

Highclare School



A Level Guide

For courses commencing: September 2026

A welcome from the Head of Sixth Form.



I am delighted to take this opportunity to introduce you to our Sixth Form at Highclare School.

Highclare Sixth Form is a place where you will thrive as an individual both academically and personally. This is a most exciting time as you make the transition to becoming an independent young adult. We support you in this journey both academically and pastorally. Progress is monitored and support plans are put in place to make sure that each student reaches their full potential. This is reflected in the excellent results our students achieve year on year.

The large number of subjects on offer, opportunities for enrichment and trips both at home and abroad make Highclare Sixth Form a truly wonderful place. Class sizes are kept deliberately small so that inspiring and focused teaching can suit you as an individual and each student is given a tablet/laptop to facilitate their studies.

Each student has a customised timetable based on extensive knowledge of their potential and strong student-staff relationships ensure support and challenge is provided as needed. Lessons emulate a university style, intimate seminar model and our superb teachers are not just experts in their subjects; they consistently deliver over and above to support every individual student, year on year, to become the very best they can be.

You are about to embark on an incredibly challenging but exciting two years, and I would be thrilled to welcome you to Highclare School Sixth Form to complete this important phase of your education.

Mrs Sharman-Everton
Head of Sixth Form

About Highclare's Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Highclare School offers a variety of courses to suit the needs of the individual student. Our aim is to deliver high quality teaching and support to ensure that students gain the necessary qualifications to facilitate progression to higher education or the world of work.

There are a wide range of A level / Level 3 subjects offered, which are listed later in this document. We also encourage students to complete the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) alongside A level choices. University offers are normally made on 3 A level / Level 3 grades or accumulated tariff points, therefore students are normally expected to choose three subjects to study plus an EPQ. Our individual approach, however, means that a programme of study can be tailored to each student so it is possible for a student to study a fourth A level subject, or focus on 2 subjects only. As far as possible, the timetable is structured for the subject options of each student, however the running of any subject course will depend on demand and not all subjects will run every year.

Arrangements will be made for regular internal assessments to be taken over the two year duration of their courses to monitor progress. In addition to this, the teaching groups are small, giving teachers the benefit of close monitoring to ensure that each student achieves their highest academic potential. Our procedures ensure that difficulties are identified and dealt with speedily.

Students entering the Sixth Form will need to achieve at least five 9-4 grades or better at GCSE level, including English and Maths. Preferred requirements for individual A Level subjects are indicated on the subject page.

Highclare's flexible, student-centred approach allows for a suitable course to be structured to individual needs. Full advice will be available to prospective students about the choice of subjects needed to follow particular careers and to gain entry into higher education. Advice will also be available for those who have a specific career in mind and for those who aim to seek employment or an apprenticeship after their Sixth Form courses. In exceptional circumstances entry may be offered to a student without a grade 4 in GCSE Maths or English, in these cases resit support will be offered.

Highclare School welcomes students from other schools and colleges. Students from other schools who are considering entry into Highclare's Sixth Form should contact the School as early as possible to discuss their choice of subjects.

The Sixth Form has its own suite of rooms in the Senior School, including a study centre, kitchen and specialist study rooms. The Sixth Form is small, informal and friendly and provides a pleasant atmosphere in which the students may develop and mature as they study for future goals.

Students are encouraged to participate in the wider life of the School through sport, music and drama. Students also supported to participate in a community service placement. This provides valuable experience for the student and local organisations benefit from the enthusiasm and dedication of the students. Students also benefit from a wide variety of leadership opportunities and can become Prefects, House Captains and academic, sporting or pastoral mentors.

At Highclare School, students enjoy good relationships with highly experienced, caring staff who are always available and willing to help and encourage them to achieve their full potential. In Highclare's Sixth Form we hope that every learner is an empowered learner and every day at school is an enriching experience. Our relationship with students is aimed at being supportive, caring and inspiring, and all staff work towards making the journey to high academic achievement an enjoyable one. All students will be encouraged to 'Take Charge' of their own independent learning (see subject guide).

We have an academic scholarship programme that is entirely based on merit (grade points achieved at GCSE) and open to anyone. When it comes to university application, we provide full support through our own staff and specialist teams from local universities. To this end, we have arranged an annual presentation, delivered by a sitting university professor, to the Upper Sixth about what to expect at university and how students may overcome any difficulties or anxieties they may have in going to university for the first time.

Since so much of what we do is about preparing for university and beyond; and because we know that travel broadens the mind, an annual £1,000 travel bursary is available to any member of the Sixth Form who has an exciting plan and can write a sufficiently compelling case for support.

Our students continually tell us that lifelong friendships are formed through the close community at Highclare. All students thoroughly enjoy the social aspects of being a young adult and the freedom to follow personal interests and pursuits. There is something for every student to make the most out of every day. Our Sixth Form students develop lifelong memories and become part of our alumni family network. We look forward to welcoming you!

For more information about enrolling in Highclare Sixth Form, please contact admissions:

Tel: 0121 373 7400

**Email: Highclare.admissions@highclareschool.co.uk
www.highclareschool.co.uk**

Contents:

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Art and Design
Art: Photography
Biology
Business Studies
Chemistry
Computer Science
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Design and Technology
English Literature
Film Studies
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Sociology
Spanish
Travel & Tourism
Extended Project Qualification
TAKE CHARGE

sixth form

Subject: Applied Science	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mr Murray-Smith	Teachers: Determined based on student`s unit choices.

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 5 or above in GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Combined Science. GCSE qualifications in English language, Mathematics and Computer Science are useful.

Specification Content

Year 1		Year 2	
1	Key concepts in science (written examination)	1	The human body (written examination)
2	Applied experimental technique (portfolio)	2	Investigating science (portfolio)
3	Science in the modern world (written examination)	3	Options: microbiology, medical physics or organic chemistry (portfolio)

Structure of the course:

The Level 3 Extended Certificate in Applied Science consists of six units and is the equivalent of an A Level. In year 1 of the course students will cover scientific principles associated with the application of biology, chemistry and physics, research into the roles and skills of scientists, and the public and media perception of science. Year 2 builds on their knowledge and develops scientific practical skills recognised by higher education institutions and employers to be the most important. The optional module allows pupils the opportunity to explore a wider range of applied learning following a particular pathway either biological, chemical or physical.

Method:

Teaching is structured to allow students to further develop ideas met at GCSE. Students are expected to work independently by tackling questions and carrying out practical tasks. The nature of the course places emphasis on transferable skills so they will need to develop their problem solving and communication of their research. Few of the numerical skills for this certificate require any methodology beyond GCSE Mathematics. Assessment is a mixture of internally and externally-assessed units. Externally-assessed units are by written examination. Internally-assessed portfolios are externally moderated by AQA. Units are graded as pass, merit or distinction (P,M,D or D*) with a D* attracting the same number of UCAS points as an A* at A Level. Pupils must pass each unit in order to pass the qualification.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

The qualification offers students an opportunity to develop transferrable skills, research and communication as part of their applied learning. The ability to communicate in a clear, accurate, logical and coherent manner and to use appropriate vocabulary will also be developed. Numeracy skills will be further developed in a contextual manner. The applied purpose demands authentic work-related learning in each of the units. The applied aspect will also enable students to learn in such a way that they develop skills required for independent learning and development such as the ability to solve problems, the skills of project-based research, development and presentation, the ability to apply mathematical and ICT skills and the ability to apply learning in vocational contexts.

What students do with this qualification:

Employers recognise scientists as people of intelligence and ability. Applied Science can lead to further study in a vast spectrum of interesting fields: environment, space, transport, computing, medicine, economics and finance. The course has been developed with a wide range of higher education institutions to ensure that the best possible progression opportunities are available to courses at BSc degree level. As this qualification contains both examined and assignment-based assessment, the students are well prepared to adjust to higher-educational study.

Subject: Art, Craft & Design	Awarding Body: Edexcel
Head of Dept: Mrs Stott	Teachers: Mrs Stott

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in Art, Craft & Design, Fine Art or Photography at GCSE.

Specification Content

A level	
1	Personal Investigation and Personal Study Internally set and assessed. Externally moderated. (60% of the total qualification)
2	Externally Set Assignment (ESA) Externally set, internally assessed and externally moderated. (40% of the total qualification)

Structure of the course:

Students have the opportunity to experiment with materials and techniques and make the transition from GCSE to A-Level in the first term of the course. They will then choose a topic for their major project (Component 1) with guidance from the teacher.

