



Sixth Form Information

2023 – 2025

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Welcome to the Mercian Trust

The Mercian Trust brings successful schools to work together under one banner, as a multi-academy trust or MAT. The schools are unique in their identity and united by their ambition to offer the best possible future for their pupils.



The eight secondary schools which make up the Mercian Academy Trust are

- Aldridge School
- Queen Mary's Grammar School
- Queen Mary's High School
- Shire Oak Academy
- Walsall Studio School
- Great Barr Q3 Academy
- Langley Q3 Academy
- Tipton Q3 Academy

Each school has its own distinct ethos and approach, but we have this over-arching aim in common: we prepare all our pupils to live life to the full by inspiring them to

- Realise their potential as learners
- Thrive in the world of work
- Make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community

The Mercian Trust respects the autonomy of its member schools but, through collaboration, fosters strengths that are greater than the sum of its parts. Working together as a multi-academy trust provides a framework for sharing expertise and enthusiasm, resources and ideas.

For the students in the Trust's schools, we have a strong focus on pastoral care and family values. We recognise that good relationships underpin successful education. We aim to ensure that excellent teaching and learning are complemented by care and support which value and applaud each student's gifts and abilities.

As you start making important choices for your future, we hope that The Mercian Trust will increase your range of options and opportunities. Choosing the right school for the Sixth Form is important. We hope that the information in this booklet will help you reach the best decision.

We look forward to welcoming you to our family of schools in Walsall.

Forward by the Head Girl Team

“If we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge.”

Malala Yousafzai

Queen Mary’s High School is an institution which strives to give its students an outstanding education alongside an enriching school experience. Our school lays the groundwork for each person to succeed in the future, regardless of their endeavours. As well as our students obtaining excellent academic results year on year, they also leave QMHS with experiences that shape them into respectable, well-rounded individuals.

From the moment you enter our school, regardless of whether you have attended for five years or are a new student, you join the Queen Mary’s family and the school community. You will be encouraged to work hard both inside and outside class by enthusiastic teachers. Staff are fully invested in each individual, and each student’s well-being is as important as their studies.

There are various opportunities which everyone can participate in, whether leading or joining a club. Due to our diverse community, there are many societies to choose from such as CAS (Cultural Awareness Society), Just Like Us (LGBTQ+ society), as well as the Anime club, Chess Club, Medsoc, and many more. You will undoubtedly be able to find a group with whom you enjoy spending time and who share your interests.

In Years 12 and 13, you will have more opportunities to assume roles of responsibilities at school, and in Queen Mary’s Sixth Form, everyone plays a part. Our student leadership team is unique to our school, as it offers countless roles catered for each sixth former. The Head Girl Team is the voice of our school, and they work with both the student body and the staff to improve the QM experience. The House Captains lead all the house-related activities, which enables them to build lasting relationships with students across year groups while taking a break from academic life. If you are passionate about a particular subject, we also have prefects who seek to enhance the education of younger years.

We guarantee that if you attend Queen Mary’s High School, you will depart with not just excellent results but also lifelong skills, memories, and friendships.

Lily-Jade Patel, Head Girl
Georgia Dufty, Deputy Head Girl
Sheiley Chen and Shamiso Sheta, Assistant Head Girls

Admission Arrangement for Entry to the QMHS Sixth Form (Year 12)

Overview

The school admits both girls and boys to the Sixth Form. Pupils will be considered for admission on the basis of their academic attainment in GCSE or equivalent examinations plus the availability and suitability of courses offered by the school. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for Year 12 is 1.

Applications should be made directly to the school and not to the Local Authority. The application should be completed online and is accessible from the school website, www.qmhs.org.uk. Conditional offers are made in the Spring Term and confirmed after the publication of GCSE results in August.

Applications

Girls and boys are welcome to apply provided they meet the entry requirements. Priority for admission to Year 12 will be given to pupils progressing into the Sixth Form from Year 11 of QMHS, although they will also need to meet the entry requirements. The number of places offered will be subject to maximum set sizes not being exceeded in individual subjects.

Entry Requirements

Entry to Year 12 is dependent upon academic attainment in GCSE examinations* and the availability and suitability of courses offered by the school. Save for candidates who are either Looked After or previously Looked After as defined in the Admissions Policy, or are eligible for Pupil Premium**, the entry requirements, which also apply to those already at the school, are at least seven GCSEs at grade 6 or above which include English and Maths.

Candidates would normally be expected to achieve at least grade 7 in the subjects they wish to study at A Level (or, for non-GCSE subjects, attain an average GCSE points score of at least 6.8). Those candidates already at the school who are either Looked After or previously Looked After as defined in the Admissions Policy, or are eligible for Pupil Premium**, together with those candidates applying from other schools to join Year 12 and who are either Looked After or previously Looked After as defined in the Admissions Policy, or are eligible for Pupil Premium**, will be required to achieve at least six GCSEs at grade 6 or above which include English and Maths. All such candidates would normally be expected to achieve at least grade 7 in the subjects they wish to study at A-Level (or, for non-GCSE subjects, attain an average GCSE points score of at least 6.2).

* Equivalent examinations will be considered, but only when such equivalence can be independently verified (by, for example, the Department for Education).

** The school will require evidence to confirm Pupil Premium status. The evidential requirements can be found at in the Admissions Policy. Please contact the School Office if further information is required.

Application Deadline

Applications should be submitted by Friday 13 January 2023 in order for subject choices to be considered when designing the curriculum and option blocks. Late entries after this deadline will be considered, but some oversubscribed courses may not be available.

Waiting list

Applicants for admission to Year 12 who meet the academic requirements for admission but who, in accordance with the admissions criteria, cannot be offered places, will be placed on a waiting list. If the number of pupils studying particular subjects falls below the maximum capacity in the available sets, then those on the waiting list wanting to study those particular subjects will be offered places in order of merit derived from their average GCSE point scores. Where there is a tie for a place, Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children will be given preference.

Appeals

An appeal against refusal to admit to Year 12 will be heard within 30 school days of the receipt of the appeal.

Withdrawal of an Offer

An offer of a place (to any year group) may be withdrawn, if it is subsequently discovered that fraudulent or intentionally misleading information has been supplied resulting in another candidate being denied a place at the school.

Sixth Form Information

Joining the Sixth Form

Queen Mary's High School has a strong sixth form tradition which benefits from being a close-knit community where all students are valued and their individual needs are met. The majority of our Year 11 pupils choose Queen Mary's High School for their education post-16 and we also welcome many students from other institutions.

Why Queen Mary's High School?

Queen Mary's High School offers its sixth formers a stable and familiar environment where they continue to develop academically and socially with the support of friends and teachers they have known for several years. Students joining us for Year 12 are made to feel welcome and quickly integrate with other members of the sixth form.

The sixth form in this school is able to offer a wide range of subjects for A-Level studies. We have an excellent record of achievement at A-Level with **46% of the A-Level grades at A*/A last summer**, and **73% from A*-B**, and this level of achievement is the result of a combination of teacher expertise and student commitment. All sixth form teaching is by specialist subject staff, all of whom are graduates with qualifications and experience in their field. Of our last Year 13 cohort, **95% have accepted places at universities** (40% of which are at Russell Group universities, and two students are studying at the University of Oxford), and the remainder are taking a gap year or have started an apprenticeship. However, the school is not complacent about its academic record and strives to ensure that every student achieves the grades of which they are capable in every subject and is prepared for their next step.

