THE THOMAS HARDYE SIXTH FORM

2027

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THE THOMAS HARDYE SCHOOL
QUEENS AVENUE
DORCHESTER
DT1 2ET

Sixth Form

The school's sixth form is vibrant and ambitious.

Ofsted

Design by C Lester
Print by Print Team Dorset

Welcome

Welcome to the sixth form prospectus. This is an important stage in your education when you will be making key decisions about your future. You will want to ensure that you are in the best possible position to make the right choices, and at Thomas Hardye you will have the opportunity to do just that. We have an outstanding track record of success that enables students to take up their first choice of university or career, whatever that might be. We offer the broadest range of subjects to meet individual needs alongside excellent support and guidance provided by experienced staff who understand how to make the most of your abilities and talents.

The sixth form should be a period of enrichment when you supplement your academic studies with other activities that broaden your mind and your circle of friends. We place high importance on sports, music, clubs and activities, travel and community involvement. We expect you to get involved and contribute.

The Sixth Form is an exciting time in your life and Thomas Hardye will provide you with everything you need for future success.

Thank you for your interest in our work.
I look forward to meeting you in person.

Nick Rutherford
HEADTEACHER

Meet the Team

Sixth Form Team. l-r Mr Bruchez, Mrs Allner, Miss Tinsley, Mr Bewley, Mrs Campbell, Miss Morgan, Miss Inns, Mr Ayre, Mrs Noble, Mr Hall. *Absent from photo:* Mrs Aslett

Mrs Noble is Head of Sixth Form/Assistant Headteacher. She supports the work of the year teams to maintain excellent progress, attainment, attendance and conduct of the students, as well as ensuring excellent standards across the sixth form. She teaches geography.

Mr Hall is Head of Year 12 and is responsible for the delivery of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). He teaches art, specialising in relief and screen printing.

Mrs Allner is Deputy Year 12 Coordinator with responsibility for student learning in the sixth form and she also oversees the Student Union and its work. She teaches economics and business studies.

Mr Bewley is Head of Year 13 and leads a full programme of enrichment activities across the sixth form, responsible for broadening the education opportunities for all students, as well as the PSHCE programme in sixth form. He teaches English and classics.

Mrs Campbell is Deputy Year 12 Coordinator and is responsible for preparing sixth form students for the world of work. She helps develop the employability skills of all students, providing advice and guidance about apprenticeships and employment. She teaches biology and science.

Mr Ayre is Higher Education Coordinator and Early Applicant Coordinator, responsible for providing high quality advice, guidance and support to students interested in higher education. He teachers English and classics.

Miss Inns is the Sixth Form Office Manager and oversees all administrative aspects of the sixth form, especially the application cycles each year for prospective students.

Miss Morgan is the Sixth Form Attendance Officer.

Mr Bruchez is a senior academic mentor and tutor, teaching chemistry and science. Working primarily with Y12 students, he runs a mentoring programme to build skills to help with the opportunities on offer and success in the sixth form.

Miss Tinsley is the Mentoring Lead and **Mrs Aslett** is the Learning and Wellbeing Mentor. They work alongside sixth form students who are looking for guidance, advice and a safe space to feel heard and talk through challenging situations. There are no judgements and conversations can be varied and unfiltered.

*Read more about our pastoral care in our **Support** section on page 8.*

Curriculum

Curriculum

Successful students joining The Thomas Hardye Sixth Form have a thirst for knowledge, a wish to develop their interests and skills and are open to new ways of thinking. There is an exciting and wide range of subjects and qualifications on offer which enables students to select and thrive on the most suitable programme of study for them.

The advanced level pathway allows students to study three GCE A Level courses with external examinations at the end of the two years. Students can expect a series of internal assessments throughout the two years including formal assessments at the end of year 12.

The professional pathway allows students to select more vocational qualifications with external assessments throughout the two years. Some of these qualifications can be studied alongside A Level courses.

Detailed information is available in the ***Courses & Guidelines*** section of the prospectus from page 12 onwards.

Core Maths is a Level 3 course for students who have achieved a good pass at GCSE mathematics. It has been designed to better prepare students for the mathematical demands of work, study and life. The one year course was developed with input from employers, universities and professional bodies to be a valuable preparation for higher education and employment. It would be especially useful for students studying A levels with some mathematical content. Students can select Core Maths as a fourth subject in year 12.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an additional qualification which enables students to further their learning and abilities beyond normal sixth form study. Students choose an area of interest, then plan, research and carry out a project. Students will also deliver a presentation and provide evidence of all stages of project development and production.

The skills acquired whilst completing the EPQ prepare students for university or their future career. A number of universities are including the EPQ in their offers to students, as the qualification is worth more than half an A level and can earn extra UCAS points. Students can start the EPQ after they have enrolled.

The tutor time programme is an important part of enriching students time in the sixth form. It includes programme of sessions which will equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to develop into an independent learner. Tutors also cover a wide range of topics and activities which include careers guidance, current affairs, wellbeing and more.

All students can request friends to be in their new tutor group, but are also encouraged to make new friendships.

Dorset Enhanced A Level Music Pathway

Students studying A Level Music will also have access to the DEAL Music pathway which offers a range of other opportunities to perform, learn new instruments, attend trips and masterclasses and at least 50% funding for a 30 minute instrumental/vocal lesson at school. The department are proud of all their performers and in 2026 were a finalist for Outstanding School Music Department. More information can be found on their website, scan QR below, and from Mr Trevorrow, the head of department.

Futures

Thomas Hardye Sixth Form students have a full programme of support towards their post sixth form transition to university, apprenticeships or employment.

Whilst it may seem daunting to think about Futures as soon as students start in the sixth form, we want to ensure that all students are aware of the exciting opportunities that are available to them. All students are challenged to have high aspirations in their individual post 18 routes and year 12 is an important time to enhance a student's experiences and CV to help make those applications when they are ready.

Work Experience

A work experience placement can be invaluable in helping you come to a decision about future career options and higher education courses. Work experience placements will not only develop your confidence and provide you with a greater understanding of the working environment but will also be very helpful when applying to university courses and future employment. Students are encouraged to search and find their own work experience opportunities, and complete a placement in the summer term.

> **The information that pupils receive about their next steps, including apprenticeships and universities, is of high quality.**
>
> *Ofsted, 2025*

Our advice and guidance is extensive and includes:

- Subject-based discussion groups for those wishing to apply to leading universities.
- A two-year mentoring programme for Oxbridge and early applicants wishing to study medicine.
- Careers Fairs; meeting local employers and apprenticeship providers.
- A dedicated Professional Pathways Co-ordinator.
- Workshops for subject specific careers including law, psychology, health and accounting/business
- Mock interviews for all with local employers and business people.
- CV and personal statement writing workshops.
- Work experience and many opportunities for voluntary work.

Leadership & Enrichment

> **The school's impressive extra-curricular offer is very much part of sixth-form life.**
>
> *Ofsted, 2025*

The sixth form challenges students to be self-motivated and to become independent learners. Leadership qualities such as vision, integrity and humility are developed through the wealth of enrichment activities on offer whilst skills in communication, taking responsibility and organisation continue to grow.

The Student Union forms an active part of the sixth form; they organise social, sporting and charity fund-raising events as well as representing the views of the wider student body. Presidents are elected each summer and they lead a wider team of Student Union Ambassadors who all contribute to an active and vibrant sixth form.

Some students have also enjoyed competitive recognition of their enrichment activities with students being successful in maths (Ritangle), engineering (Landrover 4x4), languages (UK Linguistics Olympiad), photography (Saatchi Schools), art (Royal Academy Summer Show), food science (Young Chef) and picking up a number of prizes at national Model UN conferences and Oxford Debating.

A highly active PE department provides an opportunity for students to continue with their sports. In past years, the first XI football team have reached the County Final and the rugby team has played in a national 7-aside competition at Rosslyn Park.

There are numerous opportunities for the performing arts; particular highlights include an annual musical, a variety of concerts and the choir singing in Westminster Abbey.

The Student Rep Gig caters for many different musical genres and is organised by the students.

Wider World

We live in a fast-changing and global society, and it is important that the sixth form reflects this. Students foster a global perspective by stepping out of their comfort zone and experiencing different cultures and societies. We welcome visiting students from abroad who come to study here along with department-based trips to Iceland, France, Spain and Germany*.

Students are encouraged to take part in events such as European Day of Languages, whilst student led groups such as Model United Nations and the Diversity Group provide the opportunity to take a more active role in supporting events and wider education. International affairs will often be discussed during the tutor time programme.

Recent trips, clockwise from left: Art History trip to Paris, Borneo 2025 trip & Geography trip to Iceland

Student learning and preparation for being successful in a globalised society has been enhanced with trips to the European Council for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, whilst conservation projects with organisations such as Camps International have provided the opportunity to travel to more remote countries in Central America and Asia. Presentations with trusted gap year organisations, such as Project Trust have also been at the heart of the futures programme for students planning on travel after sixth form.

To broaden students' educational experience there is a full and diverse programme of guest speakers. Past speakers include human rights barrister Sonia Ferguson and broadcaster and former MP, Rory Stewart; whilst subjects such as the Syrian refugee crisis, civil rights and climate change have been covered.

**Trips are launched throughout the year and can differ from year to year.*

Community

Top left: Debate Club in Cambridge
Bottom right: Student workshop on refurbishment of Damers Restaurant at Dorset County Hospital

Becoming a member of the sixth form is part of a much wider community and it is important that all students make a contribution, leaving behind a legacy. This could be through charitable events and volunteering. There are a number of opportunities available to mentor students in the lower school and local middle schools; these include support in lessons such as maths and one-to-one reading in English. Sixth form students have also helped to run extracurricular clubs in performing arts.

