

AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



Founded in 1598

SIXTH FORM OPTIONS 2020-2022





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INTRODUCTION

This booklet gives details of all the option choices available at Aylesbury Grammar School and should be read in conjunction with the Sixth Form Prospectus. It is divided into three sections:

1. A level options (referred to as List A options)
2. Other curriculum option choices (referred to as List B options)
3. Enrichment opportunities

LIST A: MAIN A LEVELS

Ancient History
Art and Design
Biology
Business
Chemistry
Computer Science
Design and Technology
Drama and Theatre Studies
Economics
English Literature
English Language and Literature
French
Geography
German
History
Latin
Maths
Further Maths
Music
Physical Education
Physics
Politics
Psychology
Spanish

LIST B: ADDITIONAL COURSES

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
Geology AS level
Mathematics AS level
Philosophy AS level

It may also be possible for students to take AS Dance or AS Photography through Aylesbury High School if the timetable permits (see the AHS prospectus on their website for details of these courses)

LIST C: ENRICHMENT

Sixth Form Games
Sports' Leaders Award
Engineering Education Scheme
Young Enterprise
Community Involvement
Work Shadowing
MOOCs

ANCIENT HISTORY

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H407
Head of Department: Miss S E Holliday

You will study two pivotal periods in the development of western civilisation, which impact daily on our lives – Athens and Sparta in the 5th Century BCE and Rome in the last part of the 1st Century BCE and 1st Century CE.

If you are interested in a career in Law or Politics, or wish to pursue History, English, Drama or Philosophy, and of course, anything Classics related, at university level, this course will give you an excellent grounding in all disciplines. In fact, should you want to give breadth to your studies, this will give a depth of knowledge across all humanities disciplines, which will always come in useful!

The course is split into four units, (each worth 25% of the A Level) two for Greece and two for Rome and there is no coursework requirement.

Greek Period Study: Relations between the Greek and non-Greek states, 492-404BC, this includes the relationships between Athens, Sparta and Persia.

Greek Depth Study: The Politics and Society of Sparta 478-404BC

Roman Period Study: The Julio-Claudian Emperors 31BC – AD68, this focuses on the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.

Roman Depth Study: The Flavians AD68-96 (Vespasian, Titus and Domitian)

The period studies will allow you to understand the narrative history of the period, learning about important events and individuals who shaped our understanding of the Classical world.

The depth studies will allow you to look at the more complex issues that arise during these short periods of time and understand our sources for those periods.

The main change from the legacy specification is that you will be asked to consider how modern scholars have interpreted events in the Classical world.

Requirements: there is no classical language requirement and you do not to have studied GCSE Ancient History. A minimum of grade 6 in either English and an interest in the Classical world is a necessity. If you enjoy English or History, this course will reflect your experiences in those subjects.

ART AND DESIGN

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7202 (A-Level Fine Art)

Head of Department: Mrs L M Tangi

Why Choose Art

The creative industries are now Britain's greatest export. The skills learnt through the course will equip students for future creative careers such as artist, architect, product designer, graphic designer or stage set designer to name but a few, but it also provides a sound background for other less obvious careers where the ability to think differently and creatively gives an individual the edge on the competition. Self-expression is actively encouraged through the artwork, the written word and discussion. These are valuable tools for all aspects of future life. The Art Department is committed to providing a diverse, innovative course which will provide a rewarding and exciting element to a student's A Level choices.

The new A Level is a two year course with no formal assessment within the first year. This allows the student to use the whole of the first year as an exploratory and investigative year, learning and honing skills, and gradually developing a sense of one's own strengths in the subject. Towards the end of the first year the student will be encouraged to begin developing a single idea that will be used as the focus for the coursework in the second year. Art allows the student to be as creative as they like, with very few restrictions on the media they choose to use. Developing visual awareness is a very important aspect of the course, and students should be increasingly confident with their own drawing skills. The Fine Art course is designed to encourage a broad and creative contemporary approach which allows students to develop a solid but rewarding grounding in Fine Art. Throughout the two year course students will be encouraged to explore as wide a range of techniques as they can. The focus is predominantly two dimensional which features painting, collage, photography, printmaking and mixed media. Alternative approaches such as sculpture, land art, installation, printmaking, film, animation, television, video and lens based and/or light-based media can be explored.

Indeed for the first two terms of the course the students will be introduced to a number of skills-based workshops, during which time they will be actively encouraged to become personal in their approach and outcomes. All work is linked to influences from artists as well as contextual sources with the progression in the sketchbook playing a pivotal role.

Imagination and creativity are underpinned by a sound basis in traditional as well as contemporary skills. The department is highly flexible in accommodating students' creativity and is driven by the desire to push a students' potential as far as is possible.

Course Details

We offer the Advanced GCE Art and Design - Fine Art Linear specification which consists of Units 1 and 2. It will be a discrete qualification and is a full two year course. The A-level course will be examined at the end of year two. The course allows complete creative freedom both in terms of teaching approach as well as in the student's outcomes. Find out more

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/as-and-a-level/art-and-design-2200>

Specifications and Assessment:

The structure of the full two year course is divided into the following components:

Component 1 Personal Investigation - Students develop work in response to an idea, theme, concept or issue. This is a practical unit, essentially your coursework, which is supported by a 1000-3000 word essay. One unit of coursework is submitted at the end of year 13. Submissions should consist of a sketchbook of work and can include loose experimentation and explorations which represents the range of work undertaken during the course together with a final outcome.

60% of A Level, marked out of 96

Component 2 Externally Set Assignment – An examination paper containing eight starting points. Students choose one. (Preparation time approximately eight weeks). The Component concludes with a 15 hour practical exam. Work produced will be marked by the centre and moderated by AQA.

Entry Requirements

The individual creative developments which appear at GCSE form the basis for A-Level study. It is therefore essential that a potential A Level Art student should have a genuine interest in the subject, and have achieved at least a grade 6 for Art GCSE.

BIOLOGY

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H420

Head of Department: Mr M T Pilkington

Biology is a popular A Level subject, whether combined with other Sciences and Mathematics, or Geography. Biology is a preferred subject for medical, veterinary and pharmaceutical careers. It is obviously necessary for continued university studies in Biological Sciences, Agriculture, Ecology and all related disciplines.

A level course:

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Biology (planning, implementing, analysis and evaluation)

Module 2 – Foundation Biology

- Cells
- Biological molecules

Module 3 – Exchange and transport

- Exchange surfaces
- Transport in animals
- Transport in plants

Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease

- Communicable diseases, disease prevention and the immune system
- Biodiversity
- Classification and evolution

Module 5 – Communication, homeostasis and energy

- Excretion as an example of homeostatic control
- Neural communication
- Hormonal communication
- Plant and animal responses
- Photosynthesis
- Respiration

Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

- Cellular control
- Patterns of inheritance
- Manipulating genomes
- Cloning and biotechnology
- Ecosystems
- Populations and sustainability

Assessment consists of three examination papers (Biological processes, Biological diversity and Unified Biology) totaling six hours

Requirements: a GCSE grade 7 in Biology or in Science and Additional Science (or a grade 6 with a strong teacher recommendation) is the minimum required to apply for Biology A level.

BUSINESS

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H431
Head of Department: Mr G A Davey

The broad aims of this course are:

- (a) To give students an understanding of the nature and problems faced by businesses.
- (b) To illustrate to students the principles which govern business behaviour.
- (c) To promote understanding of the ways in which all organisations work.
- (d) To promote an understanding of strategic decision making in the solution to business problems.

Although this A Level clearly has direct vocational applications for those interested in a career in business management, it will also be of value to those who would like to know something of how businesses operate, but who are not necessarily committed to a career in that area.

The main subject areas covered by the course are:

1. The nature of business
2. How decisions are made in business
3. The relationships between businesses and individuals
4. The business functions - marketing, accounting, finance, industrial relations, production
5. How these functions can best be co-ordinated
6. The relationship between business and government

The course has considerable emphasis on decision making with students being required to understand why the nature, size, and scope of a business makes a difference to its actions. The course utilises 'real world' case studies and data.

The study of Business fits well with a range of subjects. It can be combined with 'arts' subjects such as English, History, French, German or Spanish, but goes equally well with subjects like Geography, Economics, Politics or Mathematics.

Teaching is intensive and there is a lot of group work and discussion. You must come prepared to contribute to every lesson. There is also a great deal of reading and note making.

The structure of the course:

The course is taught very much as a series of real world 'hands on' activities. There are three papers that will be taken at the end of Year 13 each of which comprise 33.3% of the marks available. This assessment covers a business operating in a local environment, the national environment, and an international environment. The assessment involves multiple choice responses, short answer responses, and also the ability to write essays using qualitative and quantitative data.