Component 1 - Personal Investigation (coursework) and Personal Study (written component): This component allows students opportunities to generate and develop ideas, research primary and contextual sources, record practical and written observations, experiment with media and refine ideas towards producing personal resolved outcome(s). It incorporates 3 major elements: practical work, supporting studies and a written study in a minimum of 1,000 words of continuous prose.

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment (ESA): Students are asked to create supporting studies and personal outcome(s) in response to an externally set theme. The release date of the ESA is 1st February in year 2 and contains suggested starting points. Students have from the 1st February and the commencement of the final concluding 15-hour period of sustained focus to develop preparatory studies. The 15-hour period of sustained focus takes place under examination conditions.

Method:

The visual arts provide a rich and varied opportunity for study at A Level and the course aims to reflect this by building on each individual student's areas of interest and strengths. Students are guided via individual tutorials and the coursework tasks facilitate a personal and professional response in a range of media. The course allows for experimentation in a host of disciplines with the flexibility to explore and specialize in a particular area of interest. Critical/contextual links underpin the practical tasks.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Recording, research, presentation and communication skills are developed through the study of Art at A Level. Students learn to operate independently and creatively. They gain the attributes to allow them to express judgments about their own work and the work of others and apply this knowledge to move their work forward.

What students do with this qualification:

Students completing an A Level in Art, Craft & Design will then have access to Art Foundation courses and Degrees in a wide range of Art and Design disciplines, including; Photography, Fine Art, Visual Communication, Graphic Design, Animation, Illustration, Interior Design, Fashion Design, Product Design, or teaching in schools or colleges. Students may also gain entry onto an equally wide range of vocational courses, which include industrial placement.

Subject: Art: Photography	Awarding Body: Edexcel
Head of Dept: Mrs Stott	Teachers: Mrs Stott

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in Art, Craft & Design, Fine Art or Photography at GCSE.

Specification Content

A level	
1	Personal Investigation and Personal Study Internally set and assessed. Externally moderated. (60% of the total qualification)
2	Externally Set Assignment (ESA) Externally set, internally assessed and externally moderated. (40% of the total qualification)

Structure of the course:

Students have the opportunity to experiment with a range of photographic processes, digital editing techniques, materials and physical manipulation techniques to broaden their knowledge and make the transition from GCSE to A- Level in the first term of the course. They will then choose a topic for their major project (Component 1) with guidance from their teacher.

Component 1 - Personal Investigation (coursework) and Personal Study (written component): This component allows students opportunities to generate and develop ideas, research primary and contextual sources, record practical and written observations, experiment with appropriate photographic processes and techniques, and refine ideas towards producing personal resolved outcome(s). It incorporates three major elements: practical work, supporting studies and a written study in a minimum of 1,000 words of continuous prose.

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment (ESA): Students are asked to create supporting studies and personal outcome(s) in response to an externally set theme. The release date of the ESA is in February in year 2 and contains suggested starting points. Students have from then until the commencement of the final concluding 15-hour period of sustained focus to develop preparatory studies. The 15-hour period of sustained focus takes place under examination conditions.

Method:

The visual arts provide a rich and varied opportunity for study at A Level and the course aims to reflect this by building on each individual student's areas of interest and strengths. Students are guided via individual tutorials and the coursework tasks facilitate a personal and professional response in a range of media. This course allows students to specialise in photography and digital-editing techniques whilst drawing on a broader range of art and design skills. The course allows for experimentation in a host of photographic-based disciplines with the flexibility to focus in a particular area of interest.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Recording, research, presentation and communication skills are developed through the study of photography at A Level. Students learn to operate independently and creatively. They gain the attributes to allow them to express judgements about their own work and the work of others and apply this knowledge to move their work forward.

What students do with this qualification:

Students completing an A Level in Photography will then have access to Art Foundation courses and degrees or careers in a wide range of Art and Design disciplines, including; Photography, Fine Art, Visual Communication, Graphic Design, Animation, Illustration, Interior Design, Fashion Design, Product Design, or teaching in schools or colleges. Students may also gain entry onto an equally wide range of vocational courses, which include industrial placement.

Subject: Biology	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mr Murray-Smith	Teacher: Mr Murray-Smith

Preferred entry requirements:

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Biology or grade 6-6 or above in Combined Science, with a component breakdown in favour of Biology. A grade 5 in both GCSE Mathematics and English language is also a pre-requisite. Exceptional circumstances are always considered.

Specification Content

A level		Year 1	Year 2
1	Biological molecules	5	Energy transfers in and between organisms
2	Cells	6	Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
3	Organisms exchange substances with their environment	7	Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
4	Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms	8	The control of gene expression

Structure of the course:

The A level qualification will involve the study of eight topics as outlined above. Topics 1-4 will be assessed during a two-hour written paper, which will include short and long answer questions. Topics 5-8 will also be assessed in a two-hour written paper with short and long answer questions and a comprehension question. A third written paper will synoptically assess content from all eight topics and will include critical analysis of experimental data and an essay from a choice of two unseen essay titles. As practical work is at the heart of Biology, students will have numerous opportunities to carry out experimental work to support theory. There are twelve required practical activities which will be assessed on the three written papers and there will also be an endorsement of practical skills, which will be assessed by the class teacher throughout the course. The qualification is linear so students will sit all the A level examinations at the end of the two year course.

Method:

Many of the lessons will be structured with teacher-led discussion and note-making, but a variety of other teaching methods will be used to ensure that students are actively involved in learning and working independently. Weekly assignments will be fundamental to the contextual understanding and enrichment of students' biological understanding. A range of practical work will be carried out throughout the course to allow development of practical and investigative skills.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Throughout the A level course students learn skills that allow them to communicate using appropriate biological terminology, analyse experimental data, criticise, argue and discuss live biological events and news. Practical and investigative skills are developed including the ability to pose and define scientific problems, select appropriate apparatus and methods, analyse and interpret data and evaluate their methodology, evidence and data.

What students do with this qualification:

Many students who study A level Biology go on to study Biological science related courses at University including Medicine, Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Dentistry, Pharmacology, Physiotherapy, and of course Biology. However, the skills learnt throughout the A level course mean that students will become numerate and literate and be able to present information in a variety of formats. These are invaluable skills for any degree discipline or area of work.

Subject: Business Studies	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs Green	Teachers: Mrs Green, Mrs Roberts

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Maths and English. Ideally also with Grade 6 or above in GCSE Business studies, although students may be considered without this.

Specification Content

Year 1 June Year 1		Year 2 May/June Year 2	
	The first year looks at managing, leading and decision-making, particularly with reference to improving performance in marketing, operations, human resources, finance and culture.		The A level qualification incorporates the same topics as the first-year course plus a consideration of the external factors and strategic decision-making.
Paper 1	2 case studies each followed by six compulsory questions worth 40 marks each.	Paper 1	2 case studies each followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks each.
Paper 2	2 case studies each followed by six compulsory questions worth 40 marks each.	Paper 2	2 case studies each followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks each.
		Paper 3	2 case studies each followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks each.

Structure of the course:

Students will study 'business' in a variety of contexts, eg large and small businesses, UK focused and global operations, manufacturing and services businesses. The topics lend themselves to studying and engaging with the business world and students are encouraged to follow business developments and think critically about contemporary business issues. This A level specification is taken over two years with all the assessment taken at the end of the course.

Method:

Within the classroom we use a variety of teaching methods, including reference to the prescribed AQA textbook, ebooks and iPad applications, the use of handouts, case studies, class discussions and presentations. Students are required to use a range of both primary and secondary information including websites to support their studies. They are also encouraged to visit the central library, read appropriate newspapers, listen to suitable business podcasts and watch reliable and recommended television programmes.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

The course encourages students to acquire a range of important and transferable skills. Students are expected to manipulate data in a variety of forms and to interpret their results; they will present arguments, make judgments and justify their recommendations on the basis of available evidence; they will solve problems and make decisions using appropriate business tools and methods and they will plan work, taking into account the demands of the task and the time available to complete it.

What students do with this qualification:

The course offers a valuable understanding of the complex world of business, commerce and enterprise and aims to promote awareness and understanding of business related issues and to equip students with skills that are relevant beyond the classroom. The qualification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Business or related courses in Higher Education. It is also suitable for candidates intending to pursue a career in business, or further study in business, social sciences or as part of general education; all careers benefit from a sound knowledge of how a business operates.