Opportunities for volunteering are encouraged in and out of school and central to this is our volunteers fair each Autumn. Students have given up their time at Dorset County Hospital, Weldmar Hospital, Dorchester Youth and Community Centre, Weymouth and Dorchester libraries, The Keep and Dorchester Youth Council.

The Student Union have invited residents of local care homes into the sixth form for a tea party with entertainment from performing arts students. The Student Union have also run environmental campaigns to increase recycling, including the Clothes Swap and also produce their own newspaper, 'The Cold Hardye Truth'. In recent years, students have held many successful fundraising events to support charities such as Macmillan, and for Ukrainian refugees.

Politics students took an active roll in organising local hustings for recent general elections, as well as conducting a mock election in school. A new Environment Hub will set up links between the many subjects that cover topics on sustainability and environmental issues.

Support

The Thomas Hardye School is highly ambitious for all pupils, and students in the sixth form.

Ofsted, 2025

We are committed to both students' academic success and personal wellbeing, helping them to flourish into well-informed and mindful adults. As part of our tutor programme, we work with students to help them get through times of pressure such as starting out in our sixth form, the exam season or just coping with work/life balance. We are visited by the charities such as Mind and make sure that all students are looked after and know where to turn to if they experience problems.

Students also have daily contact with their tutor who oversees their time in sixth form, and being aware of the pressures students face, the sixth form team are supported by our mentoring team, Miss Tinsley and Mrs Aslett. They offer support with wellbeing and health, futures advice and academic mentoring as well as social and emotional coaching. Appointments provide an opportunity to be reflective and make positive decisions. They discuss perspective and different ways to work through concerns and barriers, and also help signpost and refer students to local external agencies if they decide they want additional, specialised support.

As is the case with all post 16 providers, students can apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund which aims to help young people facing financial hardship to stay on in full-time education. Students may use bursary payments for transport, educational visits and equipment.
To find out more information, please visit:
www.ths.wessex.ac/sixth-form

We are aware that there can be many challenges that a student will face during their time in the sixth form. The E4E (Education 4 Everyone) team is committed to giving students on the SEN register the extra support they may need to be successful and independent in their studies. The E4E staff will work with you to ensure that any new assessments are carried out.

If students have had learning support before, please be aware that all students may need a new referral, and that arrangements for exams that you have had in the past may not automatically continue in year 12.

Facilities

The Sixth Form Centre is at the heart of the community including study facilities and the Hardye Café. Students in year 12 have at least two supervised study sessions in the Quiet Study Room but can use this room at any time of the week.

The Learning Resources Centre (Library) is purpose-built with sixth form study in mind and offers extensive spaces for silent work. It accommodates an outstanding range of resources as well as links to many digital and virtual resources. Laptops can be borrowed for individual study and there is a WiFi network for students bringing in their own devices. The school also has a newly renovated theatre along with new dance and drama studios which provide a variety of performance spaces.

The school has extensive sports fields and two sports halls, one of which contains a climbing wall. A fitness centre and access to the swimming pool and a 3G all-weather pitch provide other locations for sport. Thomas Hardye students are also entitled to a discounted membership at 1610 Leisure and Sports Centre. The art studios and exhibition room are always populated with student work, whilst photography students have access to a lot of specialist equipment, including a dark room.

The music department boasts several rehearsal rooms and its own recording studio. The technology department is home to the electronics laboratory and CAD-CAM facilities.

Students have access to the school WiFi and are encouraged to partake in the Bring Your Own Device scheme. Many departments offer lunchtime and after-school revision clubs and are equipped with their own computer suites or laptops for lessons.

Alumni

Testament to our excellence and high standards is the continued support we receive from our alumni, many of whom return to share their experiences to inspire current students as part of the Futures Programme. Former students share their experiences of making applications, offering advice for interviews and talking about the work they complete in their careers or university courses.

Each year around three quarters of students make an application to university, with around 35% securing a place at a Russell Group university and 10 - 15 successful early applicants; students studying medicine, veterinary science and/or going to the University of Cambridge or the University of Oxford.

Increasingly, students are applying for and securing places on prestigious degree apprenticeships. In recent years, students have joined organisations such as J.P. Morgan, Saffreys, Dyson and many more.

The sixth form welcomes students from across Dorset and the country; each making their own contributions to sixth form life. Many new life-long friendships are fostered with the shared experience of being part of an outstanding sixth form.

Don't over stress about exams and grade results. They don't define you.

Just try your hardest and you'll do well. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and don't be afraid of change..

Eva, 2025

Start revising early! Consistency always beats all nighters.

Jonathan, 2025

Just volunteer! The more you volunteer the more interesting opportunities you get!

Jacob, 2025

Don't overthink things: go with your gut and what you feel is the right decision to best suit you - always be proud of yourself.

Verity, 2025

Courses & Guidelines

1

SUBMIT ONLINE APPLICATION

by 15th January 2027

Applications will still be accepted after this deadline.

2

DISCUSS APPLICATION

February & March 2027

Visit and discuss the application with a Sixth Form Team member or tutor.

3

ENROLMENT DAY

1st September 2027

After results are published, final choices are made on Enrolment Day.

For any questions relating to the information in this prospectus, please contact:

sixthformteam@ths.wessex.ac

tel: 01305 756801 or 01305 266064

www.ths.wessex.ac/sixth-form

@thomashardyesixthform **@thssixthform**

THE THOMAS HARDYE SCHOOL QUEENS AVENUE DORCHESTER DT1 2ET

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PATHWAYS

Pathway	Entry requirements	Two year study programme
Advanced Level	5 x grades 9 - 5 Ideally including English and Maths with individual course requirements	3 x GCE Advanced Level course
Professional	5 x grades 9 - 4 Ideally including English and Maths with individual course requirements	Level 3 BTEC courses Level 3 Cambridge Technical course Level 3 WJEC Diploma

Students can select to follow the advanced level or professional pathway. For the advanced level pathway, each subject is a single option and students will select three courses. Each course must come from a different option pool: information about the option pools can be found on our website.

Students with exceptionally high performance at GCSE could consider a two year study programme consisting of 4 GCE Advanced Level courses.

For the professional pathway, each subject is a single option, equivalent to an A Level, but assessed throughout the two years. Some professional courses can be combined with A Level courses, subject to individual entry requirements and option pools.

Students that have not yet achieved a grade 4 in either GCSE English and/or Maths will be required to continue their study in the sixth form.

Please note: the school reserves the right to change the option pools, depending on demand for courses.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There is a long history of students joining the sixth form from other schools, often forming over a quarter of each cohort. Applications are warmly welcomed from those not currently at the school. Online applications are made through the school website:
www.ths.wessex.ac/sixth-form

Ideally, applications should be submitted by:
15th January 2027
Applications submitted after this date will be considered.

All applicants will receive an Information and Guidance meeting. These discussions will include the suitability of the course selection and an opportunity to ask any questions that applicants may still have. Conditional offers based upon entry requirements are then made in writing.

All students will attend a Taster Day which provides an excellent opportunity to sample learning in the sixth form and to help students make final decisions about course selection.

In light of examination results, course choices can be finalised and students enrolled on to their programme of study on **1st September 2027**. There will be an opportunity for further discussions with a member of the team, especially as we know some students may wish to alter their initial choices.

Students are asked to complete Summer Tasks for each of their courses. These are preparation tasks for each subject that should take around 3-4 hours to complete. If students are unsure what to study in the sixth form then these tasks may also help them to make decisions. Summer tasks will be published on the sixth form website after the GCSE exams.

Course Offer

A LEVELS

Art & Design	Fashion & Textiles	Physical Education
Biology	Geography	Physics
Business Studies	Film Studies	Politics
Chemistry	History, Early Modern	Product Design
Classical Civilisation	History, Modern	Psychology
Computer Science	Law	Sociology
Economics	Mathematics	Spanish
Electronics	Mathematics, Further	Theatre Studies
English Language	Music	
English Literature	Music Technology	
Environmental Science	Philosophy & Ethics	
French	Photography	

LEVEL 3 PROFESSIONAL

BTEC Extended Certificate Business
WJEC Applied Diploma in Criminology
BTEC Extended Certificate Sport
Cambridge Advanced National Health & Social Care Extended Certificate
Cambridge Tech Extended Certificate Performing Arts
WJEC Diploma Food Science & Nutrition

LEVEL 2

GCSE English retake
GCSE Mathematics retake

Level 2

English Language

GCSE

It is a government requirement that all students must have achieved a minimum of grade 4 for GCSE English Language and therefore this course is compulsory for any student who has not attained this level. It is necessary for students to have passed this course to access most further education courses and apprenticeships. Students taking the GCSE in the sixth form are taught in their own groups.

YEAR 1

Students will develop skills including reading for meaning and writing for different audiences. They will analyse a range of texts including fiction, 19th Century non-fiction and modern non-fiction. They will increase their ability to write coherently and to compare the language features of texts. Students will be taught in English sessions for five lessons a fortnight and will prepare to retake the English Language GCSE in November. Students who do not achieve a grade 4 will remain in lessons and retake again in the summer.

YEAR 2

Students will continue to improve their English skills and may take the GCSE again in the second year of sixth form if they still need to obtain a grade 4.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Two exams for all students. Variations dependent on the exam board students took their initial exams with.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

English Language GCSE is an essential qualification for many courses at college and university and is also required for some apprenticeships and jobs.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss D King

Mathematics

GCSE

It is a government requirement that all students must continue studying mathematics at school until they achieve a minimum of GCSE grade 4, and this course is compulsory for any student who has not already attained this level of qualification. It is necessary for students to have passed this course or an equivalent to access most further education courses and apprenticeships. Students taking the GCSE in the sixth form are taught in their own group, separately from year 11. Students who have previously achieved a grade 1 or grade 2 may take a functional skills qualification instead of, or as well as a GCSE.

