



# Sixth Form

Prospectus



THE GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL AT LEEDS  
Be Inspired

# Key Staff

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Principal	<b>Mrs Sue Woodroofe</b>
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Vice Principal and Head of Senior School	<b>Dr Graham Purves</b>
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Senior Deputy Head (Academic)	<b>Dr Debbie Danks</b>
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Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)	<b>Mrs Helen Stansfield</b>
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Director of Sixth Form	<b>Mrs Rachel Purcell</b>
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Heads of Year	<b>Mr James Veitch</b> <b>Mrs Millie Stead</b>
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Deputy Heads of Year	<b>Mrs Briony Lancaster</b> <b>Mrs Jane Young</b>
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Head of Careers and EPQ	<b>Mrs Andrea Walker</b>
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Head of Academic Extension	<b>Mr Chris Dodd</b>
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University Applications Coordinator	<b>Mr Al Beaumont</b>
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Sixth Form Administrator	<b>Mrs Hazel Ramsay</b>
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To contact any member of the sixth form team please email  
Mrs Ramsay in the first instance **[hazel.ramsay@gsal.org.uk](mailto:hazel.ramsay@gsal.org.uk)**

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# **A-Z of** **A-level Subjects**

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**Art & Design**  
**Biology**  
**Business Studies**  
**Chemistry**  
**Classical Civilisation**  
**Computer Science**  
**Design & Technology**  
**Drama & Theatre Studies**  
**Economics**  
**English Language**  
**English Literature**  
**French**  
**Geography**  
**German**  
**Government & Politics**  
**History**  
**Latin**  
**Mathematics**  
**Mathematics (Further)**  
**Music**  
**Physical Education**  
**Physics**  
**Psychology**  
**Religious Studies**  
**Sociology**  
**Spanish**

**The Extended Project Qualification**

# Welcome to The Grammar School at Leeds Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at The Grammar School at Leeds is a special community that provides the perfect environment to fulfil your academic and personal potential.



At The Grammar School at Leeds we embrace our history and tradition whilst offering our young people space to grow, to enjoy new experiences and to explore who they will be in a challenging but highly supportive environment.

Our academic success is built on excellent teaching, fabulous resources and high level academic and pastoral support. Our students thrive in the friendly environment built on strong relationships between staff and students.

Beyond the classroom the co-curricular programme allows

students to pursue interests that will keep them happy and healthy both during their time with us and beyond. For some this will be team sport, ranging from the elite who compete at the very highest levels nationally and internationally to the house and social teams that provide fun, camaraderie and exercise for all. For others, our extensive co-curricular programme also includes volunteering opportunities, music and drama. There is something for everyone.

Our students benefit from our expertise in every aspect of school life. Our focus is on supporting students as individuals, whether to help them make the transition into

sixth form, to help guide their academic progress, or to provide support in making university and career choices. Our academic enrichment programme aims to deepen a love of learning, and allow students to explore subjects beyond the curriculum and develop vital employability skills through activities such as debating, essay competitions, subject specific societies and public speaking.

Finally, our students are supported to embrace challenge and learn from, rather than fear, failure and to develop lifelong friendships that will support and enrich their lives both while they are in sixth form and beyond.

We are deeply proud of our students and who they go on to become. I look forward to meeting you to tell you more about what makes our sixth form so special. For more information please visit [www.gsal.org.uk](http://www.gsal.org.uk).

— **Rachel Purcell**  
Director of  
Sixth Form



“Our vibrant, diverse and happy community offers the perfect environment to embrace academic challenge, explore new opportunities, and make lifelong friends. It is a very special place to be a student.”



# Beyond the Classroom

Learning in the sixth form extends far beyond the classroom as students experience a range of opportunities that will open their eyes to life after A-levels, whilst developing skills and qualities that will build towards their future success.

## Co-curricular

There is an abundance of co-curricular opportunities for students to be involved in every day of the week. From music and drama to debating, sports, MUN, DofE and much, much more!

Wednesday afternoons see students choosing from a wide range of sports and activities..

Students are also able to take part in personal development opportunities such as volunteering and student leadership roles. These foster real life skills such as teamwork, management and social intelligence allowing students to have a positive impact on their community.

We are fully committed to offering the broadest range of activities to ensure all our students feel there is something for them and to help develop their physical and emotional health as well as vital life and social skills.

## GSAL Futures

Our sixth formers benefit from the unrivalled expertise of our higher education (HE) and careers teams. We have looked to maximise the impact of these through our new GSAL Futures programme. This programme is designed to expose students to the wide array of opportunities available to them when they leave.

It includes sessions to help students understand the various paths available to them, how to prepare for them and ultimately how they work in real life. Talks from experienced visiting speakers bring these options to life. The programme is also supported by 1-2-1 sessions with qualified advisors as well as guidance meetings with the HE team and tutors to help students identify the right options for them, and to understand how to maximise their chances of success.

We are keen for our students to explore the widest range of opportunities, and that no option should be seen as beyond them. This means that as part of the university application process we also consider the most competitive university options in the UK, America and Europe.

As well as this, we work with a range of companies to promote their apprenticeship and school leavers schemes.

## Outdoor learning programme

All students attend a three-day residential course during Year 12 with our expert outdoor learning team. Students develop leadership and teamwork skills through a range of exciting outdoor activities. This programme helps the students form strong relationships with their fellow tutees and form tutor.

“Pupils benefit from a wide range of option choices at A-level...The school prides itself in catering for every combination of subject and evidence shows that they are able to do this in the vast majority of cases.”

— Independent Schools Inspectorate

# A Supportive Community

GSAL has high expectations of all our students, especially our sixth formers who act as role models to the younger pupils. We provide a wide range of support to enable them to do this, and ensure that if any challenges arise there is a clear place to turn.

## Form groups

Each sixth form student belongs to a small tutor group. The form tutor will know them well and will often be their first point of contact for support. Each form group comprises of both year 12 and year 13 students.

## Widening Perspectives

Our students benefit across both years from a series of specific lessons taught in small groups on important issues in their lives, concerning topics relating to both their health and the society in which they live.

These include: mindfulness, emotional wellbeing, relationship health and safety, substance education, internet use and safety, risk management, democracy and voting, and student finance.

## Sixth form well-being mentors

To complement our school systems of support we also have an opportunity for sixth formers to become well-being mentors for other students. Towards the end of year 12, students can opt to become a mentor and be trained in skills such as active listening, problem solving, self-care and safeguarding. Whilst our mentors give their time, energy and care, to support others in our community

they also gain valuable insights, skills and knowledge which will support their personal growth.

## Academic support

Depending on need, some students will receive regular 1-2-1 support to develop their academic skills, whilst others may benefit from more ad-hoc support at specific times, such as subject clinics, or to deal with certain pressures. Our Individual Needs team assists students with a wide range of issues that may act as barriers to their academic progress.

## Student support service

Our student support service is located close to the sixth form centre and is staffed by a team of qualified nurses, 8am to 6pm

daily. The service provides medical treatment rooms as well as space to talk through personal issues and provides access to specialist counsellors through the Oakdale Centre.

## Fee assistance

The Grammar School at Leeds was founded on the principles of excellence for all, and we aim to ensure that the most able and deserving students benefit from bursary support, as well as ensuring our school remains as diverse as the community it serves. There are a small number of means-tested bursaries available for new students joining us at year 12. To find out more please visit [www.gsal.org.uk/admissions/bursaries](http://www.gsal.org.uk/admissions/bursaries) or email [admissions@gsal.org.uk](mailto:admissions@gsal.org.uk).



# Making the Right Choices



Your A-level subject choices will influence the degree, apprenticeship and training opportunities that you can apply for and your career thereafter.

