



A-LEVEL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

2011 - 2013

ANCIENT HISTORY

Head of Department: Richard Griffiths

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H042
A2: H442

Will the course suit me?

Ancient History is endlessly fascinating and offers something for every taste. You will need to enjoy trying to squeeze every last bit of significance out of a variety of written texts and material evidence. By mastering the relevant ancient material on many important questions, you will be able to create your own theories, which means that the shaping of history is in your hands. The study of history at an anacohithon GCSE is not a requirement in order to study ancient history. However, you are required to have attained at least a 'B' grade in GCSE English or history to study ancient history to AS level.

You should enjoy solving problems and be a competent writer and avid reader. In order to appreciate the wide-ranging scholarly material, which is examined throughout the course, keeping us up-to-date with new discoveries and interpretations of aspects of our ancient past. You will become familiar with contemporary Roman and Greek texts (of Caesar, Tacitus, Aristophanes and Thucydides – translated into English) and modern archaeological and historical journals and books. This course is certainly challenging and academic and seeks to examine how the Romans and Greeks have taught us to think and express ourselves. In addition, it enables opportunities for fieldwork and for individual research into aspects of Roman and Greek culture – philosophy, religion, art, architecture, politics, law, invasion, and wars (Persian and Peloponnesian).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Course Description

AS level

Unit AH1: Greek history from original sources:

Option 1: Athenian Democracy in the 5th century BC.

Unit AH2: Roman history from original sources:

Option 2: Britain in the Roman Empire

A2 level

Unit AH3: Greek history: conflict and culture:

Option 3: Greece in conflict 460-403BC.

Unit AH4: Roman history: the use and abuse of power.

Option 4: Ruling the Roman Empire: AD114-117.

Benefits of the course:

This course will help you to analyse and interpret two past societies and their empires. It will develop your ability to research topics and your written and oral ability to construct concise and clear arguments. It is a subject which is ideal for honing the critical skills that you may have already gained from your GCSE History and/or English. As we study Ancient History we shall, in turn, re-examine our own values and habits, by studying an old world which sharpens our perceptions of our own world.

Outside the classroom:

- Trips to Romano-British sites – Cirencester, Bath, Colchester, St. Albans
- Weekend field trip to Hadrian's Wall and York town and university
- A week long excavation at Silchester Roman town with Reading University – potential for part-funding from the Roman Society Bursary Scheme
- A biennial trip to either Rome, Sicily or Greece
- Lectures at the British Museum
- Reading University Green Ure Museum and Classics Society lectures and speakers.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES:

This course combines well with both the science and arts subjects taught at AS level; in particular Biology, English, Art, Theatre Studies, Philosophy and Politics. Apart from reading Ancient History or Classics at university, this course could lead to many more subjects and careers in law, journalism, museums, history, teaching, marketing, tourism, heritage management, architecture, archaeology, anthropology, philosophy and criminology.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Richard Griffiths (Head of History) at Leighton Park School.

ART AND DESIGN

Head of Department: Simon Williams

Exam Board: AQA

Advanced Subsidiary GCE: 1201A - 1206F

Advanced GCE: 2201A – 2206F

Will the course suit me?

You should be creative and interested in developing further your artistic skills and knowledge of art and design. You should be willing to participate actively in your area of study, recognising and developing your own strengths in the subject, whilst identifying and sustaining your own lines of enquiry. GCSE grade B or above is preferred.

Course Description

AS Level

Component 1:	Coursework Portfolio	50% of AS, 25% of A level	Sept - Feb
Component 2:	Externally Set Assignment	50% of AS, 25% of A level	Feb - May

A2 Level

Component 1:	Personal Investigation	25% of A level	Sept - Feb
Component 2:	Externally Set Assignment	25% of A level	Feb - May

In both components, you have the opportunities to develop your skills across a range of media and to specialise in certain areas. An evolving portfolio of work within the chosen media is presented for moderation, which may include some of the following:

Fine Art	Drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, film, video or television
Graphics	Communication, computer graphics, illustration, web design, advertising, film, video or television
Three-Dimensional Design	Ceramics, Sculpture, theatre, TV or film design, exhibition design, interior, product or environmental design
Photography	Portraiture, documentary, photojournalism, environmental photography, still life or experimental imagery in digital or 35 mm format

Benefits of the course

The course will encourage you to develop further:

Imaginative, creative and intuitive powers;

Investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement;

Knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in contemporary society and in other times and cultures.

Outside the classroom

Gallery/Museum visits – London, Reading etc.

7 day overseas L6 and U6 Art Trip – (Easter 2009 to Madrid/Barcelona)

Previous trips: Venice, Florence and Rome 2008, Prague, Vienna and Budapest 2007, Venice, Florence and Rome 2006, Madrid/Barcelona 2005, Paris 2004, Barcelona 2003.

Further Opportunities

A one-year Art Foundation course is usually the preferred and most beneficial route to a chosen degree subject. Past LP students have gone on to become fashion, graphic, interior and product designers; painters, printers and sculptors; paparazzi and studio photographers; filmmakers and animators; set designers, ceramicists and architects.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Simon Williams (Head of Art) at Leighton Park School.

