Altwood
Church of England School







6th Form Subject Information Booklet

2027 - 2029

Altwood Church of England School Sixth Form

'High Achieving: Student Focussed: Community Spirited'

As a school, we strive to support and challenge every Sixth Form student to achieve their very best on their chosen programme of study. As well as ensuring our students thrive academically, we aim to help them to develop into well-rounded, responsible young adults, ready to face the challenges of the modern world.

To give back to the community and develop key employability skills, we encourage students to make the most of the many opportunities open to them. We are passionate about supporting every student to achieve their post 18 aspirations, whether they be university, a higher apprenticeship, employment or a Gap Year.

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive Sixth Form, welcoming both our own Year 11 students choosing to make the transition to our Sixth Form alongside students from other schools. Our seamless transition process allows them to become part of our Sixth Form family in no time, making great strides on the way to their own success stories.

Sixth Form students set the tone for the whole school. Our students care about the community they belong to and the wider community. We set very high expectations and standards for all of our students, and we are incredibly proud of their achievements.

16 – 19 Study

Students in the Sixth Form follow a programme of study which includes their academic subjects and enrichment activities.

Most students will follow a traditional pathway which consists of 3 A Level or equivalent subjects. In some cases, students may take a fourth A Level to support their final decision. Students are not encouraged to take 4 A Levels as universities do not look for this, they are encouraged to focus on achieving 3 good outcomes. They may take an additional Extended Project Qualification.

Some students may follow an adapted pathway if their results don't quite meet all entry criteria. This usually comprises of 2 Level 3 equivalent subjects, an EPQ and an extended work experience opportunity. This route may also include retaking English and/or maths GCSE in order to achieve a good pass.

Sixth Form Dress Code

Sixth form students are not required to wear formal uniform. They are expected to dress in a reasonably smart fashion. Jeans and trainers are allowed as long as they are clean and aren't ripped for example. For more details, please go to the Sixth Form section of our website.

Enrichment in the Sixth Form

Induction
Transition, study skills with support from Reading University.

Future destination preparation
Using Unifrog a platform to support careers choices. UCAS university preparation, such as workshops, talks from university advisors, Oxbridge advice and guidance, visits to universities, personal statement support. Careers support and interviews with Learning to Work alongside Rotary Club interview preparation activities.

PSHE topics
Including: First Aid, Health and wellbeing, Living in the Wider World, Relationships, Society, and driver awareness with Thames Valley Police.

Wellbeing activities
Such as first aid, sport and fitness and cooking courses. We respond to the needs of the students in each cohort.

Work Experience opportunities
All students are able to organise work experience to support their future aspirations in July of Year 12.
The sixth form leadership team (Parliament representatives) organise other enrichment/social activities and will raise funds to ensure everyone can get involved.

Students may also study an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) as part of their programme of study. Students are required to complete a project on a topic of their choice. The project can be in the form of an essay or report or an artefact e.g. a musical composition, piece of artwork or dramatic project (although these must be backed up with a written report). Depending on the grade achieved, students can gain between 8 - 28 UCAS points.

As part of the Altwood community Sixth Form students are expected to adhere to a code of conduct which will support their learning and progress. Students also take part in a number of community focused activities, which not only support our school but also enhance their experiences to use on personal statements or CVs.

How to apply
Students already at Altwood should use the SIMS student app. An invitation will be sent to them to access the options online area. If you need any support using this app please go to our website Learning/Options/Sixth Form or speak to Mrs Dicker, our Data Manager.
External students should contact the school via the following email: sixthform@altwoodschool.co.uk
Students need to make three choices in order of preference alongside one reserve subject.

GCSE results day
On results day, members of the Sixth Form Team will be available to support you and check that you are still happy with your subject decisions. If you need to make any changes to your offer this can be done at that time.

Entry requirements Summary

We require 5 GCSEs at 4 and above including English and Maths for most subjects. As well as meeting the entry requirements for your chosen subjects summarised below.

We offer an alternative vocational pathway for students who haven't quite achieved these entry requirements and have 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above including English or maths. Students can only resit one core GCSE at Altwood and resits will take place in the summer examination series.

Art and Design – A Level	Minimum grade 5 in GCSE Art and Design
Biology – A Level	Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Biology Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Business Studies – A Level	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English Preferably Grade 5 in GCSE Maths
Chemistry – A Level	Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Chemistry Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Computer Science – A Level	Minimum grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Criminology - Level 3 Diploma	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
English Literature – A Level	Minimum grade 5 in GCSE English
Geography – A Level	Minimum grade 5 in GCSE Geography
Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate)	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
History – A Level	Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE History Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE English Department discretion if GCSE not studied
Mathematics – A Level	Minimum grade 7 in GCSE Maths
Further Maths – A Level	Minimum grade 7 in GCSE Maths Must be studying Maths A Level
Core Maths – Level 3	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths
Media Studies – A Level	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
Performing Arts – BTEC Extended Certificate	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
Psychology – A Level	Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE English
Physical Education – A Level	Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE PE Department discretion if GCSE not studied

Physics – A Level	Minimum Grade 7-6 at GCSE science Or/ minimum Grade 7 at GCSE Physics Minimum Grade 7 in GCSE Maths
Product Design – A Level	Minimum Grade 5 at GCSE Product Design Minimum Grade 5 at GCSE Maths Department discretion if GCSE not studied
Religious Education – A Level	Minimum Grade 5 in GCSE English and RE
Sociology – A Level	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
Spanish – A Level	Minimum Grade 6 in GCSE Spanish
Sport - BTEC Extended Certificate	Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE Maths Minimum Grade 4 in GCSE English
Sustainability – Level 3 Certificate	

Art and Design

Examination board: AQA

A Level requires the minimum of a level 5 grade in Art and Design at GCSE

An Art and Design education should enable students to develop their creativity physically and intellectually. Our students are encouraged to enjoy the challenges of art, design, photography and sculpture by developing practical skills, exploring the wider world of art and using an aesthetic vocabulary. At A Level students are expected to demonstrate a greater depth of study and specialisation in a particular medium.

Educational visits are an important aspect of bringing art to life. During this two-year course students have the opportunity and are encouraged to visits to London galleries such as Tate Modern, Tate Britain, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and The Royal Academy.

To extend learning in Art and Design, students should engage in recording subject matter through photography, join local Art clubs and classes in the community, work with younger students at Art clubs inside/outside of school.

Students are expected to use their independent study time to complete homework tasks, address all teacher action points and meet deadlines. There is a sixth form art study located in the Art department with a place to work and store artwork safely. Approximately 4 hours a week of independent study is expected.

Art is a practical based subject where the content produced over the two years forms the basis of the grade. 60% Portfolio /Component 1 and 40% Component 2 and Externally Set Assignment.

A Level Art course on offer:

Fine Art

Students are required to work in **one or more** area(s) of Fine art, such as those listed below. They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas:

- Drawing and painting
- Mixed media, including collage and assemblage
- Sculpture
- Ceramics
- Installation
- Printmaking (relief, intaglio, screen processes and lithography)
- Moving image and photography

Portfolio: Building up a portfolio of work, developing a range of skills and techniques. Each term will focus on a different topic including, natural forms, portraiture, still life, architecture, sculpture, and a concept.

Component 1: Personal Investigation and Dissertation: Personal investigation. A practical investigation supported by written material, includes a 1000-3000 word dissertation.

Component 2: Externally controlled assignment: On receipt of the AQA set assignment paper in February, students develop ideas and explore processes. Following this preparatory period students must complete work in supervised conditions. A Level – 15 hours

The work produced is graded by an externally visiting moderator at the end of year 13, sent on behalf of the exam board.