YEAR 1

The content of the GCSE is the same as that covered in Year 11. Students will be taught for five lessons a fortnight. Those who were just a few marks short of grade 4 will prepare to retake the Maths GCSE in November and if they do not achieve grade 4, will remain in lessons and retake again in the summer.

Functional skills qualifications can be taken at different times of the year, when the student is ready.

YEAR 2

Students will continue to improve their maths skills and may take GCSE again in the second year of sixth form if they still need to obtain a grade 4 or above. They will attend classes to continue to improve their knowledge and understanding.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The GCSE consists of three exams, one without a calculator, each lasting one and a half hours.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Mathematics GCSE is an essential qualification for many courses at college and university and also required for some apprenticeships and jobs.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr T Lansdale

Design

Art & Design

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Art is an exciting and creative course where students are encouraged to be ambitious and take creative risks. The course will build upon skills gained at GCSE and enable the students to develop conceptual rigour. Students will respond to the work of other artists and designers both contemporary and traditional from across the world. Drawing is a key part of the course and students will be encouraged to experiment with a variety of drawing methods. The course is designed to offer a wide range of experiences that inspire and generate sophisticated portfolios suitable for the most demanding university courses.

YEAR 1

In the first year students will learn to develop painting skills using oil and acrylic, they will be taught to carve, construct and assemble in 3D and will make work in both intaglio and relief methods of printmaking. Students are encouraged to produce work on a range of scale and make work which is both figurative and abstract.

YEAR 2

The first component, a personal investigation, will give students the opportunity to make a significant body of coursework that is developed by an issue, concept or theme. This component opens up opportunities for a sustained line of enquiry from an initial starting point to a final realisation. This practical investigation is supported by an extended essay. The second component is an externally set question paper providing eight potential starting points from which the student chooses one to explore fully, a comprehensive body of work is built in response that reflects research and development of ideas. There is a 15 hour (three day) practical exam at the end of the component.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The personal investigation is worth 60% of the mark and the externally set assignment is worth 40%. Both components are assessed internally but AQA moderated.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Many exciting careers can start with a degree in a specialist art area. It is possible to work freelance or in industry. Some of the most popular choices that our students have explored are; architecture, jewellery design, animation, film, theatre design, illustration, graphic design, millinery, costume design, web based work, model making and fine art.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms A Davies

Electronics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

This course combines well with maths and physics for students wishing to pursue further study or employment in engineering and electronics. No prior knowledge of electronics is required but some students will have previously studied GCSE Electronics. All theory teaching is done using worksheets that include student exercises and past exam questions. There are also significant opportunities to model circuits using CAD software and build practical circuits in our well-equipped classroom. We have a full range of test equipment and components for students to use.

YEAR 1

The first year covers core concepts, combinational logic systems, timing circuits, semiconductor components, sequential logic, operational amplifiers, signal conversion, microcontrollers (assembly programming), AC circuits, communication systems, wireless transmission, optical communications (fibre optics and lasers), further semiconductors and instrumentation systems. All students gain experience of breadboarding practical circuits including the design and programming of a microcontroller based system. Students learn how to code and debug projects written in low-level assembly language using MPLAB X IDE. We also make extensive use of CAD/simulation software.

YEAR 2

The second year covers audio systems (design of filters, mixers and amplifiers), mains power supply systems, high power switching systems, further sequential logic systems, and digital communications. All students conduct their own independent research, design and build analogue and digital circuits. Students make extensive use of hardware programmers, multimeters, oscilloscopes, function generators and other test equipment.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

80% exams and 20% coursework: task 1 (6%) design, build and program a microcontroller system and task 2 (14%) research, design and build a substantial electronic system including analogue and digital subsystems.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Most students go on to university to study electronic and/or electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science and related courses at degree level. When combined with maths and physics, there is a wide range of opportunities for further study and rewarding careers.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr B Pizzey

Design

Fashion & Textiles

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the core technical, designing and making principles for fashion and textiles. They will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning into practice by manufacturing products of their choice. They will explore, design, create and evaluate innovative solutions in response to realistic design contexts. Students will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.

YEAR 1

Students will study the areas in Fashion and Textiles relating to research, product development, design methods and processes in order to complete an innovative and creative design and make task with the context set by the school. Students will also develop knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials, design illustration, Computer Aided Design (CAD), Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM), pattern drafting, history of dress, design movements and designers.

YEAR 2

Students will further their knowledge on topics from year 1 to include learning about enterprise and marketing within the fashion industry, fashion cycles, socio-economic influences, developments in fibre and material technology. They will complete a substantial design and make task to include a prototype product. The context of the task will be set by the student.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two hours long on technical, designing and making principles and specialist knowledge. These are worth 50% of the A level. Students will also complete a 40 hour non-exam assessment (NEA) consisting of a single substantial design and make task worth 50% of the A level.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers, especially those in the creative industries. These include fashion or textile designer, fashion marketing, buying, retailing, merchandising or manufacturing. Students can also pursue careers in a more technical field to include research and development in textiles, product development and textile conservation.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Mrs H Greening

Food Science & Nutrition

WJEC LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA

This course is ideal for those who wish to pursue any type of career in the food industry, as students will gain a wealth of knowledge about food and nutrition. Students will learn about the relationship between the human body and food, as well as numerous practical skills for preparing, cooking, and presenting food for different occasions and events. The diploma has been designed with flexible choices, enabling students to specialise in individual areas of interest, with a strong emphasis on practical work. Student learning will mirror many work activities in the food and nutrition industry, through a range of contexts, enabling them to extend their learning outside the classroom.

YEAR 1

Students will complete two units of study in the first year. In the first unit students learn the basic science of nutrition, as well as how to make food safe to eat, in a wide range of contexts, gaining practical skills to produce quality food for a range of different people. The second unit focuses on the understanding of the science of food safety and hygiene, supported by practical sessions.

YEAR 2

Students will study one of two optional units, focusing on subjects of particular interest or relevance to them, building on previous learning. These optional units involve either experimenting to solve food production problems or investigating current issues in food science and nutrition.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The first mandatory unit is both internally and externally assessed, with the second unit on ensuring food is safe to eat, being externally assessed. Both optional units are internally assessed through one assignment. There is one written exam. If students only complete the first year, they will gain a Level 3 Certificate in Food Science and Nutrition, gaining a Diploma if they complete the second year.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This is an ideal course for those wishing to pursue any career in food science or food production industry, or become a chef. Together with other relevant qualifications, students will gain the required knowledge to support entry into higher education courses at university, such as BSc Food and Nutrition, BSc Human Nutrition, and BSc (Hons) Food Science and Nutrition.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Mrs A Moore

Design

Health & Social Care

CAMBRIDGE ADVANCED NATIONAL

Students will develop the core specialist knowledge, skills and understanding required in the health and social care sector. It will provide students with an understanding of health and social care in the wider contexts of different environments and settings where care takes place, the importance of effective communication, legislation and how to deliver a person-centred approach in the care sector. Students will also develop transferable skills such as communication, research, planning and organisation. Throughout the course, students will produce a range of centre assessed units, as well as examined units in diverse & related areas.

YEAR 1

Students complete three units: principles of healthcare, social care, person-centred approach to care and supporting people with mental health conditions.

YEAR 2

Students will complete three more units, supporting healthy nutrition and lifestyles, anatomy and physiology, and supporting people in relation to sexual health, pregnancy and postnatal health.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The principles of health and social care and anatomy and physiology for health and social care are both exam units. The remaining four units are all assessed by assignments.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This qualification prepares students for the skills needed at university and is studied alongside two other courses. This will enable students to progress to a degree programme from a range of areas linked to the health and social care sector, such as Health Science, Nursing, Midwifery, Social Care, Social Work, Speech Therapy, Health and Social Care, Teaching & Youth Work or Early Childhood Studies.

The qualification will have UCAS points recognised by higher education institutions. It can be taken alongside, for example, A Levels in Biology and Psychology, which could lead to a BSc in Nursing, or A Levels in English and History, which could lead to a BA in Primary Education.
For health-related courses, many universities expect a Biological Science.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs S Archer

Photography

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Photography is an exciting and creative course where students will learn to develop the skills to make conceptually challenging and ambitious photographic images. Both traditional and digital methods of capture will be explored alongside studio and location work. Students will consider the work of European and non-European contemporary and traditional photographers or artists to gain inspiration and ideas for their own work. The course is designed to offer a wide range of experiences that inspire and generate sophisticated portfolios suitable for the most demanding university courses.

YEAR 1

Students will produce work that exemplifies aspects of their developing knowledge and understanding, they will produce photographic images that reflect emerging technical skills, development of ideas and an increased critical and contextual understanding. Students will explore using a single lens reflex camera, film processing and wet printing. Digital capture and post production will be taught alongside analogue photography. Students will explore a range of photographic approaches including portraiture, still life and experimental techniques. Students will learn advanced studio and location lighting.

YEAR 2

The first component is a personal investigation. Students have the opportunity to make a significant body of coursework that is developed by an issue, concept or theme. This component opens up opportunities for a sustained line of enquiry from an initial starting point to a final realisation. This practical investigation is supported by a linked 1000-3000 word essay. The second component is an externally set assignment. The students are given an externally set question paper. Students choose one starting point to explore fully. A body of work is built in response that reflects research and development of ideas. There is a 15 hour (three day) practical exam at the end of the component.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The personal investigation is worth 60%. The externally set assignment is worth 40%. All components are assessed internally but AQA moderated.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Photographer (advertising, editorial, fashion, sports, documentary, fine art, medical, scientific, and general commercial), processing lab technician, studio manager, post-production technician, graphic designer, set builder, art director, picture library editor, curator.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs R Bewley

Design

Product Design

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Design and Technology is an inspiring, challenging and practical subject that encourages learners to think creatively and innovatively. Through iterative design processes, students develop and refine ideas, using imagination and critical thinking to create effective solutions for real-world problems. Learners design and manufacture prototypes while considering the needs, wants, values and aspirations of users. It encourages an understanding of market needs and opportunities, allowing students to identify gaps in the market and develop products that respond to consumer demands. Learners gain valuable knowledge and skills in researching, designing, developing, testing and evaluating products. They develop an understanding of how products progress from initial concepts and prototypes to realisation and commercial manufacture, preparing them for further study and careers in design, engineering & related industries.