If you are certain of your career choices and know the degree or school leaver programme you wish to pursue, support is always available in our careers centre to help you find out which A-level subjects are a prerequisite or will best support your future studies. However, it is natural that many students are unsure about their plans after school, and we are here to support everyone in choosing a path that will keep options open and play to individual strengths. All sixth form students complete the Morrisby online profile to increase awareness of both their aptitudes and interests when making choices. Choosing subjects that are of the greatest enjoyment

and interest will enhance motivation and increase the chances of achieving your potential; however, you must keep an eye to the future to ensure that your subject choices do not limit the possibility of entering certain careers or studying specific degree courses. Morrisby offers comprehensive information on all aspects of making choices and supports our 1-2-1 help, which is available whenever and as often as it is needed.

Mock GCSEs can be a useful progress test but should not be the deciding factor – you may achieve a very

different result in the summer examinations. We strongly advise that you have a plan B and possibly a plan C, in case your GCSE results are not what you expected, for better or worse. There are only a few days between the publication of GCSE results in August and starting sixth form, and we will work with you during that time to ensure that you start the new term feeling confident and happy in the path you have chosen. Do not worry about changing your subject choices at this late stage. Although the sixth form timetable is drawn up based on the initial options submitted by students in year 11, in the vast majority of cases, we can accommodate changes in light of GCSE outcomes.

If you are in any doubt as to what subjects to choose, our dedicated and professional careers and higher education team will support you in making the right choices for sixth form with a view to your university and career aspirations. Your current subject teachers will also be happy to advise you on the requirements of their subject at A-level and your potential to succeed with further study.



“The careers department provides one-to-one guidance and expertise from outside the school to provide independent advice on subject choices and university courses which pupils appreciate”...“Nearly all sixth form leavers achieve a place at their chosen university, many at those with rigorous entry requirements.”

— Independent Schools Inspectorate



# A-level Results and Added Value

Our students achieve strong exam results each year and 2023 was no exception. 53% of grades awarded were A\* or A and 82% of grades were A\* to B.

The T-score from the A-level Performance System (ALPS) places The Grammar School at Leeds in the top 5% of providers for A-level value added nationally.

This is due to our students' hard work and determination, supported by the high quality of our teaching, enrichment activities and pastoral care.

The table below provides recent examples of how students in our sixth form achieved enhanced grades and secured offers from leading universities.



## Added value in The Grammar School at Leeds Sixth Form



	Average GCSE grade	National average A-level outcome for GCSE profile	A-level grades achieved at The Grammar School at Leeds	Destination
Student A	9	A A A	A* A* A*	University of Oxford
Student B	6	B C C	A* A* A	Newcastle University
Student C	4	C C D	B B C	University of Bradford

# Sixth Form

## Entry Requirements

We seek to provide a high quality, all round education at The Grammar School at Leeds. This embraces a particular commitment to academic excellence and to equipping students with a breadth of academic skills appropriate to their age and stage.

We are looking for students who will bring something in addition to their academic studies, since this will also help to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The normal academic requirement for admission to sixth form is as follows:

### Current students

Current students at The Grammar School at Leeds are normally expected to progress into the sixth form, provided that they meet the subject requirements for four A-levels, have demonstrated that they support the values and ethos of the school, and will make a positive contribution to the sixth form community. All students will be offered an opportunity to discuss their A-level subject choices to help them choose subjects which are appropriate to their GCSE portfolio and a good reflection of their interests.

### External students

**Academic achievement and potential:** If you are applying to join us in sixth form from another school, we would normally expect you to achieve at least six grade 6s at GCSE (including 5s or above in English and maths). Candidates will also have to satisfy the subject specific requirements for their chosen four A-level courses.

Candidates seeking a bursary are expected to achieve grade 7+ at GCSE (or equivalent) across most subjects. We will invite all external applicants for an interview.

### Industry and determination:

Candidates must have demonstrated that they are capable of working to deadlines and meeting the academic expectations of their teachers, commensurate with their potential.

### Conduct and attitude:

A candidate's school record during the years 10 and 11 must indicate a readiness to work hard and to respect the school's rules and policies.

Students must demonstrate that they can cope with A-level study, and must consider their subject choices carefully.

Each A-level has subject specific entrance requirements, which are outlined in the subject listings on pages 14–37.

In instances where a student's overall GCSE portfolio does not meet the grade requirements for the A-levels offered, a member of the sixth form team will meet with the student and parents to discuss the other available options.

In making a decision on whether to allow a student into the sixth form,

the school will take the following into account:

- The student's contribution to school life, their reports and disciplinary record
- The student's choices of A-level subjects and whether they are appropriate in light of their record at GCSE
- Evidence of good attitude and work ethic, indicating the potential to achieve success at A-level

If a student is allowed to enter sixth form, progression from year 12 to year 13 will be conditional upon the student's record of achievement during year 12.

For further information on joining the sixth form, please contact:

**[hazel.ramsay@gsal.org.uk](mailto:hazel.ramsay@gsal.org.uk)**  
(current students)

**[admissions@gsal.org.uk](mailto:admissions@gsal.org.uk)**  
(external students)

# Facilities at GSAL

As part of an all-through school, our sixth form benefits from being on a large 140-acre campus with excellent facilities for students with all sorts of interests.

Sports facilities include a 25m swimming pool, 3G pitch, AstroTurf and sports dome plus a 400m running track. There are music rooms and a recording studio and a new performing arts centre will open in 2024-25 comprising a 350-seat auditorium with state-of-the-art lighting and sound, a studio theatre and classrooms. We also have a stunning library, an inspiring learning space modelled on the best university libraries and resource centres with both individual and collaborative study areas.

The sixth form centre itself has its own café, garden, common room and study area, whilst sixth formers can also make use of the additional catering options in the main refectory. In July the graduation ball and prize-giving ceremony takes place in a marquee in front of school.





# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why do all students choose four A-levels initially?**

For students to do their best, choosing the right subjects is crucial. By studying four at least until February half-term, students can demonstrate their potential to succeed and motivation to study in each subject. This enables staff and students to work together to make informed curriculum choices which are individual to each student, and designed to ensure their best chances of successful outcomes.

## **Is there anything I can do to prepare for my A-level courses before I start GSAL sixth form?**

GSAL has carefully designed optional subject-related resources and activities you can do over the summer holidays to further inspire your interest in your subjects. This advice will be shared with current students and offer holders before the end of the summer term.

## **When do students have to decide which four A-levels to choose?**

All current year 11 students will submit their curriculum choices form in January, with their preferred four subjects.

Before then, they will have the opportunity to attend lunchtime talks on each subject in order to help them in their decision making.

New candidates from other schools will be required to provide details of their A-level choices when they apply.

However, some students continue with four A-levels due to their interest in a particular subject, the necessity of achieving the most UCAS points possible, or to keep their options open in the future.

## **What about AS-levels?**

We don't offer AS-levels following the exam reforms a few years ago.

## **Will students be able to continue with four A-levels?**

For most students, taking three A-levels and the EPQ provides the right balance, allowing them to prioritise and specialise, whilst also ensuring they have a wide enough range of desirable qualifications favoured by top universities.



“Sixth formers are deeply appreciative of the ‘fantastic’ support received for university applications – ‘The tutors really care about your applications...They know everyone well...You get sent specific subject bulletins while you are choosing your courses...The careers library is always open’ – including preparation for Oxbridge interviews and additional subject tests.”

— Good Schools Guide





### **What is the EPQ and is it compulsory?**

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is worth half an A-level and is a single piece of work, requiring a high degree of planning, preparation and autonomous working. The projects differ by subjects, but all require persistence over time and research skills to explore a subject independently and in real depth.