All the top Arts universities expect students to complete an Art Foundation Diploma prior to degree level. Many Altwood students go to Reading College and Buckinghamshire New University to complete this course. Options further afield include Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College, Ravensbourne, University of Kingston and Loughborough.

Many students go on to higher education in art and design, then aim to become a Photographer, Architect, Costume/Set Designer, Art & Design Teacher, Gallery and Museum work, Advertising, Art Therapist, Model Maker, Display/Window Dresser, Jeweller, Exhibition Designer, Fashion Designer, Fine Artist, Visual Effects Designer, Textile Designer, Illustrator, Cartoonist, Interior Designer, Landscape Designer, TV/Film Director, Make-up Artist, Packaging Designer, Painter Decorator…just to name a few.

Often students who study Fine Art also study, Media Studies, Design Technology, English, History, Languages or Business Studies alongside to compliment the subject.

Biology

Examination board: AQA

A Level requires the minimum of a grade 6 in Biology and Mathematics at GCSE

A Level Biology will give you the skills to make connections and associations with all living things around you. It is such a broad topic that you are bound to find a specific area of interest and it opens the door to a fantastic range of interesting careers.

All students are expected to complete independent tasks, participate in Uplearn assignments, actively engage in the lessons and research and read around topics in their own time in order to cope with the demands of the course.

Topics include

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- Organisms exchanging substances with their environment
- Genetic Information
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- Energy transfers in and between organisms
- The control of gene expression

There is no coursework on this course but your performance during practicals will be assessed. Practicals will give you the skills and confidence you need to investigate the way things behave and work. It will also ensure that if you go on to study a Biology- based subject at university you will have the practical skills needed to carry out successful experiments in your degree. Practical activities will include using microscopes to see cell division, dissection of animal or plant systems, aseptic technique to study microbial growth, investigating activity within cells, investigating animal behaviours and investigating distributions of species in the environment via a field trip to Woolley Firs.

For A Level, exams are structured so that you are assessed at the end of two years and sit three exams which are all two hours long. At least 15% of the marks are based on what you learnt in your practical's, 10% on maths and all of it covers AO1, AO2 and AO3 skills. Paper 3 includes a 25-mark essay.

According to bestcourse4me.com , the top seven degree courses taken by students who have a Biology A-level are Psychology, Biology, Sport and exercise science, Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy Chemistry.

Other than the obvious Career opportunities such as Doctor, Vet, Research scientist, and Dentist, there are career opportunities as a Marine biologist, Clinical molecular geneticist, Conservation officer, Pharmacologist, Animal Behaviourist, Soil specialist, Genetic counsellor or Science journalist.

Business Studies

Examination board: AQA

Entry Requirements

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics. A grade 5 in Mathematics is preferred. A GCSE in Business Studies is not required.

Course Overview

The new AQA A Level Business specification develops students' understanding of how businesses operate, compete and make decisions in a rapidly changing global environment. The new specification explores topical concepts such as AI, The stock market and online selling.

Students will study business in a wide range of contexts, including small and large organisations, local and multinational firms, and businesses operating in both manufacturing and service industries.

Key themes include:

- Business objectives, entrepreneurship and decision making
- Marketing management, customer behaviour and digital marketing
- Financial management, investment and business performance
- Human resource management, leadership and motivation
- Operations management, supply chains and innovation
- Business culture and competitiveness
- Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and ESG
- The impact of political, economic, social and technological change
- Business strategy, growth and globalisation
- Managing risk, uncertainty and organisational change

Students will develop their ability to analyse and interpret both quantitative and qualitative data, including financial statements, ratios, investment appraisal techniques, elasticity calculations, market data and operational performance measures.

Skills Developed

Throughout the course students will build valuable real-world skills including:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Strategic decision making
- Evaluation and judgement
- Application of business theory to real business contexts
- Numerical and financial analysis

The specification places a strong emphasis on the use of contemporary business case studies, encouraging students to engage with current business issues and developments.

Beyond the Classroom

Students are expected to take an active interest in the business world by following business news and analysing current events. The department maintains strong links with local employers, providing opportunities for business visits, guest speakers, careers events and work-related learning experiences. Students will read around the subject and keep up-to-date with current affairs.

Assessment

The qualification is assessed through three examinations at the end of Year 13:

Paper 1: What is Business? Managing Marketing and Finance

- 2 hours
- 90 marks
- 33.3% of A Level

Paper 2: Managing People and Operations

- 2 hours
- 90 marks
- 33.3% of A Level

Paper 3: Business and Society, the External Environment and Strategy

- 2 hours
- 90 marks
- 33.3% of A Level

All examinations are based on real business contexts and case studies, requiring students to apply, analyse and evaluate business decisions.

Progression

A Level Business provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers including management, marketing, finance, human resources, consultancy, entrepreneurship and business ownership.

The qualification is also highly regarded by universities and supports progression onto degree courses in Business, Business Management, Marketing, Economics and related disciplines.

Students have successfully progressed to universities with highly regarded business schools, including Swansea Warwick, Bath and Bournemouth, as well as many other leading institutions across the UK.

Chemistry

Examination board: OCR B (Salters)

A Level requires a minimum of a grade 6 in Chemistry and Mathematics at GCSE

A Level Chemistry will give you an exciting insight into the contemporary world of chemistry. It covers a range of different contexts, conveying the excitement of contemporary chemistry. This combination of academic challenge, relevant context and practical focus makes the prospect of studying A Level Chemistry highly appealing. You will learn about chemistry in a range of different contexts and the impact it has on industry and many aspects of everyday life.

You will learn to investigate and solve problems in a range of contexts and have the opportunity to build practical skills through a range of experiments and investigations. You will develop knowledge, competence and confidence in problem solving and learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and contributes to the success of the economy and society.

The course will give each student an interesting and challenging experience to link key chemical ideas and understand how they relate to each other. It will also develop transferable skills including decision making, problem solving, research and analytical skills.

All students are expected to research and read around topics in their own time in order to cope with the demands of the course.

Topics include

- Elements of life
- Developing fuels
- Elements from the sea
- The ozone story
- What's in a medicine?
- The chemical industry
- Polymers and life
- Oceans
- Developing metals
- Colour by design

There is a total of 6 hours of examinations (2 x 2 hours 15 minutes and 1 x 1 hour 30 minutes) taken at the end of the course. The papers consist of a wide range of question types including multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions. To achieve a Practical Endorsement, you will be required to display competency in following procedures, applying an investigative approach when using instruments and equipment, working safely, making and recording observations, researching, referencing and reporting.

A Level Chemistry is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare such as medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, biological sciences, physics, mathematics, pharmacology and analytical Chemistry. It is also taken by many law applicants as it shows you can cope with difficult concepts, and it compliments a number of Art subjects.

Career opportunities include Chemical, Manufacturing, Pharmaceutical, forensics, Environmental protection and Healthcare. Many Chemistry graduates also enter the financial services sector in banking and management consultancy because of the analytical aspect of the subject.

Computer Science

Examination board: OCR

A Level requires the minimum of grade 6 in Mathematics at GCSE

This A Level will consist of three components, two of which will be externally marked question papers making up 80% of the qualification. The other 20% will be the coursework project, which will retain its current qualities but will be more focused, with greater emphasis on coding and programming with a simple assessment model and marking criteria.

