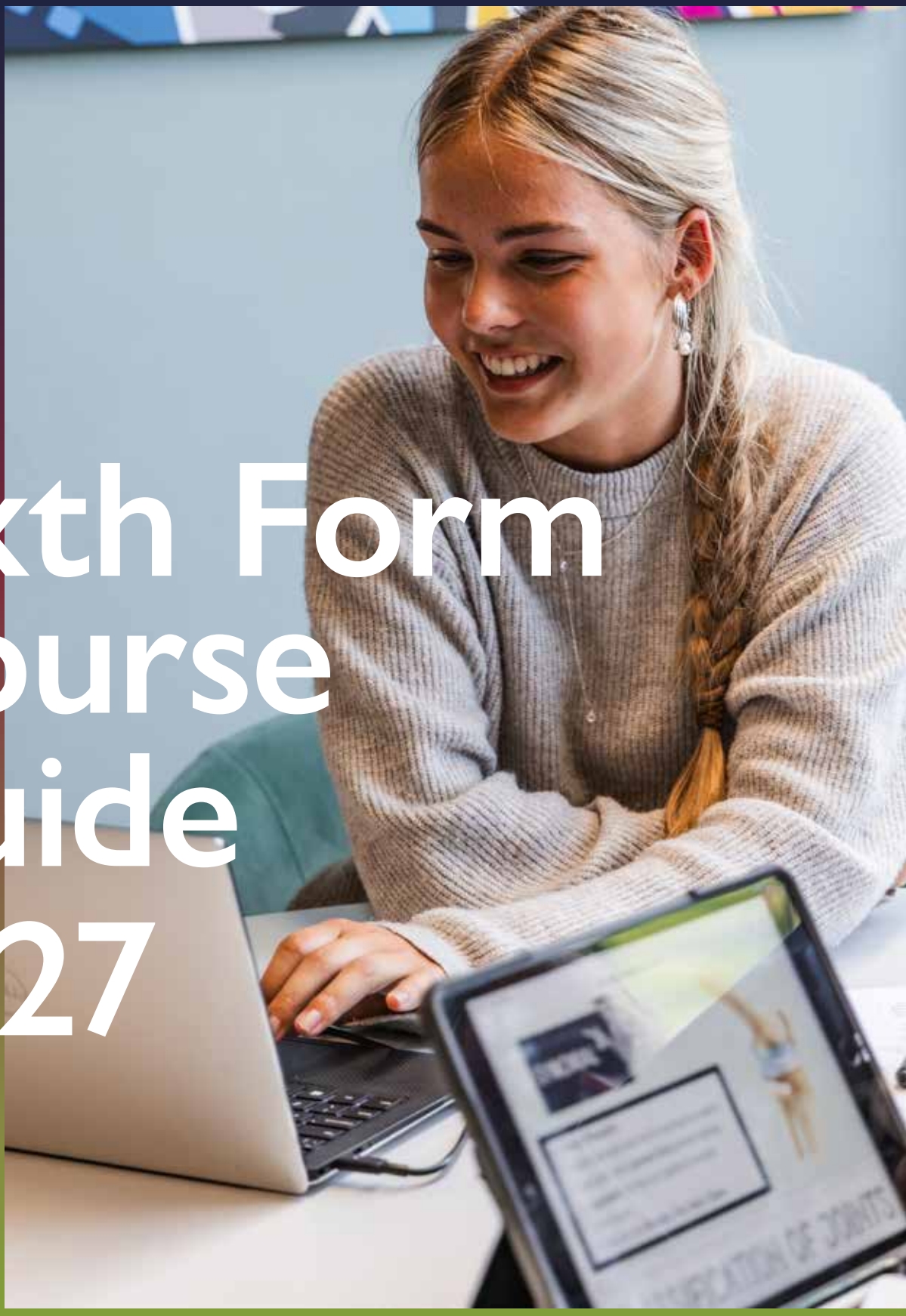


Sixth Form Course Guide 2027

Exeter School

A School of Great Character



Welcome

Choosing your sixth form subjects is one of the first big decisions that is truly yours to make, and it is worth taking time over. The next two years are a turning point: you will move from being guided through your learning to leading it yourself, and the choices you make now will shape not only what you study, but how you spend your days, who you work alongside, and the person you become along the way.

At Exeter School, the sixth form is a place where you are stretched, supported, and trusted. You will be treated as a young adult, given greater independence and responsibility, and encouraged to take ownership of your learning. With that independence comes real opportunity: to follow your curiosity further than a syllabus requires, to read beyond the subject, to ask difficult questions, and to develop the habits of thinking that universities and employers value most.

As you read through this booklet, I would encourage you to be honest with yourself. Choose subjects that genuinely interest you, that play to your strengths, and that you can imagine enjoying on a wet Tuesday afternoon as much as on results day. Talk to your teachers, to current sixth formers, and to your family. Keep an open mind, too: some of the most rewarding paths begin with a subject you had not considered before. There is rarely a single 'right' combination, but there is almost always a combination that is right for you.

Your sixth form years will also be about far more than your timetable. Whether it is captaining a team, performing on stage, mentoring younger pupils, leading a society, or volunteering in the local community, you will have the chance to make your mark on the school and leave it a little better than you found it. These experiences build confidence, character, and the ability to work with others, and they are often the memories that stay with you the longest.

You will not be making this journey alone. Our sixth form team are there to guide, challenge, and encourage you, whether you are aiming for a competitive university course, an apprenticeship, or a route you have yet to discover. Be ambitious, be curious, be real-world ready and above all, make the most of every opportunity that comes your way.



Dr Adrian Rainbow
Head
head@exeterschool.org.uk



Your time in sixth form is the start of the next chapter in your education, full of exciting new opportunities and challenges. These are crucial years in which you will study the subjects you have chosen, and they will go on to shape your academic journey towards higher education and beyond that into your careers.

Our Exeter School sixth form offers a stimulating and supportive environment where you will acquire the essential skills needed for increased independence, allowing you to fulfil your aspirations in life beyond school. You will have the opportunity to explore personal interests and broaden your understanding of what it means to collaborate as a team and succeed individually.

Our combination of academic study, a wealth of co-curricular options, and excellent pastoral care ensure a balanced education that helps you build your self-confidence, so you can bring out the best in yourself and others. Our shared commitment to the common good and the self-belief to make a difference, guided by lifelong virtues, empower you to make a valuable impact within the school and throughout your community for years to come.

Our dedicated staff work hard to ensure that every pupil finds a suitable programme where you will flourish as you progress towards your aims, whatever they may be. At Exeter School most pupils will study four subjects through to the end of Lower Sixth (Year 12), with the option to carry on with three in the Upper Sixth. Some of you may choose to continue with all four into the Upper Sixth, whilst others will know that a three-subject programme is the right pathway for you before the end of the Lower Sixth.

I hope this booklet excites you as you take the first steps towards making important decisions for your sixth form years. Personal guidance and support are always available to help you along the way, whether you are exploring individual subjects, our Futures programme, or the wide range of sporting, artistic, and cultural activities on offer. I hope this guide will help you take your next steps and should you wish to discuss any aspect of your sixth form journey further, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Mr Paul Fennemore
Acting Deputy Head (Academic)
PJPF@exeterschool.org.uk



The sixth form is an important and transformational time for all pupils. Exeter School offers excellent academic outcomes, a wonderfully wide range of extra-curricular activities, and supportive and caring staff; all this in a setting that allows for independence, but also with structure and high expectations. Our aim is to allow pupils to develop a sense of responsibility, teamwork, and leadership skills.

Our sixth formers are helped and guided in developing both their academic and character education, in preparation for their lives after school. Our aim is that the virtues-led approach we champion will serve them well when faced with a range of situations - including challenges and dilemmas - throughout life.

We look forward to welcoming you into the sixth form at Exeter School and sharing many wonderful memories with you.

Mr Luigi Chu
Assistant Head (Sixth Form)
LC@exeterschool.org.uk

Sixth Form Life





The sixth form at Exeter School is much more than just a place to study. It provides a wide range of opportunities to develop existing interests and try new activities.

Sixth form pupils develop leadership skills and have access to multiple sources of advice about higher education, other post-18 pathways, and future employment. The two years of sixth form provide a host of exciting and enjoyable opportunities inside and outside of the classroom. There is also the Futures programme to help build your character and prepare you for your next steps.

The sixth form offers an opportunity for pupils to learn with greater independence and there is a distinct shift in classroom culture with pupils expected to read around their specialist subjects to bring their views and learning to lessons.

In terms of facilities, the impressive Sixth Form Centre includes a common room, study room, collaboration room, quiet room, games room, staffed café, and kitchen area, as well as dedicated study space in the school's library.

Pupils can develop their leadership skills in many ways and take up positions of responsibility to help run the school: as prefects, peer mentors to younger pupils, leading clubs and societies, within the house system, in school teams, ensembles and productions, and as part of their role within the Friday 5 programme. Sixth formers often assist the junior school with a variety of activities and clubs, conduct tours for visitors and prospective parents, and represent the school at public events. Sports Leaders develop coaching skills and extend their knowledge in a range of sports (see page 49), while the Hospiscare Young Changemakers partnership provides a unique opportunity to develop people skills in a community healthcare setting. Sixth formers are also given the opportunity to qualify as lifeguards and put this skill into practice in the indoor pool. With our Young Entrepreneurs scheme, the challenge is to design and market innovative products; pupils set up and run a trading company for a year, developing their teamwork and problem-solving skills. In recent years, Exeter School teams have reached the Devon finals, winning awards for best trade stand and best overall business, and have represented the county in the West of England round of the competition. All these positions offer opportunities to learn more about leadership and management, and to develop important skills for later life: an ability to accept responsibility and carry out tasks reliably, to work as part of a team, to think and act independently of instruction or supervision, and to become confident in leading junior pupils and those from their peer group.

Sport plays an important role in the life of Exeter School. All pupils can immerse themselves in a wealth of recreational and competitive sport. The central aim is to develop an enthusiasm

Sixth Form Life

for physical activity in all pupils, while nurturing their independence, self-confidence, leadership, and teamwork. As well as the major sports of rugby, hockey, football, netball, and cricket, other options include swimming, climbing, water polo, spin bikes, body conditioning, aerobic fitness, cross country, squash, basketball, golf, padel, and table tennis.

Exeter School runs biennial hockey and rugby tours, with the rugby and netball tour to Portugal in October 2026, and the hockey tour to Holland planned for October 2027. Adventure expeditions happen every two years, with the 2027 destination being Peru.

Music is thriving at Exeter School and pupils can perform regularly in Exeter Cathedral and local churches, as well as in the music department's recital hall, in a wide range of instrumental and vocal ensembles. There is a full programme of annual musical events including around thirty formal and informal concerts, as well as the Choral Society, whose members include senior pupils, staff, and families of pupils.

Technology

Members of the sixth form will need a suitable portable device at school to aid them with their studies and enable full participation in all lessons. These support collaborative learning both in class but also remotely when completing tasks at home. They also promote innovation, creativity, and academic risk-taking to enhance learning in ways that were previously not possible, providing a more personalised learning experience.

The learning environment at Exeter School has moved rapidly in recent years to include more digital approaches. However, we still use books and paper, blending the best of the traditional with the new and innovative.

Portable devices – typically tablets and laptops - are additional tools which will aid the development of high-level employability skills, a level of technical understanding that gives an awareness of current working practices, and a competitive edge when it comes to next steps.

Portable Device Requirements

- Screen size of at least 10 inches
- Keyboard (physical, on-screen, or Bluetooth)
- Microsoft Office (latest version available from school)
- Wi-Fi and internet access
- Battery life of minimum six hours

Pupils are expected to bring their device to school every day (in addition to their phone).







Your Study Programme



An Exeter School programme allows all pupils to begin with four subjects in the Lower Sixth (Year 12), with one subject chosen from each of the columns on page 11. By the start of the Upper Sixth (Year 13), most pupils continue with three subjects to the end of the course. Some will maintain four subjects, while others may decide earlier in the Lower Sixth to focus on three subjects for a variety of reasons.

Starting with four subjects is the strongly recommended approach for most pupils, as it provides breadth and flexibility. Many pupils change their minds about subject choices and possible university pathways during the Lower Sixth year. All pupils, whether studying three or four subjects, benefit from our Futures programme, including the opportunity to pursue an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) – further details on these aspects of our programme are found later in this booklet.

