



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

The Rosmini Sixth Form Centre

SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK



Encouraging **Big** Ideas

www.ratcliffecollege.com

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How to apply



If you are keen to secure a place for your child, we would suggest making an application right away.

Our friendly Admissions Team are happy to help if you need any assistance with your application.

You can apply by filling in the simple electronic form on our website.

Apply online now: www.ratcliffecollege.com/apply

Scholarships

Ratcliffe College offers a wide range of scholarships to recognise academic, sporting, musical, dramatic and artistic talent amongst students for the senior school. Scholarships are available for those entering Year 12.



Visit our website to find out more:

www.ratcliffecollege.com/admissions/scholarships-information

Headmaster's Introduction

The opportunity to study in the Sixth Form at Ratcliffe College is one that cannot afford to be missed.



Whether you are new to the College or whether you have been with us since the Nursery, you will instantly recognise the warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere that pervades the Sixth Form community.

As young adults on the cusp of entering the world of work or onto an undergraduate degree course, our aim is to bring out the very best in you, helping you to grow as individuals in the deepest sense, academically, physically, morally and spiritually.

If you are already at Ratcliffe, you will have the benefit of continuity; staff have come to know you as an individual over a long period of time. You are on familiar ground, among friends and guided by staff who care for you.

If you are new, we ensure that you too, are well prepared and that you settle in smoothly when you join us.

The main purpose of this brochure is to tell you about life in the Sixth Form. It provides you with essential information on academic courses and it will help you make decisions about the next stage of your education.

Here at Ratcliffe College we believe in Encouraging Big Ideas, and this is particularly relevant when talking about the achievements and career aspirations of our Sixth Form Community.

You will receive expert advice on careers options as well as navigating the UCAS process to help you access the most suitable course at the best university possible, within a supportive environment.

Sixth Form students are inspired daily by their dedicated teachers to achieve their best academically and we aim to nurture your mind set to accept daily set-backs or disappointments as a natural part of self-improvement and personal growth.

With Christ at the centre of your learning, we aim to educate you to live your lives based on the Gospel message.

Therefore, beyond the classroom, you will be expected to play a very important role in the daily life of the College. Modelling the highest standards, you will be encouraged to develop positive relationships with younger students and to instil

within them a profound sense of community and belonging to the Ratcliffe College family of Schools: Nursery, Preparatory and Senior.

One of the joys of being headmaster is meeting members of our alumni. They recall their final years at Ratcliffe in the Sixth Form as a time of great happiness, achievement and personal growth we are confident that you will leave Ratcliffe with a strong sense of who you are and your purpose in the world, ready to lead, equipped academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually to go forth and make a positive difference to the communities in which you live and work.

While in the Sixth Form, make the most of the many opportunities Ratcliffe has to offer whilst remaining true to our school motto, 'Legis Plenitudo Charitas', love is the fulfilment of the law.

Mr Jonathan P. Reddin
Headmaster

Welcome to the Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Ratcliffe College is a positive and purposeful community. We seek to inspire our students to develop intellectual curiosity, independent thought, and transferable skills so that each student can achieve his or her full potential and develop the capacity for a successful and rewarding future, in whichever route they choose to pursue.

High quality teaching is complemented by an emphasis on students' personal development. We aim for all students to develop into confident, articulate and independent young people who are prepared for the opportunities and challenges of adult life.

The majority of our students go on to study at university, whilst others embark on degree Apprenticeships, to help them access the most suitable pathways. They receive expert guidance throughout the application process and benefit from high-level careers advice and established networks for work experience.

Throughout their time in the Sixth Form, students benefit from wide-ranging academic and pastoral support to ensure that their time at Ratcliffe is both enjoyable and fulfilling. They are encouraged to take up leadership roles and to participate fully in the superb array of co-curricular activities on offer.

Day students and boarders alike benefit from our broad range of enrichment activities, including our INSPIRE programme of guest speakers, as well as societies, clubs and trips throughout the year.

Sixth Formers also learn to manage their time effectively and to enjoy a healthy social life. Events are held regularly and present a welcome opportunity to socialise and relax after a busy day at School. The highlight of the social calendar is undoubtedly the Sixth Form Ball held at the end of the Summer Term.

The strong sense of community at Ratcliffe is underpinned by excellent pastoral care. Sixth Formers and staff maintain close relationships based on trust and mutual respect. The ethos and atmosphere is reinforced by our form tutor system and student-led initiatives, such as the Year 13 Listeners and School Council.



As senior members of the school community, our Sixth Formers enjoy increased independence and greater freedoms which develop an even stronger sense of individual and collective responsibility.

Sixth Form students are role models for the rest of the school, and the strong tradition of student leadership roles and positions of responsibility allows our students to contribute significantly to the wider community. In the context of this nurturing environment, our students develop into compassionate, responsible and resilient young people. I very much look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form.

Mr B Harrison
Assistant Head and
Head of Sixth Form



**SIXTH FORM STUDENTS
ARE ROLE MODELS FOR
THE REST OF THE SCHOOL**



Section 1

Sixth Form Life



The Rosmini Sixth Form Centre

The Rosmini Sixth Form Centre provides outstanding academic and social facilities available for students in the Sixth Form. It has been constructed and fitted out to very high specifications, and provides a significantly different, high quality experience for students during their final two years at school.



A NEWLY REFURBISHED CAFE AREA IN THE
STYLE OF A UNIVERSITY COFFEE SHOP PROVIDES
A PLEASANT AND MODERN SPACE WHERE
STUDENTS CAN BOTH WORK AND SOCIALISE

The Sixth Form Study Centre occupies the top floor. All Sixth Form students have part of their timetables set aside for private, independent study and they are given advice and guidance on how to use this time effectively. The main purpose of the Study Centre is to provide the environment and resources required for students to make full use of their study time, to promote high-quality learning and, consequently, to help students to fulfil their full potential.

The Study Centre contains both areas for private study and well-resourced library facilities. Students may also choose to work on their own devices.

Mr Harrison, Mr Newman (Deputy Head of Sixth Form), Dr Robinson (Assistant Head of Sixth Form) and Mrs Grace (Head of Careers) have offices in the Study Centre, where they spend a large part of their non-teaching time. There is a seminar room for groups of around a dozen, where students are able to discuss academic work.

Mrs Grant (Sixth Form Student Support Manager) oversees and manages the facilities in the Study Centre, liaising with Sixth Form staff and students to promote a positive working environment, and provide supervision and support for students during the week. The Study Centre is open from 8:00am - 6:10pm on Monday to Friday.

The ground floor contains locker rooms and two social areas. A newly refurbished cafe area in the style of a university coffee shop provides a pleasant and modern space where students can both work and socialise. The other room is a newly refurbished lounge, with comfortable chairs and coffee tables. These facilities are equipped with a television and a projector and play host to lectures or presentations.

Studying in the Sixth Form

The transition to Sixth Form can be the most significant during your education. The work is more academically challenging than GCSE, and you are expected to do more of it out of class, requiring a high degree of independence and self-discipline. Please be assured that Ratcliffe staff are all aware of the initial challenges you may face and are experienced in helping students to adapt to the new courses.

Lessons

For all Sixth Form subjects you will have eleven lessons of 55 minutes' duration, per fortnight in each of your subjects. This extra lesson time enables you to get to know your teachers well, and to work together with them effectively.

Prep

Each piece of work may well take several hours to complete, and you will often be given a week or more to complete it. This means you will have to develop good time management skills. It is also important to work closely with your teachers, so that they can offer all the support you may require.

Study Periods

The Sixth Form Centre has ample space for quiet working. In addition, many departments have excellent facilities for Sixth Form students to use for independent study. You may choose to spend some of your study periods in departmental areas where you will have direct access to resources (and members of staff). This is particularly useful for practical subjects such as Art and Design and Technology. Effective use of study periods will help you to meet the individual requirements for your subjects. Students are also allowed to work collaboratively in the Sixth Form Cafe in some of their study period.

We expect you to spend approximately 5 – 7 hours, per subject, per week undertaking private study.

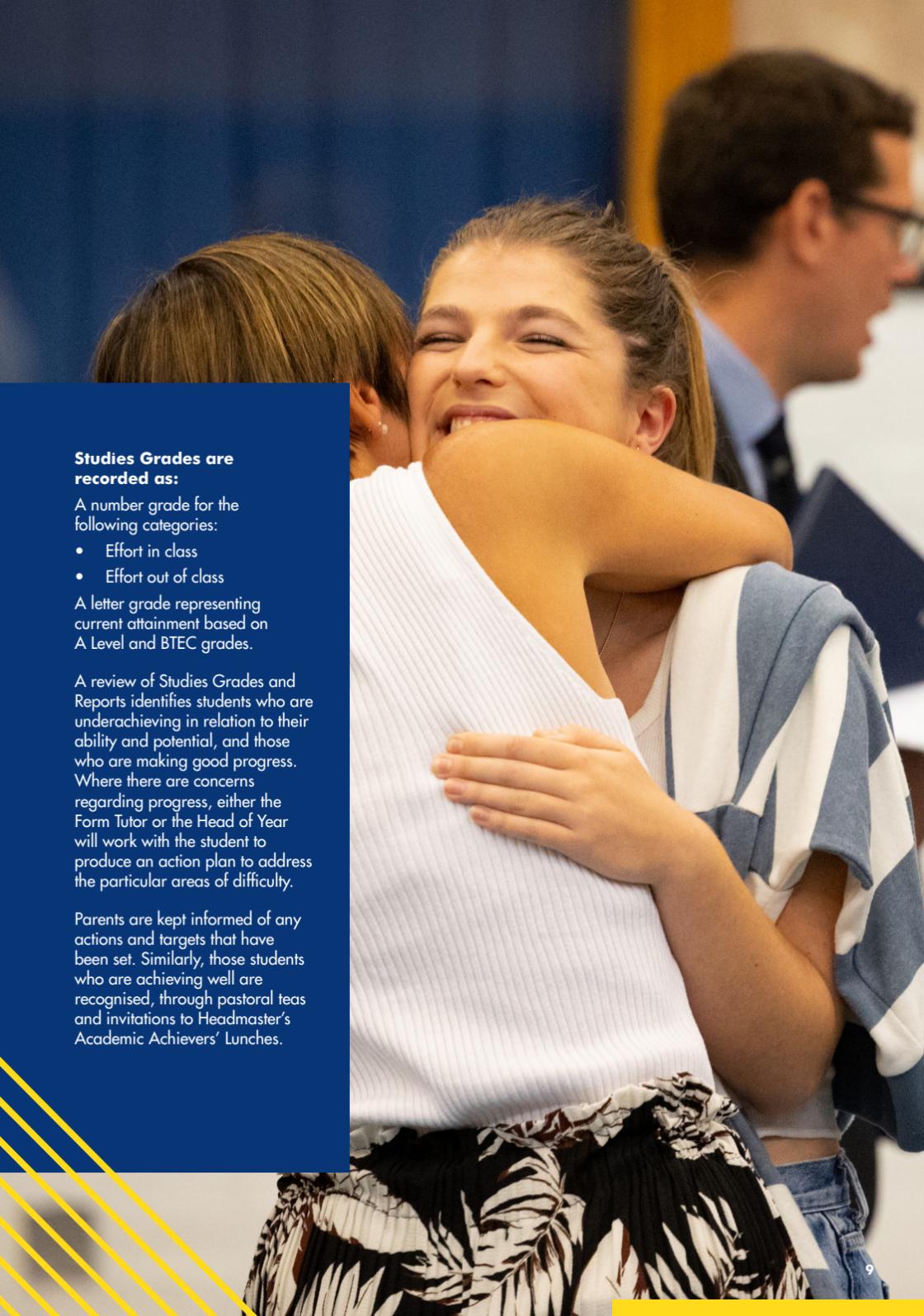
The examination grades which you eventually receive are your passport to Higher Education, or for another future you may have planned, and using your private study time effectively will be a major factor in achieving these.

During some study periods, students can access some of the school's sports facilities, including the fitness suite and running track, as we recognise the importance of physical activity to a healthy work-life balance. This is another privilege for Sixth Form students.

Monitoring Progress

During your Sixth Form courses, your progress will be monitored by your subject teachers, your Form Tutor, and the Sixth Form Team. Assessments are based on objective evidence. The majority of these will be formative so that areas for development can be identified and you can be given guidance for improvement. There will be a variety of assessment opportunities, including tests, mock examinations, oral work, observations and practical work. At specific times during your courses, there will be summative assessments to allow the recording and reporting of overall attainment (School Reports, Studies Grades).

Students in Years 12 and 13 receive half-termly Studies Grades and reports at key points in the year, and parents' evenings offer an important opportunity for parent-teacher dialogue. This gives both students and parents very clear understanding of progress being made during the course of the academic year.



Studies Grades are recorded as:

A number grade for the following categories:

- Effort in class
- Effort out of class

A letter grade representing current attainment based on A Level and BTEC grades.

A review of Studies Grades and Reports identifies students who are underachieving in relation to their ability and potential, and those who are making good progress. Where there are concerns regarding progress, either the Form Tutor or the Head of Year will work with the student to produce an action plan to address the particular areas of difficulty.

Parents are kept informed of any actions and targets that have been set. Similarly, those students who are achieving well are recognised, through pastoral teas and invitations to Headmaster's Academic Achievers' Lunches.



Pastoral Care

Excellent pastoral care is at the heart of our provision in the Sixth Form – we have a supportive environment based on mutual respect, and it is vital that students are happy and fulfilled at School during what is a critical stage in their development in order to fulfil their potential.

**THIS EXTENSIVE SUPPORT NETWORK
ENSURES THAT STUDENTS CAN ALWAYS
SEEK AND ACCESS ADVICE FOR ANY ISSUES
THEY MAY BE EXPERIENCING**

All students have a Tutor, who they will see every day and will be the first point of contact throughout their two years in the Sixth Form, both for them and for their parents and guardians. Tutors deal with routine administrative matters, discuss students' academic progress, wellbeing and future options with them, and facilitate discussions on current events and issues raised in PSHCE.

There are also a range of other staff who students can go to for support and guidance, including the Sixth Form Team, the Chaplain, Medical Staff and the School Counsellor.

This extensive support network ensures that students can always seek and access advice for any issues they may be experiencing.

Higher Education and Careers

Almost as soon as you have started the Sixth Form, it will be time for you to start thinking about what to do when you leave Ratcliffe. From Year 12 our Careers programme is dedicated to exploring future pathways and supporting our students as they consider university courses and institutions, apprenticeships, gap years and work experience opportunities.



Students are guided through filling in UCAS application forms, personal statement writing, interview techniques and CV writing.

