

ST MARGARET'S
SCHOOL

A-Level Options

2022 - 2023





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Qualifications to Enter the Sixth Form

Entry to the Sixth Form is dependent on students achieving a **minimum of 6 level 5s at GCSE- including English Language and Mathematics** and in addition they must reach the entry requirements for the subjects they wish to study at A-Level as set out in this Sixth Form information booklet.

In **Mathematics and Science a level 7 GCSE is required, and a level 8 is required to study Further Mathematics.** Our experience shows that those students who do not meet entrance requirements but who continue to study these subjects at A-Level end up disappointed with the final outcome, such is the academic 'step up' in these particular subjects. We ask that students and parents accept the advice of Heads of Department when it comes to this particular matter.

It may be necessary to discuss the options with the appropriate Head of Department, subject teacher, Director of Sixth Form or the Academic Director, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss options with parents by appointment.

Programme of study

At St Margaret's School Sixth Form students will study four subjects in Year 12, and take a mock examination in the May of Year 12. Following feedback and a parents' evening in the same term, students will then drop one subject and study three to the full A-Level thereby achieving three A-Levels. Alongside this, students will also be timetabled to study the extended project qualification [EPQ] which begins in Year 12 and concludes in the autumn term of Year 13. A typical example might be:

Typical pattern of study

Year 12	Chemistry, Biology, Maths and French [plus an EPQ]
Year 13	Chemistry, Biology and Maths [plus an EPQ]
Result	A-Levels in Chemistry, Biology and Maths and an EPQ.

Studying three subjects at the full A-Level gives the time for wider reading and taking advantage of the range of activities we offer. Studying four subjects in Year 12, however, enables greater breadth and depth of study whilst also offering greater flexibility with regards to Year 13 subject options and potentially degree course choices should students be unclear what it is that they wish to study.

The received advice from universities is that students in Year 13 will be in a stronger position with excellent grades achieved in three A-Levels than lesser grades in four or more A-Levels, though in some circumstances we may consider allowing students to study more than four. For example, some pupils applying to the most competitive of universities may be advised to continue with all four subjects to the full A-Level, as long as this does not impede their overall achievement.

Where a student does not meet general entrance requirements, we may ask that they only select 3 A-Level options as one of the conditions upon entry.

Option Blocking and the Timetable

Each year, the timetable is created afresh according to options made by GCSE students going into St Margaret's Sixth Form. When GCSE students make their formal option choices in the spring term it is crucial that they put down the subjects about which they are serious about studying at A-Level. From these options, staffing is allocated accordingly and 'option blocks' are created for the purposes of creating a timetable.

We endeavour to create a timetable that matches the vast majority of students' option choices, however on some occasions it may be necessary for us to revisit options with a student if choices do not fit. This may also be necessary if fewer than 3 students have opted to study a particular subject, which is the School's minimum number to plan to run an A-Level class. Once options blocks are set, a timetable will be created. Although we will endeavour to be as accommodating as possible with students who wish to change options after this point, once the option blocks are set, there is a greater risk of an option 'clash' within the same block. To this end, we strongly urge GCSE students to make the most of the advice they are given throughout Year 11 and to use their meetings wisely with the Sixth Form Team in the run up to GCSE options.

The date for submitting A-Level options is issued annually by the Academic Director. This is the formal and final date for students to make their decision. Although we will of course endeavour to accommodate changes after this period, options are timetabled according to the initial submission of choices, which may affect late decisions and alteration to initial choices.



A-Level Subject Selection

All subjects on offer at St Margaret's are academically rigorous. Our best advice continues to be 'study what you enjoy'. The subjects that students are best at are often the strongest indicator of the direction students are likely to take. This will enable them to achieve the very highest scores which are a prerequisite for success in any higher education application.

This booklet gives an outline of the subjects available so that students can select areas of study that reflect their strengths and offer the best starting point for their final decisions. There are new subjects available too, so students will need to consider carefully what they involve in order to decide between those and subjects already known to them.

If students already have some idea of what they want to study at university, they need to ensure their A-Level choices are suitable for that course.

Subjects The following are available

Art	History
Biology	Computer Science*
Business Studies*	Latin
Chemistry	Mathematics
Chinese	Music
Classical Civilisation*	Physical Education*
Drama and Theatre*	Photography*
Economics*	Physics
English Literature	Politics*
French	Psychology*
Further Mathematics	Religious Studies*
Geography	Textiles*
	Spanish

* These subjects do not require previous GCSE study.



Non-Examined Assessments

Most A-Level courses will involve a number of examined components. Examinations will take place at the end of Year 13. Additionally, some subjects will also contain internally assessed coursework units called non-examined assessment [NEA]. Details of which subjects contain NEA are listed below.

Non-Examined Assessments

Subject	Does this subject contain NEA?	When is the final submission date for the NEA?
Art / Textiles	Yes	May 2024
Biology	Yes - PAG	May 2024
Chemistry	Yes - PAG	May 2024
Chinese	No	
Classical Civilisation	No	
Computer Science	Yes	May 2024
Drama and Theatre	Yes	October 2023
Economics	No	
English Literature	Yes	May 2024
French	No	
Latin	No	
Mathematics and Further Mathematics	No	
Geography	Yes	March 2024 (Internal deadline) May 2024 (Exam board submission date)
History	Yes	April 2024 (Internal deadline) May 2024 (Exam board submission date)
Music	Yes	March 2024 (Internal deadline) May 2024 (Exam board submission date)
Photography	Yes	May 2024
Physics	Yes - PAG	May 2024
Physical Education	Yes	March 2024
Politics	No	
Psychology	No	
Religious Studies	No	
Spanish	No	

When selecting options, students must consider the additional time required to work towards a number of subjects containing NEA work, in addition to the usual.

How to Choose A-Levels

Students are encouraged to discuss their choices informally with staff prior to making a selection.

Students should clearly state if they are set on a particular career or university course on their options choice form which will be given out in Year 11. When considering A-Level choices where there is no clearly defined academic pathway, there are various things to consider:

- Some university courses require one or two specific A-Levels.
- The best choices are those based on academic enjoyment and interest. Which subjects [not which teachers!] are most rewarding, engaging and challenging?
- Students may wish to continue subjects where they have consistently achieved good results; after all, university places depend on good grades.
- Some subjects have coursework elements and modules which require trips in the holidays; students must be committed to these additional aspects.
- Those contemplating a 'new' subject like Economics or Psychology must discuss them with the relevant Heads of Department.

Students must take advantage of the A-Level taster days and Sixth Form open evening to experience subjects of interest and ask the right questions of the subject specialists.



Advice on combinations of subjects

A St Margaret's student has many courses from which to choose at A-Level, and this selection will put them in the best position possible to make a competitive application.

When considering subjects, thought should also be given to how subjects will complement one another, or enhance a student's overall understanding. Similarly, students may also wish to think about how the primary modes of assessment across all 4 subjects will work to their strengths e.g. a student who enjoys writing essays may select a number of essay based subjects. Looking back at past performance and experience at GCSE may also prove a useful indicator e.g. if a student has managed their time well completing Art projects in the past, this may suggest that they could cope with the ongoing independent project-led style of learning at A-Level.

For competitive university applications, the combination of subjects is highly important and therefore consideration should be taken regarding **all four** subjects. Admissions tutors look at the entire profile of a student before making an offer. It is important to bear in mind that university departments are dealing with a variety of qualifications from UK and international applicants, and this is why general admissions entrance requirements can appear to be vague.

Please note that students taking Further Mathematics potentially commit themselves to a four A-Level programme over two years depending on the entrance requirements of the university/course of choice. Students should look ahead to potential undergraduate degree course choices to ensure that Further Mathematics is accepted as a full A-Level.

Facilitating subjects

The Russell Group of universities has identified the fact that some subjects are required for entry on to a related degree course. For example, Mathematics A-Level is required if students wish to read Mathematics and Further Mathematics for Engineering or Physics at university. Thus Mathematics is a facilitating subject. By contrast, other subjects are not required on entry to university. For example, A-Level Law is not a facilitating subject because it is not a requirement for any degree course. We advise that students opt for one or more facilitating subjects at A-Level, particularly if they are unsure what they would like to study at university, as it will keep a number of broader options open to them for longer.

Use of the term 'facilitating subject' is not a judgment on the quality of the A-Level. All A-Levels on offer at St Margaret's are academically rigorous and have proved themselves to be excellent preparation for university.

By following the guidance given on the following pages and discussion with teachers and tutors, students will make the right subject choice that allows them to make a strong application to the university of their choice.

The Russell Group of universities has produced an informative guide to choosing A-Level subjects for their degree courses. The guide is called: Informed Choices and can be downloaded from the Russell Group website as a pdf: www.russellgroup.ac.uk

Competitive universities

Universities in the UK use A-Level results to offer places. Some universities require specific grades [ABB for example]; some require 'UCAS Tariff' points [an A grade at A-Level counts for 48 points, B for 40, C for 32 and so on].

Highly selective universities including Cambridge, Oxford, some London colleges and Russell Group universities may use the A* grade in their offers. The offer will also vary depending on the subject the student wishes to read. Importantly, without at least grades that match a likely offer for a university course, any student will find it hard to convince universities that they are worthy of an offer.

For many courses, such universities will also expect a very strong performance in the Year 12 mock examination. Given the recent change in university admissions policies over the new reformed A-Level, it is clear that a student who achieves as highly as they can in the Year 12 mock examinations puts themselves in the best possible position for universities to make offers.