Requirements: we are looking for hardworking students with a mature outlook who can cope with the responsibility of a course of this nature. It is not necessary to have studied the subject at GCSE to take this course - however, if you have studied at this level then there is a minimum expectation of a grade 6. There is a considerable mathematical component to the A level course and you should be expecting to gain at least a grade 6 in mathematics if you want to opt for this subject. There is also a minimum requirement of a grade 6 in English at GCSE level.

This is a very popular subject and a very large number of students go on to university to study some form of business degree. The number of students taking this course has grown over the last few years and the A Level results have been very good.

CHEMISTRY

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7405

Head of Department: Dr C J Gardner

Why choose Chemistry?

There are many reasons for studying Chemistry at A Level. It is an obvious requirement if you want to study Chemistry, or related subjects such as biochemistry, pharmacy or chemical engineering at university, but you will also find it is essential for entry to Higher Education courses in a wide range of biological, medical, veterinary and agricultural subjects. In addition, there are many tertiary courses for which Chemistry would be acceptable, though not essential, as part of your combination of subjects.

Science is about explaining the behaviour of the universe and applying the knowledge for the benefit of mankind. In our A Level Chemistry course, you will come closer to the fundamental reasons why atoms and molecules behave as they do, see how Chemistry is essential to a modern, technological and healthy society and feel some of the excitement of recent advances in chemistry, biochemistry and the science of materials. Britain continues to win Nobel Prizes in chemistry, medicine and biology.

The Course

We follow the AQA course. The content of the physical, inorganic and organic topics together with knowledge of relevant practical skills are examined in three papers, all at the end of Year 13. Competence in practical skills is assessed by teachers during normal lessons and is reported separately in the A Level certificate but not graded.

During Year 12 the topics studied include: Atomic Structure and Bonding, Periodicity, an Introduction to Organic Chemistry, Energy Changes, Rates of Reactions, Reversible Reactions, Redox Reactions, Group 2 and Group 7 Chemistry and further Organic Chemistry and Analytical Chemistry.

During Year 13 the topics studied include: Acids and Bases, Structure Determination, Biochemistry, Polymers, Transition Metals and Reactions of Aqueous Inorganic Compounds and the further study of Reaction Rate, Reversible Reactions, Energy Changes, Redox Reactions, Periodicity and Organic Chemistry.

Paper 1 Inorganic and Physical Chemistry

Assessment is by a two hour exam consisting of 105 marks from short and long questions which makes up 35% of the total A Level mark.

This assesses students on inorganic topics and relevant physical chemistry topics and practical skills

Paper 2 Organic and Physical Chemistry

Assessment is by a two hour exam consisting of 105 marks from short and long questions which makes up 35% of the total A Level mark.

This assesses students on organic topics and relevant physical chemistry topics and practical skills

Paper 3 Chemistry

Assessment is by a two hour exam consisting of 40 marks of questions on practical techniques and data analysis, 20 marks of questions testing across the specification and 30 marks of multiple choice questions. This makes up 30% of the A Level mark.

Requirements: a GCSE grade 7 in Chemistry or in Science and Additional Science (or a 6 with a strong teacher recommendation) is the minimum required to apply for Chemistry A Level. The mathematical demands of the course will be well within your scope if you have a GCSE Grade 6 or better in Mathematics. You will need to re-arrange and apply simple equations.

Chemistry can be combined with other A Level subjects in various ways – and in Higher Education there are a large number of courses combining Chemistry with other subjects. Study of Chemistry itself at university usually requires A Level Maths and the UCAS official guide to university entrance (available in the school library) will tell you the courses which require A Level Chemistry and which combinations of A Levels are desirable or preferred

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7517

Head of Department: Mr J E Chappell

As a subject Computer Science has aspects in common with Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Languages. You need to develop your capabilities to solve challenging problems (like Maths) in the contexts of programming a project and answering examination questions. There is a wide range of theory to understand and apply in the context of written paper exam questions (like any science). And as in learning a language you need to regularly apply yourself to programming tasks in order to develop the fluency you'll need for your programming project and for the practical exam at the end of two years.

University Choices

Computer Science A level is now the best preparation for students who want to go on to study Computer Science at a higher level. It is also helpful for many other university choices including: Maths, Statistics, Sciences, Geology, Earth Sciences, Engineering subjects, Medicine, Pharmacy, Optometry, Orthoptics, Psychology and Sociology.

Requirements

The Computers Science GCSE is very good preparation for the A level that builds on it. Statistical analysis of results shows that Computer Science students who also take Maths A level have a tendency to achieve better results than those who don't. Students will have a grade 7 at GCSE Computer Science.

Paper 1 - 40% of A level -- two hours and 30 minutes on screen exam

- Fundamentals of programming
- Fundamentals of data structures
- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Theory of computation

Candidates answer a series of short questions and write/adapt/extend programs in an electronic answer booklet provided by AQA.

AQA provide preliminary material, a Skeleton Program and, where appropriate, test data for use during the exam.

Paper 2 - 40% of A level -- two hours and 30 minutes written paper

- Fundamentals of data representation
- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer organisation and structure
- Consequences of uses of computing
- Fundamentals of communications and networking
- Fundamentals of databases
- Big Data
- Fundamentals of functional programming

Non-exam assessment - 20% of total A level

The non-exam assessment assesses candidate's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained throughout the course to solve or investigate a particular problem. Candidates are expected to follow a systematic approach to problem solving.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification: 9DT0

Head of Department: Dr A Twissell

This course encourages students to recognise design needs and develop an understanding of how current global issues, including integrating technology, impact on today's world. Students are encouraged to take design risks and innovate in a situation where it is safe to test and refine ideas. The course will involve two components including Principles of Design and Technology and Independent Design and Make Project.

This course is designed to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding learned during a GCSE Design Technology course. You will enjoy designing and manufacturing products using a range of materials, combining traditional skills, ICT and CAD/CAM. The Product Design course focuses on the areas of industrial design, engineering, manufacture and product design. Success could lead to Higher Education courses or other opportunities in:

- Furniture Design
- Industrial Design
- Interior Design
- Materials Science
- Mechanical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Jewellery Design
- Graphic Design
- Teaching
- and many more.....check the school's careers service and Design and Technology Department's careers' notice board

The A Level Course

Component 1: Principles of Design and Technology (9DT0/01)

Students will be required to apply knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials, including modern and smart materials, and processes used in product design and manufacture. They will be required to develop an understanding of contemporary industrial and commercial practices applied to designing and manufacturing products, and to appreciate the risks involved. Students will develop a deeper working knowledge of health and safety practices. Students will also develop a sound working knowledge of ICT use and systems and control, including modern manufacturing processes and systems, as applied to design and manufacture. The work of designers from the past will provide inspiration for present and future designing and the wider issues attached to design and technological activity. Students will develop an awareness of the impact of design activity on the environment and society, and issues of sustainability.

Component 2: Independent Design and Make Project (9DT0/02)

Students will undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project which will test their skills in designing and manufacturing a prototype, which can be sufficiently tested and evaluated. Students identify a problem and context, individually or in consultation with a client, and develop a range of potential solutions and then realise one through practical making activities. Creativity and imagination forms an important part of the iterative design process when developing and modifying designs that solve real world problems.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY: PRODCUT DESIGN			
9DT0	Overview	Assessment	% of Qualification
Component 1 (9DT0/01)	Principles of Design and Technology	Exam 2hrs 30 mins	50% (120 marks)
Component 2 (9DT0/02)	Independent Design and Make Project (Non-examined assessment)	Internally assessed and externally moderated	50% (120 marks)

More specific details can be obtained at www.edexcel.org.uk or by visiting the department and talking to staff and students.

Requirements: you will need a minimum of grade 6 at GCSE in Design and Technology, Electronics or Engineering and a good pass in Mathematics.

DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

Exam Board: WJEC Specification: 36090 for unreformed A level
Head of Department: Mr R J Warner

A Level Theatre Studies is taught jointly with AGS and AHS pupils.

We are studying the EDUQAS GCE A Level in Drama and Theatre.

Why Study Drama & Theatre Studies?

To develop your appreciation of Drama & Theatre Studies through practical and theoretical studies to the point where you can direct, perform, analyse and respond to theatre at an accomplished level.

What do I Need?

A grade 6 in English Language and a 6 in Drama if you have taken it at GCSE. A genuine interest in all forms of drama and theatre, plus the ability to work with others, be adaptable, and cope with performance to an audience and examiners.