The Careers Office ensures that our students are confident in how and where to access information about higher education and careers. Students have access to a range of print and digital resources, including Unifrog.

Whilst most of our students do decide to stay in full time education, the Careers Office provides a series of opportunities to understand alternative routes beyond Sixth Form, such as Degree Level Apprenticeships and Gap Years. The Careers Office also runs a bi-annual Careers Fair and Higher Education Fair which enables our students to speak directly to course providers and those with experience within their chosen professions.

The INSPIRE programme provides a regular opportunity for students to broaden their horizons with regards the varying careers on offer to them whilst the Ratcliffian Association Mentor Scheme provides an opportunity to receive personalised and targeted advice.

Co-curricular Activities – The Big Six

At Ratcliffe, we aim to provide a holistic, all-round education, and there is a huge range of co-curricular activities for Sixth Form students. We encourage all students to make the most of the many opportunities available and to develop their interests and abilities outside the classroom, both to ensure an appropriate work-life balance, and to gain valuable transferable skills which will benefit them at university and in the world of work.

Sports and Games

One of the major areas in which Sixth Form students can participate in life beyond the classroom is with Sports and Games. School Teams play competitively against other schools at rugby, boys' and girls' hockey, netball, tennis, girls' and boys' cricket and athletics. Ratcliffe has a strong reputation for the quality of its sports teams, and all students are encouraged to participate. Those selected for School Teams are expected to be available for all matches, which mainly take place at the weekends and mid-week. As well as the major sports, there are opportunities to play golf, table tennis, squash, basketball, badminton, swimming and aerobics and to use our state-of-the-art Fitness Suite. It is a well-established fact that physical exercise is extremely beneficial for those who wish to succeed in their studies. The facilities at the school allow plenty of opportunities for students to get involved with the busy sporting programme.



Music

The Music Department offers many opportunities for student participation. The School Choir sings a wide range of music and, in addition to concert performances, works closely with the Chaplaincy Team in preparing music for special Masses and services. The Swing Band and Orchestra give opportunities for all instrumentalists to enjoy the experience of making music, performing a varied repertoire at a number of concerts throughout the year. Alongside the main ensembles the Department encourages students to form and rehearse their own groups using the Department's facilities during lunch and prep times. In addition to ensemble work, the Music Department offers opportunities for soloists to perform at many School functions, including the Spring Concert, Picnic Concert and Exhibition Day, and weekly assemblies. Individual tuition is available in a wide range of instruments, including piano, voice, strings, woodwind, brass, guitar and percussion.



Drama

For those who have an interest in Drama, there is always lots going on. Productions take place throughout the year. These can be small-scale, one-act plays where students are performing part of a public examination course, or large-scale productions, either for Year groups or for students across the age ranges. All productions, whichever their size, require a cast, a technical crew, a stage crew and many helpers. The skills of the theatre are skills that can be used well beyond School, and all students can take advantage of the busy Drama programme to make a valuable contribution.



The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

This Award is widely recognised by universities and employers as evidence that a student can show commitment and determination to complete a series of challenges. It offers Sixth Form students the chance to be involved with a range of interesting, demanding and worthwhile activities, which help to develop the life skills that are so important. The Award at Ratcliffe is open to all Sixth Form students, where the main focus is on the Gold Award. If a student has previously completed the Bronze or Silver Award, then this is clearly good training, although it is possible to enrol in Gold without having done so. Those participating in the Award may find themselves leading a team through wild country, scoring goals for their County or spending a week on the high seas! There is certainly the chance, in the volunteering element of the Award, to make a real difference to the lives of other people.

Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

The CCF has Army and RAF sections. It offers an excellent chance for Sixth Form students to take on positions of responsibility as NCOs and to test their leadership skills both in School and on camps, field days and expeditions.

Students can learn how to operate a store, how to distribute supplies and how to lead younger cadets in a variety of exercises. Skills learned in the CCF can be transferred to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and, of course, to all aspects of Sixth Form life and beyond. Challenges faced by CCF cadets include rock climbing, canoeing, sailing, military exercises, first aid, radio communication and flying. The CCF is not just for those who are considering a career in the Military. It is open to all of the Sixth Form and provides many benefits and transferrable skills.



Chaplaincy Team

The group works together under the guidance of the Lay Chaplain to use their talents in music, art, drama and communication skills to enhance and enrich the Liturgies and Services.

In addition, Sixth Form students help with Chaplaincy activities within the Nursery School and Preparatory School and also with the younger students in the Senior School. In recent years, the Chaplaincy team has helped organise the offerings made for the Harvest and Ukraine Appeals.



WE ENCOURAGE ALL STUDENTS TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Leadership and Responsibilities

One of the main aims in the Sixth Form is to give every student the opportunity to develop their sense of responsibility by way of service to the school and the local community. Several positions of responsibility are open to you.

Year 12 Prefects

All students in Year 12 have the opportunity to serve as prefects. Prefects play an important role in supporting staff with many aspects of the day-to-day supervision and running of the school, as well as assisting at School events.

Year 13 Senior Prefects

The Senior Prefect team is made up of 20-26 Year 13 students in the following roles:

Head Boy and Head Girl

Deputy Head Boys and Deputy Head Girls

Senior Boarding Prefects

House Captains

Caritas Prefects

Co-Curricular Prefects

The process of selecting Senior Prefects starts towards the end of the spring term in Year 12. Students appointed to these roles will have developed strong leadership and communication skills, and they are given training in dealing confidently with the more varied responsibilities of their roles. The Senior Prefect Team represent the entire student body and meet with the Headmaster and Head of Sixth Form weekly.

Subject Ambassadors

Ambassadors are appointed to every academic department and area of School life. Their main responsibilities are to represent the department at Open Days and other events, to promote the subject positively to visitors and other students, and to support younger students with their work in that subject, supporting the running of clubs and activities where appropriate.

Committee Representatives

A number of students volunteer every year to represent their peers and contribute their ideas to Student Committees, including School Council, Sixth Form Council, Food Committee, Sixth Form Ball Committee, E-Safety Committee, the Anti-Bullying Crew, and the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Group.

Tour Guides

All Sixth Form students will be invited to offer tours to visitors to the school and prospective families.

Monitors and Prefects

These play an important part in assisting staff with many aspects of the day-to-day supervision and running of the school. The experience gained is not only valuable in its own right, but it is very useful to include in applications to university and places of employment. The system offers many Sixth Form students the opportunity to serve their community, to exercise responsibility and to cultivate leadership skills, by providing support for staff in a supervisory capacity. The process of selecting prefects starts towards the end of the spring term in Year 12. We look for monitors and others to have developed their leadership and communication skills so as to be confident in dealing with the more varied responsibilities associated with being a prefect. Notwithstanding this, the number of prefects is usually limited to around 25-30, although this can be flexible if appropriate. As with monitors, reviews of Year 13 students are held periodically to decide if new appointments are warranted. The Head Boy and Head Girl, their deputies and the senior boarding prefects, make up the Senior Prefect Team, who represent the entire student body and meet the Headmaster and Head of Sixth Form weekly.



Student Listeners

This team of Sixth Form students provides an additional line of communication for any students in Years 7 and above who would like to talk about concerns they might have. Most of the time, students are happy to discuss these with a parent, teacher or other responsible adult. Sometimes, however, they may be hesitant to do so, preferring to speak with another student instead. Year 12 students are invited to become Student Listeners during the summer term. Those who are selected for this important pastoral role then provide this service for others until the end of spring term in Year 13.

HCPT Pilgrimage to Lourdes

Students accompany adult organisers and provide practical support and companionship for disabled people on their week visit in the summer holiday each year. This is a fantastic opportunity for our Sixth Form students to live the Mission Statement of the School. Students get involved with the organisation and running of a variety of charity events to help raise money towards the cost of the pilgrimage. On returning from their pilgrimage, students gave a personal account of their experiences to other students who were interested in getting involved this year.

Voluntary Service

Each Thursday evening, a group of Sixth Form students visit the Syston Community Centre, where the Syston Friendship Group meet. The group is made up of adults, some with learning disabilities, who are supervised by a number of professional carers. The students, accompanied by Mr Walsh, spend time talking to the adults and are involved in other activities such as board games, drawing and playing bingo. For many students, this is one of their best experiences as a member of the Sixth Form. Indeed, some continue to attend when possible even after leaving Ratcliffe! This is an excellent opportunity for students to give their time and spend time in the company of others; it is especially impressive to read of a student's participation in this activity if they are considering Medicine, Nursing or Teaching.



**THE BOARDERS ARE INVOLVED
IN ALL ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LIFE,
AND THEY FORM A KEY PART
OF THE CORE OF THE SCHOOL**

Sixth Form Boarding

The Boarding Community is at the heart and soul of Ratcliffe College, in every sense of the word. The boys' and girls' accommodation is located in the Main School and there is no need to walk to an outlying house.

This central location allows access to all the facilities that the College has to offer – academic, sporting and social. All Sixth Form boarders have their own bedroom and have common room and kitchenette facilities in the boarding area. The boarders are involved in all aspects of School life, and they form a key part of the core of the school.

Sixth Form boarders are given every opportunity to take responsibility for both their academic studies and their leisure time. There is sometimes a perception that boarding life may be too restrictive for the average 17 and 18 year old, but nothing could be further from the truth at Ratcliffe.

We aim to provide every opportunity to achieve the grades required to progress to Higher Education, together with the freedom to develop the skills and qualities sought by employers. Boarding is an ideal preparation for university life because it encourages a strong sense of independence. More than at any other stage of your school career, success in the Sixth Form is largely down to your ability, maturity, hard work and organisation.



Whilst none of these alone guarantee success, most agree that balancing the demands of Schoolwork and social life is the single most important factor; life should not be all work and no play, or vice versa! For the first time, you will find yourself with “free time” during the academic day. You will be able to enjoy the luxury of using your study rooms during this time, along with the kitchenette facilities in the boarding area. Whilst this is an example of the increasing freedom enjoyed, the boarding staff monitor the use of this time, to ensure that is used constructively. The nature of study at this level indicates that work completed out of lessons is essential for high achievement.

Academic staff are on hand to oversee your studies and, with the Sixth Form Study Centre, Library, computer and internet facilities available to you in the evenings and at weekends, you will be able to take advantage of many opportunities to help your studies. Boarding is fun and relaxation is an important ingredient for success. There is Wi-Fi in both boarding houses as well as SKY television and games consoles. You will have ready access to the extensive facilities on offer throughout the day and at weekends. There is a comprehensive activities and trips programme, both during the weekday evenings and at weekends.

On Saturdays, there are visits to local shopping centres such as Thurmaston and Leicester, enabling you to enjoy some free time away from School. Sunday trips go to places such as theme parks, outdoor activity centres, to the cinema, ice-skating, ten-pin bowling and various sporting fixtures, along with visits to London, Birmingham and other towns and cities of historical interest.

Other facilities to enjoy in your free time are The Boarders’ Lounge, Café and The Snack Shack. These are popular with boys and girls of all ages during the evening and weekends. Both of these facilities provide an area where all boarders can socialize together along with the duty staff.

The Main School building is home for many staff, too, and the resident House staff provide essential, but unobtrusive, supervision and support.

We offer various boarding options, from Full and Weekly boarding, to 2 or 3 days Part-Time Boarding and Occasional Boarding for short periods or single nights. Please contact the Admissions Team at the College for more details.





Section 2

Sixth Form Curriculum



An overview of the curriculum

What types of qualifications are offered?

At Ratcliffe College, the vast majority of courses offered are linear A Levels. We also offer BTEC National Diplomas in Sport, IT and Level 3 Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition.

Extended Project Qualification

A small number of students will be encouraged to take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) along with their A Levels, a very small number of students may consider opting for two A level subjects along with an EPQ. Please refer to the Examination Subjects section for further details.

When will you be taking your examinations?

- For most A levels, you will take all of your examinations in May and June of Year 13.
- The EPQ will be completed July of Year 12 and entered in November of Year 13.
- BTEC Sport and BTEC IT are assessed throughout the two year course.



What are the entry requirements to study in the Sixth Form?

In order to follow a full Sixth Form programme, under normal circumstances you will need to achieve a minimum of 6 good passes at GCSE or better, including English and Mathematics.

We do allow some of our existing students into the Sixth Form with fewer than this, but they must have a viable programme. The minimum for an A Level programme in these circumstances would be passes in Mathematics and English and Grade 6 in your chosen or related subjects.

For all students entering the Sixth Form it is essential to have at least a Grade 6 GCSE in your chosen subjects, or where relevant, a related subject. However, in subjects such as English Literature and Languages, we strongly recommend at least a Grade 7 at GCSE. For students studying Mathematics and Sciences, a Grade 7 is the minimum requirement.

The majority of our students will achieve three A Levels or equivalent. However, particularly able students may consider continuing with all four subjects and / or the Extended Project Qualification.

Subject Choices

The Sixth Form Information Evening takes place in the autumn term and will give you the opportunity to discuss your potential options before making a final decision.

A—Levels

Art and Design
Biology
Business Studies
Chemistry
Computer Science
Design and Technology
Drama and Theatre Studies
Economics B
English Literature
French
Further Mathematics
Geography
German
History
Latin
Mathematics
Media Studies
Music
Physical Education
Physics
Politics
Psychology
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
Spanish

Level 3 Diploma

Food Science and Nutrition
Information Technology (BTEC)
Sport (BTEC)



Additional Courses

Whichever subjects you study in Years 12 and 13, the following elements will also be a compulsory part of your timetable:

PSHCE:

The aim of the PSHCE programme is to furnish the students with knowledge on wider topical matters and address emotive issues that are paramount to our student's wellbeing. The sessions are specially tailored toward the different year groups and professional speakers along with specialist groups are invited into School to educate and inspire the students on a range of topics. A follow-up discussion is facilitated throughout the Tutor Programme.

These are delivered once a fortnight and cover four main themes:

- Personal well-being and Relationship Sex Education
- Career and Economic Well-being
- Higher Education
- Citizenship and fundamental British Values

Religious Studies:

You will have one lesson per week. This is central to our Catholic ethos. In these lessons, students take part in discussion and debates as well as considering issues relating to relationships, the Bible, justice and forgiveness. Students have also had opportunities to reflect during Advent and Lent and some students have received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As part of the programme, we also have a speaker from LIFE talking about relationships as well as a presentation on Lourdes.