Assessments

Paper 1

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
40% of A-level

Paper 2

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
40% of A-level

Non-exam assessment

Programming project with written report
20% of A-level

Topics covered include

Computing Principles
Algorithms and Problem Solving
Computer Systems
A programming project

Other areas covered include

Elements of computational thinking
Programming
Algorithms

Computer Scientists are highly sought after by all good Universities. Computing is an ever-expanding area of academia, with new courses being introduced each year as a result of the technological revolution.

Future career opportunities include Computer Programming, Software engineer, Network Manager, Systems Analysis and Design.

Criminology Level 3 Diploma

Examination board: Eduqas

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics.

Criminology is a qualification which includes elements of Psychology, Law, and Sociology. The course aims to develop knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system and an awareness of the different types of crime as well as exploring the behavior and theories behind why people commit crime.

Course Content

The course consists of four units:

- **Changing Awareness of Crime (unit 1 – internally assessed)**
  This unit focuses on building your understanding of the different types of crime and the things that influence the way we perceive crime. We will also examine the reasons why certain types of crimes are less likely to be reported to the police.

- **Criminological Theories (unit 2 – externally assessed)**
  We will look at how we define crime and what constitutes criminal behavior. We will also look at the fundamental question of why people commit crime, drawing on biological, psychological and sociological theories. We will then examine how these theories may have influenced social policy in relation to crime.

- **Crime Scene to Courtroom (unit 3 – internally assessed)**
  This unit will enable you to develop your understanding of the criminal justice system from the moment a crime has been identified to the verdict in the courtroom. We will look at the complex processes involved in investigating and prosecuting crimes, and we will review real criminal cases to evaluate the evidence and the validity of the verdict.

- **Crime and Punishment (unit 4 – externally assessed)**
  Using the knowledge and understanding gained from units already studied we will address questions such as: Why do most of us tend to obey the law even when to do so is against our own interests? What institutions have we developed to ensure that people do obey laws? What happens to those who break the law? Why do we punish people? How do we punish people? How effective is the criminal justice system in preventing and dealing with criminality?

Methods of Teaching

We make use of a variety of teaching and learning methods including teacher-led discussions, debates, independent and collaborative research and presentation tasks, group work and interactive IT-based tasks, and quizzes. Your learning will be further enhanced through trips and visits and talks from visiting speakers involved in the criminal justice system.

Methods & Patterns of Assessment

50% of the assessment is through externally marked examinations and 50% through internally marked controlled assessment.

Where Could It Take Me?

The course will enable you to develop a range of transferrable skills including independent research skills, problem solving, presentation skills, and the ability to work collaboratively. It will support access to higher education degree courses in the social sciences such as Criminology, Sociology, Psychology and Law. The study of Criminology will also equip you with a good grounding in the knowledge and understanding required to go on to employment in the criminal justice system in areas such as the probation service, policing and the courts and tribunals service.

Financial Implications

We recommend that students purchase the course textbook which costs around £25, although we will also make some copies of the book available in the Sixth Form Centre.

English Literature

Examination board: AQA Specification A

A Level English Literature requires the minimum of a grade 5 in English at GCSE.

Exams are mostly open book and texts will be provided.

English Literature A Level is an excellent choice for developing skills of reading, writing and discussing. It is rooted in thinking about people and society, analysing their behaviour and relationships across time, considering how gender, social class, politics and history shape an individual's actions and perspectives.

Students who have studied English Literature at A Level are strong at writing, discussing and analysing. They can argue emotively and are also able to empathetically consider the views of others. Students will study a range of modern and historical plays, novels and poetry, and are encouraged to form their own opinions, whilst contesting or supporting the ideas of others. The study of English is deeply rooted in a knowledge of the world around us, and students must view society with a critical eye. Therefore, English pairs very well with History, Media, Criminology and Sociology A Levels, as there is significant overlap with the criticism and the context required.

Ultimately, studying English Literature is explores human behaviour and powerful ideas from different perspectives, cultures and contexts.

On the course students study

Component 1: Love through the Ages

Students study one Shakespeare text, one novel and a poetry anthology on the theme of Love Through the Ages. The exam will also cover unseen poetry on the same theme. Texts are analysed for meaning and morality, language and structural techniques and links to historical and political contexts. Texts are then compared, considering how attitudes have changed across time and place, but also highlighting how, although the world has changed so much, the underlying issues within relationships are universal. This study produces excellent analytical skills, but also develops empathy, and prepares students to find commonality and create cohesion between diverse texts and characters.

As a group, students study a wide range of texts, then choose together a text to study in depth for the exams. Themes covered will be romantic love, jealousy, deception, marriage, social expectations, loss, power, gender roles and family relationships.

Component 2: Modern Texts (Texts written between 1945 and the present day)

Students study one Modern Play, one novel and one poetry selection to explore how litertaure reflects the changing society. Students look at dramatic techniques and literary devices, as well as research historical events and how these have changed culture and society up to the present day. This is such an important unit, as it shows how literature can both present social changes and challenge issues within society, teaching students to become critical thinkers, making informed analysis on authorial intent and perspective.

Again students will read extracts from a wide range of modern texts, and choose as a group the texts that will be studied for the exam. Texts can cover a range of modern issues including control, relationships, marriage, family, gender roles, multiculturalism, class, fertility, employment, education, social change and the future. The exam will require students to analyse extracts, compare texts and poetry, and write essays on unseen texts of the same genres and themes.

Component 3: Coursework - Independent Critical Study – Texts Across Time

Students write one comparative essay referring to two texts. This is 20% of the final grade and can be on any two texts of the student's choice. It is the most exciting part of the English Literature A Level, where students have free choice of the books studied and the area or research for their question. Supported by their teachers, they create their own thesis, and prove this using the texts, genres and contexts which inspire them most. This is excellent preparation for writing at University and is a fantastic opportunity to build on areas of interest and learning on other A Level subjects, such as History, Media or Philosophy. Writing a sustained academic argument, students argue their own thesis, research critics who challenge and support their views, and create a formal essay with academic referencing and bibliography that is excellent preparation for University study.

English Literature is a facilitating subject that can lead to great careers such as, Law, journalism, teaching, politics, management, psychology and Human Resources. The key focus of English A Level is to understand people and understand the world, and students will hone their skills of empathy, understanding and critical thinking, which are imperative in any role that will involve working with people and decision making. Leadership skills are also developed through essay writing, as making choices and proving a clear viewpoint will always be imperative in employment. English Literature A Level continues to be considered an impressive choice from both Universities and employers, offering an excellent foundation for both employment and future study. Students gain stills of analysis and communication while developing cultural and historical awareness and independent thinking, challenging viewpoints, and exploring ambiguity and nuance.

Ultimately, students need to be interested in people and society around them; studying this through literature is an excellent way to broaden understanding of a variety of cultures and perspectives across history.

Please note - all book choices are subject to change and students take a leading role on text decisions.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

What is an EPQ?

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a Level 3 course which is taken alongside A Levels. You'll be required to complete a project on a topic of your choice. The project can be in the form of an essay or report or an artifact e.g. a musical composition, piece of artwork or dramatic project (although these must be backed up with a written report). Depending on the grade you achieve, you can gain between 8 - 28 UCAS points.

Why should you complete an EPQ?

An EPQ will help you develop a useful range of extra study skills, helping you prepare for the demands of university work. It is valued by higher education institutions as it demonstrates your dedication to independent learning and is often included in offers made by institutions to applicants.

Learn more about completing an EPQ

You can study any topic you wish but it's a good idea to choose something related to the subject you intend to study at university. It is also important to choose a subject that isn't too broad as this will help you when it comes to researching your project. You can change the title of your project once you have started but it is better to have a clear idea of the aim of your project at the beginning. All projects must include a written report of at least 1000 words (most are more than this) and once completed you must give a short presentation about your project.