BIOLOGY

Head of Department: Helen Taylor

**Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS:H021
A2: H421**

Will this course suit me?

You will need an interest in the biology of animals and plants and be able to adopt a scientific approach. You will also require good organisational and time management skills as there is a lot of content to cover in the course.

Course Description

This is a very interesting specification. Some parts build upon work covered at GCSE, other concepts are completely new. Each topic covers a different key concept of biology and then considers its applications. The teaching of practical skills is an important part of the course. These will be assessed during the course as a series of tasks.

AS Level

Unit F211: Cells, Exchange and Transport (30% of the total AS GCE mark)

Unit F212: Molecules, Biodiversity, Food and Health (50%)

Unit F213: Practical Skills in Biology (20%)

A2 Level

Unit F214: Communication, Homeostasis and Energy (15% of the total Advanced GCE mark)

Unit F215: Control, Genomes and Environment (25%)

Unit F216: Practical Skills in Biology (10%)

Benefits of the Course.

Biology combines well with other science subjects, maths and geography as well as being an accessible science subject for students whose other AS choices are more arts or language based. The course teaches a range of practical skills and applies concepts to work-place examples in food science, ecology, farming and biotechnology.

Outside the classroom.

There will be a residential field trip at the end of the Lower Sixth year. This does involve an additional cost but gives the opportunity to complete a Module of the A2 course and a set of A2 Teacher Assessment Tasks.

Further Opportunities

Biology can lead to degree choices from anatomy to zoology and careers from medicine and microbiology to optometry and oceanography based anywhere from a laboratory to the Antarctic!

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Helen Taylor (Head of Biology) at Leighton Park School.

CHEMISTRY

Head of Department: Jon Emerson

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H034
A2: H434

Will the course suit me?

Some of you will need to study chemistry in order to fulfil entrance requirements for your chosen university courses. Otherwise, if you like practical work, have a curiosity about the world around you or just enjoy chemistry, then this course is worth considering.

Course Description

F321: Atoms, Bonds and Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atoms and Reactions• Electrons, Bonding and Structure• The Periodic Table	1 hour written exam AS Level – 30% A Level – 15%
F322: Chains, Energy and Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Concepts and Hydrocarbons• Alcohols, Halogenoalkanes and Analysis• Energy• Resources	1 hour 45 min written exam AS Level – 50% A Level – 25%
F323: Practical Skills in chemistry 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AS internal assessment	Internal assessment AS Level – 20% A Level – 10%
F324: Rings, Polymers and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rings, Acids and Amines• Polymers and Synthesis• Analysis	1 hour written exam A Level – 15%
F325: Equilibria, Energetics and Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rates, Equilibrium and pH• Energy• Transition Elements	1 hour 45 min written exam A Level – 25%
F326: Practical Skills in Chemistry 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A2 internal assessment	Internal assessment A Level – 10%

How is this qualification assessed?

Two units at AS and A2 level are assessed through written examination.

One unit at AS and A2 level is assessed through internal assessment.

All written paper units are available in both the January and June series.

Practical skills units are available in the June series only.

A good understanding of GCSE maths is sufficient for the study of chemistry. Don't be put off by the word "calculations".

Benefits of the course

This course will not only develop your practical and manipulative skills, but also encourages imaginative and critical thinking. It combines well not only with physics, biology, maths and geography, but also with subjects such as history or English, if only to give you a break from essays and note taking. The new research lab facility will enable a more creative approach to chemistry to be experienced, and allow students the chance to carry out projects in co-operation with the University of Reading.

Outside the classroom

Research lab
Industrial visits
Day study courses
Chemistry Olympiad

Future opportunities

Chemistry is an obvious choice for those of you wanting to do Medicine or Veterinary courses. Other possible careers, courses or areas of interest include Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Chemical Engineering, Material Engineering, Environmental Research, Pharmacy, Nutrition, Solid State electronics, Nanotechnology, Polymers, Drug design and Genetic research.

A chemistry degree is good training for a variety of careers, not just in science and engineering. The skills learnt at university are highly transferable and chemistry graduates often make highly successful accountants, lawyers, politicians and business entrepreneurs.

A recent study, 'The Economic Benefits of Higher Education Qualifications', by Price Waterhouse Coopers, a highly respected firm of accountants, shows that chemistry graduates have significantly higher earning potential than students studying many other degree subjects. (www.rsc.org/ScienceandTechnology/Policy/Benefits/Issues/ChemDegree.usp).

Information about chemistry degrees can be found at www.rsc.org/images/RSCPparentsGuide_tcm18-39947.pdf. Although this is designed as a Parents' Guide, it is equally useful for potential students.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Jon Emerson (Head of Chemistry) at Leighton Park School.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

(Product Design) RESISTANT MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY

Head of Department: Richard Lade

Board: Edexcel
Syllabus Code: AS: 8RMO1
A2: 9RMO1

Entrance Requirements: Grade B or above in GCSE Design and Technology: RMT, or a related subject such as Graphic Communication or Engineering.