Alongside the option to move to three subjects during the year, some pupils may prefer to start with three subjects from the outset. Pupils who choose this route may do so for a variety of reasons: to devote more time to an EPQ; to focus on preparation for a competitive university application; to pursue an elite programme in sport, music, or drama alongside their academic studies; or to ensure they have the right level of support to achieve three strong grades in their chosen subjects. There will be an opportunity to indicate a preference to start on three subjects on the options form, which will then be discussed further. However, to assist with our planning and ensure that all pupils can follow their desired pathways, we ask all pupils initially to select four subjects.

Decisions about sixth form pathways are always made with the pupils' best interests in mind. Pupils are encouraged to talk to members of the academic and pastoral teams to ensure that any decisions about their future are fully informed.

If your first choice of four subjects does not fit into the option columns, then it is worth checking and discussing with us whether the four subjects fit well together: do they combine to give you options going forward as well as supporting each other? The subjects labelled with an asterisk are more moveable than others and if your preferred choice does not currently fit in the columns below, it is essential that you include details of the subjects that you want to study on the options form (or email admissions@exeterschool.org.uk for external applicants). After the options form deadline, which is Thursday 4 February 2027 for existing Exeter School pupils, we will try to alter the columns to accommodate your choices. In the rare event that this is not possible, we will provide a combination of subjects that is appropriate to your higher education or employment ambitions.

Your Study Programme



What Are A Levels?

Advanced Level qualifications (known as A Levels) are subject-based qualifications that can lead to university, further study, training, or work. A Levels are linear qualifications, which means you take all the exams at the end of the two-year course rather than being assessed after each module. For some subjects, part of the qualification is made up of non-examined assessment – formerly known as coursework.

If you enjoy academic learning and want to study a broad range of subjects, A Levels are the perfect option for you. They are highly valued by universities and employers alike. Some universities require specific A Levels for certain courses, and they may not accept vocational qualifications.

What Are BTECs?

BTECs are qualifications that are generally more vocational, which means that they tend to be more applied and career orientated. As a BTEC pupil you will put your learning into practice in real-life scenarios, by producing assignments, developing practical skills, and building knowledge.

In the sixth form at Exeter School, we offer the BTEC National Extended Certificate in sport, which is an academically rigorous qualification, equivalent to an A Level. This is a flexible option, so you can choose to study this BTEC alongside A Levels. Most universities (including more selective ones) accept BTECs as part of their typical degree course offers, alongside A Levels. However, you should investigate the entry criteria of any course you are interested in before committing to the qualification.

Choosing Your Subjects

You can discuss your preferred subject choices and chat with teachers and heads of departments at our sixth form open evening on Thursday 5 November 2026. For our current pupils, there is also the Upper Fifth parents' evening towards the end of January 2027 where you can gain further advice from your subject teachers and head of year.

Prospective new pupils are always welcome to contact the admissions team admissions@exeterschool.org.uk to arrange an individual meeting to discuss your study and subject options.

Making choices about which subjects to study is rarely easy. The factors to be considered when choosing subjects include the following:

- enthusiasm for further study of the subject
- ability previously shown in this or a related subject
- intentions for higher education and possible future career choices
- suitability of the combination of subjects
- keeping future pathways open

Please read this booklet carefully and then ask for advice from your teachers, parents, head of year, heads of department and current sixth form pupils. In particular:

- discuss your suitability for subjects with teachers
- talk to sixth formers studying those subjects
- ask yourself what you like about the subject
- discuss your thoughts with your parents and head of year
- look beyond the sixth form to university and career possibilities. The UCAS website can be used to check that your subject options are suitable for certain university courses

Completion of the Options Form

If you are a current pupil in the Upper Fifth at Exeter School, your parents should return your provisional options form to the school by 9am on Thursday 4 February 2027 via the online form on MySchoolPortal. New pupils joining the sixth form will be asked to complete their options form when applying for a place prior to their entrance interviews.

Changing Option Choices

If you change your mind after the submission of your provisional options in February then you must see your head of year and the Deputy Head (Academic). New pupils joining the sixth form should contact the admissions team who will be able to offer help and advice.

Subject choices may also be modified, if necessary, once you receive your GCSE results in August. All option choices are then finalised just before the start of the autumn term 2027. In the rare event that a subject is over-subscribed, acceptance onto that course will be based on three principles:

- date of application – February requests will take precedence over August requests
- importance of the subject for a pupil's subsequent career pathway
- previous level of performance in related subjects – e.g. GCSE grades

It is important to note that courses listed in this prospectus are all expected to run in September 2027 but are dependent on a viable number of pupils for each course. If there is a particular course that you would like to study but that is not currently offered, then please get in touch with the Deputy Head (Academic) as soon as possible.

COURSE OPTIONS

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4
Biology	Art	Biology	BTEC Sport
BTEC sport	Biology	Business studies	Business studies
Classical civilisation	Chemistry	Chemistry	Chemistry
English literature	Computer science	Drama*	Economics
Further mathematics	DT*	Economics	Electronics*
Geography	English literature	Further mathematics	English literature
History	Geography	Geography	French*
Mathematics	History	German*	Geography
Music*	Mathematics	History	Physics
	Physics	Physics	Politics
	Psychology	Politics	Psychology
	Spanish*	Religion, philosophy & ethics*	Latin*

(In order to study A Levels in mathematics and further mathematics, both further mathematics options must be chosen in columns 1 and 3. This is because further mathematicians are taught both subjects in a single class that covers both columns).



The Futures Programme



Alongside our core academic programme, we offer wide-ranging opportunities that focus on preparing you for your life beyond the sixth form, developing important skills you need to ensure your future options remain open. Our Futures programme of talks, workshops, and other activities takes place in a dedicated timetabled slot each week, with sessions focused on developing four key strands: character, university, employability, and careers.

Character: our virtues-based character education prepares pupils for life beyond Exeter School, supporting their lives at university and in their chosen career pathways. Our sixth formers continue to receive important character guidance and instruction, allowing them to apply these virtues in daily life in and outside school, in applications and interviews for positions, and in service at school and in the community. In this way, pupils can develop a sense of responsibility, teamwork, and leadership skills, ready to fully take up their place in society.

University: pupils receive guidance on researching course and university choices and are fully guided and supported throughout the UCAS application process. This includes our programme of support for pupils who wish to apply for highly selective courses and universities, including medicine, veterinary science, dentistry, and Oxbridge. Alumni who decide to apply to university after leaving Exeter School are also fully supported.

Employability: this focuses on the development of the appropriate skills that are essential for specific career pathways pupils may have in mind, and, importantly, the qualities and transferable skills that all employers increasingly value in today's ever-changing job and career landscape. This includes practical sessions and workshops such as producing a strong CV, interview skills, and giving presentations with confidence, as well as broader sessions on leadership and wellbeing.

Careers: this focuses on developing your understanding of the nature of the current labour market and of different career options. It also includes specialist careers advice from those already working in their desired field. There is also tailored advice for pupils with very specific pathways in mind, as well as guidance for those who have very little idea of what they might like to do after Exeter School.

As part of the Futures programme, pupils benefit from numerous landmark events throughout the sixth form, including a careers convention, higher education forum, a careers conference, and a focused week of Futures activities in the Lower Sixth. There is also the chance to experience an interview with a professional outside the school, when every effort is made to match pupils to an interviewer with similar interests. This is a unique opportunity for pupils to practise interview techniques and improve presentation skills.



Beyond Exeter School



Your combination of subjects may well affect the range of courses open to you in higher education and there are a number of points to consider.

Qualifications: Some careers demand a very high standard of qualification (e.g. veterinary science, medicine, law) so pupils should speak with their subject teachers and head of year about their chances of achieving the necessary A Level grades.

Acceptance to some degree courses may depend upon having completed relevant, in-person work insights.

For most pupils, gaining work insights is useful in deepening knowledge, building and developing skills, and showing commitment to a certain field. Try to think creatively about how to gain experience: are there any virtual courses available, or online events that will allow you to hear from professionals working in a certain sector? How about listening to career podcasts or asking at school if there are any alumni with whom you could connect? All these ideas and more can deepen your knowledge of career opportunities and demonstrate your genuine interest.

GCSE qualifications may be used by some universities as part of their selection criteria for making conditional offers; this could be overall GCSE profile or sometimes minimum grades in certain subjects (e.g. maths).

There are numerous additional examinations required for entry into medicine, dentistry, law, and STEM courses at some universities including Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, and Imperial College. These are generally sat close to or during the October half term in the Upper Sixth year. These are external examinations for which pupils need to register and book independently, and arrange to sit at external venues.

Abilities: You are encouraged to try and identify career pathways that match your own abilities and skills. It is important to consider in which GCSE subjects you achieved well, but non-examined, transferable skills are equally important.

Interests: You should think about what careers you might find enjoyable and satisfying. Throughout your time in the sixth form, you can access the latest information on higher education in the school library, on the school SharePoint, and on the UCAS website.



Mrs Szender is the school's Career Pathways Advisor and can offer guidance and advice at any point during the year whether it is by email, phone, or in person.

Degree Apprenticeships: Going to university will be the right choice for many of our pupils, but degree apprenticeships are an alternative that should be considered.

You would work for a company, gaining valuable experience whilst also studying for a degree part-time. Typically, your university fees are paid by your employer and you earn a salary. Degree apprenticeships are very sought after and due to the relatively small number currently available nationally, they are highly competitive. The school can offer guidance and support to those interested in this option; applicants must plan and apply early for these opportunities, which do not follow the same timeframe or cycle as UCAS applications.



How we support you



Pastoral Care

Our knowledge and understanding of all our pupils as individuals are key; we aim to develop your personal wellbeing and support you to achieve your very best. New pupils are welcomed warmly, and we support you as you settle into your new community.

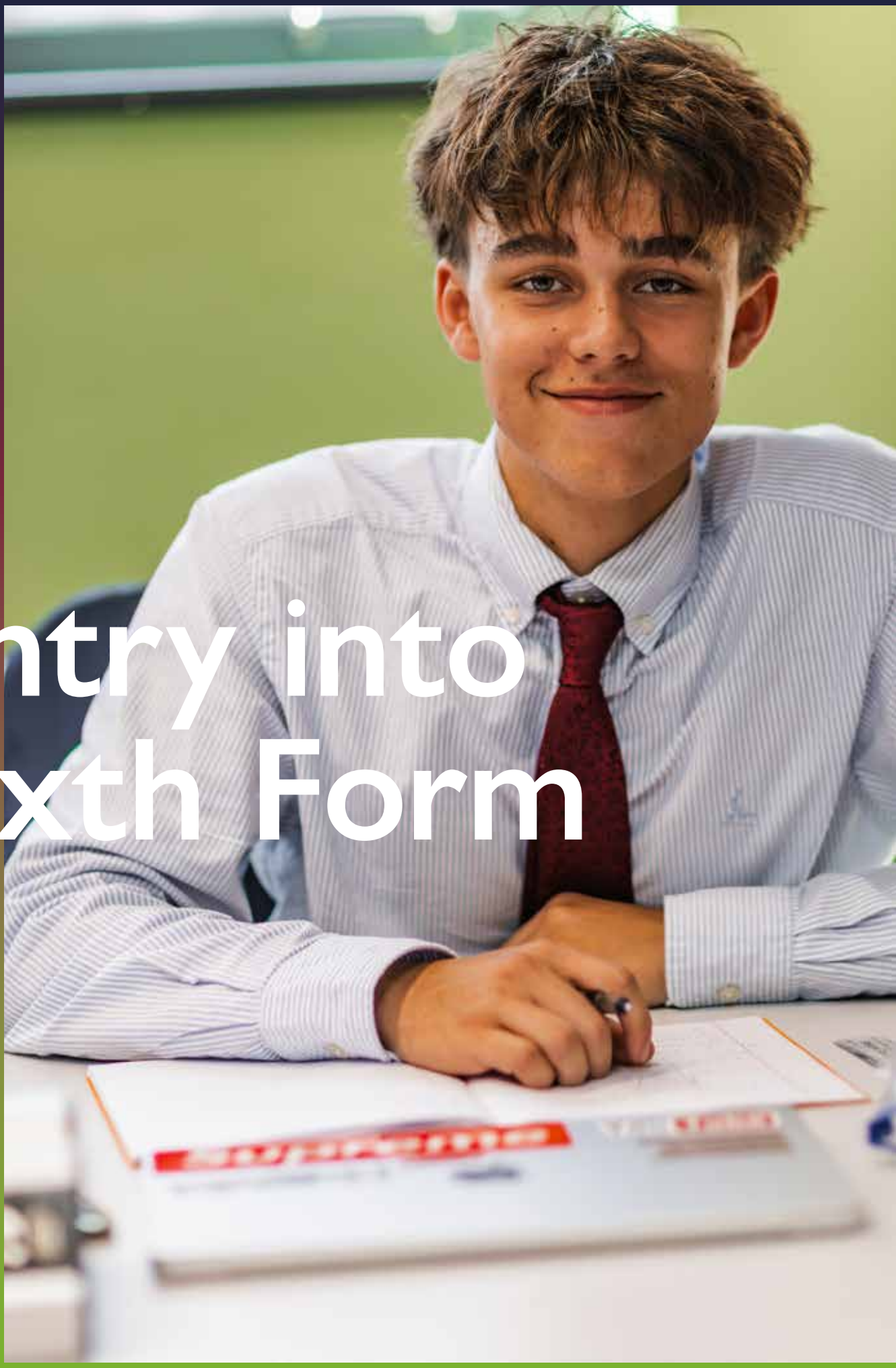
There is a large and experienced team of staff who are focused on your pastoral care. In our busy world, it is essential that you develop self-awareness which leads to you taking a proactive approach to your own wellbeing.