Choosing a Course of Study

Students will choose three subjects to study in Year 12. Students who choose Mathematics may also choose Further Mathematics as their fourth option, if they can provide evidence of strong mathematical skills at GCSE. Students should choose subjects they enjoy and ones for which they show an aptitude, as they are more likely to do well in them. A-Level courses are more demanding than GCSE courses, and students should take the opportunity to talk to subject teachers and present sixth form students, so that they make an informed choice and select a sensible combination of subjects. Students should also fully research entry requirements and any special demands of Higher Education courses to ensure that they do not impose restrictions on their future career choices.

All students learn skills to support extended study and research in Year 12, and they are also offered the opportunity to study the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in Year 13. The EPQ is valued by universities as it develops the skills of independent research that are needed to be successful at degree level. Each year, students gain entry to Oxbridge, Medicine and Dentistry courses, and relevant support is given to those who wish to pursue this route.

Sixth Form Leadership Opportunities and Personal Development

We offer a wealth of leadership opportunities to sixth form students, and they contribute to running the four Houses, Sixth Form Council, and can become Head and Deputy Head Girls. All students are encouraged to participate and lead activities in order to develop important key skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving.

Sixth formers lead in a range of musical and sporting activities, and are involved in our choir and perform in the orchestra and various instrument ensembles, and sixth form students help to organise and lead Sports Day, ensuring house and school teams are fully represented. Raising money for charity is an important aspect of school life, and sixth formers are always actively involved in organising fund-raising events with younger students. There are opportunities to use initiative in other areas too, such as leading drama productions, debating groups, production of the school magazine and involvement with the Fairtrade group.

Approach to Sixth Form Study

The A-Level curriculum allows for private study time to be allocated on individual timetables. Students learn to plan their time carefully, so that they meet deadlines for written assignments and Non-Examined Assessments (coursework), attend lessons regularly and punctually, and involve themselves in extra-curricular activities. To succeed, students need to become independent, self-motivated, self-disciplined and confident, and our experienced staff make every effort to provide them with the necessary supervision and support.

Attendance and punctuality to lessons, completion of assignments and general progress are monitored frequently and discussed with the students by subject staff and form teachers, to ensure each student is successful.

Money Matters

A Bursary Fund is available for students who are eligible for free school meals, and some additional funding may also be available to support those whose parents are on low incomes. More details are available from the Head of Sixth Form.

Special Educational Needs

No academically-able pupil who meets our entry requirements will be denied a place at QMHS because of a physical disability, or a medical or psychological condition. Neither shall any student who develops a special need during their time at QMHS be transferred to another institution, unless we can no longer fulfil their educational needs.

In Conclusion

Students at Queen Mary's High School achieve their full potential, both academically and as individuals, thanks to our supportive and flexible staff and Key Stage 5 curriculum. Our outstanding examination results demonstrate our commitment to the success of our students. We want everyone to enjoy their two years in the Sixth Form, and we work hard to develop a three-way partnership between the students, their parents, and the teaching staff

If you would like any further information please contact Dr Darwood, the Head of Sixth Form.



*Head of Sixth Form,
Dr Darwood*

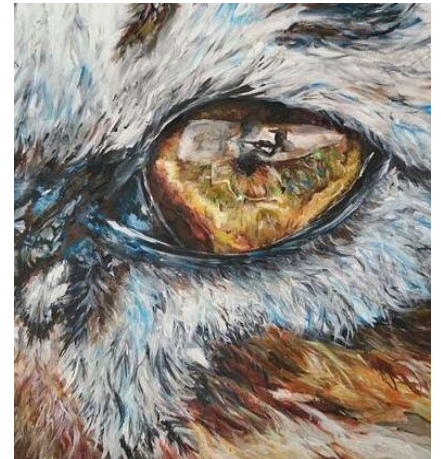


Sixth Form Curriculum

Introduction

Studying Art and Design is a fantastic opportunity for students to grow and develop into artists in their own right and to learn about Art in an ever-changing and challenging world. Studying Art gives students, the ability to learn and develop artistic key skills whilst expressing themselves creatively.

Last year, 71% of our students achieved A*/A at A-Level, and 100% got A*-B. We are very proud of our students and hope to see you studying with us next year.

**Course Overview****Year 12**

- workshop skills, including painting, drawing, print-making, sculpture, artist research and photography
- 'develop your own project' is an opportunity for students to create a project on their chosen theme, which can be drawn from a very wide range of options
- Year 12 Exhibition is a student-led opportunity to plan and present their work to a wider-school audience on their chosen theme

Year 13

- a second opportunity for students to create their own project on a different theme to the one chosen in Year 12, on which 60% of their final grade will be based
- preparation for an examination unit worth 40% of the qualification based on pre-release material issued by the examination board

Assessment Model

All work is internally assessed by the Art Department and moderated by the OCR Examination Board. Components will be assessed at their completion and will be marked to the following criteria:

- Objective 1: Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding
- Objective 2: Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.
- Objective 3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress.
- Objective 4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.

**Career Opportunities**

The skills learnt and developed in the Art A-Level prepare students for a wide range of career paths, which include architecture, computer games designer, fine artists, advertising, marketing, branding designer, fashion designer, web designer, art therapy, photography, art history, gallery owner, museum curator. Recent A-Level students have gone on to study stage and set design, fine art, animation, and architecture.

Introduction

A-Level Biology is a very popular and successful course at Queen Mary's High School. Biology is studied at a high level, with a range of topics preparing students to thrive at undergraduate level. We provide a learning environment that is supported by outstanding teachers which enables students to reach their full potential. We ensure that students are prepared to learn in depth within the classroom and are able to apply their understanding to a range of challenging scenarios.

The outcomes within the department are exceptional. Last year, out of the 51 students sitting the exams, 28% achieved an A*(the national proportion was 13%), and 47% gained either an A or A* (the national proportion was 34%). Over 70% achieved an A*-B and all students passed their practical component.

We also provide a range of opportunities outside the classroom. We run both a Medical Society and Dental Society in which current medical issues are debated, guest speakers come to share their experiences, and students are supported with early UCAS entry and medical interviews. We participate in competitions like the National Biology Olympiad in which students compete to achieve a medal by demonstrating their knowledge of biology. Students are sign-posted to literature, webinars and further resources to support their independent study. All students studying Biology develop critical reasoning, analytical and evaluation skills, the ability to handle and analyse complex data, written and oral communication skills, and independent work skills including time management and self-motivation.

Course Overview

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Year 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module 1 – Development of practical skills in biology• Module 2 – Foundations in Biology• Module 3 – Exchange and transport• Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease |
| Year 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module 5 – Communication, homeostasis and energy• Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems |

Assessment Model

At least 15% of the question paper assessment covers knowledge and understanding of practical, and at least 10% of the question paper assessment covers mathematical skills.

- Paper 1 – Written examination (2¼ hours) 37% of A-Level
- Paper 2 – Written examination (2¼ hours) 37 % of A-Level
- Paper 3 – Written examination (1½ hours) 26% of A-Level

Papers 1 and 2 contain a section A that is 15 marks of multiple choice questions and a section B that has structured questions and extended response questions covering theory and practical skills worth 85 marks. Paper 3 is 70 marks of structured questions and extended response questions covering theory and practical skills. The practical component is a teacher assessed component where candidates complete a minimum of 12 practical activities to demonstrate practical competence.