How is it Assessed?

There are three components: An assessed theatre workshop, "Text in Action", leading to an assessed performance and a two and half hour written exam assessing practical knowledge of the set texts.

What are the Special Features of the Course?

This course is concerned with close study of plays and being able to lift the words from the page to the stage. You will experience all the elements of the process and you'll be expected to go to the theatre at least three times a year and take part in theatre workshops. Year 12 students organise and run a Year 7 Drama Club.

Other Information

We arrange most of the theatre visits. When you are preparing for your practical projects, you often rehearse after school hours. We encourage various speakers from the profession and theatre companies into school to work with us. Theatre visits and workshops obviously incur a cost to students studying this course.

Where Can I Find Out More?

Speak to any Year 12 or Year 13 Drama and Theatre Studies students, Mr Warner / Mrs Isherwood.

Requirements: Students should have a minimum grade 6 in Drama GCSE.

ECONOMICS

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H460

Head of Department: Mr G A Davey

The broad aims of this course are:

- (a) To give students an strong grounding in micro and macro-economics, drawing on local, national, and global contexts
- (b) To encourage pupils to 'think like an economist' by developing analytical, questioning and quantitative skills.
- (c) To enable students to critically approach the economic policies, theories and concepts that are used by governments to shape our lives

The course is an excellent foundation for those who wish to take the subject at university and can also be seen as a useful course for those who are simply interested in achieving a greater understanding of the news and the world around them.

The main subject areas covered by the course are:

1. The nature and importance of markets
2. Market failure and government policy
3. The nature of the macro economy
4. Policy approaches to issues such as growth, unemployment, and inflation.
5. The impact of globalisation

The structure of the course:

It is a linear course. There is 100% external assessment involving three papers that will be taken at the end of Y13 each of which comprise 33.3% of the marks available. This assessment covers the working of markets, macroeconomics, and a synoptic 'Themes in economics' paper where theories are applied to real world situations.

The assessments involve multiple choice responses, short answer responses, and also the ability to write lengthy and detailed essays. There is a strong numerical element to the course.

One of the most useful functions of A Level Economics is to act as a bridge between the sciences and the humanities. Economics goes equally well with subjects such as English, History and Business as it does with Mathematics and Physics. Economics enables students to keep their options open by offering the possibility of seeking a social science course in Higher Education rather than a course in the humanities or the physical sciences.

Economics is a popular Higher Education subject, and is included as part of many other courses. In addition, a knowledge of economics is useful for those contemplating a career in industry, banking or accountancy. The number of students taking this course has grown over the last few years and the A Level results have been very good.

Requirements: we are looking for hardworking pupils with a mature outlook who can cope with the responsibility of a course of this nature. It is not necessary to have studied the subject at GCSE to take this course however, if you have studied at this level then there is a minimum expectation of a grade 6. There is also a minimum requirement of a 6 in both Mathematics (there is a considerable mathematical component to the course) and English at GCSE level.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Exam Board: AQA Specification: B (7717)

Head of Department: Mr A Skinner

In addition to telling stories, literature through the ages has sought to comment on societies, encapsulate philosophies and examine the human condition. The study of literature, therefore, gives an insight into our cultural development and the thinking of others. It provides the opportunity to examine a range of experiences outside our own and encourages us to think critically about the world around us.

An Advanced GCE in English Literature is welcomed as a qualification for many careers, and provides a very wide range of opportunities for courses in the Arts, Humanities, Media and Communications at degree level. It will also serve you well for a variety of careers such as in business, the law, education and journalism among many others.

The A Level course is designed to develop skills of analysis, evaluation and comparison and considers texts in their social, historical and literary contexts. Students' abilities to structure argument and communicate effectively in speech and writing are emphasised and they are encouraged to read widely, critically and independently. The course aims to promote original thought and self-expression, while at the same time fostering in each student the discipline of rooting ideas in the text. As 20% of your final mark is based on coursework, you will need to work efficiently on your own and meet deadlines.

We expect students taking the course to be enthusiastic readers and to contribute freely and willingly to discussion. These are important requirements if a student is to prepare themselves for the breadth and depth of thought required at university, in this subject and others.

Paper 1 – literary genres, aspects of tragedy (40% of A level)

In this unit you will study three texts from the tragedy genre. Currently, our students study *Othello*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Death of a Salesman*. This is assessed with a two hour 30 minute exam on three equally weighted questions, two of which are on the Shakespeare text.

Paper 2 – texts and genres, elements of crime writing (40% of A level)

In this unit you will study one post-2000 novel (*Atonement*), one poetry text (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*), and another text (*Brighton Rock*). This is assessed with a three hour exam, with three equally weighted questions, one of which involves an unseen text.

Coursework – theory and independence (20% of A level)

Study of two texts informed by the study of a critical anthology. Two essays of between 1250 and 1500 words. Students here have the opportunity to explore texts of their own choosing.

Requirements: a GCSE grade 6 in English Literature is the minimum required to apply for English Literature A level.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification: 9ELO

Head of Department: Mr A Skinner

How does this course differ from English Literature?

English Language and Literature is a course that will enable students who enjoyed **all** aspects of their GCSE English course to develop their interests in the Sixth Form.

The subject explores how language and literature work together as an integrated discipline, and will help you to gain greater confidence in using both spoken and written English. This is achieved through the study of the spoken word in everyday contexts, and through close analysis of both works of literature and non-literary texts. It is, therefore, a broad and flexible subject, differing from A level English Literature chiefly because of this additional focus on the spoken word and non-literary texts. The course also requires you to produce some original writing of your own, written with a particular style and audience in mind.

The course will enable you to understand how the many and varied forms of English Language and Literature have been influenced by background factors such as historical events and changing social contexts. In dealing with English both as a spoken and as a written language you will become aware of how different perspectives have influenced and continue to influence others.

Students taking this course are expected to be enthusiastic readers with a keen interest in all types of literature (poetry, plays, novels), ranging from Chaucer and Shakespeare to modern authors. You will be required to analyse language in a variety of contexts such as extracts from radio programmes, diaries, magazines, even ordinary conversations. You should be willing to join in discussions and share your ideas with others. As 20% of your final mark is based on coursework, you will need to work efficiently on your own and meet deadlines.

As with English Literature, a qualification in English Language and Literature will provide you with a wide range of opportunities for future study in the Arts, Humanities, Media and Communications. It will also serve you well for a variety of careers such as in business, the law, education and journalism among many others

Paper 1 – voices in speech and writing (40% of A level)

In this unit students will study a range of non-literary and digital texts from the 20th and 21st centuries. They will study an anthology of texts provided by the exam board, comparing these with unseen texts in the final exam. In addition students will study Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. This is assessed with a two hour, thirty minute exam.

Paper 2 – varieties in language and literature (40% of A level)

Here, students will focus on a particular theme, and how it is represented in both literary and non-literary texts. Assessment is a two hour thirty minute exam. Students currently study *The Great Gatsby* and a collection of Phillip Larkin poetry.

Coursework – investigating and creating texts (20% of A level)

Students will be required to create two original pieces of writing; one fiction and one non-fiction. In addition, they must write a commentary that reflects on the decisions they have made. The total for all three pieces should be around 3000 words.

Requirements: a GCSE grade 6 in English Language is the minimum required to apply for English Language and Literature A level.

FRENCH

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7652

Head of Department: Mr T J Crapper

In its annual surveys on the employability of British young people, the CBI (the UK's main employers' organisation) repeatedly finds that the great majority of employers emphasised the importance to them of a knowledge of foreign language, when recruiting employees. The A Level course responds to this need, opening up the ideal opportunity for students both to enjoy the experience that developing language skills to a high level brings, and improving the range of study, leisure and employment opportunities available to them in the future.

In 2016 the exam boards launched new A Level courses in Modern Languages, with the first exams to be taken in 2018.

Students following the course should by the end of two years be able to understand and write authentic French with a degree of accuracy and fluency and speak with ease about topics connected with French society and culture.

In the teaching programme, authentic and up-to-date texts and audio-visual materials from a variety of sources are used. Sixth Formers from AGS and AHS can take part in the annual French exchange with Bourg en Bresse and a study trip to Paris, and participation in one or both of these visits can enhance enormously a student's enjoyment and understanding of the language. Students have the usual eight hours taught lessons per fortnight plus a weekly half hour session with the school's French Assistante Mme. Brown in small groups of two or three.