Assessment is by a 5,000 word dissertation (or a physical or creative artefact), a production log, and a presentation.

All students will start their EPQ in year 12, and it is highly recommended that all complete it by February of year 13. Some students will be required to undertake the EPQ as part of their negotiated curriculum options. For more details on the EPQ, see page 38.

### **What are my options if I don't want to go to university?**

While the majority of our students progress to higher education, we provide full support to any student who wishes to follow another route. Our Head of Careers is here to help all students achieve their ambitions.

### **Who can I speak to for more advice?**

We want to make sure that students are confident in their subject choices and will gain maximum benefit and enjoyment from their sixth form studies. The sixth form team and your current subject teachers will be happy to talk through your options.

If you are applying from another school and need further advice, please contact [admissions@gsal.org.uk](mailto:admissions@gsal.org.uk).





# A-level Art & Design

Contact:  
**Stewart Kelly**  
Email:  
**sjk@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Art &  
Design (Art,  
Craft & Design)**

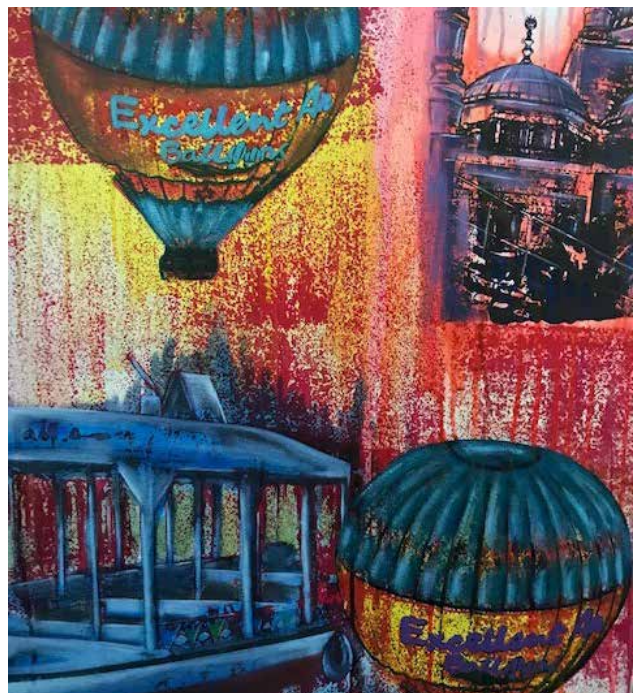
Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in an art  
related subject  
at GCSE**

Art is a journey not a destination. Students are encouraged to be creative and push boundaries, as they will be the creative driving force in art and design in the future.

The course in Art & Design (Art, Craft & Design) offers students the opportunity to explore their own creative skills using a wide range of media within our very well-resourced facilities.

Most of the assessed work is self-directed and independently produced, with the students being encouraged to discover their particular talents and to exploit them fully. There are opportunities to work in graphic design, photography, painting and drawing, 3D media including ceramics, modelling, metalwork and textiles. This is a broad-based course but students wishing to work predominantly in any of these areas will be able to do so.

We require students to be committed and enthusiastic and prepared to explore new techniques and media to cultivate and extend their skills and understanding. Students will have their own dedicated sixth form studio where they can work in free lessons or during art club sessions after school. Due to the technical demands of the course, a grade 6 in GCSE Art & Design is required in most cases, although all applications will be considered.



## The A-level course

**Component 1:  
Personal investigation**  
60% of A-level

Students are required to conduct a practical investigation into an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by written material. The focus of the investigation must be identified independently by the student and must lead to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes.

**Component 2:  
Externally set assignment**  
40% of A-level

This is a practical component only and begins on 1 February of the second year of study. Students will be given a choice of eight questions to be used as a starting point to develop a personal response. At the end of the assignment, students have a supervised time of 15 hours and must complete a finished outcome.

# A-level Biology

Contact:  
**Lynne Gilbert**  
Email:  
**alg@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Biology**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grades 8,7 in  
double award  
science (or 7,7 if  
also studying  
chemistry A-level),  
or grade 7 in  
separate biology  
and chemistry.**  
**Grade 7 in maths  
and 6 in English.**

Biology is at the cutting edge, whether in personalised medicine or enhancing food security, 3D printing with cells or wildlife surveillance technology. Innovation in fields such as these will be profoundly important for your generation.

A-level biology develops the biological knowledge and concepts necessary for understanding such innovations. It then tests your ability to apply your knowledge to explaining unfamiliar situations. It will require you to think, question, make synoptic links, interpret data and critique experiments. As a rigorous science, biology will also develop your skills in practical work, numeracy, problem solving and IT.

A keen interest in the subject is vital. You will need to be determined and proactive. You will be expected to take considerable responsibility for your own progress, making the most of opportunities to read around the subject and learning by consolidating notes, asking questions and seeking help where necessary.

The two-year course considers the following themes:

- Topic 1: Biological molecules
- Topic 2: Cells
- Topic 3: Exchange with the environment
- Topic 4: Genetic information and variation
- Topic 5: Energy transfers in and between organisms
- Topic 6: Response to internal and external change
- Topic 7: Genetics, populations and ecosystems
- Topic 8: Control of gene expression



The course is taught using a variety of approaches, utilising a wide range of resources, software and material on the school intranet GSAL World as well as practical experiences including fieldwork. Individual help from your teacher will always be available. You will experience some interesting and challenging practical work. The assessment of practical skills and competencies is integrated into activities throughout the two years and built into questions in the written papers, which are taken at the end of the course.

## The A-level course

### Paper 1: Topics 1-4 and practical skills

35% of A-level

### Paper 2: Topics 5-8 and practical skills

35% of A-level

### Paper 3: Topics 1-8 and practical skills

30% of A-level

# A-level Business Studies

Contact:  
**Karen Ward**  
Email:  
**kw@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Business  
Studies**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grades 6 and 5  
across English  
and mathematics  
at GCSE**

The overall theme underlying the course is how to run a business organisation effectively. It is made clear throughout the course that the same fundamental principles apply to achieve success regardless of the type of business in which students may eventually spend their careers. From the start of the course, students will study business in a variety of contexts in addition to being introduced to the impact of the wider external environment and stakeholder perspectives.

Students will be using business models, theories and techniques to support the analysis of contemporary business issues. Students' learning will be enriched through a bank of online resources, articles and links and visiting speakers. The course has traditionally appealed to a wide variety of students, but above all, those who want early exposure to the skills and perspectives which are essential to be a good manager. As such, the real strength of the course lies in the fact that students will develop real-life skills, enabling them to analyse data, think critically about issues and make informed decisions. There is no expectation that students should have studied business at GCSE.

There are three assessment papers of two hours each which accompany this syllabus. Each paper carries equal weight.

The bullet point list below represents the broad list of topics which will be studied over the two years. It is important to note that all of these topics will be examined across all three papers. This approach to assessment encourages an integrated and holistic approach to the subject.

## The A-level course

### 3 x 2 hour exams

Each exam is worth one third of the A-level

- What is a business?
- Managers, leadership and decision making
- Decision making to improve marketing performance
- Decision making to improve operational performance
- Decision making to improve financial performance
- Decision making to improve human resource performance
- Analysing the strategic position of a business
- Choosing the strategic direction of a business
- Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
- Managing strategic change





# A-level Chemistry

Contact:  
**Ray Peacock**  
Email:  
**rp@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Chemistry**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grades 8,7 in double  
award science, (or 7,7  
if also studying maths  
A-level), or 7 in  
separate chemistry.  
7 in maths.**

Chemistry furnishes much of the material base of modern civilisation, and chemists are a constant source of innovation for its further benefit. A genuine interest in chemistry, its principles and its diverse applications in everyday life is essential to succeed at A-level. This rigorous course requires students to be able to make synoptic links between different concepts, think methodically and think creatively to solve problems in both practical and written work.

