

YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE

Subject Information **2025 Entry**

As you look to enter the Sixth Form, choosing the right individual subjects, as well as subject combinations, is key. Check out the various pathways available to you, and then discover the content, skills required, assessment criteria, and entry threshold for each available qualification.



ROUTE PLAN



At The Holy Cross Sixth Form, our **Pathways to Success** are designed to move you a step closer to your aspirations.

We know that academic excellence and flexible combinations are important to you. Unique to our Sixth Form, we offer each of our students a pathway that is personally tailored to their ability, talent, and future plans.

Each pathway is complemented with a dedicated week's meaningful Work Experience to develop your skills and prepare you for university or employment.

SCHOLARS PATHWAY

Candidates must have at least seven Grade 7 or above GCSEs, or an Average Point Score of 8. **You will study four A Levels**, with the option of an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Pathway by consultation and agreement **only**.

ELEVATE PATHWAY

Candidates must have at least six Grade 7 or above GCSEs, and could opt for **either** three A Levels plus an EPQ **or** three A Levels plus an AS Level from a selection of subjects (including Maths, Further Maths, MFL, and History).

FLYING START PATHWAY

Candidates must have both Maths and English Language or English Literature GCSE at Grade 5 or above, and also fulfil the entry criteria for their chosen subject courses. You will study three A Levels, with the option of completing an EPQ.

BLENDED PATHWAY

Candidates must have both Maths and English Language or English Literature GCSE at Grade 4 or above, and fulfil the entry criteria for their chosen subject courses. You will study three subjects: a combination of A Level and Level 3 BTEC courses.

SUPER SKILLS PATHWAY

Candidates must have both Maths and English Language or English Literature GCSE at Grade 4 or above, and fulfil the entry criteria for their chosen subject courses. You will study three Level 3 BTEC subjects.

STEPPING STONES PATHWAY

Two-year pathway by agreement only. A bespoke pathway which is available only on a case by case basis for students with evidenced, exceptional circumstances at KS4. The final decision for eligibility will be taken by the Headteacher.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

 **QUICK LOOK**

We welcome students of all faiths or none, with the expectation that all students respect and uphold our Catholic ethos and values.

Boys and girls should come with five GCSEs at grades 4 to 9.

For more information regarding entry requirements for subjects studied at Richard Challoner please visit <https://tinyurl.com/rcsixthform25>.



Site	Subject	Qual.	GCSE Subject Grades Required
HX	Applied Science	AAQ	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">4:4 Combined Science</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">4 Mathematics</div> </div>
HX	Art & Design: Art, Craft & Design	A-Level	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">6 Art & Design</div> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">M BTEC Level 2 Art & Design</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">4 English Language OR Literature</div> </div>
RC	Art & Design: Fine Art	A-Level	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">6 Art & Design</div> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">M BTEC Level 2 Art & Design</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">4 English Language</div> </div>
HX	Biology	A-Level	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">6 Biology</div> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">6 Chemistry or Physics</div> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">5 Third Science subject</div> <div style="background-color: #FF6600; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">6:6 Combined Science</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">5 English Language OR Literature</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">5 Mathematics</div> </div>

6 Must have

5 Dependent on chosen options

* Further details on specific subject page

Site	Subject	Qual.	GCSE Subject Grades Required
HX/RC	Business Studies	A-Level	5 Business Studies (if taken) 5 English Language OR Literature 5 Mathematics
HX/RC	Chemistry	A-Level	6 Chemistry 6 Biology or Physics 5 Third Science subject 6:6 Combined Science 5 English Language OR Literature 5 Mathematics
RC	Computer Science	A-Level	6 Computer Science 5 Mathematics 5 English Language
HX	Creative Digital Media Production*	BTEC	4 English Language OR Literature
RC	Design Technology: Product Design*	A-Level	6 Design Technology OR equivalent subject 5 Mathematics 5 English Language
RC	Drama and Theatre Studies	A-Level	6 Drama 5 English Language OR Literature
HX/RC	Economics	A-Level	6 Economics (if taken) 6 Business Studies (if taken) 6 English Language OR Literature 5 Mathematics

Site	Subject	Qual.	GCSE Subject Grades Required	
HX/RC	English Language & Literature	A-Level	5	English Language
			5	English Literature
HX/RC	English Literature	A-Level	6	English Language
			6	English Literature
HX	Extended Project Qualification	Level 3	5	English Language OR Literature
HX	French	A-Level	6	French
HX/RC	Geography	A-Level	6	Geography
			5	Mathematics
			5	English Language OR Literature
RC	Government & Politics*	A-Level	5	History AND/OR
			5	English Language AND/OR Literature
HX	Health & Social Care	BTEC	M	Health & Social Care L2 BTEC (if taken)
			5	English Language OR Literature
			4	Mathematics
			4:4	Combined Science
HX/RC	History	A-Level	6	History
			5	English Language OR Literature
HX/RC	Law*	A-Level	5	English Language OR Literature
RC	Linguistics (English Language)	A-Level	6	English Language
			6	English Literature
HX/RC	Mathematics*	A-Level	7	Mathematics
HX/RC	Mathematics – Further Mathematics	A-Level	8	Mathematics

Site	Subject	Qual.	GCSE Subject Grades Required
HX	Media Studies	A-Level	5 English Language OR Literature
HX/RC	Music*	A-Level	6 Music
HX/RC	Philosophy, Theology & Ethics	A-Level	6 Religious Studies 5 English Language OR Literature
HX	Photography	A-Level	6 Art & Design M BTEC Level 2 Art & Design 4 English Language OR Literature
HX/RC	Physical Education*	A-Level	6 Physical Education 5 Biology 5:5 Combined Science
HX/RC	Physics	A-Level	6 Physics 6 Biology or Chemistry 5 Third Science subject 6:6 Combined Science 5 English Language OR Literature 5 Mathematics
HX/RC	Psychology	A-Level	5 Mathematics (Higher) 5 English Language OR Literature 5:5 Combined Science (HX) 5:5 Combined Science (Higher) (RC) 5 Biology
HX	Sociology	A-Level	5 English Language OR Literature
RC	Sociology	A-Level	5 English Language AND Literature
HX/RC	Spanish	A-Level	6 Spanish



Applied Science



The Extended Certificate in Applied Science is an exciting and practical course designed to ignite your passion for the world of science. Covering topics from Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, this course equips you with essential knowledge and skills to explore, understand, and contribute to the ever-evolving field of science.

Why is it important? Science is at the heart of innovation, technology, and solving global challenges. With climate change, healthcare breakthroughs, and technological advancements at the forefront of today's society, a strong foundation in applied science is vital.

This course empowers you to become a critical thinker, a problem solver, and a catalyst for change in a world that relies on scientific understanding.

Subject Content

Content includes the electronic structure of atoms, the periodic table, cell structure and function, cell specialisation, tissue structure and function, features common to all waves, principles of fibre optics and the use of electromagnetic waves in communication.

Unit 3 teaches science investigative skills including planning a scientific investigation, data collection, processing and analysis and interpretation. Students then learn to draw conclusions and evaluate their experiment and their practical skills.

The practical work covered includes enzymes as biological catalysts in chemical reactions, diffusion of molecules, plants and their environment, energy content of fuels and electricity.

How is it assessed?

Level 3 BTEC courses are assessed across four units: two externally-assessed examinations, and two internally-assessed coursework tasks. An overall grade is awarded based on points gained across all units, although the units are not all weighted equally. An overall grade is awarded at either Pass, Merit, Distinction, or Distinction*.

The Extended Certificate in Applied Science is assessed through a combination of coursework, examinations, and practical assessments. This comprehensive approach ensures you develop a well-rounded skill set. You will complete assignments, laboratory experiments, and written exams, allowing you to demonstrate your knowledge, research abilities, and practical competencies.

A coursework unit in Year 12 will involve conducting experiments, analysing data and presenting findings. In Year 13 an optional unit focuses on the physiology of human body systems and the treatments for different diseases.

A written exam in Year 12 will assess your theoretical understanding of scientific concepts in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and a practical assessment in Year 13 will evaluate your laboratory skills and techniques.

Future Pathways

The Extended Certificate in Applied Science is an ideal choice for students with a passion for science and a keen interest in healthcare. This course serves as a solid foundation for those aspiring to pursue careers in nursing,

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Combined Science

Grade 4:4

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 4**

midwifery, and physiotherapy. It provides valuable insights into the scientific principles underpinning these healthcare professions, giving you a competitive edge in your future studies and careers.

Beyond healthcare, this qualification also opens doors to various other scientific fields such as pharmaceuticals, environmental science, forensic science, and research. Whether you envision yourself as a healthcare professional or a scientist making groundbreaking discoveries, the Extended Certificate in Applied Science equips you with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in your chosen path.



Art & Design: Art, Craft, and Design



“Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.”

– Thomas Merton

Art and craft is the ultimate form of self-expression and freedom of thought. This course is for people to focus their creative efforts and express themselves through the creation of art.

