



# Sixth Form

Prospectus 2022-23



THE GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL AT LEEDS  
Be Inspired

# Key Staff

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Principal	<b>Mrs Sue Woodroofe</b>
Vice Principal and Head of Senior School	<b>Dr Graham Purves</b>
Senior Deputy Head (Academic)	<b>Dr Debbie Danks</b>
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Director of Sixth Form	<b>Mr Ben Harding</b>
Head of Year 12	<b>Mrs Jane Pratt</b>
Deputy Head of Year 12	<b>Mr John MacKenzie</b>
Head of Year 13	<b>Miss Millie Stead</b>
Deputy Head of Year 13	<b>Mrs Briony Lancaster</b>

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Head of HE and Student Development	<b>Mrs Christine Jagger</b>
Head of Careers and EPQ	<b>Mrs Andrea Walker</b>
Head of UCAS	<b>Mrs Jane Pratt</b>
Oxbridge Coordinator	<b>Mr Chris Dodd</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

**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 for the rest of their lives.

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).

— **Ben Harding**  
Assistant Headteacher &  
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 options, including sports, to activities such as mindful walking and climbing.

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 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.

# 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.

## Widening Perspectives

Our students benefit from a series of specific lessons and assemblies on issues of health and society in the 21st century. Topics include: mindfulness; emotional wellbeing; relationship and sex education; drug and alcohol misuse; internet misuse; national and international politics; risk management and personal finance.

## Sixth form well-being mentors

To complement our school systems of support we also have an opportunity for sixth formers to become wellbeing 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 three 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 mean-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).

“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

## 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 one to one 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



“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



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.

## A-level Results and Added Value

Our students achieve strong exam results each year and 2021 was no exception. 72% of grades awarded to our A-level candidates were either A\* or A, and 88% of grades were A\* to B, which is significantly above the national averages of 44% and 70% respectively.

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:

- If you are a current student here, there will be a place for you in sixth form if you wish to study A-levels and we feel this is the best route for you. We expect students progressing from our Year 11 to demonstrate commitment to the wider life of the school, as well as academic motivation.
- 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). We will invite you for interview, ask you to provide a personal statement and request a reference from your current school.

Students must demonstrate that they can cope with A-level study, and must consider their subject choices carefully. Form tutors and subject teachers provide advice to help students select subjects that are appropriate to their GCSE portfolio and a good reflection of their interests.

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 the Year 12.

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

**hazel.ramsay@gsal.org.uk**  
(current students)

**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 barn plus a 400m running track. Music and arts facilities include a fully-equipped theatre, music rooms and recording studio. We also have a state of the art library with over 50,000 books and journals and a well-resourced HE and careers room. The sixth form centre itself has its own café, seating area and study room, whilst sixth formers can also make use of the additional catering options in the main refectory.





# 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 for at least the first 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.

## 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.

## 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.

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.

## How will students spend their time if they do not progress with four A-levels?

All students will participate in the GSAL Futures and Widening Perspectives programmes – for further details please refer to pages 6 and 7. Most students also research a topic of their choice through the EPQ.



“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 about AS-levels?

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

## 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) in the first instance.





# 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

<b>Component 1: Personal investigation</b> 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.
<b>Component 2: Externally set assignment</b> 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 7,8 in double award science or 7,7 if studying chemistry A-level. Grade 7 in biology and chemistry if taken separately. 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:  
**Geoff Huband**  
Email:  
**gah@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Chemistry**

Subject specific requirements:  
**8,7 in double award science, or 7,7 if studying maths A-level, or 7 in 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 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

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.

# A-level Classical Civilisation

Contact:  
**Martin Gibson**  
Email:  
[mjg@gsal.org.uk](mailto:mjg@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*.
- Invention of the barbarian: how the Greeks saw themselves as distinct from their neighbours during the Greco-Persian wars.
- Beliefs, ideas and thinking: 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](mailto:tgs@gsal.org.uk)  
Course:  
**AQA Computer  
Science**

Subject specific  
requirements:  
**Grade 6 in  
mathematics at  
GCSE, and a 6 in  
an ICT related  
GCSE**

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

### Paper 1

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.

### Paper 2

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.

### Non-examined assessment

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> Written exam (2 hours and 30 mins) 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> Written exam (1 hour and 30 mins) 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**  
Email:  
**rsb@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 and there is an option to be assessed as either a performer or a technical candidate – so students interested in lighting and sound design, set design, costume or 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

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.

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

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

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



<b>Paper 1: Markets and market failure</b> 33.3% of A-level	A 2 hour written paper covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic methodology and economic problems</li> <li>Individual economic decision making</li> <li>Price determination in a competitive market</li> <li>Production, costs and revenue</li> <li>Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly</li> <li>The labour market</li> <li>The distribution of income and wealth: poverty and inequality</li> <li>The market mechanism, market failure and government intervention in markets</li> </ul>
<b>Paper 2: National and international economy</b> 33.3% of A-level	A 2 hour written paper covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The measurement of macroeconomic performance</li> <li>How the macro economy works</li> <li>Economic performance</li> <li>Financial markets and monetary policy</li> <li>Fiscal policy and supply-side policies</li> <li>The international economy</li> </ul>
<b>Paper 3: Economic principles and issues</b> 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

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.

Contact: **Kerry Kurczij**  
 Email: **klk@gsal.org.uk**  
 Course: **AQA English Language**

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

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 and, more especially, find words, human feelings and experience fascinating; and 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.

This enthusiasm will be a bonus. 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 have the chance really to come to know works and their writers, whether contemporary or from the past.