Attention to detail is critical to ensure precision of measurements and accuracy of recording. Practical activities provide an opportunity for both team and individual work and the ability to analyse data critically and identify trends and patterns is central to the course. Written and verbal communication skills are tested and developed in a variety of ways, including the preparation and analysis of tables, graphs and equations; strong mathematical skills are essential. To complete the course successfully students must be prepared to monitor their own progress, act constructively on the feedback offered, plan their study time well and demonstrate substantial resilience and perseverance.



The two-year A-level programme of study comprises:

**Physical chemistry**, including atomic structure, amount of substance, bonding, thermodynamics, kinetics, equilibrium, electrochemical cells and acid-base chemistry. Many of these ideas are covered qualitatively in the first instance then a quantitative, mathematical approach is applied. The concepts covered during the physical chemistry topics underpin much of the rest of chemistry.

**Inorganic chemistry**, including periodicity, the trends and patterns in the chemistry of selected elements and the reactions of selected ions in aqueous solution. This area of chemistry makes links with, and applies, many of the underpinning ideas of atomic structure and structure and bonding.

**Organic chemistry**, including structure, isomerism and the chemistry of a range of organic molecules, some of which are biologically active. In this area of chemistry students learn to link together the different types of reactions into synthetic strategies and develop an appreciation of the types of methods which can be used in industry and research to work out the structures of molecular substances.

**Practical work**, which forms an integral part of our teaching. Practical skills are developed continuously and all students are expected to approach practical work in a 'minds on' manner. There is no practical exam but students must keep a lab book to evidence a number of specific practical competencies throughout the course. Practical understanding and skills are also tested through challenging questions on each of the three written exam papers.

## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1</b> 35% of A-level	Inorganic chemistry, relevant physical chemistry and relevant practical skills 2 hour written paper, 105 marks
<b>Paper 2</b> 35% of A-level	Organic chemistry, relevant physical chemistry and relevant practical skills 2 hour written paper, 105 marks
<b>Paper 3</b> 30% of A-level	Any content and any practical skills 2 hour written paper, 90 marks

# A-level Classical Civilisation

Contact:  
**Emily Taylor**  
Email:  
**elt@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**OCR Classical  
Civilisation**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
English literature  
or history at  
GCSE**

Classical civilisation spans 2,500 years of history and covers a geographical area which stretches from Spain to India and from Scotland to Egypt! Whilst studying the subject you will also gain transferable skills such as critical analysis, how to construct rigorous arguments from evidence, and how to evaluate information. These skills will be of use both with other A-level subjects and in your future careers.

Classical civilisation involves the study of both the Greeks and the Romans but without the need for having studied either Latin or Ancient Greek GCSE, as all material is read in English.

The subject delves deeply into culture in its totality: its language, literature, history, philosophy, art and archaeology. By studying it, you will learn about the differences and similarities between the classical world and later times and thus gain sensitivity to past societies whose spiritual, cultural and moral values and priorities contrast with those of the modern western world.

If you enjoy history, literature and mythology and really wish to further your knowledge of the Greeks and Romans, then this is the course for you.

Topic areas for study include:

- Greek and Roman Epic: Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*
- Imperial Image: the public image of Augustus and his propaganda campaign.
- Greek Religion: beliefs, ideas and thinking around the personal and public nature of Greek religion.



## The A-level course

At the end of the course, you will have roughly six hours of examination split across three papers. The questions will cover literature, historical and visual material.

### Unit 1: The World of the Hero

40% of A-level

### Unit 2: Culture & the Arts

30% of A-level

### Unit 3: Beliefs & Ideas

30% of A-level



# A-level Computer Science

Contact:  
**Tim Street**  
Email:  
**tgs@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Computer  
Science**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**One grade 6 and  
one grade 7  
between  
mathematics  
and computer  
science.**

Computers are increasingly becoming an integral part of every business. Mobile apps and the internet continue to transform the way we work, play and communicate. An understanding of computer science not only trains you to think logically, but prepares you for the future.

Computer science A-level is suitable for anyone with an interest in current and future technology. The course content covers programming, data structures, problem solving, theory of computation, data representation, computer systems, computer architecture, legal and ethical consequences of computing, communications, networking, databases and 'big data'.

GCSE Computing is not a prerequisite for the course.



## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1</b> 40% of A-level	An on-screen examination lasting 2 hours 30 minutes. This paper tests your ability to program, as well as your theoretical knowledge of computer science, in particular data structures and algorithms.
<b>Paper 2</b> 40% of A-level	A written examination lasting 2 hours 30 minutes. This paper tests your understanding of the fundamentals of computer science; in particular data, software and hardware, networks and communications.
<b>Non-examined assessment</b> 20% of A-level	The non-examined assessment assesses your ability to use the knowledge and skills gained throughout the course to solve a real-world problem. For example, a business or scientific simulation, a database, a website or an app or game for a mobile phone or tablet.

# A-level Design & Technology (Product Design)

Contact:  
**John Bagshaw**  
Email:  
**djb@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Design  
& Technology  
(Product Design)**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 5 in a  
design related  
subject at GCSE**

Do you like to solve problems and express your creativity through design, practical projects and by producing a great product?

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers, especially those in the creative industries.

You will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put your learning into practice by producing products of your choice.

Students will gain a deep understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.

This A-level offers an opportunity to develop greater understanding of the effect of technology and design on the world. Innovation and creativity can be expressed using the extremely diverse range of design and manufacturing facilities in the department, particularly our CAD/CAM equipment.

Studying this type of course will provide you with many transferable skills, from organisation to presentation skills, as well as developing your awareness of design and practical skills.

You will need to have a keen interest in design and be open to learning new techniques and developing new skills during all stages of the course. Visits to industrial sites are an important part of the course.

Preferably you should have a design and technology or art background at GCSE, but this does not preclude students from other subject areas. Students considering A-level Design & Technology who have not taken GCSE Design & Technology should seek guidance from Mr Bagshaw.



## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1</b> <b>Written exam (2 hours and 30 mins)</b> 120 marks (30% of A-level)	<b>What's assessed</b> Technical principles through a mixture of short answer and extended response.
<b>Paper 2</b> <b>Written exam (1 hour and 30 mins)</b> 80 marks (20% of A-level)	<b>What's assessed</b> Designing and making principles. <b>Section A</b> Product analysis: 30 marks Up to 6 short answer questions based on visual stimulus of product(s). <b>Section B</b> Commercial manufacture: 50 marks Mixture of short and extended response questions.
<b>Non-exam assessment</b> Substantial design and make project 100 marks (50% of A-Level)	<b>What's assessed</b> Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles. Written or digital design portfolio and photographic evidence of final prototype.

# A-level Drama & Theatre Studies

Contact:  
**Roz Bendelow**  
**Scott Reynolds**  
Email:  
**rsb@gsal.org.uk**  
**sdr@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Eduqas Drama &  
Theatre Studies**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 5 in  
English**

The course is designed to promote an excellent balance between practical theatre making and the theoretical understanding of drama and theatre. It encourages learners to make connections between dramatic theory and their own practice. Lessons will be both practical and theoretical. There is an option to be assessed as either a performer or a technical candidate. Therefore, students interested in lighting/sound design, set design and costume/stage make-up are also welcomed.

The Eduqas A-level Drama & Theatre Studies qualification offers a practical and challenging course of study which encourages learners to:

- Develop creativity and independence.
- Develop and apply an informed, analytical framework for making, performing and evaluating drama and theatre.
- Understand the place of relevant theoretical research in informing the processes and practices involved in creating theatre.
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of how the social, cultural and historical contexts of performance texts have influenced the development of drama and theatre.
- Experience a range of opportunities to create theatre, both published text-based and devised work.
- Participate as both a theatre maker and as an audience member in live theatre.