Through self-expression, we can better comprehend who we are and how to handle our feelings. Self-expression through the arts has a favourable impact on our behaviour, mood, lifestyle, and mental health. It also helps us to gain confidence, learn new skills and provide us with a sense of achievement.

Arts and crafts encourage us to explore our creativity and imagination, allowing us to express ourselves in several different ways. Every art form pushes your mind towards a wider perspective expressing your own vision, broadening your mind and boosting self-esteem. You start looking at the world from a different perspective. This helps you to develop open-mindedness and encourages you to not limit yourself to just one idea.

With every art and craft you create, you widen your horizons and lose the fear of judgement.

You no longer fear taking risks because all your mind wants to do is look at the other side of the world. It helps you to expand your art form beyond limits.

But without the taste of failure, the creative journey is incomplete. The creative process will teach you to embrace your failures. You will be experimenting with varied media and materials along the creative art process.

Subject Content

Unit 1: Skills based workshops in Year 12 (Sept - Dec)

Unit 1: Coursework (Sept - Jan in Year 13) 60% of A Level

Within the first term students will be taught traditional techniques in skill based workshops, helping to build their confidence within the subject.

Students will select a personal portfolio theme for their personal coursework unit, giving them the opportunity to generate ideas and research from primary and contextual sources, record their findings, experiment with media and processes and develop and refine their ideas towards producing a series of outcomes.

This personal portfolio coursework unit incorporates two linked elements, practical work and a personal study. The practical work allows the student to pursue their creative potential.

The personal study is a clearly identified area of study linked to the practical work. It provides the focus for contextual analysis and connections and must be between 1000 and 3000 words

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment (40 per cent of A Level) Feb - May in Year 13

Students will be set a question or theme by AQA. They have an extended preparatory period in which to develop their ideas before a 15-hour examination.

How is it assessed?

All work is internally assessed by the Art department and externally moderated by an AQA visiting moderator. Here an annual exhibition is held to celebrate the success of

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Art & Design **Grade 6** or

BTEC Level 2 Art & Design **MERIT**

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 4**

the work completed. The external moderator attends this exhibition to check and ensure the accuracy and consistency of marking within the centre.

Future Pathways

The A Level Art, Craft and Design course can lead to further study in the creative field or Art studies. Many students can progress onto the Art and Design Foundation Diploma, which will facilitate progression onto university courses.

A level Art, Craft and Design has enabled many of our past students to progress into a number of highly prestigious degree courses including Digital Photography, Architecture and Art History. Career pathways include Graphic Designer, magazine features editor, Art Editor, Artist and Designer.



Art & Design: Photography



“You don't take a photograph, you make it.”

“Photography is more than a medium for factual communication of ideas- look and think before opening the shutter.”

Are you interested in looking at the world around you? Are you open minded and prepared to make mistakes? Do you have a genuine passion and interest in the Visual Arts? Are you ready for a new challenge in exploring new ways of recording and building an authentic artistic voice? This practical course will help you to build a portfolio of work in which written analysis and research will underpin and support the skills you develop.

Photography is not just about taking an instant photo, it allows you to share your observations of our visual world around us, documenting contemporary ideas and issues in our ever evolving world. Photography is used as a creative media to offer a broad field that can be connected with our personal interest and hobbies. Every photo is unique; this is because everybody sees things differently - Photography lets you highlight the beauty of our world such as light, shapes, colours and textures.

Through studying Photography will allow you explore your creative expression, using your creativity and vision through images, exploring your own photographic practice.

By studying a creative ALEVEL allows you to develop a variety of skills to be used in Photography and other creative professions, including digital editing, studio and darkroom practice and working to set creative briefs. By having the opportunity

to work and learn alongside professional Photography tutors will help motivate, stimulate and ignite your ideas through technical support and artistic guidance.

Subject Content

Unit 1: Skills-based workshops (Year 12)

Unit 1: Coursework (Year 13) 60% of A Level

Within the first term students will be taught digital and traditional techniques in skill based workshops, helping to build their confidence within the subject.

Students will select a personal portfolio theme for their personal coursework unit, giving them the opportunity to generate ideas and research from primary and contextual sources, record their findings, experiment with media and processes and develop and refine their ideas towards producing a series of outcomes.

This personal portfolio coursework unit incorporates two linked elements: practical work and a personal study. The practical work allows the student to pursue their creative potential.

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment (Year 13) 40% of A Level

Students will be set a question or theme by AQA. They have an extended preparatory period in which to develop their ideas before a 15 hour examination.

How is it assessed?

All work is internally assessed by the Art department and externally moderated by an AQA visiting moderator. Here an annual exhibition

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Art & Design **Grade 6** or

BTEC Level 2 Art & Design **MERIT**

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 4**

is held to celebrate the success of the work completed. The external moderator attends this exhibitions to check and ensure the accuracy and consistency of marking within the centre.

Future Pathways

Many students progress onto the Art and Design Foundation Diploma, which will facilitate progression onto university courses. A level Photography has enabled many of our past students to progress into a number of highly prestigious degree courses including Digital Photography, Fashion Photography and Commercial Photography. Career pathways include Graphic Designer, magazine features editor, photographer or press photographer.



Biology



Studying A Level Edexcel Biology offers students a deep understanding of the living world, from the microscopic workings of cells to the complexities of entire ecosystems.

This subject provides a strong foundation in essential scientific concepts such as genetics, physiology, and biochemistry, which are crucial for understanding modern advances in medicine, environmental science, and biotechnology.

A Level Biology fosters critical thinking, analytical skills, and a problem-solving mindset, which are highly valued by universities and employers. Practical experiments and investigations within the course enable students to develop key laboratory skills, enhancing their ability to conduct scientific research.

Studying A Level Biology equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in scientific careers and fosters a greater appreciation for the complexity and diversity of life.

Subject Content

'Advanced Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Genetics' covers key biological concepts. The biochemistry section explores the structure and function of biological molecules, enzymes, and metabolic pathways. In microbiology, students study microorganisms, including their growth, reproduction, and role in health and disease. Genetics focuses on inheritance, DNA structure, gene expression, and genetic engineering techniques. This topic also examines cell structure, the immune system, and the molecular basis of diseases.

'Advanced Physiology, Evolution and Ecology' focuses on key biological systems and interactions. The physiology section covers the functions of the cardiovascular, respiratory, nervous, and endocrine systems. Evolution explores natural selection, adaptation, and speciation, providing insight into biodiversity. Ecology examines ecosystems, energy flow, nutrient cycles, population dynamics, and the impact of human activities on the environment. Together, these topics provide a deep understanding of how organisms function, evolve, and interact with their surroundings.

'General and Practical Principles in Biology' integrates knowledge from biochemistry, genetics, ecology, and physiology, emphasizing how these principles apply to broader biological contexts.

How is it assessed?

Three written examinations at the end of the course: Advanced Biochemistry, Microbiology and Genetics (1h 45m); Advanced Physiology, Evolution and Ecology (1h 45m); and General and Practical Principles in Biology (2h 30m).

The Practical Endorsement assesses students' competency in practical skills through 12 core experiments. Students receive a pass/fail grade based on their ability to conduct and report experiments independently and accurately.

Future Pathways

A Level Biology allows you to pursue degrees in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or biomedical sciences, leading to careers as doctors, dentists, pharmacists, or researchers. It also lays the

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Biology, and GCSE

Chemistry or Physics **Grade 6**

GCSE Chemistry or Physics **Grade 5**

OR

GCSE Combined Science **Grade 6:6**

WITH

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 5**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

foundation for fields like genetics, biotechnology, and environmental science, offering roles as geneticists, biotechnologists, or environmental scientists. Biology graduates can enter academia, or work in healthcare in a range of roles.

Additionally, it equips individuals for roles in conservation and ecology, as well as careers in science communication, education, and policy-making.



Business Studies



This subject is about the business world, how it works and how it affects society. It is centrally concerned with how businesses analyse their options to achieve the best outcome.

This course provides a broad understanding of business knowledge and skills to support progression to higher education. Students will gain a critical understanding of organisations and their ability to meet society's needs and wants and they will generate enterprising and creative approaches to business opportunities, problems and issues.

Students will acquire a range of relevant business and generic skills, including decision making, problem solving, the challenging of assumptions and critical analysis and they will apply numerical skills in a range of business contexts.

Subject Content

A Level Business Studies encourages independent and creative thinking allowing individuals to understand the intricacies of the business world. Students are encouraged to think critically, analyse complex business scenarios, and propose innovative solutions.

The course enhances presentation skills, enabling students to articulate their findings and ideas persuasively, both in written reports and verbal presentations. Teamwork and collaboration are also emphasised, as students often work together on projects, learning the importance of effective group dynamics in the business context.

The course covers essential business functions such as

Marketing, Finance, Operations, and Human Resources. Students learn the importance of strategic planning and decision-making, with a focus on technology, ethics, and corporate social responsibility.

How is it assessed?

Three, two-hour written examinations at the end of Year 13, structured as follows:

Paper one: Marketing and People, and Global Business (35 per cent of overall qualification).