What do universities think about EPQs?

Many universities view the EPQ as an excellent way for students to get ready for university as many of the skills that are needed when completing the project are the same skills that are needed for university study. For some courses the university will make an alternative offer to an applicant based on their EPQ grade - for example, Accounting & Finance at the University of Southampton has entry requirements of AAB or ABB with an A in an EPQ.
An EPQ is usually optional for students talking a full level 3 programme of studies. If students have an adapted pathway an EPQ may be required to enhance their learning opportunities.

If you think this is something you might be interested in, please indicate in options online. This does not mean you have to follow an EPQ but will help us have an indication on numbers.

Geography

Examination board: AQA

A Level requires the minimum of a level 5 grade in Geography at GCSE

In today's globally interconnected society, it is more important than ever that we understand the world around us. Our aim is to develop students' awareness of the complexity of interactions within and between societies, economies, cultures, and environments, at scales from local to global. Geography is a very wide-ranging topic interested primarily in human and environmental development. The subject forms an important link between the arts and science subjects at A Level, and at university where it can be studied either as a BSc or BA.

The Course is linear and involves 2 exams in each year.

Component 1: Physical geography
What's assessed Section A: Water and carbon cycles Section B: either Hot desert systems and landscapes **or** Coastal systems and landscapes **or** Glacial systems and landscapes Section C: either Hazards **or** Ecosystems under stress
How it's assessed • Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes • 120 marks • 40% of A-level
Questions • Section A: answer all questions (36 marks) • Section B: answer either question 2 or question 3 or question 4 (36 marks) • Section C: answer either question 5 or question 6 (48 marks) • Question types: short answer, levels of response and extended prose

Component 2: Human geography
What's assessed Section A: Global systems and global governance Section B: Changing places Section C: either Contemporary urban environments **or** Population and the environment **or** Resource security
How it's assessed • Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes • 120 marks • 40% of A-level
Questions • Section A: answer all questions (36 marks) • Section B: answer all questions (36 marks) • Section C: answer either question 3 or question 4 or question 5 (48 marks) • Question types: short answer, levels of response, extended prose

Component 3: Geography fieldwork investigation
What's assessed Students complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by the student relating to any part of the specification content.
How it's assessed • 3,000–4,000 words • 60 marks • 20% of A-level • marked by teachers • moderated by AQA

Geography ranks amongst the eight most important 'facilitating subjects' according to the Russell Group of universities, making it one of the most valuable subjects to study, providing students with the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm sought by higher education and employers.

Geographers: have the most transferrable skills, are diverse, cultured, and resilient to change, skills include high levels of literacy, numeracy, interpersonal skills as well as the ability to show empathy with the world.

Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate)

Examination Board: OCR

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics.

This course is equivalent to 1 A level (it carries equivalent UCAS points). It is aimed for students interested in careers in nursing, midwifery, occupational therapy, social work and other health, social science and early years related degrees.

This course can be studied alongside 2 other A levels or equivalent subjects or as part of a vocational pathway and contributes a sound basis to many other subject/apprenticeship degrees.

The course has both an academic and vocational context so you will study both in the classroom and experience placements where you will gain insight into vocational careers and be able to apply the theory you learn.

Course Content

Mandatory units:
- Principles of health and social care
- Anatomy and physiology for health and social care
- Person-centred approach to care
- Supporting people with mental health conditions

Optional Units may include:
- Supporting people with long term physiological conditions
- Investigating public health
- Supporting people in relation to sexual health, pregnancy and postnatal health
- Supporting healthy nutrition and lifestyles

Methods of Teaching
Examined units are taught in a classroom environment but the course is also very student-centred so you will be participating in presentations, group work and discussions. You will develop independent research skills and learn to work as a team member through a variety of practical tasks and activities linked to your non-examined assessment (NEA) units.

Methods & Patterns of Assessment
During each of the 2 years of study you will participate in NEA units, which will be internally marked and externally moderated and undergo a total of 2 exams to gain the qualification. These 2 units will be examined and externally marked. The other 4 NEA units will be internally marked. All units are awarded distinction, merit or pass. An external moderator will confirm the grade. Successful achievement of each unit will be combined leading to a final grade for the whole qualification which carries UCAS points.

Where Could It Take Me?
This course will enable you to apply for university degrees in subjects such as nursing, midwifery, occupational therapy, radiography and paramedic science. Also, degrees in social work, primary teaching or youth studies. It will make you employable in the areas of childcare, youth work, older people care, adult disability care or give you access to higher apprenticeships.

Financial Implications
You are advised to purchase an e textbook currently £16 or a hard copy for approximately £24. You will be required to meet any costs associated with carrying out work placements.

Work Experience

In addition to classroom teaching and NEA there will be a work experience commitment in a range of care settings. This will contribute to your studies as well as help you make an informed career choice. It will also support your university application.

History

Examination board: AQA

A level requires the minimum of a level 5 grade in English and History at GCSE. Students who have not studied History at GCSE will be considered on an individual basis.

A History A-level qualification has been designed to help students understand the significance of historical events, the role of individuals in history and the nature of change over time. They will gain a deeper understanding of the past through political, social, economic and cultural perspectives. The topics available to them throughout the course will provide them with the knowledge and skills they require to succeed as A-level historians.

There are 3 components

- **A 124 year study of the Tudor dynasty in England.**
- The Battle of Bosworth 1485 to the death of Elizabeth I in 1603.
- This course considers the changes to political, religious and social policies in England and how they are tied to the extravagant personalities of our Tudor monarchs.
- **A depth study of Russia in Revolution.**
- 1917-53. This entails a study of the causes of the Russian Revolutions of 1917, Feb and October. The fall of the Romanoff dynasty and the rise of Communist Russia. Main events include the Civil war, Power struggle and dictatorship of Stalin.

- **Coursework based on the fall of the Roman Empire from 378-476CE.**

- This is a self-led historical investigation of 4500 words incorporating the use of Primary sources and secondary interpretations. Guided and supported in school but expected to be completed independently.

The final exam consists of 2 papers on the breadth and depth studies, with 40% for each paper. The coursework component is worth 20% of the final exam.

Methods of Teaching

Examined units are taught in a classroom environment but the course is also very student-centred so you will be participating in presentations, group work and discussions. You will develop independent research skills through a variety of tasks and activities linked to your examined units.

Students are expected to do additional reading outside of lesson and are given reading lists of the most up to date textbooks available. The local library should be a first port of call, but students should remember that their Library can and will bring books in upon request.

Where Could It Take Me?

Studying A Level History not only helps improve your knowledge of the past, but it also helps you gain skills that are invaluable in many jobs. Some of these skills include analysing, researching, communication, and problem-solving. You'll also gain the ability to prioritise information and learn how to make vital decisions. This helps you to build an important skill set needed for progression into university or a career.

Our A Level in History will help you gain the UCAS points needed for entry into university. There are a range of degrees A Level History can allow you to do, including law, politics, public sector, business, and many more. This course is perfect if you want to kick-start your career in law, politics, creative media, journalism, broadcasting and many more.

There are many History graduates, and it is not necessarily seen as a subject which will lead to a history related job. It is viewed more as an enabling subject that allows critical evaluation and extended comprehensive writing of a high standard.

Mathematics

Examination board: Edexcel

A Level Mathematics requires the minimum of a level 7 in Mathematics. There is also a required 'step up' to A Level mathematics bridging course which students will complete before their A Level studies begin, to support an excellent start to their A Level journey.