YEAR 1

In Year 1, students will develop a broad understanding of key Design and Technology principles and concepts. Topics studied include materials and their properties, commercial manufacturing processes, the analysis of existing products, and the social, moral, ethical and legal responsibilities of designers. Students will explore graphic communication and the ways ideas are communicated throughout the design process. These areas will be delivered through theoretical and practical activities, enabling students to develop their subject knowledge.

YEAR 2

In Year 2, students will undertake their Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) designing and manufacturing a prototype addressing a specific need or problem. Students will apply the design process, conducting research, generating and developing ideas, then testing and evaluating their solutions. This substantial 80 hour project provides an opportunity to demonstrate creativity, technical knowledge and practical skills.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

One externally assessed exam taken at the end of year 13, 50% of the final A Level grade. Mathematics and science skills in a product design context will be examined as part of this paper. The NEA consists of a design portfolio and manufacture of a prototype, worth 50% of the final grade, internally assessed & externally moderated at the end of year 13.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Product design could take you into a number of exciting career paths such as product design, industrial design, engineering, automotive design, architecture, teaching, manufacturing, CAD technician.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr S Patel

There are areas of the school where pupils, including students in the sixth form, are inspired to complete challenging work, read widely and take part in extra-curricular activities linked to those subjects. This is a strength of the school.

Ofsted, 2025

Students in the sixth form particularly value the opportunities to learn beyond the academic curriculum, for example going on trips and meeting alumni.

Ofsted, 2025

English

Classical Civilisation

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Classical Civilisation is ideal for students who are fascinated by mythology and have an interest in the ancient world of the Greeks and Romans. Students will read plays and stories in English translation, explore the work of historians and philosophers, and study ancient art and architecture. The course will introduce students to many different aspects of the classical world, from the gods and heroes of the Trojan War to the representation and status of women. By the end of the course students will understand why the classical world continues to have such an influence on modern culture and society.

YEAR 1

Students will study Homer's Odyssey, which tells the story of Odysseus and his eventful and turbulent journey home after the Trojan War. Students will also study Greek theatre. They will study two tragedies, Oedipus the King and the Bacchae, and one comedy, Frogs, as well as a selection of visual sources.

YEAR 2

Students will focus closely on the Roman world. They will study Virgil's Aeneid, an epic story written to celebrate Augustus, the first Roman Emperor. Students will also study the poetry of Sappho and Ovid in order to understand how ancient writers wrote about love and relationships. They will explore the status and representation of men and women in Greek and Roman society.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams; one is two hours and twenty minutes and two are one hour and forty-five minutes long. The examinations cover each of the topics and include questions that require extended writing using an essay style format.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Many students who have taken Classical Civilisation in the past have found it a useful qualification of similar value to other humanities and English subjects such as History or English Literature. Some have gone on to study Classical Studies at university, or as part of other combined degrees. Students have ended up in careers as varied as theatre management, archaeology, insurance and banking, and teaching. Classical Civilisation is a valuable subject that complements many options and career routes.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr T Ayre

English Language

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

This is a modern and vibrant course which gives students the practical 'tools' to become independent, critical readers of real-world language use in the 21st century. Building upon earlier study, students will be taught how English is constructed, so that they can identify how the constituent parts of language enable speakers and writers to exert influence and construct identities. Students will engage with current language debates about the changing nature and status of the English language and its place in a global society; the use of technology and its impact upon the pace of language change is an exciting element. As linguists, students will become collectors of language and will learn how to sample, research and investigate language concepts and varieties.

YEAR 1

Students will learn the skills every linguist needs to explore the language system, including grammar and the construction of meaning, and the differences between spoken and written language. Students will then be equipped to examine a wide range of texts to establish how speakers and writers can create identities, exert power and represent gender. They will learn how to write persuasively to showcase their knowledge of current language debates, whilst offering a critical perspective.

YEAR 2

Students will undertake their own choice of investigation based upon their particular area of interest. They will also study the process of children's language acquisition, how current technologies are impacting upon the development of language and how the English language has changed over time. Students will also study the language of the media and how it has shaped and is shaped by society.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long. They are equally weighted and offer opportunities for students to provide extended exploratory responses. The coursework component (worth 20%) allows students to pursue an independent language investigation, developing the skills most valued by higher education and employers.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

The excellent communication skills which students acquire make them suitable for a wide range of careers such as journalism, marketing, education, the legal profession and careers in the public sector. Some of our students have read language and linguistics at university and have trained as speech and language therapists. Lexicography and publishing are also options for our students.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs H Roser

English

English Literature

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

English Literature is a stimulating and thought provoking subject; it develops the ability to engage with the world and enhances written and oral skills. In studying literature, students learn about diverse times and different genres, and the new A level includes exciting contemporary texts as well as the classics. English Literature is exceptionally well respected by universities and employers because it enables students to construct arguments and articulate their ideas with clarity. Poetry, prose, plays and literary criticism are studied, and theatre trips, live broadcasts of plays and film adaptations bring the texts to life.

YEAR 1

Two prose texts are chosen from one of the following topic areas: the gothic, American literature 1880 – 1940, women in literature and dystopian fiction. Students will complete one piece of coursework this year which is a close reading of an extract of a text, and begin studying for the second comparative coursework essay. All texts chosen for coursework are published post-1900 with at least one published post-2000.

YEAR 2

In year 2, the second piece of coursework will be completed. Students will study a Shakespeare play, a selection of poetry and another piece of drama. They will engage in greater detail with literary criticism and will use a variety of perspectives about texts to enhance their own arguments. Throughout the course, independent research and reading will be integral to their learning.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long. The first exam covers drama and poetry pre-1900. The second exam covers comparative and contextual study.
The coursework folder is worth 20%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

English Literature is an excellent course for entry into a wide range of careers including: journalism and media related courses, advertising and marketing, teaching, the law, marketing, human resources, accountancy and the public sector. It is a subject that employers and universities hold in high esteem.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss D King

Film Studies

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Students will engage with film's broad, cultural and historical heritage and gain an understanding of how meaning has been created through film from the silent era to the present day. They will explore how film represents different cultures and societies and investigate the ideologies that shape film in the 20th century. Students will develop analytical, discursive writing skills and become confident readers of film in terms of key concepts such as narrative, genre, aesthetics, spectatorship and representation. They will investigate and explore various critical debates ranging from film poetics to the auteur and realism to expressionism. They will explore texts in a theoretical and practical manner in order for them to develop analytical and practical production skills. It will also develop and stretch their writing skills as they assimilate a new level of vocabulary required to discuss increasingly complex ideas.

YEAR 1

The students will develop their understanding of film language in US cinema from the Silent Era to 1990 and the history of European cinema. They will analyse a range of films for the micro-elements of film form, aesthetics, spectatorship and critical debates around film poetics including film narrative and claims of naturalism and realism as against the expressive.

YEAR 2

Students will analyse critical approaches to contemporary British and US Film, documentary and ideology in film. They will explore the significance of digital technology in film and the new possibilities for cinema. They will develop their understanding of the generic conventions of documentary filmmaking and critique a range of filmmakers' theories of film in order to evaluate the validity of ideology as a critical approach in film. Learners will be required to produce either an individual short film or an equivalent screenplay with a digitally photographed storyboard. Students will carry out an evaluation of their production in relation to the set short films they have studied in preparation.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams. The first is two hours long and covers film form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990 and European Cinema History. The second, also two hours, covers Critical Approaches to Film. The portfolio of production coursework is worth 30%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Film Studies can lead to further study in film and communication studies, scriptwriting, animation, advertising and film and television production. Former students have gone on to work for advertising agencies, public relations departments and film production.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs V Richmond

Humanities

Geography

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Geography is a diverse, contemporary and ever-changing subject which develops students' understanding of the world around them, alongside an ability to analyse the key human and physical processes and interactions which shape it. Geography is well regarded by employers and universities alike because of the broad range of skills it develops. Students will study a variety of physical and human aspects of geography and the subject integrates well with a range of science, humanities and arts based subjects. A range of curriculum-linked trips, from the Eden Project to Iceland, are on offer. Links with Doctors Without Borders and HL Environment Committee allows insight into other careers.

YEAR 1

Students will study physical topics on water and carbon cycles; two fundamental life-support systems for our planet, as well as 'natural hazards' which develops students understanding of earthquakes, volcanic activity and atmospheric hazards such as hurricanes. Students will also study changing places to appreciate people's experience of places and the qualities they ascribe to them as well as how places change over time. Local fieldwork in a variety of settings will support the learning.

YEAR 2

Students will study 'global systems and governance' which focuses on globalisation – the economic, political and social changes associated with technological and other driving forces. They will also study 'population and the environment' in order to explore the relationships between key aspects of physical geography and population numbers, population health and well-being, levels of economic development and the role and impact of the natural environment. Physical geography will focus on 'coastal systems and landscapes' where students will develop their existing knowledge of the processes which shape our coastlines. Time will also be given to work on an independent geographical investigation.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long, and an independent investigation of approximately 4,000 words, worth 20%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Many career paths can develop from studying geography, because of the diverse nature of the subject and the fact it deals with many of society's biggest issues. Students interested in careers connected with the environment, law, politics, tourism, resources and economics can be well supported by an A level in Geography.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs N Bramley

Early Modern History

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

History is an important and engaging subject that offers students the opportunity to develop their conceptual analysis of change, continuity and causation as well as analytical skills of analysis and judgement. The course will enable students to evaluate weight of varying historical arguments and interpretations of events as well as to express themselves in an informed and persuasive manner through their written work. The exciting Early Modern syllabus focuses on the major events which shaped the society of Britain and Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries.