The exams will have the following format:

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Writing	Two hours 30 minutes
Paper 2: Writing (2 essays)	Two hours
Paper 3: Oral Exam	15 - 20 mins

All the topics which form the basis of Papers 1 and 3 are studied within the context of French society and culture and include:

- The changing nature of the family
- The cyber society
- Poverty and social exclusion
- Crime
- Immigration
- Music and cinema
- Young people and politics

Essays on Paper 2 will be written on either two books or a film and a book, studied over the course of the two years

The oral exam will consist of a five to six minute discussion based on a stimulus card dealing with one of the topics above followed by a two minute presentation and approximately 9 minute discussion of an individual research topic of the student's choice, connected to the culture and society of a French speaking country.

Anyone considering A level should have a grade 7 at GCSE to feel confident of success and certainly no less than a 6.

GEOGRAPHY

Exam Board: WJEC Specification: A Level
Head of Department: Mr M Corby

Geography is a subject whose importance on the world stage has risen enormously as the recognition that the earth's resources cannot continue to be exhausted unsustainably. With increasing global awareness of environmental impact and social inequality, Geography is an ideal subject to help people learn about finding the right balance between development and environmental and social disaster. With Geography sitting between economic, historical and scientific subjects it is perfectly placed to offer the broad approach required to find the solutions to the world's problems.

Why Study Geography?

"Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future" - Michael Palin.

In the ever changing world in which we live, an understanding and appreciation of the world around us is vital.

A Level Geography provides the opportunities to develop important inter-personal skills – problem solving, decision making, data collection and handling. These skills can be taken forward into the work place and links Geography to a wide range of career possibilities.

Students will be undertaking the new WJEC A Level, which is an inspiring specification approaching Geography in a very contemporary manner. The WJEC Eduqas A level Geography specification encourages learners to apply geographical knowledge, theory and skills to the world around them. In turn this will enable learners to develop a critical understanding of the world's people, places and environments in the 21st century.

The course contains the following units and content:

Changing Landscapes and Changing Places

Written examination: Two hours 15 minutes 30% of qualification

For this examination we will study the topics of Coasts and Changing Places (A study of how places are dynamic because the population, society, and the economy upon which they depend and the environment in which they are situated are in a constant state of flux.)

Global Systems and Global Governance

Written examination: Two hours 15 minutes 30% of qualification

For this examination we will study the topics of Rivers, Carbon cycles and Global Governance (A study of the patterns of global migration, a global flow which has historically had a major impact on most countries. As well as global governance of the Earth's oceans including the global flows that cross oceans include container shipping, oil tankers, broadband networks and illegal movements of people and goods.

Contemporary Themes in Geography

Written examination: Two hours 20% of qualification

For this examination we will study the topics of Tectonic Hazards, Weather & Climate and Development in an Africa context.

Independent Investigation

Non-exam assessment 20% of qualification

One written independent investigation, based on group based data collection of both primary and secondary information. The investigation has a word limit of 3000 words.

All students have the opportunity to take part in an optional overseas Geography trip to such places as Iceland or Italy. Students are also able to attend a residential field Course in the UK as well as day visits. A variety of geographical techniques are taught and practiced, and an opportunity to use departmental equipment is provided. The course enables students to utilise fieldwork techniques and skills to prepare for the independent investigation.

Requirements: to take A level Geography you will require a minimum of a 6 grade at GCSE Geography and competence in English and Mathematics is important.

GERMAN

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7662
Head of Department: Mr R E Sloan

In its annual surveys on the employability of British young people, the CBI (the UK's main employers' organisation) repeatedly finds that the great majority of employers emphasise the importance to them of a knowledge of foreign language, when recruiting employees. The A Level course responds to this need, opening up the ideal opportunity for students both to enjoy the experience that developing language skills to a high level brings, and improving the range of study, leisure and employment opportunities available to them in the future.

In 2016 the exam boards launched new A Level courses in Modern Languages, with the first exams to be taken in 2018. Students following the course should, by the end of two years, be able to understand and write authentic German with a degree of accuracy and fluency and speak with ease about topics connected with German society and culture.

In the teaching programme, authentic and up-to-date texts and audio-visual materials from a variety of sources are used. Year 12 students from AGS and AHS can take part in the annual German exchange with Stuttgart, and participation in this long-standing exchange can enhance enormously a student's enjoyment and understanding of the language. In Year 13 there is also a study visit to Berlin so that students can experience the cultural life of the capital first hand. Students have the usual eight hours taught lessons per fortnight, plus a weekly session with the German Assistant.

The exams (taken at the end of Year 13) will have the following format:

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Writing	Two hours 30 minutes
Paper 2: Writing (2 essays)	Two hours
Paper 3: Oral Exam	15 - 20 minutes

All the topics which form the basis of Papers 1 and 3 are studied within the context of German society and culture and include:

- The changing nature of the family
- The cyber society
- Youth culture
- Immigration
- Cultural life of Berlin
- Young people and politics
- Reunification of Germany

Essays on Paper 2 will be written on either two books or a film and a book, studied over the course of the two years

The oral exam will consist of a five to six minute discussion based on a stimulus card dealing with one of the topics above followed by a two minute presentation and approximately 9 minute discussion of an individual research topic of the student's choice, connected to the culture and society of a German speaking country.

Anyone considering German at A level should have a grade 7 at GCSE to feel confident of success and certainly no less than a 6.

HISTORY

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification: 8HI01

Head of Department: Mr J M Barrie

The History Department is a large and highly successful department at Aylesbury Grammar School. In recent years the Department has been awarded the 'Best A Level Results in a Boys Selective School' by the Good Schools' Guide.

The study of History connects us with our past. By studying the past we can perhaps better understand the present world in which we live and try to anticipate the future course of events. For this reason, we study a number of courses that are highly relevant to the present day. History has a social value and its study is both important and rewarding.

It is essential that you have an inquiring mind, an interest in the past and its relevance to current affairs and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively, in both written and verbal form. Advanced Level History provides an excellent preparation for further study of History at degree level, in addition to a wide variety of other subjects on account of the transferable skills that the subject develops. Students of History have access to a wide range of university and career opportunities. During the A Level course, students will learn to evaluate and analyse a wide range of sources of information, weigh up evidence and develop sophisticated arguments, both in the form of essays and classroom discussions. Such skills are highly valued by universities and potential employers, regardless of what career path you choose. A Level History provides an excellent foundation for a number of popular careers including law, journalism and business and has an important contribution to make to lifelong learning.

As a Department we have taken a great deal of time to select course options that are interesting, relevant, challenging and will appeal to a large number of our students. We have taken on board the views of the History teachers and our Sixth Form students in making our decisions. We have also decided to avoid significant repetition from the GCSE specification, so that our A Level options offer something new and exciting. We have aimed to achieve a suitable balance between British and World History.

Changes to A Level

We believe that we offer a highly interesting, engaging and relevant range of options. During the two year A Level course, students will study the following:

Paper 1. In Search of the American Dream: The USA, c1917-96 (assessed by an exam).

Paper 2. South Africa, 1948-94: from apartheid state to 'rainbow nation' (assessed by an exam).

Paper 3. Britain: losing and gaining an empire, 1763-1914 (assessed by an exam).

Paper 4. Coursework, in which students will select their own topic and question. This will give students (in consultation with their teacher) the opportunity to study a period of History that they are particularly interested in.

Study Visits

It is the belief of the History Department that an understanding of the past can be increased by appropriate study visits. **In 2017-18 we are organising Sixth Form visits to the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich and the National Army Museum, to develop and extend what has been taught in lessons.**

Requirements: History is a most interesting, yet challenging subject to study at A Level. Students will ideally achieve grade 7, or a minimum of a grade 6 at GCSE, if they are to consider studying the subject at A Level.

LATIN

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H443
Head of Department: Miss S E Holliday

The study of Latin will develop skills learned at GCSE to read Latin fluently, to read some of the greatest works of literature ever written and to understand the context of when they were written.

If you are interested in a career in Law or Politics, or wish to pursue Languages, History, English, Drama or Philosophy at university level, this course will give you an excellent grounding in all disciplines. In fact, should you want to broaden your studies alongside the Sciences and Maths, this will give a breadth of academic experience. A degree in Classics itself will allow entry into most professions and remains one of the most highly regarded degrees internationally.

The course is split into four units, each worth 25% of the level, each is entirely exam based with no coursework requirement.

Unit 1: Unseen Translation

You will translate two passages from Latin into English, one prose and one verse.

Unit 2: Prose Composition or Comprehension

You will either answer comprehension and grammar questions on a prose text, or translate a passage from English into Latin.

Unit 3: Latin Verse

You will read a selection from Virgil's Aeneid and demonstrate that you understand why he is still read today be able to comment on the literary technique which they use.