Course Aims

A Level Mathematics is an exciting, interesting, and challenging subject. This course is a two-year linear course. The aim is to develop your understanding of mathematics and mathematical processes in a way that promotes confidence and fosters enjoyment. You will extend your mathematics skills and techniques and be able to recognise how a real-life situation may be represented mathematically. You will develop skills in reasoning, logic, evaluation, comprehension, and problem solving.

General Content

A Level mathematics is divided into three units. These are made up of two Pure Mathematics units and one Applications unit. The latter contains topics from mechanics and statistics. Mechanics is the study of practical problems involving motion and forces closely linked to Physics. Statistics focuses on probability and data analysis.

The major differences between GCSE and A-level are:

- Greater emphasis on your ability to analyse questions' requirements
- A greater proportion of questions whose solution requires more complex steps
- More rigour in the way you express yourself mathematically and use correct notation
- A far greater expectation that you will act independently to resolve any difficulties with understanding.

Skills

The course assumes mastery of higher-level number and algebra skills at GCSE. You will be extending your knowledge of algebra and trigonometry as well as learning some brand new topics such as calculus. If you enjoy the challenge of problem solving, this course will be very appealing. An appreciation and enjoyment of the subject, an excellent work ethic, an inquisitive mind and a resilient attitude will bring about success.

What you need to know

Prior to the start of the course, we would expect all students to have a clear and confident understanding of algebra including:

- Setting up and solving simple linear equations including simultaneous linear equations
- Solving quadratic equations by using factorisation, the quadratic formula and completing the square
- Using index laws for multiplication and division of integer, fractional and negative powers
- Using surd form including rationalising a denominator

Aptitudes required

Initially, A Level maths appears to be very different from GCSE because you need to be able to recognise both the topic and techniques that are relevant to a particular question. You should have the ambition to master the new methods in order to experience the satisfaction of solving a problem successfully.

Workload and types of work

In the early stages of the course, you will be given exercises which strengthen your understanding of new concepts encountered in lessons. Later on, you will have end of topic work sheets and tests which develop your ability to solve problems under timed conditions.

Methods of Assessment

All examinations must be taken at the end of the course in Year 13.

Qualification	Component	Assessment
A level	Paper 1:	2 hours
Mathematics	Pure	100 marks
	Mathematics 1	
	Paper 2:	2 hours
	Pure	100 marks
	Mathematics 2	
	Paper 3:	2 hours
	Statistics and	100 marks
	Mechanics	

A-Level Key Notes

- All assessments will be linear, with 100% examination
- A level maths will have 100% prescribed content, containing both pure and applied (no optional content)
- Mechanics and Statistics will be part of the compulsory content for A level maths students.

Future with Mathematics

Studying mathematics will prepare students to move into Higher Education courses. The opportunities for students of mathematics, on completion of full- time education, are considerable. It complements and supports other courses, for example: Physics, Chemistry, Design Technology and Business Studies. Qualifications in Mathematics are acceptable as an entry to many different careers. The Mathematics A-Level course and AS course are designed to provide academic and vocational experiences.

Progression and Career Opportunities

A Level Mathematics is highly regarded within higher education and is required at the top Universities to study Mathematics, Economics and Engineering. The Russell Group of leading UK universities has published Informed Choices, a guide to post-16 subject choices, which listed A Level Maths as a facilitating subject.

Maths graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment. Mathematicians enter a very wide range of career areas ranging from Aerospace and Defense to Finance. Studying Mathematics provides you with valuable skills and a firm base for life-long learning and will help students who intend to study a variety of subjects ranging from economics to medicine.

Higher education courses that are strongly related to A Level Maths include Economics, Architecture, Engineering, Accountancy and Actuarial Science, Computing, and Information Technology. Likewise, you might consider pursuing the study of mathematics at degree level or even get involved in mathematical research at postgraduate level.

For further information on graduate jobs visit **mathscareers.org.uk**

Further Mathematics

A level Mathematics requires the minimum of a grade 7 in Mathematics. Further maths must be studied with Mathematics which includes the pre-course requirements.

Course Aims

This course allows you to study a second A-level in further mathematics alongside your single mathematics A-level. During your first year, you will study both A-level mathematics and AS further mathematics alongside two other subjects, bringing your total subject load to four. At the end of your first year, you will take an AS exam. Following your first year, you have the option to either discontinue further mathematics and complete your mathematics A-level in year two or continue with further mathematics in the second year to earn two full A-levels.
This course provides the opportunity to expand your mathematical knowledge by delving into more pure mathematics and exploring a range of options. It serves as an excellent foundation for studying mathematics, science subjects, or engineering at university.

General Content

You will explore: Complex numbers, which allow for the solution of a range of equations that would otherwise have no solutions through the introduction of 'imaginary' numbers. Matrices, which consist of grids of numbers that can be used to represent transformations and are used to solve simultaneous equations, among many other applications. Polar coordinates. Differential equations. Hyperbolic functions.
Each of these builds upon earlier learning and develops a broader understanding of the interconnectedness of mathematical topics.

Methods of Assessment

AS further mathematics is assessed through two 1-hour and 40-minute exams at the end of year 12.
A-level further mathematics is assessed through four 1½-hour exams at the end of year 13.

Further mathematics is considered a fourth subject; all students will take external AS exams at the end of the first year and then have the option to discontinue the course before year two.

Future with Mathematics

Double mathematics complements and supports other courses however students pursue a wide variety of other courses with Further Maths, many choose one or more from the sciences.

Progression and Career Opportunities

Further mathematics are highly regarded and provide strong support for any application for employment or further study. Further mathematics is highly desired for certain courses in mathematics, physics, and engineering at some universities.

Core Maths

Examination board: AQA Level 3 Mathematical Studies (Core Maths)

Minimum entry requirement: GCSE Mathematics grade 4 or above.

Course Aims

The Core Maths course is a one-year linear course that is designed to develop students' understanding of mathematics with a more applied focus. The course aims to support students' maths understanding within other subjects making it an ideal fourth subject.

General Content

The Core Maths course includes interpreting solutions in the context of the problem, understanding sources of error and bias when problem-solving. This is done while working with data and probability. They look at using exponential functions to model growth and decay, as well as other functional skills.

Key Differences Between Core and A Level

Core Maths is intended for students who have passed GCSE Mathematics at grade 4 or better, but who have not chosen to study AS or A level Mathematics. It is usually studied alongside A levels or vocational courses with a high maths content, such as sciences, psychology, geography, business. Core Maths is equal in size to an AS level qualification and graded A-E.

Methods of Assessment

All examinations must be taken at the end of the course in Year 12. There are two papers:

- Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes

Future with Mathematics

The course is designed to complement and support other courses, for example, physics, chemistry, design technology, and business studies. It is an ideal course for those who want to study maths reliant courses but do not want to study a full maths A-level.

Progression and Career Opportunities

Studying Core Maths helps students develop their quantitative and critical thinking skills. This is valuable preparation for the quantitative skills they will need for any degree courses, particularly subjects such as psychology, geography, business-related courses, sports and social sciences, and natural science courses that do not require AS/A Mathematics.

Many universities have shown their support for Core Maths, with some courses offering a lower entry offer for those who students applying with an additional Core maths qualification.

Media Studies

Examination board - Eduqas

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics.

You will learn to make connections between different media forms and products, between media products and their contexts, and between theory and practical work.

You will engage with a range of rich and stimulating media forms and products.