The focus for pastoral care and academic guidance is our 'tartan' structure of year groups and the house system. You will belong to a house made up of approximately 140 pupils from the Third Form to the Upper Sixth, led by the head of house. Your year group is led by the head of year and overseen by Mr Chu, Assistant Head (Sixth Form). You will also have a sixth form tutor who will normally remain with you for both years and be a key figure in your pastoral welfare and academic progress.

We firmly believe in working closely with our families, hosting events throughout the year which help to foster strong relationships. Pupils and parents are encouraged to attend as many parents' evenings, school events, and social functions as possible. Parents are encouraged to keep in touch with your tutor and head of year regarding any personal or academic matters.

Academic Support

In addition to the individual support from your teachers, both in and out of your lessons, many departments also run a schedule of lunchtime support sessions that sixth form pupils can access if they wish. These offer opportunities for you to brush up on some basics, get some specialist support on a tricky topic, or engage in challenging extension material.



Entry into Sixth Form



Being at Exeter School for your sixth form years is an exciting prospect. We are here to support you through the process.

The vast majority of Upper Fifth (Year 11) pupils at Exeter School continue into the sixth form, and each year a significant number of new entrants join us from other schools. To qualify for entry into the Lower Sixth, applicants and current Upper Fifth pupils normally need to achieve a minimum of three grade 7 and three grade 6 GCSEs or have a points score of 39 from their top six subjects (a grade 9 = 9 points), pass GCSE English and mathematics, and have a positive reference / school record (that includes conduct, attendance and punctuality).

Individual subject entry requirements are also detailed on the subject pages within this guide.

External applicants will be invited to one of our interview days, the first of which will be held on Saturday 28 November 2026. The day consists of:

- Interviews with the heads of departments of the subjects the applicant wishes to study. These are designed to discover an applicant's motivation, future potential, and existing subject knowledge
- An interview with the Head or Senior Deputy Head and meeting with the Assistant Head (Sixth Form)
- Evaluation of a reference / school record provided by the candidate's present school
- A computer-based cognitive abilities (CAT4) test

New entrants should inform the school of their GCSE results as soon as possible after GCSE results day in August.

The school is normally unable to consider a situation whereby sixth form pupils live in accommodation independently of their families. Parents and pupils who wish to make such arrangements must first discuss their plans with the Head or Director of External Relations. The school works with Gabbitas Education to provide an educational guardianship service and homestay accommodation for any international pupils, or for sixth form pupils whose families do not live within commuting distance of the school.

Courses





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Design technology 29
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Electronics 31
English literature 32
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Further mathematics 38
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Physics 42
Politics 43
Psychology 44
Religion, philosophy and ethics 45
Sport (BTEC) 46

Art & Design

OVERVIEW

You will follow the AQA Art, Craft and Design syllabus, which allows you to explore many different aspects of the subject. The course is designed to build on the skills, knowledge, and understanding introduced at GCSE and you are required to develop practical work supported by critical/contextual studies in one or more of the following disciplines: drawing, painting, mixed-media, sculpture, installation, printmaking, moving image (video, film, animation), and photography.

COURSE OUTLINE

In the first year of the course, you will be introduced to a variety of experiences, employing a range of media, processes, and techniques appropriate to your area of individual study. Your knowledge of art will be extended through contextual research, experimentation with materials, development of ideas, and the realisation of final outcomes. Great emphasis is placed on the individuality of approach and the willingness to take risks with techniques and concepts. Recording from direct experience is an essential part of the course.

The second year of the course is divided into two key areas:

1. Personal investigation (60% of A Level)
   A personal investigation in which you develop practical work in response to an idea, issue, concept, or theme of your choice. The practical work is supported by a personal study of 1,000 – 3,000 words. (No time limit)
2. Externally set assignment (40% of A Level)
   An externally set assignment based on eight starting points from which you will select one. You will work on preparatory studies before producing a conclusive personal response in the supervised time. (Supervised time: 15 hours)

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Both the personal investigation unit and the externally set assignment are assessed internally by departmental staff and then moderated by a visiting examiner from AQA.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A minimum GCSE Art grade 6 is strongly recommended. You should have an enquiring mind, be highly motivated, and are expected to be an organised, self-disciplined, independent thinker.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

A Level Art and Design – Art, Craft and Design

7201/C/X

NEXT STEPS

Professions involving art and design are wide ranging including: fine art, architecture, theatre design, fashion, graphic design, illustration, animation, and publishing.

CONTACT

Mrs Jen Brewer, Head of Art

jlb@exeterschool.org.uk

Biology

OVERVIEW

This course provides a foundation in fundamental biological principles whilst exploring modern applications of biology. The topic areas studied in the sixth form build upon and extend the material covered at GCSE, with answers to 'why?' and 'how?' molecules, cells and organisms interact. In addition to exploring the traditional areas of biology, you will also gain an up-to-date insight into technological, social, ethical, and environmental implications of the subject.

We encourage pupils to take an active role in the lessons, from contributions to discussion, to group tasks and pupil modelling. Theory lessons are supported by many relevant practical investigations and activities. At the start of the second year, we run a fieldwork residential to FSC Nettlecombe in Somerset.

COURSE OUTLINE

The first four topics, taught in the Lower Sixth, cover many fundamental principles, which are built upon and used in context in the last four topics in the Upper Sixth year.

1. Biological molecules – investigates the properties of carbohydrates, lipids, nucleic acids, and proteins and understands the roles these essential molecules play within organisms.
2. Cells – from the basics of cell ultrastructure, we explore ways in which substances move into and out of cells, how cells divide, and cellular interactions of the immune system.
3. The exchange of substances between organisms and their environment – studies digestion and absorption, the specialised gas exchange surfaces of gills, insect tracheae, lungs and leaves, and concludes with studying the circulatory system and plant transport.
4. Genetic information, variation, and relationships between organisms – explores the importance of the genetic code and causes of variation and diversity.
5. Energy transfer in and between organisms – covers the biochemistry of photosynthesis and respiration, and links them to energy transfers between organisms.
6. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments – delves into the world of stimuli and receptors, nervous coordination, muscle contraction and hormones.
7. Genetics, populations, evolution, and ecosystems - introduces fieldwork techniques to study population ecology, then continues with genetic inheritance and evolution.
8. DNA technology and control of gene expression – investigates the mechanisms that control whether and when genes are expressed, then explores techniques and ethics of gene technology such as genetic engineering and DNA fingerprinting.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

There are three examination papers at the end of the second year. Papers one and two test content and practical skills from topics taught in the first and second years respectively. Paper three tests the full course material, with questions of a synoptic nature and an essay.

There is also a teacher-assessed practical endorsement based on pupils completing a minimum of 12 core practicals undertaken throughout the course.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum GCSE Biology grade 6 (with similar Chemistry grade) or 6,6 in Dual Award Science.

Grade 6 or higher in GCSE Maths is strongly recommended. An ability to learn key terms and apply knowledge to new contexts is essential for success.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Biology
7402

NEXT STEPS

A broad range of career areas are open to graduates in biological sciences: agriculture, biotechnology, biochemistry, cell biology, data science, dentistry, ecology and conservation, forestry, genetics, horticulture, marine biology, medicine, nutrition, pharmacy, physiotherapy, psychology, veterinary science, and zoology. Biology also keeps the door firmly open for more general careers in teaching, business, and finance.

CONTACT

Mrs Jade Seaton-Burn, Head of Biology
jmsb@exeterschool.org.uk

Business

OVERVIEW

Business A Level provides a comprehensive investigation into the business world, determining the purpose of businesses and how they make decisions. It provides an insight into a range of diverse topics from marketing and human resources, through to finance and the legal structures of businesses. You will also look at the different strategies that businesses adopt to survive in highly competitive and constantly changing markets.

COURSE OUTLINE

In the Lower Sixth, you are given a preliminary insight into the major functional areas of a business. This will include marketing, which looks at how firms successfully market their products and position themselves, and operations management, which investigates how businesses organise their production lines and measure quality control. You will also learn some of the management techniques used by businesses and critically assess the leadership styles employed by various firms. Financial concepts are also covered here, and pupils will be able to investigate common financial problems encountered by firms such as cash-flow problems and issues around raising capital for start-up businesses and PLCs alike.

In the Upper Sixth, you will build upon the work covered before and look at how firms operate strategically to survive and grow. You will learn how firms are affected by the macroeconomic environment and how firms must adapt to changes brought on by political, economic, technological, and social changes. Using various case-studies you will come to understand some of the success stories from the corporate world and some of the failures.

Finally, looking to the future, you will assess the impact of innovation, internationalisation, and digital technology on firms.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Three two-hour written examinations, assessing the work from both the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth years. The papers will contain a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. All the papers will assess relevant knowledge and skills as all papers are synoptic. Paper three is based on a single case study where pupils are expected to view businesses holistically, answering long essay style questions.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No previous qualification in business is required for the A Level course, and you are expected to have at least GCSE grade 6 in Maths and English Language.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Business
7132

NEXT STEPS

Most pupils who study business at A Level go on to study business or a related course at university and there is a wide range of courses available. Although not essential, business can be seen as a gateway to courses as diverse as finance and management, marketing, accountancy, international business, and strategic management.

CONTACT

Mr Stuart Mackintosh, Head of Business
skm@exeterschool.org.uk

Chemistry

OVERVIEW

Chemistry is central to the study of modern science because it is the only subject which provides knowledge of the structure of substances, an understanding of the ways in which particles behave and interact, and how these are translated into observations in our macroscopic world.

The units covered in the sixth form build upon the material covered in GCSE Chemistry dividing the subject into its three traditional areas of inorganic, organic and physical chemistry. The work in the Lower Sixth year covers the fundamental principles of these three areas, with the Upper Sixth work then building and expanding on them. Experimentation, practical skills, and data handling skills form an integral part of the course.

COURSE OUTLINE

The main topics within the course are:

1. Inorganic Chemistry
   The chemicals of the periodic table are the focus of inorganic chemistry. Chemical trends are studied in the Lower Sixth, with particular focus on group II and group VII. In the Upper Sixth, the varied chemistry of transition metals, their structures, and their complexes form a large part of the course. Periodicity and the patterns across the periodic table help to link both years.
2. Organic Chemistry
   This unit illustrates the importance of carbon compounds. In the Lower Sixth, we delve deeper into the chemistry of many of the compounds already studied at GCSE, such as alkanes and alkenes, alcohols and halogenoalkanes. In the Upper Sixth, further functional groups such as carbonyls, aromatic compounds, and amines are studied linking to organic synthesis pathways. A brief introduction to biochemical compounds, with modern analytical techniques such as NMR spectroscopy and chromatography make up the remainder of the unit.
3. Physical Chemistry
   Among the familiar GCSE topics expanded upon here are atomic structure, amounts of substance, chemical bonding, energy changes, redox reactions, reversible reactions, and the periodic table. In the Upper Sixth, a more quantitative approach is taken to gaseous equilibria, kinetics, and energy changes. Acids, bases, buffers, and pH are also studied, along with thermodynamics.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Three two-hour written examinations, assessing the work from both years. The papers contain a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. They also assess practical skills with the final paper containing further questions on practical techniques and data analysis. In addition, there will also be a teacher-assessed practical endorsement based on pupils completing 12 core practicals alongside many others undertaken throughout the course.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum GCSE Chemistry grade 6 or GCSE double award science grades 6,6; although grade 7 is strongly recommended. GCSE Mathematics grade 6 or above is also recommended.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Chemistry
7405

NEXT STEPS

University course admission: A Level Chemistry is essential for all courses in chemistry, medicine, dentistry, biochemistry, materials science, pharmacy, and chemical engineering.