Paper two: Managing Business Activities, and Business Decisions and Strategy (35 per cent).

Paper 3: Synoptic paper based on a pre-released case study (30 per cent).

Students must demonstrate knowledge of terms, concepts, theories, methods and models to show an understanding of how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to business issues. They must analyse issues within business, showing an understanding of the impact on individuals and organisations of external and internal influences. They must also evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence to make informed judgements and propose evidence-based solutions to business issues.

Future Pathways

A Level Business Studies equips students with a forward-thinking mindset, preparing them for diverse and promising career pathways in the field of business. The course opens doors to a number of exciting career prospects, spanning various

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

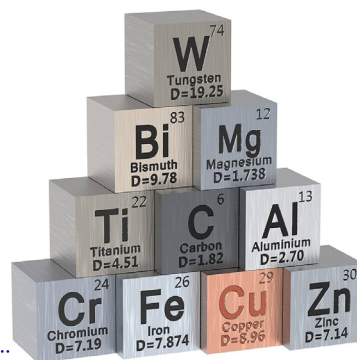
GCSE English Language
or English Literature **Grade 5**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

GCSE Business Studies (if taken)
Grade 5

sectors such as finance, marketing, entrepreneurship, human resources, and strategic management.

A Level Business Studies instils the critical skills necessary for success in the business environment or higher education. Research skills, problem-solving, strategic thinking, and effective communication, are all areas which are vital for tackling the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in whatever pathway students choose.



Chemistry

A Level Chemistry is the gateway to understanding the fundamental principles governing the composition, behaviour, and interactions of matter. This rigorous and captivating subject explores the very essence of our universe at the atomic and molecular levels. Chemistry is pivotal to comprehending various natural phenomena, from the composition of everyday substances to the intricate processes within living organisms.

It is essential because it underpins advancements in diverse fields such as medicine, materials science, environmental sustainability, and energy production. A profound understanding of chemistry equips students with the skills to analyse complex problems, engage in critical thinking, and contribute to solving global challenges.

Embark on your journey of discovery and intellectual growth with A Level Chemistry at Holy Cross School, where we nurture the scientists and problem solvers of tomorrow.

Subject Content

A level Chemistry studies the material world, and through chemistry we can describe and explain questions such as: "what happens when sugar dissolves in tea?"; "why is mercury a liquid at room temperature?"; "how do we make plastics?"; "what can we do about global warming?"; "how and why will I be affected if oil runs out?"

The course covers a wide variety of basic concepts such as the structure of the atom; the interaction of matter and energy; how to control reactions; patterns in the Periodic

Table; understanding carbon-based molecules.

A Level Chemistry is comprised of three main topics.

Inorganic and Physical Chemistry covers concepts such as Atomic structure, Chemical Bonding, Redox, Periodic Table, Calculations, Energetics, Equilibria and Transition Metals.

Organic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry looks at subjects such as Chemical Bonding, Redox reactions, Calculations, Organic Chemistry, and Modern Analytical Techniques.

General and Practical Principles in Chemistry focuses synoptic questions and assesses conceptual and theoretical understanding of experimental methods that will draw on students' experiences of the core practicals.

Practical skills are honed through a series of experiments and investigations, culminating in a practical endorsement.

How is it assessed?

Three written examinations at the end of the course: Inorganic and Physical Chemistry (1h 45m); Organic and Physical Chemistry (1h 45m); and General and Practical Principles in Chemistry (2h 30m).

The Practical Endorsement assesses students' competency in practical skills through 12 core experiments. Students receive a pass/fail grade based on their ability to conduct and report experiments independently and accurately.

Future Pathways

A Level Chemistry opens doors to a multitude of future pathways.

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Chemistry, and GCSE

Biology or Physics **Grade 6**

GCSE Biology or Physics **Grade 5**

OR

GCSE Combined Science **Grade 6:6**

WITH

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 5**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

It's a sought-after qualification for those aspiring to study chemistry, medicine, pharmacy, or engineering at university.

Chemistry graduates are in high demand in industries like pharmaceuticals, chemical engineering, environmental science, and research and development.

The skills gained through A Level Chemistry are transferable, making it an asset for a wide range of careers beyond the laboratory



Creative Digital Media Production



This course equips students with the skills and knowledge to enter the dynamic and growing media industry. Through both practical and theoretical approaches, students will learn to produce a range of media products such as adverts, magazines and film posters, while also gaining an understanding of industry roles and opportunities.

Media skills are in high demand across multiple sectors and this qualification prepares students for a range of creative careers, offering both the practical expertise and analytical understanding required in these industries.

Creativity, teamwork and communication are essential skills developed throughout the course.

Subject Content

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Creative Digital Media Production develops a range of skills, including:

Creativity: Students are able to generate and develop creative ideas for media products.

Technical skills: the ability to use a variety of media production software and equipment.

Analytical skills: Students will be able to analyse media products and identify the different elements that make them effective.

Communication skills: Students will develop the ability to communicate their ideas clearly and concisely, both in writing and verbally.

Teamwork skills: Students will take part in a range of activities to develop their ability to work effectively with others to produce work in different media.

How is it assessed?

42% coursework and 58% exam-based assessment, including external exams and project-based work. Two units are completed in each year of the course: one exam, and one coursework unit per year.

Qualification is assessed through a combination of coursework and external assessment. The coursework component accounts for 42 per cent of the final grade, while the external assessment accounts for 58 per cent. An overall grade is awarded at either Pass, Merit, Distinction, or Distinction*.

In the first year of study, students sit the Unit One exam, Media Representations, in which learners consider how media producers create meaning, messages and values.

They also complete their first coursework unit, Pre Production Portfolio, in which study the requirements of planning and delivering a digital media product.

In the second year of study, students sit the Unit 8 exam, Responding to a Commission, in which they consider the commissioning process, and how media producers respond to clients by generating ideas using a range of skills.

The second coursework unit, Digital Magazine Production, explores codes and conventions of different magazine genres and platforms. Learners select and prepare content, and create layouts for a specific genre of magazine.

Future Pathways

This award opens up a variety of career opportunities in the creative

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 4**

media industries and beyond.

Students can go on to work in roles such as filmmaker, TV producer, graphic designer, web designer, social media manager, advertising copywriter, or media analyst.

Additionally, students can go on to study media studies, film studies, and other creative media disciplines at university, such as animation, game design, and digital journalism.



Economics



Economics is everywhere, influencing our individual choices, shaping the news, and driving national and global trends. It addresses a fundamental question: How do societies efficiently allocate their limited resources? As you venture into this social science, you'll discover that economics is a particular way of studying human behaviour.

The A Level Economics curriculum offers insights into the issues, challenges, and institutions that dictate our daily lives. You'll explore both national and global economies, developing critical thinking skills and learning to interpret data from contemporary events. The course introduces an array of concepts, theories, and analytical techniques, encouraging you to critically assess economic challenges and institutions.

While some comfort with quantitative analysis is useful, it's not a prerequisite. The emphasis is on understanding economic concepts and applying them to the everyday world, making economics accessible to students from various academic backgrounds.

Subject Content

Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure

Theme 2: The UK economy – performance and policies

Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market

Theme 4: A global perspective

A level Economics is divided into two parts: Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. Microeconomics explores the concept of an ideal free market economy, based on perfect

competition, and compares it with the complexity and inefficiency of real modern market phenomena.

Macroeconomics looks at economics from a national point of view and explores themes like Inequality, Unemployment and Immigration, Economic Growth and Trade/Budget deficits. It also considers the trade-offs that governments face as they try to resolve problems such as the financial crisis of 2008.

How is it assessed?

At the end of the course, there are three, two-hour written examinations consisting of multiple choice questions, short answer questions, data response questions and several extended writing questions per paper.

Paper one: Markets and business behaviour. This paper assesses microeconomics and questions will be drawn from themes one and three.

Paper two: The national and global economy. This paper assesses macroeconomics and questions will be drawn from themes two and four.

Paper three: Synoptic (Macro and Microeconomics). This will assess content across all four themes.

Future Pathways

Economics opens doors to diverse career paths. Graduates often pursue roles as professional economists in government or the private sector, or find success in financial services, management consultancy, data analysis, policymaking, international development, journalism, and roles within NGOs or think tanks.

The analytical and research skills

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Economics and/or Business Studies (if taken) **Grade 6**

GCSE English Language or Literature **Grade 6**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

honed during the course provide a strong foundation for further academic pursuits in fields like law, business administration, international relations, and environmental sustainability. It's also an excellent option for students interested in the Degree Apprenticeship route, offering a blend of practical skills and theoretical knowledge valued by employers across various industries.



English Language & Literature



Studying English Language and Literature (OCR) at A Level offers a unique blend of creativity, critical thinking, and linguistic analysis. This course provides an opportunity to explore both the structure of the English language and a diverse range of literary texts, allowing students to develop a deep understanding of how language shapes meaning and human experience.