Games:

We aim to ensure that every student who leaves Ratcliffe will have the means to pursue a healthy lifestyle. You will be encouraged to take part in the activities you enjoy, whether in team sports or the more recreational activities that will be available to you. These typically to include:

Aerobics
Athletics
Badminton
Basketball
Cricket
Dance
Fitness
Football
Golf
Handball
Hockey
Mountain Biking
Netball
Pilates
Rounders
Rugby
Softball
Squash
Swimming
Team Building
Tennis
Trampolining
Zumba

If you are selected to represent the School or House, you are expected to be available. Fixtures take place mainly on Saturdays, although midweek fixtures may also be arranged. For our most talented athletes, you will receive the support you need to go forward and represent the county or region in a particular sport.

Making subject choices

Transition into the Sixth Form is exciting in that it allows you complete control over which subjects you want to study. The more informed you are, the more likely you are to make good decisions.

Choice of Subjects

In order to make the most appropriate subject choices, you will need to carry out research, and spend time thinking, and talking to other people. Your subject teachers, the Head of Careers and the Head of Sixth Form will be delighted to discuss this further with you and offer suitable guidance.

What subjects do I want to take?

In the Sixth Form, you will spend many hours per week on each subject. You will only be able to sustain the required work-rate if you are genuinely interested in the subject. We want your time within the Sixth Form to be enjoyable and therefore, enjoyment of your subjects will ensure that you are most likely to stay motivated throughout your two year courses.

What subjects do I need to take?

You may already have some career aspirations and be aware that in order to be able to study some university degree courses, you will need to study specific subjects in the Sixth Form. For example, Chemistry and Biology are essential for those wishing to read Medicine or Dentistry.

It would be a mistake to study an A Level just because you needed it for a future course or career. However, it is also worth noting that the majority of degree courses are open to students with any combination of A Levels, and it is the eventual grades you obtain which will determine whether you can go on to the university of your choice.

Do I have the skills and ability to succeed in my choice of subjects?

In Maths, English, the Sciences and Languages, we recommend you achieve at least a grade 7 at GCSE. For subjects new to you at A Level, then you should have grade 6 in related subjects. For example, if you want to study Business Studies, you should have good GCSE grades in English and Mathematics.

Information about the courses

The best idea is to talk to the Head of Department for the subject you want to find out about. They will be able to tell you what studying the subject involves, the parts people usually enjoy or find difficult, the way you would be assessed in the course, and so on. You should also ask your teachers if they think it is a subject in which you are likely to do well in the Sixth Form.



Information about career implications

It is important to get up-to-date, well informed advice when making career choices. Ratcliffe has excellent Careers and Higher Education research facilities.

Ratcliffe students in Year 10 have the opportunity to take a psychometric careers test. In Year 11, the results from the test form the basis of a careers interview with an independent external, which may help with A Level choices and career suggestions. Head of Careers, Mrs Kate Grace is available in the Sixth Form Centre to offer further advice and guidance.

How can we help you make the best choice?

It is not always easy to choose the most appropriate combination of subjects, particularly if you are unsure of your career aspirations. However, once you have made your choice of subjects to study in the Sixth Form, these will be discussed by your subject teachers. If they have concerns about you studying their subject, they will advise you.

Once you have received your GCSE results, a member of the Sixth Form Team will contact you to confirm your option choices in term of the appropriateness of the combination and number of subjects.

Art and Design

Why choose Art and Design?

The department is highly flexible in accommodating students' creativity and is driven by the desire to push a student's potential as far as is possible.

- Almost no restrictions on media choice.
- Actively encouraged to think for yourself and produce work that is challenging, personal and intellectually demanding.
- Develop your visual awareness and build increasing confidence in your drawing and observational skills.
- Explore a wide a range of techniques such as Drawing, Photography, Filmmaking, Animation, Painting,
- Printmaking, Sculpture Mixed-media, and Textiles.

Related Subjects

Art and Design compliments many other option choices at A Level but is not restricted to other creative subjects.

Each year we have students who study a varied range of subjects, and whilst a known degree route may sway choices in a particular direction, such as Architecture where Art, Maths and Physics may be a good selection, there are no right or wrong choices to be made.



Course Requirements

A potential A Level Art student should primarily have a genuine interest in the subject. We require at least a grade 6 for Art as well as English GCSE due to the demands within the A Level for coherent written annotation and a 3000 word essay in Year 13. An equivalent creative subject such as Design Technology would also be suitable if Art has not been studied.

Further Important Information

Within the department, we provide two dedicated A Level studios for the students to work in, one for each of the Sixth Form years. A Level Art students are given their own working space in these rooms and are expected to spend a reasonable amount of their free study periods in the Department, developing their work. A Level Art is a challenging option, but also an extremely rewarding one. Students should be prepared to work hard to develop their abilities.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Traditionally your path would be an Art Foundation Course followed by a specialised degree. As a department we would always encourage this route as it allows the individual to continue to develop and be certain of their direction.

The UK has an excellent international reputation for its creative industries and the staff in the Art and Design Department are well qualified to give guidance in this matter. We work closely with each prospective Foundation or Degree student to hone their application, their portfolio and their reference from the school.

Co-Curricular

The Art Department try to be as flexible as possible for A Level Art students to use their studios during lunch and Prep times. Consequently, there are many opportunities to further your work outside of lessons.

We also operate a mentoring program where A Level Art students can choose to help those in lower years, be it advising on sketchbook presentation, or how to annotate. With the myriad of exhibitions staged by the department each year, Sixth Form Art students are expected to contribute to the curation and hosting.

Course Details

We offer 'Art, Craft and Design' as our chosen Title as it allows complete creative freedom for the student without the restriction that the more directed Titles impose. Both Components are Internally marked and externally moderated. The structure of the full, two-year course is divided into the following components:

Component 1 Personal Investigation - Students develop work in response to an idea, theme, concept or issue. This is a practical unit, essentially your coursework, which is supported by a 1,000-3,000 word essay. 60% of A Level, marked out of 96.

Component 2 Externally Set Assignment - An examination paper containing 8 starting points. Students choose one. (Preparation time approximately 8 weeks. The Component concludes with a 15-hour practical examination). 40% of A Level, marked out of 96.



EXPLORE A WIDE RANGE OF TECHNIQUES SUCH AS
DRAWING, PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMMAKING, ANIMATION, AND PAINTING

Biology

Why choose Biology?

Studying Biology at A Level offers you the chance to gain a real understanding of the processes that control animal and plant life. It builds on the foundation of knowledge gained at GCSE and provides the basis for continuing onto biological or related subjects in higher education. It not only deals with facts and functions but also allows you to consider and discuss the implications of developments in modern Biology with reference to social, ethical and moral perspectives. It will allow you to make rational and considered judgements about scientific progress based not just on opinions but also on an understanding of the scientific principles which lie behind these.

Related Subjects

Biology can be studied at this level not only because people simply enjoy the subject, but also because it can complement their other A Level choices and provide part of a useful combination for further studies. Students who study Biology often opt to also study Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. Geography is also a common subject to be studied alongside Biology.

Course Requirements

The A Level qualifications build on the knowledge, understanding and process skills developed at GCSE. The entry requirement onto the Biology A Level course is a Grade 7 or better in GCSE Biology and a Grade 6 in Mathematics. Those of you who have taken the Double Science GCSE will be expected to have obtained a Grade 7 together with a Grade 6 or better in Mathematics.

Further Important Information

To be successful in Biology students should have a strong knowledge base in Science and be able to integrate this knowledge into newly studied material whilst demonstrating an intense level of interest and curiosity in science. Students should support thinking with logical reasoning, possesses a good memory, be able to write in a concise scientific manner and be confident when interpreting data and graphs. In addition, student should possess competent practical skills.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Any of the Biological Sciences. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Veterinary Science, Psychology, Teaching, Environmental Studies, Agriculture, Physiotherapy.

Co-Curricular

- A Level Biology Fieldtrip. Biology Fieldtrip to the Field Studies Council Field Centre situated in Preston Montford in Shropshire.
- A Level Biology discussion group - stretch and challenge. A great opportunity to develop your ability to talk through ideas and thoughts when solving Biology related problems. This discussion group will not only keep you up to date with new and exciting developments in Biology but is also an effective method of improving your interview skills.

Course Details

The Biology course studied is the OCR Biology A (H420). Students will study the following components during Years 12 and 13.

- Module 1 – Development of practical skills in biology
- Module 2 – Foundations in Biology
- Module 3 – Exchange and transport
- Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease
- Module 5 – Communication, homeostasis and energy
- Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

All modules are examined at the end of Year 13 and will consist of three papers. All papers will contain short structured and longer response questions. In addition, students will develop practical skills by carrying out a range of activities.

The practical activities are based on a number of skill areas and represent a progression of those skills studied at GCSE Level namely: planning, implementing, analysing evidence and drawing conclusions, evaluating evidence and procedures. Practical skills will be assessed throughout the written examinations at the end of Year 13.

Business

Why choose Business?

A Level Business is built around an enterprise theme, enabling you to think of a new business idea and how you may research and develop it. You will also be introduced to international business, equipping you with the knowledge and understanding to either work in or manage a business in an international context. All assessments are based on real business contexts, real data and real economic issues. Students will develop a range of skills, including numeracy, communication, commercial awareness and critical thinking.

Related Subjects

Business complements most other A Level subjects, especially essay based subjects. Students will develop a range of skills, including numeracy, communication, commercial awareness and critical thinking

Course Requirements

You should have at least six good Pass Grades at GCSE Level to cope successfully with any A Level course. Ideally, Grade 6 in Mathematics and in any essay based subject such as History or Religious Studies are also preferable. An interest and enthusiasm for business is an essential ingredient for success.

Higher Education and Careers Options

As many Higher Education courses relate to the business world, it's no surprise that many A Level students continue to take business-related courses at university. Students often take a Business or Management degree course before they specialise or apply for work through the many graduate recruitment schemes offered by large companies. Students can, however, specialise in their chosen field such as Marketing or Accounting. The course complements a range of social science and humanities subjects and can lead to courses and careers in such areas as law, business, accounting, politics, retail services, transport and logistics, financial services, human resource management, marketing, etc.

Co-Curricular

Students in Year 12 have the opportunity to apply for a position in the Young Enterprise Company Programme. This involves setting up their own 'real' company in School, with regular Board Meetings, attendance at Training Events held locally, and competition with other Young Enterprise Companies in Leicestershire and the East Midlands.

Quantitative Skills

The A level assesses quantitative skills, making up a minimum of 20% of the overall marks. The skills tested include ratios, averages, fractions, percentages and calculation of profit or loss.

Course Details

Theme 1: Marketing and People Students will develop an understanding of:

- Meeting customer needs
- The market
- Marketing mix and strategy
- Managing people
- Entrepreneurs and leaders

Theme 2: Managing business activities

- Raising finance
- Financial planning
- Managing finance
- Resource management
- External influences

Theme 3: Business decisions and strategy This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 2.

- Business objectives and strategy
- Business growth
- Decision-making techniques
- Influences on business decisions
- Assessing competitiveness
- Managing change

Theme 4: Global business This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 1.

- Globalisation
- Global markets and business expansion
- Global marketing
- Global industries and companies (multinational corporations)

Assessment is by three, 2 hour written examinations at the end of the course.

Paper 1 (35%): Marketing, people and global business

Paper 2 (35%): Business activities, decisions and strategy

Paper 3 (30%): Investigating business in a competitive environment



Chemistry

Why choose Chemistry?

Chemistry is the study of the composition, structure, properties and reactions of substances. Chemistry seeks to explain everything that we see around us on a daily basis on a molecular, atomic or even sub-atomic level. From how the food we eat provides our cells with energy for us to function and access this website, to how the materials that make up the chair you are sitting on interact with each other to prevent you from falling to the floor.

Chemistry explores the building blocks of all living and non-living substances and tries to explain why certain substances interact with each other, how they interact and what happens when they interact. Chemistry A Level can lead to a great variety of degree courses other than the obvious chemistry degree. Study of chemistry is a requirement for most medicine and dentistry degree courses in the UK. In combination with your other 2 or 3 subjects, studying chemistry it can help you gain access to just about any degree course. A chemistry degree can give you access to a wide range of industries including pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, environment management, nanotechnology, finance and law.

Related Subjects

Chemistry works extremely well alongside Biology, Physics and Mathematics

Course Requirements

The A Level qualifications build on the knowledge, understanding and process skills developed at GCSE. The entry requirements onto the Chemistry A Level course is grade 7 or better in GCSE Chemistry and a grade 6 in Mathematics. Those of you who have taken the Double Science GCSE will be expected to have obtained a grade 7 together with a grade 6 or better in Mathematics.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Besides from careers in the Chemical industry, Chemistry A Level will prepare you for a career in almost any field you can think of, including: Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Education, Law or Finance.

Co-Curricular

Students are strongly encouraged to compete in the Cambridge University Chemistry Challenge, the Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad and Royal Society of Chemistry Schools Analyst Competition.

Course Details

A Level Chemistry is a linear A Level which is examined at the end of the two-year course. During these two years of the course you will study 6 different modules:

- Module 1 – Development of practical skills in chemistry
- Module 2 – Foundations in Chemistry
- Module 3 – Periodic table and energy
- Module 4 – Core organic Chemistry
- Module 5 – Physical Chemistry and transition elements
- Module 6 – Organic Chemistry and analysis

You will be assessed through a wide range of question types, including multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions

You will be given the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of both theory and practical skills throughout the examinations. There is no coursework component, but a 'practical endorsement'. It is an additional certificate, separate from the A level, that it is achieved by completing a set number of practical tasks throughout the course. The breakdown of the examinations can be seen below:

- Paper 1 – Periodic table, elements and physical Chemistry, 100 marks (2 hours 15 minutes)
- Paper 2 – Synthesis and analytical techniques, 100 marks (2 hours 15 minutes)
- Paper 3 – Unified Chemistry, 70 marks (1 hour 30 minutes)

**CHEMISTRY IS THE STUDY OF THE
COMPOSITION, STRUCTURE, PROPERTIES
AND REACTIONS OF SUBSTANCES**



Computer Science

Why Choose Computer Science?

Component 01: Computer systems

Students are introduced to the internal workings of the (CPU), data exchange, software development, data types and legal and ethical issues. The resulting knowledge and understanding will underpin their work in component 03. It covers:

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices
- Types of software and the different methodologies used to develop software
- Data exchange between different systems
- Data types, data structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues.

Component 02: Algorithms and programming This builds on component 01 to include computational thinking and problem solving. It covers:

- What is meant by computational thinking (thinking abstractly, thinking ahead, thinking procedurally etc.)
- Problem solving and programming – how computers and programs can be used to solve problems
- Algorithms and how they can be used to describe and solve problems.