Career information: although many chemistry graduates work in industries involved with a range of materials such as oil, pharmaceuticals, and processed food, just as many find that the skills they have developed allow them to embark on a range of careers such as accountancy, marketing, banking, and the legal profession.

CONTACT

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Classical Civilisation

OVERVIEW

Classical Civilisation is a subject which allows pupils to explore the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome without needing to read the original languages. It explores the literature, art, and ideologies of those societies and places them into their social and historical contexts, making this subject a superb complement to other humanities A Levels, such as English or history. There is no need to have studied a classical subject previously and there is no linguistic component; pupils without any classical background have historically done very well.

Alongside our classroom activities, pupils may also have opportunities to watch translations of classical plays in performance, and a biennial trip to the Mediterranean will next be offered in 2028 following the 2026 trip to Sicily.

COURSE OUTLINE

The A Level course consists of three components: the World of the Hero, Culture and the arts, and Beliefs and ideas. Each paper explores the ancient world both through translated literature and visual sources, such as statues and pottery. The World of the Hero paper is taught over two years, while the other two papers are taught in succession.

1. World of the Hero (40%)
   In this paper you will study Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid, epic poems which explore the war between the Greeks and the Trojans and its aftermath. We study these foundational works of European literature both for their intrinsic interest and to better understand the values and ideologies of the cultures that produced them.
2. Culture and the arts (30%)
   This paper looks at an aspect of the literary and artistic worlds of the ancients; typically, we study Greek drama, giving pupils the opportunity to explore the origins of tragedy and comedy in classical Athens. Through these texts we also explore the thinking of Aristotle and Athenian democratic culture. (Other options are available here, such as Greek depictions of the Persians, or early Roman imperial propaganda; the topic chosen will depend on the teacher).
3. Beliefs and ideas (30%)
   This paper seeks to understand the underpinning beliefs that animated Greek and Roman society, and how they impacted on the history of Greece and Rome. Currently we explore the collapse of the Roman Republic, focusing in particular on the evidence provided to us by Cicero. (Again, other modules may be offered, depending on the teacher. Alternatives include Greek Religion and Athenian Democracy.)

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Assessment is by examination. All papers are a mixture of shorter responses focused on evidence, either from a written source or a visual one, and longer essays.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Pupils are expected to have achieved a minimum of grade 6 in English Literature GCSE. There are no further formal requirements, although an interest in literature and history is essential.

There is no need to have studied Latin, Greek, or Classical Civilisation at GCSE, and there is no linguistic component to the course.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

OCR
A Level Classical Civilisation
H408

NEXT STEPS

A Level Classical Civilisation is an excellent preparation for various degree courses in classics or affiliated subjects such as ancient history or archaeology. It is also particularly useful for pupils who wish to pursue literature courses in either English or modern European languages, as the influence of the texts studied is profound. The mixture of cultural criticism and literary analysis, examined through commentaries and essays, is also an excellent preparation for law and the humanities at university. Classicists have a well-earned reputation as accurate and independent thinkers, leading them to a wide variety of later careers, including politics, the media, and the civil service, to name but a few.

CONTACT

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Computer Science

OVERVIEW

This subject will develop pupils' understanding of the principles of problem-solving using computers. There is an emphasis on programming at A Level and scope for pupils to show their individuality in their programming projects. The syllabus is split largely into theory and programming lessons, with the main programming language being C#.

Resources are shared electronically and most work is completed on PCs or laptops. Lesson time is mainly spent answering questions to develop understanding of theory concepts or creating programs to explore programming concepts. Homework tasks can be either theory work or programming, and the Wolfson Suite facilities are available to pupils who want to work between lessons. There are also many extra-curricular opportunities with competitions such as Bebras, National Cipher Challenge, ACE Cybersecurity, CodinGame and the British Informatics Olympiad. We also enjoy inviting alumni back to talk about their experience in computing.

COURSE OUTLINE

Paper 1 – Problem solving and programming
This paper examines computational thinking skills, programming, and applying theoretical concepts to problem-solving situations. Topics include programming constructs, data structures, standard algorithms, and regular languages. Part of the paper relates to a 'skeleton' program provided by the exam board which we will study, adapt, and extend in lessons.

Paper 2 – Theory
This paper tests knowledge and understanding of theoretical aspects of the course and considers the impact of cutting-edge developments in computing. Topics include how the hardware and software components of a computer system work together to execute a program, how data is transmitted over networks and the internet, and how binary can represent different types of data and programs in a computer. The syllabus also features sections on relational databases and functional programming. The question formats are predominantly short answer with some multiple choice and some extended answer questions.

Non-exam assessment – a computing practical project. The NEA assesses your ability to create a program to solve a practical problem or investigation of your own choice. You must also document the analysis, design, testing, and evaluation of the solution. Typical choices of problems include games, simulations, databases, or interactive websites, although the range of choices is extensive.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Paper one is a 2 ½ hour on-screen examination, contributing 40% of the overall grade.

Paper two is a 2 ½ hour written examination, contributing 40% of the overall grade. The non-exam assessment contributes 20% of the overall grade, based on the project documentation, the code bank itself, and the testing videos.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Numeracy is required at several points in the course and A Level mathematics is recommended although not required. GCSE computer science is helpful but not a requirement; for those who have studied it, achieving grade 7 or above would maximise the likelihood of achieving well at A Level. Previous programming experience is required although the language studied is not important; a willingness to practise programming in your own time is essential.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Computer Science
7517

NEXT STEPS

University course admission: a qualification in computer science combines well with many subjects, especially those involving a logical and systematic approach. Programming skills are important in all scientific, engineering, and mathematical disciplines as well as increasingly in the creative arts. Although rarely listed as a pre-requisite, having studied A Level offers an advantage as an introduction to some of the first-year material.

Degree level apprenticeships: several high-profile organisations now offer degree level apprenticeships in computing and cyber security disciplines.

CONTACT

Ms Alice Pinches, Head of Computer Science
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Drama & Theatre Studies

OVERVIEW

Drama and Theatre Studies is challenging in its requirement for you to have both practical skills and the ability to write analytically and originally in a formal written exam. This is one of only a few truly creative courses. It promotes communication, collaborative learning, and problem solving, fostering creativity as well as personal and social development. It is a well-balanced course, encouraging academic rigour in the study and analysis of texts, and creativity in putting theory into practice via performance or technical design. Each week the lessons are split between lessons attributed to practical-based performance and exploration of practitioners (such as Brecht, Stanislavski, Lecoq, Frantic Assembly, Complicite and Berkoff), as well as primarily desk-based lessons that prepare you for the set texts (*Blood Wedding*, *Company* and *The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage*) for the written exam.

COURSE OUTLINE

In the Lower Sixth, you participate in several practitioner workshops before going on and completing component one of the course (the 're-interpretation'). You will also study one of the set texts. In the Upper Sixth, you will complete component two by the middle of the spring term. Alongside your practical work for component two, you continue your preparation for the component three written exam by studying the second set text and the specified extract dictated by the exam board from *The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage*.

Regular trips to watch live theatre is part of the course. We would expect you to attend arranged theatre trips, as it is a course requirement that you must include live theatre influence in all your written work.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

The A Level Drama and Theatre Studies course is assessed by examination of either performance skills or design skills, as well as through a written exam. Weighting for assessment is 60% practical and 40% written exam.

In component one (internally assessed), you use the theories and ideas of a theatre company or practitioner to re-imagine an extract from a choice of plays. This is then realised in performance as either an actor or a designer (lighting, sound, stage design or costume) and supported by an essay that documents your development process.

In component two (externally examined), you perform two pieces. The first is an original piece of theatre inspired by one of four stimuli from the exam board where you must use the theories of a practitioner or theatre company to inform your ideas. The second is an extract from an existing script in a contrasting style to your devised piece. If you are a designer, then you participate in these two pieces from a technical perspective and then give a five to ten-minute presentation to the visiting examiner explaining your ideas. Both performers and designers then produce a report that evaluates the performances.

In component three (2½ hour written exam), you answer questions on three set texts from the perspective of an actor, a director, and a designer.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There is no typical pupil of Drama and Theatre Studies. A GCSE in Drama is not required, although it is beneficial. However, an interest in theatre, an imagination, a readiness to engage in independent research, and an enthusiasm to work with others are all essential qualities.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Eduqas
A Level Drama and Theatre
A690QS

NEXT STEPS

The skills acquired in this course will equip you for a multitude of careers, as well as teach you a wide range of skills beneficial to life in general. The skills that the World Economic Forum identified as the most desirable among employers are cultivated in drama (communication, problem solving, teamwork, and cognitive thinking) – skills that A.I. and the automation of tasks cannot replace. Past drama pupils have gone on to all the major universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, following courses across the academic disciplines. There have also been successful applicants to all the major drama schools. Post university, many have made successful careers in theatre, television, cinema, advertising, marketing, and social media.

CONTACT

Mr Jamie Brough, Head of Drama
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Design Technology

OVERVIEW

Potential industrial designers and those interested in other specialist design disciplines should consider this course as a fundamental ingredient in their skill set.

The combination of in-depth material, process, and construction knowledge, combined with innovatively solving real world problems through design, prototyping, and testing, create well rounded pupils capable of delivering realistic products for manufacture. Engineers with both practical skills and theory knowledge are highly sought after.

COURSE OUTLINE

Component one: Principles of design and technology In class, you will develop knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials and processes used in the field of design, technology, and engineering. Industrial and commercial practices, quality control systems, health and safety, environmental factors, design history, legislation, digital technologies, and information handling are all studied. This knowledge informs coursework decisions and is tested through the written examination of 2½ hour duration, and accounting for 50% of the qualification.

Component two: Independent design-and-make project In this unit, you are given the opportunity to develop your creative, technical, and practical skills through a design-and-make project. The project must have a commercial viability and is developed with the support of a client. You will demonstrate creativity and flair by designing, making, and evaluating a prototype. Industry standard skills using Autodesk Inventor and Fusion 360 3D computer-aided design, and rapid prototyping techniques including laser cutting and 3D printing will be taught and used in coursework. You will also be supported to perfect skills of design sketching and innovative problem solving.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

A 2½ hour exam tests your knowledge of component one, through both short and long written answers, mathematical questioning, and graphical diagrams, accounting for 50% of the qualification.

A coursework piece is completed, that demonstrates an iterative approach to a design opportunity and is supported by close liaison with a client or user group. This accounts for the remaining 50% of the qualification.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A grade 6 at GCSE in a Design Technology related course, good quality graphic communication skills, and an aptitude in design technology are desirable. You should have the ability to analyse products and apply knowledge to real situations. Coursework will require ability to work independently and to look at problems with an open mind. Organisation, time management, and a good work ethic are also vital.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Eduqas
A Level Design Technology
A602QS

NEXT STEPS

Design technology is one of the broadest subjects and thus it has a wide range of future university, apprenticeship, and career opportunities. These include academic courses associated with manufacturing industries, engineering, product design, project management, and architecture.

CONTACT

Mr Alex Collard, Head of Design Technology
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Economics

OVERVIEW

Economics studies the logic of the choices we make as a society. We start at the elementary level of consumers buying goods and services and go on to develop an understanding of how and why governments choose between different national objectives. We then look at a range of issues, from trying to understand why some economies are not developing as rapidly as others, to looking at how individual consumers behave in the exciting new field of behavioural economics. The course will give you a thorough grounding in economic ideas and an understanding of what makes the economic system tick.