The language component hones analytical skills by examining how writers use language to craft their works, while also exploring the social and cultural influences on communication. This helps students become better communicators, both in writing and speech, which is invaluable for almost any career path.

The literature component introduces students to a variety of genres, including prose, poetry, and drama. By studying canonical and contemporary texts, students are encouraged to interpret themes, characters, and contexts in depth. This fosters critical thinking and an appreciation for artistic expression. OCR's balanced approach makes this A Level particularly engaging, as students can immerse themselves in creative writing alongside analytical tasks. It nurtures both the technical precision needed for language analysis and the imaginative freedom required for literary exploration.

Skills acquired – such as critical analysis, creativity, and communication – are transferable to careers in media, law, education, and beyond, making this subject an excellent choice for those seeking a versatile and intellectually stimulating course.

Subject Content

Students will study a wide range of spoken and written texts from different times including six substantial texts, which include prose, poetry, drama, and nonliterary texts.

English Language and Literature explores how language choices shape meanings in texts; ways in which texts relate to each other and to the contexts in which they are produced and received; how linguistic and literary approaches can inform interpretations of texts; how linguistic and literary methodologies are applied.

Learners are required to show awareness of the different language levels, drawn from phonetics, phonology and prosodics; lexis and semantics; grammar, including morphology; pragmatics; discourse.

How is it assessed?

Assessment is formed of three written examinations and one coursework component.

Paper one: Exploring non-fiction and spoken texts (one hour; 16 per cent of overall grade).

Paper two: The language of poetry and plays (two hours; 32 per cent).

Paper three: Reading as a writer, writing as a reader (two hours; 32 per cent).

Coursework: Independent study: analysing and producing texts (20 per cent).

Future Pathways

Studying English Language and Literature at A Level can lead to exciting career opportunities in

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Examination Board

OCR

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language **Grade 5**

GCSE English Literature **Grade 5**

fields such as journalism, writing, teaching, publishing, editing and the media industry.

With a solid foundation in language and literature, you can pursue a degree in English or related fields at university. It also provides a solid foundation for further studies in humanities, law, or journalism. With strong analytical and communication skills, you'll be equipped to excel in various fields. By exploring different literary works, you will also gain a deeper understanding of culture and society.



English Literature



Studying English Literature at A Level offers a deep exploration of literary texts, fostering analytical, interpretative, and creative skills. This course allows students to engage with a wide range of literature from different periods, genres, and cultures, encouraging a profound appreciation for the power of storytelling and artistic expression.

One of the key reasons to study English Literature is the opportunity to delve into the minds of some of the greatest writers in history. The course covers a diverse selection of texts, including prose, poetry, and drama, ranging from classic works like Shakespeare to modern, contemporary authors.

By analysing themes such as love, power, identity, and morality, students gain insights into human nature and societal issues, developing their critical thinking skills.

English Literature encourages independent thought and a nuanced approach to texts, prompting students to explore various interpretations and consider how historical and social contexts influence literature. This cultivates not only intellectual curiosity but also empathy, as literature often reflects the complexity of human emotions and experiences.

Studying English Literature enables transferable skills to develop, such as close reading, critical analysis, argument construction, and effective communication. These skills are essential in careers like law, journalism, publishing, and teaching, making this A Level a rewarding choice for those passionate about literature and its wider cultural significance.

Subject Content

Students study one Shakespeare play (from *Coriolanus*, *Hamlet*, *Measure for Measure*, *Richard III*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*). Some of the core texts studied include *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald; *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck; and *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen. Students will also study a collection of poetry from Christina Rossetti.

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the ways in which writers shape meanings in texts; the ways in which texts are interpreted by different readers, including over time; the ways in which texts relate to one another and to literary traditions, movements and genres; the significance of cultural and contextual influences on readers and writers.

Learners will also develop understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which the chosen literary texts are written and received, and explore connections across the chosen literary texts.

How is it assessed?

Assessment is formed by two, closed-text written examinations and one coursework component.

Paper one: Drama and poetry pre-1900 (two and a half hours; 40 per cent of overall grade).

Paper two: Comparative and contextual study (two and a half hours; 40 per cent).

Coursework: Literature post-1900 (20 per cent). There are two tasks: close reading or re-creative writing with commentary – both must be based on one literary text; and a

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Examination Board

OCR

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language **Grade 6**

GCSE English Literature **Grade 6**

comparative essay – must be based on two literary texts.

Future Pathways

Studying English Literature at A Level opens up a world of possibilities! Students can pursue a career in writing, teaching, publishing, or even become a literary critic. It also provides a solid foundation for further studies in humanities, law, or journalism. With strong analytical and communication skills, you'll be equipped to excel in various fields. Plus, you'll have the chance to explore different literary works and gain a deeper understanding of culture and society.



Extended Project Qualification



The Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project Qualification, often referred to as the EPQ, is a standalone qualification designed to encourage independent learning and research skills among students. The subject of the EPQ is not fixed and can vary widely, allowing students to choose a topic they are passionate about or that relates to their future academic or career aspirations.

The EPQ is essential for several reasons. Firstly, it fosters critical thinking, research, and project management skills, which are highly transferable and valuable in both higher education and the workplace. It enables students to delve deeply into a subject of personal interest, enhancing their knowledge and passion in that area. Moreover, it is well-regarded by universities and can significantly strengthen university applications, often helping students secure offers from top institutions. Additionally, it offers a sense of achievement and personal growth, as students tackle a substantial, self-directed project from inception to completion. Ultimately, the EPQ equips students with valuable skills and experiences to excel in their future endeavours.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is through a combination of four key components: Project Proposal and Plan (20 per cent); Production Log (10 per cent); Project Outcome (60 per cent); and Presentation (10 per cent).

The combined marks from these four components determine the final grade for the EPQ, which is awarded from A* to E.

Key skills required

Completing a Level 3 Extended Project (EPQ) requires a range of key skills:

Research Skills: The ability to conduct in-depth research, including finding and evaluating sources, is fundamental.

Critical Thinking: Analytical and critical thinking skills are essential for assessing information and forming well-reasoned arguments.

Project Management: Effective time management and organizational skills are vital to meet project milestones and deadlines.

Communication: Strong written and, to a lesser extent, verbal communication skills are needed to convey research findings and ideas clearly.

Independent Learning: Self-motivation and the ability to work independently are crucial for self-directed projects.

Problem Solving: Identifying challenges in research and finding solutions is key to project success.

Reflection: Keeping a production log and reflecting on the research process helps you to learn from your experiences.

Adaptability: Being open to feedback and willing to adjust research strategies or project direction when necessary.

Future pathways

Completing a Level 3 EPQ opens up a range of future pathways and career opportunities. It enhances critical thinking, research, and project management skills, which are valuable in academia and the

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language **Grade 5**

Learners must have a genuine interest in their chosen topic; motivation to undertake independent research; and a foundational understanding of the subject they plan to explore.

workplace. Many universities highly regard the EPQ and lower their entry requirement if they see that you have a good EPQ result. It prepares students for the rigors of higher education and research-oriented careers.

Furthermore, the EPQ showcases an individual's ability to independently tackle complex topics, making them stand out to potential employers. It can lead to careers in research, academia, project management, or any field that values analytical thinking and self-directed learning.



French



“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.”

- Nelson Mandela

“A special kind of beauty exists which is born in language, of language, and for language.”

- Gaston Bachelard

The French A Level course offers stimulating and rich contents to enable you to develop your linguistic skills, alongside your understanding of the culture and society of countries where French is spoken.

You will explore the influence of the past and present-day French-speaking communities. In the first year, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of French-speaking countries. In the second year further aspects of the social background are covered, this time focusing on issues such as life for those on the margins of French-speaking society, as well as looking at the positive influences that diversity brings.

Throughout your studies, you will learn the language in the context of French-speaking countries and the issues and influences which have shaped them. You will develop a whole range of transferable skills, such as essay-writing skills through the study of a novel and film, and you will have the opportunity to carry out an Independent Research Project (IRP) as part of your speaking examination.

Subject Content

Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends:

The evolving nature of family; Cybersociety; the role of voluntary work.

Artistic culture in the French-speaking world: Cultural heritage; Francophone music; Cinema.

Aspects of French-speaking society: current issues: The positive aspects of a diverse society; what life for the marginalised?; criminals and punishment.

Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world: young people, the right to vote & political engagement; demonstrations and strikes; Immigration & policies.

Book Study: “No et moi” by Delphine de Vigan.

How is it assessed?

Two written examinations, and one speaking assessment, at the end of Year 13.

Paper one: Listening, Reading and Writing (50 per cent of overall qualification). This exam assesses current trends and issues in French-speaking society, and artistic culture and aspects of political life in the French-speaking world.

Paper two: Writing (20 per cent). This exam assesses knowledge of one text and one film, or two texts, from a set list. All questions will require a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work, and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation.

Paper three: Speaking (30 per cent). Students are assessed over a 20-minute period; they discuss a sub-theme based on a stimulus card, and deliver a presentation of

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE French **Grade 6**

their individual research project. This assessment is conducted by teaching staff, but assessed externally.