The course aims to allow students to increase their knowledge and understanding of design and technological processes, to develop their creativity and technological capability and to produce high quality products. To recognise the social, moral and cultural values inherent in design and technological activity.

Students considering taking the subject should enjoy designing and working with resistant materials and be able to produce quality products. The ability to work independently is necessary. As the course includes a great deal of theory work the ability to study and complete detailed written work to deadlines is essential.

In the Lower Sixth students study two AS units

Unit 1: Coursework Project (60%)

- Investigation (This involves investigating a product and comparing it with a similar product on the market).
- Product Design (This involves creating design ideas and developing one. The developed idea can be modelled using materials or a 2D and or 3D model)
- Product Manufacture (A product is manufactured in the School Workshop that includes machining, joinery, biscuiting, laminating and taper turning. Hard woods and metals are used in the production process. A written plan and tests are carried out during the production process).

Unit 2: Knowledge and Understanding of product Design (40%)

The unit is externally assessed through a 1 hour 30 minutes written examination and includes:

- Materials and components (sources, classification, formation and structure of metals and alloys, polymers, woods, composites and laminates, components)
- Working properties of materials (working properties and functions of materials and components, relating to composition and structure of materials)
- Hand and commercial processes (methods of preparing, processing, manipulating and combining materials and components to enhance their properties)
- Finishing processes
- Product manufacture (scale of manufacture, systems and control, quality control in production, health and safety procedures in production)
- Design in practice (the effects of design and technological changes on society, influences on the development of products, the basic principles and application of anthropometrics and ergonomics)

A2

In the Upper Sixth students study two A2 units (these have equal weighting)

Unit 3: Further study of Product Design (40%)

The unit is externally assessed through a two hour written examination and includes:

- Modern technologies and materials (the creation and use by industry of modern and 'smart' materials, the impact of modern technology and biotechnology on the development of new materials and processes, modification of properties of materials)
- Product manufacture (uses of ICT in the manufacture of products, systems and control)
- Design in practice (value issues, economies of scale, advertising and marketing)

Unit 4: Coursework Project (60%)

This involves identifying a client/user and then designing and making a resistant materials product that meets the original need. The design folder, which includes the designing, planning and evaluative work, will be up to thirty A3 pages in length.

The completed design folder and product are assessed internally and then moderated by the exam board.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.edexcel.org.uk or please contact Richard Lade (Head of Design and Technology) at Leighton Park School.

ECONOMICS

Head of Department: Zenon Bowrey

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H061
A2: H461

The department offers single subject AS and A Level courses in economics. The course of study followed is based on the specification published by OCR.

The general appeal of economics is that it relates to the immediate 'real' world about you. For example, if your parents were not relatively successful in the economic world then you would not be in a position to avail yourself of the educational programme offered in this prospectus! Economics tends to appeal to those who have an intellectual interest in the broad philosophical principles that underlie both the structure of economic decision making in the UK, a developed 'First World' economy, and the economic orthodoxy that has come to be established worldwide at the beginning of the 21st Century. If you are drawn to modern history and/or politics, you could get a great deal out of studying economics.

Economics studies how societies address a common fundamental problem; given limited productive resources, how does a society decide how these resources should be employed so that the welfare or benefit from production is maximised? From that simple, yet vital, question flows the body of economic thought.

The material presented at AS and A2 primarily focuses on the mixed economic system that characterises the UK economy. At the core of the economy is production based on privately owned resources, with decisions about prices and output levels being determined and shaped by market forces. Not only are there markets for final goods and services but there are also markets for resources, including labour. Yet private enterprise is subject to regulation by the state and the state itself is a major producer of output (the services associated with the Welfare State). The government of the day is held accountable for the general wellbeing of the economy and economists debate with great intensity how best this can be achieved.

The AS economics course is based on a broad intermediate level presentation of the core elements of micro (small scale) and macro (large scale) economic analysis. There are two modules which are each assessed by written examinations:

- Markets in Action
- The National and International Economy

The first module considers how markets operate and the limitations of this particular approach to decision making. Issues considered include:

How do markets work?

Why does the price of oil change?

Why does a Premier Division player earn more than a nurse?

How sensitive is a product's demand to changes in its price, the income of its purchasers and the prices of related products?

Why is the existence of monopolies generally of concern?

What are the limitations to market-based economic decision making?

How effective is tax in reducing traffic congestion?

The second module will provide a sound introduction to macroeconomics. Issues that are considered include:

How do we assess changes in the standard of living?
How do changes in the value of the pound affect the UK economy?
How does the economy work?
Why is inflation a problem?
What are the causes of unemployment?
How can the government manage or support the economy?

In the Upper Sixth, those following the final year of the A Level course study two more modules, building on the knowledge and understanding acquired in the Lower Sixth. The modules are:

- The Economics of Work and Leisure
- The Global Economy

Economics has a reputation as an elite academic subject and I would like to take this opportunity to confirm this status. Given the novel nature of the subject to students, its intellectual demands and the amount of material that has to be covered, particularly during the AS course, it is strongly recommended that only those with a good academic track record and a sound work ethic should consider following economics.