Component 03: Programming project Students are expected to apply the principles of computational thinking to a practical coding programming project.

They will analyse, design, develop, test, evaluate and document a program written in a suitable programming language. The project is designed to be independently chosen by the student and provides them with the flexibility to investigate projects within the diverse field of computer science.

Why choose Computer Science?

It is a creative subject that involves innovative thinking and development of ideas through coding. Computer Science will help you with any subjects which require a degree of critical thinking – which, when you think about it, is quite a few as computational thinking skills can be a big help in the arts and humanities. Computer Science has computational thinking at its core; thinking that provides solutions to problems, designs systems and recognises the nature of human and machine intelligence. As Computer Science helps hone your computational thinking skills and problem-solving ability, it is useful for a wide range of careers. An ability to write programs and manipulate information and content are skills that potential employers may value.

Related Subjects

Subjects which work well with Computer Science include; Maths, Further Maths, Physics, Economics and Design Technology.

Course Requirements

GCSE Computer Science at grade 6 or above is a minimum requirement to study this course at A level, as well as good passes in Maths and English. Students are expected to work well independently and will also need to do plenty of reading and practice outside the classroom. The ability to analyse problems, interpret information and design efficient solutions are also key skills.

Further Important Information

Technology is becoming increasingly important and is all around us, and so any reading of current events and the impact of technology on society is an invaluable introduction. Secondly, practising programming skills using Python, JavaScript or Visual Basic using a suitable online training program such as Codecademy will help develop programming skills. Further details can be obtained from the Computer Science Department.

Higher Education and Careers Options

You could consider studying computer science at university if you want to begin a computer science career in roles such as:

- Computer programming
- Software engineering
- Website, app design, development
- Computer game development
- Cybersecurity

This is not an exhaustive list as the disciplines learnt in Computer Science are useful in a wide range of careers.

IT IS A CREATIVE

SUBJECT THAT INVOLVES

INNOVATIVE THINKING

AND DEVELOPMENT

OF IDEAS

THROUGH CODING



Course Details

Students will follow the OCR A Level in Computer Science (H446). Details of the examinations are listed below:

Computer Systems (01) Theory, 140 marks, 40% 2 hours 30 mins

This written paper tests the following sections - the internal workings of the (CPU), data exchange, software development, data types and legal and ethical issues. Calculators not allowed in this examination.

Algorithms and Programming (02) Theory, 140 marks, 40% 2 hours 30 mins

This written paper tests the following sections - using computational thinking to solve problems. Calculators not allowed.

Programming project (03) Practical, 70 marks, 20% Non-exam assessment.

Students will be expected to analyse a problem (10 marks), and design (15 marks), develop and test (25 marks), and evaluate and document (20 marks) a program. The program must be to solve it written in a suitable programming language.



Design and Technology

Why Choose Design and Technology?

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. The A Level course content has been designed to reflect authentic practice, as best as it can within the school environment, giving an insight into the way creative, engineering and manufacturing industries function. Learning about design and technology at A Level strengthens learners' critical thinking and problem solving skills within a creative environment, enabling them to develop and make prototypes and products that solve real world problems, considering their needs, wants and aspirations.

Related Subjects

The course requires students to apply mathematical and scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. This content reflects the importance of Design and Technology as a pivotal STEM subject. Combining Design and Technology with A Level Art, Business, Geography or Physics produces an excellent complement of subjects for applications on a range of university courses.

THE A LEVEL COURSE

CONTENT HAS BEEN

DESIGNED TO REFLECT

AUTHENTIC PRACTICE

Course Requirements

Students should have a genuine interest in how and why products are designed and manufactured.

Ideally, you will have studied at GCSE Level, though this is not essential. You should be able to manage your work independently as well as demonstrating your ability to be self-disciplined and reliable in extended research assignments.

Further Important Information

During the two year course you will also need to show that you can communicate confidently in discussions and through a variety of communication techniques. Sketching, CAD, modelling and manufacturing are important skills to develop, and students are encouraged to utilise the department during their free study periods to further develop such skills.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Students may follow one of several routes to working in the area of Design and Technology. Many courses can be studied at Undergraduate level ranging from product design, industrial, design engineering, architecture and manufacturing. Possible careers include: consumer product design, product design engineering, engineering design, marketing, project planning, CAD and CAM, advertising and display.

Co-Curricular

The Design and Technology department encourages students to use their facilities during study periods and prep sessions to further their learning and progress their work outside of lessons. Students are also encouraged to support younger students, especially during practical lessons, where they are invited to assist and share their knowledge.

Course Details

The OCR Product Design course is focused on consumer products and applications, their analysis in respect of materials, components, and marketability, in order to understand their selection and uses in industrial and commercial practices of product development.

Examination Details

The 'Principles' component - 25%

A written paper that is set out through four sets of questions, which predominantly cover technical principles.

The 'Unseen Challenge' - 25%

This component has two sections that respond to selected tasks.

Section A focuses on learners applying their knowledge, understanding and skills of designing and manufacturing prototypes and products.

Section B requires learners to reflect on their design task in Section A in relation to wider issues from the design principles

The 'Iterative Design Project' - 50%

The Iterative Design Project requires learners to undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project centred on the iterative processes of explore, create and evaluate.

Drama and Theatre Studies

Why choose Drama?

You will learn about a range of Theatre styles and practitioners with an emphasis on creating and reinterpreting theatre from the point of view of Actor, Director or Designer. As well as exploring the dramatic impact of texts through writing, you will be given opportunities to explore texts in practical workshop sessions and devise performances of your own. The qualification as a whole will represent a range of social, historical and cultural contexts. There will be opportunities to develop skills in improvisation, with an emphasis on small group work. Consequently, A Level Drama is a great opportunity to develop your own personal confidence, as well as teamwork skills - both greatly in demand in the world after School.

Related Subjects

The following subjects may well complement your study of Drama; English would complement the essay style nature of the written element, History may help with social, historical and political context of plays, whilst visual and creative subjects like Media, Art, Design and Technology and Music have a very strong link with Drama and Theatre Studies.

Course Requirements

Ideally students will have studied GCSE Drama and gained a Grade 6 or above in GCSE Drama and English. While experience of GCSE Drama and stage performance will obviously be helpful, many students have succeeded in A Level Drama without such previous experience. Clearly, a degree of self-confidence is required because you will be performing in front of large audiences on a number of occasions. You should also have a genuine enjoyment of visiting the theatre and be open to learning about different styles of drama.

Further Important Information

Students should be imaginative thinkers who can develop creative ideas from the point of view of actor, director and designer. They should be able to research independently and write evaluative essay style responses. Articulate expression, good organisational skills and commitment to rehearsal schedules are crucial, too. However, most important of all, is a great deal of enthusiasm and a passion for the subject!

Higher Education and Careers Options

As with any other subject at A Level, success in Drama will open up opportunities in Further Education. The skills required for Drama (teamwork, self-discipline, ability to set targets independently and to meet them, presentational skills, analytical and evaluative skills) are exactly those which employers are looking for more and more. Candidates have successfully applied to top Universities, including Oxford and Cambridge as well as gaining places at top Drama Schools such as, Guilford School of Acting, Oxford School of Drama and Liverpool Institute of Performing

Arts and go on to study courses such as; Acting, Theatre studies, Stage and costume design, creative producing, writing, directing, technical theatre courses amongst many others.

Study of drama can lead to a wide range of careers, due to the wealth of social skills gained, some of which may include; Acting for stage or screen, presenting, journalism, theatre criticism, designer, costume maker, light and sound technician, creative producing, theatre or events management, Law, Marketing and Teaching.

EXPLORE TEXTS IN PRACTICAL

WORKSHOP SESSIONS AND DEVISE

PERFORMANCES OF YOUR OWN



Co-Curricular

Students who show commitment to the department may be appointed as Drama Ambassadors. In this role, students represent the department at a whole School level, participating in open days and School events such as exhibition day as well as assisting backstage and front of house with lower School productions and the weekly drama club. A wealth of trips and workshops are also offered to all A Level drama students to enhance their study of the subject.

Course Details

Exam Board: EDUQAS – Drama and Theatre Studies (A Level)

Component 1: Theatre Workshop – 20%

You will be creating, developing and performing a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract from a text chosen by the Examination Board. You will utilise your experiences learnt from Component 1 using a theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company. You will create a log reflecting the research and evaluation of performance. This will be internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 2: Text in Action – 40%

This gives you an opportunity to create and devise a piece of theatre based on a stimulus and, additionally, an opportunity to perform an extract from a play of your choice. This is marked by a visiting examiner. You will also submit a report on how you perceived the process along with an evaluation after the performance.

Component 3: Text in Performance – Written examination 2 hours 30 minutes – 40%

You will have the opportunity to study two complete texts as well as an extract from 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time'. You will approach these texts practically through the eyes of an actor, designer or director with rehearsal techniques, as well as being an informed member of a theatre audience. You will have plenty of opportunities to attend live theatre performances for further analysis and evaluation.



**STUDENTS WITH AN A LEVEL
QUALIFICATION IN ECONOMICS HAVE
ACCESS TO A WIDE VARIETY OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

Economics

Why choose Economics?

The Edexcel Economics B course examines real world problems in order to create a genuine understanding of the important concepts in economics. It offers a distinctly different approach with economic concepts and theories taught through real business contexts.

The economic theory means students understand economic issues and events and the business contexts help them to understand the strategies employed by businesses in responding to these events. It has updated content with an introduction to the financial sector and the role of banks, the investigation of consumer behaviour, business decisions and government objectives and policies.

It reflects today's global world, with a focus on the current global issues that impact on the economy and the businesses operating within them. All assessments are based on real business contexts, real data and real economic issues. Students will develop a range of skills, including numeracy, communication, commercial awareness and critical thinking, in order to make a smooth transition to the next level of study. Students can learn how to participate effectively in society as a citizen, producer and consumer.

Related Subjects

Economics complements most other A Level subjects, especially essay based subjects. Students will develop a range of skills, including numeracy, communication, economic awareness and critical thinking.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Students with an A Level qualification in Economics have access to a wide variety of higher education and career opportunities. During the course, students will develop such skills as collecting and analysing economic and business data, written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to solve, evaluate and discuss economic problems.

The course complements a range of social science and humanities subjects and can lead to courses and careers in such areas as law, business, accounting, economics, politics, retail services, transport and logistics, financial services, human resource management and marketing.

Course Requirements

You should have at least six good Pass Grades at GCSE Level to cope successfully with any A Level course. Ideally, Grades 6 in Mathematics and in an essay-based subject such as History or Religious Studies are usually necessary. Key skills to be developed during the course are communication, numeracy, problem solving, information technology and teamwork.

Co-Curricular

Students in Year 12 have the opportunity to apply for a position in the Young Enterprise Company Programme. This involves setting up their own 'real' company in School, with regular Board Meetings, attendance at Training Events held locally, and competition with other Young Enterprise Companies in Leicestershire and the East Midlands.

Course Details

The A Level is structured into four coherent themes to support teaching and learning:

- Theme 1 introduces students to markets, consumers and firms
- Theme 2 introduces students to the wider economic environment
- Theme 3 explores the global economy
- Theme 4 explores how markets work

There are three externally assessed papers at A Level. Each paper comprises 100 marks and is two hours in duration. Questions comprise short answer, data response and essay.

Papers 1 and 2 count for 35% each, while paper 3 counts for 30% of the A Level.

- Paper 1 examines themes 1 and 4,
- Paper 2 examines themes 2 and 3
- Paper 3 examines all 4 themes.

Quantitative Skills

The A Level assesses quantitative skills, making up a minimum of 10% of the overall marks.



English as an Additional Language

Why is English as an Addition Language (EAL) important to the Sixth Form?

For students whose first language is not English, EAL is vitally important in the Sixth Form for a variety of reasons.

The lessons will enable you to obtain the necessary qualifications to meet your university English entrance requirements and there is the opportunity to gain an advanced certificate in English – the Cambridge English: Advanced or Proficiency. Both of these qualifications provide opportunity to gain additional UCAS points.

Completing the advanced course in the Sixth Form will ensure that your English level is advanced as far as possible, thereby enabling you to cope comfortably at university, in all situations, as well as in life outside education.

TEST YOUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE

EFFECTIVELY IN FACE-TO-FACE SITUATIONS

Course Requirements

Students entering the Sixth Form should be at IELTS level 5.5 or B2 on the CEFR to enable them to cope with the demands of the curriculum, but because EAL is compulsory throughout the school, there is no entry requirement for the subject itself.

Further Important Information

In Year 12 you will work with a member of the department who has experience in teaching the IELTS course with the view to achieving the level required for university entrance by the end of the academic year, dependent on your starting level of English. In Year 13 you will focus on advancing your English further with the ultimate aim of entering the Cambridge Advanced English examinations, or if possible the Cambridge Proficiency, dependent on the level to which you have progressed. As well as preparing for the English qualifications, you will also be supported in your other subjects, with help in checking grammar and vocabulary in essays, for instance. Help is also available with the completion of personal statements or applications for roles of responsibility.

Higher Education and Careers Options

IELTS and the Cambridge examinations are appropriate for any course being studied in English as well as for adjustment to university life in general. Additionally, the examinations you take are globally recognised and accepted by thousands of universities and companies as evidence of English ability. Ultimately, studying English throughout your time in the Sixth Form is essential in your overall achievement.

Course Details

The IELTS course consists of 4 papers:

Paper 1: Reading - 60 minutes

The Reading component consists of 40 questions, designed to test a wide range of reading skills.

IELTS Academic - this includes three long texts which range from the factual and descriptive to the discursive and analytical.

Paper 2: Writing- 60 minutes

Topics are of general interest, suitable for test takers entering undergraduate and postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1 - Describe, summarise or explain a graph chart or diagram in your own words.

Task 2 - Write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem.

Paper 3: Listening - 30 minutes

You will listen to four recordings of native English speakers and then write your answers to a series of questions.

- 1 – a conversation between two people set in an everyday social context.
- 2 – a monologue set in an everyday social context, for example a speech about local facilities.
- 3 – a conversation between up to four people set in an educational or training context, for example a university tutor and a student discussing an assignment.
- 4 – a monologue on an academic subject, for example a lecture.

Paper 4: Speaking - 11-14 minutes

The speaking component assesses your use of spoken English. Every test is recorded.

Part 1 - General questions about yourself and a range of familiar topics, such as home, family and interests.

Part 2 - You will be given a card which asks you to talk about a particular topic. You will have one minute to prepare before speaking for up to two minutes.

Part 3 - You will be asked further questions about the topic in Part 2. These will give you the opportunity to discuss more abstract ideas and issues.