Subject: Chemistry	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mr Murray-Smith	Teachers: Mrs Blake & Mr Murray-Smith

Preferred entry requirements:

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Chemistry or a grade 6-6 in Combined Science (with a component breakdown in favour of Chemistry). A grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics is also preferable. Exceptional circumstances are always considered.

Specification Content**A level: Assessment**

Paper 1	Physical chemistry, inorganic chemistry and relevant practical skills. 2 hour written examination; 35% of A level
Paper 2	Physical chemistry, organic chemistry and relevant practical skills. 2 hour written examination; 35% of A level
Paper 3	Any relevant content and practical skills. 2 hour written examination; 30% of A level

Structure of the course:

The course covers the three core areas of chemistry: physical, inorganic and organic. All three areas will be covered during Year 1 with many areas being revisited in Year 2 of the course. In Year 2, knowledge, understanding and skills are developed further, requiring deeper understanding of the concepts already covered as well as further developmental understanding of the application of concepts. A level Chemistry involves a good deal of practical work to which a significant portion of time is allotted and the skills gained through carrying out practical tasks during the course will be examined in Paper 3, with some relevant skills also being examined in Paper 1 and 2. Teacher assessed practical skills and 12 required practical activities are incorporated into the course leading to a practical endorsement.

Method:

Teaching is well structured to allow students to further develop ideas met at GCSE Chemistry. Students will be expected to work collaboratively and independently by tackling questions and exercises which stretch them to the limits of their abilities. There are opportunities for students to produce presentations to enhance their learning and modelling of concepts will be used to help with the understanding of more challenging aspects of the course. Practical work will form an integral part of the course and will link into theoretical work at all stages.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students will improve their understanding of Chemistry and its importance in today's society. They will begin to understand the mechanisms of chemical reactions and why structure and bonding in a substance determines its physical and chemical properties. Students will learn to develop logical thought, problem solving and will improve their mathematical skills. Practical skills and manual dexterity will be improved by learning how to manipulate sensitive and accurate pieces of apparatus to obtain precise results.

What students do with this qualification:

Chemistry is an important qualification for any medical or scientific career. It is often a pre-requisite for some courses so prospective students should check to see if they definitely need Chemistry for a particular course. Forensic science, criminal law, architecture, materials science, engineering, dentistry, medicine, physiotherapy, pharmacy, ophthalmology, dietetics are some of the many vocational courses which may require an A Level Chemistry qualification.

Subject: Computer Science	Awarding Body: OCR
Head of Dept: Mr Sneary	Teachers: Mr Sneary

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Computer Science.

Specification Content

A level

01 COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Computer Systems will cover the characteristics of contemporary systems architecture and other areas including the following: The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices • Software development • Exchanging data • Data types, data structures and algorithms • Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues.

02 ALGORITHMS AND PROGRAMMING

Elements of computational thinking • Programming and problem solving • Pattern recognition, abstraction and decomposition • Algorithm design and efficiency • Standard algorithms.

03 PROGRAMMING PROJECT

Students and/or centres select their own user-driven problem of an appropriate size and complexity to solve. Students will need to analyse the problem, design a solution, implement the solution and give a thorough evaluation.

Structure of the course:

	Component	Assessment	Weighting	Marks and duration
A Level	01 Computer systems	Externally marked question paper	40%	140 marks / 2 hr 30 mins
	02 Algorithms and programming	Externally marked question paper	40%	140 marks / 2 hr 30 mins
	03 Programming project	Externally moderated	20%	70 Marks

Method:

This course will be relevant to the modern and changing world of computing. It will focus on programming, building on GCSE Computing and emphasising the importance of computational thinking as a discipline. It will have an expanded maths focus, much of which will be embedded within the course. Students will be able to apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real world systems in an exciting and engaging manner.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students will gain an understanding and ability to apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including: abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation. They will have the ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including writing programs to do so.

What students do with this qualification:

In addition to their other A level subjects, students completing A Level Computer Science will then have access to Computer Science/ Computing or IT related degrees at University. Typical careers for computer scientists include IT Consultant, Software Developer, Games Developer and Multimedia Programmer to name but a few.

Subject: Computing: Application Development (Extended Certificate)	Awarding Body: OCR
Head of Dept: Mr Sneary	Teachers: Mr Sneary

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Computer Science or any other GCSE ICT related subject.

Specification Content

Level 3 Extended Certificate

The Cambridge Advanced National in Computing: Application Development provides students with theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience of application development, equipping them with the understanding and skills that will help prepare them for progression to undergraduate study and are relevant to the ICT practitioners sector.

Structure of the course:

There are **three mandatory** units, and **two optional** units that students must complete over the two years:

The **three mandatory units** are:

- Fundamentals of application development (F160) – External assessment
- Developing application software (F161) – External assessment
- Designing and communicating UX/UI solutions (F162) – NEA (Coursework)

The **two optional units** will be chosen from the following four units:

- Game development (F163) – NEA
- Website development (F164) – NEA
- Immersive technology solution development (F165) – NEA
- Software development (F166) – NEA

Method:

Students will spend time outside of lessons learning how to use different software packages to create solutions to problems. You will demonstrate creativity when exploring and generating ideas, making connections to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value. You will explore the options, tools and techniques to tackle problems and use critical thinking skills to select the most appropriate way to proceed. You will plan and design solutions, checking the outcome to see if the problem has been resolved.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students will develop the following skills through studying this subject:

- Independent learning
- Creativity
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Time management

What students do with this qualification:

Progression pathways to further and higher education: Examples include Higher education courses in Computer Science, Computer Games Development, Computing, Creative Computing, Web and Mobile Development, Web and User Experience Design.

Subject: Design and Technology	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mr Deaves	Teachers: Mr Deaves and Mrs Good

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in Design and Technology at GCSE.

Specification Content

Paper 1: Technical Principles

- **What's Assessed:** Technical Principles.
- **How it's Assessed:** A 2-hour 30-minute written exam worth 120 marks, contributing 30% of the total A-level.

Paper 2: Designing and Making Principles

- **What's Assessed:** Designing and making principles.
- **How it's Assessed:** A 1-hour 30-minute written exam worth 80 marks, contributing 20% of the total A-level.

Non-exam assessment (NEA):

- **What's Assessed:** Practical application of technical principles and designing and making principles.
- **How it's Assessed:** A substantial design and make project worth 100 marks, contributing a significant 50% of the total A-level.

Structure of the course:

The A Level Design and Technology: Product Design (7552) is a linear qualification designed to be taken over two years. Students complete all exams and submit their non-exam assessment (NEA) at the end of the course. The subject content is divided into two primary areas that students must cover through both practical and theoretical study: **Technical Principles** and **Designing and Making Principles**.

The assessment for the A-level is comprised of three components:

1. **Paper 1: Technical Principles**
Features a mixture of short answer and extended response questions.
2. **Paper 2: Designing and Making Principles:**
Includes a mixture of short answer and extended response questions, with Section A focusing on Product Analysis (30 marks based on visual stimulus) and Section B on Commercial Manufacture (50 marks)
3. **Non-exam assessment (NEA): Substantial design and make project:**
Evidence includes a written or digital design portfolio (recommended not to exceed 45 pages) and photographic evidence of the final prototype. The NEA encourages an **iterative process of designing, making, testing, and evaluating**.

Method:

Students engage in both **practical and theoretical study** throughout the course. They are required to apply skills and knowledge from various other subjects, such as **Computer Science, Business Studies, Art and Design, and History**, to inform their design decisions. A strong emphasis is also placed on developing and demonstrating **maths and science skills** within the context of design and technology, as these support decisions made in designing and making.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Practical Skills and Theoretical Knowledge - Confidence and Innovation - Intellectual Curiosity - Creative and Critical Thinking - In-depth Understanding - Informed Design Decision-Making - Application of Knowledge - High-Quality Prototyping - Collaboration and Feedback - Communication Skills - Project Management

What students do with this qualification:

An A Level in Design and Technology: Product Design prepares students for a range of future pathways. It provides them with the **knowledge and skills highly sought after by higher education institutions and employers**. This qualification is particularly valuable for students aspiring to careers within the **creative, engineering, and/or manufacturing industries**.

Subject: English Literature	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs Dawson	Teachers: Mrs Dawson and Miss Smith

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English Language and English Literature.