YEAR 1

The British unit focusses on Stuart Britain up to 1649, the personality and rule of James I and Charles I, and how their relationships with Parliament broke down resulting in the English Civil War and the execution of the king. The European unit is the story of how the ideas of the Enlightenment and price of bread led to a popular revolution, removal of the monarchy and finishes with the country in turmoil at the height of a wave of denunciations and executions called the Terror. Students will also start their personal investigation into the nature of the European witch-hunts 1550-1680 by examining primary sources.

YEAR 2

In the second year, students will finish their personal investigation. On the British side, students will then explore the aftermath of the execution of the king on the state including emerging ideas about political authority and religious conformity under Cromwell, Charles II and James II, culminating in the establishment of our constitutional monarchy under William III. The European unit follows the story of the revolution from conservative reaction under the Directory to Napoleon's seizure of power and ends by considering his impact on France and Europe before his eventual fall.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long; one for the British unit and one for the European unit. Each paper will be 40% of the final assessment. The personal investigation accounts for the other 20%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

The skills and discipline learned through studying History are valued by universities and employers alike. The nature of the subject in developing students' understanding of the world around them makes it useful to a whole array of careers including law, the public sector, journalism, teaching, marketing and heritage.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs G Bunker

Humanities

Modern History

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

History is an important and engaging subject that offers students the opportunity to develop their conceptual awareness of change, continuity and causation as well as analytical skills of analysis and judgement. The course will enable students to evaluate the weight of varying historical arguments and interpretations of events as well as to express themselves in an informed and persuasive manner through their written work. The exciting Modern course focuses on major events which shaped German history from unification in 1871, though Weimar, Nazi and Cold War Germany up to reunification in 1991. The British side of the course looks at the changes to British state and society in the context of the two world wars.

YEAR 1

In the British unit, students study key developments from 1906-1929 including Liberal welfare reforms, the campaign for women's suffrage, the First World War and the conflict in Ireland. In the Germany unit, students explore Bismarck's chancellorship from 1871, the Kaiserreich from 1888 and the impact of WWI on Germany, culminating in the ill-fated Weimar Republic. At the end of the year, students will begin their personal investigation by examining primary sources and historians' interpretations about the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade 1730 - 1830.

YEAR 2

Students will finish their personal investigation. They will then continue their study of British history exploring the legacy of the Depression, the effects of WWII and also the impact of post-war reconstruction on British politics, the economy and society in the years up to 1957. In the Germany unit, students will examine the methods used to establish and maintain the Nazi dictatorship as well as assessing the impact of resistance and the effects of the Second World War. They will go on to explore key developments under Allied occupation from 1945 before studying the history of West Germany from 1949 through the Cold War to reunification in 1990.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long; one for the British unit and one for the European unit. Each paper will be 40% of the final assessment. The personal investigation accounts for the other 20%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

The skills and discipline learned through studying History are valued by universities and employers alike. The nature of the subject in developing students' understanding of the world around them makes it useful to a whole array of careers including law, the public sector, journalism, teaching, marketing and heritage.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs G Bunker

Politics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Studying politics creates passionate, informed individuals. It is ideal for students interested in the news, that debate with friends and family and that show a keen interest in life beyond their own surroundings. Politics students think it matters to understand who has power, why they have it and what they do with it; and the course enables them to tackle such issues. Students will study both UK politics and global politics. Politics can be combined with science for contrast, or with other humanities subjects for depth.

YEAR 1

In the first year students focus on UK politics. They will be studying democracy and discussing key questions such as how democratic is the UK and is it becoming more or less so? They will also be studying the different voting systems used in the UK and whether they would work in the House of Commons. In addition, they will also be looking at political parties and how have these changed in recent years. As well as core political ideas such as liberalism, conservatism and socialism. Students will also study the governing of the UK. This focuses on the UK constitution, Parliament and how it has development in particular since 1979. As well as the Prime Minister and Cabinet, students will also cover one additional political theory based on feminism.

YEAR 2

In the second year students focus on global politics and will gain an understanding on how the United Nations works but also why it is significant. Students will discuss the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade organisation (WTO), the EEC and look at the impact they have on countries and nation states; as well as gaining knowledge on global sovereignty and power, with a specific link to developments since 9/11, including issues to do with the so-called 'war on terror.' They will study the significance of human rights in global politics and investigate to what extent human rights are protected by international law.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long.
The examinations are split into two examinations on UK politics & one examination on global politics.
The examinations consist of questions that require extended writing using an essay style format.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Students who have studied this politics course find it provides them with excellent written and oral communication skills. Politics students go on to a wide variety of careers such as journalism, law, teaching and work in the NGO sector of charities and pressure groups. It is a long established, academically rigorous subject respected by all universities.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs C Roper-Brown

Humanities

Philosophy & Ethics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Philosophy and Ethics is an exciting, interesting and thought-provoking course, which involves an objective view on the history of thought, metaphysical questions about reality and a selection of ethical approaches to moral decision making. This A level in Religious Studies will consist of three modules: Philosophy, Ethics and the Development of Buddhist thought. This offers a superb foundation for many future courses and professions in our contemporary and progressive world. This course provides students with the ability to reason, think outside the box, critically analyse, and select the best ethical approach towards challenging contemporary moral dilemmas.

YEAR 1

In Philosophy, students will study ancient philosophical influences on the nature of reality and views on the soul, arguments for the existence of God based on observation and reason, religious experience and the problem of evil. In Ethics, students will study four normative approaches to moral decision-making including Kant, Utilitarianism, Situation ethics and Natural law. The development of Buddhist thought offers a contrast of eastern philosophical issues such as impermanence and suffering by focusing on the life of the Buddha.

YEAR 2

In the second year, students focus in philosophy on the dilemmas surrounding the nature of a classical theists view of God and whether religious language can be meaningful. In ethics, students will apply the normative theories to business ethics, euthanasia and sexual ethics. They will analyse issues around what is a conscience and meta-ethics; the language we use to describe something as good or right. In Buddhism the focus is on the development of both western and eastern Buddhism.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long on each module. The exam consists of questions that require extended writing using an evaluative essay style format.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Students can use this A level as a foundation to go on to specialise in religious studies, theology, ethics or philosophy. Or they may take the knowledge acquired to enhance studying other academic fields. It provides a basis for many careers including, politics, law, armed forces, police, medicine, teaching, humanitarian jobs, writing and working with worldwide companies, to say but a few.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Mrs C Selway

You have more time to figure out where you are in life than you think - so take the time. Enjoy learning. Dive in with both feet. Opportunities will find you if you follow what you love and are passionate about.

Epp, 2025

Computing & IT

Computer Science

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Advances in technology and computing have massive impacts on our society and the way we work and live. Computer Science is at the forefront of these advances and is a discipline that offers reward and challenge to a wide range of people regardless of their interests. Computer Science is well established in all major disciplines and will link to all other A Level options and beyond. Computer Science requires and develops capabilities in solving deep, multidimensional problems requiring imagination and sensitivity to a variety of concerns. It is a practical subject where you can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It is also an intensely creative subject that combines invention and critical thinking, key skills for your future career.

YEAR 1

Students will cover a variety of topics, which include programming, data structures, the theory of computation, data representation, computer systems and architecture, communication and networking, and consequences of computing.

YEAR 2

Students will continue with topics from year 1 to a greater depth, whilst also starting to cover topics which include algorithms, databases, big data, and systematic approaches to problem solving. The NEA practical programming project forms a major part of the year. Students choose an appropriate project to research, design, implement and test. They can choose a programming language for this beyond those learnt on the course and create a coded solution and accompanying documentation.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two exams, each two and a half hours long. Paper 1 on Programming and Algorithms is completed on screens, whilst the Computing Theory is a written exam. The practical programming project (NEA) is worth 20% of the final grade.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Many of our students progress onto Computer Science degrees, both general and more specialist (e.g. Cyber Security), however, with the far reaching nature of the subject, this qualification will combine well with many of the options for students beyond A Level. The demand for computer scientists creates excellent graduate prospects, with computer science students being in the top five highest paid professions.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr F Price

The school's sixth form is vibrant and ambitious.

Ofsted, 2025

Stick with it! Learning gives you freedom

Ellie, 2025

Mathematics

Mathematics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Mathematics A level is a popular course at Thomas Hardye School, with over 100 students choosing to study it. As well as traditional areas of study, the new specification includes working with a large data set to reflect common uses of mathematics and research. Studying involves discussion, individual work, note-taking and independent research. Practice and perseverance are essential. Success in this course depends as much on hard work as ability and a high degree of self-motivation is required.

YEAR 1

Students will study pure maths, which includes algebra, trigonometry and calculus; these are essential skills for all areas of mathematics. The applied topics are divided into statistics and mechanics. Statistics is a major part of the course and involves drawing conclusions about real life by gathering and analysing information. It supports subjects such as biology, economics and business studies. Mechanics is the mathematics of structures and movement. It supports other subjects such as physics and design and technology and includes topics such as forces and Newton's laws of motion.