Cambridge English: Advanced
Achieving an A grade on this qualification will earn you 32 UCAS Tariff points.

Reading (1 hour 30 minutes)

Shows you can deal confidently with different types of texts.

Writing (1 hour 30 minutes)

You create two different pieces of writing, such as essays, letters and emails, proposals, reports and reviews.

Listening (40 minutes)

Tests your ability to follow and understand a range of spoken materials.

Speaking (15 minutes)

Tests your ability to communicate effectively in face-to-face situations. You will take the Speaking test with another candidate. The Cambridge English: Proficiency qualification is structured similarly to the Advanced, but there are up to 42 UCAS Tariff points available for achieving this qualification.

English Literature

Why choose English Literature?

The English Literature course aims not simply to provide students with a detailed understanding of individual texts, but also an awareness of the breadth and variety of our literary heritage. Literature is concerned with ideas, feelings and experience expressed in the language of various types of artists – but it is centrally concerned with placing literature in a wider context in order to deepen an appreciation of the world. As such, the course helps students to understand the issues at the heart of people's lives in the past, today and in the future.

Studying English Literature improves student's understanding of the written word and will develop analytical skills. It also improves your linguistic skills in ways valuable for any career, but especially where being articulate means being successful. Literature carries considerable status with universities and society at large. Hopefully, however, it will be studied because it is enjoyable, stimulating, relevant and exciting!

Related Subjects

English Literature combines well with other Arts related subjects as well as History and RS. However, it can also be taken with Science and Mathematics related subjects to provide a greater breadth of study.

Course Requirements

A grade 6 in English Literature is vital; however, a grade 7 or above is desirable. A love of reading is crucial! In all but exceptional circumstances, students must have studied English Literature at GCSE. Reading widely is of paramount importance to those considering taking this course. Students should be able to read a number of genres with both insight and an understanding of complex concepts. This enthusiasm for reading should be reflected in a participation in the Sixth Form and Staff Reading Club.

Further Important Information

Students will be taught by at least two members of the department who will specialise in particular texts. Progress will be monitored across the groups and regular moderation of work will take place to ensure consistency in marking and assessment policies. While close examination of texts is central to the subject, this may well be achieved in a variety of ways: individual presentations, group discussions, writing under timed conditions, theatre visits, trips and outside speakers.

Higher Education and Careers Options

English Literature A Level is appropriate for any course involving the Arts or those requiring a good general knowledge and powers of expression, such as Law, Marketing, Administration, Business and Journalism. Ultimately, English Literature is invaluable for virtually any career when combined with the appropriate options.

Co-Curricular

The English department is keen to offer leadership opportunities including; becoming a prefect for the department; helping the lower years with their reading and leading discussions and debate. Our co-curricular programme for the Sixth Form includes a thriving Debating Club and the Staff and Sixth Form Book club.

Course Details

This is a linear course comprising four components. All but the coursework components are examined at the end of the two year course.

Component 1: Drama
- 30% 2 ¼ hours

A play by Shakespeare and Marlowe's Dr Faustus. Open text.

Component 2: Prose - 20% 1 ¼ hours

A comparison of two texts from within a range of themes including Science and Society, Colonialism and its aftermath. Open text.

Component 3: Poetry
- 30% 2 ¼ hours

Anthologies of post-2000 poetry and another chosen period, including The Romantics and Modernism. Open text.

Component 4: Coursework - 20%

An extended comparative essay of 3,000 words. Free choice of 2 texts with no genre or period restrictions.

Extended Project Qualification

What is the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)?

EPQ is a standalone qualification that is the equivalent to an AS Level, but assessed at A Level standard. EPQ provides extension for students beyond the subject matter of their courses and also develops project management skills essential for Higher Education and future careers. Students choose the subject matter of their project, which may require research across multiple disciplines. The project can also be practical, such as designing a weather station, acoustic guitar, robot or theatre set. Project proposals are limited only by the imagination of the student.

The EPQ is highly valued by:

- Future employers, who value its capacity to develop independent learning skills, including planning and managing a long-term project effectively.
- Universities, who value its central goal of nurturing students' ability to manage their own learning effectively.
- The EPQ also stretches the most able students who are challenged beyond the curriculum.
- Enables students to deepen their understanding in an area that really interests them.
- Has the potential to give the competitive edge with university and employment applications.

Who should take the EPQ?

The EPQ provides a stretch and challenge to those who will manage the demands of three A Levels well. It also allows students the flexibility to take a two A Level programme.

What Guidance Can You Expect?

Almost all students taking EPQ complete the project in an academic year. It will start in Year 12 after the October half-term break. Students will be given approximately 30 hours of taught skill sessions and additional one-to-one tutorials with their superior. Students will be expected to spend 90 hours working independently.

Research Support

One of the benefits of the EPQ is that it encourages students to develop independent research and academic skills that will be highly relevant for the transition to Higher Education. Our Sixth Formers benefit from wide-ranging online resources, including access to JSTOR, Google Scholar and other academic journals. This is further enhanced by collaboration with Higher Education institutions, such as Loughborough University. EPQ students enjoy a tour of the Loughborough University Library, benefit from expert guidance in developing research skills and can gain access to the library's resources.

Course Details

Choose, plan and manage a project. An outcome could be:

- A dissertation, investigation or report
- An artefact or design
- An event
- A performance of some kind

Alongside these outcomes, students need to keep a documented record of the project management process.

How is the EPQ Assessed?

AO1 - Manage - 20%

Identify, plan and carry out a project applying a range of skills, strategies and methods to achieve objectives.

AO2 - Use of Resources - 20%

Research, organise and use information, and use a range of resources. Analyse data apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic.

AO3 - Develop and Realise - 40%

Select and use a range of skills, including, where appropriate, new technologies and problem-solving, to take decisions critically and achieve planned outcomes.

AO4 - Review - 20%

Evaluate all aspects of the extended project, including outcomes in relation to stated objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidence project outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format.

Food Science and Nutrition

This qualification is equivalent to one A Level and carries the equivalent UCAS points to enter university at undergraduate level.

| Grade at Diploma | A Level Equivalent | UCAS Points |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Distinction* | A* | 56 |
| Distinction | A | 48 |
| Merit | C | 32 |
| Pass | E | 16 |

Why choose Food Science?

Food is an essential requirement to sustain life, a knowledge of nutrition, diet and health is valuable for our understanding of society around the globe. It is relevant to many industries and job roles including nutritionists, sports coaches, food manufacturers, government agencies to develop menus, food products and policies that support healthy eating initiatives. At Ratcliffe we offer small sized classes that will allow you to reach your true potential in this academic and practical course. The course is designed to support students' progress to university and beyond. It offers exciting, interesting experiences to apply learning through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in purposeful, work-related contexts.

Related Subjects

It would be helpful if you have studied Food Preparation and Nutrition at GCSE Level but this is not essential. To have a passion for nutrition, food science and a love of developing your practical skills whilst working under pressure is a must. Other subjects that link well to Food Science and Nutrition are Biology, Chemistry, Sports Science, Media and Business.

Course Requirements

The normal entry into Ratcliffe Sixth Form plus level 5 in Food Preparation and Nutrition and a Science. You will enjoy working under pressure with tight time constraints, you will be able to work independently, relish solving problems and be able to organise yourself efficiently are imperative.



Further Important Information

Students will complete three units: two mandatory and one optional. Each unit within the qualification has an applied purpose which acts as a focus for the learning in the unit. It demands authentic work related learning in each of the available units. It requires students to consider how the use and application of their learning impacts on themselves, other individuals, employers, society and the environment. You will develop;

- Skills required for independent learning and development
- Skills to ensure your own dietary health and well being
- A range of generic and transferable skills
- The ability to solve problems
- Skills to allow project based research, development and presentation
- The ability to apply mathematical and ICT skills

Higher Education and Careers Options

Together with other relevant qualifications you could enter higher education courses such as: Food and Nutrition, Human Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition, Food Science and Technology and Food Marketing and Nutrition.

Co-Curricular

You would have the opportunity to help younger students at our popular, oversubscribed Cooking Club.

Course Details

You will complete three units: two mandatory and one optional. Unit 1 has a weighting of 50%, unit 2 a weighting of 25% and unit 3 or 4 a weighting of 25%

Unit 1: Meeting Nutritional Needs of Specific Groups

This will be taken in Year 12. It will consist of a 90-minute examination, plus 15 minutes reading time. It is divided into three sections:

Section A is short answer questions

Section B is extended answer questions

Section C relates to a case study.

You will also complete an internal assessment which will be externally moderated.

Unit 2 – Ensuring Food is Safe to Eat

This is an eight hour timed and supervised assessment.

Unit 3 or Unit 4

One of these units will be taken and will be a summative controlled assessment.

Unit 3 - Experimenting to Solve Food Production Problems

You could be investigating a topic Why does ice cream freeze? How can we stop cream curdling?

Unit 4 - Current Issues

Through this unit, you will develop the skills needed to plan, carry out and present research project on current issues linked to food science and nutrition. This could be from a perspective of a consumer, food manufacturer or caterer.

Internal Assignment (Written and Practical):

To be completed during spring term of Year 12.

**FOOD IS AN ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT
TO SUSTAIN LIFE, A KNOWLEDGE
OF NUTRITION, DIET AND HEALTH
IS VALUABLE FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING
OF SOCIETY AROUND THE GLOBE**

French

Why choose French?

An A level in a Modern Foreign Language such as French gives you not only a qualification but a skill for life which will complement any course or career path you may choose to pursue.

Course Requirements

Developing language skills to A Level is an enjoyable experience and anyone with a grade 7 or above at GCSE together, with the commitment to work hard, is particularly welcome.

Related Subjects

French will combine well with a number of subjects, whether your passion lies in History, English, Geography, Maths, the sciences, Music or Media. You will find much to explore and broaden your horizons when studying one of the many French-speaking countries.

Further Important Information

Students are also required to study a film at A level which is a new experience many really enjoy.

Each year we are fortunate enough to welcome a French native speaker as a language assistant in the department whose role is to develop pupils' oral competency through individual speaking lessons.

Higher Education and Careers Options

French is classed as a facilitating subject, meaning that it is more frequently required for university entry than other subjects. It will give you a wide range of degree courses to choose from and allow you to keep your options open, particularly if you are unsure what you want to study. Former students have gone on to become teachers, doctors, vets and lawyers.

Co-Curricular

We expect all students to take part in a trip to France organised by the languages department during their A Level studies. They should also embrace any other opportunities such as cinema trips which may boost their language skills or cultural knowledge.

Course Details

The course aims to develop understanding of the spoken and written forms of French from a variety of registers, develop critical insights into, and contact with, the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the French speaking world, as well as develop positive attitudes to foreign language learning. As there is an emphasis on the practical application of language skills, a communicative approach is adopted; thus, French is the main medium for teaching and learning the language. You will use grammar and textbooks. You will also study a literary text and a film.

You will develop your language skills through the study of 4 main themes following the Eduqas specification:

- Travel and Exploration
- Contemporary Youth Culture (entertainment, music, media)
- Diversity and Difference (migration, integration, discrimination)
- France 1940-1950: The Occupation and post-war years

Examination

Oral: - 21-23 Minutes - 30%

Task 1: Presentation and discussion of independent project (11-12 minutes)

Task 2: Discussion of a stimulus card comprising an image, a short text and points for consideration. 5 minutes' preparation followed by 5-6 minutes' discussion

Listening, Reading and Translating: 2 ½ hours writing - 50%

Section A: Listening true/false, multiple choice, comprehension questions and answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading questions based on texts, true/false statements, gap-fill, comprehension questions and answers in the target language.

Section C: Translation – passages from, and into, the target language.

Written Examination

2 hours - 20%

2 essays, 300 words each, one on a literary work, one on additional literary work or film.



**AN A LEVEL IN A MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE
SUCH AS FRENCH GIVES YOU NOT ONLY A
QUALIFICATION BUT A SKILL FOR LIFE**

Geography

Why choose Geography?

Geography is an academically challenging subject requiring a dedicated attitude in order to succeed.

Students with A Level Geography have access to a wide range of career and higher education opportunities. You will develop a variety of transferable skills throughout the course. These include collecting, analysing and interpreting data (with the help of fieldwork) and communicating your findings in different ways, research and presentation skills, use of ICT, time management and developing different styles of writing including essays. An ability to work well with others and independently is crucial, and a confidence with ICT is useful. These skills are in great demand and are recognised by employers, Universities and Colleges as being of great value; the Russell Group (which represents 24 leading UK Universities including Oxford, Cambridge and Durham) lists Geography as one of only eight facilitating subjects that open a wider range of University options for students.

Related Subjects

Geography combines well with almost all other subjects. As part of a human and social sciences approach it sits well with subjects such as History and Religious Studies, sharing common skills and approaches such as critical evaluation and evaluating ethical issues. Traditionally many students have studied Economics alongside Geography because of their shared global perspectives. Some universities accept Geography as a Science subject and it also combines well with Biology in particular, through study of systems such as water and carbon.

Course Requirements

It is a requirement that you will have studied Geography at GCSE. Owing to the academic demands of the course, you should ideally have attained grade 6 in Geography with good general grades, including English Language and Mathematics. Enthusiasm for the subject is also important. An essential requirement of studying Geography is that you should have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in the environment and current affairs, a willingness to explore new ideas, and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively. You must also have an excellent work ethic and a willingness to undertake a good deal of independent study (research, reading and note-making) outside of lessons in order to succeed.

Further Important Information

Students will participate in a variety of fieldwork, both residential and shorter local trips. The fieldwork residential to support the independent investigation will take place in October of Year 13, but this is supported by local field days and short field visits during certain lessons. There is strong emphasis on independent learning and you will be expected to undertake extensive reading and research in addition to work covered with teachers. Within lessons, a variety of approaches will be adopted, including group work, research and the use of ICT, delivering presentations and using specimen-assessment materials. Development of geographical skills, including mathematical skills with an emphasis on statistics, cartographic skills and extended writing skills is key to learning. Confidence in this field is useful for studying Geography.



GEOGRAPHY IS AN ACADEMICALLY CHALLENGING

SUBJECT REQUIRING A DEDICATED ATTITUDE IN ORDER TO SUCCEED



Higher Education and Careers Options

Geography supports applications for almost any science-based University course; Geography also supports an equally wide range of university courses such as Business, Law, Media, Politics and Philosophy. A number of students have recently gone on to study Geography related degrees. The Russell Group includes Geography as one of only eight 'facilitating' subjects. These are the subjects that are more frequently required for entry to degree courses than others and leave students with a wider range of options for study.