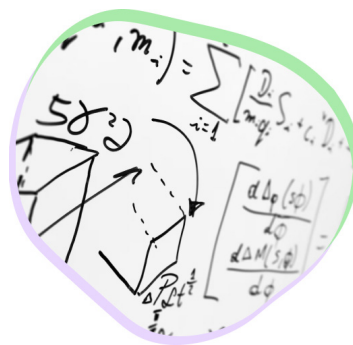
Future Pathways

French is the fifth most-widely spoken language in the world. It is spoken in 33 countries, second only to English, which is spoken officially in 45 countries. The ability to speak another language is highly sought after by employers in the current global market.

Top universities also recognise and respect the wide range of transferable skills acquired through studying a language at A Level, along with the rigorous demands of the course itself. Students may choose to study French either on its own, or as a combined programme after Sixth Form. Past students have studied French with other languages, or they have combined it with other subjects, such as Politics or History.



Further Mathematics



Further Mathematics is ideal for students with an enthusiasm for mathematics, many of whom will go on to degrees in mathematics, engineering, the sciences and economics.

The qualification is deeper and broader than A Level Mathematics. Building on the A Level Maths course, Further Maths delves deeper into key areas like calculus and proof.

The rigour of the course demands an excellent work ethic and effective time management. Students must have strong algebraic fluency and mathematical intuition and a genuine interest in the subject. The course allows student to specialise and, at Holy Cross, we offer the option to study Further Mechanics and Decision Maths.

Subject Content

As well as building on algebra and calculus introduced in A Level Mathematics, the Further Mathematics core content introduces new areas of mathematics such as complex numbers, vectors and matrices, fundamental mathematical ideas with wide applications in many fields.

The non-core content also covers mechanics on a deeper level and Decision maths which focuses on algorithms, procedures and optimisation. The course requires students to use their mathematical knowledge to make logical and reasoning decisions, in solving problems both within pure mathematics and in a variety of contexts and communicate the mathematical rationale for these decisions clearly.

Key aims and objectives of this

qualification are to enable students to understand mathematics and mathematical processes in ways that promote confidence, foster enjoyment and provide a strong foundation for progress to further study.

Students extend their range of mathematical skills and techniques; understand coherence and progression in mathematics and how different areas of mathematics are connected; apply mathematics in other fields of study and be aware of the relevance of mathematics to the world of work and to situations in society in general.

How is it assessed?

There are four one hour and a half examinations at the end of Year 13.

Paper one: Core Pure Mathematics 1; Paper two: Core Pure Mathematics 2.

Students will study the following topics: Proof, Complex numbers, Matrices, Further algebra and functions, Further calculus, Further vectors, Polar coordinates, Hyperbolic functions, and Differential equations. Any of these topics could appear in either paper.

Paper three: Further Mathematics Option 1. Students study Further Mechanics 1, looking at Momentum and impulse, Work, energy and power, Elastic strings and springs, and Elastic Collisions.

Paper four: Further Mathematics Option 2. Students study Decision 1, looking at Algorithms, Route inspection, Linear Programming, Critical Path analysis, and Spanning Trees.

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 8**

Future Pathways

The Further Maths course enhances the offering of students who are planning to study mathematics, physics, computer science or engineering at university. For courses in Mathematics at Oxford or Cambridge and, for certain other Russell Group universities, it is a requirement. It is often a preferred subject for university courses related to Mathematics such as Economics, Computer Science and, in some cases, Architecture and Engineering.

In general, the course simply gives students' university application an added advantage, even in courses where it is not explicitly stated as an eligibility requirement.



Geography

“You can travel the seas, poles and deserts and see nothing. To really understand the world you need to get under the skin of the people and places. In other words, learn about Geography. I can't imagine a subject more relevant in schools. We'd all be lost without it.” - Michael Palin

Geography is a fascinating subject about the environment, how places differ, how physical systems work and about how people interact with the world.

A level Geography provides students with the opportunity to investigate issues facing people and the environment. Through the course topics and skills developed along the way, students are encouraged to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the interdependence and interconnectedness of our world and grow in their role as global citizens.

In addition to the concepts and processes, a range of skills are learnt by studying geography including; analytical skills, critical thinking, communication, data collection/manipulation, evaluation, problem solving and teamwork.

Geography is a demanding academic subject and is highly valued among universities.

Subject Content

AQA Geography A Level covers a balance of both physical and human topics, alongside fieldwork and investigative skills.

Physical Geography: Water and Carbon Cycles; Coastal Systems and Landscapes; Hazards.

Human Geography: Global Systems and Governance; Changing Places;

Contemporary Urban Environments

Non examined assessment: This is an independent investigation, based on fieldwork. Fieldwork is an integral and compulsory part of A Level Geography.

How is it assessed?

A Level Geography is split into three components for the AQA exam board.

Paper 1: Physical Geography (120 marks) - 40%

Paper 2: Human Geography (120 marks) - 40%

Both of the written papers are 2 hours 30 minutes

Question types: short answer, levels of response and extended writing

Non-Examination Assessment 20%.

Students will complete a geographical investigation which is linked to the specification content but based on a question defined individually by students. As part of the investigation students must undertake independent fieldwork.

The NEA is marked by teachers and moderated externally. The report will be 3000 to 4000 words. Time is given to write up the report independently.

Future Pathways

Geography is a subject that bridges the Arts and the Sciences and is a popular degree choice at university. Geographers combine relevant and applicable knowledge with a strong skills base and are regarded as flexible, adaptable and good at solving problems and are sought after in many occupations. Popular careers destinations are business,

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Geography **Grade 6**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

GCSE English Language OR

English Literature **Grade 5**

law, management consultancy, civil servants, diplomats, journalism, vocational careers such as teaching and a range of environmentally based careers such as conservation and development.



Health & Social Care



This course allows students to engage in a broad investigation of various aspects of the health and social care sector. Working in this diverse, exciting and expanding sector will provide job satisfaction and where you can make a positive impact in people's lives.

Students focus on the principles that underpin meeting the care and support needs of individuals, which are the foundation of all services within health and social care. Health education, its purpose and use of different approaches and models to achieve positive health outcomes will be studied in the Health Promotion unit.

Students will develop a range of skills, including communication, research and critical thinking. This course will also build on the students' cultural and social understanding when studying individuals from a range of life stages with complex needs.

During this course students will understand the importance of interpersonal skills including compassion and empathy when working and caring for others. It will develop the awareness of responsibilities of professionals to be adaptable and innovative in delivering care and managing their own time and learning.

Subject Content

Students examine physical, intellectual, emotional and social development across the human lifespan, the interaction between biological and social factors in health and well-being and how health care professionals provide effective care. They will explore the structure and normal physiological functioning of

the human body, and the effect on health of common disorders of the body systems.

By studying this course you will be able to draw together, analyse and critically evaluate information, communicate effectively with individuals and work as a team

Health and Social Care is designed to develop your knowledge in key areas such as Duty of Care, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, championing health and wellbeing, learning about mental capacity and personal wellbeing.

How is it assessed?

There are three compulsory units, and one optional unit, as follows:

Unit 1: Human Lifespan and Development

Unit 2: Human Biology and Health

Unit 3: Principles of Health and Social Care Practice

Unit 4: Promoting Health Education (optional).

Unit 1 and 2 are external examinations set and marked by Pearson in Year 12 (unit 1) and in Year 13 (unit 2).

Coursework in Year 12 and Year 13 for units 3 and 4.

Future Pathways

Studying Health and Social Care will enable students to progress to a degree programme in a range of careers in the health and social care sector, including the following degrees: BSC Nursing; BSC Social Work and BSC Subjects Allied to Health.

Pathways may also include working

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language **Grade 5**

BTEC Health & Social Care (if taken) **Level 2 Merit**

in hospitals as a Radiographer, Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Dietician, and Chiropodist. Students also consider pathways in Social Work; Family Social Worker and Probation. Nursing is a popular choice and includes Practice nurse, Midwife, Community Nurse, Children's Nurse, Health Visitor, School Nurse and Mental Health Nurse.

Education is another career choice; Early Years, Primary and Secondary Teacher; Play Worker and Youth Worker.



History

'History is who we are and why we are the way we are.'

- David McCullough

'A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.'

- Marcus Garvey

Everything happening around us today has been influenced by and is a result of what has happened in the past. History can help us predict what could happen in the future.

History is a fascinating subject which gives us a greater understanding of the world in which we live. History is about people, their rich, varied, and compelling lives and events that still impact our own lives today. Studying history broadens the mind and gives you valuable skills.

History is a firm foundation for many academic courses and career choices. It is widely respected by universities and employers as a discipline which promotes independent thinking, research skills and the ability to present a logical argument.

The work and assessments you will complete throughout the course will help you develop several highly sought after and transferable skills.

Don't worry, you are not expected to be an expert right away!

By studying History, you will develop and hone your critical reasoning and analytical skills as well as the capacity for solving problems and thinking creatively.