Please note that some university courses require good GCSE scores for entry as well – for example, Medicine at Edinburgh requires an applicant to have achieved GCSE level 6 grades in Sciences, Mathematics and English. Other universities create a points or aggregate system around a student's number/quality of GCSE levels.

From experience, we see that most students who are subsequently offered a place on a competitive course are those who have achieved six or more level 8 or 9 grades at GCSE. In a few cases a minimum number of level 8 or 9 grades at GCSE is a stated requirement for selection and the university publishes this information on its website. Most universities, however, do not publish such information and look at the whole application including predicted A-Level grades, personal statement, the school's reference, interviews and admissions tests, if sat.

Nonetheless, when faced with a large number of very strong applicants for just a few places, strong level 8 and 9 performance at GCSE inevitably becomes compelling evidence of all-round sustained ability.

Making a competitive application

Most students at St Margaret's choose to make competitive applications to university. A competitive application is one made to a popular course where there is exceptionally high demand.

Making a competitive application

These courses include but are not exclusive to:

- Medicine
- Engineering
- Dentistry & Veterinary Sciences
- Law
- Economics
- Psychology
- PPE
- Finance, Business & Management

Many students also choose to apply to competitive courses at competitive universities such as:

- Cambridge
- Durham
- Edinburgh
- Imperial
- LSE
- Oxford
- UCL
- Warwick
- Edinburgh





Oxbridge: Additional Considerations

In addition to the extra Oxbridge programme of support students will receive in the Sixth Form, it is essential to select the right A-Levels that will feed into the course of their choice. Generally, students who are applying to Oxbridge will have a good idea of the course to which they wish to apply well in advance so that they might have a chance of adding depth to this subject area during Sixth Form study.

Some Oxbridge colleges e.g. Trinity Cambridge publish lists of 'preferred' A-Levels and combinations of 'acceptability'. Students will find further information on individual course and college websites and in the prospectuses which list certain subjects that if taken in combination, and without a facilitating subject, may mean that you are not qualified for certain courses. The list includes the following subjects, which we offer at St Margaret's:

- Photography
- Economics
- Theatre Studies
- Psychology
- Politics
- Physical Education

Some colleges offer very specific or unique courses, which may also require an additional A-Level, or an extra year of study while on the undergraduate course e.g. the Classics course at Oxford or Cambridge requires Latin or Greek A-Level to be considered for the 3 year course, but students can apply for the 4 year course if they do not have this.

Although every subject offered at St Margaret's is well-respected and for some admissions the diversity of these subjects will look favourable, it is of course in the university's best interests to encourage applications from students who are working at the highest level with a complementary range of subjects.

If students are planning an application to a competitive university including Oxbridge, they should speak with the Director of Sixth Form or the Oxbridge Coordinator before making A-Level selections.



University A-Level Entry Requirements

A-Level Subjects Required for University Courses

Subject requirements differ depending on the university and the course. Where an A-Level subject is stated to be 'required' it means that over 75% of university courses currently list this subject as a requirement for entry.

It is important to realise that if a university says "Subject X is recommended/preferable" it really means, "if your school offers Subject X, you must study it and offer it at application". If students do not have the correct subjects/qualifications, they are making a weaker application.

The Sixth Form Team has made every effort to ensure that the information given in this table is correct at the time of printing. However, universities often change or make additions to entry requirements. It is advised that students check on university websites and carry out their own research regarding entry requirements for the course(s) they are interested in studying post A-Level.

A-Level subjects required for university courses

University course	A-Level subjects required	Notes
Accountancy, Finance, Business and Management	Mathematics and Economics are certainly advantageous, Mathematics required for top universities.	Interested candidates should refer to www.ucas.com/courses , since requirements vary considerably.
Acting	Drama & Theatre. Music may also be valued, especially for courses with a Musical Theatre pathway.	Interested candidates should consult lists of accredited drama schools, such as the Federation of Drama Schools (https://www.federationofdramaschools.co.uk/) or CDMT (https://cdmt.org.uk/accredited-schools-and-colleges/drama-and-acting). Applications will usually include a form of audition.
Agriculture	Two of Chemistry, Physics or Biology.	Biology preferred.
Ancient History	Classical Civilisation, History or Latin recommended.	
Archaeology	Classical Civilisation or Latin recommended.	An MFL qualification is also an advantage.
Architecture	Mathematics usually specified, plus one additional Science (Physics usually preferred). A-Level Art an advantage.	A portfolio of drawings and sketches must be developed, and is required for interview.
Art (Fine Art) and other Art-related Degrees	Art.	A portfolio of artwork and sketch book is required for interview as well as spoken knowledge.
Biochemistry	Chemistry and two subjects from Biology, Physics or Mathematics.	
Biological Sciences (Anatomy, Bacteriology, Botany, Physiology, Zoology)	Biology and Chemistry.	

A-Level subjects required for university courses

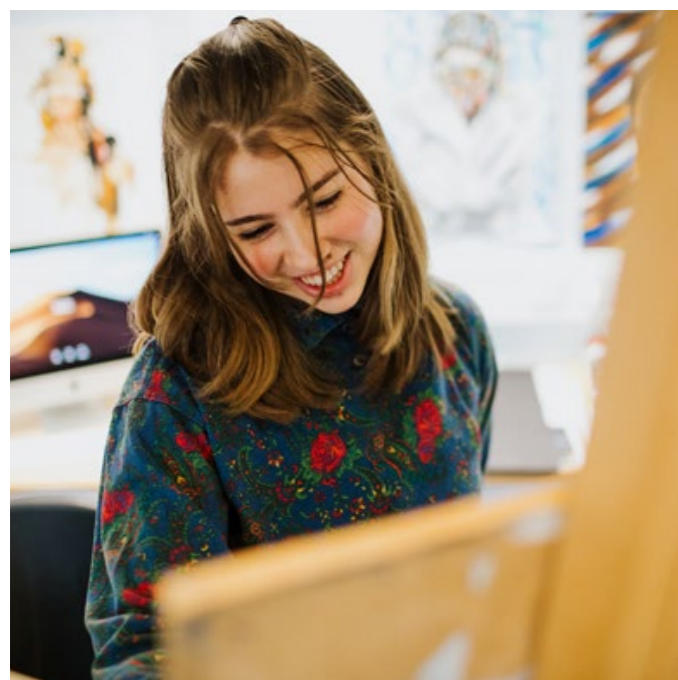
University course	A-Level subjects required	Notes
Chemistry	Chemistry- and Mathematics to at least Year 12 Level; A-Level for Oxbridge and top universities.	
Classics	Latin is preferred for top universities and Classical Civilisation is also valued.	No prior knowledge of Greek is expected but it may be recommended that a summer school is attended.
Classical Civilisation/ Classical Studies	Classical Civilisation or Latin preferred.	
Computer Science	Mathematics required by all but a few universities and Physics is sometimes advantageous.	Further Mathematics is preferred by top universities.
Dentistry	Chemistry and Biology A-Level are both required.	
Drama/ Theatre Studies	Drama & Theatre. English may be required for top universities. Music may also be valued, especially for courses with a Musical Theatre pathway.	English requested for combined courses with English.
Economics	Mathematics and Economics are certainly advantageous; Mathematics essential for the top universities.	Further Mathematics required for certain top universities and Oxbridge colleges.
Engineering: Aero, Mechanical	Physics, Mathematics.	Many Engineering courses are now open to those without Science/Mathematics qualifications, but such courses are longer and may require an additional foundation year. Further Mathematics recommended for top universities.
Engineering: Chemical	Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics.	Further Mathematics strongly advised for Oxbridge and other top universities.
Engineering: Civil	Physics, Mathematics.	Further Mathematics strongly advised for Oxbridge and other top universities.
Engineering: Electrical	Physics, Mathematics.	Candidates must check course requirements of individual institutions on www.ucas.com . Further Mathematics recommended for top universities.
Engineering: Electronic	Physics, Mathematics.	Further Mathematics strongly recommended for top universities.
English Literature	English Literature required.	
English Language	Check university websites. Some want to see A-Level English Language.	
Geography (BA)	Geography required.	
Geography (BSc)	Geography and one Science; or Geography and two Sciences, or Geography, Mathematics and one Science.	Some universities increasingly prefer a Science background for their BSc Geography course.
Geology	Two Sciences and/or Mathematics.	Chemistry and Mathematics recommended for top universities.
History	History required.	

A-Level subjects required for university courses

University course	A-Level subjects required	Notes
HSPS	Different colleges have different selection preferences, therefore you should check the individual college websites .	
Land Economy	N/A.	Economics, Geography and Mathematics are useful subjects.
Law	None specified though essay based subjects, which develop a careful, analytical approach to reading and which require students to present information in a well-structured and thoughtfully argued way are advantageous for any Russell Group university and Oxbridge.	Degree courses in Law with a language, European Law, or English Law with French/German/Spanish Law, require the language at A-Level.
Mathematics	Mathematics required. Further Mathematics required for Oxbridge, and frequently preferred for other top universities.	Mathematics and Physics often acceptable.
Medicine, Dentistry	Chemistry required to A-Level. Biology usually required (some medical and dental schools actively seek a broader academic base with one non Science subject to at least Y12).	Consult the Biomedical Coordinator and Oxbridge Coordinator , who can give more information regarding Oxford and Cambridge, and the possible requirement for GCSE Physics. Experience of both the profession and working with people is essential.
Metallurgy; Materials Sciences	Mathematics and at least one of Chemistry or Physics for top universities.	
Modern Languages: French Spanish	French. Spanish.	Degree courses are available in single languages, but more often as joint honours or in combination with other disciplines. Less common languages may be started ab initio (from scratch).
Music	Music.	Proficiency in instruments/ voice required. Candidates must check the requirements of individual institutions.
Natural Sciences	Any two Sciences, plus Mathematics.	Oxbridge prefer Further Mathematics. Candidates should consult university websites to confirm.
Optometry	Two from: Chemistry, Biology, Physics or Mathematics.	
Pharmacology	Chemistry and two from: Physics, Mathematics or Biology.	
Philosophy		You may apply for Philosophy having done any combination of subjects but in order to demonstrate that you have the required skills of writing analytically and abstract reasoning a humanities subject such as English Literature, History, Classical Civilisation, Theology or a MFL along with Mathematics or Physics may be advantageous. It is not necessary to have studied Philosophy but it would help you to demonstrate an interest and develop the tools needed for the required independent reading.