Career Opportunities

Biology is a demanding course that prepares students for a career in many fields. Students are equipped with a variety of skills that are highly desirable within the scientific sector and other demanding professions.

Biology is a core subject for anyone thinking of working within the fields of medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and the healthcare sector. Previous students have also gone onto study degree level in Optometry, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy, Nursing, Zoology, Midwifery, Animal Behaviour and Welfare, Radiotherapy, Audiology, Biological Sciences, Natural Sciences, Biomedical Science and teaching.

Introduction

Chemistry at Queen Mary's High School is great subject for combining theory with practical work, and extends beyond the requirements of the AQA course to prepare students for further study. Last year, 40% of the cohort achieved A*/A grades and 64% attained A*-B grades. Thirteen students have continued to study a Chemistry-related degree such as Pharmacy or Chemical Engineering, and seven attained a place to read Medicine or Dentistry. University destinations included University of St Andrews, University of Birmingham and King's College, London.

Chemistry students are well supported with enthusiastic teaching staff, a weekly Chemistry clinic and the opportunity to be a subject ambassador for KS3 and GCSE students. We also attend lectures at the University of Birmingham, have welcomed visiting university lecturers, and invite students to enter the Royal Society of Chemistry's annual Olympiad (last year, students attained one silver and two bronze awards). Staff have over sixty years' teaching experience between them, and bring experience from such as scientific publishing and forensic science to their teaching.

Course Overview

- Physical Chemistry, atomic structure, amount of substance, bonding, energetics, kinetics, chemical equilibria, thermodynamics, rate equations, equilibrium constants, electrode potentials and electrochemical cells.
- Inorganic chemistry: periodicity, group 2, and group 7, period 3 elements and their oxides, transition metals, reactions of ions in solution.
- Organic chemistry: alkanes, halogenoalkanes, alkenes, alcohols, organic analysis, optical isomers carbonyls and carboxylic acids, aromatics, amines, polymers, amino acids and DNA, organic synthesis, NMR and chromatography.
- Practical content: 12 required activities completed during the course in specified fortnightly practical lessons which focus on the skills and techniques universities are seeking

Assessment Model

Six hours written examination spread over three exam papers:

- Papers 1 and 2: 35% each of total grade; questions include long and short answers.
- Paper 3: 30% of total grade, including practical techniques (data analysis), multiple choice questions and questions on any area of specification
- Additional endorsement of practical skill on certificate.

Career Opportunities

Chemistry is a requirement for degree level courses in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and veterinary science. In addition, Chemistry provides a solid platform for a wide range of careers including law, accountancy, forensics, pharmacology, chemical engineering, food science, materials science, IT, banking, journalism, toxicology and geology.

Introduction

Enhance your computational, logical thinking and analytical skills by studying a course which prepares students for a wide range of future opportunities and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality. In addition to careers with a computer science focus, the course will help develop your problem solving and digital literacy skills which are valuable soft skills for a diverse variety of careers.

Course Overview

The content of the course will include

- 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
- elements of computational thinking
- problem solving and programming
- algorithms

Students will choose a computing problem to work through according to the guidance in the specification, and it will entail the four stages of Analysis of the problem, Design of the solution, Developing the solution, and Evaluation.

Assessment Model

- a written examination of 2½ hours on 'Computer Systems' (40%)
- a written examination of 2½ hours on 'Algorithms and programming' (40%)
- a Non-Examined Assessment programming project (20%)

Career Opportunities

A degree in Computing opens the door to a wide range of careers both with IT companies and those who use computers in industry, commerce, government service and the universities. Roles span technical innovation, management, analysis, consultancy, training and research. Employers range from small companies to large multinationals with much scope for work and travel abroad. As computers are applied to new application areas, opportunities for computing graduates with the right kind of specialist knowledge will become increasingly available too. Any student wishing to progress to a Computer Science university course is advised to also consider studying A-Level Mathematics.

Previous students have gone on to study Mathematics and Computer Science, Business Computing and IT, Computer Science and Games Art at university and on to careers in Data/Financial Analysis.

Additional Entry Requirements

Students are required to have experience of a high-level programming language up to GCSE level. The main language taught at Queen Mary's High School is Python although any high-level language will provide the experience required to progress at A-Level. Any students who do not use this language need to upskills themselves prior to beginning the course.

Introduction

The A Level Drama and Theatre studies course provides students with the opportunity to create, shape and explore a variety of theatre texts and performance styles, studying practitioners and applying methodologies whilst still allowing for individual creative freedom. The course is underpinned by a highly practical approach to the world of theatre and co-curricular opportunities that encourage pupils to develop their abilities in directing and designing.

Last year, 50% of our Drama students achieved an A*/A grade, and 100% achieved A*-B, with students obtaining places at Exeter University, the University of St Andrews and Oxford University to study subjects including Law and Biochemistry.

Drama and Theatre studies is a challenging subject suited to students who are creative, questioning and observant. Group work and collaboration is at the heart of this course, and students learn through experience, seeing theatre and making theatre for themselves. It is a varied course with students studying a wide range of theatrical styles, plays, practitioners and theatre conventions; learning about approaches to theatre and applying knowledge to practical and theoretical components. In addition to Drama lessons, students will go and see a number of live performances, access online digital theatre shows and have the opportunity to work with a theatre company in a workshop context.

The various assessment models used such as extract based questions, reflective log books, performance work, rehearsal strategies and open and closed book approaches allow students to develop a wide range of skills, such as the ability to read a script critically and apply creative ideas of both self and set practitioners, analyse and evaluate the impact of theatre and performance and undertake independent research which are valuable to both future study and employment.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

- **Unit 1: Drama and Theatre (written examination)** enables students to analyse and critique live theatre during the course and apply knowledge and understanding of theatre to interpret two set texts from either a performance or directing perspective.
- **Unit 2: Creating Original Drama** enables students to learn how to create and develop original devised ideas to communicate meaning, as part of the theatre making process. Students will develop ideas, research relevant processes and theatre practices, apply what they have learnt from live performances, explore devising work, influential practitioners, rehearsal methods and refine work in progress.
- **Unit 3: Making Theatre** will enable students to work in groups to explore, rehearse and perform three extracts from three different plays. They learn how to interpret texts and realise artistic intentions, make connections between theory and practice, and create and communicate meaning for a live audience.

Career Opportunities

A-Level Drama and Theatre is useful for students considering higher education in any arts or humanities subject, including English Language and Literature, Journalism, Dance, Music, Art and Design, and Media Studies. Students have also gone on to study Law, Speech Therapy, Drama Therapy, Psychology, Counselling and Teaching. Further career opportunities include arts/theatre administration, arts journalism, director, actor, designer, playwright, stage management, theatre management, theatrical agent, technician, broadcasting, media presenting, education, drama therapy and scriptwriting.

Introduction

A-Level Economics is a rewarding and highly regarded subject which combines a range of inter-disciplinary skills: it fuses knowledge and insights from politics, philosophy, history and mathematics, to name a few. The intellectually stimulating course enables students to use 'The Economist's Toolkit' to analyse everyday phenomena, such as unexpected price rises, globalisation and even why some elite athletes earn such high wages.

Last academic year, around 75% of our A-level Economics students achieved grades A*-B, with many pursuing the subject as their chosen field of study at undergraduate level at universities such as UCL and Exeter.