Co-Curricular

The Model United Nations (MUN) Society involves geopolitical research and debate, and a large number of the issues that are debated at MUN Conferences are geographical in theme. These include migration and its impacts, power and borders, human rights and environmental issues. MUN delegates develop a deep-rooted understanding not only of the issues researched, but of the political process and the workings of the United Nations. This is a highly valued activity by universities and is supportive of any student who wishes to continue an interest or potential involvement in politics.

Course Details

The overall format is as follows:

Unit 1: Physical Systems - 22%

1 hour 30 minute examination.

The following are assessed:

- Earth's Life Support Systems
 - o Water and carbon cycles
 - o Tropical rainforests and Arctic tundra
- Landscape Systems
 - o Glaciated landscapes

Unit 2: Human Interactions - 22%

1 hour 30 minute examination.

The following are assessed:

- Changing Spaces; Making Places
 - o The study of place, and how places are shaped, perceived and change
- Global Connections
 - o Global migration issues
- o Human rights

Unit 3: Geographical Debates - 36%

2 hour 30 minute examination

The following are assessed:

- Disease Dilemmas
 - o Patterns of diseases, factors influencing diseases, economic development and disease and the management of communicable and noncommunicable diseases
- Hazardous Earth
 - o Plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions

Unit 4: Investigative Geography - 20%

Assessed via a 4,000 word written investigation, marked by teachers and moderated by OCR.

- Personal investigation with your own individual question
- Based on data collected in the field
- Can relate to any part of the specification content

German

Why choose German?

An A level in a Modern Foreign Language such as French gives you not only a qualification but a skill for life which will complement any course or career path you may choose to pursue.

Related Subjects German will combine well with a number of subjects, whether your passion lies in History, English, Geography, Maths, the Sciences, Music or Media. You will find much to explore and broaden your horizons when studying one of the many German speaking countries.

Course Requirements

Developing language skills to A Level is an enjoyable experience and anyone with a 7 or above at GCSE together, with the commitment to work hard, is particularly welcome.

Further Important Information

A level German also involves studying and analysing a film in depth. Each year we are fortunate enough to welcome a German native speaker as a language assistant in the department whose role is to develop pupils' oral competency through individual speaking lessons.

Higher Education and Careers Options

German is classed as a facilitating subject, meaning that it is more frequently required for university entry than other subjects. It will give you a wide range of degree courses to choose from and allow you to keep your options open, particularly if you are unsure what you want to study. Former students have gone on to become teachers, doctors, vets and computer programmers.

Co-Curricular

We expect all students to take part in a trip to Germany organised by the languages department during their A Level studies and to embrace any other opportunities which may help boost their learning.

Course Details

The course aims to develop understanding of the spoken and written forms of German from a variety of registers, develop critical insights into, and contact with, the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the German-speaking world, as well as develop positive attitudes to foreign language-learning. As there is an emphasis on the practical application of language skills, a communicative approach is adopted; thus, German is the main medium for teaching and learning the language. You will use grammar and textbooks. You will also study a literary text and a film. You will develop your language skills through the study of 4 main themes following the Eduqas specification:

- Travel and Exploration
- Contemporary Youth Culture (entertainment, music, media)
- Diversity and Difference (migration, integration, discrimination)
- The making of modern Germany: 1989 onwards

Examination

Oral: 21-23 minutes - 30%

Task 1: Presentation and discussion of independent research project (11-12 minutes)

Task 2: Discussion of a stimulus card comprising an image, a short text and points for consideration. 5 minutes' preparation followed by 5-6 minutes' discussion

Listening, Reading and Translating: 2 ½ hours writing - 50%

Section A: Listening true/false, multiple choice, comprehension questions and answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading questions based on texts, true/false statements, gap-fill, comprehension questions and answers in the target language.

Section C: Translation – passages from, and into, the target language.

Written Examination: 2 hours - 20%

2 essays, 300 words each, one on a literary work, one on additional literary work or film.





THE AIM OF
TEACHING AT A
LEVEL IN HISTORY
IS TO ENABLE
YOU TO BECOME
INDEPENDENT
THINKERS

History

Why choose History?

History can give you the skills that most employers want – whichever job you have in mind. Through the study of History, you will learn about people, their motivations, and how societies develop and work. History teaches you to think in a combination of ways not found in any other subject. Historians and students of History have to use sources as evidence to answer questions about the way people behaved, thought and felt in the past, and make judgements about human nature and behaviour. You will develop a valuable and necessary skill: that of being able to write a report, or essay, which is concise, relevant, supported by evidence and which clearly addresses the question set. In doing so, you will develop an independent mind; in this sense, History is a good subject for everyone to study.

Related Subjects

Subjects that will help compliment studies in History and will be benefited by your study in History include; English, Geography and Religious Studies.

Course Requirements

Those of you wishing to study History at A Level should have a minimum of 6 GCSE passes at grade 6 or above, including History and English Literature or English Language. We would expect students to be able to work well independently and be willing to do plenty of reading outside of the classroom. The key skills required are:

- Thorough investigative and research skills.
- The ability to analyse and interpret information.
- Good communication skills.
- An interest in human behaviour, culture and society.
- An enquiring mind.

Higher Education and Careers Options

History at A Level is useful for entry onto more than just History degree courses. It is useful for English, Media, Journalism, Law and Politics related subjects, and studies involving people such as Social Policy, Tourism and Business Studies. It is also useful for Environmental Studies, Banking and Accountancy, Publishing and Administrative Courses. History is particularly good training for administration, and large numbers of History graduates go on to posts in management requiring leadership; in fact 30% of History graduates go on to post-graduate study (nearly double that of the average across other subjects). No one should let concerns about employment prospects convince them that History should be given up. In fact, it is the breadth of its relevance and the variety of the skills which it encourages that make it such a good basis for employment in the rapidly changing world of career patterns, where employers often prefer people with a wide range of skills. Many of the top radio and TV presenters and managers (including sports!) are History graduates, as well as politicians, writers, journalists and lawyers. It may surprise you to learn that Historians provide more directors of Britain's leading companies in proportion to the number of graduates than any other subject, out-performing law, science and engineering. Examples include Lord Sainsbury, Charles Miller Smith of ICI and Sir Bob Reid.

Further Important Information

The aim of teaching at A Level in History is to enable you to become independent thinkers who can analyse, evaluate critically and write cogently. You will be expected to take part in discussions and debates, to present your own ideas and arguments, to complete notes, diagrams and essays, and to work with sources. You are expected to use DVDs, newspaper articles, journals and primary and secondary sources during the course of your studies.

Co-Curricular

The Department offers a wide range of opportunities. There is a yearly trip on a two-year cycle. One year is a trip to

Berlin concentrating on the Cold War and Nazi Germany and the other year is a trip to London, with a focus on Tudor History, the Cold War and the Second World War. Throughout the year there are a number of Sixth Form History Society evenings that could include guest speakers, debates or watching helpful documentaries or films.

Help is 'on tap' in the History Department, with Mr Newman, Mr Harrison and Mr Cantrill always willing and able to help. It is also a benefit that Mr Newman is based in the Sixth Form Centre and so can be easily accessed during the day. Whilst not History related directly, Mr Cantrill runs the Schools Model United Nations Club and so historians are often at the forefront of this activity with the opportunity to visit conferences in Manchester and Bath.

Course Details

Year 12

Paper 1 - Germany and West Germany, 1918-1989

2 hours 15 minutes - 30% Breadth study with interpretation. Students answer three questions, one from each section.

Sections A and B: Comprise a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in breadth.

Section C: Comprises one compulsory question that assesses the ability to analyse and evaluate historical interpretations.

Paper 2 - The Rise and Fall of Fascism in Italy, 1911-1946

1 hour 30 minutes - 20% Depth Study. Students answer two questions: One from section A and one from Section B.

Section A: Comprises one compulsory question on Italy, based on two sources. It assesses source analysis and evaluation skills.

Section B: Comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth.

Year 13

Paper 3 - Rebellion and Order under the Tudors, 1485-1603.

2 hours 15 minutes - 30% Themes in breadth with aspects of depth. Students answer three questions: one from each section.

Section A: One compulsory question assessing source analysis and evaluation.

Section B: A choice of essays that understanding the period in depth.

Section C: A choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in breadth.

Coursework - 20% Causes of World War One



Information Technology (BTEC)

Why choose IT?

In a world where Information Technology (IT) is constantly changing, individuals increasingly need IT literacy skills that include the ability to gather, process and manipulate data. Studying IT at Ratcliffe will help students to develop a broad range of skills and knowledge as well as an understanding how of systems work. Students will also learn about the wider impact of IT on society in general, understanding the consequences of data security, safety and the digital divide.

Related Subjects

Subjects which work well with IT include; Maths, Business, Media, Economics and Design Technology

Course Requirements

Whilst a GCSE in ICT is not a mandatory requirement for this subject, the student will be required to show mastery of certain mathematical and digital skills in coursework in GCSE subjects, involving both research and presentation. Where relevant, reports will be sought from GCSE teachers. However, passes in Maths and English and Science, coupled with a logical and analytical mind would be considered good pre-requisites for this course.

50

Further Important Information

Information and Communication is all around us, and so any reading of current events and the impact of technology on society is an invaluable introduction. Further details can be obtained from the Computing Department.

Higher Education and Careers Options

This qualification supports progression into appropriate Further or Higher Education, employment or training and has been designed to provide a suitable foundation for the study of IT, or a related area of study. Examples of appropriate Further or Higher Education include:

- Honours and Foundation degrees in IT, Computing or a related subject
- Higher Nationals in ICT or a related subject
- Level 4 NVQs in ICT or a related subject.

Course Details

Students will follow the Cambridge International AS or A Level in IT course. The course is non-linear, so students will sit an AS examination at the end of Year 12 and a final A2 examination at the end of Year 13. The details of the examinations are listed below:

Year 12

Paper 1 - Theory - 70 Marks
1 hour 45 minutes This written paper tests sections 1-11 of the syllabus content.

Paper 2 - Practical - 90 Marks
2 hours 30 minutes This paper tests sections 8-11 of the syllabus content, Candidates will also need to use their previous knowledge from sections 1-7.

Year 13

Paper 1 - Theory - 70 Marks
1 hour 45 minutes This written paper tests sections 12-20 of the syllabus content. The content of sections 1-11 is assumed knowledge.

Paper 2 - Practical - 90 Marks
2 hours 30 minutes This paper tests sections 17-21 of the syllabus content, and sections 8-10 of the syllabus content within a problem solving context.

Course Outline

Year 12

Data processing and information
Hardware and software
Monitoring and control
Algorithms and flow charts
eSecurity
The digital divide
Expert systems
Spreadsheets
Modelling
Database and file concepts
Sound and video editing

Year 13

IT in society
New and emerging technologies
Communications technology
Project management
System life cycle
Mail merge
Graphics creation
Animation
Programming for the web

Latin

Why Choose Latin?

You should choose Latin if you enjoyed studying it at GCSE and are keen to develop your knowledge and understanding of the classical world further! Latin will enhance your understanding of the accident and syntax of the Latin language and develop your interest in and appreciation of some of the most influential literature of the Roman period. You will study a range of selected prose and verse classical authors, including Cicero, Tacitus, Livy, Virgil, and Ovid. Through these texts, you will be able to discuss and understand a diverse range of issues which they raise, some of which are of universal importance, such as life, death, love, war, philosophy and politics and the roles of men and women in society.

You will undertake a more detailed study of the Latin language, including through Prose Composition, which will develop your command of grammar and sentence structure in English, enrich your English vocabulary, and enhance your knowledge of Modern European languages.

The study of both the language and the literature of the Roman world will also provide you with a further insight into the civilisation of the time and the debt we owe to the Romans, ranging from the philosophical and linguistic to the technical and scientific.

Related Subjects

Latin is the ideal subject to study alongside Modern Languages, English, History, Politics and Religious Studies; while it can also very effectively complement other subjects, including Mathematics and the Sciences.

Course Details

OCR A Level Latin specification (H443).

There are four Latin examinations (two language and two literature), the details of which are as follows:

Course Requirements

It is important to gain at least a 6, and ideally a 7, in Latin GCSE to progress to A Level. A willingness and ability to read and enjoy literature, along with a logical and analytical approach towards translation, are also essential.

Higher Education and Careers Options

The academic skills of logical analysis and problem-solving developed through studying Latin provide a strong grounding for an undergraduate degree in almost any subject. Teachers in the department are very experienced in preparing students for Classics-related degrees at university and supporting them in their applications. Classics graduate go into careers in a diverse range of areas, for example Law, Finance, Business, Teaching, and the Civil Service.

Co-Curricular

There are many opportunities to involve yourself in the subject and extend your knowledge outside the classroom, for example by attending relevant Sixth Form study days and acting as an Ambassador for the subject in School. We also run a range of trips to classical sites both in the UK abroad, and Sixth Form students are particularly welcome to come on these.

Unit 1, Unseen Translation – 1 hour 45 minutes, 33%

The Unseen translation paper has two compulsory sections. In Section A, candidates will translate a prose unseen passage from Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* into English. In Section B, candidates will translate a verse unseen passage by Ovid into English and scan two lines of verse.

Unit 2, Prose Composition or Comprehension – 1 hour 15 minutes, 17%

There are two sections in this paper, of which candidates will be required to answer one. In Section A, candidates will complete a short translation and answer comprehension and grammar questions on a prose unseen passage. In Section B, candidates will translate a passage of English, of at least 100 words, into Latin.

Unit 3 – Prose Literature – 2 hours, 25%

There are 3 sections in this paper. In Sections A and B, candidates will be required to respond to passages from their two prose set texts via translation, comprehension, and analysis questions. In Section C, candidates will be required to answer an essay question on one of their set texts.

Authors for 2025:
Cicero and Tacitus

Unit 4 – Verse Literature – 2 hours, 25%

There are 3 sections in this paper. In Sections A and B, candidates will be required to respond to passages from their two verse set texts via translation, comprehension, and analysis questions. In Section C, candidates will be required to answer an essay question on one of their set texts.

Authors for 2025: Virgil and Ovid



Mathematics and Further Mathematics

Why choose Mathematics?

Mathematics at A Level is a course worth studying in its own right. It is challenging but interesting. A Level Mathematics builds on work you have met at GCSE and also involves new concepts. A Level Further Mathematics builds further on GCSE but also consolidates and reinforces your standard A level Mathematics work, helping you to achieve your best possible grades. It makes the transition from sixth form to university courses which are mathematically rich that much easier.