## The A-level course

<b>Component 1: Performance Workshop</b> Practical performance examination A reinterpretation of a text A creative log 20% of A-level	<b>What's assessed</b> Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre. Key drama skills. There is an option to be assessed on either acting or as a technical/design candidate.
<b>Component 2: Text in Action</b> Practical performance examination A process and evaluation report 40% of A-level	<b>What's assessed</b> Process of creating and performing one scripted and one devised drama. Evaluation of both the creative process and their own performance.
<b>Component 3: Text in Performance</b> External examination Two and a half hour written paper 40% of A-level	<b>What's assessed</b> There are three elements to this examination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textual Study of a pre-1956 play and a post-1956 play from a set list</li> <li>• A response to a question on an extract from 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.'</li> </ul>

# A-level Economics

Contact:  
**Rob Stevenson**  
Email:  
**ras@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Economics**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
mathematics and  
English at GCSE**

Economics is an analytical subject, so the ability to think logically and clearly are vital. You need to be interested in current affairs and comfortable with mathematical techniques such as simple equations, statistics and graphs.

The subject is both immensely interesting for its own sake and extremely useful in later life as you apply to university, develop a career and follow current affairs. The course contains no difficult maths, but students expecting to continue with economics to degree level at the top universities should take A-level mathematics as well, because this has become a conventional entry requirement.

Teaching focuses on discussion and problem solving, with a great deal of emphasis placed upon using current data and topical case studies. Economics is an enormously powerful vehicle for developing an understanding of the world that we see and read about every day. Studying economics will transform your perspective on life, and you will come to think about the world very differently. We reinforce class work with visits, speakers and video, and always aim to offer an ambitious student the chance to engage in rapid independent learning.

## The A-level course



### Paper 1: Markets and market failure 33.3% of A-level

- A 2 hour written paper covering:
- Economic methodology and economic problems
  - Individual economic decision making
  - Price determination in a competitive market
  - Production, costs and revenue
  - Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly
  - The labour market
  - The distribution of income and wealth: poverty and inequality
  - The market mechanism, market failure and government intervention in markets

### Paper 2: National and international economy 33.3% of A-level

- A 2 hour written paper covering:
- The measurement of macroeconomic performance
  - How the macro economy works
  - Economic performance
  - Financial markets and monetary policy
  - Fiscal policy and supply-side policies
  - The international economy

### Paper 3: Economic principles and issues 33.3% of A-level

A 2 hour written paper, no additional content is required from that covered for Paper 1 and Paper 2

# A-level English Language

Contact:  
**Mary Curran**  
Email:  
**mtc@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA English  
Language**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
English Language  
at GCSE**

A-level English language provides a challenging, fresh approach to the study of English. Language is what distinguishes us from other animals; an understanding of its nature and functioning should be part of the general knowledge we have about ourselves and the world we live in.

The course is designed to develop your interest in and enjoyment of English and language more generally, building upon the knowledge and skills acquired at GCSE, and encompassing various new concepts such as the study of the spoken word in various social contexts and the crucial idea of representation. It allows you to consider and understand what language is, how language works, and what language reveals about us as human beings. It also gives you the opportunity to further develop your own writing in a range of genres, both creative and academic.

A sound competence in using and writing about English is required. In addition to this, it is imperative that you are a student who is

highly motivated to undertake academic study in what is a genuinely challenging course.

There are no set texts, but it is a requirement that students read regularly, widely and independently to support what is covered in class. There is much opportunity for independent learning on the course.

The coursework element requires you to develop two very different disciplines: writing at length in different genres and analysing your choices as a writer, and producing an independent language investigation.

Additionally, the exam papers will require you both to analyse unseen data and to craft your own extended discursive essays on an array of possible language topics.



## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1: Language, the individual and society</b> 40% of A-level	Textual variations, representation and child language acquisition
<b>Paper 2: Language diversity and change</b> 40% of A-level	Comparison of texts demonstrating diversity and change, and an exploration of discourse
<b>Original writing coursework</b> 20% of A-level for the two pieces of coursework	An original piece of writing and accompanying analytical commentary <b>(1,500 words)</b>  An independent research project on a language topic of your choice <b>(2,000 words)</b>



# A-level English Literature

Contact:  
**Anna Merrick**  
Email:  
**adm@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**OCR English  
Literature**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
English Literature  
at GCSE**

The A-level English literature course gives you the chance to enjoy and study some of the best writing since Chaucer, in poetry, prose and drama. If you enjoy reading; if you find words, human feelings and experience fascinating; if you are interested in understanding the ways in which works of literature achieve their effects, whether through creating imagined worlds in fiction and drama, or creating images in poetry, then you will enjoy A-level English literature.



English literature A-level is a serious and academic course which has the invaluable importance of teaching you vital skills of analysis, judgement and reasoned argument, developing your ability to write, think critically and argue coherently. An A-level in English literature shows that you can analyse, empathise, assemble evidence and construct cogent and well-written arguments.

Most of you will have GCSEs in English language and English literature. You will need to have achieved a good result in English but if you have not taken the literature exam you may still be allowed to take the A-level course as it does not build directly on GCSE work. The main difference from GCSE is that the approach to your books is more wide-ranging, looking in detail into their deeper meaning, the techniques they use, their strengths and weaknesses and the social and cultural backgrounds they come from. You will enjoy the opportunity to study writers and their work in depth, enabling you to see their work in its context.

The qualities you need to study A-level English literature are:

- you enjoy reading and critical thinking
- you would like to develop your understanding of human nature
- you have the ability to argue for a personal opinion and support your views from selected evidence
- you would like to develop your skill in writing well-expressed, reasoned essays.

## The A-level course

<b>Component 1</b> 40% of A-level	Written examination, studying Shakespeare, drama and poetry pre-1900
<b>Component 2</b> 40% of A-level	Written examination requiring close reading in chosen topic area, and comparative and contextual study from chosen topic area
<b>Component 3: Coursework</b> 20% of A-level	Close reading or re-creative writing piece with commentary Comparative essay

# A-level French / German / Spanish

A-level language courses provide an exciting opportunity to develop your ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of people in our increasingly multilingual global society. You will gain a deeper understanding of contemporary issues, a better appreciation of other cultures and enjoy the stimulating and rewarding experience of studying a language to a higher level.

The study of languages teaches valuable transferable skills in comprehension and communication, and helps with the transition to sixth form study in other A-level subjects. It sits well within any combination of subjects.

In all three languages, the course broadens and deepens the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The topics covered give students a valuable insight into modern society and culture in the target language country and offer scope for stimulating discussion both in class and in regular sessions with the foreign language assistant. There is also the opportunity to visit France, Germany and Spain.

Topics vary slightly depending on the language, but could include:

- Media and music – their place in contemporary culture
- Aspects of German/French/Spanish society – changing nature of the family and equal rights
- Reunification of Germany/occupation and resistance in France/Spanish Civil War
- A film
- A book

Contact:  
**Chris Belcher**  
Email:  
**cfb@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel French**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 7 in  
French at GCSE**

Contact:  
**Frank Hill**  
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**fh@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel German**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 7 in  
German at GCSE**

Contact:  
**Rowan  
Reed-Purvis**  
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**rr@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel Spanish**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 7 in  
Spanish at GCSE**

## The A-level course

**Paper 1: Listening, reading  
and writing**  
40% of A-level

**Paper 2: Writing**  
30% of A-level

**Paper 3: Speaking**  
30% of A-level



# A-level Geography

Contact:  
**Simon Knowles**  
Email:  
**sk@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel  
Geography**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6  
in geography  
at GCSE**

Geography is an exciting subject which fascinates and inspires. Geographic investigation satisfies and nourishes our curiosity and deepens our understanding of contemporary challenges. Pupils who study geography A-level enjoy studying a subject that is relevant to their own lives and experiences; enjoy finding out about new people, places, landscapes and events and enjoy developing their own responses to challenging questions.