YEAR 2

Students will develop their knowledge of all the above areas; in pure maths they will solve problems which bring together several techniques and will learn to prove results that they have been using. In statistics they will develop their knowledge of hypothesis testing, calculating whether or not there is evidence that a change in conditions or situation suggests that a probability or mean has changed. In mechanics students will apply methods from pure maths, such as calculus and vectors, to work with more complicated models of situations.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. The exams are Pure Mathematics 1, Pure Mathematics 2 and Statistics and Mechanics.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Mathematics is a highly regarded subject and opens up unlimited career possibilities. Mathematics degrees contain a broad range of disciplines; other related degrees are statistics, computing and combinations of these. Mathematics is a useful qualification to have if you want to study accounting, sciences, engineering, economics, business studies, medicine, architecture etc. Several of our students have gone straight into engineering apprenticeships and the armed forces.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr T Lansdale

Further Mathematics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

This course provides a high level of challenge to students and it is appropriate for any student who is interested in studying mathematics or a related subject beyond school. There are about 40 students taking further mathematics at Thomas Hardye School, and many of our successful Oxbridge candidates, across a range of subjects, have studied further mathematics. Students who study further mathematics must also complete the mathematics course and study two other A Level courses. Universities cannot specify that A Level further mathematics is required for a course as not all schools and colleges can offer it, but it will give students an advantage in a range of degree courses.

YEAR 1

The content of the mathematics and further mathematics A Levels will be taught together, with most of the mathematics topics being taught in the first year. Further pure mathematics topics include abstract concepts such as complex numbers and matrices where the focus of study is on how these behave as well as their applications.

YEAR 2

As well as completing the study of further pure mathematics, students can select from a range of options, which include further mechanics, further pure and decision mathematics. Decision mathematics includes algorithms for solving problems based on networks of roads and investigating methods for maximising and minimising multi-variable models.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are four exams, each one and a half hours long. The exams are Core Pure Mathematics 1, Core Pure Mathematics 2 and two papers covering a wide range of options.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

From the December of year 12, we offer enrichment lessons for further mathematics students to help with preparation for university entrance exams and interviews. We will also teach other pure mathematics topics which will be both interesting and useful.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr T Lansdale

Modern Foreign Languages

French | Spanish

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

The study of a modern foreign language is a pathway to broader horizons. The course is an ideal complement to a range of subjects offering the potential for real breadth of study, whilst remaining a rigorous and highly respected qualification. Students will learn to speak the foreign language with a good degree of fluency, will develop real insight into cultures and will have the opportunity to study authentic literature and film, as well as undertaking an independent research project. In short they will learn much more than a language.

YEAR 1

Students will study two themes and one work of film. The themes relate to aspects of society in French/Spanish speaking countries and to artistic culture in those countries. Sub-topics include the changing nature of the family, the 'cyber society' and contemporary music and cinema.

YEAR 2

In the second year the remaining two themes will be covered along with a work of literature. The broad and stimulating themes focus on current issues in countries where the language is spoken as well as aspects of political life. Examples include immigration, diversity, political engagement and the right to vote. Students will also undertake an independent research project on any topic of their choice, related to a country where the language is spoken. This will be presented and discussed in the speaking test.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams. Paper 1 is a listening, reading and writing test which also includes translation from and into the language of study. Paper 2 is an essay paper where students will be required to respond in writing in the foreign language to questions set on the works of film and literature that they have studied. Paper 3 is a speaking test which involves a general discussion of some of the themes studied as well as the presentation and discussion of their independent research project.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Advanced level qualifications in foreign languages are highly valued by universities and can open doors into career paths as diverse as business, law, academia and education, journalism and media, the charitable sector, politics or tourism.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Mr R Davison

> **Learn as much as you can from the staff. They are so knowledgeable and kind. Take advantage of the amazing facilities.**
>
> *Malia, 2025*

Performing Arts

Music

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Music students will study performance, composition, theory & harmony, and discover a wide range of music. The balance between academic and practical study is fundamental to the course. Students will be able to develop their creativity through study of a range of composers across a wide variety of genres, implementing the theories and methods learnt in their own compositions. Students will have the opportunity to perform in a wide range of venues. It is an expectation of the course that students will take an active role in the co-curricular music activities

YEAR 1

Students begin their free compositions, studying techniques and spending time analysing exemplar student work. They will also be studying the methodology of Bach's Chorales. Students will study set works by The Beatles, Debussy, C Schumann, A Shankar, Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams and others. They will be learning about their musical contexts and language and learn to make critical judgements about the music. Students will perform public recitals in and around Dorchester.

YEAR 2

Students will study pieces by Bach, Berlioz, Kate Bush, Elfmann, Herrmann, Courtney Pine, Saariaho and others. They will continue to develop their evaluative and comparative skills. The coursework based on Bach's Chorales will be completed as will their free composition. Students will perform their final recital.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There is one exam which is two hours long worth 40%. The examination includes listening questions, dictation, and two essay questions. The coursework consists of a recital of at least 8 minutes, a 4 minute composition and two completed chorales in the style of J.S. Bach. The coursework is worth 60%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Music A level is recognised and highly respected by all universities for degrees in all subjects due to the wide range of transferable skills learnt through studying music. A level music provides students with full preparation for any music or music-related degree course. Music specific careers include: solo performer, orchestral musician, composer, arts management, teacher, radio or TV presenter or broadcaster, music publisher.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr B Trevorrow

Music Technology

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Music Technology is a highly interesting course aimed at developing the skills, knowledge and understanding of recording, production and composition required to succeed in the modern music industry. It offers an alternative pathway to the traditional study of music with a clearer emphasis on music technology and the popular music scene, with less emphasis on music theory. This course will equip students with a broad range of skills for undergraduate study in music technology, sound production, sound engineering and other courses requiring a similar skill set.

YEAR 1

Students capture sound through use of microphones and a sound desk. They learn to use a digital audio workstation (DAW) to edit, process and mix sounds and also to sequence and compose music through the use of virtual instruments, samples and synthesis. Students will study the development of music technology throughout history, developing an understanding of genre, instrumental use and production methods, and be able to reflect on this through listening activities.

YEAR 2

Students will use their accumulated skills and knowledge to produce a portfolio of two pieces of work. Task one is to record and produce a multi-track recording based on a choice of ten artists provided by the exam board. Task two is to create and compose a technology-based composition from a choice of three provided commissions. Students will continue to work towards their final examinations.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are two examinations. In the listening and analysing exam (worth 25%) students aurally analyse the application of production techniques and the development of recording and technology. In the producing and analysing exam (worth 35%) students process a mixture of audio and MIDI files to produce a completed mix whilst answering questions on the understanding required. The practical portfolio is worth 40%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Music Technology is useful for those wishing to pursue a career in the popular music industry. It is highly suited to progression into courses in creative music technology, sound production, sound engineering, or courses in contemporary composing or performing.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr B Trevorrow

Performing Arts

Performing Arts

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICAL LEVEL 3 EXTENDED CERTIFICATE

This is primarily a musical theatre course, aimed at students with a passion for performing. This course is perfect for students who enjoy expressive arts or are looking for careers in performing arts or creative industries. Performing arts is a creative and complex sector, with an ever-changing array of opportunities. This course puts performing arts in its wider context by offering students strategies for progression in education or freelance careers. Students respond to scenarios through project-based learning.

YEAR 1

Students will complete group projects; Combined Arts and Performing Repertoire. They study a large range of practitioners and performance companies which will inspire them to devise their own work. They will integrate multiple art forms, re-imaging repertoire and develop specialist skills in a series of performances. Students will also work in marketing and designing roles of their productions.

YEAR 2

Students will complete three projects; Proposal for a Commissioning Brief, Preparation for Work in the Performing Arts Sector and Influential Performance Practice. These are all solo units and students will develop survival skills for sustaining a career in industry and also begin to understand the expectations of employers in a fiercely competitive environment.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

This is a synoptic project-based course with no written examination. Students complete five assessed units over the two years, all of which involve them preparing detailed portfolios of evidence alongside practical work. The three units in year 2 are completed as 1500 word written coursework assessments that are externally marked.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This course provides students with full preparation for any career in both the on-stage and production pathways. The course addresses the skills required for those with the ambition of entering this competitive and highly flexible industry. It enables students to progress onto a higher education performing arts programme or specialist performance degree. This course is specifically designed for those seeking to continue in the industry or with an interest in performing.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss G Higgins

Theatre Studies

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

This qualification emphasises practical creativity alongside research and theoretical understanding. Each assessment is designed to allow students to demonstrate their creativity and imagination. There is also an excellent focus on student performance, with 60% attributed to the practical units. Students learn through experience: seeing theatre, reading texts and making theatre for themselves. Students will gain many invaluable skills, both theatrical, technical and transferable, to expand their horizons.

YEAR 1

The practical component for the year requires students to perform an extract from a text which has been inspired by a famous practitioner. This will be performed in front of an audience. Students will also study two set texts; A Winter's Tale by William Shakespeare and The Arsonists by Max Frisch. They will learn how to direct these plays and will be required to answer exam questions on their directorial and design ideas.

YEAR 2

Students complete a practical unit in which they explore and perform a devised piece and a second scripted extract. The final extract is showcased to an audience and is externally assessed. The year culminates with the final written exam.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Component 1 – 20% coursework (performance & log)
Component 2 – 40% coursework (2 performance pieces)
Component 3 – 40% - 2hr 30 written examination (A Winter's Tale, The Arsonists & The Book of Dust – the live theatre adaptation)

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Whatever the future holds, students of theatre emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills (including collaborative ability, analytical thinking, confidence, independence and objective evaluation) preparing them for their next steps. The course particularly gives an excellent foundation for further study at university, preparing them for drama school, a degree or auditions. It also offers opportunity for directing or writing for theatre. Many Theatre Studies students have also gone on to pursue careers in education, law, journalism, medicine, history, sociology and politics. It is an excellent complimentary A level to these subjects.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss G Higgins

Physical Education

Physical Education

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

This is a stand-alone qualification and is suitable for students wishing to study a multidisciplinary subject which incorporates modules from human and physical sciences, historical aspects and contemporary approaches in relation to the sports performer. It is expected that candidates will have a specialist background in at least one sport.