Unit 4: Latin Prose

You will read two of Cicero or Tacitus or another author, you will need to be able to comment on literary techniques and to place it within its historical and literary context. We give students the choice for this selection.

Requirements: students require a minimum of grade 7 in GCSE Latin in order to study the subject at A level.

MATHEMATICS

Exam Board: Pearson/Edexcel

Specification: 9MA0

Head of Department: Mr C P Smith

Mathematics is traditionally a very popular choice for Sixth Form study at AGS. Although not seen as one of the easier subjects at this level, students who respond to the challenge, and apply themselves well, gain a great deal from the course. An A Level qualification in Mathematics will stand you in good stead, whether or not you intend to make use of it beyond the Sixth Form. The skills you will develop to succeed in Mathematics make it a very marketable qualification. This is a new A Level specification with increased emphasis on problem solving, so follows naturally from the new GCSE course which students will have been following.

At Sixth Form level, Mathematics combines well with several subjects, including Economics and the sciences, especially Physics.

Course content and structure:

There are no options in the new A Level so all students follow the same two year course in pure and applied mathematics.

- There will be internal exams in the summer of Year 12.
- Three external exams are taken at the end of Year 13: Pure Maths 1, Pure Maths 2, Statistics and Mechanics, each of two hours and equal weighting.

Pure Mathematics: This is the cornerstone of the course and accounts for two-thirds of the assessment. Some topics will be familiar from GCSE, such as algebra and trigonometry, but will be developed and studied in greater depth. Other topics will be completely new, such as calculus and logarithmic functions.

Applied Mathematics: All students are required to study Statistics and Mechanics, to gain a broad grounding in applied maths. This accounts for one-third of the assessment.

- Statistics includes the analysis and representation of data, application of probability theory to model real life situations, and hypothesis testing. Building upon the foundations laid at GCSE, this will be useful particularly to those studying subjects such as Biology, Geography or social sciences.
- Mechanics includes the study of forces and motion. Setting up and analysing mathematical models of problems in the real world. Anyone considering a course in Engineering or Physics at university will find this particularly useful.

The course aims to enable students to:

- Develop understanding of mathematical principles, and interest / confidence in the subject
- Extend their range of mathematical skills and techniques and apply them to more challenging problems where they have to decide on the solution strategy
- Develop the ability to apply mathematical techniques in other subjects, to reason logically and to recognise incorrect reasoning
- Acquire a strong foundation for progress to the further study of mathematics and other disciplines
- Develop the ability to recognise situations where mathematics can be used to analyse and solve a problem in context
- Recognise situations where the use of modern technology is appropriate and be confident in its application.

Requirements: to succeed at an advanced level in Mathematics you need to have shown an aptitude for the subject at GCSE and in particular be able to use algebra confidently in a variety of situations. As a minimum requirement you must have followed a Higher Tier course and gained GCSE grade 7 (or 6 with a strong teacher recommendation). As important as this, for anyone embarking on advanced study in Mathematics, is an enjoyment of the subject.

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Exam Board: Pearson/Edexcel

Specification: 9FM0

Head of Department: Mr C P Smith

Further Mathematics is a popular option for those with a strong aptitude for mathematics, who must have **achieved at least grade 8 at GCSE**. This option results in a highly valued second Mathematics A Level. It is almost essential for anyone wishing to study the subject at university and is very useful for those going into a mathematically orientated subject such as Engineering or Physics.

Course content and structure:

Students are taught in dedicated Further Mathematics sets following a faster paced course in A Level Mathematics, as detailed above. They will also study additional content to take four extra exams to earn A Level Further Mathematics.

There will be internal exams in the summer of Year 12. All seven external exams are expected to be taken at the end of Year 13. (three × two hours for Maths, four × one and a half hours for Further Maths.)

Further Pure Mathematics: Compulsory papers Further Pure Maths 1 and 2 form the core of the qualification. Pure Maths topics from A Level Mathematics are extended to a higher level, whilst new topics studied include complex numbers, matrices, polar coordinates and hyperbolic functions.

Option papers: Two option papers are taken. We hope to be able to offer some choice to account for chosen directions in higher education. The options will extend students' study of Further Pure Maths (including group and number theory), Statistics (including regression, chi-squared tests and confidence intervals), or Mechanics (including collisions, elasticity and circular motion), or broaden their study into the new area of Decision Maths (including algorithms, CPA, linear programming, dynamic programming and game theory).

Whilst all candidates will start out aiming for two A Levels, other options may become possible such as taking A Level Maths and AS Further Mathematics. Teaching is normally shared by two teachers.

The course is demanding, yet very rewarding, laying emphasis not only on the application of the subject but on studying mathematics for its own sake. **If you are good at mathematics and are already aiming toward a maths related university course you should strongly consider taking the Further Maths option.** You should discuss this with your mathematics teacher.

For those intending to apply for entry to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the extra work covered in Year 12 on the Further Mathematics course can be of considerable assistance and improves the chances of obtaining a place.

Requirements: a good grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics (ideally a grade 9).

MUSIC

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H543
Head of Department: Mr D C Nathan

A Level music centres on the three elements of Performing, Composing and Historical Studies. This course is examined at the end of Year 13, there is no end of Year 12 A/S Level.

Performing (35%): solo (and/or ensemble) recital lasting between 12 - 15 minutes on your chosen instrument or voice. A variety of styles and genres is prepared. Candidates who are taking Grace VII or VIII at the end of Year 13 can use the three ABRSM pieces for their recital for A Level.

Composing (25%): two complete compositions in any style (e.g. modern, pop, classical) and a folio of chorales in the style of J.S. Bach and other exercises.

Historical Studies (40%): including aural and essay questions. Analysing music, reading mixed scores and varied aural questions. Some set works.

Musical students will appreciate the flexibility of the course allowing students to develop skills on their chosen instrument and encouraging freedom of expression in the composition work. All compositions are recorded onto CD and use of the recording studio on an individual basis is encouraged.

Requirements: students would be able to take the course if they have taken GCSE Music and achieved a 6 grade or above. Grade 5 theory would be satisfactory as an equal alternative. Most students will have a grade 7 or above at GCSE, and all students **must** be accomplished performers on their main instrument, **usually equating to grade V or VI**. Other candidates may well be able to pursue the course if they are able to demonstrate a high degree of musical skill and involvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Exam Board: OCR Specification: H555

Head of Department: Mr P N Dean

Component 1: Physiological Factors Affecting Performance

This group of topics focuses on key systems of the human body involved in movement and physical activity. Candidates will develop their knowledge and understanding of the changes within these body systems prior to exercise, during exercise of differing intensities, and during recovery. Application of this theoretical knowledge will enable candidates to understand how changes in physiological states can influence performance in physical activities and sport. Candidates will be expected to be able to interpret data and graphs relating to changes in these body systems during exercise of differing intensities and during recovery.

Assessment: Two hour written paper worth 30%

Component 2: Psychological Factors Affecting Performance

This component focuses on the psychological factors affecting physical activities and sports, including: models and theories that affect learning and performance in physical activities; how different methods of training and feedback work and why their effectiveness differs from person to person; group dynamics and the effects of leadership and stress on performers. Through the study of this component, candidates will gain a deeper understanding of the underlying psychological factors that influence our performance in physical activity and sport. They will learn how to apply the theories to practical examples, giving guidance and feedback in constructive ways that are suited to that individual's personality; therefore assisting in developing practical performance in physical activities and sports.

Component 3: Socio-cultural and Contemporary Issues

This component focuses on the sociological and contemporary factors that influence and affect physical activity and sport for both the audience and the performer and how sport affects society. It includes the emergence and evolution of modern sport and how social and cultural factors shaped the characteristics of sports and pastimes in preindustrial and post-industrial Britain. The impact of the modern Olympic Games will be understood as well as the impact on society of hosting global sporting events. The ever-evolving modern technology and its influence on sport performers and spectators will be understood and practical examples will be used by candidates to show the effect of modern technology.

Assessment: One hour written paper worth 20%

Component 4: Performance within Physical Education

Learners will be required to undertake two parts within this component.

Part 1: Performance/coaching of a sport or activity from the approved DfE list.

Part 2: The Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement (EAPI) of a sport or activity from the approved DfE list. This does not have to be the same sport or activity that was undertaken in part 1, although it can be. Learners will identify and justify the major area of weakness within the performance to prioritise for improvement and will propose a long term (Two to three months) development plan to improve the area of performance identified. This component is assessed via NEA.