COURSE OUTLINE

The A Level course is divided into two distinct areas:

1. Microeconomics
   This looks at the operation of individual markets and provides an insight into how markets work. In the Lower Sixth, you will investigate a range of markets, from commodity markets (including the oil market) to currency markets. You will also look at market failure, where government intervention is required to maximise the welfare of society. Markets studied include the education markets, transport markets, and the drugs market. In the Upper Sixth, you will investigate market structures, looking at how monopolies and oligopolies operate and how the government intervenes in these markets to ensure they operate efficiently.
2. Macroeconomics
   This area of the course looks at how the British economy works and how the government intervenes to try and influence key national indicators. You will assess economic performance by looking at inflation, unemployment, trade, and economic growth and consider monetary and fiscal policy goals. In the Upper Sixth, you look at the international environment, looking at the global financial markets and international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO. You will also be expected to critically assess the economic impact of global events and logically deduce consequences.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Three two-hour written examinations, assessing the work from both years. The papers will contain a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. Paper one is based on microeconomics and paper two is based on macroeconomics. Paper three is a synoptic paper which draws on both microeconomic and macroeconomic topics.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No previous study of economics is required to study the A Level course, although an interest in current affairs is expected. A minimum GCSE grade 6 in Mathematics and English Language is required.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Economics
7136

NEXT STEPS

Although you do not need to study A Level Mathematics to study A Level Economics, many university courses require A Level Mathematics. Those considering economics at Cambridge and the LSE are advised to take further mathematics.

CONTACT

Mr Stuart Mackintosh, Head of Economics
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Electronics

OVERVIEW

Just look around you – electronics are everywhere! Electronics specialists are in demand. In the A Level Electronics course, you will learn about the basic principles and building blocks of electronic systems, and how to use these basic ideas to design and build more complex systems.

There is a lot of practical work. Almost every circuit and system that we describe in theory is then built and tested by pupils. The culmination of the course is a major individual project, in which you design, build, and test an electronic system to your own design and specification.

COURSE OUTLINE

The starting point of the course is a careful review of circuit theory from GCSE Physics. The course covers both digital and analogue electronics, including programming digital microcontrollers. The exam board provides an excellent set of dedicated notes that complement the work we do in class. The course is split into three sections:

1. Core concepts
   System synthesis, DC electrical circuits, input and output sub-systems, energy and power in DC and AC circuits
2. Component one
   Semiconductor components, Logic systems, Operational amplifiers, Signal conversion, AC circuits and passive filters, Communications systems, Wireless transmission, Instrumentation systems
3. Component two
   Timing circuits, Sequential logic systems, Programming of microcontrollers, Digital communications, Optical communication, Mains power supply systems, High power switching systems, Audio systems

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

40%: Principles of electronics, 2 hour 45-minute written examination.

40%: Application of electronics, 2 hour 45-minute written examination.

20%: Non-examination assessment comprising two practical tasks that are to design and program a microcontroller system, and to design and build a substantial integrated electronic system.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Mathematics and physics (or combined science) at a minimum of GCSE grade 6. No prior electronics knowledge is required.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Eduqas
A Level Electronics
A490

NEXT STEPS

In recent years, many of the pupils have enjoyed the subject so much that it has influenced their choice of degree, and they have gone on to study electronics engineering at university. We also have pupils progress to a wide range of different degree courses at top universities, including subjects such as music, sound technology, economics, and sports management.

CONTACT

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English Literature

OVERVIEW

English Literature involves exploring some of the most influential poems, novels, and plays that have shaped, and continue to shape, the world we live in. Over two years, you will hone your critical thinking and close reading skills, and your ability to analyse and argue in speech and in writing. You will become a better thinker, a better communicator, and a better writer.

If you are interested in the big ideas which have forged who we are as thinking individuals, and have an ear for language and the way words create music and light, then English Literature is the subject for you. English Literature is a stimulating, well-respected, and facilitating university subject and is essential for several important careers such as law, media, the performing arts, and business.

COURSE OUTLINE

In the Lower Sixth, you will study an exciting range of modern poetry as well as two prose texts: *Frankenstein* and *The War of the Worlds*. In addition, you will explore one modern play: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams' classic tale of the American Deep South. You will also start working on your coursework texts: F Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and a text of your choice.

In the Upper Sixth, you will study *Hamlet*, arguably Shakespeare's finest play, as well as an anthology of poetry from the modernist period – with featuring poets such as Robert Frost, T S Eliot, and E E Cummings. You will also complete a piece of comparative coursework (which is started in the Lower Sixth) allowing you to expand your knowledge of texts and apply a critical lens to your reading.

In addition to the texts studied as part of the course, the English department also encourages wider reading through lunchtime discussion groups. The aim is to cover a range of texts – from medieval to modern day – in an informal setting to inspire pupils to extend their reading and their love of literature.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Most components of the course are externally assessed (three examinations worth 80% of the total mark), as follows:

Paper 1: Drama (*Hamlet* and *Streetcar*)

Paper 2: Prose (*The War of The Worlds* and *Frankenstein*)

Paper 3: Poetry (modernism and a question on taught and unseen poetry)

There is also the Non-Examined Assessment (coursework) worth 20% of the total marks, which comprises of a comparative essay on two texts that is between 2,500 and 3,000 words.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

You are likely to have achieved at least a GCSE grade 6 in English Language and English Literature. More importantly, you should take pleasure in reading, the discussion of ideas, and the art of writing.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
A Level English Literature
9ETO

NEXT STEPS

Opportunities will be provided for those pupils interested in reading English at university and specialist Oxbridge tuition is available. The department has a strong record of acceptance at Oxbridge and Russell Group universities.

CONTACT

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Extended Project Qualification

OVERVIEW

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project allows pupils to study a topic area of their choice as a standalone qualification. Sixth formers research and write an analytical dissertation which expands their learning in an area of their current studies, in a related area, or in an area of personal interest. The EPQ is offered as a dissertation and is supported in part through the Futures programme. Pupils are provided with taught sessions to develop research skills, referencing conventions, and expectations of the different project components. Group seminars and individual feedback sessions punctuate the programme at pivotal points, although the essence of the qualification is to provide a framework for independent research and seeing through an academic project from planning to completion.

Those who complete an EPQ (including those who carry out extended research without ultimately submitting a completed project) find themselves very well-equipped for the demands of undergraduate life, having undertaken their own academic research presented in a format that conforms to the conventions required in academia. Independent learning, in-depth study, critical research, and project management are all skills that are highly valued by universities and employers.

COURSE OUTLINE

Pupils will be assessed on their ability to plan, manage, complete, and evaluate their project. It is started in October of Lower Sixth and completed in March of Upper Sixth. Over that 17-month period, pupils complete a project proposal form, activity log, dissertation, and evaluation, and give a ten-minute presentation to an audience of their peers and supervisor.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Completed projects are typically between 5,000 and 6,000 words in length. They are supported and assessed by supervisors within Exeter School and externally moderated by the exam board.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

None required.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
Extended Project Level 3
P301

NEXT STEPS

The EPQ can be used by some universities to offer adjusted UCAS offers; for example, AAB could be adjusted to ABB with an A (or perhaps B) in EPQ. The qualification is worth half an A Level, providing UCAS points for course offers based on the UCAS Tariff instead of grades. Most universities, including highly selective ones, recognise the EPQ as a strong indication of academic engagement beyond A Level courses. Reference to an EPQ in a UCAS personal statement can also provide a useful point of discussion (including at any interviews) and improve prospects of degree outcomes.

CONTACT

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Geography

OVERVIEW

Geography occupies a central position in understanding and interpreting issues affecting people, places, and environments across a range of spatial and temporal scales. As a multi-disciplinary subject, it presents you with the contextual knowledge and understanding of the big global problems we face today and equips you with the analytical and evaluative skills needed to manage these effectively.

You will investigate the principal meteorological, hydrological, and geomorphological processes operating in the physical world as well as the social, demographic, economic, and political systems in place in the human world. A Level geographers are logical and analytical thinkers. They possess the skills to present ordered and coherent arguments in a variety of ways with the aim of solving human and environmental issues.

The Geography department has a good programme of fieldwork, which usually includes an optional overseas field trip. Recent locations have included Interlaken, Sorrento, Iceland, and Sicily. There are also three local fieldwork day trips as part of the course.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course follows an even split of human and physical topics across both years:

1. Core physical geography
   You will study topics on hydrology, river processes and hazards, atmospheric processes and global climate change, and earth processes and mass movements. Links are made to the human impact and ways of managing issues.
2. Core human geography
   You will study topics on population and migration, water resources and management, and urban areas and management. Sustainability will be a key lens through which you view opportunities and challenges in human environments.
3. Advanced physical geography
   You will study hazardous environments and arid environments, building on your knowledge and understanding of the Lower Sixth course. The sustainable management of these environments is assessed and evaluated by considering the interactions between human and physical processes.
4. Advanced human geography
   You will study trade, aid, and tourism, looking at flows, governance and sustainable management, and environmental issues and management, focusing on energy, environmental and energy degradation.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

This is an international A Level, and the syllabus is followed by overseas schools as well as prestigious independent schools in the UK.

Paper one: Core physical geography (25%)

Paper two: core human geography (25%)

Section A: Three data response questions

Section B: One essay from a choice of three

Paper three: advanced physical geography options (25%)

Paper four: advanced human geography options (25%)

Candidates answer questions on two of the optional topics. Each topic consists of one structured question and a choice of essay questions. Each paper is 1 hour 30 minutes.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Although a GCSE in Geography is not a prerequisite of the course, it is desirable in order to have the necessary foundations in knowledge and understanding. A grade 6 or above is preferred.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

CIE Cambridge International
A Level Geography 9696

NEXT STEPS

Geography is a popular degree course at university, where it can be studied as either a science or an arts subject. Pupils often choose to combine geography with another subject such as economics, planning, or languages. A geography degree gives pupils a wide range of transferable skills and makes them very employable. Geographers take up employment in business and commerce, research, teaching, tourism and recreation management, and with environmental agencies, the UN, and the EU.

CONTACT

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History

OVERVIEW

Exeter School offers a history course that attempts to strike a balance between British Early Modern and Modern world history.

Building on knowledge and skills learnt at GCSE, the course develops a greater understanding of both the Early Modern era and the modern world, not least key themes such as capitalism and communism. Important skills in the handling and evaluation of historical source material are developed to enhance your critical reading and understanding of the past.

COURSE OUTLINE

The A Level course offers a dynamic exploration of political intrigue, global conflict, and independent historical research across two exam papers (40% each) and coursework (20%).

You will develop analytical skills, by evaluating historical interpretations and primary sources to understand the forces that shaped the modern world.

Paper 1: Breadth Study with Interpretations
1C: The Tudors: England, 1485–1603 (40% of A Level)
This component examines the tumultuous consolidation and development of the Tudor dynasty. Pupils study five iconic monarchs and how they navigated intense religious turmoil, foreign relations, domestic rebellions, and sweeping social and economic change.

Paper 2: Depth Study with Sources
2R: The Cold War, c1945–1991 (40% of A Level)Pupils delve into the ideological, political, and military struggle between the global superpowers. This module tracks the evolution of global tensions from the ashes of World War II to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)
Independent Historical Enquiry (20% of A Level)
The non-examination assessment (coursework) is a 3,500 – 4,500 word essay on the Civil Rights Movement in the USA. This component develops enhanced independent learning, critical thinking, and advanced research skills. You will learn to ask significant historical questions, analyse primary source materials, and evaluate competing historical interpretations.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

There are two external examination papers worth 80% of the overall marks, both 2 hours and 30 minutes long.

The non-examined assessment (coursework) is marked internally and then externally moderated, worth 20% of the overall marks.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

At least a grade 6 in GCSE History or a similar subject e.g. English. It is not a requirement to have studied GCSE History.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level History
7042

NEXT STEPS

History is a rigorous yet accessible academic A Level subject that is held in high regard by universities and employers alike. Apart from obvious career routes, such as history lecturing, teaching, research, archiving, librarianship, and museum curatorship, history is also a useful background for careers in law, journalism, management, accountancy, and business. Many of our pupils go on to study the subject at university including reading history at Cambridge and Oxford.

CONTACT

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Latin

OVERVIEW

A Level Latin offers the opportunity to take the study of Latin language and literature to a much deeper and more satisfying level. It builds on the linguistic work of GCSE, allowing pupils to access much more interesting and sophisticated texts, while also developing literary critical, essay writing, and reasoning skills. Pupils will also be given opportunities to engage more fully with Roman history, artistry, and literary culture, opening a world of profoundly influential and interesting texts.