You will develop media production skills, apply their knowledge and understanding of the theoretical framework to media forms and products. Debating and discussion skills are useful.

To extend learning in Media you should engage in media forms outside of lesson time.

<u>You will study products from 9 media forms</u>

- Television
- Magazines
- Online media
- Music videos
- Video Games
- Advertising and film marketing
- Newspapers
- Radio
- Film (Industries only)

You will sit 2 examinations in year 2. Both are worth 35% leaving 30% coursework (based on audio visual extract or print publication). The coursework allows for learners to develop media production skills and become active creators of meaning. You will explore your own interests when responding to a choice of set briefs in a range of forms such as:

TV: create a cross media production to include a sequence from a new television programme and related print or online products

Advertising and marketing (Film): Create a cross media production to include a print marketing campaign for a new film, and related audio visual or online products

Advertising and marketing (Music): Create a cross media production to include an original music video for a new or local unsigned band or artist and related print or online products.

Magazine: create a cross media production to include a new print magazine and related audio visual or online products.

How much reading/independent learning should students undertake to succeed in this subject?

Lots and Lots! Students will need to study various set texts and some of their own in order to respond in detail to the questions in the exam. Independent learning, research and reading is expected.

Southampton, Newcastle, St Marys, Kings College London, Warwick and Cardiff Universities are considered specialists in Media.

Typical career pathways include

- Media planner
- Multimedia specialist
- Programme researcher, broadcasting/film/video
- Public relations officer
- Runner, broadcasting/film/video
- Television/film/video producer
- Advertising account executive
- Broadcast journalist
- Editorial assistant
- Event organiser
- Information officer
- Magazine journalist
- Market researcher
- Writer

The A level subjects that complement Media include Photography, Art, Business, IT or Philosophy and Ethics.

BTEC Extended Certificate in Performing Arts

Examination board: Pearson Edexel

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics.

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended certificate in Performing Arts is designed for learners who are interested in learning about the performing arts sector alongside other fields of study, with a view to progressing to a wide range of higher education courses, not necessarily in performing arts. It is designed to be taken as part of a programme of study that includes other appropriate vocational subjects or A Levels.
Students will develop their technical skills as performers alongside their capacity to create, refine, and reflect on the development of performance pieces. This qualification gives a broad introduction to the performing arts sector with an emphasis on core knowledge, and fundamental skills which are transferable across other sectors (including communication, presentation, physical and creative skills).

This is a Level 3 Extended Certificate, which is a two year course equivalent to 1 A Level. It is an exciting professional and vocational course focussed on practical performance.

Course Content

Assessment comprises of four units of study – two are assessed by the centre and two are assessed externally. Due to the vocational nature of this course students will be assessed on a regular basis and this features a balance of practical and written tasks.

Unit 1 – Investigating Practitioners' Work (mandatory)

Unit 2 – Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance (mandatory)

Unit 3 – Group Performance Workshop (mandatory)

Optional Units (1 to be followed) could include:

Acting Styles, Improvisation, Developing the Voice for Performance, Movement in Performance.

Methods of Teaching

We encourage students to explore ideas in a practical way creating a variety of performances which will develop a range of performance skills. The course is taught through a combination of practical workshops, student led research, rehearsal and performance evaluation.

Methods & Patterns of Assessment

Students are rewarded along the way for consistent hard work, without the added pressure of written exams at the end. The course is totally assessed through a range of assignments, predominantly performances and some focussed coursework. In the final year there is an externally assessed unit which will be set by the exam board. This assessment will involve a 5 week exam period which will culminate in a final assessment which will take place in May/June.
Grades awarded are Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

There are no written examinations

BTEC Performing Arts will give you the skills you need to develop to the next stage either into Drama Schools or Theatre related courses at University. This course will also support those students who wish to take Drama or Performance as a joint honours course or who are looking to develop valuable confidence, teamwork and presentation skills into other subject areas or the world of work.

Financial Implications

There will be an expectation to attend performances which will have a cost attached to them. Students are also encouraged to purchase materials to support their study.

Altwood has a Bursary Fund for those who have financial difficulties, so please do not allow any worries in this area to prevent you from embarking on this course.

Psychology

Examination board: AQA

This qualification requires 5 GCSEs at grade 5 or above, including Mathematics and English. Students may be asked to follow a short 'Maths for Psychologists' course to support their studies.

This qualification offers an engaging and effective introduction to Psychology. It also gives students an overview of why people behave the way they do from social influence, memory, cognition, development and so much more.

Course Content

The course consists of the following topics:

- 1 Social influence
- 2 Memory
- 3 Attachment
- 4 Approaches in Psychology
- 5 Psychopathology
- 6 Research methods

We will then explore one option from each section outlined below (the choices are yet to be confirmed):

Option 1

- Relationships
- Gender
- Cognition and development

Option 2

- Schizophrenia
- Eating behaviour
- Stress

Option 3

- Aggression
- Forensic Psychology
- Addiction

There are three papers in Psychology where all the above topics will be examined. They are:

- **Introductory topics in psychology (paper one)**
- **Psychology in context (paper two)**
- **Issues and options in psychology (paper three)**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified content.
- apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified content in a range of contexts.
- analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified content.
- evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness.
- Additionally, your knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills will be assessed.

Methods of Teaching

We make use of a variety of teaching and learning methods including teacher-led discussions, debates, independent and collaborative research and presentation tasks, group work and interactive IT-based tasks and quizzes.

Methods & Patterns of Assessment

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:
    - in a theoretical context
    - in a practical context
    - when handling qualitative data
    - when handling quantitative data.
- AO3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:
    - make judgements and reach conclusions
    - develop and refine practical design and procedures.

Where Could It Take Me?

The course will enable you to develop a range of transferrable skills including independent research skills, problem solving, presentation skills and the ability to work collaboratively. It will support access to higher education degree courses in the social sciences such as Criminology, Sociology, Psychology and Law. The study of psychology will also equip you with a good grounding in the knowledge and understanding required to go on to employment in the workforce.

Financial Implications

We recommend that students purchase the course textbook which costs around £25, although we will also make some copies of the book available in the Sixth Form Centre.

Physical Education

Examination board: AQA

A level requires the minimum of a level 5 grade in PE at GCSE and a strong science outcome. If you did not take GCSE PE but wish to consider this subject, please discuss with the PE team.

Course Aims

A-Level Physical Education delivers a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, sport and sports science, providing a strong base from which to move on to higher education, employment or further training. The emphasis throughout the course is on the development of knowledge, application of knowledge, competence and confidence in a wide variety of skills. You will learn how Physical Education affects and contributes to society and also how to apply your knowledge from this course to any number of different practical situations or career choices.

Course content

The A-Level Specification content is divided into three components, Each component is further sub-divided into topic areas.

Paper 1: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport	Paper 2: Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport	Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport
What's assessed Section A: Applied anatomy and physiology Section B: Skill acquisition Section C: Sport and society	**What's assessed** Section A: Exercise physiology and biomechanics Section B: Sport psychology Section C: Sport and society and technology in sport	**What's assessed** Students assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity. Plus: written/verbal analysis of performance.
How it's assessed • Written exam: 2 hours • 105 marks • 35 % of A-level	**How it's assessed** • Written exam: 2 hours • 105 marks • 35 % of A-level	**How it's assessed** • Internal assessment, external moderation • 90 marks • 30 % of A-level

Assessment is made up of two examinations a practical element and analysis of performance assignment. One element of the practical assessment is the student performing in a 'competitive situation'. Students who choose this course are expected to be committed to competitive sports team or club.

