



# A Level Curriculum Booklet

For pupils starting courses in  
September 2020

**Bancroft's**  
Sixth Form



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# An Introduction by the Head of Sixth Form

*“The aim of the Sixth Form is to enable the young people of Bancroft’s School to achieve not only their academic potential but to also develop in them the skills and attributes which are essential to success in later life.”*

Life in the Sixth Form at Bancroft’s will provide an exciting and hugely rewarding experience, that will not only prepare you for the rigours of A-Levels, but will equip you with the life skills that will enable you to flourish whatever your chosen career path may be. The Sixth Form is a time to develop your personal talents and interests, your scholarly approach to study, and your skills of leadership and teamwork so that you are ready to take on the challenges of life beyond school. The two years in the Sixth Form act as a bridge between the relatively ordered style of GCSE courses and the much freer life at university and beyond.

## Outline of the 16+ Curriculum

- You will start with either four A Levels or three A Levels plus an EPQ in the L6<sup>th</sup>
- Within the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification), there will be considerable scope for pupils to engage in a wide range of possible research pathways, all carried out independently, from investigative science to practical robotics, CGI animation, computer science, as well as music and drama productions (see page 49). Please be aware, not all of these options lead to an exam or qualification.
- Irrespective of A Level options, all L6<sup>th</sup> pupils will be taught research skills during the first term.
- Learning for Life will also be delivered as part of the curriculum including personal financial and employment wellbeing
- Games remains compulsory for everyone on Wednesday afternoon
- Alongside your formal academic study, there will be an expectation to undertake the Sixth Form Charter, focussing on personal development and growth outside the classroom.

## The Sixth Form Charter

As part of the curriculum changes brought about by the transition to linear A-Levels, there is now an opportunity to focus on and develop other skills and attributes in the L6<sup>th</sup> that will have a considerable impact on personal growth. To that end, we expect all sixth formers to undertake aspects the following areas of personal development during their time at Bancroft’s;

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Learning and Scholarship | • Creativity and Activity         |
| • Enquiry and Independence | • Competency and Life Skills      |
| • Community and Service    | • Leadership and<br>Communication |

The table below sets out the expectations of the Sixth Form Charter and how this underpins the core values of the school.

<b>Learning and Scholarship</b>	This is the formal academic curriculum and involves the successful completion of the three / four A-Level subjects.
<b>Enquiry and Independence</b>	ALL pupils are expected to explore academic opportunities beyond the curriculum to promote intellectual curiosity, develop skills and foster independence. This could be through an EPQ, undertaking an academic essay competition or the completion of a Mass Open Online Course (MOOC).
<b>Community and Service</b>	ALL pupils will be expected to complete a period of service and / or charity work within the school and the wider community. This could involve running school societies / clubs, School Congress, Community Service, peer mentoring, leader's awards such as Modern Foreign Languages Leaders Award, or perhaps volunteering as part of their D of E.
<b>Creativity and Activity</b>	ALL pupils are expected to undertake purposeful activities, outside the classroom, that involve personal challenge, planning, reviewing progress and personal reflection on the outcomes. This could be achieved by long term goals in music, drama, sport, outdoor pursuits (e.g. climbing), art and design, exercise / dance etc.
<b>Competencies and Life Skills</b>	ALL pupils will have the opportunity to develop other personal attributes that will be useful in their lives beyond Bancroft's School. This will include higher education / careers preparation (L6th) and opportunities to gain experience in other life skills covering budgeting and finance, tax, credit and debt, health and wellbeing, DIY etc.
<b>Leadership and Communication</b>	ALL pupils will be expected to undertake leadership duties/roles and / or be involved in teamwork environment. This could involve running for the School Congress, CCF, Leaders Awards or the running of school societies etc.

Participation in the wide range of societies, sports and activities beyond the classroom, both within the house structure and outside it, is an essential part of being a Bancroftian. These areas will enrich your Sixth Form experience immensely; they will help you to enjoy life and support your academic studies; and they will also help you to develop vital skills, in leadership, in teamwork and collaborative learning that are highly valued in later life.

I hope that anyone joining the Sixth Form at Bancroft's School will look for the opportunity to learn new skills and contribute to the school community, ensuring their time in Bancroft's Sixth Form is well spent and of value to the rest of their lives. The aim for each student is to leave Bancroft's with the utmost preparation, not only for the continuation of their academic journey at university, but also as mature, confident, responsible and well-grounded members of society ready to tackle the trials and tribulations of later life.



Nick Lee, Head of Sixth Form

## Membership of the School Community

Every Sixth Former is a member of a house led by a Housemaster or Housemistress who will support each pupil throughout their time in the Sixth Form. The Housemaster/mistress is closely involved in helping students to make important decisions regarding further education and career choices. Within each house, students are grouped into tutor groups led by House Tutors. Tutor groups are small, enabling the Tutor to offer day-to-day support to individuals.

Members of the Sixth Form are encouraged to become involved in some of the many and varied house and school activities. From Easter of the Lower Sixth, all students are invited to become monitors and take on responsibilities as senior members of the school. Some may also apply to become House Prefects, assisting a Tutor with one of the junior tutor groups.

The Lower and Upper Sixth have a shared Common Room, ICT suite, and a Sixth Form Library with a careers section. Student committees look after the day-to-day management of the areas, under the guidance of the Head of Sixth Form.

## Opportunities Outside the Curriculum

Bancroft's offers Sixth Formers the chance to enjoy a wide range of activities, offering many opportunities and challenges for self-realisation and leadership.

One of the key events in the school year is the House Drama Festival, which occurs in the Autumn Term. Each house produces its own play with students taking on responsibility for all aspects of the production, including writing the script in many cases. The senior school play is staged in the Spring Term, and this major production offers considerable opportunities in all aspects of drama. The Performing Arts Centre supports excellence in drama both in and out of the curriculum – whether run by students or staff.

The school choir and orchestra rehearse weekly and prepare for a range of concerts. A chamber choir, the Bancroft's Singers, has an ambitious programme, performing at a variety of venues both in and out of school. A great variety of other musical ensembles meet to make music in many contexts, and are often led by Sixth Formers. Instrumental teachers cover the whole musical range and private lessons can be arranged for Sixth Formers to fit in with their academic timetables.

Bancroft's offers a number of adventurous and outward bound activities, each of which attract roughly equal numbers of male and female participants. There is a large Combined Cadet Force and a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme group, which sees a large number of students completing the Gold Award during their time at Bancroft's. Those new to the school are encouraged to join these groups, and build on any qualifications or experience they may have acquired elsewhere.

Students can choose to participate in a range of other activities as well, from academic based societies - such as the Physics or Modern Foreign Languages Societies, to setting up and running their own society for pupils in the lower school. There will also be the opportunity of running for

one of the senior positions in the School Council and ultimately, a position of responsibility within their respective House's in U6th. This is to say nothing of the wealth of opportunity within sport at Bancroft's, including rugby, hockey, netball, cricket and football to name but a few.

## Sports

All Sixth Formers take part in a games on Wednesday afternoons. Students who are selected to represent the school in a major sport will be required to train or compete in that sport on a Wednesday, as follows:

	<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>
<b>Boys</b>	Rugby	Hockey	Cricket
<b>Girls</b>	Hockey	Netball	Tennis

For other Sixth Formers there is a large range of activities available including aerobics, athletics, mountain-biking, badminton, fitness training, football, golf, lifesaving, rifle shooting, rounders, self-defence, squash, swimming, table tennis and trampolining. Students are encouraged to make full use of all the excellent facilities available in and around the Sports Hall such as fields, courts, a 25m heated indoor pool, fitness suite – and enjoy the benefits of being fit and healthy.

## Higher Education & Careers Advice

Over the last fifteen years, Bancroft's has consistently sent almost all of our U6th pupils to the leading universities in the UK and North America, including Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities. A small number choose to go straight to employment or undertake a school leaver/higher apprenticeship programme in specified industry, or take a gap year that usually involves some charitable/volunteering work overseas. The post-18 options are increasing every year and I would encourage all pupils to Bancroft's Sixth Formers to investigate the possibilities during their L6th year.

## Higher Education (University)

Most U6th pupils will have sat exams in three A-Level subjects. A small minority, for example, those who are taking Double Maths, may sit four subjects in total. For many, their formal academic curriculum will be enriched by undertaking the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) that will run alongside their other three A-Levels (page 49). EPQ's are increasingly being valued by institutions and may form part of an offer if pupils achieve an A or A\* for this.

Universities will typically use a combination of the following criteria when making offers (in no particular order);

- GCSE results and your academic trajectory
- Predicted grades – based partly on your performance in the L6th exams (internal) and your teachers' professional judgement
- School reference written by your Housemaster/mistress and subject teachers
- Personal Statement
- Performance in any Admission Test, if applicable

Competition for the leading universities is growing. As a result, they will expect to see a good set of GCSE grades (7, 8, and 9's) and a clear upward trajectory throughout the L6th year. It is therefore vital to work hard through this year as any predicted grades will not be solely based on exam performance. Predicted grades will be the result of a contribution of: assessment of your ongoing academic performance, your academic trajectory moving into the U6th and your performance in the internal, end of year, L6th exams.

As a result of increasing competition, offers for leading universities usually require a minimum of AAB or higher in A-Level exams; for more competitive institutions/courses, this will also involve attainment of at least one A\*. Typically for example:

### **Cambridge:**

Two A\*'s for STEM subjects; one A\* for arts/humanities

### **Oxford:**

Two A\*'s for Maths and one A\* for the majority of other courses

### **Imperial:**

Often demands two A\*'s for STEM related subjects

### **Warwick, Bristol, Durham, Birmingham, LSE, UCL:**

Usually require at least one A\* for more popular/ competitive courses.

A\* predictions are not given out lightly. For pupils wanting an A\* grade in any subject, they must demonstrate a combination of academic ability, diligence when working independently (free periods) and increasing ownership and independence when planning for progress (self-reflection). Pupils should bear this in mind when selecting their A-Level subjects; the subjects they choose must be ones they are confident of achieving a good set of grades in and equally important, they must choose subjects they enjoy and are intellectually curious about. The latter is an area that more competitive universities are increasingly using as part of the selection process, particularly courses that require an interview. Pupils need to think carefully about their

A-Level choices as, to a certain extent, the choice of degree can be defined by the A-Levels they study. This is certainly the case for courses such as (but not exclusively) **Medicine** (Chemistry and Biology), **Engineering** (Maths/Further Maths and Physics (if applicable) and **Economics** (Maths/Further Maths)

There are however, many misconceptions about A-Level choices and the possible impact on degree courses and future careers. In many cases, the graduate schemes, applied for when leaving university, are non-subject specific; employers commonly use a degree merely as a measure of academic ability. Success in obtaining places on such courses, as well as other employment opportunities is often as much about the personal skills and attributes an individual possess. Therefore, unless pupils have a clear idea about what course/career they want to go into, I would encourage all pupils to consider a well-balanced A-Level subject diet, choosing subjects that they enjoy, are good at, and offer a broad range of skills (e.g. a balance between STEM, social sciences (arts/humanities) and languages).