Assessment: Performance or coaching of one sport (15%) and the EAPI (15%)

Requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE Biology (and PE if studied) and one sport practised at a high level

PHYSICS

Exam Board: OCR Specification: B (H557)

Head of Department: Mr J P Kemp

If you intend to study Physics at A-level, it is a requirement that you either study Mathematics as a full A level (List A) or as an AS level (List B).

Physics is a very important subject for those intending to follow a degree course in engineering and other science-related disciplines, such as medicine, surveying, chemistry, veterinary science, mathematics or computer science, to name but a few. The key skills learned in the study of Physics are also highly sought after in other careers such as finance, computing and management.

Our popular Physics course, **Advancing Physics**, was originally designed by the **Institute of Physics** and has recently been updated to respond to A level reform. The course aims to be as modern and relevant as possible and makes considerable use of ICT for experimental and modelling work.

The first four modules of the **A level course** cover the following aspects of the subject:

- Development of practical skills
- Fundamental, experimental and analytical skills
- Imaging and signalling (Lenses to QR codes)
- Sensing (Basic electrical circuits to modern sensors and instrumentation)
- Mechanical properties of materials (Microscopic structure to macroscopic properties)
- Waves and Quantum behaviour (Electromagnetic waves to the quantum behaviour of the photon)
- Space, time and motion (Forces, energy and power to the kinematics of uniformly accelerated bodies)

The remaining two modules of the **A level course** cover the following aspects of the subject:

- Creating Models (Spreadsheet modelling of exponential decay to simple harmonic oscillators)
- Out into Space (Momentum to gravitation)
- Our Place in the Universe (Hot big bang theory to relativistic time dilation)
- Matter; very simple (Kinetic theory to ideal gas laws)
- Matter; hot or cold (Quantum energy levels to the Boltzmann factor)
- Electromagnetism (Generators and transformers to rate of change of flux linkage)
- Charge and Field (Electric field between charged plates to the force on a charged particle within the field)
- Probing deep into matter (Quarks to particle accelerators)
- Ionising radiation and risk (Ionising radiation to $E=mc^2$)

The **Practical Endorsement** is the feature of this new course to replace the more traditional coursework of the previous A-level Physics specification. It comprises the assessment of 12 key pieces of practical / investigative work by the class teacher over the course of the A-level.

Requirements: a GCSE grade 7 in Physics or in Science and Additional Science (or a grade 6 with a strong teacher recommendation) is the minimum required to apply for Physics A level. The mathematical demands of the course require that you should ideally have achieved a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics, but a grade 6 is a minimum expectation.

POLITICS

Exam Board: Pearson / Edexcel Specification: 9PLO
Head of Department: Miss L H Pollard

Why study Politics?

Politics influences us all every day and studying Politics allows us to be able to see how the world around us is being shaped. Universities and employers view politics as an academically rigorous subject, which shows an interest in, and awareness of current issues. To study Politics, it is expected that you will already have an interest in current affairs and this will be utilised throughout the course. Students will develop a wide range of skills throughout their course of study, including the ability to comprehend, synthesise and interpret political information; identify connections and analyse political knowledge; as well as construct and communicate arguments clearly and coherently. The course offered by AGS will allow students the opportunity to develop their understanding of British and American Politics as well as key political ideologies.

Component 1: UK Politics (*Component code: 9PL0/01)

Written examination: 2 hours

Content overview

1. Political Participation, students will study:
 - democracy and participation,
 - political parties,
 - electoral systems,
 - voting behaviour
 - and the media.
2. Core Political Ideas, students will study:
 - conservatism,
 - liberalism,
 - socialism.

Component 2: UK Government (*Component code: 9PL0/02)

Written examination: 2 hours

Content overview

1. UK Government, students will study:
 - the constitution,
 - parliament,
 - Prime Minister and executive,
 - relationships between the branches.
2. Non-core political ideas, students will study:
 - anarchism

Component 3: Comparative Politics (*Component code: 9PL0/3A)

Written examination: 2 hours

Content overview, students will study:

- the US Constitution and federalism,
- US Congress, US presidency,
- US Supreme Court and civil rights,
- democracy and participation,
- comparative theories.

Requirements: the only requirement for choosing Politics, aside from interest in the subject, is evidence of competence in relevant subjects at GCSE. A grade 7 in History or a grade 7 in English is desirable and a grade 6 in History or grade 6 in either English is a necessity.

PSYCHOLOGY

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7182

Head of Department: Mr T A Walker

Why choose Psychology?

Psychology offers a wide variety of future careers, ranging from educational and occupational psychology to sport psychology. Even for those who are not interested in pursuing a career in psychology, the skills you will learn are transferable to many areas of employment. These skills include computer literacy, numeracy, problem solving and the ability to plan and carry out independent research.

The course studies the impact of social and biological factors on human development in order to explain why we act in the way we do. Designed to develop students' understanding of human behaviour and the factors, which impact their decisions, students will get the opportunity to adopt a critically reflective approach in their studies. With the flexible and diverse nature of the course, students are given the opportunity to study a variety of areas in psychology. One example is the module on forensic psychology, giving students the opportunity to explore motivational factors behind crime and the methods used by the judicial system to process and rehabilitate offenders.

With the statistical element of the course, students will learn to analyse a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data. They will study research methods used in the subject design before carrying out their own studies.

Course Content

Paper One 33.3% of A Level 2 hour paper (96 marks)

- Social Influence
- Memory
- Attachment
- Psychopathology

Paper Two 33.3% of A Level 2 hour paper (96 marks)

- Approaches in Psychology
- Biopsychology
- Research methods
- Issues and debates

Paper Three 33.3% of A Level 2 hour paper (96 marks)

- Issues and Debates in Psychology
- Gender
- Schizophrenia
- Forensic Psychology

Assessments: There will be three assessments at the end of year 13. While there is no coursework, students will be expected to complete individual and group research projects.

Requirements Psychology is a social science, which requires an understanding of the human anatomy and the confident analysis and application of statistical data. Therefore, a grade 6 will be required in Biology with a grade 6 in Maths. Due to the written nature of the course, students will also be required to have achieved a grade 6 in either English GCSE.

SPANISH

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7692

Head of Department: Mrs R J Corbould

In its annual surveys on the employability of British young people, the CBI (the UK's main employers' organisation) repeatedly finds that the great majority of employers emphasised the importance to them of a knowledge of foreign language, when recruiting employees. The A Level course responds to this need, opening up the ideal opportunity for students both to enjoy the experience that developing language skills to a high level brings, and improving the range of study, leisure and employment opportunities available to them in the future.

In 2016 the exam boards launched new A Level courses in Modern Languages, with the first exams to be taken in 2018.

Students following the course should by the end of two years be able to understand and write authentic Spanish with a degree of accuracy and fluency and speak with ease about topics connected with Spanish society and culture.

In the teaching programme, authentic and up-to-date texts and audio-visual materials from a variety of sources are used. Sixth Formers **will have the opportunity to take part in a trip to Madrid to broaden their linguistic and cultural knowledge of Spain.** Students have the usual eight hours taught lessons per fortnight plus a weekly half hour session with the school's Spanish **Assistant** in small groups of two or three.

The exams will have the following format:

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Writing	Two hours 30 minutes
Paper 2: Writing (2 essays)	Two hours
Paper 3: Oral Exam	15 - 20 mins

All the topics which form the basis of Papers 1 and 3 are studied within the context of Spanish society and culture and include:

- Modern and traditional values
- The cyberspace
- Equal rights
- Racism
- Integration
- Immigration
- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world
- Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world

Essays on Paper 2 will be written on either two books or a film and a book, studied over the course of the two years

The oral exam will consist of a five to six minute discussion based on a stimulus card dealing with one of the topics above followed by a two minute presentation and approximately 9 minute discussion of an individual research topic of the student's choice, connected to the culture and society of a Spanish speaking country.

Anyone considering A level should have a grade 7 at GCSE to feel confident of success and certainly no less than a grade 6.

LIST B SUBJECTS

A part of the Sixth Form timetable is occupied by list B subjects, from which it may be appropriate to select one. If you are studying Further Mathematics you should not choose a list B subject.

The courses offered in list B are:

Further Mathematics: not a list B course but if you do Further Mathematics, you should not choose a list B option since some Further Mathematics lessons will take place during this time

EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)

Geology AS Level

Mathematics AS Level

Philosophy AS Level

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Exam Board: AQA
Head of Department: Mr G J Ramsbottom

The EPQ can be studied through one of 2 options

Option 1: The EPQ begins from the start of Year 12 with taught skills and timetabled research lessons. Research will continue into the autumn term of Year 13 and will be finalised by the end of that term. To study via this option, the EPQ should be entered as your list B choice on the options application form.