Beyond the classroom, pupils may have opportunities to see ancient plays in performance and visit archaeological sites. The next departmental trip to the Mediterranean will be in 2028, following Sicily in 2026.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course is loosely divided into two halves, each comprising two papers. Both elements are studied in both the Lower and Upper Sixth.

Linguistic components:

1. Unseen translation (33%): you will learn to translate more complex pieces of writing in both verse and prose, developing a more sophisticated understanding of the language than at GCSE. This module gives pupils the opportunity to read a wide range of myths and authors and to think analytically about the language.
2. Prose comprehension or composition (17%): here you will be asked to look more closely at the grammar and syntax of the language. While there is an option to translate into Latin, it is not compulsory.

Literature components

1. Prose literature (25%): you will study two selections from Roman prose authors in depth, such as the politician Cicero or the historian Tacitus, writing commentaries and essays on these works of literature. These works usually explore important (and often scandalous) events, such as the overthrow of the Republic or the reigns of the emperors.
2. Verse literature (25%): again, you will be asked to study two selections of literature in depth, this time from important Roman poets such as Virgil or Ovid. These texts are among the most beautiful and important of European literature and provide a fascinating insight into Roman culture and society.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

All four elements are assessed by examination. You will be expected to translate into English, but not into Latin. Papers on literature involve some longer written responses, as well as a prepared translation.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

You should have at least a grade 6 in Latin and English Literature at GCSE level, although a 7 in Latin is strongly recommended.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

OCR
A Level Latin
H443

NEXT STEPS

A Level Latin is tremendously useful to pupils hoping to pursue classical subjects and related degrees at university. It is also particularly beneficial for people hoping to study literature degrees, modern foreign languages, and for those interested in early European history. The attention to detail and analytical application of linguistic rules also have significant benefits for pupils who go on to study computing (Mark Zuckerberg viewed it as one of his most useful school subjects), law, and even medicine. Classicists have a well-earned reputation as rigorous analytical thinkers and excellent communicators, which has led many classicists to continue into careers in business, politics, and the media; many also find classics to be good training for further study and subsequent careers in academia.

CONTACT

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Mathematics

OVERVIEW

Mathematics A Level continues to develop the topics studied in GCSE or IGCSE Mathematics and introduces methods and techniques used in many subjects at university level and beyond. The mathematics course covers a range of pure and applied mathematics, including mechanics and statistics. Mechanics at A Level is not essential for A Level Physics but could be advantageous if you are considering university courses such as physics or engineering. Statistics is increasingly important in many fields such as biology, geography, business, economics and marketing. Mathematics is also an interesting subject to study for its own sake.

COURSE OUTLINE

The content below follows the year 1 and year 2 textbooks. In fact, we start year two pure during the Lower Sixth. We start the applied in the Upper Sixth when all the pure has been covered.

1. Pure mathematics year one
   Topics will include proof, algebra and functions, coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane, sequences and series, trigonometry, exponentials and logarithms, differentiation, integration, and vectors.
2. Pure mathematics year two
   Further techniques involving proof, algebra and functions, coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane, sequences and series, trigonometry, and integration as well as an introduction to numerical methods.
3. Statistics and mechanics Section A: Statistics
   Statistical sampling, data presentation and interpretation, probability, statistical distributions, statistical hypothesis testing.
4. Section B: Mechanics
   Quantities and units in mechanics, kinematics, forces and Newton's Laws, moments.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Each of the three areas above is examined by a written paper that is two hours in length. Pupils must answer all questions in each paper and calculators are allowed throughout. Each paper is worth a third of the overall qualification. The pure content is shared across two of the three papers and could contain any of the topics covered. The third paper is a combination of statistics and mechanics, tested separately but with equal weighting.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A GCSE or IGCSE grade 6 is the minimum requirement, with a grade of 7 or higher strongly recommended. Pupils studying mathematics in the sixth form will need a graphical calculator to support their studies – we normally arrange to source them at the start of the Lower Sixth. The current recommended model is the Casio CG50. Whilst having studied the level 2 certificate in Further Mathematics would be advantageous, it is certainly not a requirement as bone of the A Level content has assumed knowledge from this award.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
A Level Mathematics
9MA0

A Level Statistics – we may offer A Level Statistics for the first time as an alternative to A Level Mathematics to support pupils going on to study the social sciences and some humanities at university. Please speak to Mr Foster or your maths teacher if you are interested.

NEXT STEPS

University course admission: Mathematics A Level is a valuable subject for almost any course. It is essential for courses in Mathematics, Statistics, Sciences, Computer Science, and Engineering, and desirable for most numerate courses such as Economics, Finance, or Management.

Qualifications in mathematics are essential for many careers in numerate subjects and helpful in many others; for example, many interviews for management posts require tests in numerical reasoning.

CONTACT

Mr Matt Foster, Head of Mathematics
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Further Mathematics

OVERVIEW

A Level Further Mathematics must be combined with Mathematics A Level, and this means Further Mathematics counts as two options and therefore must be selected in columns one and three. The teaching in these two columns then covers both the Mathematics and the Further Mathematics A Level content. The Mathematics and Further Mathematics courses are taught together in a dedicated group, which has a mixture of directly taught lessons and independent study lessons. The topics covered in Further Mathematics help broaden the pupils' mathematical experience and knowledge beyond the A Level Mathematics course. Typically, A Level Mathematics is taught in Lower Sixth and Further Mathematics in Upper Sixth, with all exams being completed at the end of Upper Sixth.

COURSE OUTLINE

Core pure 1 and 2 are mandatory and count for 50%. The other 50% comprises two of the options below. The two optional papers are most likely to be numbers three and four which is currently what is being taught this year but may vary depending on the interests of the set.

1. Core pure mathematics one
   Topics will include proof, complex numbers, matrices, further algebra and functions, further calculus, and further vectors.
2. Core pure mathematics two
   Further techniques involving complex numbers, algebra and functions, calculus, polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions, and differential equations.
3. Further mathematics option one: Further mechanics one
   Momentum and impulse, collisions, centres of mass, work and energy, elastic strings, and springs.
4. Further mathematics option two: Further statistics one
   Poisson and binomial distributions, hypothesis testing, central limit theorem, chi squared tests, probability generating functions.
5. Further mathematics option three: Further pure one
   Vectors ad geometry, conic sections, inequalities, T formulae, Taylor series, methods in calculus, numerical methods, and reducible differential equations.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Each of the areas above is examined by a written paper that is 1-hour 30mins in length. Pupils must answer all questions in each paper and calculators are allowed throughout. Each paper is worth 25% of the overall qualification.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The Further Mathematics teaching takes place in column one and column three of the options table. Pupils would usually have a GCSE grade 8 or 9 and should have the potential to achieve grade A* in A Level Mathematics.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
A Level Further Mathematics
9FM0

NEXT STEPS

University course admission: Further Mathematics is a major benefit for many courses in Mathematics, sciences or Engineering, and for those who enjoy the subject it is likely to enhance their application for any university course; it may also provide an exemption from some first-year courses. It can be a distinct advantage for elite universities courses in other disciplines with significant mathematical content.

CONTACT

Mr Matt Foster, Head of Mathematics
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Modern Foreign Languages

OVERVIEW

In a post-Brexit UK, it is even more important to speak other people's languages. To do this well, we must not only know the language but also understand the different cultures and ways of thinking. Most school leavers in the UK have no formal qualification in a foreign language, and most of those who do, will be able to offer GCSE level at most. Therefore, an A Level in a modern language will set you apart from the rest. In summer 2025, there were only 8,000 A Level Spanish entrants, 6,500 French entrants and 2,000 German entrants across the whole of England and Wales. In comparison, more than 100,000 people sat A Level maths!

It is hugely practical. According to the British Council's Languages for the Future project, 'there can be no doubt that the UK needs more of its people to speak foreign languages – for employability, for trade and the economy, and for our cultural life'. You will be in demand in the workplace and will also have an advantage over your peers when competing for university places. Studying languages to an advanced level shows that you are culturally aware, open-minded, adaptable and in possession of excellent communication skills. These are key attributes for success in life beyond Exeter School.

A Levels in modern languages follow on neatly from GCSE, in that you will still be refining your skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in your chosen language. You will also learn new and valuable skills, such as translating into and out of the language, taking part in issue-based debates, and writing essays on a range of texts and films that you will study.

Studying a book and a film in the language is a key part of the course and sometimes the mention of literature causes concern, but this is usually the area of the course people remember and value the most: they are stories giving you a window into a target language community. You will study the history of the main European countries where the language is spoken and carry out a research project into an aspect of history or culture which has particularly captured your attention. Every society has its quirks, fascinations, obsessions and idiosyncrasies, and mastering the language in all its formats gives you greater enjoyment and understanding of the countries where your chosen language is used.

To this end a range of visits abroad are offered to help you find out about the people who speak your chosen language, and you should investigate the possibility of visiting a country where the language is spoken at least once during the A Level course. You will also spend one of your study periods working with a foreign language assistant to ensure your oral skills are highly polished.

COURSE OUTLINE

Module one covers aspects of society in France, Germany, Spain: including the world of work, family structure, education, environment, and tourism.

Module two covers artistic culture throughout the French, German, and Spanish-speaking worlds: including music, media, and festivals and traditions.

Module three covers multiculturalism in France, Germany, Spain: including the history, benefits and challenges of immigration, and public opinion including the extreme right wing.

Module four covers political culture in wartime France; East Germany and reunification; the Spanish Civil War, the Franco dictatorship, and the transition to democracy.

You will also study one literary text and one feature film, analysing plot, character, and authorial / cinematographic techniques.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Listening, reading, and writing skills are assessed through a two-hour exam and counts for 40% of the A Level: you answer several questions in the target language, based on several listening and reading passages, as well as completing a summary and translation into English. You control the listening soundtrack yourself, pausing and repeating as necessary. Prose translation and texts / film are assessed through 2 hours 40-minute-long exam and counts for 30% of the A Level: you will write two essays in the target language; one on a text and the other on a film that you have studied during the course.

Speaking is assessed through a 16–18-minute speaking exam that counts for 30% of the A Level: you discuss with your teacher a statement about one of the topics in the course from themes 1-4 (six minutes). You will then present and discuss the findings of your research project (consisting of two minutes' presentation, and nine to ten minutes' discussion).

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

At least a grade 6, although grade 7 or higher is preferred at GCSE. In addition, you will need a willingness to discover the countries where the target language is spoken, a desire to debate and speak the language, an interest in current affairs as well as in the grammar and structure of languages, an eye for detail, the ability to spot patterns in words and a retentive memory for vocabulary.

Modern Foreign Language (continued)

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

At least a grade 6, although grade 7 or higher is preferred at GCSE. In addition, you will need a willingness to discover the countries where the target language is spoken, a desire to debate and speak the language, an interest in current affairs as well as in the grammar and structure of languages, an eye for detail, the ability to spot patterns in words, and a retentive memory for vocabulary.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
A Level French / German / Spanish
9FR0 / 9GN0 / 9SP0

NEXT STEPS

University course admission: an A Level in a modern language is key to studying that language at undergraduate level. It also demonstrates to admissions tutors in any discipline that candidates have completed one of the most academically rigorous A Level courses, involving a range of transferable skills and significant independent research.

Career information: many linguists will combine their language skills with another discipline at undergraduate or postgraduate level. The possibilities of using language skills in the workplace are therefore many and varied, including law, trade and business, industry, advertising, design, engineering, humanitarian work, education, and the specialist fields of interpreting and translation, which are currently experiencing serious shortages of native English-speaker practitioners.

CONTACT

Mrs Claire Sewell, Head of Modern Foreign Languages
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Music

OVERVIEW

Music at A Level is not intended just for pupils aiming to study music at a university or conservatoire. It is equally suitable as one of a mixed group of subjects leading to qualifications in other areas. It is highly facilitating, rigorously academic, creative, and very practical, covering a wide range of valuable skills: independent learning, teamwork, presentation skills, active and critical listening, essay writing, confidence, and creativity.

COURSE OUTLINE

Component one: Performing
This is based on you playing or singing solo, in an ensemble, improvising, or using music technology. You have regular rehearsals with an experienced accompanist who can guide and assist. Typically, the very best marks are achieved by performing pieces at or above grade VI standard.