Studying A-Level Economics allows students to apply economic theory to support analysis of current economic problems and issues. At QMHS, we encourage students to appreciate the interrelationships between microeconomics and macroeconomics and provide them with access to online resources, including the *Financial Times*, that complement study with real-life scenarios. Students can also reinforce their knowledge, employability skills and confidence when participating in co-curricular activities with Young Enterprise. Last year, some of our students entered the Young Economist of the Year competition and deepened their understanding of current economic issues and promoted the study of economic science.

Course Overview

The A-Level course has two main branches: macroeconomics and microeconomics. In Macroeconomics, students study the national and international economies. Macroeconomics includes looking at the success or failure of government policies – for example, does the government have effective and fair policies for cutting unemployment? or has the government succeeded in creating the conditions for a sustainable and balanced recovery?

In Microeconomics, students study individuals, firms, markets and market failure. They explore the economics of everyday life, the decisions that we as households and individuals make, and the impact of businesses in different industries. Microeconomics looks at issues such as consumer behaviour, individual labour markets, and the theory of firms.

Assessment Model

- Paper 1: Markets and market failure (33.3% of A-level)
- Paper 2: National and international economy (33.3% of A-level)
 - Section A: data response questions with a choice of one from two contexts
 - Section B: essay questions with a choice of one from three
- Paper 3: Economic principles and issues (33.3% of A-level)
 - Section A: Multiple choice questions
 - Section B: extended response questions which require a student to draw together different areas of the specification

Career Opportunities

Economics is perhaps the most common degree choice for the world's leaders and multinational organisations. As the second most lucrative degree subject, it provides students with the thinking skills and numerical analysis methods needed for a wide range of careers. Economics is an ideal career option for students aiming to shape the policies and decisions of organisations such as the NHS and local and national governments. Many graduates choose to work in the private sector, working as investment analysts, statisticians, economists and management consultants.

Introduction

The A-Level English Language course is a highly successful and refreshing course that is underpinned by enriching and stimulating co-curricular opportunities with excellent outcomes.

Last year, 58% of our A-Level English Language students achieved an A*/A grade, and 92% achieved A*-B, with many continuing to study the subject at degree level. Several of our students have achieved places at Oxford University and King's College, London.

One of the crucial ingredients that enables students to perform so well during our time with us is through the co-curricular opportunities that run alongside the course. Students have a wide range of opportunities available to them, such as lectures by the University of Lancaster, and last year our students contributed to an interesting linguistic research project about the representation of pandemics. Students also attend conferences by the English and Media Centre, and these exciting sessions offer new interpretations and perspectives that go beyond the specification, thus preparing them for the rigour of academic study. Students also have access to a range of online resources, such as Massolit and *emagazine* so that they can engage with wider linguistic research.

The A-Level English Language course offers a stimulating exploration and experience of the way language is used in a range of contexts. Whilst the course builds upon the foundations developed at GCSE, A-Level English Language enables students to explore new areas within linguistics, such as gender, age, occupation, global languages, and the way English has changed and evolved. Students also explore how children learn to acquire a language through spoken and written communication. Most importantly, A-Level English Language is concerned with exploring different debates surrounding such linguistic topics.

As part of the course, you will experience a range of assessment styles, such as forming discursive essay responses, creative writing, linguistic investigations and writing for different publications as part of a directed writing task. These assessments will enable students to develop their analytical skills, formulate sustained arguments, as well as writing for a specific audience and genre – all of which will be invaluable for both further study and future employment.

Course Overview

- **Paper One: Language, the Individual and Society** will enable students to explore texts from different periods, as well as examine children's language development through spoken and written communication.
- **Paper Two: Language Diversity and Change** will provide students with the opportunity to explore the different debates surrounding the English language. In this paper, you will develop your craft as an academic, whilst writing about linguistic issues for a non-specialist audience.
- **Non-Examination Assessment (coursework)** will provide students will the opportunity to conduct an independent investigation on a linguistic topic of their own choice. Alongside this, they will also craft a piece of original writing and a linguistic commentary based on a genre of their own choosing.

Career Options

The skills developed in the English Language course are marketable in most career areas. Jobs related to the course may include teaching (in primary or secondary schools, or teaching English abroad as a foreign language), media (journalism, publishing, copywriting), marketing, advertising, linguistics, speech therapy, computing, law, government, forensics. There are very few jobs in which an understanding of the workings of the English language would not be helpful!

Introduction

The A-Level English Literature course provides students with the opportunity to explore literary texts in a refreshing way. The course is underpinned by enriching and stimulating co-curricular opportunities with excellent outcomes.

Last year, 78% of our A Level English Literature students achieved an A*/A grade, and 89% achieved A*-B, with many opting to study the subject at degree level and obtaining places at Oxford University and Kings College, London.

One of the crucial ingredients that enables students to perform so well during our time with us is through the co-curricular opportunities that run alongside the English Literature course. Students have a wide range of opportunities available to them, such as, lectures delivered by academics and when opportunities arise, theatre trips for drama texts are made available. Students also attend conferences by the English and Media Centre, and these also enable students to grow into literary critics. These co-curricular opportunities play an instrumental role as they facilitate in preparing students for the rigour of academic study. Students also have access to a range of resources, such as Massolit and *emagazine* to enhance their knowledge and inform their appreciation of literature texts.

The A-Level course offers an independent study of a range of texts that transcend through time. Students will explore texts from different periods, traditions and cultures, as well as having the opportunity to study drama, poetry and prose texts. The course enables students to explore dystopian literature in depth.

The variety of assessment styles used, such as passage-based questions, unseen material, single text questions, multiple-text questions, open and closed book approaches allow students to develop a wide range of skills, such as the ability to read critically, analyse, evaluate and undertake independent research which are valuable for both further study and future employment

Course Overview

- **Paper 1: Drama and Poetry pre-1900** will enable students to explore Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, as well as a selection of poetry by Rossetti. Here, students will make thematic connections between texts.
- **Paper 2: Comparative and Contextual Study** will provide students with the opportunity to examine dystopian fiction across different contexts. Students will study Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, whilst also exploring a wide variety of additional novels and short stories from the genre.
- **Non-Examination Assessment (coursework)** will consist of a close-reading piece, alongside a comparative essay task in which two genres are examined. Students will have the opportunity to select their own text choices and formulate their own questions for each task.

Career Options

The skills developed in the English Literature course are marketable in most career areas. Jobs related to the course may include teaching (in primary or secondary schools, or teaching English abroad as a foreign language), journalism, publishing, marketing, advertising, government, public relations, library and information services. There are very few jobs whereby the critical skills developed in analytical and comparative approaches would not be helpful!

Introduction

Geography is the study of Earth's landscapes, peoples, places and environments. It is, quite simply, about the world in which we live. Geography is learning from the real world, about the real world, and in the real world.

The A-Level Geography course is a highly successful course that is underpinned by enriching co-curricular opportunities. Last year, 50% of our students achieved an A*/A grade, and 83%% achieved A*-B, with most students opting to study an environmental or Geography-based degree. Several of our students achieved places at leading Russell Group universities.

One of the key ingredients that enables students to perform so highly is through the co-curricular opportunities that accompany the course. Students have a wide range of opportunities available to them including Geographical Association lectures by expert academics, with the most recent lecture offering focusing on 'HIV/AIDS as the forgotten pandemic'. Students also conduct field work in diverse landscapes including woodlands, post-glacial, coastal and urban environments both locally and in Snowdonia.