Option 2: The EPQ begins at the end of Year 12 and will be completed by the end of the autumn term of Year 13. You should **not** therefore put the EPQ down on your options form.

The EPQ is a standalone level 3 qualification with a UCAS weighting of A* 28 points, A 24 points, B 20 points etc. It is the equivalent of half an A2 (not an AS, hence the availability of the A* grade).

It is, generally, a written essay of 5000 words but can also be in the form of an artefact, performance or production which is accompanied by a 1000 word write-up. It should comprise a single piece of work, of the students choosing, that shows evidence of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working. It is ultimately a journey of discovery. The learner will:

- Identify, design, plan and complete an individual project, applying organisational skills and strategies to meet stated objectives.
- Obtain information from a range of sources, analyse data, apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate linkages, connections and complexities of the topic.
- Use a range of skills to solve problems, and take decisions critically, creatively and flexibly.
- Evaluate outcomes – including own learning and performance.
- Select and use a range of communication skills and media to convey and present evidenced outcomes and conclusions.
- Be supported through the process by a Supervisor (member of staff).

Exemplar titles have included:

- Have the Crusades had a profound impact on modern society?
- The effect of the moon on geothermal processes on earth.
- Create an album of songs composed and sung by the student.
- Did the USA win World War 2 for the Allied Forces?
- What impact will the sequencing of complete genomes have on society?
- How important are applications of cryptography in the 20th Century?
- The link between facial symmetry and genetic superiority.
- Should science lead to atheism?
- “There is no great genius without some touch of madness” - Seneca. How does this quote relate to the artist Vincent Van Gogh?
- Do the ethics and controversial arguments surrounding the use of stem cell transplants in the treatment of patients with Alzheimer’s disease outweigh the possible benefits of more traditional treatments?
- “Stalin, mad or bad?”

The benefits for the student are that:

1. YOU have control over your learning. YOU own your project.
2. You can explore an additional aspect of a subject you already study.
3. You can pursue a personal interest and gain credit for it.
4. You can make a conscious link with your intended HE study/career.

GEOLOGY AS LEVEL

Exam Board: WJEC
Head of Department: Mr M Jones

The AS course is studied as a two year course with all exams taken at the end of Year 13

AS Geology is a new option for Sixth Form study at AGS. AS Geology may be an appropriate additional choice for pupils studying other Earth Science based subjects like Geography or for those studying the Sciences. Geologists are increasingly in demand and Earth Sciences are currently one of the most successful fields following further education. Pupils who have an interest in the planet we live on can take a great deal from this course and the range of transferable scientific skills required makes it a very useful qualification.

Course content and structure:

There are no options in the new AS Level so all students follow the same two year course which is examined as follows;

Component 1: Geological Enquiries (40% of qualification)

An investigation of the geology of an area shown on an accompanying simplified geological map -
Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

Component 2: Foundation Geology (60% of qualification)

An assessment which covers all the AS Geology content - Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

Pupils are also required to undertake a minimum of **two** days of work in the field in order to develop field observation and practical skills.

The WJEC Eduqas AS in Geology provides the foundations for the study of the Earth, its structures, evolution and dynamics. It develops four main concepts:

- Elements, minerals and rocks
- Surface and internal processes of the rock cycle
- Time and change
- Earth structure and global tectonics.

The course aims to enable students to:

- Use theories, models and ideas to develop geological explanations
- Use knowledge and understanding to pose scientific questions, define geological problems, present scientific arguments and geological ideas
- Use appropriate methodology to answer geological questions and solve geological problems
- Carry out fieldwork including the collection, compilation and analysis of data
- Manipulate and extrapolate these sometimes incomplete data sets in both two and three-dimensions
- Critically evaluate methodology, evidence and partial data sets

Requirements:

There are no prior learning requirements in the subject of Geology i.e. if you did not study Geology at GCSE then you can still study AS Geology. If you studied Geology at GCSE then you must have achieved a grade 6 or above. If you have not studied Geology at GCSE, as a minimum requirement you must have gained a grade 6, preferably a grade 7 in Geography (if taken) and/or chemistry.

MATHEMATICS AS LEVEL

Exam Board: Pearson/Edexcel (Provisional)

Specification: 8MA0

Head of Department: Mr C P Smith

The AS course is studied as a two year course with all exams taken at the end of Year 13

Mathematics is traditionally a very popular choice for Sixth Form study at AGS. An AS Level qualification may well be appropriate for students who would like to take the subject beyond GCSE but do not wish to take the full A level. Although not seen as one of the easier subjects at this level, students who respond to the challenge, and apply themselves well, can gain a great deal from the course. The skills you will develop to succeed in Mathematics make it a very marketable qualification.

At Sixth Form level, Mathematics combines well with several subjects, including Economics and the sciences, especially Physics.

Course content and structure:

There are no options in the new AS Level so all students follow the same two year course in pure and applied mathematics.

- There will be internal exams in the summer of Year 12.
- Two external exams are taken at the end of Year 13: Pure Maths (two hours), Statistics and Mechanics (one hour).

Pure Mathematics: This is the cornerstone of the course and accounts for two-thirds of the assessment. Some topics will be familiar from GCSE, such as algebra and trigonometry, but will be developed and studied in greater depth. Other topics will be completely new, such as calculus and logarithmic functions.

Applied Mathematics: All students are required to study Statistics and Mechanics, to gain a broad grounding in applied maths. This accounts for one-third of the assessment.

- Statistics includes the analysis and representation of data, application of probability theory to model real life situations, and hypothesis testing. Building upon the foundations laid at GCSE, this will be useful particularly to those studying subjects such as Biology, Geography or social sciences.
- Mechanics includes the study of forces and motion. Setting up and analysing mathematical models of problems in the real world. Anyone taking Physics A Level will find this particularly useful.

The course aims to enable students to:

- Develop understanding of mathematical principles, and interest / confidence in the subject
- Extend their range of mathematical skills and techniques and apply them to more challenging problems where they have to decide on the solution strategy
- Develop the ability to apply mathematical techniques in other subjects, to reason logically and to recognise incorrect reasoning
- Develop the ability to recognise situations when mathematics can be used to analyse and solve a problem in context
- Recognise situations where the use of modern technology is appropriate and be confident in its application.

Requirements: to succeed at AS level in Mathematics you need to have shown an aptitude for the subject at GCSE and in particular be able to use algebra confidently in a variety of situations. As a minimum requirement you must have followed a Higher Tier course and gained GCSE grade 6. As important as this, for anyone embarking on advanced study in Mathematics, is an enjoyment of the subject.

PHILOSOPHY AS LEVEL

Exam Board: AQA Specification: 7171
Head of Department: Mrs K L Crussell

Are you interested in the big questions of life? Do you enjoy thinking and developing arguments? Do you question things about how people act in the world that other people take for granted? Then AS Philosophy might be for you. The course comprises two equally weighted units of study: Epistemology (theory of knowledge) and Moral Philosophy (ethics). It forms an additional academic subject to complement the three Advanced Levels you will be studying for future courses of study in medicine, PPE, policing or law, for example, and is particularly well-suited to students who naturally question the way things are.

Epistemology starts with consideration of the question 'What is knowledge?' and distinguishes between different types of knowledge. Consideration is given to the tripartite view and issues surrounding it. The course then moves on to consider perception as a source of knowledge and the difficulties presented by perceptual variation, hallucination and illusion. Direct and indirect realism are considered as is Berkeley's idealism. We go on to consider reason as a source of knowledge, looking at a) innatism, arguments from Plato and Leibniz, and empiricist responses and b) the intuition and deduction thesis again with empiricist responses. Finally, we end the Epistemology course, with consideration of the limits of knowledge, philosophical scepticism, Descartes' sceptical arguments and responses (including empiricist responses) to it.

The study of **Moral philosophy** includes:

1. Normative ethical theories: Utilitarianism, Kantian deontological ethics, Aristotelian virtue ethics
2. Meta-ethics: whether moral principles originate from reason, emotions, or society, Moral realism and Moral anti-realism
3. Applied ethics: applying the above content to issues around stealing, simulated killing (computer games, plays, films etc), eating animals and telling lies

The final assessment will require you to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the content, including through the use of philosophical analysis (conceptual analysis and argument analysis). You must be able to analyse and evaluate philosophical arguments to form reasoned judgements.