Specification Content

A level			
Year 1 1	Love Through The Ages: Introduction to English Literature Shakespeare play. Unseen love poetry NEA preparation for Independent Critical Study	Year 2 3	Love Through the Ages: one poetry, one prose text and one Shakespeare play. Unseen poetry and set texts. Written Paper 40% 3 hours Open book in section C only.
		4	Texts in Shared Contexts either WW1 or 1945 to present. One prose, one drama and one poetry text. Unseen prose and set texts. 40% 2 hours and 30 minutes. Open book.
2	Love Through The Ages: One prose text. Pre or post 1900 love poetry anthology.	5	Non-Examined Assessment: Texts across Time 20%. Word count: 2500 words. Two different authors must be studied including one before 1900.

Structure of the course:
(Year 2) Love Through The Ages: 1 prose, 1 poetry anthology, 1 Shakespeare text and unseen poetry. Texts in Shared Context: WW1: 1 prose, 1 drama, 1 poetry text and unseen prose. Non Examined Assessment: Texts Across Time. 2500 words.
(Year 1) Intro to English Literature
Love Through the Ages: study of 1 prose text; Shakespeare text and a poetry anthology. NEA.

Method:
The aims of the course are to enable students to enjoy reading, discussing and writing about English Literature. The emphasis is on getting to know a wide range of texts in depth, by close reading and written response. At the same time, students will be encouraged to study the contexts in which these texts were written. A range of teaching and learning strategies is employed to engage students in the study of literature from teacher-led discussion to group work and individual research tasks. We will endeavour to go on theatre visits and relevant trips when the opportunities arise.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:
It is essential that students who are contemplating studying English Literature at A level should enjoy reading and be prepared to read a wide range of texts independently. Students will be given the opportunity to develop their analytical, essay writing and vocabulary skills, thereby enabling them to write in some detail for coursework (re-drafting is permitted). Timed written work also forms an important part of the course in preparation for the examinations. Students will also be expected to take part in class discussions in order to develop independent views, logical argument and self-confidence.

What students do with this qualification:
English Literature combines well with most A level subjects and a qualification in this subject provides a very wide range of opportunities for courses in the Arts, Humanities and Communication at degree level. Competition for places to read English at degree level is strong and most universities also require a modern language at GCSE grade 4/5 or above. English is a subject which emphasises creativity, disciplined thought, communication and an ability to contextualise and synthesise ideas.

Subject: Film Studies	Awarding Body: WJEC
Head of Dept: Mrs Dawson	Teachers: Mrs Dawson and Miss Smith

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English Language and English Literature.

Specification Content

A level			
Year 1	Varieties of Film and Filmmaking	Year 2	Global filmmaking Perspectives
1	Hollywood 1930-1990 (comparative study)	3	Global film (two film study)
2	American film since 2005/2012 (two-film study)	4	Documentary film
3	British film since 1995 (two-film study)	5 and 6	Film movements – Silent cinema and Experimental film
NEA	Learners produce a short film, or a screenplay for a short film and a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay with an analysis of 1600-1800 words.		

Structure of the course:

(Year 1) Varieties of film making worth 35% written examination
(Year 2) Global film making perspectives worth 35% written examination
NEA. Worth 30%

Method:

WJEC A Level Film Studies aims to broaden students' understanding of film by studying a wide range of global, historical and contemporary cinema. It develops learners' analytical and critical skills by exploring how films create meaning through film form, context and spectatorship. The course encourages appreciation of film as both an aesthetic art form and a cultural medium. It also enables students to apply their knowledge creatively through practical filmmaking or screenplay production

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Studying WJEC A Level Film Studies helps students develop strong analytical and critical thinking skills through examining how films use aesthetics, ideology and context to create meaning. Learners also gain confidence in discussion and debate, forming and defending interpretations supported by theoretical and contextual understanding. The course strengthens written communication through engagement with academic film criticism and structured evaluative writing. Practical filmmaking or screenwriting tasks further build creativity, technical competence and the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to original production work

What students do with this qualification:

Students with WJEC A Level Film Studies can progress to a wide range of degree courses, including Film, Media, English and other humanities subjects. The qualification is recognised as an academic, literate subject that supports entry into university-level study. It also provides a strong foundation for careers in the creative industries, from film production to screenwriting and media-related roles. The analytical, theoretical and practical skills gained make it valuable preparation for both further study and employment in culturally and creatively focused sectors.

Subject: French	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs Pupino	Teachers: Mrs Pupino

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE French.

Specification Content

A level	
Year 1	Listening, Reading and Writing: 1) Aspects of French speaking society 2) Artistic culture in the French speaking world 3) Translation into English Writing: 1) One text or film from the specification 2) translation into French Speaking: no assessed content in Year 1
Year 2	Listening, Reading and Writing: 1) Multiculturalism in French speaking society 2) Aspects of political life 3) Translation into the target language Writing: One text and one film or two texts Speaking: Individual research project

Structure of the course:

Year 1 Core Content – Social issues and trends, artistic culture and grammar.

Film studies: 'Au revoir les enfants' by Louis Malle.

Year 2 Core Content – Social issues and trends, artistic culture and grammar.

Literature studies: 'No et moi' by Delphine de Vigan.

Examinations: Paper 1 Listening, Reading and Writing (2 hours) 40% of A level

Paper 2 Writing - Literature & Film (2 hours 40 minutes) 30% of A level

Paper 3 Speaking (21-23 minutes) 30% of A level

Method:

Within the classroom pupils will develop their skills in the language using a variety of resources. They will listen to a range of authentic recorded language material to enable them to retrieve and convey information. Students will be required to read and respond to a variety of language written texts. There will be much emphasis on developing oral skills within lessons and expressing opinions on a variety of topics. Pupils will acquire a sound knowledge of grammar during the course so that they can communicate accurately.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students should develop an interest in and enthusiasm for language learning, as well as an understanding of the language. They will learn to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively in the language. During the course students will also develop an awareness and understanding of the society, cultural background and heritage of the countries where their chosen language is spoken.

What students do with this qualification:

Some students use the qualification to study a language at University or may combine it with another subject such as Law, Business, Accountancy or another language. Universities are very keen to see that a student has studied a language to a high level, even if he or she applies for an unrelated course. Knowledge of a language will improve employment opportunities either in the UK or abroad, for example, in marketing or working as a lawyer, accountant, engineer, journalist or designer. Students will also be able to communicate with people who also speak the language at home or abroad. Travelling abroad will be a lot more interesting!

Subject: Geography	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs J Palmer	Teachers: Mrs J Palmer, Mrs C Allen and Mrs S Cassell

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Geography
 If students have not studied GCSE Geography, a discussion with the Head of Department is necessary.

Specification Content

Year 1	Year 2
<p>Physical theme – Coasts (Landscape systems)</p> <p>Human themes – Changing places and Contemporary urban environments</p> <p>Geographical fieldwork investigation: we have a residential fieldwork course in Year 1 and carry out a variety of local fieldwork skills projects. This prepares students of the individual investigation and supports the teaching of the course.</p>	<p>Physical themes: Hazards, Water and carbon cycles</p> <p>Human themes: Global systems and global governance</p> <p>Independent investigation (using both fieldwork and research) – up to 4,000 words.</p> <p>Field work – a minimum of four days fieldwork is required for A level Geography – the individual investigation and the residential visit in Year 1 allow for this.</p>

Structure of the course:

The course is assessed through two examination papers (each 2 hours 30 minutes) and a written independent investigation. Question types include data response, extended writing and essay questions. The course includes an even mixture of both physical and human geography. 80% of the A level grade is from the two examinations, the final 20% is from the independent investigation.

Method:

Learning in Geography is as varied as the subject itself. Students think, engage in debate, watch geographical programmes and research geographical issues. They carry out fieldwork so that statistical and fieldwork techniques can be practised. This has included trips to London, Manchester, Sorrento, Sicily and Iceland in the last couple of years, as well as paddling in local streams and investigating the changing characteristics of the local area. This new course requires a minimum of 4 days fieldwork and may include a UK residential visit to a specialist fieldwork centre during the course and a series of more local fieldwork days. Students make use of ICT and map skills throughout the course; the iPad is an essential research and learning tool for every lesson. At A level the independent investigation involves research and fieldwork and builds on the skills developed in L6. Students follow geographical events and enjoy becoming knowledgeable about geographical current news events relevant to their studies.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Skills learnt in Geography are highly valued in further education and by employers. Students develop and apply their understanding of geographical concepts and processes to understand and interpret our changing world. They develop their awareness of the complexity of interactions within and between societies, economics, cultures and environments at scales from local to global. By studying contemporary geographical issues an appreciation of a range of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues are engendered. Students develop fieldwork and ICT skills to further enhance their studies. Geographers are able to discuss, research, think and analyse.