### **Higher Education Support**

The Higher Education & Careers programme is coordinated by the Sixth Form leadership team; Mr Lee (Head of Sixth Form), Ms Dean (Head of Careers), Ms Korcz and Mrs Hampson (Deputy Heads of Sixth Form) and the Higher Education Team; Mr Choy (Head of Medics), Dr Hunn (Oxbridge coordinator) and Mr Busch (Head of US Admissions). The programme begins in the first half of the Easter term and is generally completed by the October half term of the Upper Sixth. There is a wealth of expertise on the teaching staff. Subject teachers, Tutors and Housemasters/mistresses are available to ensure that students have the opportunity to make informed and realistic decisions about their future. Additional insight is provided by: guest speakers from university admissions teams, Old Bancroftians currently at university, and a careers fair. Interview training, both general and academic is also provided. Candidates applying to Oxford, Cambridge, or for Medicine and other competitive courses that rely on interview for an offer will receive additional assistance. For example, practice interviews with external academics or current medical professionals are arranged. Such students are expected to be rigorous in their preparation and attend additional classes.

Students at Bancroft's will have access to the latest resources on which to base their research, which are either available in the careers room or on the web. In the Lower Sixth, Medics groups meet once a fortnight in the place of a free study period in order that more can be found out about these careers and how to apply for related courses at university.

### **US Universities**

Bancroft's also provides guidance for students applying to US universities. These institutions offer a liberal arts education which provides students with flexible learning opportunities, including interdisciplinary learning, a focus on team-based work and an emphasis on a broad skill set in both the arts and sciences. Typically, degree courses are better for generalists, since students do not pick their major until the third year (of a four year course). If this is something pupils are considering, it is worth bearing in mind when selecting A-Level subjects. The US universities also have well developed careers departments with a history of work experience and internship partnerships with industries of all kinds. These experiences could be invaluable in today's rapidly changing employment market.

## **School Leaver Programs/Higher Apprenticeships**

As competition for university places increases every year, the number of qualified graduates hitting the job market is also on the rise. As a result, many companies and corporations are offering employment opportunities straight from school, some with the opportunity of completing a degree at a later stage, after initial training. Many of the big firms such as PWC and KPMG offer degree apprenticeships, in areas such as accountancy and finance. Successful applicants would essentially be employed but spend a number of months studying at university (such as Nottingham or Durham) with the remainder of the time working and completing their training. This can be an interesting route into the world of work whilst at the same time obtaining a degree. Benefits obviously include a guaranteed job (upon training completion), a university degree and a healthy starting salary, negating the problem of student debt incurred during a traditional degree program. They tend not to be subject specific and grade entry requirements tend to, but not exclusively, be lower than the UK's leading universities.

## **Which Subjects Should I Choose?**

### **Subject Choices**

Choosing your combination of A-Level subjects is an important decision and you will need to consider a number of factors. You should opt for the subjects that you will enjoy the most and have a passion for beyond the classroom. However, you will also need to take into account the entry requirements for any university courses you have in mind. Ideally you should achieve grade 8/9 in subjects related to your chosen A-Levels to have a solid foundation for further academic progress.

You will find a distinctly different atmosphere in the Sixth Form. Your teachers will guide your studies and insist on high standards. However, the lessons represent only 50% of the time you will need to spend studying each subject in order to master the material and develop the required skills. The Sixth Form is about developing excellent independent work habits and time management skills. There will be considerable opportunities to use time in school for private study; it is this that is often decisive in achieving examination success and preparing for life beyond school.

As already noted students have the options to choose four subjects or three and a research pathway. As those on four continue on to the Upper Sixth year they may either continue all four through to A-Level standard or choose to stop one.

In making decisions about choices, the following points may be helpful:

- You should study subjects which you enjoy and wish to study further;
- You should consider studying subjects in which you are likely to achieve your best grades;
- You may wish to consider new subjects which do not require you to have studied them at GCSE (marked \*\* in the index on page 12);
- It is important that the A-Level subjects chosen have some pattern to them and while straightforward preference is a significant factor, you should also consider the entry requirements for any university courses or careers that you have in mind (see page 5);
- The ability to choose four subjects in the Lower Sixth is an opportunity to broaden your choices, and you should consider whether it is right for you to take a fourth subject which complements or contrasts with your other three.

Although you will be responsible for your final selection of subjects, you should consider the expert advice offered by your teachers, your Housemaster or Housemistress, the careers staff and others.

We allow students a free choice of subjects and do not run pre-decided option blocks to choose from. We then design the timetable around these choices. There is sometimes a very small number of students who make choice combinations which do not fit with the rest on the timetable, in which case we will be in contact and give appropriate advice. Similarly, if a very small number of students pick a particular subject, it may be the case that we decide we cannot run it, in which case we will be in contact.

## **Guidelines for Choosing Subjects**

We expect students to achieve a minimum of grade 8 at GCSE in the subjects they plan to take at A-Level.

In order to study Economics or Physics, it is expected that a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics is achieved.

## **A Note about Double Maths**

Double Maths is counted as two subjects in terms of options and leads to two A-Levels – Maths and Further Maths. See page 38 for more details.

## A Look Ahead to Degree Choice and Career

If you have a particular career or course in mind it is important that you research carefully what qualifications are required. Details of most courses in universities and colleges of higher and further education are available in the Sixth Form Library. The Heads of Department and teachers of relevant subjects will also be happy to help and advise.

The table below gives guidance on the A-Level subjects necessary or often preferred for a range of degree choices. It is based on the Russell Group of 20 universities to which the majority of students from Bancroft's will go. The table is not meant to replace the advice above; institutions differ in their entry requirements even within the Russell Group, so individual research is still recommended. A good place to start is the "Informed Choices" website. Visit the site via: <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Archaeology	No specific A-level requirements
Architecture	Art usually required & portfolio; Maths preferred; Physics sometimes preferred
Art Foundation	Art necessary & portfolio
Biochemistry	Chemistry required; Biology usually preferred;
Biological Sciences	Chemistry required; Biology preferred; Maths sometimes preferred
Biology	Biology required; Chemistry usually required
Business / Management	Maths often preferred
Chemistry	Chemistry required and another science, often Biology; Maths often preferred
Classical Studies	Neither Latin nor Greek required
Classics	Latin or Greek nearly always required
Dentistry	Chemistry and Biology nearly always required
Economics	Maths preferred; Economics not always necessary some prefer Further Maths
Engineering	Maths & Physics required; some prefer Further Maths
English	English required
Modern Languages	French required for a French degree; German and Spanish almost always required for a degree in those languages; all others can be <i>ab initio</i> (& combined) but a language to A-level is required
Geography	Geography usually required
History	History usually required
Law	No specific A-level requirements; breadth often welcomed; English sometimes preferred
Mathematics	Mathematics required; Further Maths preferred
Medicine	Chemistry required; Biology usually required; a third Science (Maths or Physics) sometimes preferred
Pharmacy	Chemistry required and usually another science
Physics	Physics and Maths required; some prefer Further Maths
Psychology	A Science often required; Maths sometimes preferred
Sports Science	A Science usually required; PE sometimes preferred
Theology / Philosophy	No specific A-level requirements
Veterinary medicine	Biology, Chemistry required; a third Science (Maths or Physics) sometimes preferred

The following subjects are offered; details are available on the pages indicated:

SUBJECT	PAGE
Art	11
Biology	13
** Business Studies	14
Chemistry	16
** Classical Civilisation	18
** Drama and Theatre Studies	20
** Economics	22
** Electronics	24
English Literature	26
** Geography	28
Classical Greek	30
** History	32
Latin	34
Mathematics	36
Modern Foreign Languages	38
** Music	40
Physics	42
** Politics	43
** Religious Studies	45
<i>indicates a subject which may be taken without having been studied at GCSE level</i>	
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	47

# Art and Design

Exam Board: OCR

Art can form a stimulus for thought or it can be used in many practical ways from product design, advertising, architecture and the media. The A-Level course will allow students to develop their ability to appreciate the visual world and respond in a personal and creative way.

Students without a GCSE in Art and Design have been admitted onto the course in the past and have been very successful.

## Why should I study Art and Design?

- Art encourages personal creativity and freedom to explore ideas.
- Art teaches lateral thinking, problem solving, observational and analytical skills.
- Art helps students understand the visual world within which we live in.
- Art enables students to express ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- Art helps students analyse and interpret the wider context within which their work is placed.

## What will I study?

The emphasis of the course is to enable students to develop their technical skills in a range of disciplines whilst enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the context within which their emerging work is placed. Students initially focus on formal elements of the visual language, experimenting and developing ideas through line, tone, colour, texture and composition. This leads to a thematic project which should focus on the students personal interests. The theme is set by the student in discussion with their art teacher and where possible students are encouraged to look at the wider social, historical, cultural and political context surrounding their work. Students embarking on the A-Level course should expect to be independent learners and follow much broader lines of enquiry, making their own personal links between the work they produce and the world around them. This coursework element is accompanied by a personal study consisting of between 1000 and 3000 words. The study focuses on links between work produced by the student and that of a range of other art practitioners.

## How will I be assessed?

### Unit 1: Personal Investigation 60% of A-Level

Students submit a practical portfolio of work based upon a starting point of their choosing. They will also complete a related written study of 1000-3000 words.

### Unit 2: Externally-set assignment 40% of A-Level

Students will select a starting point from a range of topics provided by OCR. Students will produce preparatory studies based around this topic then produce an outcome within 15 hours of controlled time.

All work is exhibited, then internally examined and externally moderated.

There are four, equally weighted, assessment objectives which cover recording and exploring, analysing and evaluating, investigating and developing, and realising intentions.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

Site specific visits are encouraged and official gallery and museum visits form an integral part of the course. In the past, a range of visiting speakers have inspired our students further, provided inspiration and talked about such things as Art History, a career in Architecture, Rome, Graphics, and making puppets for Lion King. We have a number of former students who are keen to return to talk about their experiences on Art Foundation Courses and Architecture Degree Courses.