If you want to know about how the world works and understand more about issues like globalisation, the impact of the economic rise of China and the current economic issues of the European Union then this is the subject for you. If you are successful in your studies, you will learn to analyse complex situations and structure arguments in a focused and effective manner. Your thinking will be disciplined and sharp. As mentioned, economics is an elite subject; a degree in this subject will open up lucrative opportunities in business and public administration. Economics could be viewed as the new religion of the 21st Century; those who understand the teachings of the faith will be in great demand!

It is expected that a student opting for this subject has a confident grasp of basic mathematical principles and their application to practical situations; the student must have a 'pass' grade at GCSE, ideally 'B' or above. A prospective student should have an effective written style as the formal assessments are based on written papers. It follows that overseas students must have a very good command of English and must be able to express themselves clearly in writing.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Zenon Bowrey (Head of Economics) at Leighton Park School.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Head of Department: Jerry Radburn

Exam Board: AQA (Specification B)

Syllabus Code: AS: 1746

A2: 2746

Will the course suit me?

You will need to have a good level of competency in writing and to enjoy reading. You should have an enjoyment of film and theatre. You should have a clear desire to debate and to explore and expand your reading

Course Description:

AS English Literature

Unit 1: Aspects of Narrative

Examination: 2 hours

Open text examination

Four texts for study: two novels (at least one post-1990) and two poetry texts 1800-1945

Unit 2: Dramatic Genres

Coursework: two essays of 1500 words each

Two texts for study both in the genre of Tragedy

A2 English Literature:

Unit 3: Texts and Genres

Examination

One area of study from: Elements of the Gothic or
Elements of the Pastoral

Minimum of three texts including at least one text 1300-1800.

Unit 4: Further and Independent Reading

Coursework

Minimum of three texts including one pre-released anthology of critical material. Candidates can choose their own texts for this element of the course.

Benefits of the course:

It will allow you to read a range of poetry, prose and drama from throughout history. You will develop your ability to analyse and to think critically. English Literature combines well with History, Ancient History, Psychology, Religious Studies, Politics, Modern Foreign Languages and Theatre Studies.

Outside the classroom:

- Theatre trips
- Visiting writers
- Study days
- Debating
- Film society

Future Opportunities:

Apart from reading English at university this could lead to many more subjects at university and careers in law, journalism, media, teaching, civil service, management, retail, events management, social work, administration, publishing, public relation, marketing, librarianships etc.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aga.org.uk or please contact Jeremy Radburn (Head of English) at Leighton Park School.

FRENCH

Head of Department: Françoise Wilson

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H075
A2: H475

Will the course suit me?

You need to have proved your linguistic competence with an A or A* in your French GCSE. If you have obtained such a grade, enjoy reading and writing, and are interested in France/French speaking countries and cultures, you will enjoy learning French.

Course Description

Modern Language courses at AS and A2 build upon the skills acquired at GCSE, namely listening, speaking, writing and reading, but go beyond the basic transactional language (asking the way, shopping, etc.) At A Level, students learn the skills needed to analyse and appreciate texts, formulate opinions in the foreign language, organise arguments and translate.

These skills are taught through a range of topics related to the culture of the countries where the language is spoken.

At AS Level, the topics studied are: the media, education, the arts, daily life, food and drink, sport and pastimes, travel, transport and holidays.

At A2 Level: Social issues, the environment, science and technology and culture.

AS Level and A2 Level both consist of two units of assessment:

AS Level

- Unit 1: Speaking (role play and topic discussion) 15 minutes
- Unit 2: Listening, reading and writing

A2 Level

- Unit 3: Speaking and reading 15 minutes
- Unit 4: Listening, Reading and Writing

Benefits of the course

Competence in Modern Languages is becoming more desirable than ever, now that the job market is increasingly centred on Europe. Therefore, students should seriously consider the study of a language as an AS subject and, with the study of languages no longer compulsory in state schools, beyond Year 9, language skills are going to be increasingly in demand.

Outside the classroom

- Multimedia Centre
- Visits to our partner school in Nantes (depending on class size)
- Work experience (depending on class size)
- French cinema trips

Future opportunities

A large number of degree courses particularly in the business world, international law, tourism and journalism now have a language option (and often offer the opportunity of spending a year studying abroad) particularly under the Erasmus scheme. An AS or A2 in a modern language is often a requirement for access to these courses which are increasingly sought after by employers.

Students who would like to take a language degree course, even in a different language should consider studying two modern languages to increase their chances of obtaining a place in a top university.

Career options

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Françoise Wilson (Head of Modern Languages) at Leighton Park School.

Leighton Park School

A2 GEOGRAPHY

*AQA GCE A2 Geography Outline
AQA A2 Specification & Certification Code: 2031*

Contemporary geography is a subject which explicitly engages with the **relationship of human populations to each other over space and time** and their **relationship with their physical environment** at a variety of scales from the local to the global.

The A2 specification has 2 units:

Unit 3: Contemporary Geographical Issues

An issue based approach to contemporary themes. Candidates will study four topics covering physical and human geography and the interactions that occur between the human and physical environments. The theoretical modules/topics covered at A2 level are:

- **Plate Tectonics and associated hazards**
- **Ecosystems: change and challenge**
- **World Cities**
- **Development and globalisation**

Assessment: External written paper: structured short and extended questions, plus an essay.