Geography is unique in bridging the social and natural sciences. Human Geography concerns the understanding of the dynamics of cultures, societies and economies whilst Physical Geography concerns the understanding of the dynamics of physical landscapes and the environment. Geography puts this understanding of social and physical processes within the context of places and regions. Geography therefore, provides an ideal framework for relating other fields of knowledge. It is not surprising that those trained as geographers often contribute substantially to the applied management of resources and environments. Geography is, in the broadest sense, an education for life and for living. Learning through Geography, whether gained through formal learning or experientially through travel, fieldwork and expeditions, helps us all to be more socially and environmentally sensitive, informed and responsible citizens and employees.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Component 1: Physical Geography – 2½ hours written examination (40%)

- Section A: Water and carbon cycles
- Section B: Glacial systems and landscapes
- Section C: Hazards

Component 2: Human Geography – 2½ hours written examination (40%)

- Section A: Global systems and global governance
- Section B: Changing places
- Section C: Population and the environment

Component 3: Geography Fieldwork Investigation (20%) - an individual fieldwork investigation of 3,000-4,000 words

**Career Opportunities**

Geography is an intellectually challenging subject which requires an understanding and application of scientific logic, principles, methods and laws; flexibility and openness of mind to deal with a range of different concepts; an ability to develop and test hypotheses and to integrate ideas; analytical capabilities to collect/select, analyse, present and interpret primary and secondary datasets, especially spatial data. Geography graduates are therefore numerate, literate, good team workers, can think analytically and critically, and are highly computer literate. This makes them extremely employable in careers directly linked to geography such as meteorology, disaster management, healthcare management and GIS engineering, but also in broader fields such as business and management.

Introduction

History combines the excitement of exploration with the sense of reward earned by successfully confronting and making sense of complex and challenging problems. It is about human behaviour and real people dealing with real situations. Whether we study the actions and impact of Fidel Castro or Queen Elizabeth I, we try to get to grips with what makes people tick.

The History Department is made up of experienced teachers who enable their students to become successful learners that enjoy learning, make progress and achieve their potential. This can be seen in our results in 2022 where 56% of students achieved A*/A, and 81% secured at least a B. We are very proud of these results and believe they are proof that, if you work hard in History at Queen Marys, you will succeed.

In 2022, seven of our students have gone on to study History and/or Politics at a range of prestigious universities such as the University of Bristol, the University of York and the University College London. We were extremely gratified to see so many wonderfully talented students build on their time with us in Higher Education. It is a testament to the work we do as a department, preparing them for the challenges of A-Level and nurturing their love of History.

History at Queen Mary's High School is more than the examined course. Our students enjoy varied opportunities to develop their enthusiasm for, and understanding of, their studies. These include interesting lectures by eminent historians, national debating competitions and extra-curricular trips to historical sites such as Hampton Court and/or Hardwick Hall. Beyond this, our A-Level students have the opportunity to represent the school as part of the Lessons from Auschwitz programme, developing their knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust.

Course Overview

- **Paper 1 - The Tudors – England 1485-1603** takes you from Henry VII's epic seizure of power, through the six wives of Henry VIII to the reigns of Edward, 'Bloody Mary', and Elizabeth I. It is a story which will take your breath away!
- **Paper 2: The Cold War 1945-1991** begins by tracing the origins of global tension following WWII and takes us to the brink of nuclear war. You will study the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, the Berlin Wall and so much more. If you want to understand the world we live in today, you need to look no further!
- **Independent Coursework - American Civil Rights.** In Year 13 students will research, craft and submit a 3000-4000 word essay on the topic above. You will be supported by teachers in lessons and via individual tutorials.

Assessment Model

Students complete two examinations at the end of this two-year course, one for each component:

- students will firstly be asked to understand and evaluate arguments in extracts taken from relevant primary sources or written by academic historians
- secondly, students will be required to write two argumentative essays (from a choice of three questions)

Career Opportunities

Universities and employers agree that A-Level History is a highly regarded qualification which will open doors into a range of higher education and career choices. Students of History are able to ask and answer important questions, evaluate evidence, identify and analyse different interpretations of an issue, and substantiate their own arguments and judgements. Our future doctors, lawyers, politicians, accountants, managing directors and scientists need these skills. Above all, our students develop an open and inquisitive mind; they become critical thinkers.

Introduction

The A-Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics courses provide unique opportunities for students to be inspired, challenged and to stand out academically. Students who have studied Mathematics beyond GCSE are widely thought of as having achieved something prestigious, and are highly desirable to universities and employers.

We are proud that 48% of our Year 13 students achieved A*/A grades in A-Level Mathematics last year, and over fifteen students have gone on to study Mathematics or subjects requiring a mathematical foundation at some of the best universities around the country, including St Andrews, Durham, Loughborough and Bristol. Over the past five years we have also had students taking up places at Oxford, Cambridge and Warwick to read Mathematics.

The Mathematics department at Queen Mary's High school is an enthusiastic team which offers specialist teaching in all mathematical disciplines. We offer co-curricular support for students looking to take STEP, AEA and other papers that are essential to progress to many of the best universities. Feedback from our departmental questionnaire showed that students enjoy their lessons and feel very supported. In 2022, our A-Level Further Mathematics students achieved 100% A*-C, and 92% of these students achieved A/A* in Mathematics too.

Students who are looking to study Mathematics, or any Applied Sciences at degree level, may be considered advantaged if they have also studied Further Mathematics A-Level. Further Mathematics is of particular benefit for students looking to study Physics, Engineering, Computing, or any subject that has a deep mathematical content. Further Mathematics is always studied at Queen Mary's High School as a fourth A-level, and is delivered through a course designed with exactly the same number of teaching hours as all the other A-Level courses.

Course Overview

Geometry, Calculus, Algebra, Sequence, Numerical Methods, Proof, Mechanics, Matrices (unique and Complex Numbers (unique to Further Mathematics), Statistics (unique to Mathematics)).

Assessment Model

Students studying Further Mathematics must also be studying Mathematics. A-Level Mathematics consists of three 2 hour papers (Paper 1 and Paper 2 are Pure Mathematics; Paper 3 is Applied (Mechanics and Statistics) Mathematics). A-Level Further Mathematics is four papers: Paper 1 and Paper 2 are Pure Mathematics (2 hours); Paper 3 is Further Pure Material (90 minutes); Paper 4 is Further Mechanics Material (90 minutes).

Career Opportunities

For students who have studied Mathematics beyond GCSE, there are very clear advantages for career prospects. Mathematics is invaluable in any career which values problem solving skills, or requires logical thought and reasoning. Many students also use the rigour and analytical thinking they develop in Mathematics at Queen Mary's High School to move into degree courses and careers in Medicine, Law and Politics.

Introduction

The course builds on and develops the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing which have been acquired in GCSE work. An important difference is that the subject concentrates not on basic transactional language but on wider social, political, economic and cultural issues. The course will develop skills, and an understanding of the grammatical systems of the languages studied. It gives a better insight into the way of life, and the history, geography, political system, economic life and customs of countries where the languages are spoken. Students may also have the opportunity to study the literature of the country and, where possible, to visit the theatre, cinema or watch video and on-line material.

Furthermore, the course is underpinned by enriching and stimulating co-curricular opportunities with excellent outcomes. The one to one sessions with our Foreign Language Assistant play an essential part in developing the confidence, examination skills and fluency of our students.