A-Level subjects required for university courses

University course	A-Level subjects required	Notes
Physics	Physics and Mathematics.	Further Mathematics at AS Level or A-Level is an advantage.
Physiotherapy	One Science (Biology preferred).	One further Science is often preferred.
Politics/Social Studies/Sociology	None specified.	Politics, History, Philosophy, Economics, English Literature or Theology may be useful.
Politics, Philosophy and Economics	None specified.	You may apply for PPE with any combination of A-Level subjects, but competitive applicants should be strong at Mathematics. It is not necessary to have studied Politics, Philosophy or Economics at School; but taking at least one of these subjects with English Literature, Geography, History Theology or any ancient or modern language, would help you to develop and demonstrate relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. You are strongly advised to access the university website course requirements. Oxford requires that applicants sit the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA).
Psychology	Mathematics and one Science an advantage or a requirement at a top university.	Available as BA or BSc. Many universities prefer one Science (Biology or Chemistry) and/or Mathematics to at least AS Level. Candidates must check requirements of individual institutions at www.ucas.com/courses .
Religious Studies/Theology	Although Theology may not be a requirement, it is in a student's interest to be able to demonstrate an enjoyment of the subject to A-Level standard.	If students decide to study Theology without having studied the subject to A-Level, this should not be detrimental to a successful application. For Oxbridge and applications to other top universities, evidence of an interest in language study is important.
Sports Science	None specified.	One Science is often preferred (usually Biology).
Veterinary Science	Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics/Physics.	Experience of working with animals is essential.



Strengthening A-Level Studies

At St Margaret's we promote the enjoyment of a broad education. Along with A-Levels, students will be expected to undertake a wide range of co-curricular activities that will strengthen students' university applications by developing skills such as independence, leadership and confidence. St Margaret's Sixth Form offers a wealth of opportunities in order for students to begin this journey.

In addition to A-Level courses, students will also receive:

Dedicated UCAS provision and support

Timetabled University support sessions [UPL] are in place from the beginning of Year 12 and focuses students' minds on course choice, adding academic depth to the university application and support with interview preparation and supplementary pieces of work required for application. Personal statement writing sessions and support will begin during 'enrichment week' after end of year examinations in June of Year 12. Additional opportunities for evening taster courses, conferences and experience courses will be available, sometimes in conjunction with the Careers Department. Students also have the opportunity to visit higher education conventions.

Extended project qualification

Highly regarded by UK universities, this timetabled qualification is offered to all Sixth Form students and is roughly equivalent to half an A-Level. Extended Projects support students with the transition to higher education or into the world of work. They provide opportunities for the development of critical, reflective, problem-solving and independent learning skills through the planning, research and evaluation of a self-selected project – all invaluable preparation for university. Individual project work begins in Year 12 under the guidance of a dedicated mentor. Students have the opportunity to explore a topic or a question that is of particular interest to them. Under the guidance of their mentor they will write a dissertation, make an artefact, put on a performance or undertake a fieldwork investigation. Those who achieve an A/A* may be eligible for reduced offers when making UCAS applications; some universities also like the EPQ to be course related e.g. Warwick and Oxbridge, so it is important that students spend some time strategically planning what it is they wish to research.

If students elect not to study the EPQ, then they will study for a short in-house St Margaret's Independent Research Project or will submit an entry for a national essay prize led by individual subject departments.

General studies

All Sixth Form students attend a structured programme of academic, social, citizenship, welfare and careers-motivated talks as part of the General Studies lecture series.

Careers provision

All students have the opportunity to discuss career options with a member of staff. There is also a careers intranet page which provides links to reliable and current information, advice and guidance resources. In order to gain direct experience from the world of work and apply knowledge learned within Careers sessions, Year 12 are advised to organise at least one work experience placement after their GCSE examinations and again in the summer of Year 12; for more vocational courses like Medicine and Dentistry, regular and longer placements will need to be arranged as a matter of course. They are welcome to use the large employer's database by arranging an appointment with the Head of Careers or organise a placement through their own contacts, as well as reach out to our alumnae network.

A-Level heritage languages

There may also be opportunities for speakers of other native languages to take an exam in a native language qualification and students should make themselves known to the Sixth Form Team as soon as possible.

Community service

There are a limited number of placements which are arranged by the School with a local care home, school, library or museum which students visit every Wednesday afternoon.

Critical thinking

A timetabled slot for Year 12 where students are encouraged to develop their critical thinking abilities, a skill which develops their ability to dissect and make arguments and they can then apply this to their A-Level subjects.

Duke of Edinburgh award scheme

This is a real adventure from beginning to end. Pupils achieve an award by completing a personal programme of activities. Students find themselves helping people, getting fitter, developing leadership skills and going on expeditions. The programme is full of activities and projects that get pupils buzzing. Along the way students pick up experiences, friends and talents that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

English as a second language

If English is not a student's first language, lessons are included in the curriculum in order to prepare them for the IELTS examination. Up to 2 hours a week of after-school EAL provision is provided to both Year 12 & 13 students respectively. These sessions provide a variety of interactive exercises to improve the students' reading, writing and speaking skills; interview practice is also included in this provision, as is guidance with intonation and basic etiquettes. Please note that it is compulsory for students to continue attending even after they have taken their IELTS to further improve their academic English skills.

Music

There are many opportunities for students to involve themselves in co-curricular music. As well as the full range of instrumental and singing lessons, there are various choirs. There is also a school orchestra and many Sixth Form students take up the opportunity to play chamber music.



Online learning

Online learning courses may also be available from time to time during Wednesday afternoon enrichment slots, for example teaching English as a foreign language, learning British Sign Language and MOOCs [massive, open online courses].

Games

Students have the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of sporting activities. During a double lesson each week, pupils can choose from a wide range of activities including swimming, dance, yoga, athletic development, team and individual sports. In addition, we encourage our students to commit to play in one of our school teams who take part regularly in fixtures against other schools. A wide range of co-curricular clubs and team practices are also available and all students are encouraged to take part in these, or set up their own if there is sufficient demand. Sixth Form students also have the opportunity, where appropriate, to assist in lessons and team practices for younger students, from which they gain valuable experience.

Peer mentoring scheme

Following a process of successful application, interview and training, Year 12 and Year 13 students play a significant mentoring role in the lives of students lower down the School. This could involve general discussion with a younger student, offering help with study skills or something more academically focused.

Societies

These will be academic and non-academic clubs designed to enrich and challenge students during a number of designated slots during the week.

Speech and drama

These extra lessons continue to be very valuable in the Sixth Form as a means of developing communication skills, building confidence for an interview or when addressing an audience. They are an excellent means of supporting IELTS speaking and listening examinations.

Volunteering in The Junior School

Following a process of successful application, interview and training, students may either volunteer to work as a classroom assistant in The Junior School and with this experience, apply for a formal paid role as an After School Club Assistant at the end of Year 12.



A-Level Scholarships and Study Requirements

Scholarships

Being a Sixth Form scholar is a position of academic prestige in the School, and we are committed to rewarding and celebrating excellence both inside and outside of the classroom. All students rewarded with a scholarship are expected to play a full and impactful role in their respective area of the School.

In return, it is expected that they will grow and develop in their chosen areas of expertise well beyond the A-Level curriculum.

Details

Scholarship applications are open to both internal and external Year 11 students.

Scholarships are awarded at the Head's discretion and are available for:

- Academic achievement
- Commitment & loyalty to the School and the local community
- Co-curricular excellence in Sports, Music, Art and Drama

Additional Honorary scholarship titles will be awarded to those students who achieve six level 8/9 grades at GCSE or more and it is anticipated that these students will contribute towards the life of the Oxbridge and Biomedical Society programmes.

The number of scholarships awarded each year will be dependent on the pool of applications and, although there is a selection process attached to each scholarship, these are awarded at the Head's discretion.

Students are eligible to apply for up to two scholarships.

Students applying for St Margaret's Sixth Form Scholarships must already have formally notified the School of their firm intention to stay on at the Sixth Form.

Details of the scholarships available and their respective selection processes are listed below:

Academic

Students will sit a 90 minute paper in the A-Level subject for which they are applying to be a scholar.

Students will have an additional formal interview with a member of the Senior Management Team, which will involve students preparing a 5 minute piece on how they will contribute to the academic life of the School.

Commitment and loyalty to the School and the local community

Students will deliver for example a 10 minute presentation to a panel of staff which evidences their consistent commitment to the School and/or the local community; this will be followed by a formal Q+A session from the panel.

Co-curricular excellence in sports, music, art and drama

All co-curricular scholars will be expected to play a full part in the life of the School to which they are attached.

