the GCSE RS Course and the proposed units are detailed below.

### **What does the course involve?**

#### **AS Unit 1: Religion and Ethics 1**

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute, 90 marks written examination. It will be two structured essay questions from a choice of four

Students will study:

- Utilitarianism as exemplified by Bentham and J. S. Mill;
- Situation Ethics and Fletcher
- Religious teaching on the nature and value of human life.
- Ethical issues – abortion and euthanasia

### **AS Unit 2: Religion, Philosophy and Science**

Assessment is in the form of a 75 minute, 90 marks written examination. It will be two structured essay questions from a choice of four.

Students will study:

- Miracles
- Creation – alternative theories concerning the origin of life and the universe
- The design argument for the existence of God
- Quantum mechanics and its implications for religion

### **A2 Unit 3A: Religion and Ethics 3A**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute, 100 marks written examination. It will be two structured essay questions from a choice of four.

Students will study:

- Libertarianism, free will and determinism;
- Virtue Ethics
- Religious views on sexual behaviour and human relationships
- Science and technology

### **A2 Unit 4A: Perceptions of Ultimate Reality**

Assessment is in the form of a 90 minute, 75 marks written examination. It will be two structured essay questions from a choice of four.

Students will study:

- The relationship between God and the physical world, including revelation
- Psychology and Sociology of religion
- Religious experience
- Religious language and the significance of religious art and symbol

### **Why study Religious Studies?**

A Level Religious Studies is not just for those who ascribe to a particular religious faith or for those who wish to study Religion or Theology at university. Religious Studies is of use in a number of careers: if you are considering a career in the police force, medical profession or social services then they all welcome pupils with Religious Studies. In the world of Commerce, Accountancy and Law, firms actively recruit Religious Studies students at university and it would also be of benefit to anyone thinking of a career in Human Resources. On a general level, it is suitable for any pupil who wishes to expand his or her personal knowledge on some aspects of religion and who wants to debate in greater detail the ultimate questions that affect all of our lives.