Last year, all of our A-Level German students achieved an A*/A grade, with many opting to study the subject at degree level and securing a place at the university of their choice.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing:

- aspects of German-speaking society
- artistic culture in the German speaking world
- multiculturalism in German-speaking society
- aspects of political life in German-speaking society
- grammar

Paper 2 is a written paper assessing one text and one film, or two texts from the list set in the specification, and grammar

Paper 3 is the Speaking Test with stimulus card material followed by a presentation and conversation based on an Independent Research Project. This project can be on any aspects of German-speaking society or artistic culture in the German-speaking world or multiculturalism in German-speaking society or aspects of political life in German-speaking society.

Career Opportunities

Statistics show that employment amongst language graduates is second only to Medicine and Law. More and more employers expect a high level of competence in a modern foreign language and there are now a large number of degree courses with a language component. Specific career opportunities include teaching, interpreting, marketing and business.

Introduction

The course builds upon and develops the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing which have been acquired in GCSE work. An important difference is that the subject concentrates not on basic transactional language but on wider social, political, economic and cultural issues. The course will develop skills, and an understanding of the grammatical systems of the languages studied; and give a better insight into the way of life, history, geography, political system, economic life and customs of countries where the languages are spoken. Students may also have the opportunity to study the literature of the country and, where possible, to visit the theatre, cinema or watch video and on-line material.

Furthermore, the course is underpinned by enriching and stimulating co-curricular opportunities with excellent outcomes. The one to one sessions with our Foreign Language Assistant play an essential part in developing the confidence, examination skills and fluency of our students.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing:

- aspects of French-speaking society
- artistic culture in the French speaking world
- multiculturalism in French-speaking society
- aspects of political life in French-speaking society
- grammar

Paper 2 is a written paper assessing one text and one film, or two texts from the list set in the specification, and grammar

Paper 3 is the Speaking Test with stimulus card material followed by a presentation and conversation based on an Independent Research Project. This project can be on any aspects of French-speaking society or artistic culture in the French-speaking world or multiculturalism in French-speaking society or aspects of political life in French-speaking society.

Career Opportunities

Statistics show that employment amongst language graduates is second only to Medicine and Law. More and more employers expect a high level of competence in a modern foreign language and there are now a large number of degree courses with a language component. Specific career opportunities include teaching, interpreting, marketing and business.

Introduction

Physics is at the heart of everything, and A-Level Physics builds upon the foundations set at GCSE with an emphasis on practical inclusion which allows us to better understand the world we live in. AQA provides a solid foundation that can be a springboard to many further degree courses. The department is well resourced and at A-Level has two highly enthusiastic teachers spanning more than 50 years of teaching, who are ready to support you through your studies. Of last year's Year 13, 67% of the group obtained an A*-B grade, with 100% of the group gaining an A-Level in Physics. We are pleased to say that over 60% of the group are moving on to scientific related degree course. Three of them are continuing with Physics and one of these will be studying at St Andrews, which is currently ranked as number in the UK.

Course Overview

Year 12 studies cover the first five topic areas listed below which are assessed on our end of year UCAS assessments. After the internal examinations, we commence the Year 13 content which is completed by the end of April the following year. Lessons include theory, tutorial time and practical experiences to develop all the skills needed to be successful in their final examinations. Once the Year 13 content is well underway, the group discuss the merits of each option module on offer and decide which option will be studied. The course content includes:

- Core content
 1. Measurements and their errors
 2. Particles and radiation
 3. Waves
 4. Mechanics and materials
 5. Electricity
 6. Further mechanics and thermal physics
 7. Fields and their consequences
 8. Nuclear physics
- Options
 - Astrophysics or Turning points in physics

Alongside the core and options content, there are a minimum of twelve essential practical experiences from the content to complete, which are graded as pass or failed. The recognition of this is stated on the final certificate as a pass in practical Physics.

Assessment Model

- Three 2 hour examinations.
- Paper 1: Topics 1-5 and 6.1 = 85 marks. 60 marks structured and 25 marks multiple choice 34% of A-level
- Paper 2: Topic 6 – 8 = 85 marks. 60 marks structured and 25 marks multiple choice 34% of A-level
- Paper 3: Practical questions and option content = 80 marks. 45 marks on practical Physics and 35 marks on the option content. 32% of A-level. (Option content offered at QMHS = Astrophysics or Turning Points in Physics).

Career Opportunities

Physics offers a way into many different career paths: environmental choices include Geophysics or Meteorology, the finance sector includes banking, Law includes Patent Law and education enables teaching at all levels. Healthcare pathways include Medical Physics and Nuclear medicine, and careers in entertainment may include computer games and film. Opportunities in hi-tech industries include space technology, nanotechnology and optoelectronics, and Physics could also lead to curiosity-driven academic research into fields such as Astrophysics and Particle Physics.

Introduction

If you are interested in human behaviour, then studying A-Level Psychology will provide the answers you're looking for. It will feed your curiosity and give you a deeper awareness of the reasons behind your behaviour and that of others. Psychology is a science subject which has links to a variety of other scientific disciplines, such as Biology and Chemistry, and it can be successfully used as a science qualification in applications for courses such as Medicine and Dentistry. It also fits well with humanities subjects such as Geography, History and English, due to the development of communication and analytical skills.

Last year, 41% of our A-Level Psychology students achieved an A*/A grade, and nearly 80% achieved grades A*-B, with many of our students continuing to study the subject at degree level.

The sorts of questions we consider in Psychology are:

- What makes a criminal? Why do people commit inhumane acts? Why do some people develop psychological disorders? How can we measure intelligence? How can we identify a psychopath?

Psychology has a broad range of real-world applications, ranging from health, mental illness, artificial intelligence and criminal attributes, to personal development, social interaction and the environment

Course Overview

Students will study research methods and learn how to evaluate research as well as plan, conduct and analyse their own small-scale investigations. Alongside these skills students will look at the following topics:

- Core Studies
 - Social: Responses to people in authority and people in need
 - Cognitive: Memory and Attention
 - Developmental: External influences on children's behaviour and moral development
 - Biological: Regions of the brain and brain plasticity
 - Individual Differences: Understanding disorders and measuring differences
- Applied Psychology
 - Issues in Mental Health - The historical context of mental health, The medical model, Alternatives to the medical model
 - Criminal Psychology - What makes a criminal?, The collection and processing of forensic evidence, Psychology and the courtroom, Crime prevention, Effect of imprisonment
 - Child Psychology - Intelligence, Pre-adult brain development, Perceptual development, Cognitive development and education, Development of attachments, Impact of advertising on children

Assessment Model

Psychology is assessed by examination with a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions.

- Examination 1: Research methods (2 hours) 30% of total A-level
- Examination 2: Psychological themes through core studies (2 hours) 35% of total A-level
- Examination 3: Applied Psychology (2 hours) 35% of total A-level

Career Opportunities

Psychology opens the door to many career options both within and outside Psychology itself. The wide range of topics and skills covered means it can link to many different degree courses and careers. It can be used as a science subject for applications to degree courses that have this requirement. Our Psychology students have successfully gone into a wide range of careers after sixth form study, including medicine, dentistry, social work, law, nursing, teaching, counselling, art therapy, law enforcement, the Prison Service, and speech therapy.