The following individual scholarship application procedures are listed below:

Sports

To be eligible for an invitation to the High Performance Programme, students must perform at a county, regional or national level for a team or in an individual sport. Students demonstrating the raw potential to reach county level may also be invited to participate.

Candidates must undergo a practical assessment of skills in isolation and a competitive situation / performance where appropriate and an additional panel interview which may cover leadership, ambition and teamwork abilities as well as fitness, nutrition and their plans to contribute towards the sporting life of the School.

Art

Candidates must sit an hour set-piece drawing on a given theme, followed by a formal interview and discussion of an art portfolio that was not created as part of any GCSE class or coursework.

Music

To be eligible, candidates should normally have reached the standard of Grade 8 (or equivalent) in their first instrument/ voice or show great potential; a second instrument or voice may be an advantage.

They will be expected to perform two contrasting pieces on their main instrument/voice, and one on their second instrument, though there may be some flexibility according to a candidate's specialisms.

Each candidate will also have practice time on their own and with our accompanist (if necessary). Candidates will be required to sight-read a piece, undertake aural tests, be asked questions on their pieces and be interviewed more generally on music awareness and history.

Drama

Drama is a vibrant and important part of life at St Margaret's and makes up a large portion of the co-curricular offering at the School. Throughout the year this includes drama clubs, theatrical productions, theatre trips, LAMDA lessons and examinations, and workshops by visiting professionals from the performing arts.

When selecting scholars for drama we look in particular for a strong knowledge of the subject, including historical and contemporary performance practices, as well as excellent practical performance skills and abilities. Candidates with initial successful applications for a Sixth Form Drama Scholarship will proceed to a second stage which consists of the following two elements:

1. Written paper reviewing a piece of live theatre that the candidate has recently seen. The written response will be in relation to a specific aspect of drama and theatre such as staging, acting, design, directing, or something similar. **A demonstration of a strong understanding of a range of subject-specific terminology will be required.**
2. Audition to the Head of Drama; drama scholarship auditions include the following:
 - Performance of a classical monologue (maximum 2 minutes)
 - Performance of a contemporary monologue (maximum 2 minutes)
 - Interview

Candidates should memorise both monologues and be prepared to answer questions about the context of these monologues in the plays they are selected from. They should also be prepared to answer questions about their experience and passion for drama and theatre, and to discuss various talking points about both contemporary and classical performance practices with the Head of Drama.

Monologues can be chosen by the candidate, although they must be selected from a published play, i.e. they must not be a piece of new writing or from a film or television show. Candidates should know the name of the play their monologues are selected from and should have read or heard the play at least up to that point. It is advised that candidates choose two contrasting monologues to demonstrate the full range of their acting skill. Suggested monologues can be found here:

<https://www.lamda.ac.uk/all-courses/how-to-apply/choosing-your-audition-piece>

<https://www.cssd.ac.uk/audition-speeches-ba-acting-courses>

<https://theloviediaries.co.uk/blogs/blog/our-top-picks-for-classical-speeches>

<https://theloviediaries.co.uk/blogs/blog/our-top-picks-for-modern-speeches>

Drama scholars at St Margaret's are expected to fully engage with the drama department both in terms of curriculum and co-curricular activities. Scholars are expected to audition for the annual school play or be a leading member of the backstage crew. Scholars will be afforded several opportunities throughout the year, such as theatre trips and masterclasses from visiting professional practitioners, that they will either be expected to take part in or will be given first pick for a space. For trips and events that usually incur a charge, scholars will either receive a discount or (in exceptional circumstances) have the charge waived completely.

Scholarship applicants' contributions to the life of the School will be reviewed regularly.



Fine Art

This course will give students a broad approach to the subject allowing students to develop a sound grounding in a number of areas including portraiture, landscape, still life, human form, abstraction, experimental imagery, narrative and installation. It builds on the skills, knowledge and understanding which students have acquired in Art and Design at GCSE level.

Entry requirements: Level 6 or above at Art GCSE is preferable.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: Foundation skills building	Internally assessed	In the autumn term Year 12 students follow a foundation course in order to develop their skills using a wide range of media, techniques and processes. Some examples of these are: painting (oil, watercolour, acrylics), drawing, printmaking (mono, etching, lino and screen printing), lens based media (Digital and/or analogue), digital manipulation and drawing, sculpture (ceramics, mixed media). Students will work from direct observation, analyse, record and learn how to develop and apply relevant processes.
Unit 2: Personal investigation	NEA Externally moderated 60%	The A-Level gives students the opportunity for more focused, in depth work around a particular topic and to develop their favoured area of study from the Foundation Unit 1. Students will build on their skills and knowledge to produce a Personal Investigation of their own chosen theme. They will evaluate and develop their ideas to show evidence of a personal and creative response with maturity and independent thought. As part of the investigation they will complete a related written study of a minimum of 1000 words.
Unit 3: Externally set task	NEA Externally moderated 40%	Students produce a second project chosen from an OCR set choice of themes, producing the final outcome in a 15 hour examination.

Related university courses that students could go on to study include: Art Foundation, Fine Art, Architecture, History of Art, Fashion Design, Theatre Design, Graphic Design, Digital Media, Illustration, Product Design, Interior Design, Advertising, and Computer Games/Visual Effects. This list is not exhaustive as there are a huge range of art related degrees out there.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓		✓

Art & Design: Textiles

The textiles course runs alongside the fine art course so students choose to study either Fine Art or Textiles. This subject focuses on developing skills such as: printmaking, machine and hand stitching, textiles illustration, and materials sampling.

Entry requirements: Level 6 or above at GCSE Art is preferable.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: Foundation skills building	Internally assessed	Students are given opportunities to explore, research and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of textile media. They explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to textile design. Students may work in areas such as garments and fashion, accessories, soft furnishings, printed and/or dyed textiles, constructed textiles, textile installation or expressive textiles. Specific techniques include: fabric printing, mono-printing, relief printing, screen printing, tie-dye, batik, spraying, transfer, fabric construction, stitching, appliqué, patchwork, padding, quilting, embroidery, weaving, knitting, felting and mixed-media applications.
Unit 2: Personal investigation	NEA Externally moderated 60%	The A-Level gives students the opportunity for more in depth study. Students will build on their individual skills and knowledge to produce a Personal Investigation of their own chosen theme. They will evaluate and develop their ideas to show evidence of a personal and creative response with maturity and independent thought. As part of the investigation, they will complete a related written study of a minimum of 1000 words.
Unit 3: Externally set task	NEA Externally moderated 40%	Students produce a second project chosen from an OCR set choice of themes, producing the outcome in a 15 hour examination.

Related university courses that students could go on to study include: Art Foundation, Fine Art, Fashion Design, Textiles and Interior Design. This list is not exhaustive as there are a huge range of art related degrees out there.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓		✓

Chinese

A course for those already fluent in Chinese, this is a motivating course of study that will enable students to develop an advanced level knowledge and understanding of the Chinese language, the culture of China and other Chinese-speaking countries, as well as practical and valuable language and transferable study skills.

Entry requirements: A formal qualification in Chinese e.g. GCSE or a qualification from the student's native country. As a matter of course, we recommend that all students whose native language is Mandarin Chinese take this as a 4th or even 5th A-Level.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Listening, reading, writing and translation	Externally assessed written paper 40% 2 hours	The focus of this paper is on four themes which are based on the society and culture of Chinese-speaking countries.
Paper 2: Written response to works in translation	Externally assessed 30% 2 hours 40 mins	This paper requires students to translate a previously unseen passage from English into Chinese. This paper also draws on the study of two discrete Chinese works: either two literary texts, or one literary text and one film. The works must be taken from a list of prescribed literary texts and films. The literary texts listed include novels and short stories. All of the films are feature length.
Paper 3: Speaking	Internally conducted and externally assessed 30% 30 mins	Task 1 draws on vocabulary and structures across all four themes. Task 2 is based on independent research selected and carried out by the student. The research may be based on one of the themes or on the student's own subject of interest related to the society and culture of the Chinese-speaking world. Students will be assessed on their ability to use a range of language accurately, communicate and interact effectively, summarise and analyse findings from written sources relating to their research subject, and show knowledge and understanding about the society and culture of the Chinese-speaking world.

This A-Level will lead to a variety of degree courses in languages, Cultural Studies, Business, Mandarin Studies, Education and much more. Our experience is that students who are native speakers with this A-Level are at an advantage when it comes to making UK university applications in a variety of courses too.

Students should expect to take part in the Global Day of Languages as celebrated by the MFL Department, assist the Boarding House running a variety of cultural enrichment events, offer support with younger students and perhaps even run a Chinese club for non-native speakers.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Classical Civilisation

In A-Level Classical Civilisation you will study the literature, society, culture and history of the Classical world, which shaped modern Europe. This qualification combines well with other Humanities subjects and can also complement non-arts subjects. You will study the literary and artistic legacy of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, and read in translation a range of the great works of literature and thought which helped to shape the ideas and values of modern European society - such as the *Odyssey*, *Aeneid* and the works of Plato.