Future with PE

Students choosing this course will have a deep passion for sport. They relish being actively involved in competitive sport outside of school and are expected to do so for the duration of the course. A motivation to read around the subject is essential; linking famous sporting examples with units of work, to help bring the course to life. Also, how current affairs in the world of sport links to exam content.

Progression and career opportunities

- Physiotherapist
- Nutritionist
- Fitness Trainer
- Sport and Health Consultant
- Sports Analyst
- Sports Journalism
- Sports Photographer
- Sports and Media
- Sports Marketing
- Events Management
- Teaching
- Coaching

The world of sport is a multibillion-pound industry. With so many career opportunities available, many A Levels complement the subject well. These include Physics, Biology, Chemistry, English, Maths, Media, Geography, Philosophy and Ethics.

Brighton, Bath, Cardiff, Chichester, Exeter, Leeds and Loughborough are established as leading universities for PE, and they consider this subject as a science.

This course is dependent on numbers applying and it is likely that either the BTEC in Sport or Physical Education A level will run next year.

Physics

Examination board: AQA

A Level requires the minimum of a grade 7-6 at GCSE Science or a grade 7 GCSE Physics and a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics.

A Level Physics allows you to explore the fundamental nature of the universe, from the sub-atomic scale to the Universe as a whole.
You will learn to investigate and solve problems in a wide range of contexts and have the opportunity to develop useful experimental skills through a series of experiments and investigations. You will develop your knowledge, competence and confidence in problem solving and also learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues which contributes to the success, and failures, of the economy and society. There is a strong mathematical thread running throughout the course; however, your powers of estimation, detailed description and explanations will also be required in each and every context.

All students are expected to independently study, research and read around topics in their own time in order to cope with the demands of the course. The recommended ratio to challenge for the highest grades is an accepted 1:3 contact time to independent study.

In Year 12: the units covered during the two-year course are

- Measurements and their errors
- Particles and radiation
- Waves
- Mechanics and materials
- Electricity
- Further mechanics and thermal physics
- Fields and their consequences
- Nuclear physics

In Year 13: 5 optional topics as part of the full A Level course so students can focus on 1 area of interest

- Astrophysics
- Medical physics
- Engineering physics
- Turning points in physics
- Electronics

A Level Physics has no coursework as such, but your performance during practical will be assessed. You will be provided with a lab book in which to record all your required practical experimental work. Practical work will give you the skills and confidence you need to investigate the way phenomena behave and work. It will also ensure that if you go on to study a STEAM-based subject at university you will have the necessary skills needed to carry out successful experiments in your chosen degree.
The AS has two exams at the end of the year which are both 1 hour and 30 minutes long.
At the end of two year course you will sit three examinations, totalling 6 hours. Your Practical skills and knowledge are assessed during the third paper.
40% of the overall assessment of A Level Physics will contain mathematical skills equivalent to Level 2 or above. At least 15% of the overall assessment of A Level Physics will assess knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to practical work.

Career opportunities include Geophysicist, Field seismologist, Research scientist, Meteorologist, Structural engineer and Systems developer. You can also move into Astrophysics, Nanotechnology, Renewable energy and more.

Product Design

Examination board: Eduqas

A Level requires the minimum of a level 5 grade in D&T and Maths at GCSE. Students who have not taken Product and Design at GCSE will be considered on an individual basis.

The level of mathematics required is equivalent to that of higher tier GCSE Maths.

Design is all about innovation and meeting the needs of an intended user. To fully prepare A Level students for a possible career or degree in this field of study we aim to develop their skills in a wide range of practical, designing and investigative activities. This includes modelling and manufacturing products in a range of resistant and compliant materials including wood, metal, plastics, 3D printing, composites, modelling materials. Using CAD/CAM packages and testing the suitability of design concepts out on different end users.

Course Content: This is a practical and written based subject where the content produced over the two years forms the basis of the grade.

Component 1: Design and Technology in the 21st century written examination: 3 hours: 50%

<u>The examination includes a mix of structures and extended writing questions assessing a learner's knowledge and understanding of</u>

- Technical principles
- Designing and making principles

<u>Along with their ability to</u>

- Analyse and evaluate wider issues in design and technology

50% written examination/ Component 1 and 50% Component 2 practical.

Competent 2: Design and make project. Non-exam assessment: 50%

A sustained design and make project, based on a brief developed by the candidate, assessing their ability to:

- Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities
- Design and make prototypes
  Analyse and evaluate design decisions and outcomes. Including for prototypes made by themselves and others

Year 12: A range of design brief tasks developed in response to contextual challenges and a final prototype(s) based on design briefs.

Year 13: A final prototype(s) based on a design brief developed by the Learner [i.e. it must have a client who can analyse and feedback to the student on the usefulness of their design ideas]

Students have the opportunity to visit the Design Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum.

Universities that have specialist Design related degree courses in Product Design- Industrial Design – Design Engineering – Architecture – 3D Design include Brunel University, Loughborough, Nottingham Trent, University of Bath, Leeds University.

Many students who study Product Design tend to either study maths or physics which would tend to lead into STEAM based courses at university. Some study ICT along with Product

Design and these students can often move onto programming or software design related courses.

There are those who study Product Design with arts-based subjects as the creative options are then often pursued, an art foundation course is then often a popular pathway chosen.

Religious Education (philosophy and ethics)

Examination board: Eduqas

Entry requirement: 5 GCSEs at 5 and above including English Language and Religious Education

Course Content

Study of Religion (Christianity)

Students explore the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity, considering their historical development and contemporary significance. They examine key theological concepts and debates, analysing how religious beliefs continue to influence individuals, communities and society.

Philosophy of Religion

Students investigate fundamental philosophical questions concerning the existence and nature of God, religious experience, evil and suffering, miracles and religious language. They engage with the ideas of influential philosophers and develop the skills to critically assess complex arguments and competing perspectives.

Religion and Ethics

Students examine a range of ethical theories and apply them to real-world moral issues. Topics include Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Utilitarianism, Virtue Ethics, free will and determinism, and meta-ethics. Students develop their ability to construct balanced arguments and evaluate ethical responses to contemporary challenges.

Course Objectives

Throughout the course students will:

- Develop a thorough understanding of religious, philosophical and ethical concepts.
- Analyse and evaluate different viewpoints using evidence and reasoned argument.
- Explore the influence of religion on individuals and society.
- Develop excellent essay-writing, critical thinking and communication skills.
- Apply philosophical and ethical theories to contemporary issues.

Assessment

The Eduqas A Level Religious Studies qualification is assessed through three written examinations, each lasting **2 hours** and contributing **33.3%** of the final A Level grade:

- **Component 1:** Study of Religion (Christianity)
- **Component 2:** Philosophy of Religion
- **Component 3:** Religion and Ethics

Future Pathways

Religious Education complements a wide range of subjects including History, English, Sociology, Law and Politics. It is highly regarded by universities because of the analytical, evaluative and essay-writing skills it develops. Students frequently progress to degrees in Philosophy, Theology, Religious Studies, Law, Politics, History, International Relations, Social Sciences, Education and related disciplines.

Sociology

Examination board: Eduqas

Entry requirements: A Level Sociology requires a minimum of 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above, including English Language.

Course Content

Students study a range of contemporary social issues and develop an understanding of the major sociological theories that explain how society operates and changes. Throughout the course, students learn to apply sociological perspectives, analyse research evidence and evaluate competing viewpoints.

Acquiring Culture

Students explore how individuals develop their identity and understanding of the world through the process of socialisation. They examine how factors such as family, education, peer groups and the media shape beliefs, values and behaviour, while considering the impact of gender, ethnicity and globalisation on people's experiences.