You will demonstrate intellectual rigour and independence, together with the ability to conduct detailed research. You'll be able to build arguments and make judgements as

well as communicate your findings clearly and persuasively, whether spoken or in writing.

Subject Content

Component 1: Breadth Study – The Tudors: England 1485-1603

Component 2: Depth Study – Democracy & Nazism: Germany 1918-1945

Component 3: Historical Investigation - Witchcraft: England and Salem c 1600-1695

How is it assessed?

There are two examinations at the end of Year 13: one on the Tudor unit and one on Germany. Both are 2 hours 30 minutes long. Each exam is worth 40% of the final grade. The historical investigation (coursework) comprises the final 20 per cent of your grade.

Future Pathways

'I believe that the more you know about the past, the better you are prepared for the future.'

- Theodore Roosevelt

History opens doors. Employers and universities respect the academic and critical nature of the subject. History provides you with contextual knowledge of the past and greater awareness of how the present has come to be as well as an appreciation of the diversity of human society. Alongside conceptual understanding, it allows students to hone a wide variety of valuable skills.

Many of our students go on to study History, Law, Classics, Ancient History, Social Anthropology,

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE History **Grade 6**

GCSE English Language or

Literature **Grade 5**

History is recommended, but not essential. GCSE Subject Leader approval **MUST** be given if you have not studied GCSE History. Enthusiasm and passion for History is essential. Please speak to Mrs Kay.

History & International Relations and PPE at leading universities.

History offers progression to further study and a diverse range of careers in law, journalism, accountancy, the civil service, policing, politics, teaching, heritage, media, marketing and business... to name but a few pathways open to you as a historian.



Law



A Level Law introduces students to a fascinating and broad discipline. You will learn where our laws come from, how they are enforced, and most importantly how this country 'works'. Studying law enables you to fully understand society, from the workings of our ancient democracy to the many ethical, philosophical and moral problems it faces.

Law is a unique subject that enables students to demonstrate their skills across several disciplines as it requires precision, logic and reasoning skills you have developed from your maths and science studies, and clear communication and critical thinking skills honed in the essay writing subjects such as English and history.

You will study in depth three substantive law topics: criminal, contract and tort, and become adept at applying your logic and reasoning skills to problem based scenarios in which you provide the legal advice. You will also extend your critical thinking as we probe topics that explore balancing the competing rights of individuals, and the many moral and ethical dilemmas within our justice system. You will leave your studies as a well rounded individual with multi-discipline skills to enable you to challenge, debate and form the world around you.

Subject Content

Paper 1: The legal system and criminal law (2 hours, 80 marks)

Paper 2: Law making and tort (2 hours, 80 marks)

Paper 3: Nature of law and contract (2 hours, 80 marks)

Learners will be introduced to the concept of legal

liability through the study of criminal law and the law of tort. This will enable them to develop and apply the techniques of legal method and reasoning to analyse and offer answers to legal problems, based on legal rules and principles and develop the ability to construct and communicate legal arguments by reference to appropriate legal authorities.

The A Level in Law will develop learners' knowledge of law through advanced study of an additional legal subject human rights law or the law of contract. They will develop their critical awareness of the law through the study of the nature of law.

How is it assessed?

Paper 1 & Paper 2 Two short form explain/describe/discuss questions; Two legal advice questions based on factual scenarios (these make up 50% of the papers); One essay

Paper 3 Two legal advice questions based on factual scenarios (50% of the paper); Two essays

Future Pathways

Law is a well respected and rigorously academic subject. Competence in the skills you develop are highly regarded by universities, who recognise the cross-curricular nature of the subject that develops and tests students' multidisciplinary abilities.

In a world in which more students are choosing single academic pathways - science or the humanities - a subject that encompasses both creates a well-rounded, in high-demand individual capable of cross-

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

OCR

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language OR

Literature **Grade 5**

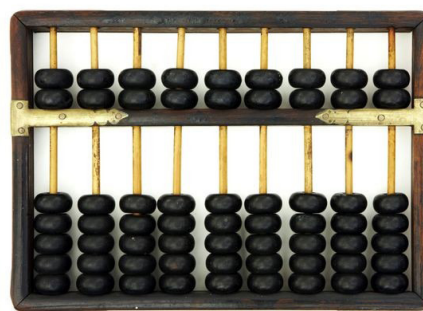
Other GCSE English **Grade 4**

disciplinary thinking. For students considering a legal career, the rise of legal apprenticeships means studying A level law gives you a head start in your career.

Law is of practical use in numerous professions, including the civil service; journalism; social work; the police; business and commercial roles; politics and many more.



Mathematics



Patterns permeate our universe and it is through analysing them that we are able to make sense of the world. Mathematics, often called the language of science, allows us to describe these patterns - such as modelling biological processes or analysing social trends. Mathematics is also an essential tool for navigating everyday situations—managing finances, understanding statistics in news reports, or making informed decisions based on data.

The A Level mathematics course is designed to hone students' mathematical thinking, problem-solving, reasoning and communication skills. There is a strong emphasis on modelling and applying mathematics to contextual real world scenarios.

Studying mathematics develops competencies that are held in high regard by employers and universities alike. It offers excellent preparation for a wide array of courses at university, particularly in STEAM careers, as well as finance, computer sciences and social sciences.

Subject Content

A significant portion of the A Level mathematics course is dedicated to pure mathematics, which covers fundamental topics such as algebra, calculus, trigonometry, and coordinate geometry.

All students also study statistics and mechanics. Statistics develops the skills required to interpret real data presented in summary or graphical form and helps us to draw conclusions about what the data shows.

Mechanics allows us to describe and make predictions about

how physical objects move and interact with each other involving ideas such as velocity, acceleration, force and mass which are central to understanding how the world works.

Key aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to understand mathematics and mathematical processes in a way that promotes confidence, fosters enjoyment and provides a strong foundation for progress to further study; extend their range of mathematical skills and techniques; understand coherence and progression in mathematics and how different areas of mathematics are connected; apply mathematics in other fields of study and be aware of the relevance of mathematics to the world of work and to situations in society in general.

How is it assessed?

Three two-hour written examinations at the end of the course.

Paper one: Pure Mathematics 1

Paper two: Pure Mathematics 2

Students study proof, algebra and functions, coordinate geometry, sequences and series, trigonometry, exponentials and logarithms, differentiation, integration, vectors, and numerical methods. Any of these topics could appear in either paper one or two.

Paper three: Statistics and Mechanics

In Statistics, students will study statistical sampling, data presentation and interpretation, probability, statistical distributions, and statistical hypothesis testing.

In Mechanics, students study modelling, quantities and units in

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 7**

Students must also sit an A-Level Bridging Assessment so that we can assess their suitability for the course.

mechanics, kinematics, forces and Newton's laws, and moments.

Future Pathways

A Level Mathematics is considered a challenging and rigorous program of study, and successful completion of the course is highly regarded by universities and employers alike. It prepares students for further study and employment in a wide range of disciplines such as sciences, social sciences, engineering and computing careers as well as business and finance.



Media Studies



Media Studies is a broad and exciting subject that explores the ways in which media texts are created, distributed, consumed and interpreted. It examines their social and cultural impact, as well as the role that they play in our everyday lives.

Students will view, evaluate and analyse a variety of media products, and develop practical skills spanning a range of media forms. They will also refine their debating skills through the discussion of contemporary issues from a range of perspectives.

This subject enhances students' media literacy, enabling them to critically analyse and create media content. By developing their critical thinking skills, students learn to deconstruct media texts, interrogate their messages and techniques, and evaluate their impact on audiences.

Additionally, students will have the opportunity to produce their own media products, applying their theoretical knowledge in a practical context. This fosters creativity and work-related skills that are essential for success in a media-driven society.

Subject Content

Key concepts of the A Level Media Studies course include how the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings; how the combination of elements of media language influence meaning; how developing technologies affect media language; the codes and conventions of media forms and products, including the processes through which media language develops as genre;

and the processes through which meanings are established through intertextuality.

Other concepts include processes of production, distribution and circulation by organisations; the nature of media production, distribution and circulation; the relationship of recent technological change and media production, distribution and circulation; and the significance of economic factors to media industries and their products.

How is it assessed?

A Level Media Studies is assessed through a combination of two, two-hour written examinations, and a coursework component. Examinations account for 70 per cent of the final grade; coursework for 30 per cent.

Paper one focuses on Media Language and Media Representations, while paper two focuses on Media Industries and Media Audiences.

The coursework component requires students to create a cross-media production. Students choose one of six annually changing briefs, which cover a range of media forms, such as film, television, radio, and online. Students must also write a statement of intent that explains their creative choices and demonstrates their understanding of relevant media theories.

The coursework is assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Future Pathways

A Level Media Studies opens doors to diverse career paths in the media industry, such as

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language OR
Literature **Grade 5**

journalism, public relations, advertising, marketing, film and television production, web design, and social media management. Additionally, it provides a solid foundation for further studies in media, communication, or related fields at university level. Graduates from these programmes often find themselves in roles such as media analysts, content creators, digital marketing specialists, communication strategists, and film critics.