What students do with this qualification:

Students can do almost anything with this qualification! It is studied at degree level by many who are not too sure of their future career aspirations, knowing that it will keep their options open. It can be studied as an Arts or a Science degree and there are many different options available at degree level. Careers include cartography, human resources, working in the energy industry, teaching, refugee advisors, charity work, forestry, meteorology, civil engineering, social work, estate agency, travel agency, law, banking and chartered accountancy. A recent study showed that Geography graduates had the lowest unemployment rate of any other subject.

Subject: History	Awarding Body: OCR
Head of Dept: Miss Watson	Teacher: Miss Watson

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE History.

Specification Content

A level (Year 1 - Lower Sixth)		A level (Year 2 - Upper Sixth)	
1	Lancastrians, Yorkists and Tudors 1455-1509 (1 hour 30 minute examination)	3	Russia and its Rulers, 1855-1964 (2 hour 30 minute examination)
2	The French Revolution and the Rule of Napoleon, 1774-1815 (1 hour examination)	4	You will complete a 3-4,000 word piece of coursework on any relevant topic of your choice

Structure of the course:

In this two-year History A level course the first unit of study will be the Lancastrians, Yorkists and Tudors. This unit gives you the opportunity to study an exciting period of English history where rival families quarrelled over the crown of England, where battles were frequently fought and where Kings were murdered and overthrown on a regular basis. Secondly, you will study the French Revolution during which the French King was executed and France entered a time of great chaos, terror and violence. In the second year you will look at the development of Russia over the years 1855-1964, from the rule of the Russian Tsars (kings) to the outbreak of revolution in 1917 and the emergence of one of the most brutal of the 20th century dictators - Stalin. You will also complete a piece of coursework on any historical topic, time period or country of your choice – this is your chance to choose whatever you want to study.

Method:

The History Department employs a range of different teaching methods to help you learn (and enjoy learning) the topics studied at A level. You will be expected to write essays and answer source questions as essential preparation for the examinations, but you will also have the opportunity to take part in role-plays, debates, historical re-enactments, presentations and decision-making exercises. There is also the opportunity to go on trips as part of the course. History students have been on a number of trips in the last few years including spending a day at Bosworth Battlefield re-enacting medieval warfare with the aid of some plastic swords and real medieval armour, a day at Ludlow Castle and visiting the Tower of London.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

A level History helps you to:

- Develop a wide range of skills including the ability to gather and select relevant information and to communicate your ideas effectively both verbally and in writing.
- Develop your analytical skills - you will learn to assess why events happen and what the consequences of events and decisions are; these are useful skills which are valued by universities and employers.
- Develop your organisational skills. You will learn to present and organise your views in a logical and effective manner as well as improving your study skills as you will be required to complete coursework, to set deadlines and undertake extra research and reading.

What students do with this qualification:

History is well respected by Universities and is useful for a whole range of Higher Education courses as you can apply the analytical and investigative skills learnt in A level History to many different areas of study. A level History can prove beneficial to a wide variety of careers. Past History A level students from Highclare have gone on to study a range of subjects at university including Law, Business, Archaeology and, of course, History.

Subject: Mathematics

Awarding Body: Edexcel

Teachers: Mr Coles, Mrs Bate, Mr Sharp

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 7 or above in GCSE Mathematics.

Specification Content

Year 1	Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pure Mathematics Development of algebra alongside new work in trigonometry, vectors, exponentials and logarithms. Introduction of differential and integral calculus. Topics covered include: Proof, Algebra and functions, Coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane, Sequences and series, Trigonometry, Exponentials and logarithms, Differentiation, Integration and Vectors.• Statistics Data analysis, representation of data, probability and hypothesis testing.• Mechanics Kinematics, forces and Newton's laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pure Mathematics More advanced algebra and trigonometry, calculus, series and sequences. Topics covered include: Proof, Algebra and functions, Coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane, Sequences and series, Trigonometry, Exponentials and logarithms, Differentiation, Integration, Vectors and Numerical methods.• Statistics Probability, regression and the Normal distribution.• Mechanics Moments and application of kinematics.

Structure of the course:

All students will be assessed on their knowledge of Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics at A level Mathematics. In Pure Mathematics you will build on topics that you have already met at GCSE level such as algebra, coordinate geometry and trigonometry. In addition to extending your knowledge in these areas, you will meet a new branch of Mathematics, calculus (differentiation and integration). The statistics content again builds on topics met at GCSE, including the summary and representation of data, probability and correlation, but also introduces statistical distributions such as the Binomial and Normal distributions, as well as hypothesis testing. Mechanics, which is closely related to Physics, focuses on kinematics, forces and Newton's Laws. Assessments will include a greater emphasis on modelling, problem-solving and reasoning. This builds on the increase in problem-solving questions in GCSE. Students will sit three, equally weighted examinations, two in pure mathematics and one in applied mathematics. All examinations will be taken at the end of the course.

Method:

Within the classroom environment a variety of teaching methods are adopted including formal tuition and worked examples, class discussion, note taking, practice of examples, group work and the use of information technology e.g. graphical software. At all times you will have opportunities to receive further explanation and support within a small group. You will be expected to practise many examples, both within lessons and in your own study time, and to keep organised files of notes and examples. You will regularly need to spend time revising methods and concepts that you have been taught throughout the course.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

You will be encouraged to develop your understanding of Mathematics and mathematical processes in a way that will aim to promote confidence and foster enjoyment. You will develop the ability to reason logically and recognise incorrect reasoning, to generalise and to construct mathematical proofs. You will extend your range of mathematical skills and techniques and use them in more difficult problems, learning how to communicate effectively using Mathematics. You will begin to recognise how real-world problems can be represented by mathematical models.

What students do with this qualification:

A qualification in Mathematics is essential if you wish to study Mathematics, Physics or Engineering at university. It may also be required for courses in Computer Studies, Architecture, Science, Business or Finance. Mathematics is also highly valued for entry into many other university courses, as well as for many varied careers, even those that do not directly involve Mathematics.

sixth form

Subject: Music	Awarding Body: Edexcel
Head of Dept: Mr Smith	Teacher: Mr Smith

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 5 or above in GCSE Music, minimum Grade 5 pass in one instrument, Grade 5 theory or Grade 5 Jazz instrumental examination.

Specification Content

A level		
Component	Requirements	Marks
Paper 1 Performing	Public performance of minimum 8 minutes duration. The performance can be playing or singing solo, in an ensemble, improvising, or realising music using music technology. This element is externally assessed.	60 marks 30% of total A Level
Paper 2 Composing	Two compositions, one to a brief set by the examination board and one either free composition or also to a brief. The total time across both submissions must be a minimum of 6 minutes. This element is externally assessed.	60 marks 30% of total A Level
Paper 3 Appraising	One written paper of 2 hours, comprising familiar and unfamiliar pieces.	100 marks 40% of total A Level

Structure of the course:

For the Performing units, relatively little class time is needed. Our role is to ensure you understand the requirements and have selected pieces to perform of an appropriate standard and duration. Your role is to extend your practice routine by an extra hour per week so that you achieve the best possible marks. The Composing units involve the study of models, both to inspire the free composition and the techniques. A series of progressive technical exercises will develop your ability to harmonise a melody. The Listening units develop your understanding of how the Set Works “work”. Study of each piece involves comparison of the melodies, rhythms, textures and structures in each work. The range of pieces is very wide and includes classical, jazz, pop, film and world music. Homework tasks will include research into composers and their backgrounds, but once you have learned the main skills of musical analysis, you will be expected to uncover the secrets of the music for yourself.

Method:

The course has a healthy balance between practical and academic aspects, and one key feature is the importance of individual responsibility. This is especially true of the performing and composing work but also of the listening lessons. Groups are small, so there is no hiding place, but students seem to enjoy the content and appreciate the support they receive. Music is an inescapable part of human existence, and studying for the A Level is an opportunity to share in and appreciate something that people can't help doing. Students are encouraged to read widely around the historical and stylistic context of the set works, listen to a broad diet of music in their own time and attend as many 'live' concerts as possible (trips will be arranged as appropriate).