Families

This unit examines the changing nature of family life in contemporary society. Students investigate family diversity, relationships within families, demographic trends and the influence of social policies, applying a range of sociological perspectives to explain changes in family structures and experiences.

Education

Students investigate the role of education in society and the reasons why some groups achieve more highly than others. The unit explores issues such as social class, gender, ethnicity, educational policy and school processes, encouraging students to critically assess the purpose and effectiveness of the education system.

Sociological Research Methods

This unit develops students' understanding of how sociologists study society. Students learn about a range of research methods, consider the strengths and limitations of different approaches and develop the skills to interpret, analyse and evaluate sociological evidence.

Crime and Deviance

Students explore why crime occurs, how society defines deviance and the ways in which crime is controlled. They examine patterns of offending, media representations of crime and competing explanations for criminal behaviour, while considering contemporary issues such as globalisation, human rights and social justice.

Students are encouraged to apply sociological theories and contemporary evidence to real-world issues throughout the course. The specification places a strong emphasis on developing analytical skills, extended essay writing, independent thought and the critical evaluation of evidence. Students are expected to engage with current affairs and wider reading to enrich their understanding of the social world.

Spanish

Examination board: AQA

A Level requires a minimum of a grade 6 at GCSE Spanish

The A Level in Spanish builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It fosters a range of transferable skills, including communication, critical thinking and creativity, which are valuable to the individual and to society.

The approach is a focus on how Hispanic-speaking society has been shaped, socially and culturally, and how it continues to change. Students study aspects of the social context together with aspects of the artistic life of Spanish-speaking countries.

Skills Required

You will need to show a good listening and reading understanding of a range of contexts and sources covering different registers and adapted as necessary. Material will include complex factual and abstract content and questions will target main points, gist and detail.

You will also be studying one text and one film, and students will require to demonstrate a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation, as appropriate to the work studied.

Application of grammar is also key in the assessment.

You will also need to develop research skills in Spanish, demonstrating the ability to initiate and conduct individual research on a subject of personal interest, relating to the country or countries where Spanish is spoken.

You need to identify a key question or subject of interest and select relevant information in Spanish from a range of authentic sources, including the internet.

You must use information to illustrate knowledge and understanding of the research subject.

You will analyse and summarise research findings, elaborating on key points of interest, as appropriate, through oral presentation and discussion.

How the course is assessed: Three exam papers at the end of Year 13

Paper 1 Listening, reading and writing	Paper 2 Writing	Paper 3 Speaking
What's assessed	*What's assessed*	*What's assessed*
Aspects of Hispanic society Artistic culture in the Hispanic world Multiculturalism in Hispanic society Aspects of political life in Hispanic society Grammar	One text and one film	Individual research project One of four themes: Aspects of Hispanic society Artistic culture in the Hispanic world Multiculturalism in Hispanic society Aspects of political life in Hispanic society
How it's assessed	How it's assessed	How it's assessed
Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes 100 marks 50% of A-level	Written exam: 2 hours 80 marks in total 20% of A-level	Oral exam: 21–23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time) 60 marks in total

BTEC National Extended Certificate in Sport

Examination board: Pearson Edexel

This qualification requires minimum of a grade 4 in English and Mathematics with strong outcomes in GCSE PE.

The Pearson BTEC National Extended Certificate in Sport is designed for learners who want to continue their education through applied learning and who aim to progress to higher education or to employment in the sport sector.
Students will develop a range of skills such as methodical analysis and research, presentation skills and independent study. Alongside this, students will extend their knowledge of key concepts across the sports industry such as anatomy and physiology, fitness training and programming and the professional development within the sports industry.
This is a Level 3 Extended Certificate, which is a two year course equivalent to 1 A Level.

Course Content

Assessment comprises of four units of study – two are assessed externally in formal examinations and two are coursework portfolios.

- Unit 1: Anatomy and Physiology (externally assessed)
- Unit 2: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Sport and Well-being (externally assessed)
- Unit 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry (coursework portfolio)
- Unit 5: Application of fitness testing (coursework portfolio)

Grades awarded are Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

Course Prospects

This is a very valuable qualification to have. Sport is an excellent base for many relevant sport and sport-related Higher Education courses. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- BSc (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Science
- BSC (Hons) in Performance Analysis
- BSC (Hons) in Sport Psychology
- BA (Hons) in Sports Education and Special and Inclusive Education

The sport industry contributes billions of pounds each year to the UK economy and is a continuously growing sector. The industry employs more than 400,000 people and offers many career openings in a range of areas, including management, fitness, leisure, recreation, outdoors, well-being, elite performance, coaching and teaching.

This course is dependent on numbers applying and it is likely that either the BTEC in Sport or Physical Education A level will run next year.

Sustainability

Examination board: OCR

OCR Level 3 Certificate in Sustainability. This qualification is equivalent to an AS or half an A Level and can be taken in conjunction with other subjects to provide a suitable programme of study for learners.

Entry Requirements

A minimum of **5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above**

Overview

Sustainability is an exciting and contemporary qualification that equips students with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to address some of the most significant challenges facing the world today. From climate change and biodiversity loss to resource management and sustainable development, students explore how individuals, organisations and governments can create a more sustainable future.

The course encourages students to think critically about environmental, social and economic issues while developing the research, analysis and problem-solving skills valued by universities and employers alike.

Course Content

The Principles of Sustainability

Students develop an understanding of sustainability and the interconnected environmental, social and economic factors that influence decision-making. They explore global challenges such as climate change, population growth, resource depletion and inequality, considering their impact on local, national and international communities.

Investigating Sustainability Issues

Students examine a range of contemporary sustainability issues and analyse how different stakeholders respond to them. Through case studies and research, they evaluate the effectiveness of strategies designed to create a more sustainable future and consider the role of individuals, businesses and governments in driving change.

Sustainability in Practice

A key element of the qualification is the opportunity to apply knowledge to real-world contexts. Students undertake independent investigation and project work, developing practical research skills and proposing solutions to sustainability challenges that affect communities, organisations or the wider environment.

Course Objectives

Throughout the course students will:

- Develop an understanding of environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- Investigate complex global and local sustainability challenges.
- Analyse evidence and evaluate a range of perspectives.
- Conduct independent research and present informed conclusions.
- Develop problem-solving, project management and communication skills.
- Consider how sustainable practices can support positive change.

Assessment

The qualification combines externally assessed content with project-based learning, allowing students to demonstrate both their knowledge and their ability to apply sustainability principles to real-world issues. Students undertake research and investigative work that develops independence, organisation and critical thinking.

Future Pathways

Sustainability complements a wide range of A Level and vocational courses, including Geography, Biology, Environmental Science, Sociology, Business, Politics and Economics. The qualification supports progression to degree courses and careers in environmental management, sustainability consultancy, renewable energy, conservation, business sustainability, public policy, engineering, planning and corporate social responsibility.

As employers and universities increasingly prioritise environmental awareness and sustainable decision-making, this qualification provides valuable knowledge and transferable skills for a rapidly changing world.

Potential new offers

We understand that there may be some subjects you are interested in which we don't traditionally offer. Please speak to Miss Brittain or any member of Altwood SLT about this. If we have enough interest we may consider running a new subject or we may be able to reach out to other local providers to support in the delivery.

You need to use the SiMs app to make your application. If you are having trouble with this please contact Miss Brittain, Ms Williams or Mrs Dicker who can help you out.

The deadline for returns is Thursday 16th December.