The study of geography provides a perfect complement to other disciplines, linking key concepts from the social sciences, such as economics, as well as the pure sciences, and using them in the study of humankind and their relationship with the environment. Pupils are encouraged to “think like a geographer”, applying their wider knowledge, skills and interests to the course.

The new course involves an issues based approach, enabling pupils to explore and evaluate contemporary geographical questions such as why do some tectonic hazards develop into disasters? How and why do places vary? What are the threats to national sovereignty in a more globalised world? Pupils have the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of physical and human geography, the complexity of people and environmental questions and issues, and to become critical, reflective and independent learners.

Geographical study involves the synthesis of facts, figures, ideas and perspectives. Our pupils develop their spatial literacy and analytical skills through a wide range of teaching and learning approaches.

Fieldwork remains a vital component of geography, developing pupils’ understanding and widening their learning experience. Pupils carry out human and physical studies on a variety of scales.

## The A-level course

<b>Unit 1</b> 30% of A-level	The topics studied are tectonic processes and hazards, glaciated landscapes and change, the water cycle and water insecurity, the carbon cycle and energy insecurity,
<b>Unit 2</b> 30% of A-level	The topics studied are superpowers, globalisation, diverse places and health, human rights and intervention.
<b>Unit 3</b> 20% of A-level	This is a synoptic investigation based on a geographical issue within a place based context directly linked to multiple areas of the content covered throughout the course. It is based upon a resource booklet which contains information about the geographical issue.
<b>Unit 4</b> 20% of A-level	An independent investigation focusing on a question or issue from within the course content. This will incorporate fieldwork and utilise the analysis and evaluation skills developed throughout the course.

# A-level Government & Politics

Contact:  
**Laura Parker**  
Email:  
**lep@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel  
Government  
& Politics**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
history or English  
at GCSE**

Government and politics A-level offers a fresh area of study for students entering the sixth form. If you have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in politics and current affairs, and a desire to explore new ideas, then this is the subject for you. No previous experience is expected or needed.

You will learn how to develop a critical awareness of the nature of politics in the UK and the United States including the role of political parties and pressure groups; the structure of power in each country, featuring the relationship between prime minister, parliament and the judiciary in the UK, and that between the president, Congress and the Supreme Court in the USA; the rights and responsibilities of individual citizens; and a clear understanding of the theories and values that underpin these two modern systems of government.

The syllabus also covers UK voter behaviour, the role of the media and British political ideologies.

The impact of the contentious Brexit process, the continued effects of the global pandemic and the ongoing issues at the heart of contemporary US politics also feature prominently.

The course is designed for students who:

- enjoy debating issues related to politics and current affairs
- appreciate the need to form clear opinions on the key issues of the 21st century
- are considering careers such as law, journalism or broadcasting
- want a qualification which proves to universities and employers that they understand how their society functions.

## The A-level course

### Unit 1: UK politics

33% of A-level

### Unit 2: UK government

33% of A-level

### Unit 3: Comparative politics: USA

33% of A-level



# A-level History

Contact:  
**Cathryn Haigh**  
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**cvh@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA History**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 history  
at GCSE**

History is at once lively, demanding, shocking and intriguing. Students who have the curiosity to investigate independently, to interrogate, and to question are ideally suited to the study of history at A-level. History is a popular subject which opens many career routes and is very highly regarded as a subject in its own right.



The course is composed of two examined units of study:

- Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603-1702 (Unit 1)
- The transformation of China, 1936-1997 (Unit 2)

We have selected these units because they contain material that you have not encountered at GCSE and because they will provide you with valuable historical context for some of the social, political and ideological struggles that continue to shape the world in which you live. They are amongst the most engaging and exciting periods it is possible to study.

Towards the end of year 12 you will begin an independent investigation on a historical topic separate from the taught course, culminating in the writing of an extended essay. You will have the opportunity to study any period, individual, theme or event that you find intriguing from ancient history to the late 19th century. This piece of work will be researched and written outside of lessons over a six month period.

A good grade in GCSE history is beneficial, but please enquire if you are interested in A-level history and have not taken the subject at GCSE.

## The A-level course

<b>Unit 1: One written examination</b> 40% of A-level	Three questions, 2 hours 30 minutes
<b>Unit 2: One written examination</b> 40% of A-level	Three questions, 2 hours 30 minutes
<b>Unit 3: Coursework</b> <b>(3,500-4,500 words)</b> 20% of A-level	A topic of each student's own choice



# A-level Latin

Contact:  
**Emily Taylor**  
Email:  
**elt@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**OCR Classics  
(Latin)**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 7 in Latin  
at GCSE**

Latin offers a unique combination of analytical challenge and study of literature and society. Whilst delving into the world of the ancient Romans and to some extent the ancient Greeks, and seeing their legacy on the western world, you will develop greater appreciation of how the Latin language works and how English grammar functions, as well as improving your knowledge of vocabulary. Simultaneously, transferable skills such as literary criticism, problem solving and historical evaluation are all improved from the solid ground laid at GCSE.

You will spend approximately half the number of lessons each week consolidating and expanding your knowledge of the language, including practising unseen translations and comprehensions. Much of the grammar and syntax of the language has been covered before at GCSE level but you will investigate these at a deeper level and learn about new grammatical structures.

In addition, you will read, translate and discuss extracts from prose and verse authors (currently Cicero and Virgil). For the examination you will be required to translate and provide commentary on selected passages.

We recommend that you gain a good GCSE grade in Latin. Please talk to us if you would like advice about whether this course would suit you.



## The A-level course

### Unit 1: Unseen translation

25% of A-level

### Unit 2: Comprehension or prose composition

25% of A-level

### Unit 3: Prose literature

25% of A-level

### Unit 4: Verse literature

25% of A-level

# A-level Mathematics

Contact:  
**Pat Brotherton**  
Email:  
**mpb@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel  
Mathematics**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 7 in  
mathematics  
at GCSE**

Mathematics is an exciting intellectual challenge in its own right as well as a subject that supports a wide range of other courses.

The course covers the three main branches of mathematics: pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics. The focus throughout the course will be on problem solving, clear and effective communication, and exploring the links between the various aspects of mathematics.

Independent thought is encouraged and resilience developed as you strive to understand the key concepts underpinning a multi-stage problem.

A-level mathematics is a highly regarded qualification and most importantly, when tackled with enthusiasm and determination, this course will be a great deal of fun.

The study of mathematics at sixth form level requires perseverance, a genuine interest in and enjoyment of the subject. It is a demanding course that repeatedly builds on

previous skills in order to develop new ones. The theory and examples tackled in lessons will need to be consolidated at home by working through notes, examples and exercises. Maths clinics are available twice a week and staff members are always on hand for any extra help you may need.

If you would like to stretch yourself further, there will also be the opportunity to take part in a range of maths challenges, both individual and team.

Students already taking A-level mathematics sometimes add further mathematics as a fourth subject. In deciding whether this would be worthwhile, students should bear in mind that universities generally only take into account one maths grade for degree courses other than pure maths.