YEAR 1

Students learn the foundations of sports psychology, goal setting, group and team dynamics, stages of learning, transfer and personality. In the sport and society module they will study the emergence and evolution of modern sport, sport in the twentieth century and global sporting events. In the physiology section they will study anatomical systems, diet and nutrition, applied biomechanics and training methods. Students will also start working towards the practical section of the course.

YEAR 2

Students build on the foundations established in year 1 and study how human physiology adapts to altitude training and heat, energy systems in sport and sports injuries. The history module includes ethics, commercialism and technology in sport. The biomechanics module explores how we can influence the movement of projectiles, fluid mechanics and linear motion. In the practical section the students will be assessed on their performance in one sport. In addition students will need to evaluate a live performance giving coaching points and an action plan to improve the performance.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, one lasting for two hours (30%) and two lasting for one hour (20% each). Questions will include a synoptic element which will require an extended writing style which includes answers drawn from across different modules. The practical section, NEA, is worth 30%.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

As well as being a course which supports a wide range of career paths and university entry, it is also an important subject for students wishing to specialise in a career based in the sports/leisure industry, medical disciplines such as physiotherapy and the armed forces.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss E Bright

Sport

BTEC LEVEL 3 EXTENDED CERTIFICATE

The sports industry is undergoing a revolution and there are many opportunities for young people to combine their love of sport with a successful career; whether it is as a physiotherapist, a strength and conditioning coach, an analyst, a skills coach or any number of other exciting opportunities this BTEC is a great starting point. The award is worth the equivalent of one A level and will be taught across 9 lessons a fortnight. The structure of the BTEC allows students to be assessed in a variety of ways without compromise on academic rigour.

YEAR 1

The first year will look at two units of work, the first being anatomy and physiology which will focus on the skeletal, muscular, cardio-vascular, respiratory and energy systems. This work underpins many jobs in the sports industry and will be assessed via an exam lasting one and a half hours. The second unit is 'practical sports performance' where students will produce coursework to demonstrate their ability to perform and analyse sporting performance in their preferred sport.

YEAR 2

Year two will consist of a further two units with the first being 'fitness training and programming for health, sport and well being'. The work consists of the ability to assess, discuss, design and implement a health and fitness plan for a case study. This unit will bring together a large amount of theory content and requires students to prepare in detail a suitable lifestyle plan. The second unit will focus on professional development in the sports industry which will involve students researching and preparing for a future in the sports industry.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There is a variety of assessment methods, including written exams, supervised assessment sessions and project-based assessments. Students will be able to use different media sources to support their project work including performance videos, recorded interviews, and images.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This course enables students to plan a potential career in the sports industry which could include degree courses, coaching, sports science, sports performance, sports development, leisure management, education and sports journalism.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss E Bright

Social Science

Business

LEVEL 3 BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE

This exciting qualification is equivalent to one A Level and has been designed as a two-year programme. It is a varied and demanding course that requires students to complete a range of units, be organised, complete coursework to deadlines and sit external examinations.

YEAR 1

Students will complete the first unit of coursework Unit 1- exploring business, this looks at business ownership, organisational structures, aims and objectives and business strategies. Students will also study Unit 3 - personal and business finance, which is formally assessed via an exam at the end of year 12. In this unit students will learn about the importance of accountancy and complete a variety of financial documents along with several important calculations and ratios.

YEAR 2

The coursework in the second year looks at Unit 8 - recruitment and selection in business, this involves assessing why businesses need workers, advertising for vacancies and the interview and selection process. Students will participate in mock interviews in the role of both the interviewer and the interviewee. The externally assessed module in year 13 is Unit 2 - developing a marketing campaign.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Students will be assessed by a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications which will include a combination of internally set and marked coursework, externally set examinations and two controlled assessments.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This qualification is designed primarily to support progression to employment after further study at university. However, it also supports students who choose to progress directly to employment, as the transferable knowledge, understanding and skills will give successful students an advantage in applying for a range of entry level roles, industry training programmes and apprenticeships in areas such as business administration, marketing, accounting, sales or enterprise.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs G Allner

Business Studies

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Business enables students to investigate different types and sizes of organisations in various business sectors and environments, drawing on local, national and global contexts. Students will develop a holistic understanding of business and enterprise and be aware of the opportunities and threats of operating in a global marketplace.

YEAR 1

Marketing and people focuses on studying the characteristics of the markets within which firms operate. Students will investigate the importance of meeting customer needs using the marketing mix and effective strategy in order to change consumer behaviour. Students will study people management and explore the methods used to recruit, motivate, lead and monitor staff as well as developing entrepreneurship and leadership. Managing business activities consists of raising, planning and managing finance for businesses. A range of financial accounts will be studied and analysed using performance ratios to determine profitability, liquidity and efficiency for a firm. The importance of effective resource management and awareness of external influences is investigated.

YEAR 2

Business decisions and strategy focuses on overall objectives for a firm and identifying functional actions that will achieve these for the firm. Methods of business growth including mergers and takeovers of businesses as well as organic growth are studied. Assessing competitiveness and managing change for business is covered and evaluated to allow students to make recommendations for future strategy. Students will investigate a range of global markets, marketing techniques, industries and companies. As well as analysing the techniques used by international firms and recognising the external influences on international consumers.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three examinations, each two hours long, containing a mix of shorter questions and longer essays, all responding to case study material.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

The course will be valuable for students who are considering a career in business, finance or marketing. It will also be useful for those considering starting up their own business.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs G Allner

Social Science

Criminology

WJEC APPLIED DIPLOMA

Equivalent to one A level, this qualification looks at the types of crime that take place within our society. Students will be given the opportunity to develop their understanding of what behaviours are considered criminal. They will learn how we can use different theories of criminality to explain behaviours. Real life cases are used to gain an understanding of the criminal justice system from crime scene to courtroom. The course is assessed through a range of controlled assessments and external examinations over the two years.

YEAR 1

During the first year students will complete two units including unit 1 – Changing Awareness of Crime where they will be able to look at different types of crime and public perceptions including the impact of media. They are then given the opportunity to plan their own campaigns for change. They will then move onto unit 2 - Criminological Theories which allows students to gain an understanding of why people commit crimes and how these theories are used to set policy.

YEAR 2

During the second year of the course students will complete their final two units including unit 3 – Crime Scene to Courtroom where students will learn about the various personnel and processes used to take evidence from a crime scene all the way through to how this is presented within the courtroom. They will learn the skills to examine criminal cases and review verdicts. The final unit is unit 4 – Crime and Punishment where students will be able to explore how the criminal justice system is used to achieve social control.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Students will be assessed through a combination of two internally controlled assessments and two external examinations over the four units.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Criminology can offer pathways into many various courses or careers within the criminal justice sector such as the police, law, forensic psychology, social and probation work or the prison services.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs J Josic

Economics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Economics attempts to make sense of the world we live in. It is the study of how individuals, firms, governments and other organisations make choices and how these choices determine the way in which resources are used. Economics is continually evolving, making it the perfect choice for students with intellectual curiosity and passion for discussion. Students will get the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of some of the key economic theories and concepts and apply them to a range of real world situations.

YEAR 1

The microeconomics unit focuses on concepts including demand and supply analysis, and its application to real world situations, market failure and government intervention. The macroeconomics unit includes the aggregate demand/aggregate supply model, government policies and direct controls to improve an economy's performance and the investigation of economic events over the past ten years.

YEAR 2

The second year builds on the knowledge gained in the first year. The microeconomics unit examines how the number and size of market participants, and the level of contestability, affect the pricing and nature of competition among firms. The labour market is also studied. The macroeconomic unit includes the significance of globalisation, international trade, exchange rates, macroeconomic policies and the financial sector. Emerging and developing countries will also be studied and students will develop an awareness of trends in the global economy over the last 25 years.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long; one macroeconomics, one microeconomics and a combined paper. The exams comprise of a selection of multiple choice, data response and essay questions.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

This course will open doors in many professional areas, especially in banking, finance and accounting. It is also valued in marketing, consultancy, politics, the civil service and teaching.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs G Allner

Social Science

Law

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Why do we have the laws that we do? Is it a problem that there is only one female judge in the Supreme Court? How do you prevent juries using social media to research the defendant? Should the law treat an intoxicated defendant more leniently or more harshly? Is it ever reasonable to kill someone? These are just some of the questions that students will try to answer as they study two years of A level law. If students enjoy asking questions and trying to make sense of the idea of justice and its relationship to law, then A level law might be for them.

YEAR 1

Students will begin by learning about the English legal system, including the rule of law, law making and dispute solving measures. Students will study aspects of criminal law as it relates to fatal and non-fatal offences, the property offences of theft and robbery and the law in relation to attempts and defences relating to capacity and necessity. They will also develop their knowledge of the law of tort, including negligence, occupiers liability, torts related to land, vicarious liability and defences and remedies. They will develop their skills of evaluation and application of the law to case study problems.

YEAR 2

Students will study human rights law, including the history of the legal protection of human rights, specific human rights provisions and the restrictions and enforcement of human rights law. Students will also study the relationship between law and morality, law and justice, law and society and how the law is attempting to tackle the advancements of new technologies.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Law is an excellent basis for further study at university, both of law and of other subjects. It develops high-level thinking skills, the ability to formulate arguments within a rigid structure and a disciplined and logical thought process, as well as essay writing and research skills. It is often the first step towards entering the legal profession as a solicitor, barrister or legal executive. It can also provide a solid basis for careers with the police service, local authorities, businesses and banking. Law develops many of the skills which employers from all industries value: critical thinking, research skills and advocacy.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs J Josic

Psychology

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Psychology is the scientific study of people, the mind and behaviour. As a highly popular course, studying psychology will give students an understanding of scientific explanations for a range of typical and diagnosed abnormal behaviours. Completion of the course will enable students to skillfully analyse and critique theories whilst apply the knowledge they've gained from a range of topics to real life scenarios and case studies, explaining behaviours from a variety of perspectives and evaluating treatments where applicable. This skill is key for success on the course whilst understanding how this discipline is effectively used in real world application.