2 hours 30 mins. (90 marks) taken at the end of the A2 academic year (30% of A Level)

Unit 4A: Geography Fieldwork Investigation

Candidates will have the opportunity to extend an area of the subject content studied at AS level into an individual, detailed fieldwork study. Students will plan their study in the autumn term and collect data over the October half term break, as well as analyse and evaluate their fieldwork in response to the sequence of investigation structure given in class.

Assessment: External written paper: structured short and extended questions based on the candidates individual fieldwork investigation (section A) and general fieldwork skills and statistical analyses (section B) which builds on the fieldwork and skills preparation that was carried out for the unit 2 examination at AS level.

1 hour 30 mins. (60 marks) taken at the beginning of the spring term (20% A Level)

More information (specification and specimen papers) are available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Caroline Kirby (Head of Geography) at Leighton Park School.

Leighton Park School

AS GEOGRAPHY

AQA GCE AS Geography Outline

AQA AS Specification & Certification Code: 1031

At AS students will study **human and physical geography**, building on the work studied at GCSE level. **Contemporary geography** is a subject which explicitly engages with the relationship of human populations to each other over space and time and their relationship with their physical environment at a variety of scales from the local to the global. Students will also develop a variety of **geographical skills**, including **fieldwork**, **graphical** and **ICT** skills which will broaden subject knowledge.

Among the many benefits, the AS specification is specifically designed to:

- develop fieldwork skills and study geographical issues and impacts.
- develop a specialist interest within the field of geography with the aim of progressing to higher education and employment.

The AS specification has 2 units:

Unit 1: Physical and Human Geography

Topic list:

- **Rivers, floods and management** – *physical core, Autumn Term*
- **Coastal environments** - *physical option, Spring Term*
- **Population change** - *human core, Autumn Term*
- **Health issues** - *human option, Spring Term*

Assessment: external written paper: Structured short and extended questions

2 hours (120 marks) taken at the end of the AS academic year
70% of total AS / 35% of A Level

Unit 2: Geographical Skills

Topic list:

- Basic, investigative, ICT, graphical, cartographical and statistical skills, based on content of unit 1
- Research skills and the assessment of AS fieldwork. This will involve a **compulsory residential fieldtrip to Dorset in the spring term which will cost approximately £250 and also a field trip day within the local area (Berkshire).**

Assessment: external written paper:

1 hour (50 marks) taken at the end of the AS academic year
30% of total AS / 15% A Level

More information (specification and specimen papers) are available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Caroline Kirby (Head of Geography) at Leighton Park School.

GERMAN

Teacher in Charge: Sarah Ledger

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H076
A2: H476

Will the course suit me?

You need to have proved your linguistic competence with an A or A* in your German GCSE. If you have obtained such a grade, enjoy reading and writing, and are interested in Germany/German-speaking countries and cultures, you will enjoy learning German.

Course Description

Modern Language courses at AS and A2 build upon the skills acquired at GCSE, namely listening, speaking, writing and reading but go beyond the basic transactional language (asking the way, shopping, etc.) At A level, students learn the skills needed to analyse and appreciate texts, formulate opinions in the foreign language, organise arguments and translate.

These skills are taught through a range of topics related to the culture of the countries where the language is spoken.

At AS Level, the topics studied are: the media, education, the arts, daily life, food and drink, sport and pastimes, travel, transport and holidays, and the world of work.

At A2 Level: Social issues, the environment, science and technology and culture.

AS Level and A2 Level both consist of two units of assessment:

AS Level

Unit 1: Speaking (role play and topic discussion) 15 minutes

Unit 2: Listening, reading and writing

A2 Level

Unit 3: Speaking and reading 15 minutes

Unit 4: Listening, reading and writing

Benefits of the course

Competence in Modern Languages is becoming more desirable than ever, now that the job market is increasingly centred on Europe. Therefore, students should seriously consider the study of a language as an AS subject and with the study of languages no longer compulsory in state schools beyond Year 9, language skills are going to be increasingly in demand.

Outside the classroom

- Multimedia Centre
- Visits to our partner school (depending on class size)
- Work experience.
- German cinema trips

Future opportunities

A large number of degree courses particularly in the business world, international law, tourism and journalism now have a language option (and often offer the opportunity of spending a year studying abroad) particularly under the Erasmus scheme. An AS or A2 in a modern language is often a requirement for access to these courses which are increasingly sought after by employers.

Students who would like to take a language degree course, even in a different language should consider studying two modern languages to increase their chances of obtaining a place in a top university.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Sarah Ledger (Teacher in Charge) at Leighton Park School.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Head of Department: Howard Shaw

Exam board: Edexcel
Syllabus Code: AS: 8GPO1
A2: 9GPO1

Entrance requirements: A good range of GCSE passes and lively interest in politics and current affairs. Government and Politics is a fine preparation for citizenship, as well as for further academic study. As Bismarck said, 'Politics is the art of the possible'.

Will the course suit me?