## The A-level course

### The curriculum is divided into three areas

- Pure mathematics: Methods and techniques underpinning all other areas of mathematics, including proof, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and vectors
- Statistics: Statistical sampling, data presentation and probability leading to the study of statistical distributions
- Mechanics: The study of the physical world, including forces and motion

### Students will take three examinations in total

Each 2 hour exam is worth one third of the A-level

- Pure mathematics topics will be tested on at least two of the papers and account for 66% of the final assessment
- Mechanics will account for 17% of the final assessment and will be tested on one paper only
- Statistics will account for 17% of the final assessment and will be tested on one paper only

# A-level Further Mathematics

Contact:  
**Pat Brotherton**  
Email:  
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Course:  
**Edexcel Further  
Mathematics**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 8  
in mathematics  
at GCSE**

If you have a particular interest in and flair for mathematics, you may choose to study A-level further mathematics as well, thus obtaining two different A-level qualifications in mathematics.

This provides an opportunity to study a broader and deeper range of topics and offers excellent preparation for the study of a mathematics based course at university.

Further mathematicians are passionate about mathematics and enjoy finding the most efficient and elegant solution to a multi-stage problem. They will want to know the “why” underpinning the concepts they are tackling and will be able to spot links between the various aspects of mathematics.

The course extends the pure mathematics topics covered at A-level and also offers the opportunity to study other areas of mathematics such as statistics and mechanics in much more depth.



## The A-level course

The curriculum is divided into three areas

- Pure mathematics: Methods and techniques underpinning all other areas of mathematics, including proof, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and vectors
- Statistics: Statistical sampling, data presentation and probability leading to the study of statistical distributions
- Mechanics: The study of the physical world, including forces and motion

There will be six hours of examinations in total, divided into four papers

- Two of the papers to be based entirely on pure mathematics which makes up at least 50% of the course
- Topics for remaining papers to be selected as best suits our students, from a mixture of statistics and mechanics

# A-level Music

Contact:  
**Pippa Sidwell**  
Email:  
**pjs@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Eduqas/WJEC**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
music at GCSE  
plus grade 5  
standard theory  
and practice**

Those who have an enthusiasm for music and enjoy creating, performing and listening to it should consider A-level music. Music is a highly regarded A-level both by universities and future employers due to the diverse nature of the subject skills developed during the course, equipping students for a broad range of careers, not just in music.

At GCSE you will have learnt a number of skills that you will develop further at A-level. At the start of the course, you will need to be able to play a musical instrument or sing to grade 5 standard, be able to read music fluently and have a sound theoretical understanding of the subject to grade 5 level. You can sign up for theory lessons if your theoretical knowledge is lacking.

The range and quality of co-curricular musical activities at GSAL is superb and as an A-level musician, we would hope that you take a leading role in terms of your involvement as a practising musician both instrumentally and

vocally. There are numerous opportunities for performance such as the competitions and workshops organised in school in order to develop your skills and confidence. We assume that you will be having regular instrumental or vocal lessons either in or outside school.

The A-level syllabus covers a fabulous range of set works, which, through detailed listening and analysis, will inspire you to develop your awareness of unfamiliar music and styles further. You will be encouraged to develop your own composition style but also to learn traditional techniques of harmony.



## The A-level course

Unit	Component 1: Performing	Component 2: Composing	Component 3: Appraising Written examination 2 hours 15
% of A-level	35% or 25%	35% or 25%	40%
Content	Pupils may opt for either weighting, which must be the other choice weighting for Component 2. Pupils are encouraged to participate in co-curricular music ensembles and competitions to hone their skills. In the final performance, examined by an external examiner, they perform for 10 (35%) or 6 (25%) minutes. Standard difficulty level is grade 6. Higher grades accrue extra credit. One performance is assessed each half term.	Pupils work towards producing a portfolio of three compositions (35%) one of which must reflect the musical language, techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition in response to a brief set by WJEC. The second composition (only for 35%) must reflect the musical techniques and conventions of a different area of study and the third composition is a free composition.	The knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language will be applied to two areas of study in year 12: The Development of the Symphony 1750-1900 including set works - Haydn's "London" Symphony and Musical Theatre. In year 13 a further area "Into the 20th Century", including works by Poulenc and Debussy is studied.  As well as questions related to these set works, there will be extended questions asking students to draw links with music heard as an unfamiliar extract and shorter questions testing aural dictation skills.



# A-level Physical Education

Contact:  
**Tom Bodley**  
Email:  
**trb@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**OCR Physical  
Education**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in both  
English and  
science at GCSE.**

Studying A-Level physical education will give you a fantastic insight into the amazing world of sports performance. Not only will you have the chance to perform or coach a sport through the non-exam assessment component, you will also develop a wide ranging knowledge into the how and why of physical activity and sport.

The combination of physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting opportunity for students. You can perform, and then through the academic study improve your performance or coaching through application of the theory.

Physical education is studied through a range of different contexts and the impact it has on both ours and others everyday lives. You will learn the reasons why we do things, why some people outperform others, mentally and physically. You will also delve into the ethical considerations behind the use of drugs as well as explore the influence that modern technology is having on physical activity and sport.

## The A-level course

<b>Component 1:</b> Physical factors affecting performance. Applied anatomy and physiology Exercise physiology Biomechanics.	2 hour written paper 90 marks 30%	Students gain a deeper understanding of key systems in the body and how they react to changes in diet and exercise. They also study the effects of force and motion on the body and how they can be used to our advantage.
<b>Component 2:</b> Psychological factors affecting performance Skill acquisition Sports psychology.	1 hour written paper 60 marks 20%	Students study the 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. They also explore the psychological factors that affect group dynamics and the effects of leadership and stress.
<b>Component 3:</b> Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport Sport and society Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport.	1 hour written paper 60 marks 20%	This component focuses on the social and cultural factors that have shaped sports over time, and their influences on physical activity. Students consider the impact of hosting a global sporting event such as the Olympic Games, and the influence of modern technology on both the performer and the spectator of contemporary sport.
<b>Component 4:</b> Practical performance Practical performance or coaching.	Non-exam assessment (NEA) 30 marks 15%	Students are assessed in the role of either performer or coach in one practical activity. They are required to demonstrate effective performance, the use of tactics or techniques and the ability to observe the rules and conventions under applied conditions.
<b>Component 5:</b> Evaluating and analysing performance for improvement (EAPI)	Non-exam assessment (NEA) 30 marks 15%	Students are also assessed in the Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement (EAPI). They observe a live or recorded performance by a peer and provide an oral analysis and critical evaluation of their peer's performance.

# A-level Physics

Contact:  
**David Dee**  
Email:  
**djd@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Physics**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grades 8,7 in double  
award science (or 7,7  
if also studying maths  
A-level), or 7 in  
separate physics.  
7 in maths.**

Physics is mankind's attempt to understand the universe. Its scope is (literally) limitless ranging from grand universal concepts such as relativity, quantum theory and antimatter to more pragmatic matters such as manipulation of electric signals, light and sound.

The A-level in physics has always given us the opportunity to better link together concepts for students. In doing this we help open their eyes to the wonder and complexities of the universe whilst equipping them for a vast array of careers and courses requiring the ability to analyse, see patterns and develop

imaginative solutions to problems, whilst thinking in a logical and systematic way.

The AQA syllabus has been the most popular choice at A-level for a considerable time. It has been enjoyable and inspiring for staff and students alike.

One of the many advantages of the course is that it is very clearly structured in lesson by lesson sections, and these are well supported by a variety of textbooks, including an online one which is specifically dedicated to the course. Checklists issued at the start of topics will help students to plan their learning, and to review progress afterwards.

Much of the work in Year 12 is based on the exciting developments in physics, such as atomic structure, antimatter, and fundamental particles. In addition to this, sections on measurement, waves, mechanics, electricity and circular motion give a solid foundation for further study.