YEAR 1

Students will be expected to analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the areas covered.
At the start of the year students will develop a knowledge of the core principles of research methodology which they will then build upon throughout the course. Other topics include social influence, memory, biopsychology, attachment, approaches such as psychodynamic explanations of behaviour and psychopathology including OCD, phobias and depression.

YEAR 2

In the second year students will learn about issues and debates in psychology such as whether free will exists or is an illusion, problems surrounding gender bias and the ethical implications in psychological research. They will use this knowledge to further evaluate and compare explanations of behaviour. Students will also study the following topics in greater detail, schizophrenia, addiction and cognition and development.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. Each examination will consist of a mix of shorter questions as well as longer style questions which require extended writing in an essay style format.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

A qualification in psychology is valuable to students considering a wide variety of careers including behavioural and medical research, health and social care, sports management, the legal profession, business and marketing. It is ideal preparation for a degree in psychology, one of the most highly applied for university subjects, which can lead to careers such as educational psychology, counselling or clinical psychology.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss K Loveless

Social Science

Sociology

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Sociology is the fascinating study of society, how it is organised, how it shapes our lives, and how we can influence social change. It explores human behaviour, social institutions, and cultural norms, encouraging students to identify patterns and think critically about issues such as inequality, identity, power and social order. By studying Sociology, students will examine trends which help us understand modern life, for example changes in the family, inequalities in education, changing patterns of crime, and changes in religious belief. Students will also investigate different sociological theories and research methods needed to study society.

YEAR 1

Students will study two units: Education with Theory and Methods, and Families and Households, considering how class, gender and ethnicity can impact educational attainment. Also studied is the role of education in society, the impact of government policies on education, the reasons for changing patterns of marriage, divorce, cohabitation and parenthood, plus the methods used to collect information about society.

YEAR 2

Students will study two units: Beliefs in Society plus Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods, looking at the relationship between religious beliefs and social change, and the nature and extent of secularisation. Also considered are the theories of crime, deviance, social order & control, globalisation, green crime, state crime, human rights, nature of science and debates about objectivity and the value of freedom.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. Each examination will consist of a mix of shorter questions as well as extended writing questions in an essay style format.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Sociology provides students with the skills to become critical thinkers, effective communicators and skilled researchers. Many sociology graduates take up business management, marketing and advertising positions. Sociology graduates carry out research for charities, civil service, local authorities, and universities. National and local governments use sociologists to look at the effects of new legislation and the impact of government activity. Sociology is also useful for careers in teaching, social work, the police force, nursing, probation and journalism.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs S Hedgecox

If you don't understand A-level content don't try to brush over it by just memorising it, that won't get you an A*. Keep asking 'why' until you feel you understand it fully.

Declan, 2025

Science

Biology

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Biology is an exciting and varied subject, covering a broad range of topics and issues that are up-to-date, relevant and challenging. The course includes a mixture of theory and practical lessons developing a wide range of scientific thinking skills with an increased emphasis on developing relevant mathematical and practical skills. There are six required practicals in each year which will be assessed in the written papers.

YEAR 1

Students will learn about the building blocks of life, covering the biological molecules carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, DNA and ATP. We study microscopes and cells, learning about organelles and how cell structure relates to function. This leads on to the ways in which tissues and organ systems exchange and transport substances and interact with their environment. Genetic inheritance, variation and immunity are also covered before extracting and using DNA in the lab. The year finishes with ecology, following the transfer of energy between organisms in ecosystems and nutrients cycling. We also cover how to sample ecosystems and the use of statistics to interpret biological data.

YEAR 2

The term begins with a work succession and environmental study techniques before a field trip to Studland. We study the biochemistry of photosynthesis and respiration, as well as genetic crosses, evolution and changes in populations leading to speciation. We then look at the ways in which organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments including nervous and hormonal control and explain the physiological processes involved in muscle contraction. We also prioritise essay planning and writing skills and synoptic thinking in preparation for the exams.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. The third paper can include questions on any content from both years including the analysis of given experimental data and a synoptic essay on key themes.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Biology supports a very wide range of career paths including business, public sector and industry. There are also many Bioscience degree related research and employment fields including: Biology, Bioinformatics, Botany, Biochemistry, Conservation, Dentistry, Environmental science, Genetics, Medicine, Microbiology, NHS careers (various), Pharmacology, Physiology, Physiotherapy, Veterinary Science, Zoology.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Dr J Rowe

Chemistry

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Chemistry is a rigorous, challenging and ultimately rewarding course that develops students' scientific skills and knowledge. The course subject content is relevant to real world experiences and will show students the value of chemistry to society and how it may be used responsibly in social, economic, environmental and technological applications. Students will develop their skills in laboratory procedures and techniques and assess the uses and limitations of these procedures. Chemistry will foster imagination and critical thinking as well as the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual discipline. It is recommended that students study maths A level alongside chemistry or core maths.

YEAR 1

The skills studied during this chemistry qualification (logical thinking, communication, creativity, analysis, data handling and observation skills) are highly desirable to employers in all sorts of sectors. Students will study physical, inorganic and organic chemistry. Some examples of topics include: atomic structure, amount of substance, bonding, energetics, kinetics and equilibria (physical), periodicity and group chemistry (inorganic) and isomerism, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, mechanisms and organic synthesis (organic). There will also be six required practical assignments to complete.

YEAR 2

In the second year further topics in physical, inorganic and organic chemistry will be studied. Some examples of topics include: thermodynamics, rate equations, equilibrium constants, electrode potentials, acids and bases (physical), transition metals, reactions of ions in aqueous solutions (inorganic) and aldehydes, ketones, carboxylic acids, aromatic chemistry, amines, polymers, amino acids, organic sythesis, NMR and chromatography (organic). There will also be a further six required practical assignments to complete.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. Paper 1 is 35% and covers inorganic and physical chemistry. Paper 2 is 35% and covers organic and physical chemistry. Paper 3, worth 30% covers synoptic and practical skills. Required practical endorsement – internal assessment of all 12 required practical assignments.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Possible careers include nanotechnology, environmental science, sustainability, product development, forensics, drug discovery, biotechnology, marine chemistry, sales and marketing, consultancy, central and local government, business and finance, law, publishing, journalism and information technology. Chemistry is an essential course for medicine.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms Y Brammer

Science

Environmental Science

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

We are connected to our environment in a myriad of ways, with every human activity shaped by the availability of natural resources and in turn impacting on the physical and biological world around us. This has never been more important given the environmental challenges we face and with almost every area of our world economy becoming more closely aligned with the principles of environmental stewardship and sustainability. This course provides students a gateway to develop the expertise and skills needed to meet these challenges and help various sectors navigate the changes needed to ensure they are competitive globally.

YEAR 1

Students study units on the living environment and the physical environment. The former focusses on the interaction of living organisms with each other and their abiotic environment, and how an understanding of this can inform decisions that lead to more sustainable human activities. In the second, students will look to understand how the anthropogenic activities are inter-connected with physical processes, to formulate management strategies and plan sustainable activities, ensuring that we do not over-exploit our environment and develop improved technologies to harness our existing resources.

YEAR 2

Students study units on energy resources and environmental pollution, focusing on the impact of energy supply problems to both society and the environment, attempting to find a balance between the two. This is followed by biological resources and sustainability that focuses on the challenges caused by an increasing population, including food production and the impact on biodiversity, working towards a holistic understanding of the circular economy.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

The course is assessed through two exam papers, each lasting three hours. Both papers contain a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions. Paper 1 contains questions on the physical environment, energy resources, pollution and research methods. Paper 2 contains questions on the living environment, biological resources, sustainability and research methods.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Environmental science is considered an excellent facilitating subject, meaning you could go on to study degree level qualifications in environmental, geographical, geological or biological fields leading to a huge range of careers including conservation, sustainability, planning, research and education with employers like The Environment Agency, Natural England and even the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr M Whitbread

Physics

GCE ADVANCED LEVEL

Physics allows students to appreciate how fundamental science works and to study optional topics that particularly interest them. There are eight units in the specification – five in the first year and three in the second year. All of the units are assessed by exam. The students are also required to obtain a practical endorsement based on skills exhibited during twelve required practical assignments. A level physics builds on the concepts and skills developed in the physics GCSE and is particularly suitable for students who have the skills and knowledge associated with GCSE physics or equivalent. Students are required to be highly numerate and must relish the challenge of undertaking one of the most academically demanding and challenging A levels. It is recommended that students study maths alongside physics.

YEAR 1

During the first year the students will study: measurements and their errors, particles and radiation, waves, mechanics and materials, electricity, and six required practical assignments are completed for part one of the practical endorsement.

YEAR 2

During the second year of the course, students will study: further mechanics and thermal physics, fields and their consequences, nuclear physics and the final six practical activities completed as part two of the practical endorsement. In addition, the students study the astrophysics option topic.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

There are three exams, each two hours long. Paper 1 assesses the first year topics plus periodic motion. Paper 2 assesses the second year content, not including periodic motion. Paper 3 assesses the practical skills aspect of the course, and the astrophysics option. The practical endorsement, assessed by teaching staff, is judged against the five competencies criteria, which are assessed in the twelve required practical assignments.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS

Physicists continue to be employed in a wide range of professions. They are particularly attractive to employers due to their high level of numeracy and their well developed problem solving skills. Possible careers paths could be: research scientist, engineering, banking, physics teacher. In fact, most professions value the numeracy and cognitive reasoning skills of a successful physics student.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Dr T Rand

Sixth Form

Whether a former student has secured a first-class honours degree, opened their own business, released their own film, won a World athletics medal, become an MP or now teaches back at the school; we wish all our students the very best for their future and take joy in all their own personal achievements after their time with us here.

The Sixth Form Team, 2026