An interest in politics and the political life of this country is a prerequisite for this course. How this country is run, who makes the decisions and how the decisions are made have an impact on us all. If you are the type of person who enjoys knowing what is going on, who wants to develop the ability to have a say in the running of this country, then this is a course for you.

Course Description:

AS Level

- Unit 1: People and Politics
- Unit 2: Governing the UK (stimulus based questions)

These modules examine the central ideas of the ways we are governed, the major institutions of the UK government and the desirability of political and constitutional change. The start of the twenty-first century brings many of these issues sharply into focus and should encourage lively debate, as politics influences our lives, personalities and the society in which we live.

A2 Level: Route B

- Unit 3: Key themes in political analysis
Route B: introducing Political Ideologies
- Unit 4: Extended themes in Political Analysis.
Route B: Other Ideological Traditions

Benefits of the course

The course develops your knowledge and understanding of the British political system and the ideas behind how the country is run. It enables you to question and discuss all aspects of British political life and to develop ideas that you may wish to take further once you have left school. It could be described as a major element of your preparation for adult life, and, in particular, your role as a citizen of a political society. It helps you to understand the complex political world in which we live on a local, regional, national, European and global level. The course also allows you to develop the skill of critical analysis. Politics lessons enjoy a lively, friendly discussion-led atmosphere.

Outside the classroom

- Trip to Parliament
- Trip to Strasbourg/Brussels
- Visits to and by local politicians
- Debates

Future opportunities

This course combines very well with History, Ancient History, Economics, Business Studies, Geography and English. At university, there are many existing courses on offer which allow a strong political element to be mixed with other areas and the possibility of spending years abroad in the United States studying the American political system. The ability to argue cogently and successfully, and to analyse in a rational and critical manner, prepares you well for many exciting and demanding careers, including politics, journalism, law and media.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.edexcel.org.uk or please contact Howard Shaw (Head of Government and Politics) at Leighton Park School.

HISTORY

'Only a good-for-nothing is not interested in his/her past' Sigmund Freud

Head of Department: Richard Griffiths

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H106
A2: H506

Will the course suit me?

History is a very rewarding subject to study. With group work, written tasks, source analysis, discussions, presentation and debates there are numerous ways to keep you interested and motivated to learn and enjoy this subject. History seeks to interpret and explain the events, processes and personalities that have helped to shape the world we live in. If you are keen to ask questions, look beyond the headlines about people and events, and to express your own opinions, then History is the course for you. We require you to have attained at least a 'B' grade in your History GCSE to study History to AS Level.

Course Description

GCE History AS: H106: OCR

GCE History A2: H506: OCR

OCR AS/A level GCE History A:

Option B: Modern 1795-2003

AS Level:

AS Unit F962:

- European and world history period studies
- Democracy and dictatorship: Italy 1896-1943

AS Unit F963:

- British history enquiries – the age of Gladstone and Disraeli.

A2 Level:

A2 Unit F965:

- Historical interpretations and investigations
- Nazi Germany 1933-45

A2 Unit F966:

- Historical themes: Option B. Russia and its rulers 1855-1964.

The AS course enables pupils to gain an understanding of the movements which bring about change and their consequences, through peaceful and violent means. The A2 course aims to encourage a greater understanding of historical methodology. It contrasts an in-depth study of individuals with the identification of common themes over a long period of time.

Benefits of the course

History enables you to understand the origins of modern political and social problems and to appreciate how the world in which we now live has evolved. It will help you to appreciate that people in the past were not just good or bad, but motivated in complex inconsistent ways just like us. This course encourages analysis and evaluation of information, to investigate historical issues through a friendly and flexible approach. History will help you to formulate clear and consistent arguments that are well supported so you should never lose an argument again! History students are rounded individuals who develop an understanding of both past and present. In developing your communication and thinking skills this subject will leave you one step ahead whatever you want to do in later life.

Outside the classroom

- Trips to Hughenden Manor, Disraeli's former residence and Gladstone's Library
- Study tours to Russia and Berlin.

Future Opportunities

This course combines well with both the science and arts subjects taught at AS Level; in particular biology, english, art, theatre studies, philosophy and politics. Apart from reading history at university this course could lead to careers in law, journalism, museums, teaching, marketing, tourism, heritage management, architecture, archaeology, anthropology, philosophy and criminology.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Richard Griffiths (Head of History) at Leighton Park School.

ICT

Head of Department: Angela Rigby

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus code: AS: H117
A2: H517

Will the course suit me?

This is the new syllabus which started in 2008.

The course aims to develop in students the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT in a range of contexts to solve problems. Students will be expected to understand the consequences of using ICT for individuals, organisations and society and of the legal, ethical and other considerations of the use of ICT.

Technology is a fast moving subject and students will be encouraged to be aware of emerging technologies and the impact these may have on our society.

Students who have followed the skills based ECDL will enjoy the mix of theory and practical work involved in this course. It is not essential to have studied ICT at GCSE in order to succeed at this course but those who have should have achieved a grade B or higher.

Course description

AS: has two units. One theory unit

Information Systems and Applications carries 60% of AS mark, and is assessed in a 2 hour examination.