Related Subjects

It serves as a very useful support for many other qualifications as well as being a very sought after qualification in the workplace and for courses in Higher Education.

Course Requirements

Mathematics GCSE 9-1 Grade 8 or above is strongly recommended, though a Grade 7 could be considered after consultation with the Head of Mathematics. It is also preferred and recommended, but not essential, that students have also achieved AQA Level 2 GCSE Further Mathematics Grade A or above.

A Level Further Mathematics should be considered by the strongest Mathematicians only – those who have achieved the highest grades at GCSE, and without too much difficulty.

Higher Education and Careers Options

A Level Mathematics is a highly valued and sought after qualification. Courses in Higher Education that either require A Level Mathematics or are strongly related include: Engineering, Medicine, Architecture, Accountancy, Computer Science, Information Technology, Economics, Physics, and Law.

Further Maths is also highly desirable, if not required, by many top universities for Mathematics, Science and Engineering courses, as well as Computing and Economics.

Course Details

The examination Board is Edexcel and the syllabus for Mathematics is 9MA0, whilst the syllabus for Further Mathematics is 9FM0. The A Level course in Mathematics will consist of two units in Pure Mathematics and one in Statistics and Mechanics.

The A Level course in Further Mathematics will consist of two compulsory units in Pure Mathematics and two units from: Further Pure Mathematics, Mechanics, Statistics, or Decision Maths.

In order to obtain an A Level qualification in Mathematics, you will need to take three units. If you want two A Levels in Mathematics and Further Mathematics, you will need to take seven units in total.

Further Important Information

Both A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics are highly respected courses, but are also very demanding. Any student, regardless of ability, will need a sound work ethic and plenty of determination and perseverance to be successful. The recommended calculator for the A Level Mathematics course is the Casio fx-991EX.

Essential Reading / Preparation

All students wishing to take A Level Mathematics who have not completed the AQA Level 2 GCSE Further Mathematics course should complete the course text book 'AQA Level 2 Further Mathematics' ISBN 978-1510446939 before the start of the course in September.

Any student starting the course should purchase the following text book ready for September: Pearson Edexcel AS and A Level Mathematics: Pure Mathematics: Year 1/AS (ISBN 978-1292183398)



**MATHEMATICS AT A LEVEL IS A COURSE
WORTH STUDYING IN ITS OWN RIGHT.
IT IS CHALLENGING BUT INTERESTING**



Media Studies

Why choose Media Studies?

The Media becomes more powerful every day. To a large extent, it controls our culture and even our opinions and beliefs. This is why the study of the Media has grown in importance over recent years. We need to adopt a more critical approach to the Media if we are not to be increasingly manipulated. Media Studies seeks to increase your critical awareness, to offer an analytical and practical approach to an understanding of the effects of the Media on our modern world.

Related Subjects

Media Studies is an analytical subject, where media products, including film, television, video games and newspapers, comprise the texts you will study for inference and meaning. In this way then, it ties closely with English Literature. The practical elements of the course require creative and technical skills which will be advantaged by proficiency in Art and ICT. Finally, the study of media industries is complemented by a wider understanding of business practices explored in Economics and Business.

Course Requirements

It is not necessary to have studied Media at GCSE Level. However, to have done so will obviously prove to be advantageous. At the very least, you should have a genuine interest in the Media, especially in film and television genres and the development of your own technical skills. It is expected that you watch and read a variety of media and have an interest in creating your own media products. There is room to excel for both the creative and the technically minded.

Further Important Information

During the course of the A Level, students will be expected to organise and execute their own professional media production. This is a unique part of the course that students often find most rewarding and can open many doors for them post-Ratcliffe. It does, however, require a different set of skills to most other subjects, particularly in the organisation of resources and time. Students must be prepared for the responsibility of this production process. Essay-writing skills are also essential, as is an analytical and enquiring mind; the key focus of Media Studies is to debate the world around us, so engagement and enthusiasm is paramount!

Higher Education and Careers Options

The majority of our students choose to pursue a Media or Media-related course at university. This may be in practical production, a specific discipline like Journalism, or in a broader theoretical context. We have alumni from the department who have been very successful in this way, including students who now work for Warner Brothers.

Alternatively, the subject fully supports the further study of those subjects which it complements at A Level, such as English Literature or Business (where Marketing and Publishing are popular routes).

Co-Curricular

Media students are routinely chosen to be the Photography Ambassadors for the School. This is a highly sought after position, which involves co-ordinating photography for School events, with the assistance of the Media Technician.

It has stood students in excellent stead, particularly those who have gone on to pursue interests in Marketing. Many have gone on to achieve real world success with their products, including national distribution with online television channels. Sixth Form students have the opportunity to get involved in our podcast, Ratcliffe Rambles. The podcast is run entirely by Sixth Form students, each week choosing an exciting new topic to discuss. The podcast has so far proved very successful and we are excited to grow and evolve the podcast over the coming years.

Course Details

Paper 1 - Media Messages
2 hours - 35%

News and Online Media: an in-depth study of contemporary news in the UK. May include texts such as the Daily Mail and The Guardian.

Media Language and Representation: an exploration of language and representation through magazines, advertising and music videos.

Paper 2 - Evolving Media
2 hours - 35%

Media Industries and Audiences: an exploration of industries and audiences, through radio, video games and film.

Long Form Television Drama: an in depth study of television as an evolving global media form. May include texts such as Stranger Things and Deutschland 83.

Non-Examined
Assessment 30%

Coursework –style component involving the production of two linked media products.

Students will respond to a brief to create a cross-media brand, for example a music video and website for a new electropop band.

THE MEDIA BECOMES MORE POWERFUL
EVERY DAY. TO A LARGE EXTENT, IT
CONTROLS OUR CULTURE AND EVEN
OUR OPINIONS AND BELIEFS

Music

Why choose Music?

Music is an exciting and creative subject at A Level. It gives you the opportunity to improve your own musical knowledge and performance skills. At the same time, it teaches a variety of key skills, such as ICT, listening, problem-solving, time-management, appraisal, co-operation and working with others. Music students will be experienced performers and a desire to have more performance experience. Students who enjoy learning new repertoire to gain experience in different styles will have the opportunity to do this. Enjoyment of composition is an important part of the course. Students will be encouraged to have their music performed at events in the school. Students will enjoy musical analysis and the opportunity of studying the detail of a piece of music, finding out the techniques the composer has employed to capture the interest of the listener. They will also gain an insight into the relevance surrounding the composition. This will enable them to enhance their own performance and composition skills. Although essay skills are important, you will be required to give a both shorter and extended answers to the questions as well as having control of the audio clips during the examination. Ability to make judgements of a piece of music under exam conditions will be taught so that you can sit the paper with confidence.

Course Requirements

The best foundation for success in Music is a good grade at GCSE. If you are an able instrumentalist or singer, who often listens to Radio 3 or Classic FM and regularly attends concerts, you will also possess many of the basic skills necessary for successful study. You should be of at least Grade 5 standard on your instrument, but with the view to being at least of Grade 7 standard by the end of Year 13. You should have knowledge of the fundamental elements of music: style, form, genre, instrumentation, etc. and also some understanding of the development of music throughout history. Above all, you should have a strong interest in creating, performing and understanding music, and the determination to develop that.

Related Subjects

Music uses a range of skills and will work with a variety of other subjects. Scientists and Mathematicians will enjoy the analytical skills you will hone as well as the styles of composition which are based on sequence of formula. In contrast, those who enjoy the creative side of music will have the advantage of the freedom you have in performance and composing the styles you choose.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Music is a useful qualification for:

- Students wishing to study Music, Popular Music or a Combined Arts subject in Higher Education
- Students wishing to pursue a career in Music and the Arts, whether as a performer, teacher, composer, writer or administrator
- Students wishing to study media, advertising, marketing and publishing
- Students wishing to deepen their understanding and broaden their knowledge of their leisure interest as part of lifelong learning Music sits equally alongside Science and Arts subjects and is well respected by universities and employers. The study of Music can also help you to develop a wide range of transferable skills that you can take into any career or job. Wherever your future takes you, Music will be a fulfilling and rewarding life skill and companion.

MUSIC STUDENTS WILL BE

EXPERIENCED PERFORMERS

AND HOLD A DESIRE TO HAVE MORE

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE



Co – Curricular

It will come as no surprise that music has great scope for co-curricular and leadership. Those who opt for this subject will be keen to take part in the plethora of musical activity the school offers. They will be encouraged to instigate music ensembles themselves and direct them during concerts. Musicians will develop leadership skills, either in support of the departmental aims or by the leadership of an ensemble.

Course Details

Unit 1 – Performing (30%)

Students must perform a public recital lasting no less than 8 minutes on their principal instrument in the spring term of Year 13. Students will have the opportunity to develop and refine their performance skills throughout the course, performing at numerous concerts, recitals, assemblies, Services, Masses and Open Days. This part of the course is particularly enjoyable for those students who enjoy performing and are expected to be around Grade 7-8 standard on their instrument/voice by this stage.

Unit 2 – Composing (30%)

Students are required to write a Free Composition worth 40 marks (loosely linked to one of the Areas of Study) over the course of Year 12 and the autumn term of Year 13. This does not have to be notated in traditional staff notation and must be at least 4 minutes in length. The second composition, worth 20 marks, is set by the exam board and completed in 4-6 hours under controlled conditions in April of Year 13. This unit particularly appeals to those with a creative and imaginative musical mind and caters for all tastes, styles and abilities.

Unit 3 – Appraising (40%)

The appraising exam is worth 100 marks and is a 2 hour paper testing students' listening and aural awareness skills, in addition to questions on the Set Works. Students will have their own anthologies, in which they will analyse, annotate and appraise 18 Set Works over the course of the two years. These cover a wide variety of musical genres, including vocal music, instrumental music, music for film, popular music and jazz, fusions and new directions. It is an advantage to be able to read staff notation fairly fluently, but it is not a necessity. Aspects of music theory, notation and music history will be covered in this unit also.

Physical Education

Why choose Physical Education?

Studying A Level Physical Education will give you a great insight into the world of sports performance. You will develop a wide ranging knowledge into the how and why of physical activity and sport and also you will perform a sport through the non-exam assessment component. Through the combination of physical performance and academic challenge 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 and also the influence that modern technology is having in and on physical activity and sport.

Related Subjects

Biology
Physics
Geography
Business and Economics
Religious Studies
Food Science and Nutrition
History
Media Studies

Course Requirements

If you wish to take the course you should ideally have successfully completed the GCSE course, preferably with at least a grade 6 on the theoretical aspect. It is not a prerequisite that you should have taken GCSE PE.

Further Important Information

It is important that you have an interest in how sport has become what it is today, want to understand how science and society affects sporting performance and participation. In addition, you should have a sound science background (Grade 6) and proven sporting ability in one major sport is recommended.



Higher Education and Careers Options

Past students have gone on to study degrees in Sports Science, Exercise and Health, Sports Management, Coaching, Personal trainer, Physiotherapy, Recreation development, Sports Psychology, Fitness and Exercise Science and Occupational therapy. Students have also gone on to study degrees with Psychology, Business Management and Geography and not forgetting Teaching!

The sports industry is one of the fastest growing sectors and there is a wide range of career opportunities. Please see the display board outside the Sports Science classroom for more ideas.

Co-Curricular

In order to further understanding you could come and help the PE staff and coaches and get involved in coaching younger pupils.

Course Details

Examination Board: OCR

Course code: H555

Examination assessment :
Worth 70% of final grade.
You will study Anatomy and Physiology, Exercise Physiology, Biomechanics, Skill Acquisition, Sports Psychology, Sport and Society and Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport.

Practical assessment: Worth 30% of final grade. Your performance in one sport will be assessed and you will also do an oral analysis and evaluation of someone else's performance. The oral analysis involves making a development plan suggesting what the performer needs to improve and how.

Physics

Why choose Physics?

Physics is in many ways the central and fundamental science subject. It is essentially logical in its approach and uses mathematical techniques to arrive at an understanding of the universe. It deals with crucial issues such as the origin of the universe, how materials behave, the structure of the atom, as well as practical applications of this knowledge to the world of engineering, telecommunications, medical science.

It is a challenging subject to study and will repay your commitment by strengthening your ability to think logically and analyse critically. If you are curious, imaginative, patient and determined, you should find plenty of inspiration in your study of Physics.

Related Subjects

Mathematics and
Further Mathematics
Biology
Chemistry
Art and Design
Geography
Computing

Course Requirements

The A Level qualifications build on the knowledge, understanding and process skills developed at GCSE. The entry requirements onto the Physics A Level course is a Grade 7 or better in GCSE Physics and a Grade 7 in Mathematics. Those of you who have taken the Double Science GCSE will be expected to have obtained a Grade 7 together with a Grade 7 or better in Mathematics.

Further Important Information

Statistically, at least, the attainment of one of the higher A Level grades is more likely if you study Mathematics at A Level. We strongly recommend students to think carefully about what they intend to do with a Physics qualification beyond Year 13. Many young people use the study of Physics as a means of entry into Engineering but very nearly all engineering courses require A Level Mathematics, and this should be borne in mind by those wishing to maintain this option.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Students studying A Level Physics go on to a wide variety of careers, including:

- Engineering
- Scientific research
- Architecture
- Legal profession
- Medical careers
- Computing
- Accountancy

Co-Curricular

Each year, we try to arrange for Year 12 Physics students to take part in the Engineering Education Scheme. However, this does depend on the availability of local companies who are willing to give up their time and resources to support the project. In addition to this, students will be given the opportunity to assist in the department at Open Mornings and Information Evenings.

Reading List

- A Level Physics for OCR, Gurinder Chadha
- Regular reading of New Scientist and Physics Review, available on VLE
- Advanced Physics, Steve Adams, Jonathan Allday

Course Details

The Physics OCR A Level comprises 6 units, with 3 examinations, plus the non-examination assessed Practical Endorsement module. You will study mechanics, electric circuits, quantum physics and waves, and applications of physics in the areas of material science. You will also explore the topics of momentum (collisions and rockets), orbits, oscillations and resonance, gravitational, electric and magnetic fields, radioactivity, nuclear physics, medical physics and cosmology. Practical skills will be tested through a series of set tasks that will consolidate students' understanding of the relevant theory. This non-examination assessment component rewards the development of practical competency for Physics and is teacher assessed. However, a student's understanding of the techniques used in practical work, and the strategies used in the analysis of results, will be assessed in the examinations at the end of the course. As this is a linear course, all 3 examinations will be sat in Year 13 in the summer term.

Politics

Why choose Politics?