Introduction

Choosing to study Philosophy and Ethics will enable students to discuss, analyse and evaluate philosophical and moral issues, alongside their own views. Some of the issues we study are the question of whether God exists, the challenge of scientific views, miracles, life after death, sexual identity, issues that deal with human life and animal life, the question of how free we are or whether everything is pre-determined and as a result you are never truly free at all. This study is rigorous, challenging, interesting and relevant to so many wider issues that a student will encounter in life. If you are curious and want to ask the big questions in life, then Philosophy and Ethics is for you!

In 2022, 100% of our students achieved A*-A grades, with two thirds of the students achieving A*.

Course Overview**Component One:****Section A: Philosophy of religion**

- Arguments for the existence of God
- Evil and suffering
- Religious experience
- Religious language
- Miracles
- Self and life after death.

Section B: Ethics and religion

- Ethical theories
- Issues of human life and death
- Issues of animal life and death
- Introduction to meta ethics
- Free will and moral responsibility
- Conscience
- Bentham and Kant

Component Two:**Section A: Study of Christianity**

- Sources of wisdom and authority
- God/gods/ultimate reality
- Self, death and the afterlife
- Good conduct and key moral principles
- Expression of religious identity
- Religion, gender and sexuality
- Religion and science
- Religion and secularisation
- Religion and religious pluralism.

Section B: The dialogue between philosophy of religion and religion. How religion is influenced by and has an influence on philosophy of religion in relation to the issues studied.

Section C: The dialogue between ethical studies and religion. How religion is influenced by and has an influence on ethical studies in relation to the issues studied.

Assessment Model

- Two 3 hour A-Level papers which use both structured and unstructured questions.
- A-level Religious Studies is 100% externally examined

Career Opportunities

A degree in Philosophy, Ethics and or Religious Studies will give students the opportunity to think, reflect, listen, debate, and develop a range of skills that are highly valued by employers when they graduate. Graduates in these disciplines are successful in the job market and may go into areas such as, but not limited to, journalism, teaching, law, the media, marketing, human resources, consultancy, social concern, and care professions. Some will also go on to undertake further study and research in pursuit of higher degrees.

Subjects available in Mercian Trust Schools

By working together in The Mercian Trust, we are able to offer a wider range of subject options, whatever your academic interest and aptitude may be.

Each school will continue to offer its own curriculum (as you will have already seen in this booklet), but we will be collaborating to provide the opportunity for students to study a subject which may not be on offer in the school where you are registered as a pupil (and will spend most of your time).

We have done this by creating a Mercian Block: part of the working day which will be timetabled not just in one school, but across the schools working together in the Multi Academy Trust. You can choose to do one subject from the Mercian Block in a different school. This may mean a bit of extra travelling a couple of times a week, but it will be worth going the extra mile if it allows you to take a subject which really interests you and prepares you for the post-18 pathway you have in mind, which otherwise you may not be able to access.

You can find information about the subjects offered across the Mercian Trust schools in the next few pages.

You may not have thought about some of these opportunities before. It's worth taking a look and finding out more. The Mercian Trust will give you access to a wider range of A-Level courses. At a time when many schools and colleges are having to cut their curriculum offer, our collaboration is something to celebrate.

Introduction

There is little as illuminating as civilisation's distant past, especially as we move towards a global age of increasing tensions. In the same vein, there are few subjects like Ancient History within which our ancient pasts can be rediscovered and learnt from. Take the rise of fifth century Athenian demagogy against modern American politics, for example: the likes of Cleon vs. Donald Trump serve as a clear parallel and prove the eternal relevance of the classical world.

An A-Level in Ancient History will allow students to study the ancient world, its momentous events and its larger than life personalities including Alexander the Great, Caligula and King Leonidas of Sparta. Students will see how ancient civilisations like the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians have shaped the world that we live in today and develop a passion and curiosity for antiquity. The course will also allow students to gain a greater understanding of the literature of the period, including the first great historians like Herodotus, Thucydides and Livy.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Two exams at the end of Year 13 assess knowledge and understanding of the topics but also of the ancient source materials studied:

- Greek component exam (2½ hours) will test your understanding of the Greek depth and period study Greece and Persia: The Rise of Macedon
- Roman component exam (2½ hours) will test your understanding of the Roman depth and period study The Julio-Claudian emperors Roman Britain

Career Opportunities

Many of our students enjoy the subject so much, that they go on to study this subject at university, taking degrees in Ancient History and Classics. Given the critical thinking skills that Ancient History develops, students can also enter a wide variety of careers, including law, journalism and the media in general; advertising, accountancy, business management, marketing, public relations, the armed forces and the police; the civil service, the dramatic arts and education at all levels.

Additional Entry Requirements:

Grade 5 in English and/or Grade 5 in one of History, Geography, Citizenship or Religious Studies.

Introduction

China is a vast country with diverse culture and very long history. China is full of rich literature and philosophies. China has become the second largest economy in the world and plays a critical role in shaping the globe in the 21st century. Therefore, it is important to help young people in the UK to develop better understanding of the history, the culture, and the society of China and Chinese speaking regions. The acquisition of highly competent Chinese language skills can facilitate the process of communication and cooperation with Chinese speaking regions, companies and individuals. A-Level Mandarin is a two-year course. It enables students to acquire the advanced language skills to operate in a Chinese environment. Students are encouraged not only to develop the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, but also to conduct extensive research on Chinese history and culture. The course provides plenty of opportunities for students to develop higher order thinking skills.

Course Overview

Theme 1 Changes in Contemporary Chinese society

- Part 1 Family, including family structure; multi generation household; new patterns of family relationships, the generation gap; conflicts in the family; attitudes of young people in the family, family planning; attitude change towards relationship and marriage, China's ageing population; responsibility to care the elderly
- Part 2 education and the world of work, including school life and student issues; education systems and types of school, education and training; further and higher education provision, public examinations and exam preparation and pressure, preparation for work and job opportunities; career plans; qualifications and job routines, work related problems such as unemployment, demise of traditional industries, maintain a good work-life balance; value of leisure; modern tourism

Theme 2 Chinese Culture

- traditions and customs; the importance of maintaining traditions and customs; the world of the creative industries: music, art, drama and their social impact; the impact of social network in pop culture and work culture

Theme 3 Evolving Chinese Society

- social issues related to economic activities and urbanisation; communications and the use of the technology in everyday life; the evolve of the economic policies and its impact; environmental protection; green energy; new industries

Theme 4 post-1978 China on the World Stage

- key political figures in the last fifty years; China's urban and rural life; China's relationships with UK and the West; China's role in easing the global environmental problem

Literature study (Required):

- *A Very Special Pigeon* – Cao Wenxuan 《一只叫凤的鸽子》 (作者 曹文轩), 2014 (short story)
- *My Memories of Old Beijing* – Lin Haiyin 《城南旧事》 〈惠安馆〉 · 〈爸爸的花儿落了〉 (作者 林海音), 1960 (autobiographical novel)
- Film study (optional): 《请投我一票》, 2007 (<https://youtu.be/KD1Q5X2hOnk>)

Assessment Model

- Paper 1 (40%): Listening, reading and translation (2 hours)
- Paper 2 (30%): Written response to works and translation (2 hours and 40 minutes)
- Paper 3 (30%): Speaking (23 minutes including 5 minutes' preparation time)
 - Task 1 discussion on a theme which is prescribed by the exam board
 - Task 2 Part 1 independent research presentation; Part 2 discussion on independent research

Introduction

The course builds upon and develops the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing which have been acquired in GCSE work. An important difference is that the subject concentrates not on basic transactional language but on wider social, political, economic and cultural issues. The course will develop skills and an understanding of the grammatical systems of the languages studied. It gives a better insight into the way of life, and history, geography, political system, economic life and customs of countries where the language is spoken. Students may also have the opportunity to study the literature of the country and where possible to visit the theatre, cinema or watch video and on-line material.