A Level Media Studies is a valuable subject that equips students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in a variety of careers in the media and beyond.



Music



A-Level Music provides a well-rounded and engaging approach to understanding music, both in theory and practice. This course gives students the chance to refine key skills in performance, composition, and listening, all while exploring a wide range of musical traditions. Pearson Edexcel A-Level Music is designed to keep pace with the modern music industry, helping students develop the abilities needed for successful futures in fields like performance, composition, or academic research.

The course structure ensures a balanced education, combining theoretical learning with practical application. Students will engage in critical and creative thinking, enhancing their cultural awareness through the study of set works from various genres, including vocal, instrumental, jazz, and film music. The curriculum is designed for continuous growth, building on previous knowledge and providing support for those new to music.

With regular opportunities to perform, compose, and analyse music, students will gain a deeper understanding of musical elements and styles. This comprehensive approach ensures students are prepared for further study in music or other fields, whether in higher education or in the professional world.

Subject Content

Unit 1: Performance (30%) – Solo and ensemble performances, externally assessed

Unit 2: Composition (30%) – Free composition and composition to a brief, externally assessed

Unit 3: Appraising (40%) – Written

exam focusing on set works and wider listening: Vocal music; Instrumental music; music for film; popular music and jazz; fusions; new directions.

Students will develop their listening and appraising skills through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres. Students will engage critically with music and develop an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts. The skills of musical analysis and evaluation of music in aural and written form are core: these skills will be developed through attentive listening coupled with acute aural perception skills. Analysis of the key musical elements will lead to an understanding of genres, styles and traditions, students will demonstrate specialist musical vocabulary and notation skills. With these skills, the expected outcome is the ability to discern the relationship between compositional devices and musical techniques.

How is it assessed?

A-Level Music is assessed through practical performance (30%), composition (30%), and a written exam (40%) on appraising set works and wider listening.

Future Pathways

A-Level Music offers many future opportunities. It prepares students for degrees in music-related subjects like performance, composition, music production, or music education. Potential careers include professional musicianship, composing for media, music teaching, or roles in arts management and administration.

The skills gained through A-Level

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Music **Grade 6**

Students must also have

Grade 5 performance standard on an instrument or voice.

Music—critical thinking, creativity, and communication—are also valuable in fields beyond music, such as media, broadcasting, event management, and the wider creative industries. Additionally, the discipline and dedication required for music study make it a strong foundation for careers in law, business, and marketing.



Physical Education

A Level Physical Education (PE) is an academic discipline that explores the theoretical and practical aspects of physical activity and sports science. This subject delves into the mechanics of the human body, exercise physiology, psychology, and the sociocultural factors (including technology) influencing sports and physical activity. A key emphasis is placed on understanding the principles of training, sports performance analysis, and the role of physical education in promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.

A Level PE is important for several reasons. Firstly, it equips students with a profound understanding of the human body and its response to exercise, fostering a comprehensive knowledge of fitness and well-being. Additionally, it encourages critical thinking and analytical skills through the study of applied anatomy and physiology, skill acquisition, sports psychology, biomechanics, and socio-cultural factors. Furthermore, in an era where physical inactivity is a global health concern, A-Level PE plays a vital role in promoting physical activity and developing future leaders in sports, coaching, and health-related professions. Overall, A-Level PE is essential for fostering a holistic understanding of human movement, health, and well-being.

Subject Content

A Level Physical Education demands a combination of theoretical understanding and practical application, making it essential to develop a well-rounded skill set to excel in the subject.

Studying A Level PE requires

a diverse set of skills, including analytical thinking, practical competence, time management, critical evaluation, independence, attention to detail, application of theory, and research, communication, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills.

How is it assessed?

Two, two-hour written examinations at the end of Year 13, and a non-exam assessment split into two parts.

Paper one: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport (35 per cent of overall qualification).

Paper two: Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport (35 per cent).

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA):

NEA 1: Performance or coaching of an activity (15 per cent): Students choose one activity as a performer or coach and are assessed on their practical skills or coaching abilities.

NEA 2: Analysis and evaluation of performance (15 per cent). This assessment involves students analyzing and evaluating their own performance or the performance of others in their chosen activity. They need to provide video evidence and a written report discussing their weaknesses, and strategies for improvement.

Future Pathways

Some potential pathways and careers include Higher Education, teaching, coaching, sports psychology, sports medicine, sports management, sports journalism, sports science research, fitness and personal training,

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Physical Education **Grade 6**

GCSE Biology **Grade 5** OR GCSE
Combined Science **Grade 5:5**

Students must make a regular commitment to one extra-curricular competitive sport.

sports development, nutrition and dietetics, and recreation and leisure management.

It's important to note that some careers may require additional qualifications or specialized training beyond A Level PE. Therefore, students should research specific requirements for their desired career paths. Additionally, work experience and internships can be invaluable in building connections and practical experience in the sports and physical education industry.



Physics



Physics is the fundamental science that seeks to understand the nature of the physical world and the laws that govern it. It is the science that underpins our understanding of everything, from the tiniest subatomic particles to the vast expanse of the universe.

By studying A level physics you will gain many transferable skills, including risk evaluation, evidence based decision making, teamwork and communicating complex ideas through collaborative working and presentations. These skills are developed through a variety of activities including: research project, university visits, extracurricular enhancement activities e.g. The ORBYTS project with UCL.

The OCR A Level Physics course at Holy Cross is an academically robust course which will deepen your comprehension of Physics, enhance your problem-solving abilities, develop your scientific literacy, and ignite your curiosity.

Studying Physics is vital in today's world as it equips you with the skills to address complex global challenges such as climate change, energy production, and healthcare advancements.

Subject Content

Core Topics: Students will explore a range of core topics including mechanics, electricity, waves, and modern physics. These areas cover everything from the motion of objects and the forces acting upon them to the behavior of light and sound waves, as well as the peculiarities of quantum physics and relativity.

Mathematical Applications: Physics at this level involves a

significant amount of mathematics, with approximately 40% of the content requiring application of mathematical skills to solve physics problems.

Advanced Theories: Beyond the basics, students will delve into more complex theories and concepts, such as particle physics, astrophysics, and nuclear physics, requiring a deep understanding of theoretical and mathematical principles.

How is it assessed?

Students sit three papers at the end of Year 13.

Paper 1 Modelling Physics 37% of the total marks

Paper 2 Exploring Physics 37% of the total marks

Paper 3 Unified Physics 26% of the total marks

40% of written exam assessment covers mathematical skills.

Practical Endorsement: Students are teacher-assessed across two years in set practical activities. This is reported separately as part of their A Level certificate.

Future Pathways

A Level Physics is a gateway to numerous exciting career opportunities. With an A Level in Physics, you can pursue careers including:

Engineering: Mechanical, electrical, aerospace, civil, or sound engineering.

Research and Academia: Contribute to scientific discoveries as a researcher or academic.

Medicine: Specialise in medical physics or pursue a career as a medical doctor.

Subject Leaders

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Examination Board

OCR

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Physics, and GCSE Biology or Chemistry **Grade 6**

GCSE Biology or Chemistry **Grade 5**

OR

GCSE Combined Science **Grade 6:6**

WITH

GCSE English Language

or English Literature **Grade 5**

GCSE Mathematics **Grade 5**

Finance and Data Analysis: Use your analytical skills in the financial sector or data analysis.

Architecture and Design & Technology: Apply your knowledge of material science in building and product design.

Energy and Environmental Science: Address global challenges in energy production and sustainability, Nuclear fusion research.

Space and Astrophysics: Explore the mysteries of the universe as an astrophysicist or space scientist.



Psychology



Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. It encompasses a wide range of topics, all aimed at understanding and explaining various aspects of human cognition, emotion, development, personality, social interaction, and mental health.

Psychologists use research methods and empirical evidence to explore and gain insights into how people think, feel, and behave. It helps us understand why people behave the way they do. It provides insights into the factors that influence our thoughts, emotions, and actions. Psychologists play a crucial role in diagnosing and treating mental health disorders. They develop therapies and interventions to help individuals manage and overcome issues such as depression, anxiety, and addiction.

Educational psychologists study how people learn and develop, leading to better teaching methods and curriculum design. This can ultimately improve educational outcomes for students of all ages.

In summary, psychology is important because it helps us better understand ourselves and others, improves mental health and well-being, enhances relationships, informs education and workplace practices, and contributes to the development of effective interventions for a wide range of societal issues. It plays a fundamental role in improving the quality of human life and the functioning of society as a whole.

Subject Content

Topics in A Level study include social psychology: why we conform or obey and what causes

independent behaviour; memory - how and why we remember, how and why we forget, factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony, and the use of the cognitive interview to improve it; attachment - how and why we form our earliest relationships, animal studies of attachment, what happens when attachments are disrupted, and the influence of early attachments on our later relationships; psychopathology - definitions of abnormality, understanding phobias, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder, and biological, cognitive and behavioural treatments for these disorders.