Entry requirements: A GCSE in this subject is not required, but a Level 5 in both English and English Literature is advisable.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
World of the hero	Externally assessed 40%	Students read two great epics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> or <i>Iliad</i>, stories from the time of the Trojan War. You will also learn about the ancient society in which the poem is set. Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i>, a story of romance and the foundation of cities, a key influence on modern European literature. The historical background to the story, in particular the reign of the first Roman emperor Augustus, and his influence on one of the most celebrated epics of all time.
Culture and the arts	Externally assessed 30%	Greek Theatre: the invention of drama by the Ancient Greeks. Students read comedy (<i>Frogs</i> by Aristophanes) and tragedy (<i>Oedipus the King</i> by Sophocles and <i>Bacchae</i> by Euripides) in English translation. The plays focus on themes such as family relations, gender fluidity, politics, democracy, fate and free will which remain relevant today.
Beliefs and ideas	Externally assessed 30%	Love and Relationships: Greek and Roman ideas about love, desire, sex and relationships, including the writings of Plato, Ovid and the poet Sappho, one of the few female voices to survive from the ancient world. Or: Politics of the Late Republic: the Roman civil wars, the downfall of the republic and the characters, ideas and literature of the time.

The A-Level can lead to honours degrees in Humanities courses, such as Classics, Classical Civilisation, Ancient History, Archaeology, or Ancient and Modern History. The skills acquired prepare students for careers in education, business, management, museum work, publishing, accountancy, Civil Service and law among many others.

Co-curricular: trips to museums and study days, opportunities to help run Classics clubs for younger students and to learn the rudiments of Classical Greek in Greek Club. For those interested in applying for Classical Studies or Classical Civilisation courses at university, Senior Classics Society will broaden their experience of the subject beyond the A-Level syllabus.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Business Studies

Business Studies enables students to develop an insight into business organisations and their ability to meet society's needs, business behaviours in a range of contexts, business enterprise, problems, solutions and ethical dilemmas facing business in the modern world.

Entry requirements: GCSE English Language at level 5 and above is an ideal requirement to study this subject as AS and A-Level. If you select Business Studies, in the interest of breadth you will not be able to select Economics at A-Level.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: UK Marketing and people	Written examination 2 hours 35% of the overall qualification covering units 1 & 4	Meeting customer needs; the market; marketing mix & strategy; managing people; entrepreneurs and leaders.
Unit 2: Managing business activities	Written examination 2 hours 35% of overall qualification merging units 2 & 3	Raising finance; financial planning; managing finance; resource management; external influences.
Unit 3: Business decisions and strategy		Business objectives and strategy; business growth; decision-making techniques; influences on business decisions; assessing competitiveness; managing change.
Unit 4: Global businesses	Written examination as per unit 1	Globalisation; global markets and business expansion; global marketing; global industries & companies (multinational corporations).
Unit 1-4	Written examination, synoptic pre-release skills based paper 2 hours 30% of the overall qualification covering all four units	

Students should expect trips to revision lectures and to engage in enterprising co-curricular activities for example Young Enterprise or national competition. Business Studies can lead to university degrees in Business, Management, International Relations, IT, Hospitality, Accountancy and more. Business Studies graduates are typically employed by: accountancy and banking organisations, charities, councils, law firms, local and national government, retail, IT and media companies.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Computer Science

Understanding different dimensions of computing is part of the necessary skill set for an educated person in the 21st century. Students may want to model the next vaccine using software engineering, create and design the latest killer application, or develop and adapt new technology to our changing environmental conditions. Problem solving is an essential skill in this subject. Students study the design, development and analysis of software and hardware to solve problems in a variety of business, scientific and social contexts. Computers solve problems to serve people, therefore there is a significant human side to computer science and how we consider a user's wants and needs.

Entry requirements: It is not necessary to have completed this subject at GCSE level but a minimum level 7 grade in English and Maths is required.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Component 1	Externally assessed 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices Software and software development Exchanging data Data types, data structures and algorithms Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues
Component 2	Externally assessed 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of computational thinking Problem solving and programming Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms
Component 3: NEA project	Internally assessed 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the problem Design of the solution Developing the solution Evaluation

A Computer Science A-Level would be an excellent foundation for a degree in many subjects, including Physics, Mathematics, Engineering, Biology and Economics. Many universities (including the Russell Group) offer an increasing range of Computer Science Degrees.

Many universities are now having a strong push to recruiting more students on Computer Science courses because of the burgeoning skills requirements in careers such as IT, technical support, software development, games design, hardware engineering, systems analysis, web design and many more.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Drama and Theatre

Drama and Theatre is an exciting and challenging course which develops a vast array of cross-transferable and employability skills.

Entry requirements: Students will have completed Drama at GCSE to a minimum level 6 standard; a minimum level 6 grade in English Language and Literature is also preferred. A keen interest in Classics, English Literature, History, Music, Politics and/or Psychology would also be advantageous. Students taking this course should be creative, enjoy practical work and performing to a live audience. It is expected that A-Level students take part in the school play each year and attend theatre trips organised by the department.

N.B. Exceptional candidates without a GCSE in Drama will also be considered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Head of Drama.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Component 1: Devising	Creation of and participation in a group devised performance as a performer or designer Individual written portfolio 40%	Students use an extract from a text and the work of a practitioner as a stimulus to create a devised performance, rehearsing and refining their performance/design realisations for an assessed performance. Students record and evaluate the exploration and rehearsal process of creating their devised performance, as well as the final performance.
Component 2: Text in performance	Participation in a monologue or a duologue, and a group performance as a performer or designer 20%	Students create a group performance from a text, rehearsing and refining their performance/design realisations for an assessed performance. They also create a monologue or duologue from another text, rehearsing and refining their performance/design realisations for an assessed performance.
Component 3: Theatre makers in practice	Written examination Section A Live theatre evaluation Section B Page to Stage - Realising a Performance Text Section C Interpreting a Performance Text 40%	Students are audience members for a live performance. They make and refine notes on the performance. Students practically explore a chosen set text from a prescribed list, focusing on performance and design aspects. Students practically explore a second set text, from a second list, in the light of a practitioner. Students create a director's concept for a re-imagined production of the play.

Potential careers in the arts, media, teaching, theatres, production and acting. The A-Level can lead to honours degrees in related courses such as Acting, Drama, Musical Theatre, Film and Media to name a few. Past students have gone on to a broad range of courses including English, History, Journalism and Law. Past students have pursued careers in the Arts, Business Management, Education, Law, and Media among many others.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓

* If design options are followed in A-Level Components 1 and 2.

Economics

Economics will help students to develop a critical understanding of the economic problems society faces and will allow students to consider policies to alleviate these problems. Analytical and evaluative skills are practised by applying them to case studies and current economic events.

Entry requirements: GCSE Mathematics and English Language at level 6 and above.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure	Externally assessed examination covering Themes 1 and 3 2 hours 35%	Considers the role and operation of the market.
Theme 2: The UK economy - performance and policies	Externally assessed examination covering Themes 2 and 4 2 hours 35%	Considers the economy as a whole and problems such as inflation, unemployment, and economic growth are discussed and government policies for meeting objectives are evaluated.
Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market	As per Theme 1	This Theme develops the microeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 1 above and focuses on business economics. Topics covered include, business growth, business objectives, market structures, costs revenue and profits, labour market and government intervention.
Theme 4: A global perspective	As per Theme 2	This Theme develops the macroeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 2 above and focuses on global economics. Topics covered international economics, poverty and inequality, emerging and developing economies, financial sector, role of the state in macroeconomy.
	Externally assessed examination covering Themes 1, 2, 3 and 4 2 hours 30%	

Economics is a well-respected discipline and will provide students with essential knowledge if students hope to pursue a career in business management, financial services or accountancy. It also provides students with useful background knowledge for careers in Law, Finance, Medicine or Engineering.

Students can participate in the Royal Economic Society Essay competition, Churchill College Cambridge's Winston Churchill Sixth Form Economics Prize, attend economic workshops in central London and have an opportunity to attend the Women in Economics Day at Gonville & Caius College Cambridge in September.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

English Literature

This course will develop students' interest and enjoyment of literature through reading widely and independently. They will engage critically and creatively with a wide range of literature and learn to develop and apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation. They will explore the context of the texts they are reading and others' interpretation of them. It is expected that they will undertake independent and sustained studies to deepen their appreciation and understanding of English Literature and its changing traditions.

Entry requirements: A minimum of level 6 in both English Language and English Literature.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Component 1: Drama	Externally assessed 30%	Students will study aspects of the form of drama via two plays. The central focus of the drama study is the literary text. Students will study one tragedy or comedy drama by Shakespeare and one other tragedy or comedy drama by another writer. The study of Shakespeare will be enhanced by engagement with critical writing.
Component 2: Prose	Externally assessed 20%	Students will study aspects of prose via two thematically linked texts, at least one of which must be pre-1900. Literary study of both texts selected for this component will incorporate the links and connections between them, and the contexts in which they were written and received.
Component 3: Poetry	Externally assessed 30%	Students will study a selection of poems from two published poetry texts. They will consider the concerns and choices of modern-day poets in a selection of contemporary poems. Students will also develop depth of knowledge about poetic style by studying a selection from the work of a single named poet, or a selection from within a literary period or movement.
NEA [coursework]	Internally assessed, externally moderated 20%	Coursework will be assessed via two texts which may be drawn from poetry, drama, prose or literary non-fiction. The selected texts may be linked by theme, movement, author or period. Literary study of both texts will be enhanced by study of the links and connections between them, different interpretations and the contexts in which they were written and received.

English is a well-respected discipline, which combines naturally with Law, Journalism, or other arts based courses. It is also of benefit for those pursuing a scientific route since it will sharpen critical thinking and communication skills.