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Performing musicians develop skills of concentration, attention to detail, confidence in public performing, self-discipline, communication and determination. Students develop their ICT skills through use of the music software programmes available. Students refine their instrumental/vocal skill and develop lifetime talents.

What students do with this qualification:

An A Level in Music opens many doors and closes none. There are two obvious, direct lines of progression into Higher Education – to a Music degree at a university or to a performing course at a Conservatoire. Music scholarships to Universities offer a great incentive to opt for the subject in FE. Choral Scholarships, Organ Scholarships can be worth upwards of £1000 per annum. These courses are now much more varied than used to be the case and include the study of all types of musical tradition and the music business itself. **Pupils are awarded extra UCAS points for each examination grade passed (VI and above) from the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music, which enhances their capacity to gain the university place of their choice.** Careers as music teachers, whether in the classroom or the practice room, or as performers or composers are the natural next step. Beyond these, however, there are many careers available in arts administration and management, for students who perhaps don't aspire to be professional performers but who want to help orchestras or theatres to develop their audiences or reach out into their communities. Music therapy is another option for those with an interest in psychology and working with young (or elderly) people.

Subject: Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts	Awarding Body: Pearson
Head of Dept: Mrs Sharman-Everton	Teachers: Mrs Sharman-Everton And Mr Smith

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Drama

Specification Content

BTEC Performing Arts – equivalent to 1 A Level		Marks
Component 1 Investigating Practitioner's work	Learners investigate the work of performing arts practitioners and develop critical analysis skills and contextual understanding of how practitioners communicate themes in their work.	90 GLH Externally assessed
Component 2 Group Performance Workshop	Learners explore and integrate creative, physical and vocal skills and techniques, working collaboratively to create a performance in response to a given stimulus	120GLH Externally assessed
Component 3 Developing Skills and Techniques for Performance	Learners will develop and apply technical performing arts skills and techniques to produce a recorded performance.	90 GLH Internally assessed
Optional units – learners complete 1 unit Dance technique Interpreting Classical Text for Performance Acting Styles Improvisation Movement in Performance Developing the Voice for Performance Musical Theatre Techniques	Learners choose one unit that compliments their working style.	60GLH Internally assessed

Structure of the course:

Component 1, 2 and 3 are mandatory units that focus on an introduction to the performing arts. Learners then select one optional unit to support their choices in progression.

Method:

This qualification gives a broad introduction to the performing arts sector with an emphasis on core knowledge and fundamental skills which are transferable across other sectors (including communication, presentation, physical and creative skills).

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students will develop performance, technical and analytical skills through the study of BTEC Performing Arts. They will have the opportunity to develop skills as a theatre maker and develop the ability to evaluate, analyse and critique live theatre. Students will develop collaborative working methods, communication and the ability to amend and refine work which are all transferrable skills that help make a smooth transition to the next level of study or employment

What students do with this qualification:

In addition to the performing arts sector-specific content, this qualification provides learners with the opportunity to develop all-round performance skills and transferable skills such as self-confidence, self-presentation, personal discipline, time management and organisational skills which are highly regarded by higher education and employers.

Subject: Physical Education	Awarding Body: Pearson Edexcel
Head of Dept: Miss Buxton	Teachers: Mr Rawlings and Miss Buxton

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Physical Education or
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Biology or Combined Science.

Specification Content

BTEC Extended Certificate in Sport (equivalent to one A Level and Distinction* worth 120 UCAS Points)

Year 1	Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1 – Anatomy and Physiology in Sport (Mandatory – externally assessed through 90 minute examination) Focus; Skeletal, Muscular, Cardio-vascular, Respiratory and Energy Systems and how they respond to exercise. Unit 2 – Fitness training and programming for health, sport and wellbeing (Mandatory – externally assessed synoptic) Focus: Screening clients for lifestyle assessments and understanding training methods and programming. Supporting improvements in the above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 3 – Professional Development in The Sports Industry (Mandatory – internally assessed through 4 assignments Unit 4/5/6/7 (Optional – 1 unit internally assessed through 2 assignments) Unit 4: Sports Leadership; Unit 5: Application Of Fitness testing; Unit 6: Sports Psychology; Unit 7 Practical Sports Performance.

Structure of the course:

Equivalent in size to one A Level. 4 units of which 3 are mandatory and 2 are external. Mandatory content (83%). External assessment (67%). A broad basis of study for the sport sector. This qualification is designed to support progression to higher education when taken as part of a programme of study that includes other appropriate BTEC Nationals or A Levels.

Method:

Pupils undertake the three mandatory units and one optional unit (above). Assessment is specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. It includes a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications in the sector. There are three main forms of assessment that you need to be aware of: external, internal and synoptic.

Achievement in the qualification requires a demonstration of depth of study in each unit, assured acquisition of a range of practical skills required for employment or progression to higher education, and successful development of transferable skills. Learners achieving a qualification will have achieved across mandatory units, including external and synoptic assessment.

Units are assessed using a grading scale of Distinction (D), Merit (M), Pass (P), Near Pass (N) and Unclassified (U). The grade of Near Pass is used for externally-assessed units only. All mandatory and optional units contribute proportionately to the overall qualification grade, for example a unit of 120 GLH will contribute double that of a 60 GLH unit.

Qualifications in the suite are graded using a scale of P to D*, or PP to D*D*, or PPP to D*D*D*. Please see Section 9 for more details. The relationship between qualification grading scales and unit grades will be subject to regular review as part of Pearson's standards monitoring processes on the basis of learner performance and in consultation with key users of the qualification.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

In the BTEC units there are opportunities during the teaching and learning phase to give learners practice in developing employability skills. Where employability skills are referred to in this specification, we are generally referring to skills in the following three main categories:

- Cognitive and problem-solving skills: use critical thinking, approach non-routine problems applying expert and creative solutions, use systems and technology.
- Intrapersonal skills: communicating, working collaboratively, negotiating and influencing, self-presentation.
- Interpersonal skills: self-management, adaptability and resilience, self-monitoring and development. There are also specific requirements in some units for assessment of these skills where relevant, for example, where learners are required to undertake real or simulated activities.

What students do with this qualification:

A qualification designed to provide specialist work related skills for the Sport Industry and University entrance. Gives learners the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need to prepare them for employment or sports based degree. The National Extended certificate provides equivalent UCAS points to 1 GCE A Level.

It is an excellent base for a university degree in sports science, sports management, healthcare, or exercise and health. This qualification can also complement further study in biology, human biology, nutrition and sociology.

BTEC Sport can open up a range of career opportunities including sports coaching, physiotherapy, personal training or PE teaching. The transferable skills learnt through the study of this course, such as decision-making and independent thinking are also useful in choosing the most suitable career path.

Subject: Physics	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mr Murray-Smith	Teacher: Mr Sandford

Preferred entry requirements:

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Physics or a grade 6-6 in GCSE Combined Science (with a component breakdown favouring Physics). A grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics is also a pre-requisite. Exceptional circumstances are always considered.

Specification Content

A level Year 1		Year 2	
1	Measurements and their errors	6	Further mechanics and thermal physics
2	Particles and radiation	7	Fields and their consequences
3	Waves	8	Nuclear physics
4	Mechanics and materials	9	Optional section (see below)
5	Electricity		

Structure of the course:

The A level qualification will involve the study of eight sections as outlined above and an optional section (with a choice from: astrophysics, medical physics, turning points in physics, engineering physics, applied physics and electronics). Sections 1-5 will be assessed during a two-hour written paper, which will include short and long answer and multiple choice questions. Sections 6-8 will also be assessed in a two-hour written paper with short and long answer and multiple choice questions. The third paper will assess practical skills and data analysis with short and long answer questions followed by short and long answer questions on the optional section. In Year 1 the course builds upon the skills and knowledge acquired at GCSE as well as introducing new topics, such as particle physics. Teacher assessed practical skills and 12 required practical activities are incorporated into the two year course and lead to a practical endorsement.

Method:

Teaching is well structured to allow students to further develop ideas met at GCSE Physics. Students will be expected to work collaboratively and independently by tackling questions and carrying out practical tasks. The nature of the course requires some independent research with much independent study and learning. There are more calculations at this level than previously at GCSE, and these need to be practised regularly if they are to be mastered. None of the numerical skills at A Level require any methodology beyond GCSE Higher Tier Mathematics.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

The course involves knowledge, understanding, application and evaluation. These are skills that will be developed through the units and through experimental and investigative work. The ability to communicate in a clear, accurate, logical and coherent manner and to use appropriate vocabulary will also be developed. Numeracy skills will also be further developed in a contextual manner.