This unit requires the students to understand ICT from a business focus, and to demonstrate this understanding within the context of a scenario described in the examination paper.

And one practical unit

Structured ICT tasks carries 40% of the mark, coursework.

A2: 50% of the marks come from the AS units, but it also has two units, the theory unit

ICT Systems and Application carries 30% of the A2 mark, and is assessed in a two hour exam

Students study business situations that focus on systems cycles and apply their knowledge to real world examples. This paper will also test elements of AS work.

ICT Project carries 20% of the A2 mark, coursework

Students are required to find a real world client who needs an ICT solution to a real problem. The student takes on the role of systems analyst and produces that solution for them. The unit is assessed by the written report of the work.

Stretch and Challenge is now contained in the A2 units, in the theory unit via essay style questions where candidates demonstrate their knowledge in relation to a specified context.

AS Level

Mandatory/Optional?	Unit title and description	Assessment method and weighting
Mandatory	G061: Information, Systems and Applications (External) Topics covered in this unit: data, information, knowledge and processing; software and hardware components of an information system; characteristics of standard applications software and application areas; spreadsheet concepts; relational database concepts; applications software used for presentation and communication of data; the role and impact of ICT - legal, moral and social issues.	2 hour exam AS Level – 60% A Level – 30%
Mandatory	G062: Structured ICT Tasks (Coursework) Candidates have the opportunity to explore design, software development, testing and documentation.	Coursework AS Level – 40% A Level – 20%

A2 Level

Mandatory/Optional?	Unit title and description	Assessment method and weighting
Mandatory	G063: ICT Systems, Applications and Implications (External) In this unit candidates gain an understanding of the systems cycle; designing computer-based information systems; networks and communication; applications of ICT; implementing computer-based information systems and implications of ICT.	2 hour exam A Level – 30%
Mandatory	G064: ICT Project (Coursework) Candidates explore definition, investigation and analysis; design; software development, testing and implementation; documentation and evaluation through a client-driven project.	Coursework A Level – 20%

Benefits of the course

The world is increasingly dominated by the use of Information and Communications technology. This course provides you with a sound base from which to solve problems using ICT. You will have the necessary skills and knowledge if you subsequently study in other areas or if you continue with this field of study at university.

Outside the classroom

Students are invited to attend Reading University for the day in the summer term to see undergraduates' work in their world class robotics department and to explore the option of studying ICT/computing at degree level.

L6 students are encouraged to apply for Headstart courses organised by the Royal Academy of Engineering on both ICT and Computing. Students who have followed this option have always enjoyed both the technical challenges presented and the chance to talk to current undergraduates about their experiences. These are residential courses that run during the summer between lower sixth and upper sixth years.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Angela Rigby (Head of IT) at Leighton Park School.

MATHEMATICS AND FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Bridget Evans

Exam Board:

AQA

Syllabus Code: Maths:

AS: 5361/ A2: 6361

Further Maths: AS: 5371/ A2: 6371

Will the course suit me?

Mathematics encourages students to be open-minded and adaptable; to look for more than one method of approach to a problem; to make judgements on methods and techniques available in terms of appropriateness and accuracy; to interpret, evaluate and implement solutions and results.

To be successful students need to:

- Enjoy the challenge of mathematics
- Be self-disciplined and highly motivated
- Almost certainly have achieved A* or A at GCSE
- Show stamina and be determined when they find things difficult (because there will be times when they do!)

Course Description

The mathematics course consists of six modules, four of which must be pure mathematics. The other two may be mechanics, statistics or decision mathematics. Unless there is a clear consensus in the class for one area in particular we generally study mechanics and one statistics module.

The further mathematics course also has six modules, three of which must be pure mathematics. The remaining three may be any of the above applications; in addition there is another Pure module available.

Mathematics complements many other A Level subjects particularly physics, chemistry, geography, economics, biology, DT and business studies.

Benefits of the course

Mathematics is a qualification highly valued by employers and higher education as it encourages logical and structured approach to problem solving. It also develops skills in analysis, effective and accurate communication, handling information and modelling practical solutions.

Outside the classroom:

Maths Inspiration: The aim of this lecture is to motivate students about mathematics and to help them think about where a future in studying mathematics can lead them.

Further Opportunities

Students who take mathematics at this level often find that they are at an advantage over those who have not, when studying sciences and other mathematical related degrees at university. The more ground breaking areas of many these courses such as GIS in geography, econometrics in economics and Banking require the student to be competent in mathematics.

Careers in which mathematics has a direct bearing:

Accountancy, Astronomy, Aircraft Industry, Architecture, Banking, all forms of Engineering, Computer Technology and Programming, Market Research, Weather Forecasting, Surveying, Economics, Teaching, Statistics and various types of scientific research.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Bridget Evans (Head of Mathematics) at Leighton Park School.

MUSIC

Head of Department: Rosemary Scales

Exam Board: Edexcel
Syllabus Code: AS: 8MU01
A2: 9MU01

The course is intended to be stimulating and enriching. At both AS and A2, students experience all three main musical disciplines of performing, composing and listening/understanding.