The course also covers approaches in psychology - the basic assumptions of the behaviourist, cognitive, biological psychodynamic and humanistic approaches to understanding human behaviour and personality - and biopsychology - understanding the divisions of the nervous system.

How is it assessed?

Three, two-hour examinations at the end of Year 13, which will cover all material over the two years. Each paper is out of 96 and equally weighted, worth a third of all marks.

Paper one is purely year one content, memory, social influence, psychopathology and attachment.

Paper two has some year twelve content and some year thirteen content, research methods, approaches and biopsychology.

Paper three is all taught in year thirteen including topics of stress, forensic psychology, relationships and issues and debates.

Subject Leader

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language or

English Literature **Grade 5**

GCSE Mathematics Higher **Grade 5**

GCSE Biology **Grade 5** or GCSE

Combined Science **Grade 5:5**

Future Pathways

A degree in psychology opens up a wide range of career opportunities in various fields, but many careers in psychology require advanced degrees (master's or doctoral).

Areas include clinical, counselling, educational, forensic, and health psychology. Sports psychologists work with athletes to enhance their performance, whilst neuropsychologists study the relationship between brain function and behaviour. They assess and treat individuals with neurological disorders and may work in hospitals or rehabilitation centres.



Sociology

Society is ever changing; from the global financial crisis, to the post-pandemic landscape, to the impact of new technologies, there is always change.

Sociology allows students to explore our increasingly diverse world, highlighting the multiple forms of power and inequality, within a variety of institutions, and how they affect the lives of us all. By joining together the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions of life, sociology gives students the tools to make better informed decisions about social issues.

It is a forward-thinking subject, with practical and personal application, helping students understand a wide range of topics that are actively affecting people locally, nationally and internationally.

Not only does it provide students with the understanding of key events of our time and how they are linked to the main forces and institutions that shape the modern world, but it will also assist them in adapting and coping with inevitable societal change.

The debates and discussions that are held throughout the course will help to develop a wide range of practical and transferable skills, including critical thinking, analysis, research and communication.

The skills developed will be applicable to many areas of work: exploring a variety of perspectives will allow students to make rational and measured decisions in the interest of fairness; group projects will provide students with the opportunity to enhance their teamwork skills; whilst independent work will equip them with skills of autonomy and self-dependence.

Subject Content

Students will become familiar with the following content: the role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure; differential educational achievement of social groups by social class; gender and ethnicity in contemporary society; relationships; and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures.

Other topics include crime, deviance, social order and social control; the social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime; globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; victims; and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.

How is it assessed?

There are three examinations at the end of Year 13 which make up 100% of the Sociology A Level: paper 1 consists of Education with Theory and Methods; paper 2 consists of The Media and Families and Households; and paper 3 consists of Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Each paper is 2 hours long with an equal weighting of the final grade.

Future Pathways

As the world adjusts to the post-pandemic landscape, the need for the next generation to understand and to answer society's most pressing questions has become more important than ever. Studying

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Examination Board

AQA

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE English Language or
English Literature **Grade 5**

sociology involves continuous interplay between matters of concern in society and concepts of society. It encourages students to critically analyse the workings of our society, applying the material to their own personal lived experiences.

Careers and pathways related to Sociology are diverse and varied. The subject focuses on the understanding of human attitudes and behaviour and therefore any 'people related' job would be a natural fit. Sociology itself is a popular choice of degree course and can lead to careers in social research, youth work, teaching, policy work, the NHS, charitable work, Law, family support, local and central government and community based development.



Spanish

The Spanish A Level course offers stimulating and rich contents to enable students to develop their linguistic skills, alongside their understanding of the culture and society of countries where Spanish is spoken.

Students will study technological and social change, looking at the multicultural nature of Hispanic society. They will study highlights of Hispanic artistic culture, including a focus on Spanish regional identity and the cultural heritage of past civilisations. They will learn about aspects of the diverse political landscape of the Hispanic world. Students will explore the influence of the past on present-day Hispanic communities.

Throughout their studies, students learn the language in the context of Hispanic countries and issues and influences which have shaped them. Students will develop their essay-writing skills through the study of a novel and film, and they will have the opportunity to carry out an Independent Research Project (IRP) as part of their speaking examination.

Subject Content

The A Level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture and society.

The A-Level Spanish syllabus is meticulously crafted to provide students with a deep and well-rounded understanding of both the Spanish language and the cultural contexts in which it is used.

It encompasses a broad range of themes and topics, divided into three core areas: Social Issues and Trends,

Political and Artistic Culture, and Grammar. These areas are designed not only to enhance linguistic skills but also to foster a comprehensive appreciation of the diverse and rich cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.

How is it assessed?

Two written examinations, and one speaking assessment, at the end of Year 13.

Paper one: Listening, Reading and Writing (50 per cent of overall qualification). This exam assesses current trends and issues in Hispanic society, and artistic culture and aspects of political life in the Spanish-speaking world.

Paper two: Writing (20 per cent). This exam assesses knowledge of one text and one film, or two texts, from a set list. All questions will require a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work, and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation.

Paper three: Speaking (30 per cent). Students are assessed over a 20-minute period; they discuss a sub-theme based on a stimulus card, and deliver a presentation of their individual research project. This assessment is conducted by teaching staff, but assessed externally.

Future Pathways

The ability to speak another language is now more important than ever in today's society and Spanish now represents one of most influential and widely spoken languages in the world. The ability

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

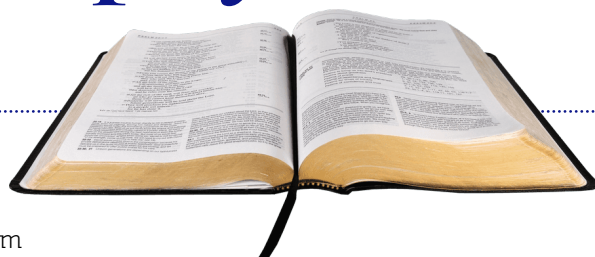
GCSE Spanish **Grade 6**

to speak another language is highly sought after by employers in the current global market.

Top universities also recognise and respect the wide range of transferable skills acquired through studying a language at A level, along with the rigorous demands of the course itself. Students may choose to study Spanish either on its own, or as a combined subject after Sixth Form.



Theology, Philosophy, and Ethics



Philosophy and Ethics will let you examine the most fundamental questions in life, and Theology/New Testament will help you to critically examine beliefs and traditions that inform such views, and shape people's identity, ethnicity, and behaviour. It is a highly engaging subject, and you can expect classes to involve a considerable amount of discussion and debate.

You learn to ask questions about the nature of reality and the place of religion within our world.

You develop skills in explanation, critical analysis, evaluation and debate.

You understand the world around you and the diverse views of a range of different people.

The course is grounded in scholarship, so you learn about how key thinkers have developed philosophical ideas by analysing their writings.

You develop your writing ability, learning to present your thoughts clearly and write coherent arguments, which are grounded in reason.

You will learn skills that can be applied to other subjects and in many different areas of life and it also pairs well with other subjects such as history, politics, geography, economics, psychology, and the sciences.

Finally Philosophy, Theology and Ethics is an intellectually demanding subject that can be rewarding for those who are ready to work hard and enjoy a challenge.

Subject Content

This course involves the study of three different strands.

Philosophy is the study of wisdom and it gives you the opportunity to study some ultimate questions such as philosophical arguments about the existence of God, the problem of evil and suffering, and philosophical debates about miracles.

Ethics is thought provoking and relevant to many careers today such as law and medicine as it deals with current issues in society. You will study the relationship between religion and morality; ethical theories such as Utilitarianism and Situation ethics and ethical issues including War and Peace and Sexual Ethics.

New Testament Studies/Theology will give you the opportunity to study the Gospel texts, the scholarly and critical methods used today to study the text of the New Testament. You will also explore aspects of Christian Theology, for example the nature of Jesus as both human and divine.

This Philosophy, Theology (NT) and Ethics course enables you to develop a broad spectrum of knowledge, understanding and skills, through these three subject areas. You will enhance your academic skills of critical analysis, evaluation and extended written argument.

How is it assessed?

The course is comprised of three separate, equally weighted components.

There are three exam papers in total, Philosophy, Ethics and New Testament. These exams are two hours long per paper, with each one marked out of 80. Each of these papers consists of three sections, and students must answer all questions in section A, section B and in section C.

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Examination Board

Pearson Edexcel

Minimum Entry Requirements

GCSE Religious Studies **Grade 6**

GCSE English Language or
English Literature **Grade 5**

Future Pathways

Studying Philosophy, Theology/NT and Ethics at A Level forms excellent preparation for further education; a wide range of careers; and life in general. The skills acquired will be useful to anyone interested in going into many areas, including law, medicine, journalism, psychology, history, and the arts.

The skills learned will also be very important for anyone involved in making important decisions, those who need to form strong opinions or those wishing to work with people. This might include nursing, counselling, publishing, social work, or education