What students do with this qualification:

Employers recognise physicists as people of intelligence and ability. Increasingly, companies are looking for physicists for entry into a wide range of disciplines. Physics is required for entry into all engineering based courses and often medicine, dentistry and physiotherapy. Pure physics leads invariably to research where new theories and new products are developed and is a fascinating and rewarding career. Applied physics can also lead to a vast spectrum of interesting fields: environment, space, transport, computing, medicine, economics and finance. Moreover, many A level students have found that Physics increases their university options beyond the obvious scientific choices. UK Physics graduates are in demand worldwide, and especially in the USA.

Subject: Psychology	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Miss Latif	Teacher: Miss Latif

Preferred entry requirements:
Psychology involves scientific research methods, statistics and essay writing, so grade 5 in Maths, English and Science are required.

Specification Content

A level	
Paper 1	Introductory topics in Psychology: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Clinical Psychology and Mental Health
Paper 2	Psychology in context: Approaches in psychology, Biopsychology, Research Methods
Paper 3	Issues and options in Psychology: Issues and debates in psychology, Relationships, Schizophrenia, Forensic Psychology

Structure of the course:
For this A level course you will study social influence, including why people conform and obey. You will look at different models that explain how memory works, including explanations of why we forget and how research into memory has improved accuracy of eyewitness testimony. Attachment formation concerns how infants form a bond to their main carer. In Clinical Psychology and Mental Health you will find out about explanations and therapies for three disorders – depression, phobias, and obsessive compulsive disorder. You will also study biopsychology, including nerve impulse transmission, brain structure, and techniques for finding out about brain function. You will develop awareness of the major debates in psychology, for example, whether behaviour is due to nature or to nurture, and to what extent we have control over our behaviour. You will study evolutionary and psychological explanations of romantic relationships, biological and psychological explanations of schizophrenia, and how psychology can be used to help us understand crime and offending. Research methods are a large and important aspect of the course, and though there is no coursework component, you will be expected to conduct and evaluate studies.

Method:
Lesson activities vary but will comprise taught information involving listening, note-taking and participation in questioning; a wide variety of individual and group activities designed to encourage independent learning, and replication of key studies. Activities are chosen to help students develop verbal and written communication skills, numeracy and ICT, and which also develop important key skills such as working with others, action planning and improving own learning and performance.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:
Students are given every opportunity and assistance to develop a confident and balanced approach to study at Sixth Form level, with focus on increasing independence and more sophisticated study skills through the Upper Sixth year in particular in preparation for higher or further education. A level Psychology also focuses students' minds so that when they ask the question, "*Why do people behave like that?*" they can take an objective, evidence-based approach in trying to explain why. This promotes insight, understanding and tolerance of self and others.

What students do with this qualification:
The skills and personal qualities developed through this course mean that Psychology students are multi-skilled, confident and resourceful individuals who are well prepared for the next step in choosing and embarking on further training for a career. Those who go on to study Psychology in higher education have excellent employment prospects, with excellent rates of employment following graduation when compared with other subjects. The variety of skills developed in a Psychology degree make a huge variety of careers accessible to Psychology graduates.

Subject: Religious Studies	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs J Palmer	Teacher: Mrs J Palmer

Preferred entry requirements:
Grade 5 or above in GCSE English.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Religious Studies.

Specification Content

A level Year 1	Year 2
Component 1: Philosophy of religion and ethics.	Component 2: Study of religion and dialogues, from ONE religious faith.

Structure of the course:
Students study two components over the 2 years. Both components are assessed externally in their final year. For component 2 a religious tradition is chosen from the five available options: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism or Hinduism. Each component makes up 50% of the total A level and each component consists of a 3 hour written examination paper. Each paper consists of two compulsory two-part questions, worth 10 marks and 15 marks. The 10 mark question tests students' knowledge and understanding of religion and belief (A01) and the 15 mark question tests their ability to analyse and evaluate religion and belief (A02). Component 2 also has two synoptic questions from a choice of four, testing both A01 and A02, each worth 25 marks.

Method:
Teaching is carried out using a variety of methods including prescribed texts, note taking, handouts, presentations, PowerPoints, DVDs, discussion, games, research in the library and on line, visiting speakers and RS sixth form conferences to meet other students in order to share knowledge and opinions. Students will be expected to work collaboratively and independently by tackling questions, carrying out research and independent study and learning.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:
Candidates are encouraged to develop their understanding of social, moral, ethical, social and religious issues in considerable depth. They can deepen their understanding of the ways in which culture shapes and is shaped by religious belief. Also, the range of skills like analysis, interpretation, critical thinking and the ability to produce extended evaluative pieces of writing will prepare students for a range of further courses in higher education or employment generally. It is a challenging, interesting and thought provoking course.

What students do with this qualification:
This course is growing in popularity in recent years and provides students with elements to relate to aspects of human experience, especially in a multicultural society. It goes well with both Science and Humanities subjects and has several cross curricular links with History, Sociology, English and Science. It is useful for any job which involves interacting with people, including Legal and Medical and is a good basis for a variety of courses in further education.

Subject: Sociology	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Dr Edwards	Teacher: Dr Edwards

Preferred entry requirements:
 GCSE Maths at Grade 4 or above. GCSE English Literature and Language at Grade 5 or above.
 Students of Sociology should have an interest in social issues, a readiness to think critically about topics and a willingness to appreciate a range of arguments in any given debate.

Specification Content

A level			
Year 1	Education with Methods in Context	Year 2	Beliefs in Society
	Research Methods		Crime and Deviance
	Families and Households		Theory and Methods

Structure of the course:

The course starts with the sociology of education, research methods and sociological theory. This involves an exploration of changing educational policies, teacher/pupil relationships and reasons for the different attainment patterns of children (looking at social class, gender and ethnicity particularly). The methods topic demands an understanding of the way sociologists conduct research (particularly in schools) and so we explore issues around the use of interviews, questionnaires and observations. Early on, students can also expect to learn and apply the major theories of society, for example, Functionalism, Marxism and Feminism. In the spring term of the first year, the sociology of families and households is our focus and we explore a wide range of social issues such as the status and quality of children's lives today; levels of equality between men and women; the variety of family and household types in Britain today and changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation and divorce. By the summer of the first year, students will be studying the sociology of beliefs. This section of the course focuses largely upon religion but also considers people's engagement in non-religious belief systems, for example, science. We debate the apparent decline of religion, consider global trends, examine a variety of religious organisations (from churches to cults to New Age Movements) and the question of whether religion causes conflict or encourages unity between people. Finally, the crime, deviance, theory and method section of the course will discuss topics such as: the factors which cause some people to commit crime; the reasons behind crimes such as cyber-crime, corporate crime and green crime; the role of the criminal justice system and current patterns and trends in crime. The theory element of the unit draws together arguments explored throughout the two years and students will deepen their understanding of sociological theories and methods.

Method:

To answer sociological questions, students need to apply and evaluate sociological arguments and evidence. To this end, students will build their sociological knowledge by reading about sociological theories, research and keep up to date with current events via the media. This reading and research will inform the lessons which then provide opportunities for lots of discussion and debate. Written work will involve note making, structured questions and essay writing.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Sociology is a subject which encourages students to reflect upon their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society. Students acquire a knowledge and critical understanding of contemporary issues along with a respect for social diversity. Through their study of the subject, sociology students learn how to structure and communicate balanced and logical arguments. Sociology also encourages good organisation along with the invaluable skills of analysis and critical thinking.

What students do with this qualification:

Sociology A level encourages students to look at the world in a critical manner: to see the questions behind the questions. This critical thinking, along with invaluable research skills, means that Sociology provides an excellent foundation for a variety of university courses. A degree in Sociology would be useful for a wide range of careers such as those found in health and social work, personnel and recruitment, social research, policing, journalism and teaching in primary, secondary and further education.

Subject: Spanish	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Mrs Pupino	Teachers: Mrs Pupino & Miss Holyman

Preferred entry requirements: Grade 6 or above in GCSE Spanish.