All pupils will visit the Curwen Print Workshop and this year an additional animation workshop is planned. Saturday workshops and afterschool classes are continually happening in school and life drawing classes are a regular after school practice for the first term.

### **Skills gained**

Initially, students have an opportunity to experiment with a variety of media, techniques and processes in order to improve technique and become familiarised with the wide range of disciplines available to them. Once thematic links are introduced, students are taught to develop their ideas and research with relevant contextual information. Specific tasks are then set for each student based on the four assessment objectives against which their work will be assessed. Individual critiques take place once a term where each student makes a presentation of their work. This is an opportunity to share ideas and give positive feedback. Students will become divergent thinkers, driven by a desire to be proactive and independent.

### **University and Beyond**

This course is not only relevant to those who wish to pursue a career in Fine Art. Other careers in which an Art & Design background is very relevant will include design (including graphic, interior, fashion and textile design), architecture (where most courses ask for a portfolio of art work), advertising, publishing, marketing, the media, museum, gallery or theatre work, animator, art therapist, illustrator, photographer, sculptor, video game/ web designer.

You will develop your imaginative and creative powers and with your experimental, analytical and documenting skills, you will be encouraged to think laterally when problem solving and you will be challenged to think beyond the obvious – all valuable transferable skills. Students who have studied Art at A-Level go on to study medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, law, and engineering with Art recognised as a subject which nurtures the creative, analytical and investigative skills required for all these professions.

## **Biology**

**Exam Board:** AQA

The primary aims of the course are to promote an interest in and enjoyment of the study of living organisms, to develop an understanding of Biology and to appreciate its significance to ourselves and to the world in which we live. This is achieved by focusing on aspects of the subject that are relevant to our everyday lives and possible career requirements.

### **Why should I study Biology?**

You should study Biology primarily because you find it interesting and would like to find out more about the fascinating world of the living organism. It is a rewarding challenge for students who are scientifically competent, and it provides the opportunity to develop many skills such as problem solving and research.

### **What will I study?**

The specification covers all aspects of Biology from molecules and cells through biological systems to genetics, evolution, biotechnology and ecology. In all cases the applied aspects of Biology are emphasised but the teaching also ensures that a thorough understanding of the basic principles is achieved.

### **How will I be assessed?**

Three 2-hour written papers, largely a mixture of short and long answer questions, with one essay in the third paper.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

There is the opportunity to spark and further your enthusiasm for Biology in a half-termly 'supper club', which gives the chance to discuss articles or books you've recently read. There is also an extended research project running in the first two terms of the L6th, culminating in a presentation at the Cambridge Science Fair to members of the public.

In addition, there are a number of trips available throughout the year, including a lecture day at the Apollo Theatre with five scientists at the cutting edge of Biology, lectures throughout the year at UCL, and a compulsory five day field trip to Norfolk at the end of the L6th. The field trip will involve both coastal and terrestrial ecology, studies being made of the interaction between plant and animal communities and their physical environment and of the effect that man can have on the environment.

### **Skills gained**

Biology helps you to build up research, problem solving, organisational, and analytical thinking skills. You will also acquire the ability to apply factual knowledge to new situations and develop your practical skills.

### **University and beyond**

Biology is a key subject for lots of STEM careers, particularly in healthcare, medicine and jobs involving plants or animals. Possible careers include: nursing, dentistry, forensic science, psychology, physiotherapy, botany, environmental science, zoology, geology, oceanography, pharmaceuticals, energy, teaching, science writing, genetics and research.

Biology is also excellent preparation for non-scientific careers, thanks to the skills it provides, everything from analytical thinking to writing reports.

## Business

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

The course aims to provide pupils with an understanding of the nature and problems of business through an investigation of the decision-making processes and environment within which business operates. The perspectives of all stakeholders are considered.

There are no formal entry requirements other than a genuine desire to learn how businesses are organised, operate, plan and make decisions. Skills developed during the course include communication, application of number, problem solving and working with others.

### Why should I study Business?

The A-Level Business course introduces students to some of the key issues and concerns. Are you are interested in questions such as how will Brexit affect businesses? What will be the implications of the introduction of the Sugar tax? How and what do businesses decide to produce? Why are some businesses more successful than others?

The examination is based on real businesses, and so during the course of the two years you will need an interest in current affairs – What businesses are in the news and why? What are the forecasts for the economy and how will it impact on Business decisions?

Business will give you a greater understanding of the business environment whilst developing key skills required to analyse and evaluate business behaviour.

It should be noted that Economics may not be taken alongside Business Studies as there is too great an overlap in the courses.

### What will I study?

The course comprises of four Themes. Themes 1 and 2 are studied in Year 1. Themes 3 and 4 are studied in Year 2.

<p>Theme 1: Marketing and People Students will develop an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting customer needs</li><li>• The market</li><li>• Marketing mix and strategy</li><li>• Managing people</li><li>• Entrepreneurs and leaders.</li></ul>	<p>Theme 2: Managing business activities Students will develop an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raising finance</li><li>• Financial planning</li><li>• Managing finance</li><li>• Resource management</li><li>• External influences</li></ul>
<p>Theme 3: Business decisions and strategy Students will develop an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business objectives and strategy</li><li>• Business growth</li><li>• Decision-making techniques</li><li>• Influences on business decisions</li><li>• Assessing competitiveness</li><li>• Managing change</li></ul>	<p>Theme 4: Global business Students will develop an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Globalisation</li><li>• Global markets and business expansion</li><li>• Global marketing</li><li>• Global industries and companies</li></ul>

The course involves a certain amount of number work, but it is basic numeracy rather than mathematical ability which is required, and more than half the marks in the examinations are for qualitative judgments rather than "number-crunching".

### **How will I be assessed?**

The course is assessed over three Papers each of which is two hours long.

- Paper 1: Marketing, people and global business - assesses the content covered in themes 1 and 4.
- Paper 2: Business activities, decisions and strategy - assesses the content covered in themes 2 and 3.
- Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment – this is a synoptic paper drawing on students' knowledge of all areas of the syllabus.

All of the questions are data response based on case studies of real businesses.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

In order to provide context to the theory being studied students will visit businesses such as Google, and where possible, speakers from local businesses are invited in. Regular support sessions are also offered to help students consolidate their understanding of areas which are of particular concern to them.

### **Skills gained**

The course will enable students to gain a range of transferable skills including:

- Cognitive skills such as non-routine problem solving; decision making and reasoning; critical and ICT literacy
- Interpersonal skills such as communication; relationship-building skills and collaborative problem solving
- Intrapersonal skills such as adaptability, self-management and self-development

### **University and beyond**

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- Higher education courses such as business management, business administration, accountancy and finance, human resource management, marketing, retail management, tourism management and international business
- A wide range of careers ranging from banking, sales, product management, general management to working in public sector organisations or charities.

# Chemistry

Exam Board: AQA

The A-Level Chemistry course at Bancroft's aims to and develop a candidate's knowledge and understanding of Chemistry and foster analytical skills. It also hopefully enhances a candidate's enthusiasm for Chemistry and Science in general. Pupils who have enjoyed all aspects of the GCSE Chemistry and who like mathematical and conceptual challenges would find this course attractive.

It is open to students who have studied GCSE Chemistry or Trilogy (double award) Science courses.

## Why should I study Chemistry?

Chemistry is a vibrant and exciting subject. It is involved in everything around us - from the making of new materials to understanding biological systems, from the fuels we use to the medicines which keep us healthy, and from the fabrics we wear to keeping the air we breathe healthy. It is often called the central science and has overlap with Biology, Geography and Physics.

## What will I study?

The course splits chemistry into three components.

1. Physical Chemistry is the study of the main principles of chemistry. It incorporates the mole, energy, structure and bonding, equilibrium, rates of reaction, acids and bases. Many of these topic become more mathematical as the course proceeds.
2. Inorganic Chemistry is the study of the elements in the periodic table and their compounds. It includes a study of Groups 2 and 7, and the transition metals.
3. Organic Chemistry. This is the study of carbon based chemistry from simple alkanes through to polymers, medicines and the molecules of life.

## How will I be assessed?

At the end of the Upper Sixth, all components of this course will be assessed in three, 2-hour examinations. Practical work is completed throughout the course. There are required practicals that must be recorded in a laboratory book as evidence for the practical competency component of the A-Level. The knowledge and understanding gained from the practical activities will be examined in the final written examinations.

There is no coursework component to the A-Level Chemistry.

## How else will my studies be supported?

We have extensive online resources to support your study written by teachers at Bancrofts. The Chemistry Department offers Sixth Form extension classes where we look at concepts outside of the A-Level and prepare for competitions like the International Chemistry Olympiad. You also have the opportunity to participate in chemical research as part of our ionic liquids project.

### **Skills gained**

There are a range of skills that will be developed by studying A-Level chemistry. You will develop analytical thinking skills and the ability to apply concepts to new situations. A successful chemist needs to be able to link the abstract, microscopic world of the atom and electron to the macroscopic observations of experimental work. Understanding the concepts is as important as the reproduction of factual material. You will develop your mathematical skills which are required to cope with the quantitative aspects of the course. You will also develop your practical skills. Experimental work is an important part of the course with many of the theoretical discussions based upon results from it.

### **University and beyond**

Chemistry is obviously essential for degrees in chemistry and most Natural Science degrees. Chemistry has a significant part to play in the understanding of applied fields of medicine, chemical engineering, geology, food science and materials science. It is an essential entry requirement for many scientific and medicine based degrees and a useful A-Level for many more.

# Classical Civilisation

Exam board: OCR

Classical Civilisation can be taken up by those who have not studied Classical Civilisation (or Latin or Greek) at GCSE.

Over the two years, three distinct components are studied; they are important and interesting in themselves and have significance for the development of Western Civilisation.

## Why should I study Classical Civilisation?

- You will have the opportunity to read and enjoy some of the earliest surviving, and most highly-regarded, works in the Western literary canon.
- You will compare elements of the culture of ancient Greece and Rome, using this fresh perspective on the values underlying our own culture and society to reflect on your own experiences and perspective.
- You will combine the source analysis of History, the literary criticism of English and the cultural comparisons of Religious Studies.
- You will be introduced to elements of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- You will learn how to appreciate and respond to a wide range of works of art.
- Because the material is so wide-ranging, interesting and engaging, you will find it fascinating and enjoyable!