Concepts learned in Year 12 are developed through the study of thermal physics, electric, magnetic and gravitational fields and nuclear physics. A very appealing aspect of the AQA course is that options are available in Year 13 and we aim to offer turning points and one other, depending on demand.



## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1</b> 34% of A-level	Atomic physics, mechanics, materials and electricity 2 hour written paper, 85 marks
<b>Paper 2</b> 34% of A-level	Thermal physics, electric and gravitational fields, and nuclear physics 2 hour written paper, 85 marks
<b>Paper 3</b> 32% of A-level	Section A: Practical skills and data analysis; Section B: Option topic 2 hour written paper, 80 marks

# A-level Psychology

Contact:  
**Alison Wilson**  
Email:  
**paw@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Psychology**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 5 in maths  
and grade 6s in  
English and  
science (grade 6 in  
biology if separate  
sciences)**

Psychology represents a new opportunity for students at A-level, and requires no previous knowledge. Most important of all is a genuine interest in people and a willingness to be proactive in your learning.

Psychology is defined as “the scientific study of the brain and behaviour” and as this suggests it is recognised as a science by universities. It is an engaging and effective introduction to the understanding of why people behave and interact in the way they do.

You will consider a large range of behaviours that will introduce you to several different areas of psychology (see the unit breakdowns below).

You will gain knowledge and understanding of and develop analytical, application, communication and evaluative skills in relation to approaches, theories, research studies and therapies, and have the opportunity to replicate (ethical) research activities.

A-level psychology is a linear course designed to be examined at the end of the two-year period of study. Assessment is by examination in three equally weighted units/papers.



## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1: Introductory topics in psychology</b> 33.3% of A-level	This unit provides a broad introduction to the subject and comprises familiar and popular topics such as social influence, memory, attachment and psychopathology (abnormal psychology).
<b>Paper 2: Psychology in context</b> 33.3% of A-level	This unit develops the learner as a 'scientist' and includes the five main approaches to psychology which are used to explain all behaviours. Research methods develops the learner's methodological and practical skills in terms of design, data handling and data analysis.
<b>Paper 3: Issues and topics in psychology</b> 33.3% of A-level	This unit considers the debates in psychology such as 'nature - nurture' and ethical implications. There will be the opportunity to study in more depth three further areas – typical behaviour (cognition and development); atypical behaviour (schizophrenia) and anti-social behaviour (forensic psychology).

# A-level Religious Studies

(Philosophy, Ethics and Theology)

Contact:  
**Fiona Fishburn**  
Email:  
**ftf@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**OCR Religious  
Studies**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6  
in religious  
studies or  
English language  
at GCSE**

This is a fascinating course in philosophy, ethics and theology, which focuses on some of the biggest questions that human beings can ask; is there a God? Where did the universe come from? Why does evil exist? How do I decide what is right and wrong? Is religion harmful? This course encourages students to question and critically analyse the truth claims made in philosophical, ethical and theological thinking and to develop their own justified conclusions. Religious studies A-level is a highly regarded qualification as it develops critical thinking skills and analytic thought.

This course is designed for pupils who:

- Are considering a wide variety of careers including law, medicine and politics
- Wish to develop an understanding and appreciation of philosophical, ethical and theological thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- Wish to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of philosophy, ethics and theology and to develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments

## The A-level course

<b>Unit 1</b> 33.3% of A-level	2 hour exam <b>Philosophy of religion:</b> Students will evaluate the traditional arguments for the existence of God and will consider if religious experiences are merely a product of psychology. Questions surrounding the problem of evil, the nature of God and what makes us human are discussed.
<b>Unit 2</b> 33.3% of A-level	2 hour exam <b>Ethics:</b> What does it mean to say an action is morally good? What is the best foundation for decision making? Various ethical theories are studied and applied to contemporary issues such as sexual ethics and euthanasia; the application of ethical theories to business is also a key element of this contemporary and relevant course. The implications of these debates are hugely significant to the study of the legal system.
<b>Unit 3</b> 33.3% of A-level	2 hour exam <b>Theology (DCT):</b> A fascinating study of both traditional and contemporary religious attitudes to issues such as gender, politics and the role of other religions in the modern world. Students will consider whether religion is a danger to society and if the world would be a better place if it was removed. Students will also have the opportunity to discuss the role of Jesus as liberator and the implications of the use of Marxism as a framework for Christian teaching on helping the poor.





# A-level Sociology

Contact:  
**Carmel Neville**  
Email:  
**csn@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Sociology**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
English or  
religious studies  
at GCSE.**

Sociology is an exciting and illuminating field of study that explains and analyses human behaviour. It is a theoretical subject which aims to explain the role and functions of institutions such as the education system, the family, the criminal justice system, religion and the mass media.

The course encourages students to think about society in a new light by studying a range of sociological perspectives. These include functionalism, neo-liberalism, marxism, feminism interactionism and postmodernism. Students will also develop a deep understanding of modern societies and sociological thinking, alongside a range of skills, such as analytical and critical thinking, writing about complex issues and analysing qualitative and quantitative data. They will develop a comprehensive understanding of the social problems that affect the society we live in and students will discuss and evaluate the different social policies that aim to tackle these issues.

Sociology is regarded as a demanding and rigorous A-level, which combines well with any other combination of subjects.

A-level sociology is a linear course and is examined at the end of the two-year period of study. Assessment is by examination in three equally weighted papers (see the below unit breakdown).



## The A-level course

### Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods

2 hour written exam  
33.3% of A-level

Students will explore the role and purpose of education, examining how it shapes and is also shaped by societal structures and ideologies. Students will also explore how research methods are used by sociologists.

### Paper 2: Topics in Sociology. Families and Households, and The Media

2 hour written exam  
33.3% of A-level

Students study two sociological topics in depth, engaging in theoretical debate which draws upon their own experiences and research projects.

### Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

2 hour written exam  
33.3% of A-level

Students will study issues surrounding crime, deviance, social order and control, learning about demographic patterns and the relationships between crime and societal structures. Sociological theory and research methods will also be examined.

# The Extended Project Qualification

Contact:

**Andrea Walker**

Email:

**baw@gsal.org.uk**

Course:

**AQA Extended Project Qualification**

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There are few chances for students to have free rein with the specifics of what they study both in and out of school. The beauty of the EPQ is that our students gain just that opportunity.

Having the chance to devise and refine your very own research question, work alongside fellow students on the research journey, and be treated more like an undergraduate when meeting with your supervisor is both rewarding and challenging. This is what the EPQ has to offer – the chance to go on a personal journey with a topic area about which the student feels passionate.

The qualification is worth 28 UCAS points and therefore carries the weighting of half an A-level. The EPQ programme runs from the summer term of year 12 until the February of year 13, with the student expected to devote about 90 hours of their own time to the project.

The school is experienced in giving students the academic skills to be able to succeed at the highest level, such as how to research and reference effectively as well as successfully present to an audience. Year on year our results have been excellent with an extremely high proportion of our students securing A or A\* grades.



“We welcome the introduction of the Extended Project and would encourage you to undertake one as it will help you develop independent study and research skills and ease the transition from school/college to higher education.”

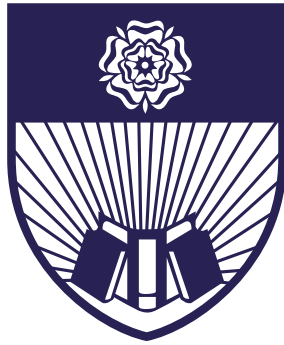
— **University of Cambridge**



“The skills that students develop through the Extended Project are excellent preparation for university level study. Students can refer to the Extended Project in their UCAS personal statements and at interview to demonstrate some of the qualities that universities are looking for.”

— **University of Manchester**





THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
AT LEEDS

Be Inspired

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