Specification Content

A level	
Year 1	Listening, Reading and Writing: 1) Aspects of Spanish speaking society 2) Artistic culture in the Spanish speaking world 3) Translation into English Writing: One text or film from the specification Speaking
Year 2	Listening, Reading and Writing: 1) Multiculturalism in Spanish speaking society 2) Aspects of political life 3) Translation into the target language Writing: One text and one film or two texts Speaking: Individual research project

Structure of the course:
 Year 1 Core Content – Social issues and trends, artistic culture and grammar.
 Film studies: ‘El Laberinto del Fauno’ by Guillermo del Toro
 Year 2 Core Content – Social issues and trends, artistic culture and grammar.
 Literature studies – the play ‘La Casa de Bernarda Alba’ by Federico García Lorca
 Examinations: Paper 1 Listening, Reading and Writing (2 hours) 40% of A level
 Paper 2 Writing – Literature & film (2 hours 40 minutes) 30% of A level
 Paper 3 Speaking (21-23 minutes) 30% of A level

Method:
 Within the classroom, pupils will develop their skills in the language using a variety of resources. They will listen to a range of authentic recorded language material to enable them to retrieve and convey information. Students will be required to read and respond to a variety of language written texts. There will be much emphasis on developing oral skills within lessons and expressing opinions on a variety of topics. Pupils will acquire a sound knowledge of grammar during the course so that they can communicate accurately.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:
 Students should develop an interest in and enthusiasm for language learning, as well as an understanding of the language. They will learn to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively in the language. During the course, students will also develop an awareness and understanding of the society, cultural background and heritage of the countries where their chosen language is spoken.

What students do with this qualification:
 Some students use the qualification to study a language at University or may combine it with another subject such as Law, Business, Accountancy or another language. Universities are very keen to see that a student has studied a language to a high level, even if he or she applies for an unrelated course. Knowledge of a language will improve employment opportunities in the UK or abroad, for example, in either marketing or working as a lawyer, accountant, engineer, journalist or designer. Students will also be able to communicate with people who also speak the language at home or abroad. Travelling abroad will be a lot more interesting!

Subject: BTEC Travel & Tourism	Awarding Body: Pearson BTEC
Head of Dept: Mrs J Palmer	Teachers: Mrs J Palmer, Mrs C Allen and Mrs S Cassell

Grade 5 or above in GCSE Geography or Business Studies is recommended. Students should also have a good standard of written communication and an interest in global travel, tourism and business.

Specification Content

Year 1	Year 2
<p>The World of Travel and Tourism</p> <p>Students investigate the size and importance of the travel and tourism industry and explore how tourism contributes to the UK and global economy. They analyse visitor numbers, tourism trends and the role of different travel organisations.</p> <p>Global Destinations</p> <p>Students explore global tourist destinations and examine factors that influence travel patterns. They learn how destinations develop tourism appeal and how travel itineraries are planned to meet customer needs.</p>	<p>Principles of Marketing in Travel and Tourism</p> <p>Students investigate marketing strategies used by travel organisations. They develop practical skills by designing and producing a promotional campaign for a travel or tourism destination or organisation.</p> <p>Optional Unit (one chosen):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Attractions – Explore how natural and built attractions attract visitors and how they manage different types of tourists. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events, Conferences and Exhibitions – Study how events and conferences are planned, organised and managed within the tourism industry.

Structure of the course:

The BTEC National Extended Certificate in Travel and Tourism is equivalent to one A Level and is studied over two years alongside other A Level or BTEC subjects. The course is assessed through a combination of external and internal assessment. External assessment accounts for 60% of the qualification and consists of a written examination and a supervised research assessment completed under timed conditions. The remaining 40% is assessed through internally assessed coursework assignments based on travel and tourism industry scenarios completed throughout the course.

Method:

Learning in Travel and Tourism is practical, applied and linked to real industry examples. Students investigate tourism organisations and global destinations, plan travel itineraries and tourism products, develop marketing campaigns and analyse tourism trends and visitor behaviour. Lessons include research tasks, case studies, presentations, group work and industry-based projects, allowing students to apply their knowledge to real-world situations.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

Students develop a range of transferable skills valued by universities and employers. These include problem solving, critical thinking and the ability to analyse information from a variety of sources. The course also develops strong communication, presentation and teamwork skills through research projects and practical assignments. Students learn to plan and organise their work independently, manage deadlines and apply their knowledge to real travel and tourism scenarios, helping to build confidence, adaptability and professional awareness.

What students do with this qualification:

This qualification provides a strong foundation for further study or employment in the travel and tourism industry. Students may progress to university courses such as Tourism Management, Events Management, Hospitality Management, Business or Geography. It also supports entry into a wide range of careers within the travel, aviation and hospitality sectors, including roles in travel agencies, tour operations, airlines, event management, hotels and destination marketing.

Subject: Extended Project Qualification	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Miss Watson	Teacher: Miss Watson

Preferred entry requirements:

This Level 3 project qualification is offered to all students in their Lower Sixth year. Like an AS level, it is essentially half an A-level in terms of size and, like other A-levels, it is graded A*-E, with an A* awarded 28 UCAS points. After an introduction to the assessment objectives and research skills, students are invited to submit a research proposal. If their proposal successfully meets the criteria set down by AQA then students will be able to take over the management of their individual project and work independently to agreed deadlines and a final submission date in March of their Upper Sixth year.

Structure of the course:

The AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a piece of autonomous work on a topic of a student's choosing. Students may produce a written project of 5000 words or, alternatively, an "artefact" based project which would entail the production of a product plus an accompanying report of 1500 words. Artefact possibilities are numerous and examples include animations, scripts, models and events.

Before their individual project work begins, students will have weekly skills lessons to develop the skills that are needed for project work and for academic study in general. Skills covered in the first term will include: time-management, searching and evaluating sources and effective note-taking.

The process of designing their personal extended project will begin early in the Autumn term of the Lower Sixth year. The process formally starts with the opening of an AQA log book, the written recording of initial ideas followed by a formal research proposal which, once approved, will initiate the project's production.

Once their project commences, students are expected to independently devote 90 hours to its production. As the first year progresses, skills lessons will provide a back-bone to students' independent study by continuing to develop students' project skills and offering guidance in the management of the project and the required log book. In the Summer term of the Lower Sixth year, skills lessons will focus on the written and oral presentation of the project, enabling students to move to the final stages of the project.

The written project will be completed by February of their Upper Sixth year. All students will then be required to give an oral presentation of their findings to a small audience and the presentation will be followed by a question and answer session. The project and log book will then be submitted for moderation in March of the Upper Sixth year.

Method:

Skills lessons will require active participation in a wide range of activities so that students can practise the required project skills: from time-management, to idea development, to research, through to presentations. During the project, students will be further supported by at least four one-to-one meetings with a supervisor who will be available throughout the year for guidance and support. However, students are ultimately in charge of their own learning and project management, with 90 hours independent study required.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

This qualification develops many skills that are vital for both successful academic study and project work. Students can expect to improve their time-management skills, become more effective in their searching for source material, develop their critical thinking; and build their confidence in written and oral presentation.

What students do with this qualification:

This qualification is a great opportunity for students to demonstrate their passion for a topic and their ability to work independently. It is therefore a valuable resource for personal statements and interviews and, in its development of mature study skills, it provides an excellent preparation for study at undergraduate level. Some universities make lower "alternative" offers based on achievement of grade A or above in EPQ.

TAKE CHARGE

T	Think before you act	Think before you act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spend time listening and attempting to understand • decide your best course of action • deliberate
A	Aim High	Aim High: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strive for accuracy and precision • check your work before submission
K	Keep trying	Keep trying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persist, be determined • try different things • always do your best • never give up.
E	Engage with your work	Engage with your work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask questions to fill in the gaps between what you know and what you don't know • set yourself problems • conceive different solutions • think flexibly • think about causes and effects
C	Challenge yourself every day	Challenge yourself every day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take responsible risks • be brave enough to be different • try something new
H	Have faith in yourself	Have faith in yourself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • believe in your ability • use your knowledge of different strategies for learning and pick an approach that best suits at a time • get into a routine (if it helps)
A	Achieve more together	Achieve more together: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate with clarity and precision • recognise the value of interdependence • work well as part of a team • together = more learning power • be ready to exchange good practice.
R	Reflect on your learning	Reflect on your learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply past knowledge to new situations • listen carefully to feedback and respond to it • embrace failure – learn from this experience.
G	Get organised!	Get organised!: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have all the right things with you • be mentally ready • look ahead and plan what should happen.
E	Enjoy your learning journey	Enjoy your learning journey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find humour • have a passion for what you do • take pride in your work • remain open to continuous learning.

Notes:





sixth form