## What will I study?

The three components are:

- **The World of the Hero.** This is a compulsory component consisting of an in-depth study, in translation, of the epics of Homer (*Odyssey*) and Virgil (*Aeneid*).

Key topics for both epics are:

Literary techniques and composition; the heroic world: characterisation and themes; the social, cultural and religious context.

Historical and political background is an additional key topic for the *Aeneid*.

- Culture and the Arts: **Greek Theatre.** This component involves the study of prescribed visual and material culture (e.g. archaeological evidence and artefacts), combined with the study of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, Euripides' *Bacchae* and Aristophanes' *Frogs* – all in translation.

Key topics are:

Drama and the theatre in ancient Athenian society; nature of tragedy; nature of (old) comedy; literary techniques, structure, and dramatic conventions; social, political and religious themes in tragedy and in comedy.

- Beliefs and ideas: **Love and Relationships.** This component involves the study of an area of Classical thought, in combination with literature in translation. The works of Plato, Seneca, Sappho and Ovid provide the source material; the interpretation of this evidence is an integral part of the course.

Key topics are:

Men and women; Plato and Seneca on love and desire; love and relationships in Sappho and Ovid; ethics and values relating to love, desire and relationships.

### How will I be assessed?

Each written examination tests AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature, visual/material culture and classical thought] and AO2 [critically analyse, interpret and evaluate literature, visual/material culture, and classical thought].

Paper name	Marks	Time allowed	Percentage of whole A Level	Types of question.
The World of the Hero	100	2 hours 20 minutes	40	10 mark stimulus 20 mark essay 30 mark essay (requires some analysis and evaluation of the opinions of modern scholars)
Greek Theatre	75	1 hour 45 minutes	30	Short answer 10 mark stimulus 20 mark essay 30 mark essay (as above).
Love and Relationships	75	1 hour 45 minutes	30	Short answer 10 mark stimulus 10 mark ideas 20 mark essay 30 mark essay (as above)

### How else will my studies be supported?

You will have the opportunity to attend drama productions and visit museums. You will have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the topics studied and the Classical world in general by attending lectures and conferences on a variety of topics. You will have the opportunity to attend Classical Society (which holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics) and to research a subject of your choice to enable you to deliver a talk. You will have the opportunity to assist in the running of Junior Classics Club. You may have the opportunity to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

### Skills gained

You will learn how to assess, compare and contrast cultures different from those of the modern world and to make connections and comparisons between aspects of Greek and Roman society and your own. You will develop skills in interpreting, analysing and evaluating a wide range of evidence. You will learn how to form your own judgements, how to contribute to discussion and how to listen to, analyse and evaluate the views of others. You will learn how to articulate a clear, concise and informed response to the material studied, using a range of appropriate evidence to formulate coherent and substantiated arguments. You will develop an awareness of how the Classical sources reflect issues relevant to both the Classical World and today, such as questions of gender, belief, sexuality and citizenship.

### University and beyond

Classical Civilisation may be studied further as a highly-regarded Honours course (some, but by no means all, courses include modules which require study of Latin and/or Greek *ab initio*) or as part of a Joint Honours course. The intellectual qualities which will be developed by a Classical Civilisation graduate are in great demand in a wide range of careers; employers especially value the diverse skillset which Classical Civilisation graduates have built up during their studies. Those who continue to study Classical Civilisation at university often proceed to careers in journalism, the media, politics, industry, or the computing world.

# Drama and Theatre Studies

Exam Board: Eduqas

Drama and Theatre Studies should appeal to anyone with a love of theatre. The course provides the opportunity to study plays in depth from the points of view of directors, designers, actors and critics. The A-Level is a discrete subject meaning that students who have not taken Drama at GCSE will not be significantly disadvantaged, although they will need to demonstrate their abilities as an actor/designer before acceptance onto the course.

## Why should I study Drama and Theatre Studies?

Drama and Theatre Studies is a balance between the academic and the creative, exploring theatre making from a range of different angles. Students gain independence in the creation of their practical pieces, as well as in the outline of their directorial and design visions for the plays they study in class. Students enjoy frequent trips to the theatre which develop their understanding of a range of contexts, eras and theatrical styles.

## What will I study?

- Theatre Workshop  
This unit introduces you to a wide range of different theatrical styles which you'll study practically and through watching a wide range of theatre productions. You will get the opportunity to stage your own re-imagined scripted piece; for example, a modernized Shakespeare set in a bar, a physical *Faustus*, or a dark and comic 1927-style take on *A Doll's House*.
- Text in Action  
You will be staging two different theatre pieces, loosely based on a central theme. One is a scripted performance piece from a play, the other will be a devised piece. Both will be influenced by theatre practitioners you will study during the course
- Text in Performance  
This unit involves the study of three set texts: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* – Tennessee Williams; *Love and Information* – Carol Churchill and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* – Haddon and Stevens. The historical, social and political contexts will serve as the basis for exploring the text in relation to acting, directing, costume, set, lighting, sound and make-up.

## How will I be assessed?

- Theatre workshop: 20%  
Performance of an extract from a play, reinterpreted in a theatrical style  
Creative log- 2000 words
- Text in Action: 40%  
Performance of a devised piece  
Performance of an extract from a script  
2500 word process and evaluation report
- Text in performance: 40%
- Written exam- 2 hours and 30 minutes

**How else will my studies be supported?**

Throughout the course you will be taken to a large number of plays which inform both your written and practical work. You will get the opportunity to take part in a range of workshops from theatre companies such as Frantic Assembly, Punchdrunk and Paperbirds and a huge number of theatre trips. You will be given first access to programmes such as the National Theatre New Views and Connections.

**Skills gained**

The course develops critical skills including communication, analysis, evaluation, independence of thought and creativity. Time management, the ability to work as a team and leadership skills are developed throughout the course.

**University and beyond**

The Theatre Studies course is excellent for anyone who is interested in exploring the world of theatre beyond school as a director, actor, producer, designer, and equips you with key skills suitable for careers in areas such as journalism, television, film, media, politics, business, law or communications.

## Economics

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

Consider these important questions: Why is it that the NHS is struggling to provide a fully functioning health service? Is it right to compensate the unemployed? Is Google too powerful? Why are globalisation and free trade out of favour? Is immigration detrimental to the economy? How will Brexit impact the British economy? How can economics help to correct the overuse of antibiotics and slow the growth of superbugs?

If these questions intrigue you, then the study of Economics will provide you with the critical and analytical tools to begin to answer them. You will be introduced to a number of formal, theoretical models in order to analyse the world. You will be expected to think independently about particular economic issues and discuss your views.

### Why should I study Economics?

The course is designed to introduce new theories to students with no previous experience of studying Economics; however, an appetite for current affairs is essential. The examinations and class discussions are based on the economic phenomena reported every day in the media. The course is challenging as it introduces a new and logical way of looking at the world. It is important to be open-minded and allow yourself to step back from the discussion and evaluate the assumptions it may be resting on.

It should be noted that Business Studies may not be taken alongside Economics as there is too great an overlap in the courses.

### What will I study?

Microeconomics, the study of individual markets and the decisions firms and consumers make within them. Topics included are:

- Demand and supply
- Labour markets
- Theory of the firm (monopoly, oligopoly, game theory)
- Market failure and externalities

Macroeconomics, considers the performance of the economy as a whole. Topics studied include:

- Macroeconomic objectives (economic growth, inflation, unemployment, and income inequality)
- Aggregate demand and aggregate supply
- Globalisation
- Trade blocs and economic integration
- Economic development

Understanding the economy is important both when operating a business and when policymaking in government. However, the intellectual skills developed will be of life-long value:

- Ability to extract and interpret complex data
- Present a coherent argument on paper
- A good grounding in how the national and international economy works

### **How will I be assessed?**

The course is assessed over three papers each of which is two hours long.

Paper 1: Markets and business behaviour assesses the micro content of the course.

Paper 2: The national and global economy assesses the macro content of the course.

Paper 3: Microeconomics and Macroeconomics – this is a synoptic paper drawing on students' knowledge of all areas of the syllabus.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

Students are taken to a variety of lectures and student conferences. They are also encouraged to independently attend lectures at the LSE. Students are also encouraged to enter essay competitions held by a number of universities. A weekly extension session is held for those students who wish to explore the subject beyond the confines of the syllabus. Regular support sessions are also offered to help students consolidate their understanding of areas which are of particular concern to them.

### **Skills gained**

The course will enable students to gain a range of transferable skills including:

- Cognitive skills such as non-routine problem solving; decision making and reasoning, critical and ICT literacy
- Interpersonal skills such as communication, relationship-building skills and collaborative problem solving
- Intrapersonal skills such as adaptability, self-management and self-development

### **University and beyond**

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- Higher education courses such as economics degrees with a focus on theory, or degrees in applied economics such as environmental economics, labour economics, public sector economics or monetary economics. Alternatively, students may choose to study a business economics, mathematical economics or business degree
- A wide range of careers ranging from finance, banking, insurance, accountancy, management and consultancy, to becoming professional economists.

If you are considering Economics at university, Mathematics A-Level is normally required and certainly Further Mathematics is necessary for Oxbridge and LSE applications.

## Electronics

**Exam Board:** Eduqas

We offer the WJEC A-Level Specification. Electronics GCSE will be an advantage in some of the modules but is not required to take this A-Level course.

### Why should I Study Electronics?

Anyone going on to study (or work) in engineering or design will gain skills in technical analysis and problem solving. This course will teach the fundamentals of electronics and give a good understanding in a broad range of topics. The course will appeal to students who have lively and enquiring minds and who wish to gain an insight into the internal workings of many of the products we take for granted.

### What will I study?

The course is taught in modules covering the following areas of electronics:

Semiconductors	Digital Logic and Sequencers
Filtering	Analogue to Digital Conversion
Optical and Digital Communications	Microcontrollers
Mains Power Supplies	Audio Systems
High Power Switching	Instrumentation
Wireless communication	Timing circuits

There are also two practical projects of programming a microcontroller in the L6th and an open project of the student's choice in the U6th. Many opportunities will exist to simulate, build, test and evaluate completed circuits throughout the course.

### How will I be assessed?

Assessment for the course is achieved through a combination of two externally assessed papers (each worth 40% of the final grade) sat at the end of the U6th and two student led coursework projects of their own choosing (constituting the remaining 20%). Both coursework elements are internally assessed and externally moderated by the examination board.