Students studying English are encouraged to get involved with 'The Crown' or the Sixth Form Magazine, 1749, in an editorial role. They can attend various lectures at a number of different universities. Literature students in the Sixth Form are encouraged to hone their writing skills on the Peterhouse, Cambridge and Corpus Christi, Cambridge essay competitions as well as the Connell Essay Guides Competition.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Geography

Geography A-Level is a challenging and interesting course which builds on the skills and topics covered at GCSE. A combination of physical and human geography topics are studied which enable students to develop a comprehensive understanding of the world around them and the interactions that humans have with the natural environment.

Entry requirements: A minimum level 6 in GCSE Geography is required. It is also useful, although not essential, to have achieved level 5 in GCSE Mathematics and level 6 in GCSE English Language. Students will undertake a minimum of four days of fieldwork during the course.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Dynamic landscapes and physical systems and sustainability	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 15 mins 30%	Topic 1 Tectonic Processes and Hazards Topic 2 Landscape Systems, Processes Topic 5 The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity Topic 6 The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security
Dynamic places and human systems and geopolitics	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 15 mins 30%	Topic 3 Globalisation Topic 4 Shaping Places option - Regenerating Places Topic 7 Superpowers Topic 8 Global Development: Health, Human Rights & Intervention
Synoptic investigation of a contemporary geographical issue	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 15 mins 20%	The synoptic investigation will be based on a geographical issue within a place-based context that links to the three synoptic themes and is rooted in two or more of the compulsory content areas: Players; Attitudes and actions; Futures & uncertainties.
Independent investigation (NEA)	Written report, 3000-4000 words Internally assessed 20%	The student defines a question or issue for investigation, relating to any aspect of geography contained within the specification. The student's investigation will incorporate fieldwork data.

Students visit museums, RGS (Royal Geographical Society) lectures, study days and overseas visits. They take on additional responsibilities to promote geography and help run the geography club for younger students. Geography A-Level links to various degrees in similar subjects at university. It leads to a wide range of careers such as environmental planning, education and urban planning to name a few.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Politics

Politics enables students to develop an insight into the structures of government, and political beliefs central to an understanding of the modern world.

Entry requirements: GCSE English Language at level 5 and above is an ideal requirement to study this subject at A-Level.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: UK politics	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 33.33%	Students will study: democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media, as well as core political ideologies like conservatism, liberalism, socialism.
Unit 2: UK government	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 33.33%	Students will study: the UK constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and executive, the UK Supreme Court and relationships between the branches of government. In addition to the ideological concepts introduced in Unit 1, students will also explore one non-core political ideology from a range of five. This includes nationalism, feminism, multiculturalism, ecologicalism, and anarchism.
Unit 3: Comparative politics	Written examination Externally assessed 2 hours 33.33%	Students will study US Politics. Core topics are: the US Constitution, democracy and participation, Congress and Presidency, The US Supreme Court and the separation of the branches of government. Comparison with UK government and politics.

Students should expect a visit to the Houses of Parliament and UK Supreme Court, alongside debates, lectures and study days. Model United Nations is offered as an extracurricular activity, with participants attending and speaking at MUN conferences. A trip to the USA is being considered.

Politics can lead to university degrees in Politics, History, International Relations, Social Policy, Peace Studies, Business, Economics, Social Sciences and more. Politics graduates are typically employed by: accountancy and banking organisations, charities, councils, law firms, local and national government, retail and media companies. Other employers include the United Nations (UN), the European Commission, the Civil Service, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), voluntary organisations and the public sector in general.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓



History

History A-Level candidates should be interested in people and society, in finding out why things happen and their consequences. They should enjoy thinking, reading, researching, working things out for themselves, and drawing conclusions.

Entry requirements: A minimum level 6 in GCSE History is required. Students should be able to write clear, precise English. It is also useful, although not essential, to have achieved a level 6 in GCSE English Language or Literature.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1K: The making of a superpower: USA, 1865 - 1975	Externally assessed 40%	Students will study the concepts of change, continuity, cause and consequence over the course of US history, and gain a deep understanding of one of the world's most powerful countries. They will examine in what ways America altered its identity over time as it healed from the wounds of war in the post-Civil War era, as it became a global superpower following World War Two, and as it reimagined itself after the Civil Rights Movement. Students will engage with changes to the US economy, politics and American society over that time period.
Unit 2B: Religious conflict and the Church in England 1529 - 1570	Externally assessed 40%	Students will study the religious controversies in the Tudor times up to 1570. This unit covers a period of major change in the English Church and government, focusing on issues which led England to break with Rome and the problems surrounding the establishment of a new Anglican Church and faith. Concepts such as piety, humanism, Protestantism, Catholicism, authority and conformity and an in-depth understanding of the relationship between Church and state, monarch / parliament, faith and pragmatism are covered.
Non-examined assessment	Internally assessed Externally moderated 20%	Students will also complete a piece of coursework which tests understanding of change over 100 years. Students are recommended to keep within a word limit of 3000-4000 words.

History can lead to university degrees in American Studies, Ancient History, Archaeology, Heritage Studies, Law, Economics, Medieval Studies, Modern History, Social History and more. Those who study a history degree should be practised in applying the lessons of the past to help resolve problems of the present, and have the ability to deploy an analytical mindset to all kinds of situations and challenges.

Popular career paths nationally for those who studied History for A-Level in recent years include merchant banking, accountancy, law, the Civil Service, industrial management, financial services, journalism, retail management, marketing and sales, advertising and public relations.

Trips overseas, themed lectures, interview practice and study days are offered.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Latin

Latin offers students the opportunity to discover more about the Latin language, their own language, and the nature of language in general, as well as about the culture and history of the Romans which was the single greatest key influence in the shaping of modern European society. The course enables students to read and appreciate a range of Latin literature in the original language, and students learn to analyse and respond to these texts in their historical context.

Entry requirements: Ideally students should have at least a level 7 in Latin at GCSE, and an interest in Latin literature and thought. Studying the language at A-Level requires hard work, but the greater depth of the course is even more stimulating.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Language (2 papers)	Externally assessed 50%	Prose and verse passages for translation, based on prescribed authors (Livy and Ovid); choice of further passage with comprehension questions or a shorter passage to translate into Latin. Candidates prepare through study of the language and readings from a range of authors.
Literature (2 papers)	Externally assessed 50%	Prose and Verse authors studied from a selection including Ovid, Horace, Virgil, Cicero, Tacitus and others: essay questions on the language and style and on the socio-historical context of the literature. Candidates must demonstrate understanding of both language and the socio-historical context, ability to evaluate evidence and to draw conclusions using appropriate reference and quotation.

Latin can lead to university degrees in Classics, Classical Studies, Classical Civilisation, Ancient History, Archaeology, Law, languages and more. It trains students in skills of analysis and logical thinking which are useful in a wide range of careers, including law, finance, industry and commerce, publishing, the Civil and Diplomatic Services, journalism and even computing. Latin students have founded dot.com companies, become pop stars, bestselling authors and even Prime Ministers! Latin is a useful complement to the study of mathematics and the sciences because it requires logical, analytical and other higher level thinking skills.

The Classics Department runs trips to museums and study days; there are opportunities to help run Classics clubs for younger students and to learn the rudiments of Classical Greek in Greek Club. Senior Classics Society broadens students' experience of the subject beyond the A-Level syllabus.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Mathematics

Mathematics builds on topics students will have studied at GCSE but involves several new areas. Studying mathematics gives training in logical thinking and gives students the ability to work confidently with numbers and analytical methods. There is an emphasis on modelling, problem-solving and reasoning, use of IT and dealing with large data sets.

Entry requirements: Students will need to have gained at least level 7 in GCSE Mathematics to begin this course.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Pure Mathematics 1	Written examination 100 marks 2 hours	Topic 1 Proof
Paper 2: Pure Mathematics 2		Topic 2 Algebra and functions
	33.33% per paper	Topic 3 Coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane
		Topic 4 Sequences and series
		Topic 5 Trigonometry
		Topic 6 Exponentials and logarithms
		Topic 7 Differentiation
		Topic 8 Integration
		Topic 9 Numerical methods
		Topic 10 Vectors
Paper 3: Statistics and Mechanics		Section A: Statistics
		Topic 1 Statistical sampling
		Topic 2 Data presentation and interpretation
		Topic 3 Probability
		Topic 4 Statistical distributions
		Topic 5 Statistical hypothesis testing
		Section B: Mechanics
		Topic 6 Quantities and units in mechanics
		Topic 7 Kinematics
		Topic 9 Forces and Newton's laws
		Topic 10 Moments

As well as being a fascinating subject in its own right, mathematics serves as a useful support for many other subjects. If students wish to study Economics, Medicine, Science, Engineering, Architecture, Accountancy, Psychology, Sociology or Geography at university, students will find that A-Level Mathematics provides them with useful skills.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Further Mathematics

If a student's mathematics is particularly strong and they are thinking of studying a mathematics related subject at university, they may wish to study Further Mathematics in addition to Mathematics. Studying Mathematics and Further Mathematics would use two teaching blocks, taking a total of 18 lessons each fortnight. The Further Mathematics course provides more depth and breadth of mathematics through the opportunity to study pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics to a higher level, but is taught alongside the topics covered in single Mathematics.