Component two: Composing
One route teaches formal harmony techniques such as 4-part harmony and the completion of Bach chorales; the other teaches free composition in a range of styles, including the department's specialist areas of choral music, jazz, pop, and both contemporary and traditional instrumental music.

Component three: Appraisal
Pupils acquire deeper knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language, as well as aural responses, by means of both short questions, short essays, and extended writing.

There are three areas of study:

1. Western classical tradition (specific examples of Baroque concerto, Mozart opera, and romantic piano Music by Brahms, Chopin, and Grieg)
2. Popular music (based around the study of classic songs by the likes of Stevie Wonder, Beyoncé, Muse, Daft Punk, Labrinth, and Joni Mitchell)
3. Jazz (including Pat Metheny, Miles Davis, and Louis Armstrong)

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

- Performing is worth 35%, and the recital for the non-examination assessment is six to seven minutes long
- Composing is worth 25%, and candidates produce about five minutes of music for the non-examination assessment
- Appraising is assessed by means of the only written examination which is two hours long and worth 40%

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

You will need to be committed to playing, studying, and listening to music. A Level candidates can access the best marks in the performance units performing at grade V in Lower Sixth, and grade VI in Upper Sixth.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Music
7272

NEXT STEPS

Universities and employers are very interested in Music A Level due to the wide range of transferable skills acquired during study. All universities recognise Music A Level as a rigorous and academic subject, and its balance with other A Levels is welcomed for all university courses. Many former A Level musicians have gone on to take university and conservatoire degrees in music at the very best universities.

Alumni music graduates have gone on to work in many fields, including law, as administrators for arts organisations, as accountants, running businesses, teaching, in research and education, as well as performing.

CONTACT

Mr Peter Tamblyn, Director of Music
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Physics

OVERVIEW

Physics is the study of the natural world all around us, from the fundamental building blocks of matter to the large-scale structure of the universe and all the multitude of scales in between. It allows us to gain a better understanding of how things work and attempts to answer some of the most fundamental questions about the world we live in. The study of physics develops problem-solving and mathematical skills, as well as other transferable skills such as logical, analytical, and creative thinking. Importantly, physics also helps to solve real-world problems for both people and the planet.

COURSE OUTLINE

The material covered during the study of physics in the sixth form is split into nine topics. Many of these are extensions of areas studied in physics at GCSE whilst some are newer, more fundamental, and even more exciting. Each topic includes a mixture of experimental work and theory components, along with an analysis of wider applications. In the Lower Sixth, the topics studied are:

1. Measurements and their errors: doing and analysing practical work effectively
2. Particles and radiation: a look at fundamental ideas in particle and quantum physics
3. Waves: the mathematical study of waves and their many uses and applications
4. Mechanics and materials: the study of dynamics, forces and energy, and basic material science
5. Electricity: extending ideas from GCSE to understand and use electrical circuits

In the Upper Sixth, the topics studied are typically more mathematical and more in-depth, and so are even more interesting:

1. Further mechanics and thermal physics: circular and oscillatory motions, and thermal physics
2. Fields and their consequences: the study of gravitational, electric, and magnetic fields
3. Nuclear physics: further understanding of the nucleus and its many applications including fission and fusion
4. Option topic: as a class set, there is a choice of medical physics, astrophysics, engineering physics, or turning points in physics

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Three two-hour written examinations, assessing the work from both years. The papers will contain a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. One paper each will focus mainly on material from the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth years respectively. The final paper will assess practical techniques and data analysis as well as the chosen option topic. At A Level, there is also a practical endorsement (pass grade only). This is assessed as a series of set practical tasks completed throughout the two-year course.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum GCSE physics grade 6 or GCSE double award science grade 6,6 as well as minimum GCSE mathematics grade 6. However, a grade 7 or above is strongly recommended. A Level mathematics is not required but it is very beneficial.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Physics
7408

NEXT STEPS

Physics is offered at a wide selection of universities but there are also a huge range of physics-related degrees including: engineering, medicine, astrophysics, geophysics, materials science, computer science, and the natural sciences. Physics offers a vast array of career options and physicists are very much in demand both in physics and engineering, but also sectors such as finance. Employers actively seek out people who can prove their ability to think logically, understand complex ideas, problem solve, and apply ideas to the real world – skills developed in physics can help give you the edge.

CONTACT

Mr Dominic Tuohey, Head of Physics
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Politics

OVERVIEW

This course introduces you to the politics of the UK and USA, enabling you to develop an informed understanding of the historical and contemporary influences that shape the nature of government and politics in both countries. You will examine the ways in which people engage with politics, and the structure and effectiveness of the political systems that operate, by closely relating theory to current affairs. Careful examination of the key debates that surround issues such as party policy, the role of the legislatures, the nature of general and presidential elections, the respective roles of the judiciary and the protection of rights provide you with a detailed overview, and comparison of, modern politics in the UK and USA. Furthermore, you will be introduced to key political ideologies and learn how to evaluate and interpret political events through debate, discussion, and written work.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course is divided into three separate components, offering pupils the opportunity to explore the following:

Component one: UK politics and core political ideas

- The nature of politics and how people engage in the political processes of the UK, exploring issues such as democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour, and the media.
- The core principles of conservatism, liberalism, and socialism, and how they apply to issues such as human nature, the role of the state, and the shape of society.

Component two: UK government and non-core political ideas

- UK constitution and the specific roles and powers of the major branches of the government (including the PM, parliament, and the UK Supreme Court) and the relationships between them.
- The political ideas of anarchism, the ways it has developed over time, its core principles, and the divisions between different strands of anarchism and relevant influential thinkers.

Component three: Comparative politics

- The nature of the US constitution and the specific roles and powers of the major branches of government (including the presidency, Congress, and the US Supreme Court) and the relationship between them.
- Contemporary issues such as US electoral processes and civil rights, and a comparison between the politics and institutions of the US and those of the UK.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

- Three, equally weighted exam papers – one for each of the above components.
- Each written exam is two hours long.
- From a choice, pupils select and answer source-based, essay, and shorter answer questions.
- Some questions are compulsory.
- The assessment objectives require pupils to explain, analyse, and evaluate political issues, concepts, and information.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No specific subject grades are required. Strong reading, writing, analytical, and debating skills are an advantage. You should, above all, be interested in current affairs with a willingness to watch quality news programmes and read newspapers.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Edexcel
A Level Politics
9PL0

NEXT STEPS

Politics combines well with other A Levels such as Economics, History, Geography and English Literature. It is a highly valued A Level that regularly provides a route into Oxbridge and Russell Group universities. It is a great introduction to many undergraduate courses, including PPE (Oxford), HSPS (Cambridge), and other widely offered politics and international relations courses. There are many attractive degree courses that combine politics with the study of other disciplines such as languages or law. Politics demands high levels of analytical skill and is therefore potentially attractive to employers, particularly in combination with modern languages or other subjects.

CONTACT

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Mrs Melanie Sheehan, joint Head of Politics
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Psychology

OVERVIEW

Have you ever wondered what it is that makes some people behave the way they do? For example, what turns someone into a psychopath or makes someone afraid of spiders? How can different things affect your mood and even your confidence? Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and human behaviour. Not only will you gain insights into the human mind, but you will also participate in practical experiments that will enable you to understand the causes of human behaviour and how to change it.

COURSE OUTLINE

The A Level Psychology course will involve your analysing, interpreting, and evaluating psychological concepts, theories, research studies, and research methods. You will evaluate different therapies and treatments in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness, and will also carry out several practical research activities including the use of statistics and maths to interpret data. There are three main units:

1. Introductory topics in psychology (33.3%)
   This unit covers social influence, memory, attachment, Clinical Psychology, and mental health.
2. Psychology in context (33.3%)
   This unit includes approaches in psychology, biopsychology, and research methods.
3. Issues and options in psychology (33.3%)
   This unit includes the study of the major issues and debates in psychology, aggression, cognition, development, and eating behaviours.

It is important to realise that Psychology A Level requires a high level of analytical and mathematical skills. Overall, at least 35% of the marks in assessments for psychology will require the use of mathematical skills (at least at the standard of higher tier GCSE Mathematics) and scientific research methods.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

Three two-hour written examinations, assessing the work from both years. The papers will contain a mixture of multiple choice, short, and extended answer essay questions.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum GCSE grade 6 in both Biology (or 6,6 in Double Award Science) and Mathematics, although a grade 7 is preferred. There is no requirement to have studied any psychology before..

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

AQA
A Level Psychology
7182

NEXT STEPS

Psychology develops a range of valuable skills, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research which are transferable to further study and the workplace. It therefore fits easily with many other subject areas and career choices including medicine, dentistry, nursing, management, advertising, teaching, research, market research, and statistics.

To pursue a career specifically in psychology, you will need a degree that has been endorsed by the British Psychological Society and an appropriate postgraduate qualification e.g. in clinical psychology, educational psychology, occupational psychology, or forensic psychology.

CONTACT

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Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

OVERVIEW

This course incorporates a variety of academic disciplines and is available to all. It offers variety and rigour and requires you to play an active role through discussion and enquiry. It is challenging and will make you question long-held ideas and look at how we make moral decisions in life. Whilst not an A Level purely in philosophy, two thirds of the course is philosophically based and so it will provide a good introduction to philosophy for those interested in that subject.

COURSE OUTLINE

This is the Religious Studies syllabus offered by Eduqas, comprising of three components: religion and ethics, philosophy of religion, and study of Christianity.

1. Religion and ethics: you look at what it means to say something is ethical or moral. You consider what it means to call ethical theory absolutist, objective, relativist, and subjectivist. Several ethical theories are studied: natural law, situation ethics, utilitarianism, religious ethics, Kantian ethics, and libertarianism.
   You apply these theories to the following ethical topics: abortion, euthanasia, war and peace, and genetic engineering.
2. Philosophy of religion: you will undertake an in-depth and broad study of fundamental philosophical themes ranging from arguments for the existence of God to the use of religious language. This is broken down into four themes:

- Cosmological, teleological, and ontological arguments for the existence of God
- Challenge religious belief about evil and suffering, studying philosophers such as Freud, Jung, and Epicurus
- Religious experience, including arguments surrounding near-death experiences
- Religious language and the problems associated with the use of language, referring to scholars such as Wittgenstein and Phillips

3. A study of religion: You will study Christianity under the following themes:

- Religious figures and sacred texts
- Religious concepts and religious life
- Significant and historical developments in religious thought
- Christian practices that shape religious identity

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

The course is assessed with three two-hour exams.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Required GCSE subject: English Language at grade 6 or better. It is not necessary to have religious studies at GCSE. An interest in ethics, philosophy, development of ideas, and an enquiring mind are essential.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Eduqas
A Level Religious Studies
A120PA

NEXT STEPS

Pupils who take A Level Religion, Philosophy and Ethics sometimes go on to study theology or philosophy or a wide variety of other disciplines and they often establish successful careers in the increasing number of jobs that require an element of religious literacy. Previous A Level pupils are now in the police, teaching, law, social work, higher education, journalism, business, the civil service, and a whole host of other professions. The skills required to be successful in the course, and developed through it, are highly prized by universities and employers alike.

CONTACT

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Sport (BTEC)

OVERVIEW

BTEC qualifications come in a variety of sizes and levels, so it is important to distinguish between them. The BTEC National Extended Certificate in Sport is a Level 3 qualification equivalent in size to a full A Level. It is a rigorous academic and applied course that develops both subject knowledge and practical understanding, providing a unique combination of technical skills that help prepare you for higher education together with a breadth of knowledge about the sector that empowers you to succeed in the real world. This course is designed for individuals with a genuine interest in, and good general knowledge of, the world of sport, since much of the course will involve linking theory that is learned through sporting examples. Successful pupils will be highly motivated and able to consistently meet coursework deadlines.

You will not be directly assessed on your sporting ability. However, there are some practical elements of the course that require you to be motivated, enthusiastic, and able to regularly participate in practical lessons. You should be willing to take part in practical activities and be able to work with others.

COURSE OUTLINE

This qualification is equivalent to a single A Level and is an academic, practical, and vocational course. You learn by completing projects and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations and activities, in addition to several externally set tasks and exams. You will study four units of which three are mandatory and one is optional. The mandatory content is equal to 83% of the course, with external assessments equal to 67% of the total qualification. The external assessments are in the Lower Sixth year and coursework units only in the Upper Sixth.

The mandatory units are anatomy and physiology, fitness training and programming for health, sport, and wellbeing, and professional development in the sports industry. The optional unit is sports psychology.