### How else will my studies be supported?

Along with comprehensive notes, students learning will be supported through the availability of a well-equipped electronics laboratory. This has equipment for the design and analysis of physical circuits, enables students to program microcontrollers and to simulate designs in software before building circuits.

### Skills gained

Students will develop an appreciation of the important role that electronics plays in a modern society and will be encouraged to develop an understanding of the issues associated with designing, manufacturing and using safe and environmentally friendly electronic products. Students will be able to design circuits that can solve problems and perform a wide variety of tasks e.g. products to monitor and control household environments. Students will also learn how to simulate designs in software and how to program a microcontroller. Additional skills gained are analysing problems, developing solutions and implementing designs in hardware.

### **University and Beyond**

An A-Level in electronics will be of benefit to anyone studying a degree in electronics, engineering, industrial design or applied science. The base skills learnt in this course of using known elements to design and build solutions to real world problems are applicable to a wide range of career choices.

## English Literature

Exam Board: Edexcel

Reading great books forces us to address important issues. At Bancroft's we hope to teach not only a detailed understanding of particular texts, exploring ways in which writers shape our views of the world, but also to foster an intellectual and imaginative interest in a wide variety of social and philosophical topics, helping students to read everything with greater insight and more profound pleasure.

### Why should I study English Literature?

The study of literature leads us to a greater understanding of ourselves and of those around us; this emotional intelligence enhances performance in any job and, even more importantly, our ability to negotiate a path through the many human issues of living in a family and wider society. The works we study invite us to explore social and philosophical questions which might not otherwise occur to us, and students become increasingly confident in shaping those thoughts into cogent arguments. Discussions during English lessons are thought-provoking and wide in scope. Every class is taught by two teachers in order that a variety of views and approaches may be experienced. The importance of a personal response to the material means that there is room to pursue individual interests.

### What will I study?

The course is organised around the principal literary forms - prose, poetry and drama. The components are:

- Two novels, at least one of which must have been published before 1900
- One Shakespeare play supported by an anthology of extracts from critical essays
- One non-Shakespearean play
- A selection of poetry by one writer or from one literary period
- A selection of twenty-first century poetry
- Two coursework texts chosen by the set teacher

In the Lower Sixth we study the non-Shakespearean play, two novels linked by theme (e.g. *The Supernatural* or *Women in Society*) and approximately half the modern poems. As part of sharpening their essay-writing skills students learn how to analyse and evaluate ways in which writers comment on, and are affected by, their social, historical and cultural contexts. This is enhanced in the study of the novels by the need to compare the texts, promoting understanding of the development of genres and literary themes through time.

The skill of comparing texts is also an important aspect of the coursework unit, which offers an opportunity to develop an extended essay on two related texts, exploring ways in which writers have been influenced by earlier works and literary genres. The process of drafting and redrafting this piece not only improves students' skills in sharp literary analysis and in developing a cogent argument, but helps them to reach more profound insights into the relationships between literary texts.

In studying the Upper Sixth texts, students will also learn the key academic skill of engaging with critical work in order to inform and develop their own arguments. This will enable them to enter into intellectual debate at a sophisticated level and help to develop research skills which will be essential in almost any degree course.

The course also features practice in the discipline of Practical Criticism, with students asked to compare an unseen poem to one of the modern poems they have studied. This often leads to some of the most spontaneous examination work for A-Level, with students often finding new insights into a poem which they already know in detail.

### **How will I be assessed?**

The course is linear, culminating in three examination papers, with one coursework unit written during the spring term of the Upper Sixth.

Paper 1 – Drama. One essay on the Shakespeare play, incorporating some of the critical essays; one essay on the non-Shakespearean play.

Paper 2 – Prose. One essay comparing both novels.

Paper 3 – Poetry. One essay comparing an unseen 21<sup>st</sup> Century poem to one of the prepared poems; one essay on two poems from the other selection studied or two extracts from Chaucer.

Coursework. One essay (c. 3000 words) comparing two texts and incorporating critical material.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

The work in the classroom is complemented by visits to the theatre, attendance at lectures, and the opportunities to participate in drama and the work of other arts societies within the school. There is an annual L6th trip to hear some of the 21<sup>st</sup> century poets read and discuss their poems. London theatres often stage productions of plays studied or related texts, and there will be trips to relevant exhibitions at museums and galleries. The English Society provides a forum for discussion of works outside the syllabus and hosts contemporary writers. All interested students are welcome to attend Oxbridge preparation classes, and regular revision classes are provided in the second half of the Upper Sixth year.

### **Skills gained**

The ability to organise complex ideas into a coherent argument is one which will be useful in almost any university course and job. The redrafting of coursework sharpens students' written style and teaches them to adopt a critical and evaluative approach to their own work. As part of the coursework and of the Shakespeare unit students learn the essential academic discipline of engaging intellectually with the work of other critics, balancing arguments against each other and using them to develop their own thoughts. Analytical and evaluative skills gained through GCSE English Literature are developed through the A-Level course. Classroom discussion helps to develop the verbal skills of articulating complex ideas and assimilating challenging arguments.

### **University and beyond**

An English degree leads very naturally into careers where strong communication skills are essential; for example, journalism, publishing, advertising, work in media/the creative industry and public relations. Many English graduates do a Law Conversion course or move into politics or into aspects of the public sector such as government or the civil service. Beyond this, it is impossible to list the range of organisations where the skills listed above will be valued and developed further.

# Geography

Exam Board: Eduqas

## Why should I study Geography?

Grounded in contemporary 21st Century issues, the geography A-Level course investigates a range of global challenges and opportunities for individuals, societies and their environments. Additionally, students gain an integrated understanding of how global economic, developmental and environmental changes have become inter-related over time. During the course, students also acquire a broad range of skills. They learn how to analyse complex data series and how to write in a discursive, well-evidenced and argumentative way. By the end of the course, our students can adopt a multi-disciplinary approach to problem-solving and are independent learners.

Fieldwork has always formed an important and enjoyable part of A-Level geography. Students participate in a residential fieldtrip and will also be required to conduct their own out of classroom research.

## What will I study?

### Component 1: Changing Landscapes and Changing Places

- *Changing Coastal Landscapes*
- *Changing Places*

### Component 2: Global Systems and Global Governance

- *Water and Carbon Cycles*
- *Processes and Patterns of Global Migration and Global Governance of the Earth's Oceans*
- *21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges*

### Component 3: Contemporary Themes in Geography

- *Tectonic Hazards*
- *Contemporary Themes in Geography-choice of four optional themes*

### Component 4: Independent Investigation

- *A non-exam component consisting of a 3000-4000 word essay on a piece of original research*

## How will I be assessed?

This qualification will be assessed through three exams at the end of the two years and an independent investigation completed by the end of the U6th Autumn Term.

**Component 1:** Changing Landscapes and Changing Places (20.5% of qualification)

**Component 2:** Global Systems and Global Governance (27.5% of qualification)

**Component 3:** Contemporary Themes in Geography (32% of qualification)

**Component 4:** Independent Investigation (20% of qualification)

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

The Geography department has subscriptions and access to numerous online resources which can support, challenge and extend your learning. All resources used in the course will be available on the VLE and a textbook is also provided. You can become a member of the Royal Geographical Society which enables you to attend their prestigious Monday night lecture program (or watch them online). A residential fieldtrip is an integral part of this course and there will also be an international trip offered during your time studying Geography at A-Level which will be relevant to the course.

### **Skills gained**

Together with this broad curriculum, geography teaches and nurtures a wide range of skills that have enormous relevance and practical application to our everyday lives and range of professions:

- Communication skills, written and spoken
- Numerical, ICT and graphical skills including Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Independent research – the independent investigation gives students the chance to carry out an original piece of fieldwork on a topic which interests them and learn how to present their research

### **University and Beyond**

Geography will provide you with a broad knowledge base and transferrable skills that could reward you both academically and advance you professionally. The broad remit of the A-Level enables students to engage with a diverse range of topics. These include aspects of earth science, land economy, politics and social anthropology, making geographers strongly employable.

# Greek

Exam board: OCR

You must have studied GCSE Greek to enable you to follow this course.

There are two elements to this course: language and literature.

## Why should I study Greek?

- You will continue to develop your understanding of the Greek language and the related literature, values and society and, by making comparisons, achieve a better understanding of your own culture.
- You will continue to develop a wide range of **transferable skills** (e.g. literary criticism, enhanced knowledge of English – including derivations, problem-solving, analysis, historical and textual evaluation, and attention to detail).
- You will read a wide range of interesting and entertaining literature which has influenced the development of European literature and culture.
- You will develop insights into the relevance of Greek and of ancient literature and civilisation to our understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
- If you are enjoying Greek so far, you will relish the opportunity to study this fascinating subject in even greater depth.

## What will I study?

There are four components:

- **Unseen Translation:** You will continue to study the Greek language and to widen your vocabulary, beginning with the Defined Vocabulary List. You will read extracts from Xenophon for the Prose Unseen and extracts from Euripides for the Verse Unseen. You will also learn how to scan iambic trimeters.
- **Comprehension:** You will read a variety of Greek oratory, practising translation and the relevant type of comprehension questions; you will also practise the type of questions which will be asked with regard to accident and syntax.
- **Prose Literature:** You will study selections from Book 6 of the *Histories* of Thucydides (in which Thucydides describes the Athenians' desire to conquer Sicily) and selections from the *Symposium* by Plato (in which Socrates and his dinner companions discuss the nature of love). You will also read further selections from the *Symposium* in English to enable you to understand the context of your set text more clearly.
- **Verse Literature:** You will study sections of Book 1 of Homer's *Odyssey* (in which Athene visits Telemachus to encourage him to seek news of his father, Odysseus) and selected lines (which show Ajax's anger at not being awarded the armour of Achilles) from the *Ajax* by Sophocles. You will also read the rest of the play in English to enable you to understand the plot more clearly.

## How will I be assessed?

**Unseen Translation:** this tests AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language] and is worth 100 marks (33% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 1 hour 45 minutes. You will translate an unseen passage of Greek prose (50 marks) and an unseen passage of Greek verse (45 marks) into English; you will also scan two lines of verse (5 marks).

**Comprehension:** this tests AO1 and is worth 50 marks (17% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes. You will answer translation, comprehension and grammar questions on an unseen passage of Greek prose (oratory).