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

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

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

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 with our well-established programme of exchanges.

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

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

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

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

## The A-level course

<b>Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing</b> 40% of A-level
<b>Paper 2: Writing</b> 30% of A-level
<b>Paper 3: Speaking</b> 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, the carbon cycle and energy insecurity, the water cycle and water insecurity, climate change futures and glaciated landscapes and change.
<b>Unit 2</b> 30% of A-level	The topics studied are superpowers, globalisation, diverse places and migration, identity and sovereignty.
<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:  
**Andrew Stodolny**  
Email:  
**ams@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 contentious issue of the UK’s relationship with the EU during

the Brexit process features prominently, as does the Government’s handling of the pandemic and the ongoing divisions at the heart of contemporary US politics.

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:  
**Keith Milne**  
Email:  
**kdm@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:

- The British Empire, 1857-1967 (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.

In Year 13 you will also undertake an independent investigation and write one piece of work on a historical topic of your choice. This will allow you to study any period, individual, theme or event that you find intriguing but do not study within the taught units. This can include anything ranging from ancient history to the modern day. This is written during the course of the year and is done at home.

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 (3,000-3,500 words)</b> 20% of A-level	A topic of each student's own choice

# A-level Latin

Contact:  
**Martin Gibson**  
Email:  
**mjg@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

<b>The curriculum is divided into three areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pure mathematics: Methods and techniques underpinning all other areas of mathematics, including proof, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and vectors</li> <li>• Statistics: Statistical sampling, data presentation and probability leading to the study of statistical distributions</li> <li>• Mechanics: The study of the physical world, including forces and motion</li> </ul>
<b>Students will take three examinations in total</b> Each 2 hour exam is worth one third of the A-level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pure mathematics topics will be tested on at least two of the papers and account for 66% of the final assessment</li> <li>• Mechanics will account for 17% of the final assessment and will be tested on one paper only</li> <li>• Statistics will account for 17% of the final assessment and will be tested on one paper only</li> </ul>

# A-level Further Mathematics

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

<b>The curriculum is divided into three areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pure mathematics: Methods and techniques underpinning all other areas of mathematics, including proof, algebra, trigonometry, calculus and vectors</li> <li>• Statistics: Statistical sampling, data presentation and probability leading to the study of statistical distributions</li> <li>• Mechanics: The study of the physical world, including forces and motion</li> </ul>
<b>There will be six hours of examinations in total, divided into four papers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two of the papers to be based entirely on pure mathematics which makes up at least 50% of the course</li> <li>• Topics for remaining papers to be selected as best suits our students, from a mixture of statistics and mechanics</li> </ul>



# A-level Music

Contact:  
**Pippa Sidwell**  
Email:  
**pjs@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**Edexcel Music**

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

<b>Component 1: Performing</b> Non-examined assessment (externally assessed): 30%	A public performance either playing or singing solo, in an ensemble, improvising or realising music using music technology of a minimum of eight minutes
<b>Component 2: Composing</b> Non-examined assessment (externally assessed): 30%	Two compositions totalling a minimum of six minutes One composition will be from a choice of briefs assessing compositional technique One composition will be from a list of briefs related to the areas of study or could be a free composition
<b>Component 3: Appraising</b> Written examination 2 hours: 40%	The knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language will be applied to 18 set works ranging from Clara Wieck-Schuman Piano Trio in G minor Opus 17 Mut 1 to Danny Elfman's Batman Returns through to popular songs by Kate Bush and the Beatles. 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:  
**Grades 6 and 5 across English and science at GCSE**

The A-level physical education course takes a multidisciplinary approach, encouraging the development of different methods of enquiry drawn from a wide range of study, with the focal point being the performer and the performance.

The modules are based on the interaction between theory and practice in physical education. Excellence in sport is not essential; however, 30% of the final mark is taken from your performance skills in an activity from an approved list.



## The A-level course

<b>Unit 1</b> 30% of A-level	2 hour written paper Applied anatomy and physiology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise and physiology and biomechanics</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2</b> 20% of A-level	1 hour written paper Psychological factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skill acquisition and sports psychology</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3</b> 20% of A-level	1 hour written paper Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical activity</li> <li>• Sport and society</li> <li>• Contemporary sporting issues</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 4</b> 30% of A-level	Non-written assessment Performance or coaching in physical education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation and analysis of performance</li> <li>• Performance or coaching of an activity in physical education</li> </ul>

# A-level Physics

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

Subject specific requirements:  
**8,7 in double award science, or 7,7 if studying maths A-level, or 7 in 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:  
**6 grades in science and maths, Grade 5 in English at GCSE**

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 (gender); 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 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 5 in English 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

<b>Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods</b> 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.
<b>Paper 2: Topics in Sociology, Families and Households, and on The Media</b> 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.
<b>Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods</b> 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:  
**acs@gsal.org.uk**  
Course:  
**AQA Extended Project Qualification**

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**

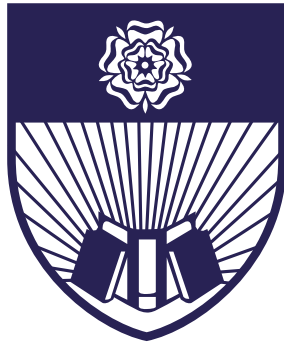


“The skills that students develop through the Extended Project are excellent preparation for university level study. Students can refer to the Extended Project in their UCAS personal statements and at interview to demonstrate some of the qualities that universities are looking for.”

— **University of Manchester**







THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
AT LEEDS

Be Inspired

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