Entry requirements: Students will need to have gained at least a level 8 in GCSE mathematics to begin this course.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Core Pure Mathematics 1	Written examination 75 marks per paper 1 hour 30 mins	Proof
Paper 2: Core Pure Mathematics 2		Complex numbers
	25% per paper	Matrices
		Further algebra and functions
		Series
		Further calculus
		Further vectors
		Polar coordinates
		Hyperbolic functions
Paper 3: Further Mathematics Option 1	Written examination 75 marks 1 hour 30 mins	Differential equations
		Volumes of revolution
	25%	B: Further Statistics 1
		Discrete random variables
		Poisson distributions
		Geometric and negative binomial distributions
		Hypothesis testing
		Central limit theorem
		Chi-squared tests
		Probability generating functions
		Quality of tests
Paper 4: Further Mathematics Option 2	Written examination 75 marks 1 hour 30 mins	C: Further Mechanics 1
		Momentum and impulse
	25%	Work, energy and power
		Elastic strings and springs
		Elastic collisions in one and two dimensions

Whilst it is not always a requirement to apply for Mathematics or Mathematics related courses at university it is often a distinct advantage in terms both of the level of offer when applying and a student's preparation for such a course.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Modern Languages: French and Spanish

Language skills are set to be more vital than ever if the UK is to remain outward looking and open for business in a post-Brexit world. Speaking another language not only boosts job prospects but also allows you to connect with another culture. The A-Level course in a modern language will develop your language skills to a high level of fluency and allow you to acquire a deeper understanding of the society and culture of the countries where that language is spoken.

Entry requirements: Students embarking on this course will need at least a level 6 at GCSE in their chosen language.

French A-Level syllabus (AQA)

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1	Listening, reading and translation 50%	<p>Theme 1: Social issues and trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What 'family' looks like today • The role of technology in our lives • The importance of voluntary work <p>Theme 2: Artistic Culture in the French-Speaking World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop music from France, Belgium, Canada and Africa • Discussing French traditions and famous buildings, food, people and French words used in English <p>Theme 3: Aspects of French society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study of the diversity in France • Life for the vulnerable and marginalised • How criminals are treated <p>Theme 4: Aspects of Political Life in France</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing young people's rights to vote and how to encourage political commitment • Learning about previous demonstrations and strikes • Discussing contemporary French politics and debating topics such as immigration
Unit 2	Written response to works and translation 20%	<p>Study of the film <i>'Au Revoir les Enfants'</i> by Louis Malle</p> <p>Study of the novel <i>'Un Sac de Billes'</i> by Joseph Joffo (both are set in the Second World War during the German occupation of France).</p>
Unit 3	Speaking 30%	<p>Photo card based on an A-Level topic</p> <p>Independent research presentation and discussion: candidate chooses their own research project from a variety of topics: famous person, period in history, building etc.</p>

Spanish A-Level syllabus (Edexcel)

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1	Listening, reading and translation 40%	<p>Theme 1: Development of Spanish society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to family life • The world of work • The impact of tourism <p>Theme 2: Political and artistic culture in the Hispanic world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Media • Festivals and traditions <p>Theme 3: Immigration and Spain's multicultural society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration through history • Integration and multiculturalism <p>Theme 4: Franco's dictatorship and the transition to democracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Spanish Civil War and Franco's rise to power • Daily life during the dictatorship • The transition to democracy • The impact of the dictatorship on Spain today
Unit 2	Written response to works and translation 30%	<p>Study of one film and one literary text:</p> <p><i>La Lengua de las Mariposas</i> directed by José Luis Cuerda</p> <p><i>Como Agua Para Chocolate</i> by Laura Esquivel</p>
Unit 3	Speaking 30%	<p>Discussion on a theme</p> <p>Independent research presentation and discussion</p>

Many students choose to combine a language with the study of another subject at university. It is hugely advantageous to be proficient in more than one language and employers look favourably on these candidates as they have excellent communication skills and are able to collaborate effectively on international projects. Above all, learning about another language and culture is fascinating and will be a great asset to students in whatever career they choose.

Language students will have the opportunity to get involved in a range of co-curricular activities to practise their language skills. A-Level linguists regularly take part in national and international language competitions and enjoy visits to relevant film or theatre performances.

We emphasise the importance of visiting the target-language country and, if possible, of staying with a family. In the past, we have organised visits to France and Spain, including work experience. Now that international travel has resumed following the pandemic, A-Level language students will be able to discover more about the culture and way of life of these countries as part of our revitalised programme of overseas trips.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓



Music

This course is designed to provide clear progression from the interrelated skills developed at Key Stage 3 and GCSE: performing, composing, listening and appraising. It allows access for all musicians and provides opportunities to study a range of musical styles.

Entry requirements: Although it is likely that a student studying A-Level Music will have taken GCSE Music, this is not a requirement. It is more important that a student can read music and has reached a reasonable standard on an instrument or in voice (equivalent to Grade 5 ABRSM level).

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Component 1: Appraising	Externally assessed 40%	Listening and analysing unfamiliar music, study pieces and named composers from three areas of study: Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910 plus two other optional areas of study (e.g. Music for Theatre, Art Music since 1910).
Component 2: Performing	Externally assessed 35%	Pupils will be required to produce a minimum 10-minute performance as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble. The music performed may be in any style. Any instrument(s) and/or voice(s) are acceptable (minimum grade 5 standard).
Component 3: Composing	Externally assessed 25%	Students will be required to compose two pieces (minimum 4 ½ minutes): Composition 1 will be to a set brief and Composition 2 will be a free composition. Pupils are encouraged to use Sibelius and/ or Logic software.

Those looking to apply for music or music related courses at universities or conservatoires should contact the Director of Music. Career pathways stretch far beyond being a professional musician and can include teaching, therapy, digital arts, events management, film, TV, sound technician and many more.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Physical Education

The content has been designed to enable students to critically analyse and evaluate physical performance and apply experience of practical activity in developing their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The examined components will provide the knowledge and understanding which underpin the non-exam assessment (NEA). The NEA within this specification allows learners to explore an activity in detail as a performer or coach, chosen from a wide variety of sporting activities. Learners will also analyse and evaluate performance in a chosen activity as part of their NEA.

Entry requirements: Although it is likely that a student studying A-Level Physical Education will have taken GCSE Physical Education, this is not a requirement. It is more important that a student can perform or coach a sport on the prescribed list to a good level.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
H555/01 Physiological factors affecting performance	Written examination 90 marks 2 hours 30%	This component will assess: 1.1 Applied anatomy and physiology 1.2 Exercise physiology 1.3 Biomechanics
H555/02 Psychological factors affecting performance	Written examination 60 marks 1 hour 20%	This component will assess: 2.1 Skill acquisition 2.2 Sports psychology
H555/03 Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport	Written examination 60 marks 1 hour 20%	This component will assess: 3.1 Sport and society 3.2 Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport
H555/05 Practical performances	NEA 30 marks, weighted up to 45 marks 15%	This component will assess either: Core and advanced skills in performing one activity or Core and advanced skills in coaching one activity
H555/06 Evaluating and analysing performance for improvement	NEA 30 marks, weighted up to 45 marks 15%	This component draws upon the knowledge, understanding and skills a student has learnt throughout the course and enables them to analyse and evaluate a peer's performance in one activity.

Pupils can progress to higher education on full degree single or combined courses, for example: Sports Development and Management, Sports Physiotherapy, Sports Medicine, Sports Therapy, Sports Business Management, Sport and Leisure Management, Sports Science, Exercise, Health and Fitness or BSc (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Psychology.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Photography

The photography course focuses on developing skills such as: darkroom technology and printing, digital editing technology, the use of camera equipment and lenses, lighting and exposure techniques. Students are given opportunities to explore, research and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of photographic media.

Entry requirements: There are no entry requirements however a level 6 or above at GCSE art is helpful.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: Foundation skills building	Internally assessed	In the autumn term Year 12 students follow a foundation course in order to develop their photography skills, introducing pupils to using the camera (both digital and analogue), composition, experimental techniques and processes, digital edition, and using the darkroom. They explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to traditional and/or digital photography. Students may use methods such as photographic film and/or digital techniques to produce images. Students will work from direct observation, analyse, record and learn how to develop and apply relevant processes. Areas of study could include: landscape photography, commercial photography, still-life photography, documentary photography, experimental imagery, editorial photography, photographic installation, the photographic process, moving image and animation.
Unit 2: Personal Investigation	NEA Externally moderated 60%	The A-Level gives students the opportunity for more in depth study. Students will build on their individual skills and knowledge to produce a personal investigation on their own chosen theme. They will evaluate and develop their ideas to show evidence of a personal and creative response with maturity and independent thought. As part of the investigation they will complete a written related study of a minimum of 1000 words.
Unit 1: Foundation skills building	NEA Externally moderated 40%	Students produce a second project chosen from an OCR set choice of themes, producing the final outcome in a 15 hour examination.

Related university courses that students could go on to study include: Photography, Film Studies, Visual effects, Media Studies, Cinematography and Animation.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind. It uses scientific methods such as experiments, observations and brain imaging in order to study thoughts, emotions and behaviours, and results are analysed using statistical techniques. Topics range from ‘why do we obey?’ to ‘can we trust the testimony of eyewitnesses?’

Entry requirements: You do not need to have studied psychology prior to Year 12, however psychology is a science A-Level and includes both scientific and mathematical content. Excellent use of English and the ability to grasp new technical and scientific terminology are also fundamental to success in this A-Level, therefore GCSE mathematics, English language and science level 5 and above are required.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Introductory topics in psychology	Externally assessed examination 2 hours 33.33%	Topic 1 Social influence Topic 2 Memory Topic 3 Attachment Topic 4 Psychopathology* <small>*Students will learn about certain disorders (OCD, phobias and depression) in more detail</small>
Unit 2: Psychology in context	Externally assessed examination 2 hours 33.33%	Topic 1 Approaches in Psychology Topic 2 Biopsychology Topic 3 Research methods
Unit 1: Issues and options in psychology	Externally assessed examination 2 hours 33.33%	Topic 1 Issues and debates in Psychology Topic 2 Eating behaviour* <small>*Students will study the biological and psychological mechanisms which control eating behaviour</small> Topic 3 Gender* <small>*Students will explore the biological and psychological factors that make us masculine or feminine</small> Topic 4 Aggression

You will have the opportunity to join the weekly Psychology Society to discuss engaging psychological issues such as whether psychopaths are born or made, the psychology of attraction and whether animals have emotions.