**Prose Literature:** this tests AO2 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature] and AO3 [critically analyse, evaluate and respond to literature] and is worth 75 marks (25% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 2 hours. You will answer questions to show your understanding and appreciation of the set texts (including translation, comprehension and a 15-mark question analysing literary style, characterisation, argument and literary meaning) and write an essay on the Plato set text and the material read in translation.

**Verse Literature:** this tests AO2 and AO3 and is worth 75 marks (25% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 2 hours. You will answer questions to show your understanding and appreciation of the set texts (including translation, comprehension and a 15-mark question analysing literary style, characterisation, argument and literary meaning) and write an essay on the Euripides set text and the material read in translation.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

You will have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the literature studied and the Classical World in general by attending lectures and conferences on the set texts and a variety of subjects. You will also have the opportunity to attend Classical Society (which holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics) and to research a subject of your choice to enable you to deliver a talk. The opportunity will be available to assist in the running of Junior Classics Club. There may be the opportunity to assist younger pupils who are finding an aspect of the language difficult and to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

### **Skills gained**

You will continue to develop your ability to understand and translate the Greek language.

You will continue to develop precision and logical thinking.

You will continue to develop your analytical and evaluative skills.

You will learn to form your own opinions, to select relevant material to support your arguments and to articulate your views coherently.

You will develop an appreciation of the nuances of language and the ability to identify the impact of certain literary aspects on the reader.

You will develop your clarity of thought and expression, writing with increased sophistication as a result of your enhanced linguistic awareness and appreciation of style.

### **University and beyond**

Greek may be studied further as part of a highly-regarded Honours course in Classics or as part of a Joint Honours course. The intellectual qualities which will be developed by a Classics graduate are in great demand in a wide range of careers; employers especially value the diverse skillset which Classics graduates have built up during their studies. Those who continue to study Greek at university often proceed to careers in journalism, politics, the legal profession, industry, commerce, banking, accountancy or the computing world.

# History

Exam Board: OCR

## Why should I study History?

A-Level History challenges students' minds and will help them to develop clear, concise and accurate powers of expression, orally and on paper. Students who wish to read widely, learn to research independently, like questioning and arguing, both in small groups and as a class, will find much to enjoy in our study of the past. A good GCSE pass in History is desirable as a foundation for the skills required at A-Level but is not a requirement; only an open mind and enthusiasm!

## What will I study?

The Department is proud of its longstanding tradition of teaching a broad range of different historical periods and helping students interpret the past of a wide variety of peoples and nations. Each student will study four units and at least 200 years of history. They will consider the changing relationship between rulers and their subjects, why wars are fought and how are they won, why nations and empires unite and divide, how economics shape past societies and how competing religions and ideologies have developed and how they have come into conflict.

The department delivers two distinct periods of history, Early Modern and Modern. Each course is made up of complementary units designed to deepen your understanding of the periods being studied. If you wish, you can choose which of the two periods you would prefer and the school will try to accommodate your choice as far as is possible. Please remember that the issues which we address are remarkably similar in both periods and that you should opt for History due to general enthusiasm to explore past human experiences rather than any particular period.

In the **Early Modern** course you will learn about -

- **'The Crusades 1095 – 1193'** – A violent pilgrimage by Western European kings, knights, monks and priests into the heart of the Middle East to reclaim Jerusalem from Islam.
- **'The Early & Mid Tudors 1485 – 1558'** – political and economic turmoil as Henry VII attempts to establish the Tudor dynasty on England's throne before his son and grandchildren unleash war, rebellion and religious division with the English Reformation.
- **'The Catholic Reformation 1492 – 1610'** – the Catholic Church fights back globally, from Germany to Japan, against the rise of Protestantism and other faiths.
- **The Independent Study** – A coursework element tackled in the Upper Sixth in which students pursue their own historical interests and, through independent research, discover the answer to a question which they have researched. Recent topics have included the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Ottoman Empire, Charlemagne and Witchcraft persecutions.

In the **Modern** course you will learn about -

- **'Germany 1789 – 1919'** – the ideas, revolutions, wars and leaders that united Germany into a single state before ultimately leading the nation to disaster in the Great War.
- **'Russia 1894 – 1941'** – from the collapse of the hated Russian monarchy amid war and revolution to the rise of Lenin, Stalin and the waves of terror they unleashed on Russian society.
- **'Britain 1930 – 1997'** – the career of Winston Churchill and his role in the Second World War followed by Britain's post war economic decline and the end of the British Empire.

- **The Independent Study** – A coursework element tackled in the Upper Sixth in which students pursue their own historical interests and, through independent research, discover the answer to a question which they have researched. Recent topics have included the relationship between Britain & Ireland in the nineteenth century, the careers of Gladstone & Disraeli and the expansion of the British Empire in the Victorian period.

### **How will I be assessed?**

The course will be assessed through three formal examinations (80%) and coursework (20%). Much like GCSE History, the examinations will test the pupil's ability to construct convincing arguments using detailed evidence to explain and judge historical events. Students will also be expected to analyse and evaluate historical evidence for meaning and accuracy and weigh the interpretations of other historians.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

Regular history trips are organised to support your studies; some are local visits to sites such as the Cabinet War Rooms or Westminster Abbey in London while others are further afield to Moscow, St Petersburg, Rome or Paris. The Department also regularly organises access to lectures delivered by top historians both inside and outside school. To extend knowledge beyond the syllabus, a pupil researched and written termly history magazine, Past Paper, is published and a successful preparation programme is offered to those planning on pursuing history at university.

### **Skills gained**

Through discussion and reading students will develop an in-depth understanding of the period, societies and cultures they study. Critical thinking and evaluation skills will be nurtured allowing pupils to identify truth and recognise myth, propaganda and downright lies both in a historical context and in the world around them. Confidence and communication skills will also be fostered, allowing pupils to communicate an argument effectively on paper and in oral debate. Through their studies of the past, they will learn about people, how they interact, what motivates them to work together in common cause or tears them apart into rivalries. They will also gain a broader insight into modern international relations and gain a better understanding of government institutions, ideologies both political and religious, social divisions and economics.

### **University and beyond**

A-Level History may lead to a degree in History, Ancient and Modern History, Archaeology or Law but would also contribute as an A-Level to any student hoping to study any of the Humanities, an ancient or modern foreign language, or a Social Science at degree level. No career path is closed by the study of History at A-Level and many of our past students have gone on to pursue careers in the media, marketing, management, law, teaching, research, finance, publishing, conservation, tourism, the Civil Service and the Armed Forces.

## Latin

Exam board: OCR

You must have studied GCSE Latin to enable you to follow this course.

There are two elements to this course: language and literature.

### Why should I study Latin?

- You will continue to develop your understanding of the Latin language and the related literature, values and society and, by making comparisons, achieve a better understanding of your own culture.
- You will continue to develop a wide range of **transferable skills** (e.g. literary criticism, enhanced knowledge of English – including derivations, problem-solving, analysis, historical and textual evaluation, and attention to detail).
- You will read a wide range of interesting and entertaining literature which has influenced the development of European literature and culture.
- You will develop insights into the relevance of Latin and of ancient literature and civilisation to our understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
- If you are enjoying Latin so far, you will relish the opportunity to study this fascinating subject in even greater depth.

### What will I study?

There are four components:

- **Unseen Translation:** You will continue to study the Latin language and to widen your vocabulary, beginning with the Defined Vocabulary List. You will read extracts from Livy for the Prose Unseen and extracts from Ovid for the Verse Unseen. You will also learn how to scan hexameters and elegiac couplets.
- **Comprehension:** You will read a variety of Latin texts, practising translation and the relevant type of comprehension questions; you will also practise the type of questions which will be asked with regard to accident and syntax.
- **Prose Literature:** You will study selections from Cicero's *Pro Cluentio* (in which Cicero eloquently defends Cluentius, who has been accused by his mother of killing his stepfather) and selections from *Annals* IV by Tacitus (describing Tiberius's withdrawal to Capri and Sejanus's scheming for power). You will also read selections from *Annals* IV in English to enable you to understand the context of your set text more clearly.
- **Verse Literature:** You will study a selection of poems by Catullus, including those which document his turbulent relationship with Lesbia, and sections of Book XII of Virgil's *Aeneid* (in which Aeneas and Turnus finally fight their duel). You will also read the whole of *Aeneid* Book XII in English to enable you to understand the context of your set text more clearly.

### How will I be assessed?

**Unseen Translation:** this tests AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language] and is worth 100 marks (33% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 1 hour 45 minutes. You will translate an unseen passage of the Latin prose author Livy (50 marks) and an unseen passage of Ovid's Latin verse (45 marks) into English; you will also scan two lines of verse (5 marks) – either hexameters or an elegiac couplet.

**Comprehension:** this tests AO1 and is worth 50 marks (17% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes. You will answer translation, comprehension and grammar questions on an unseen passage of Latin prose.

**Prose Literature:** this tests AO2 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature] and AO3 [critically analyse, evaluate and respond to literature] and is worth 75 marks (25% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 2 hours. You will answer questions to show your understanding and appreciation of the set texts (including translation, comprehension and a 15-mark question analysing literary style, characterisation, argument and literary meaning) and write an essay on the Tacitus set text and the material read in translation.

**Verse Literature:** this tests AO2 and AO3 and is worth 75 marks (25% of the total marks for the A-Level); it lasts 2 hours. You will answer questions to show your understanding and appreciation of the set texts (including translation, comprehension and a 15-mark question analysing literary style, characterisation, argument and literary meaning) and write an essay on the Horace set text and the material read in translation.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

You will have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the literature studied and the Classical World in general by attending lectures and conferences on the set texts and a variety of subjects. You will also have the opportunity to attend Classical Society (which holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics) and to research a subject of your choice to enable you to deliver a talk. The opportunity will be available to assist in the running of Junior Classics Club. There may be the opportunity to assist younger pupils who are finding an aspect of the language difficult and to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

### **Skills gained**

You will continue to develop your ability to understand and translate the Latin language.

You will continue to develop precision and logical thinking.

You will continue to develop your analytical and evaluative skills.

You will learn to form your own opinions, to select relevant material to support your arguments and to articulate your views coherently.

You will develop an appreciation of the nuances of language and the ability to identify the impact of certain literary aspects on the reader.

You will develop your clarity of thought and expression, writing with increased sophistication as a result of your enhanced linguistic awareness and appreciation of style.