The course will allow you to understand the ways in which philosophers have analysed the core concepts of philosophy, including the subtle differences in analyses that can have wider impacts on philosophical arguments. You will learn some interesting philosophical arguments, and the philosophical claims which are made, through the works of philosophers, and articulate those arguments in appropriate forms, correctly, clearly and precisely. You will also learn to appreciate the ways in which philosophical arguments are developed, issues are raised, and arguments are reformulated in response to those issues

Full details of the specification are available at: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/philosophy/as-and-a-level/philosophy-7171>

The Exam Paper (3 hours)

At the end of the two-year course students will take the AQA Religious Studies AS level examination. This will comprise ONE written paper of three hours duration.

Section A: five questions on epistemology 50%. Section B: five questions on moral philosophy 50%

Requirements: Students should have a grade 6 in English Language GCSE and have the ability to a) thoughtfully consider a range of viewpoints with an open mind b) express clearly, well-supported reasons for the views they themselves hold c) think critically, analyse and evaluate a range of abstract concepts and moral dilemma.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SIXTH FORM GAMES

Most students will participate in Sixth Form Games, but some students may request to opt out. As far as facilities will allow, we offer the Sixth Form as wide a choice of physical activity as possible in the hope that every student will find something to interest him. Some sports such as squash, however, are regularly oversubscribed and it may well be that some students will have to participate in their second choice activity until they can be fitted in.

Activities usually available are:

Winter terms:

rugby, basketball, squash, swimming, football, badminton, cross-country running, weight training and table tennis.

Summer term:

cricket, tennis, swimming, squash, badminton, weight training, softball and volleyball.

It is also a policy of the school to run competitive teams in most of the various sports offered. 1st and 2nd Rugby XVs play every Saturday and have some mid-week fixtures against strong opposition. The Senior Football Squad plays in the County and National Cup and also has approximately 14 friendly games throughout the season. Squash is popular and offers an extremely comprehensive fixture list and a high level of competition. Basketball also offers competitive opportunities. The summer term is given over to Cricket with 1st and 2nd Cricket XIs playing regular fixtures.

SPORTS LEADERS' AWARD

Level 2 Award in Sports Leadership
Course Leader: Mr N D Gibbs

Nearly 200,000 young people will gain Sports Leaders awards and qualifications in the coming year. They will gain a range of essential life skills such as planning, motivation, and communications that will equip them for the next steps on their education or employment path.

The Level 2 Award in Sports Leadership is a nationally recognised qualification that enables successful candidates to independently lead small groups of people in sport and recreational activities. The qualification teaches generic leadership skills and teamwork through the medium of sport. It is a fun and practical qualification with no entrance requirements or final exams to sit.

The qualification is divided into eight units:

1. Contribute to organising and delivering a sports activity session.
2. Establish and maintain a safe sporting activity (involving First Aid).
3. Understand the structure of sport and recreation at local, regional and national level.
4. Understand and lead fitness sessions.
5. Demonstrate principles and practice in running sporting events and competitions.
6. Demonstrate principles and practice in adapting sports activities.
7. Plan a series of appropriate sporting activities.
8. Demonstrate school sport leadership skills.

On successful completion of the Level 2 Award in Year 12, there will be the option of studying for the Sports Leaders UK highest award, the Level 3 Award in Year 13.

Year 12's must complete ten hours of Sports Leadership based in the community (ie at a sports club/school) as well as volunteer for a minimum of 3 AGS primary school festivals.

Year 13's must complete 30 hours of Leadership at AGS and with local sports clubs.

Requirements: there are no official requirements other than an interest in and a love of sport and a willingness to organise sporting activities for groups.

ENGINEERING EDUCATION SCHEME (EES)

Course Leader: Miss S K Giddings

The EES is very highly thought of in industry and will be advantageous to you at job and university interviews, where you can show off your portfolio of work and talk about the project you were involved in. This scheme provides you with an in-depth experience in science, engineering and technology, which will enable you to make an informed decision about your future studies and career.

There is no official coursework, final exam or actual recognisable qualification gained, however, your EES involvement can be used towards your Duke of Edinburgh's Award skills section, and approximately 80% of participants nationally (100% so far in AGS) also gain CREST certification. As a team you will be expected to produce a considerable record of your work (generally about 40 pages in a similar form to DT A level coursework). You will also present your findings to a panel of engineers; produce a display to present your project to other interested parties and be involved in question and answer sessions specifically relating to your project.

You will work in a team of around four to six students on a real engineering/scientific problem, the solution to which is important to a local company. The company will supply an engineer mentor to support the team to apply project management techniques to help find a solution to the problem.

The project lasts around six months and includes the following events:

- Company visit to see the project in context
- Scheme launch
- University Residential Workshop – typically two days at a regional university or similar venue to utilise their facilities and progress the project
- Celebration and Assessment Day

These are real projects and, on completion, many of the outcomes are implemented by the companies/organisations involved. You will get in-depth, hands on experience of engineering, design and research at a professional level including experience of: problem solving, team working, presentation skills and project management.

For more information see: <http://www.engineering-education.org.uk/index.php>

Requirements: this course complements DT and Science A Levels. You will need to demonstrate abilities in DT and Science with a minimum of grade B at GCSE. You will need to be studying A Levels appropriate to following a career in Engineering (i.e. including Mathematics and Physics

There are **limited places available** so each applicant will be considered on individual merit. There is a cost associated with EES due to participation fees, residential costs etc. and it is anticipated to be in the order £70. The course is completed as an extra-curricular activity and therefore requires considerable commitment and organisation.

N.B. Provision of the EES depends on the school being able to secure sponsorship from an engineering company

YOUNG ENTERPRISE

Course Leader: Miss K E Chalk

The Young Enterprise scheme enables participants to gain practical experience of the business world by setting up and running their own companies. Its aim is to inspire and equip young people to learn and succeed through enterprise. Each company typically has between 12-15 members and carries out the following activities:

- Deciding on a company name and establishing a brand or identity
- Electing members to the key posts within the company
- Deciding on products and services to offer to the market place
- Selling shares to raise capital
- Trading from October to April with a view to making a profit
- Winding up the company by paying dividends, writing a report and holding an AGM
- Paying taxes

There is no coursework as such but participants will be expected to attend certain functions such as training and enterprise activities in their own time, and also be willing to volunteer to sell their products on occasions outside of the school day. Companies also take part in trade fairs where they compete with other local Young Enterprise teams and give an account of their dealings at a presentation evening.

Throughout the year participants are supported by business advisers from local organisations as well as a Centre lead from the school. The aim of Young Enterprise is that students should 'learn by doing' and have fun while gaining skills and confidence as they gain insights into the world of business.

Requirements: an interest in the business world and willingness to work in a team.

MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCS)

We will encourage all students to develop their learning skills and widen their interests and experience – either by following a 4th A level, an AS level or other enrichment courses. There is a very wide range of MOOC's available which can be used, on CV's and in UCAS applications, to demonstrate wider knowledge and experience. Students will be able to access MOOC's via the online platform, Unifrog, and will be able to choose any online learning course that they are interested in – and has approval from the supervising teacher. A huge range is available both in terms of length of course and topic – for example, courses on building organisation skills, courses in specialist areas that are not covered in school (ie law, child development) or that enrich chosen A levels. Students will be expected to follow this course at least two terms in Year 12 and will be supervised for one period per week.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Opportunities to undertake Community Involvement will be available at the start of the academic year for both Years 12 and 13. In recent years AGS has developed relationships with Stocklake Park and Harding House special schools in addition to a number of local mainstream Primary schools. Anyone wishing to embark on a career in the caring professions such as Medicine or Teaching should consider volunteering for a Community Involvement placement; Information will be available at the start of the academic year. Students have been encouraged in supporting the delivery of a wide variety of curriculum activities and also with lunchtime clubs and pursuits. In addition many students work with local primary schools as part of their Sports Leaders' Award.

WORK SHADOWING

All students are encouraged to gain an insight into careers which interest them by taking part in a Work Shadowing placement arranged with Adviza, our independent careers information and guidance provider. We are also a partner school to InvestIN Education, which provides our students with a discount on their range of Work Experience programmes and a number of bursaries for eligible students.

Any student who has contacts through parents or friends and is able to arrange their own Work Shadowing or Work Experience placement, can do so by taking responsibility for ensuring that the employer has risk assessed the placement and is suitably insured. If the placement will take the student out of lessons they will also need to request permission for the absence from school before taking part. Work Shadowing enables students to observe professionals in a wide variety of career areas e.g. sales manager, accountants, solicitors, to understand in greater depth what is involved in the role and to establish their suitability for that field of work. For some vocational degree courses (e.g. education, medicine) work experience is essential to a successful application and the summer break between year 11 and year 12 is a good time to gain some experience.