Nationally, psychology is the fourth most popular A-Level choice and is in the top five most popular choices at degree level. Psychology can lead to various careers or areas of further study such as Educational Psychology, Criminal Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Sport Psychology etc.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Religious Studies

Religious Studies gives students a wonderful opportunity to rethink their beliefs and values, to ask questions and to try to find answers to cutting-edge problems. Decision-making is crucial for many aspects of life, and the ability to see both sides of an argument from a critical angle is useful for a wide-range of careers. RS is compatible with, and has a similar skills base to, subjects such as English, History and Politics. It is also a good partner course for Classical Civilisation, History of Art and Psychology.

Entry requirements: A minimum of level 6 in Religious Studies GCSE is desirable and 6 grades in both English and English Literature are required.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Unit 1: Philosophy of religion	Externally assessed examination 120 marks 2 hours 33.33%	Ancient philosophical influences – Plato and Aristotle. The nature of the soul, mind and body. Is there life after death? Arguments about the existence of God. Religious experience. Challenges: the problem of evil and suffering; philosophical problems raised by the nature of God; issues in religious language.
Unit 2: Ethics	Externally assessed examination 120 marks 2 hours 33.33%	Normative ethical theories of Kant, utilitarianism, situation ethics and Aquinas' Natural Law. How do we make moral decisions? Applying ethical theories to euthanasia and business ethics. Is modern medicine ethically sound? Can we have complete autonomy? Ethical language and thought and debates surrounding conscience and sexual ethics.
Unit 3: Christian thought	Externally assessed examination 120 marks 2 hours 33.33%	Christian beliefs, values and teachings – how are these interpreted? How do believers attribute authority both to key religious people and sacred texts? Was Jesus more than a teacher of wisdom? Christian moral principles and Christianity in action (Bonhoeffer). Significant social and historical developments and challenges from science, secularisation, multi-cultural societies and changing gender roles: e.g. are Christianity and feminism compatible?

RS involves an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion and provides an excellent foundation for progression to higher education. As well as going on to further studies in Religion/Theology, a significant number of students go on to study PPE or Psychology. In addition, the detailed study of complex decision-making in medical ethics will be invaluable for those embarking on a course in medicine.

Co-curricular opportunities: as well as attending conferences in London to support their learning, RS students have participated in Philosophy Society and the School's Amnesty International group.

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓



Science

Science subjects provide an excellent route into a great number of university degrees and subsequent careers. The broad range of skills that students will acquire during their study of science is attractive to universities and employers.

Entry requirements: To take any of the sciences at A-Level, pupils should ideally have achieved a level 7 for that particular separate science at GCSE. Pupils who have taken the Combined Sciences will be considered, but only if they have achieved excellent results for both Combined Science and Mathematics.

Enthusiasm and genuine interest in general scientific topics should be an integral part of a student's decision to opt for science A-Levels. At St Margaret's, we follow the OCR A specification in all three sciences, they will therefore have very similar assessment criteria. Some important aspects of the courses are:

- Students will do a set number of class practicals which are internally assessed and will be awarded a practical endorsement if they complete the required practicals and meet the skills requirements.
- Practical assessments will be examined in the written papers.
- The level of mathematics required has increased and will make up a larger percentage of the exam papers.
- Examinations will include some multiple choice questions.
- Students must be committed to a great deal of hard work and students will be given work to do over the summer holidays to prepare them for A-Level science. Some aspects of the courses will involve social and ethical consequences of scientific discoveries so the ability to think about issues beyond the classroom will be required.

Students may have seen the list of "St Margaret's Scientists" that is on display in the science department building; this shows the success that our students have had in entering an enormous range of university courses. Subjects from Astrophysics to Marine Biology, Civil Engineering, Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Veterinary Science and Zoology are represented. University degrees and careers in areas such as law, business studies, accountancy, computing and politics all require some of the expertise that is developed in A-Level science courses.

Biomedical Society, Sixth Form Physics Journalling Club, Y10-13 STEM Club, Biology field trips, Big Bang Fairs, Chemistry Olympiads and visiting speakers are just some of the co-curricular activities students can expect when selecting a science A-Level

Key skills developed

Communication & Literacy	Information Technology	Numeracy	Problem Solving	Team Work	Independent Study
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Biology

Biology is all around us. Every day there are newspaper articles or television programmes about advances in stem cell research, conservation, wildlife, importance of lifestyle choices in prolonging life, as well as the latest CRISPR gene editing technique.

The structure of DNA was discovered in the 1950s. Now scientists have completed the 100,000 Genomes Project. This has led to ethical issues as to who has the right to this information. If you find these topics interesting and you want to know more, then studying Biology at A-Level may suit you.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Biological processes	37%	Module 1 Development of practical skills in biology Module 2 Foundations in Biology Module 3 Exchange and transport Module 5 Communication, homeostasis and energy
Paper 2: Biological diversity	37%	Modules 1,2 Module 4 Biodiversity, evolution and disease Module 6 Genetics, evolution and ecosystems
Paper 3: Unified Biology	26%	Modules 1-6
Practical endorsement in Biology	Assessed internally as awarded or not awarded	Requires a minimum of 12 practical activities (PAGs) to be completed as well as mastering specific practical skills e.g. safe use of equipment, presenting data in a scientific way etc.

In Biology, 10% of the question papers will consist of mathematical skills assessment and at least another 15% will cover understanding of the practical work.

The study of Biology at A-Level may be combined with other science subjects but may be studied as the only science combined with subjects such as Geography, languages or arts courses. Mixed combinations have proved to be successful in past years.

Biology A-Level is usually a requirement for a number of university courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Biochemistry. Other Biology related degree courses include Genetics, Animal Behaviour, Physiology, Molecular Biology and Microbiology. The number of career opportunities in Molecular Biology and Genetic Engineering is continuing to increase.

Chemistry

Chemistry is often called the “central science” as it forms the bridge between a number of scientific and non-scientific subjects. It is an essential requirement for many university courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy and Biochemistry. Pure Chemistry degrees and other Chemistry related degrees offer many employment opportunities.

The range of skills required for A-Level Chemistry includes mathematical ability, interpretation of written and numerical information, concise written communication, practical and ICT skills. Good quality A-Level Chemistry students have the transferable skills that are in great demand in a wide range of careers.

During your A-Level Chemistry course you will have the opportunity to enter the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, as well as the RSC Chemistry Olympiad. You will also attend the Chemistry in Action Conferences each year in London.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Periodic Table, elements and physical chemistry	37%	Module 1 Development of practical skills in Chemistry Module 2 Foundations in Chemistry Module 3 Periodic table and energy Module 4 Core Organic Chemistry Module 5 Physical Chemistry and transition elements
Paper 2: Synthesis and analytical techniques	37%	Modules 1, 2, 4 Module 6 Organic Chemistry and analysis
Paper 3: Unified Chemistry	26%	Modules 1-6
Practical endorsement in Chemistry	Assessed internally as awarded or not awarded	Requires a minimum of 12 practical activities (PAGs) to be completed as well as mastering specific practical skills e.g. safe use of equipment, presenting data in a scientific way etc.

The number of different Chemistry degrees has multiplied dramatically in recent years and Chemistry can now be studied alongside environmental science, industry, drug discovery, education, management, forensic science, pharmaceutical science, materials science, physics and biochemistry to name only a few.

An A-Level Chemistry course can therefore be seen as the starting point for a large number of varied and exciting careers. A comprehensive list of Chemistry degree courses approved by the RSC can be found at: <http://www.rsc.org/Education/courses-and-careers/accredited-courses/index.asp>

Physics

The range of skills required for A-Level Physics includes mathematical ability, interpretation of written and numerical information, concise written communications, practical and ICT skills. Good quality A-Level Physics students have the skills and flexibility of thought that are much sought after by employers and universities in a wide range of disciplines that go far beyond the traditional scope associated with the subject.

A-Level syllabus

Component	Assessment & weighting	Summary of the component content
Paper 1: Modelling Physics	37%	Module 1 Development of practical skills in Physics Module 2 Foundations in Physics Module 3 Force and motion Module 4 Electrons, waves and photons Module 5 Newtonian world and astrophysics
Paper 2: Exploring Physics	37%	Modules 1, 2, 4 Module 6 Particles and medical Physics
Paper 3: Unified Physics	26%	Modules 1-6
Practical endorsement in Physics	Assessed internally as awarded or not awarded	Requires a minimum of 12 practical activities (PAGs) to be completed as well as mastering specific practical skills e.g. safe use of equipment, presenting data in a scientific way etc.

In Physics, 40% of the question papers will consist of mathematical skills assessment and at least another 15% will assess students' knowledge of the practical work.

A comprehensive list of Physics degree courses approved by the IOP can be found at: <http://www.myphysicscourse.org>.

Physics is a sound preparation for a number of university courses such as Architecture, Engineering, Medicine, Chemical Engineering and Aeronautics. Pure Physics degrees and other Physics related degrees offer many employment opportunities.





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