### **University and beyond**

Latin may be studied further as part of a highly-regarded Honours course in Classics or as part of a Joint Honours course. The intellectual qualities which will be developed by a Classics graduate are in great demand in a wide range of careers; employers especially value the diverse skillset which Classics graduates have built up in the course of their studies. Those who continue to study Latin at university often proceed to careers in journalism, politics, the legal profession, industry, commerce, banking, accountancy or the computing world.

## Mathematics and Further Mathematics

Exam Board: Edexcel

Mathematics is the study of abstract patterns and problem solving. It is the development of another language in which we communicate concepts, situations and ideas. It is this 'abstract' nature that means that its methods and results are applicable in almost all aspects of our physical world.

### Why should I study Mathematics and Further Mathematics?

Mathematics is the language of the scientific world and heavily supports many other subjects. It is one of the most desired subjects for the widest range of University courses and employers; Mathematicians are problem solvers, logicians, numerically astute and accurate, making them eminently employable in a wide range of fields.

### What will I study?

#### Single Mathematics

All students will follow the same two year A-Level Mathematics course, and the public examinations will take place at the end of the two year course.

- **Pure Mathematics:**  
This comprises of two thirds of the total content of the course. It focuses on such topics as algebra, calculus, trigonometry, vectors and transformation mathematics.
- **Statistics:**  
This comprises one sixth of the course. This is the application of pure mathematics to matters of uncertainty and probability. In the second year, students go on to study hypothesis testing and how certain one can be of the conclusions drawn from data.
- **Mechanics:**  
This comprises one sixth of the course. This deals with the way we can use equations to solve problems relating to physical objects and their motion and interaction; things that move, rotate and collide with each other.

#### Double Mathematics

Double Maths consists of two distinct A-Levels: A-Level Mathematics (the same course as Single Mathematics) and A-Level Further Mathematics. Both A-Levels will be sat at the end of the U6th, but they are studied successively with Mathematics studied in the L6th and Further Mathematics studied in the U6th. The Further Mathematics course consists of 4 modules:

- **Pure Mathematics:**  
The modules Further Core Pure 1 and Further Core Pure 2 each make up 25% of the course. Topics studies will include, differential equations, further vectors, hyperbolics, complex numbers, polar geometry, power series and conics.
- **Further Applied Mathematics:**  
The modules Further Mechanics 1 and Further Statistics 1 each make up 25% of the course. The mechanics element contains topics such as centres of mass, collisions, work and energy, elasticity, dynamics and kinematics statics and circular motion. The statistics element contains topics such as random variables, hypothesis testing, Chi-squared, confidence intervals and probability generating functions.

## **AS Further Mathematics**

If a student has taken Further Maths in the Lower Sixth and feels that A-Level Further Maths will be too challenging for them in the Upper Sixth, it may be possible to elect to study AS Further Mathematics. Similarly, if a student has opted for Single Maths and would like to supplement their study of Maths in the Upper Sixth then it may be possible to opt for AS Further Mathematics.

## **AEA Course**

The Advanced Extension Award is for many students the first steps towards preparing for a scientific or Mathematical course at Oxbridge and provides the opportunity to dig deeper into the Mathematical curriculum by solving more difficult problems in teams. There is no additional content presented; the 10 week course focusses on problem solving techniques and different ways of thinking about Mathematics.

The majority of students who elect to study Further Maths have usually completed the FSMQ Additional Mathematics. Whilst this is extremely advantageous, it is not *absolutely* necessary and students have transferred from IGCSE Mathematics. This is not a task to be taken lightly and will require a course of study to be completed over the summer after GCSEs which will be tested on return in the sixth form. Students in this position should have a discussion with the Head of Maths.

## **How will I be assessed?**

Single Mathematics consists of three exams; two on the pure syllabus and one combined mechanics and statistics paper. All papers carry equal weight.

Further Mathematics students will sit the same three exams as single Mathematics students, plus four Further Mathematics papers; one for each module.

## **How else will my studies be supported?**

Trips, conferences, visiting speakers, societies, extension classes and workshops.

Many extension classes from the AEA course to STEP preparation and interview practise are offered. Support classes are tailored to students and offered where necessary. UKMT Maths Challenges including the annual Team Challenge are run by various members of staff and students are often given the opportunity to attend lectures and masterclasses in central London.

## **Skills gained**

- Problem solving
- Logical reasoning
- The ability to present an argument using precise technical language
- The ability to check work and achieve accuracy

## **University and beyond**

If you're thinking about studying a Science, Engineering or Economics degree at university, you'll almost certainly find that you'll be glad you studied A-Level Maths; students are also advised to consult with university department websites to determine whether Double or Single Maths is considered to be essential or preferred for their chosen course of study. Further Mathematics is usually required for Engineering, Computing, Physics or Economics at Oxbridge, LSE and Imperial College.

# Modern Foreign Languages

## French, German, & Spanish

Exam Board: AQA

In each language, the aims are to develop the skills of communication associated with GCSE, and to broaden an interest in aspects of the French, German, Russian and Spanish-speaking worlds in an enjoyable and stimulating way. These courses will appeal to those who wish to broaden their intellectual horizons and awareness of contemporary issues through the medium of a foreign language. Students who have genuine interest, imagination and the desire to work hard in foreign language study will gain a deeper insight into different cultures, and gain more enjoyment when travelling abroad. Students will need to feel confident in the four language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. It is not possible to do these subjects without having done them at GCSE.

### Why should I study Modern Languages?

- To use the language for practical communication
- To develop a better understanding of other cultures
- To see these countries and their peoples in a positive light so that you enjoy travel more
- To take the language study further, if you wish
- To understand your own language better
- To take on a rewarding cognitive challenge
- To build a bank of transferrable skills which will be useful in your other subjects, future studies and work

### What will I study?

- Aspects of French/German/Spanish-speaking society: current trends
- Aspects of society: current issues
- Artistic culture in the French/German/Spanish-speaking world
- Aspects of political life
- Grammar
- One literary text
- One film

### How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing:

- Listening and responding to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources covering different registers and adapted as necessary. Material will include complex factual and abstract content and questions will target main points, gist and detail. Studio recordings will be used and students will have individual control of the recording. All questions are in French/German/Spanish, to be answered with non-verbal responses or in the target language (30 marks).
- Reading and responding to a variety of texts written for different purposes, drawn from a range of authentic sources and adapted as necessary. Material will include complex factual and abstract content and questions will target main points, gist and detail. All questions are in French/German/Spanish, to be answered with non-verbal responses or in the target language (50 marks).

- Translation into English; a passage of minimum 100 words (10 marks).
- Translation into French/German/Spanish; a passage of minimum 100 words (10 marks).

#### Paper 2: Writing

- Either one question on a set text from a choice of two questions, or one question on a set film from a choice of two questions, alternatively two questions on set texts from a choice of two questions on each text.
- All questions will require a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation, as appropriate to the work studied (eg the effect of narrative voice in a prose text or camera work in a film).

- **Paper 3: Speaking**

#### Paper 3: Speaking

- Discussion of a sub-theme with the discussion based on a stimulus card (5 – 6 minutes). The student studies the card for 5 minutes at the start of the test (25 marks).
- Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9 – 10 minutes) of individual research project (35 marks).

#### How else will my studies be supported?

In addition to normal lessons, language students attend a conversation lesson with a native speaker who helps them to build confidence in the spoken language and to prepare for the Oral Assessment Unit.

The Modern Languages department has its own digital language laboratory. In addition, students will be expected to take part in residential visits abroad, outings to foreign theatre productions in London, and wider reading, all of which are strongly encouraged and facilitated by the department.

#### Skills gained

- Communication
- Open-mindedness
- Resilience
- Logical thinking
- Attention to detail
- Filmic and literary analysis

#### University and beyond

An A-Level in a Modern Foreign Language is the perfect basis for further study in languages or linguistics. The skills learnt will enhance your university applications for any literary based degree, film studies, social and political sciences, history, geography and philosophy. A language will make your application for medicine, Maths or sciences better-rounded.

# Music

Exam Board: AQA

There is much music making at Bancroft's School with a huge variety of settings and repertoire. For those students who wish to explore music in a more analytical context the A-Level course provides students the opportunity to do this in a complimentary way to the Co-curricular programme.

## Why should I study Music?

The study of music gives us insight to composer's thoughts in the act of composition, and helps us to understand, through the use and exploration of musical elements, what the composer's intentions were at the outset. It also gives us an awareness of the elements that are used in music to create emotion and effect. Music lessons are taught by a variety of teachers who guide you through the different components of the course.

## What will I study?

The course is split into three areas.

- Appraising - listening, analysis, and contextual understanding 40%
- Performance - A ten minute solo recital. 35%
- Composition - two compositions 25%

In the appraising section there are three strands that are studied from the Western Classical Tradition 1650 - 1910:

- The Baroque solo concerto
- The operas of Mozart
- Romantic piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg

Two further areas of study are:

- Pop Music
- Music for Theatre

Performance - you will work towards your recital developing your technique and interpretive skills with your individual music teacher.

Composition - two compositions, one to a brief set by AQA and the other a free composition. During the course you will analyse set works and, through wider listening, develop an understanding of the different genres. You will learn to use technical language to write about how the set works were created, developed and performed, and how the composer uses musical elements. You will also have composition lessons where you can develop ideas and learn the technical aspects of harmonic progression through the study of Bach Chorales. Students are also encouraged to perform to each other in lessons and participate in the wide variety of Co-curricular activities on offer.

### **How is it assessed?**

The Appraising (listening) paper is in three sections - Listening, analysis, and an essay question. There will be familiar and unfamiliar music from the areas studied during the course.

The solo recital is recorded in the spring term of the second year. The recital should last ten minutes and have a variety of repertoire at Grade 6 or above.

Compositions are completed in the second year of the course during lessons. The composition briefs set by AQA are released in the September of the second year.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

There will be opportunities to attend live performances of the set works. The music department also has many scores available for you to borrow to extend your listening and practice your score reading. Music department staff are always on hand to support and answer questions or clarify when new concepts are challenging. Alongside this you will be supported in performance and composition through a range of workshops and masterclasses.

### **Skills gained**

Music inspires creativity and expression and in many ways can complement and enhance other A-Level choices. You will gain skills in applying musical knowledge and understanding in a way that you may not have experienced before. You will increase your confidence as a performer and composer, and learn to develop your own ideas and consider constructive feedback.

### **University and beyond**

You may want to study music at University or at Conservatoire level depending on your specialism and instrument. A music degree can lead to employment in the music industry or as a performer, producer, composer or teacher.

# Physics

Exam Board: EDEXCEL

A context-based course across a broad range of Physics principles including mechanics, waves and electricity.