You will learn in a variety of styles during this BTEC Level 3 course. You will have both theory and practical lessons, and will be able to apply your understanding from theory lessons to practical situations or via activities that will stimulate understanding and application. You will have exam-style assessments and independent assignments throughout the two-year course. You are expected to keep physically active and try out different sports to widen your knowledge and understanding of sporting methods and skills.

METHOD OF EXAMINATION

The anatomy and physiology unit is assessed by a 1 hour 30 externally marked exam. The unit on fitness training and programming for health, sport, and wellbeing is also externally marked and is entirely essay based; it is a rigorous 2 hour 30 min exam. Both these units are completed at the end of year one.

The third unit is professional development in the sports industry and consists of two assignments, while the sports psychology unit consists of 3 assignments. These are internally assessed by teachers and externally moderated.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Biology or GCSE Double Award Science.

EXAM BOARD AND ENTRY

Pearson
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Sport
601/7218/6

NEXT STEPS

The BTEC National Extended Certificate in Sport is a rigorous Level 3 qualification, equivalent in size to a full A Level. Recognised by universities across the UK, it is accepted for entry to a wide range of degree courses when studied alongside A Levels. While pupils should always check the requirements of individual universities and courses, only a small number of highly competitive degree courses require a different qualification profile. As a result, BTEC Sport can form part of a strong academic programme and support progression to higher education in a broad range of disciplines. More directly, it can of course lead naturally to degrees such as teaching, sport and exercise science, sports coaching, physiotherapy, sports therapy, sports business, sports management and sports journalism.

CONTACT

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PB
PERFORM BETTER
20



Beyond the Classroom



An Exonian character education stretches far beyond the constraints of the classroom, timetable and examination specifications.

Sport

In the sixth form pupils can choose from an extensive range of competitive and recreational sports as well as health and fitness options during the Wednesday games programme. These include the major sport of the term (cricket, football, hockey, netball, and rugby) as well as badminton, body conditioning, spin, weights and fitness training, climbing, cross-country, golf, squash, swimming, basketball, tennis, Pilates, padel, and table tennis. The central aim is to make sport and physical activity an integral part of every Exeter School pupil's school experience and weekly routine. You will have the opportunity to immerse yourself in a wealth of social and competitive sport and physical activity, both during timetabled games and also extra-curricular sports clubs and training sessions. We want all our pupils to find a sport or activity that they are passionate about and in which they will continue to participate when they leave school. There is also the opportunity for pupils to represent the school in a range of sports with extensive fixture cards both on Saturdays and mid-week, and elite programmes that challenge the best athletes and teams.

As well as outside all-weather, hard, and grass playing surfaces, the on-site facilities include a climbing wall, fitness suite, athletic development gym, squash courts, sports hall, multi- purpose studio, indoor rifle range, and a 25-metre indoor swimming pool. These are all available to pupils and are extensively used by sixth formers. The school regularly runs sports tours, the latest being a hockey tour to the Netherlands and a rugby and netball tour to Portugal.

Music, Art, Drama, Outdoor Education, Overseas Trips and Tours

The thriving art department lies at the heart of the school; sixth form pupils studying the subject have their own work pods and access to a suite of desktop Macs to support their creativity and study. Our young artists take part in gallery visits and art trips, and put on high-quality exhibitions throughout the year for the school community.

There are many opportunities for pupils to be involved in music through the school orchestras, bands, and choirs, and to take part in school plays



or assist with work behind the scenes as stage crew, make-up artists, or lighting assistants. The music department runs music tours biennially, travelling to Verona in Italy in 2025 and Harz, Germany in the summer of 2026.

The senior school play follows a three-year rotation, with a musical one year, Shakespeare the next, and a straight play in the final year of the rotation. In 2025, senior school pupils put on a brilliant performance of the musical *Grease*, while 2026's production is Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

Those with an interest in outdoor pursuits can develop this through the CCF, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, or the Ten Tors Challenge. Several academic subjects also run field-work trips in the UK and abroad.

In the sixth form you can enter the Ten Tors Challenge in 45 and 55-mile teams. The school also runs its own '1633 Challenge', which is run on similar lines to Ten Tors and enables all those who have undertaken the training to demonstrate their abilities and receive a certificate upon completion.

As well as sports and music tours, sixth formers can take part in a wealth of school trips both nationally and abroad, for example classics trips to Rome, Sicily, or Greece, geography trips to Iceland, language trips to Europe, history and politics trips to Ireland or the US, physics trips to CERN in Geneva, economics and business trips to the City of London and the Midlands, and so on.



Friday 5 Programme



Challenge yourself by joining the Combined Cadet Force, taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, or one of our other exciting options!

The Friday 5 programme involves school or community-based service activities that pupils carry out from 2.55pm until around 4.30pm and is designed to further enhance a wide range of 'soft' skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and communication. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 at Exeter School will have either taken part in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) or the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award. On reaching the sixth form, they either carry on with their current activity or try one of several alternative options. New entrants can choose any of the options below including CCF or DofE, even if they have not done these before.

Combined Cadet Force: our CCF section is one of the largest in the South West and offers an impressive range of options and activities to cadets. The aims of the CCF are to develop pupils' leadership skills, teamwork, and resilience through the structure of a cadet unit where these skills are nurtured and respected. The CCF has three sections reflecting the three services of the British Armed Forces.

The Royal Navy section's activities centre around afloat training and the RN syllabus, presenting cadets with an impressive range of opportunities to develop their skills.

The Army section's syllabus is built around basic infantry skills development, offering opportunities such as fieldcraft, weapon handling, and survival training to name a few.

The Royal Air Force section has a strong ethos of teamwork and leadership, with high standards of developing military skills, which are tested in regular competitions. Flying plays a significant part with the opportunity to use the school's flight simulator equipment and trips to fly Grob Tutor aircraft.

All sections run a leadership programme in the sixth form so that sixth form cadets are responsible for planning and delivering the training for the junior cadets. This includes pupils joining new in the sixth form, who are teamed up with more experienced Lower Sixth cadets for this leadership role. Each section has an annual summer camp and there is a wide range of courses on offer that are run by the MOD at little or no cost to cadets.



Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award: this is nationally and globally recognised as a leading programme for the personal development of young people. In the words of Steve Backshall, naturalist, explorer, presenter, and writer: 'Your DofE shows you have fortitude and the ability to stick to a task, which is recognised by universities and employers alike.' The school is determined to make the award enjoyable, challenging, of the highest quality, and with the widest reach.

The award has five sections: volunteering, skills, physical recreation, expeditions, and a residential project. All activities are usually undertaken in your free (i.e. non-directed) time and are often lunchtime, after-school, or weekend activities. Since the award is often an extension of a young person's personal interests and activities and has a long completion time, the award can quite easily fit around school or other commitments.

***The Exonian* editorial team:** this is a small, dedicated group of sixth formers who write and edit the annual school magazine *The Exonian*.

They work throughout the school year gathering stories about junior and senior school events, trips, and activities, writing and editing articles,

Friday 5 Programme



and selecting accompanying photographs. Pupils may also be asked to interview visiting speakers and other guests, which requires careful research and advanced planning. The team also participates in trips and activities relating to the fields of journalism, design, and publishing. Being a member of *The Exonian* editorial team is a valuable experience if you have a wider interest in media, creative writing, and graphic design, and demonstrates specific interest and insight if you wish to apply for related courses at degree level.

Community Service: this is a chance to give back to the local community and make a difference. There are many ways to get involved e.g. running clubs here in school, supporting young readers in local junior schools, volunteering at local residential homes, healthcare centres, charity shops, or church groups, helping at local youth clubs, Cubs or Brownies, or supporting the Exeter School's Warm Space initiative.

Many pupils enjoy visiting older people in our community, either in their own homes or at some of the local residential care homes in Exeter. Highlights of the year are the annual Christmas tea party in December, when the group welcomes over a hundred local senior citizens to a seasonal celebration here at school, as well as visits to local special schools on Field Days. There really is something for everyone, to suit all talents or interests.

Sports Leaders: this is aimed at aspiring coaches or young leaders whilst developing organisational and presenting skills. This is a chance to 'give back' to the younger pupils at the school. Year one of the course is spent learning how to coach with a mixture of practical and theory sessions. Content includes identifying and using different teaching styles, methods of practice, guidance, and feedback. This helps develop coaching philosophy.

Year two is spent learning about the role of the coach. This involves learning about the key principles of leadership, group dynamics, attitudes, and attribution theory. Both years involve one hour a week helping to coach a junior age group team or activity. This programme is not examined, nor does it lead to a certification. It is often over-subscribed, and selection is based on previous commitment to school sport and coaching experience/interest.

Gold Arts Award: this offers pupils the opportunity to further develop leadership skills as well as developing their interest in the creative arts beyond the curriculum. It involves pupils creating their own artistic work, learning new artistic skills, reviewing dramatic works, and facilitating arts projects for other young people. The programme is designed to provide challenge in planning and delivering a creative arts project, demonstrating commitment to the school community through artistic engagement.

At Exeter School we offer either the drama or the art route for this award, which also carries 16 UCAS points (equivalent to a grade B at AS Level), allowing it to be used to strengthen university applications.

Swunk: this is a jazz and funk band comprising some of the best musicians in school, some of whom may never have played jazz music before. The band is an invitation-only group, curated each summer by the band's director, jazz guitarist, and top session musician, Mr Bowen. The band typically comprises rhythm section members (piano, guitar, bass, and drums) as well as front line players (typically trumpet, saxophone, and trombonists) and a vocalist. Close attention is paid to chamber-group ensemble techniques as well as to the vocabulary of improvisation, within a huge variety of styles ranging far beyond swing and funk, to frequently include Reggae, Bossa Nova, and Hip-Hop. Their many regular events throughout the year include workshops and performances at local primary schools, particularly the annual jazz concert, as well as one-off gigs both inside school and in the wider community.





Results and Destinations

Each year we are delighted for our pupils who consistently secure places across a range of leading universities, respected for their teaching and research work. Over the past three years, 73% of UCAS applicants have taken up courses at Russell Group universities, with 89% progressing to these and other top 35 institutions (including, for example, St Andrews and Bath).

There are typically up to ten pupils who take up Oxbridge or medical places each year, as well as a handful who secure prestigious and highly competitive degree apprenticeships (e.g. in recent years Airbus, Dyson, Jaguar Land Rover, J P Morgan, Bird & Bird LLP).

University destinations include Bath, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Imperial College, King's College, Leeds, Liverpool, LSE, Loughborough, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield, Southampton, Surrey, UCL, St Andrews, Warwick, and York.

Pupils have also gone on to study a broad range of subjects including biology, business, chemistry, criminology, dentistry, earth sciences, economics, engineering, English literature, geography, history, international relations, law, liberal arts, marine biology, materials science, mathematics, medicine, modern foreign languages, paramedic science, pharmacy, physics, politics, psychology, sport and exercise science, veterinary science, among others.



A Level Examination Results – 2026

Subject	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Art	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Biology	21	6	3	5	5	2	0	0
Business	18	0	4	8	5	1	0	0
Chemistry	21	5	5	4	5	2	0	0
Classical Civilisation	9	0	3	4	2	0	0	0
Computer Science	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0
Design & Technology	5	0	1	3	1	0	0	0
Drama and Theatre	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Economics	22	4	11	7	0	0	0	0
Electronics	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
English Literature	10	2	5	3	0	0	0	0
French	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Further Maths	14	6	5	3	2	1	0	0
Geography	24	8	11	4	0	1	0	0
German	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
History	18	4	5	7	2	0	0	0
Latin	0							
Mathematics	48	14	14	3	10	3	4	0
Music	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Physics	28	7	10	3	5	1	2	0
Politics	12	2	5	4	0	1	0	0
Psychology	8	1	2	4	0	1	0	0
Religious Studies	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Spanish	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	284	66	93	67	39	14	6	0
% achieving grades		23.4%	32.7%	23.6%	13.7%	4.6%	3.1%	0%

A* Grades – 23.2; A*A Grades – 56%; A*AB Grades – 79.6%

BTEC Results

Subject	Entries	D*	D	M	P	U
BTEC Sport	20	9	11	0	0	0
% achieving grades		45%	55%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

EPQ Results

46.7% A*
80% A*-A
86.7% A*-B
100% A*-C



Exeter School

A School of Great Character

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