Furthermore, the course is underpinned by enriching and stimulating co-curricular opportunities with excellent outcomes. The one to one sessions with our Foreign Language Assistant play an essential part in developing the confidence, examination skills and fluency of our students.

Last year, all of our A Level Spanish students achieved an A*-B grade, with many opting to study the subject at degree level and securing a place at the university of their choice.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing:

- aspects of Hispanic society
- artistic culture in the Hispanic world
- multiculturalism in Hispanic society
- aspects of political life in the Hispanic world
- grammar

Paper 2 is a written paper assessing one text and one film, or two texts from the list set in the specification, and grammar

Paper 3 is the Speaking Test with stimulus card material followed by a presentation and conversation based on an Independent Research Project. This project can be on any aspects of Spanish-speaking society or artistic culture in the Spanish-speaking world or multiculturalism in Spanish-speaking society or aspects of political life in Spanish-speaking society.

Career Opportunities

Statistics show that employment amongst language graduates is second only to Medicine and Law. More and more employers expect a high level of competence in a modern foreign language and there are now a large number of degree courses with a language component. Specific career opportunities include teaching, interpreting, marketing and business.

Introduction

Music may be combined with Arts and Sciences, and many universities offer combined degree courses. A number of colleges are now offering degree courses in Performing Arts where Music may be studied along with Movement and Drama, Art and Literature, intending performers would usually apply to music colleges, through the CUKAS system. Music is welcomed by universities and colleges in particular, even if the subject is not to be continued beyond that level. Aldridge School has a long tradition of sending young musicians to further education and has had students at all major conservatoires in the UK and major universities including Oxford and Cambridge. It can also lead to a life-long cultural interest in the arts generally. Music brings people together and strengthens the local community. A-Level Music combines well with a wide range of A-Level subjects. It is highly regarded as an academic A-Level but it is practical and enjoyable.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Over the two-year course students cover Listening, Composing and Performing in three units. The course offers a variety of alternatives which enable students to submit work demonstrating their strengths in the subject. There are three units of study, and external assessments take place in May of Year 13.

In Units 1 and 2 students may opt for Option A or B. This flexibility means they can gain up to 35% in the option for higher study and 25% in the option where they choose the smaller amount of study.

Unit 1: Performing (35% or 25%)

Students have the opportunity to perform both as a soloist and in ensembles. Performances can take place on any instrument, including voice. A recital is prepared for Year 13 and should last either for six to eight minutes (Option A) or twelve to fifteen minutes (Option B)

Unit 2: Composing (25% or 35%)

Students are required to compose two pieces. One from a brief set by the board and one working from their own brief. For option A, an extension to their composing comprises of four-part harmony and two-part counterpoint.

Unit 3: Listening and Appraising (40%)

This work is undertaken through the study of four areas. Areas 1 and 2 are compulsory, and a further two are selected from areas 3-6. The areas of study are

1. Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven
2. Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band
3. Developments in Instrumental Jazz from 1910 to the present day;
4. Religious Music of the Baroque period
5. Programme Music
6. Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day

Career Opportunities

Musician, conducting, teaching, recording studios, member of orchestra, theatre, session players, TV companies, radio, film scoring, music composition, recording engineer.

Additional Entry Requirements:

If students have studied Music at GCSE they require a grade 6 to continue to A-level. Students also need to have Grade 5 ABRSM in their chosen instrument. Students who have not studied Music at GCSE need a pass in Grade 5 ABRSM Music Theory.

Introduction

During the course you also study a range of themes to extend your photographic horizons. These include topics such as portraiture, landscape photography, commercial photography, still-life photography, documentary photography, experimental imagery, editorial photography, photographic installation and photographic process, moving image, animation textile design.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Component 1: Personal Investigation (internally assessed, and externally moderated) 60% of final grade

- During the personal investigation you will produce two elements:
 1. A portfolio of practical work showing your personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus, devised and provided by you or your staff.
 2. A related study: an extended response of a guided minimum of 1000 words.

Component 02: Externally Set Task (15 hours of Non-Examined Assessment)

The early release paper will be issued to you by your staff from the exam board and will provide you with a number of themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs and stimuli.

Career Opportunities

A-Level Photography will give students the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and creative skills within Art and Design, using photography as a medium to explore and develop their individual ideas. Many of our students enjoy the subject so much, that they go on to study this subject at University or pursue related work. The course will prepare students for further education courses in creative related subjects or enter into employment within the creative industries, as such students may consider linking photography with Art, Media, Film Studies.

Additional Entry Requirements

GCSE Photography or Art at grade 6 or above, or a portfolio of work equivalent to this.

Introduction

These units will give you an understanding of sport in the wider contexts of coaching and leadership, anatomy and physiology, the body's short and long term responses to physical activity, the framework of sport in the UK and the organisations involved and the psychological challenges that sport can provide. You will also develop transferable skills such as planning, communication, adaptability and leadership.

Course Overview

Students will study four units which are all mandatory:

- Physiological factors affecting performance
- Psychological factors affecting performance
- Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport
- Performance in physical education

Assessment Model

- Three units (units 1,2 and 3) are assessed by exam and marked by OCR (70% of qualification).
- The final unit is coursework based which is internally assessed by teachers and externally moderated by OCR. This section requires performance or coaching in a selected sport and a verbal evaluation of performance and action plan to improve (30% of qualification)

Career Opportunities

This qualification is for learners who want to study sport, physical education, leisure or fitness. This qualification is not just about being able to play sport, it will provide you with the skills, knowledge and understanding to progress into Higher Education on a sport related programme such as Sport and Physical Education, Sport Science, Sport Coaching, Sports Psychology, Physiotherapy or Development of Sport and Leisure Management.

Course Overview and Assessment Model

Three 2 hour exams taken at the end of Year 13

Unit 1: Government and Politics of the UK People, Politics and Participation

An introduction to the political world: Why do people vote? Who do they vote for? How do elections work? Why do people take part in political protests?

Governing Modern Britain: How is Britain governed? How are laws made? Who holds the real power in this country?

Unit 2: Government and Politics of the USA Politics of the USA

This unit looks at how politics in the USA is conducted. How is the President elected? What is the difference between a Primary and a Caucus? Why do Republicans and Democrats dominate? How much power do pressure groups in the USA wield?

Government of the USA

How is the USA governed? What is the difference between a senator and a governor? How much power does the president really have? What is the constitution?

Unit 3: Political Ideas

Students study four ideologies including the three core ideologies of liberalism, conservatism and socialism. They will also study one non-core ideology, Nationalism.

Career Opportunities

Students can enter a wide variety of careers, including law, journalism and the media in general; advertising, accountancy, business management, marketing, public relations, the armed forces and the police; the civil service, the dramatic arts and education at all levels.

Additional Entry Requirements:

Grade 5 in English and/or Grade 5 in one of History, Geography, Citizenship or Religious Studies.