## Why should I study Physics?

If you are interested in 'how things work' across a scale from atoms to galaxies, then this is the course for you. Physics develops skills that are highly prized by employers, such as mathematical ability, analytical thinking, communication of ideas and practical aptitude, making it one of the best vocational subjects to study. Finance and Engineering are the two largest employment sectors for physicists.

## What will I study?

The course is split over the two years into 11 context-based chapters, covering the Physics involved in Sport, Space technology, Music, Food production, Medicine, Archaeology, The Eurostar, Media, Particle Physics, Earthquakes & Architecture, Stars & The Universe.

## How will I be assessed?

Academic and practical skills are both assessed, leading to an exam-based grade and a separate practical endorsement certificate. There are 3 terminal exam papers, of which 40% of the content will test mathematical ability. Across the 2 years of study, there is a suite of 16 required practicals that will be used to assess experimental and communication skills.

## How else will my studies be supported?

There is an extensive programme of support throughout the 2 years, both in and out of the classroom. Extension classes, such as the 'L6 Accelerator' and the Isaac Physics initiative, are designed to push those considering Physics/Engineering at university beyond the classroom requirements. Support clinics also run weekly, for those needing further explanation and assistance. Various trips/events are held throughout the course, including regular Cambridge lectures, UCL lectures, Diamond Synchrotron, Greenwich Royal Observatory, JET fusion reactor. Pupils are encouraged to obtain Headstart engineering placements at select universities and to enter Oxbridge essay competitions.

## Skills gained

Primary skills developed throughout the course include Mathematical techniques, Data handling, IT skills, Experimental skills, Communication, Independence, Creativity and Innovative thinking.

## University and Beyond

We have a very successful Physics/NatSci/Engineering application history to various top institutions, reflecting the broad range of skills demonstrated by many of our pupils and their correspondingly strong academic performances.

# Politics

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

As this subject is not offered at GCSE, it is open at A-Level to anyone with a lively interest in the current political scene!

## **Why should I study Politics?**

Primarily because in the era of Brexit and Trump, it is more relevant than ever. We aim to help students gain a critical awareness of the nature of contemporary politics, alongside an introduction to broader political theory, and to help them form opinions based on fact and logical thinking.

## **What will I study?**

The syllabus involves the study of a variety of issues central to contemporary British and American politics, as well as an introduction to political theory.

### **UK Politics:**

**British Politics** introduces the student to the study, through examination of the representative process in the UK, of the key principles in British politics: citizenship, democracy and political participation. We will study political parties, how elections work and the role of pressure groups.

**British Government** provides an introduction to the major institutions of the UK Government and examines their relationships with one another, especially the House of Commons, the Prime Minister and Cabinet as well as the Judiciary. We will also consider their effectiveness within the context of the Brexit process and other contemporary concerns.

### **American Politics:**

The course looks at the representative processes of the US political system and considers their adequacy in terms of popular participation and full democracy. Areas of study focus on Elections and Voting, Political Parties, Pressure Groups and Racial / Ethnic factors. It also examines the institutional framework of US government and considers the inter-relationships between its legislative, executive and judicial processes and the health of US federalism. Areas of study focus on the Constitution, Congress, Presidency and the Supreme Court. Comparisons are made between all areas of UK and US politics.

### **Political Theory:**

Students will study the theory and practice behind the key ideologies of conservatism, liberalism and socialism, along with another 'ism' with great contemporary relevance, nationalism.

## **How will I be assessed?**

Politics is an entirely essay-based subject, including some source analysis. Three papers will be sat at the end of the Upper Sixth.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

No prior knowledge is needed, just a desire to explore new ideas with an open mind, a willingness to read a broad-sheet newspaper or news magazine on a regular basis and follow current affairs on radio, television and cyberspace. You should enjoy argument and debate, listening to others as well as voicing your own opinions.

During the course of the Autumn term in the Lower Sixth students have the opportunity to visit the Palace of Westminster. This is an excellent opportunity to have a guided tour of Parliament and to place academic studies into context. In the Autumn term of the Upper Sixth students usually take part in a conference in London focused on contemporary American issues. Bancroftians regularly take part in Model United Nations conferences, and these can be particularly relevant to Politics students.

### **Skills gained**

Students have the opportunity to:

- Develop powers of critical thinking in order to communicate and argue effectively on paper and in oral discussions.
- Understand and form opinions on the major political issues facing the UK and other major democracies (whilst still retaining an open mind), enhancing their role as informed citizens and voters.
- Develop an understanding of political theories - and their limitations!

### **University and beyond**

Taking Politics A-Level might lead on to pursuing a degree in Politics or International Relations, but it would also contribute (in combination with facilitating subjects) to pursuing a degree in any of the Humanities or Social Sciences. It will certainly provide a broader understanding of the many complex issues facing those engaged in the political process, hopefully encouraging those who have studied it to become more active participants in the political sphere.

# Religious Studies

Exam board: OCR

A-Level Religious Studies explores the existence of God, morality and Christian Theology at a deep level. These questions require an understanding of three disciplines - Philosophy of Religion, Ethics and Theology. Studying RS at GCSE is preferable but not required.

## Why should I study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies at A-Level will suit students who are open-minded and willing to look at the world in whole new ways. If you want to challenge your preconceptions, engage with the world's most prominent thinkers, and build your ability to argue, this may be just the subject for you.

## What will I study?

The course is comprised of three separate strands:

### Philosophy

This strand considers fundamental questions of existence and reality with an exploration of works of Plato and Aristotle. The course also considers a range of philosophical arguments for the existence or non-existence of God, introducing students to a range of theologians and philosophers including Thomas Aquinas, David Hume and Bertrand Russell. Finally, this strand questions the nature of philosophical and religious language, including the ideas of contemporary philosophers such as AJ Ayer and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

### Ethics

This topic explores questions of morality and whether right or wrong acts are fixed or change depending on the situations and outcomes. Students will here encounter the absolute ethical ideas of Immanuel Kant as well as the consequentialist approach adopted by the utilitarian reformers Jeremy Bentham and JS Mill. We will also look at the nature and role of conscience in moral decision making, as well as considering how the moral theories they have studied can be applied to the contemporary issues of euthanasia and of business ethics.

### Developments in Christian Thought

Students are introduced to a wide range of theological concepts, including an examination of pluralism within society and whether or not there is a life after death. The role of religion in morality is explored through analysis of the life and ideas of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Christian pastor who was famously associated with a plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler. Along with this, students consider the fundamental ideas facing religion today including the idea of gender in theology and the increasing secularisation of society.

## How will I be assessed?

There are three, 2 hour examinations at the end of the course, in Philosophy of Religion, Ethics and Developments in Christian thought.

## How else will my studies be supported?

Visiting speakers are invited into school, and we arrange visits to conferences and presentations where you can engage with current thinking on our topics. We also have an extensive collection of further reading.

**Skills gained**

The course intends to develop and encourage specific skills of critical analysis. As a consequence, you will develop the ability to argue coherently and effectively, both through your verbal contributions in lessons and through your written work. This will develop your ability to elucidate your ideas and use logic and reasoning to defend positions.

**University and beyond**

The critical thinking skills that you will gain in RS will be useful across a variety of different subjects at university, irrespective of whether they are humanities or scientific, since they are valuable for developing intelligent, interesting and effective arguments. A degree in Philosophy or Theology can be a useful starting point for a career in law, the City, the Civil Service, academia and teaching, alongside many others.

# Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Exam Board: Edexcel

Over the course of the L6 year, students will learn how to conduct an extended piece of research, then develop it into a project of their choosing. The aim is for students to learn independent working, project management, critical thinking and analytical skills, while applying them to a topic of *your* interest.

## Why should I do an EPQ?

The EPQ presents a unique opportunity for you to choose a subject of study, then develop a project to suit those interests. There is a focus on research and presentation skills, which you will get to use while you work. This is good preparation for university and professional work, when independent working and the ability to develop a plan and manage its completion will be essential.

## What will I study?

All L6 pupils will learn research skills, such as planning, locating and obtaining resources, referencing, constructing and evaluating arguments, along with presentation skills. Pupils doing an EPQ will then propose a research question that fits into one of the following streams:

- Dissertation – A piece of writing that explores a question that analyses information you have gathered about your topic of choice
- Investigation – A scientific experiment or field study that takes place over a longer period of time, which you will then analyse at length
- Performance – A performative work that explores a particular topic, with a description of the process by which you developed it
- Artefact – A piece of physical work that fulfils a design brief, along with a description of how you have come to make it

With guidance from your teacher, you will develop your ideas and create a project that achieves the goals you set at the beginning of the process.

## How will I be assessed?

The completed project will be assessed, but it is the *process* of creating it that really matters. You are judged on:

- How well you manage the project
- Your appropriate use of resources
- Your analysis of the resources and ideas
- Your final review of the process

In the final stage, you will complete a short presentation on your findings and overall review of the project.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

There are no special skills required at the outset of the project. We will teach you all you need to learn and guide you through the process. Each project is dealt with on its own terms, and will receive individual attention, tailored to student carrying it out. As a result, you will get the support needed gain skills and to complete your project successfully.

### **Skills gained**

An EPQ will teach you to plan a project, locate and obtain appropriate resources, reference properly, construct and evaluate arguments, make a presentation and think critically.

### **University and beyond**

Universities understand the value of work on an EPQ for students as they make the transition to more open and independent styles of learning. There are some that will make a reduced offer based on the successful completion of such a project, and it is certainly useful to be able to discuss such in-depth study in a personal statement or interview situation. More importantly, the universities will all recognise the utility of the skills acquired during the completion of an EPQ.

Young people today are entering a workplace where new technologies are changing the way in which business is done. As a result, ability to access important information and synthesise it into a working knowledge is becoming more important than ever. The EPQ can help train you to do this in a safe setting with someone to guide you along the way.

# Sample Options Form for September 2020

Make your choices by ticking FOUR\* boxes.

(\*If choosing Further Maths you must also tick Maths, and this counts as two of your four choices)

	Art
	Biology
	Business Studies <i>may not be chosen with Economics</i>
	Chemistry
	Classical Civilisation
	Drama and Theatre Studies
	Economics <i>may not be chosen with Business Studies</i>
	Electronics
	English Literature
	French
	Geography
	German
	Classical Greek
	History
	Latin
	Maths
	Further Maths
	Music
	Physics
	Politics
	Religious Studies
	Spanish
	EPQ/Research Option





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