The study of A Level Politics has never been more relevant or more fascinating. It is a great subject for those with curious minds and a desire to find out just what is going on in the world today. The world of British politics really opens up to you after your eighteenth birthday, with the vote giving you the ability to change our nation and allow the principles we hold dear to thrive.

Politics provides the opportunity to discover your own political beliefs and to see in much greater detail the benefits and disadvantages of the vast array of political ideologies in the world today. Being able to express what you believe accurately and concisely is extremely useful. In Politics, textbooks are out of date as soon as they're published because the landscape changes every day. With new examples appearing constantly in the media, picking which examples to use is really exciting. Something that has happened on exam day can also appear in your response!

Related Subjects

An interest in current affairs is the most important requirement, as it's very beneficial to be able to bring existing knowledge of political events to your studies. History is the most useful subject to have some knowledge of, as a lot of contemporary politics is informed by past events. Other subjects such as Economics and Geography would be options to choose to enhance your knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Course Requirements

You must have History or English at Level 6 or above to deal with the essay writing demands of the course. Generally, no specific GCSEs are required.

Further Important Information

The course will help you understand the ideologies and policies of our political parties, showing how they play out within our Parliament. We will be able to watch events unfold worldwide, see our leaders' reactions and come to understand these reactions as demonstrations of what we have learned. A level Politics involves a lot of discussion and debate, so is ideal for those who enjoy talking and thinking about current affairs. You will need to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the world via: Newspapers, Internet sites and TV. To be good at Politics, you will need to engage in independent learning to increase your knowledge past and present. A level Politics is divided into a number of components covering a broad spectrum of themes. Put simply, the first year will be the study of British politics and the second year will focus on American politics. At Ratcliffe, we will study the Edexcel Politics course which includes UK Politics and UK Government, political ideas and US politics. You will also have the opportunity to compare and contrast US and UK politics. There is no coursework but the final exams for Politics are heavily essay based and you will get a lot of practice in researching and writing answers to sample exam questions.

Higher Education and Careers Options

This course could be useful for careers in:

- Politics
- Civil Service
- Local Government
- Law
- Business Administration
- Journalism
- Teaching
- Any field where a basic knowledge of the government is of assistance

Course Details

Each component is assessed with a 2 hour exam worth 84 marks that accounts for a third of the qualification.





**TO BE GOOD AT POLITICS, YOU WILL
NEED TO ENGAGE IN INDEPENDENT
LEARNING TO INCREASE YOUR
KNOWLEDGE PAST AND PRESENT**

Year 12

Component 1: UK Politics
Assessment overview

Section A: Political Participation - democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media.

- One 30-mark source question from a choice of two.
- One 30-mark question from a choice of two.
- Section B: Core Political Ideas - conservatism, liberalism, socialism.
- One 24-mark question from a choice of two.

Component 2: UK Government
Assessment overview

Section A: UK Government – the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches.

- One 30-mark source question from a choice of two.
- One 30-mark question from a choice of two.
- Section B: Non-core Political Ideas - Nationalism
- One 24-mark question from a choice of two.

Year 13

Component 3: Comparative Politics – USA

Content overview

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

Assessment overview

Section A - One 12-mark question from a choice of two.

Section B - One compulsory 12-mark question focused on comparative theories.

Section C - Two 30-mark questions from a choice of three

Psychology

Why Choose Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. The goal of Psychology is to understand and explain behaviour, so that we may be able to predict, change or prevent certain behaviours. Psychology offers a fascinating insight into human behaviour and will strengthen your skills of analysis and communication. A-Level Psychology covers a range of differing biological and social psychological topics. We will look at behaviours including the stress response, human memory, obedience, offending behaviour, relationships and psychopathologies such as schizophrenia.

Related Subjects

Psychology complements many other option choices at A-Level. Being classed as a science, it sits well alongside other science subjects such as Biology and Maths. However, students interested in business, education or any career working with people will find the subject useful. It can sit alongside other writing subjects such as Literature, History or Philosophy.

Course Requirements

Psychology involves science, maths and writing skills. The entry requirements onto the Psychology A-Level course is a grade 6 or above in English, Maths and Science GCSE.

Further Important Information

To be successful in Psychology, students should have a strong interest in human behaviour along with competent scientific research and data handling skills. Students should be able to create arguments within essays and analyse both theories and studies. You will also be required to analyse, interpret and present data.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Students may wish to pursue Psychology or related subjects such as counselling at higher education. Psychology will also be useful for careers in medicine, nursing, education, law, business, marketing, criminology and policing.

Co-Curricular

Students may be appointed as Psychology Ambassadors. In this role, students represent the department at a whole School level, participating in Open Days and School events. As a new subject to students at A-level, those in Year 13 may choose to be a study mentor to Year 12 students. There is also the opportunity to attend and assist at the weekly Psychology co-curricular club that is open to Year 9 and above

Course Details

Assessment is by three, 2 hour written examinations at the end of the course.

Paper 1 (33.3%) – Introductory Topics in Psychology

- Cognitive Psychology – Memory: models of memory, forgetting and eyewitness testimony
- Developmental Psychology – Attachments: including early social development and deprivation
- Social Psychology – including conformity, obedience, independent behaviour and social change
- Psychopathology – Abnormality: definitions of abnormality, OCD, phobias and depression

Paper 2 (33.3%) – Psychology in Context

- Approaches in Psychology – e.g., Biological, Cognitive, Learning (SLT), Humanistic and Psychodynamic
- Bio-Psychology – nervous and endocrine systems, the brain and scanning techniques, bio-rhythms such as the sleep-wake cycle
- Research Methods – experimental and non-experimental methods, designing studies, hypotheses and variables, calculating statistics (this is a double section worth twice as many marks)

Paper 3 (33.3%) – Issues and Options in Psychology

- Issues and Debates – Gender and Culture, Ethics, Reductionism, Determinism, Nomothetic v Idiographic
- Relationships – romantic, virtual and parasocial relationships
- Schizophrenia – diagnosis, explanations and treatments, interactionism
- Forensic Psychology – offender profiling, explanations of, and ways of dealing with, criminal behaviour

All exam sections contain compulsory multiple choice questions, structured questions and longer extended writing questions.

Some questions require application of knowledge to novel information and stimulus materials. You may be required to draw a graph and you are allowed use of a calculator for the calculations and statistics you are required to work out. 10% of the marks available come from maths questions. Research methods questions can appear in any section on any exam.

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Why choose Religion, Philosophy and Ethics?

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics helps students to develop their rational thought and powers of critical analysis and also to formulate their own arguments as well as equipping students with the skills necessary to question the arguments of others. Many students continue to study a combination of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics or Theology at University. Religion, Philosophy and Ethics at A Level is beneficial for many other courses, including Medicine, Nursing and Law.

Related Subjects

This course compliments most other A Level courses including English and History as well as Geography and Business Studies. Similar skills are necessary and there are also many links in content. Religion, Philosophy and Ethics also complements Maths as well as scientific subjects with an emphasis on logical thinking.

Course Requirements

Academically, a Grade 6 at GCSE Religious Studies is required for entry into the subject. More importantly, an inquiring mind and the desire to seek deeper truths are an asset in opting for this course.

Further Important Information

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics is a diverse subject at A Level, focusing on three areas: the study of Religion (Christianity); Religious Ethics and Philosophy of Religion. Students need to think logically and critically about a wide range of topics. The ability to evaluate key ideas and to write in depth and succinctly is very important. Students must also be able to read the views of many scholars in order to support their own ideas.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics is a well-respected subject that can lead to a number of other subject disciplines as well as Theology. The linguistic rigour of Philosophy lends itself well to careers in Law, while the ethical areas studied, such as Euthanasia and Business Ethics provide a moral framework for the medical professions and business related courses respectively. In recent years, several students have gone on to study Theology, Philosophy or related courses at university.

Co-Curricular

The topics studied in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics and the skills required link in very well with debating and also public speaking. Moreover, many other Sixth Form evenings will focus on related issues. Students could also help mentor GCSE students in preparation for their GCSE examinations.

Course Details

The OCR examination course is followed. There are three main components, and the course will be assessed by 3 examinations at the end of Year 13.

Religion

- The person of Jesus
- Christian Beliefs: The Trinity, The Fall, Atonement and salvation
- The challenges of being a Christian in Britain

Philosophy

- Does God exist? Is there any proof?
- Why is there evil in the world?
- Is there life after death?
- Do miracles happen?

Ethics

- What makes an action 'good'?
- Do moral laws exist? Is morality simply about opinions?
- Is life sacred? Can euthanasia ever be justified?
- What is Business ethics?

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS IS A
WELL-RESPECTED SUBJECT THAT CAN LEAD TO
A NUMBER OF OTHER SUBJECT DISCIPLINES

Spanish

Why choose Spanish?

An A level in a Modern Foreign Language such as French gives you not only a qualification but a skill for life which will complement any course or career path you may choose to pursue.

Related Subjects

Spanish will combine well with a number of subjects, whether your passion lies in History, English, Geography, the Sciences, Music or Media. You will find much to explore and broaden your horizons when studying one of the many Spanish speaking countries.

Course Requirements

Developing language skills to A Level is an enjoyable experience and anyone with a 7 or above at GCSE together, with the commitment to work hard, is particularly welcome.

Further Important Information

A level Spanish also involves studying and analysing a film in depth. The MFL department employs a native speaker as a Spanish language assistant whose role is to develop pupils' oral competency through individual/paired speaking lessons.

Higher Education and Careers Options

Spanish is a facilitating subject, meaning that it enjoys considerable prestige on applications to universities, is highly regarded by employers and is easily combined with other subjects as a Joint Honours Degree. Whether or not you choose to continue your studies at Higher Education, by the end of the course, you should be well prepared and confident to use the language for practical communication enabling you to live, work or travel abroad.

Co-Curricular

Time spent in the target language country is essential to improving student performance at A Level. For this reason, we take it for granted that students will embrace any opportunities offered by the school to boost their knowledge of Spanish language and cultures. Pupils are expected to take part in a trip to Spain during their A Level course where they can immerse themselves in the language.

Course Details

The course aims to develop understanding of the spoken and written forms of Spanish from a variety of registers, develop critical insights into, and contact with, the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the Spanish-speaking world, as well as develop positive attitudes to foreign language-learning. As there is an emphasis on the practical application of language skills, a communicative approach is adopted; thus, Spanish is the main medium for teaching and learning the language. You will also study a literary text and a film.

You will develop your language skills through the study of 4 main themes following the Eduqas specification.

- Travel and Exploration
- Contemporary Youth Culture (entertainment, music, media)
- Diversity and Difference (migration, integration, discrimination)
- The two Spains: 1936 onwards

Oral – 21 – 23 minutes – 30%

Task 1: Task 1 presentation and discussion of independent research project (11-12 minutes)

Task 2; discussion of a stimulus card comprising an image, a short text and points for consideration. 5 minutes' preparation followed by 5-6 minutes' discussion

Listening, Reading and Translating – 2 1/2 hours – 50%

Section A: Listening true/false, multiple choice, comprehension questions and answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading questions based on texts, true/false statements, gap-fill, comprehension questions and answers, min the target language.

Section C: Translation – passages from, and into, the target language.

Written – 2 hours – 20%

2 essays, 300 words each, one on a literary work, one on additional literary work or film.

**SPANISH IS A
FACILITATING SUBJECT,
MEANING THAT IT ENJOYS
CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE
ON APPLICATIONS TO
UNIVERSITIES**

Sport (BTEC)

Why choose BTEC Level 3 Sport?

BTEC Level 3 Nationals are vocational qualifications designed to help learners succeed and develop a blend of technical and academic skills. They have been developed in collaboration with over 5,000 universities, employers and professional bodies so learners can develop the skills and confidence they will need for their next step. BTEC Level 3 Sport takes a flexible unit-by-unit approach and provides learners with practical, work-related learning, offering clear progression routes and transferable skills. You can study a range of interesting units, including: Anatomy and Physiology; Sports Leadership; Coaching for Performance; Investigating Business in Sport and the Active Leisure Industry; and Sports Injury Management.

Related Subjects:

Biology
Business and Economics
First Aid
Outdoor Education
Sport and Leisure

Course requirements:

Students should have a genuine interest in Sport and a want to learn about the industry and all its many facets. Ideally, you will have studied GCSE Physical Education, although this is not essential. You should be able to manage your work independently as well as demonstrating your ability to be self-disciplined and reliable in extended assignments.

Further important information:

BTEC Level 3 Nationals Sport courses offer a flexible range of qualifications that can be studied alongside other Level 3 qualifications such as A Levels as part of a larger programme of study or as the main focus of study. The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Sport (2016) is equivalent to two A Levels, therefore allowing you study an additional subject alongside it. The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Sport (2016) is equivalent to three A Levels, meaning you will not be able to study an additional subject. Students who express an interest in pursuing sports related careers that include anatomy and physiology, for example Physiotherapy, are encouraged to also take A Level Biology. It is strongly recommended that students check university requirements before they make their BTEC course choices.

Higher education and careers options:

The qualifications carry UCAS points and are recognised by higher education providers. Examples of the courses available are as follows:

BA (Hons) in Sports Development and Management
BSc (Hons) in Sports Management
BSc (Hons) Sports Business Management
BSc (Hons) Sport and Leisure Management
BSc (Hons) Sports Science (Outdoor Activities)
BSc (Hons) in Exercise, Health and Fitness
BSc (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Psychology

Co-curricular:

To further your understanding and experience, you will have opportunities to support the PE staff and get involved in coaching younger pupils.

Course Details

Examination board:
Pearson BTEC

Course code:
BTEC Level 3 National Diploma
in Sport (2016) 603/0460/1

BTEC Level 3 National
Extended Diploma in Sport
(2016) 603/0459/5

Examination assessment:

The courses take a unit-by-unit approach and offers a combination of assessment styles. An individual's final qualification grade reflects their achievements across the units in their BTEC course. Units are graded Pass, Merit or Distinction with points between ,grades also recognised for external units. Total points scored across all units are used to calculate the final grade. Assignments (internally assessed): Practical tasks set in work-related scenarios. Learners complete a practical project over a period of time, working individually or in groups. Tasks (externally assessed): Practical work related scenarios completed in realistic time-based situations. Tasks are completed in controlled conditions and some tasks have pre-released information. Written exams (externally assessed): Learners respond to practical questions in exam conditions. Learners apply appropriate knowledge to a work-related challenge in timed conditions.



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

Contact details:

+44 (0)1509 817072 | admissions@ratcliffecollege.com

Ratcliffe College, Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SG, United Kingdom

www.ratcliffecollege.com  RatcliffeCollege  @RatcliffeColl  RatcliffeCollege