Skills

Students will develop performance skills (solo and/or ensemble), compose music and learn about harmony. They will build up their aural and analytical skills by studying selections from the *New Anthology of Music* and a range of wider listening.

Flexibility

The full GCE course (AS plus A2) is excellent preparation for higher education courses in music, but is equally valuable for non-specialists as a second or third area of study. The AS units alone can offer a broad and satisfying experience for those who want to conclude their musical studies at this point.

AS Unit 1: Performing Music (Internally assessed)

This unit accounts for 30% of the total AS marks and 15% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit gives students the opportunities to perform as soloists and/or as part of an ensemble. Teachers and students can choose music in any style. Any instrument(s) and/or voice(s) are acceptable as part of a five-six minute assessed performance. Notated and/or improvised performances may be submitted.

Assessment:

The music performed is chosen and assessed by the centre and moderated by Edexcel.

AS Unit 2: Composing (Externally assessed)

This unit accounts for 30% of the total AS marks and 15% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit encourages students to develop their composition skills leading to the creation of a three-minute piece in response to a chosen brief. Students also write a CD sleeve note to describe aspects of their final composition and explain how other pieces of music have influenced it.

Assessment:

In September of each year Edexcel will publish on its website (www.edexcel.org.uk) a document entitled Unit 2: Composing. Section A will contain four composition briefs from which students will select one as the basis for a three-minute composition. In Section B students will answer three questions to provide information that could be used for a CD sleeve note to accompany their composition. Both sections of the examination must be completed under controlled conditions. The composition and CD sleeve note will be externally assessed.

AS Unit 3: Developing Musical Understanding (Externally assessed)

This unit accounts for 40% of the total AS marks and 20% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit focuses on listening to familiar music and understanding how it works. Set works from the anthology provide the focus for the first two sections, through listening and studying scores. It is recommended that students familiarise themselves with each work as a whole, before learning how to identify important musical features and social and historical context. In the third section, students use a score to identify harmonic and tonal features and then apply this knowledge in the completion of a short and simple passage for SATB.

Assessment:

Assessment is through a 2-hour examination paper set and marked by Edexcel. There are three sections: *Section A*: Listening; *Section B*: Investigating musical styles and *Section C*: Understanding Chords and lines.

Section A requires students to listen to extracts of music, using a skeleton score. In Section C, students may use a keyboard with headphones.

A2 Unit 4: Extended Performance (Internally assessed)

30% of the total A2 marks and 15% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit gives students opportunities to extend their performance skills as soloists and/or as part of an ensemble. Students can choose music in any style. Any instrument(s) and/or voice(s) are acceptable as part of a 12-15 minute assessed performance of a balanced programme of music. Notated and/or improvised performances may be submitted.

Assessment:

The music performed is chosen and assessed by the centre and moderated by Edexcel.

A2 Unit 5: Composition and Technical Study (Externally assessed)

30% of the total A2 marks and 15% of the total GCE marks

Content summary:

This unit has two sections: composition and technical study.

The composition section further develops students' composition skills, leading to the creation of a final three-minute piece in response to a chosen brief. The technical study section builds on the knowledge and awareness of harmony gained in Unit 3 section C through the medium of pastiche studies.

Students must complete two tasks in this unit choosing from either one composition and one technical study or two compositions or two technical studies.

Assessment:

In September of each year Edexcel will publish on its website the *Unit 5: Composition and Technical Study document*.

Section A contains four composition briefs from which students will select one as the basis for a three-minute composition. Section B will contain the opening bars of four pieces of music. Students will complete these openings in a specified style. Both sections of the examination must be completed under controlled conditions. The composition and technical study will be externally assessed.

A2 Unit 6: Further Musical Understanding (Externally assessed)

This unit accounts for 40% of the total A2 marks and 20% of the total GCE marks.

Content summary:

This unit focuses on listening to music, familiar and unfamiliar, and understanding how it works. Set works from the anthology provide the focus for much of the unit. It is recommended that students familiarise themselves with each work as a whole, before concentrating on important musical features, context and/or elements of continuity and change. Between works students should also listen to a wide range of unfamiliar music which relates to the two compulsory areas of study. They should learn how to compare and contrast pairs of excerpts, contextualise music and identify harmonic and tonal features.

Assessment:

Assessment is through a 2-hour examination paper set and marked by Edexcel. There are three sections: *Section A*: Aural analysis, *Section B*: Music in context and *Section C*: Continuity and change in instrumental music.

Section A requires students to listen to extract of music. A skeleton score is provided for use with Section A. Each student must have access to an unmarked copy of the anthology during the examination.

Areas of study are fundamental to the specification. Each area provides opportunities not only for the study of repertoire but also for the development of musical ideas through composing and performing activities. The specification encourages integration of the various musical disciplines throughout.

There are three areas of study:

AoS1 Instrumental music: embraces a wide number of instrumental styles and traditions, including full-scale orchestral works and chamber music;

AoS2 Vocal music: to help students understand and appreciate the important role, in various places and at various times, of music for voices only or for voices and instruments.

AoS3 Applied music: largely 'pure' music for concert or domestic performance, whereas those selected here are 'applied' to a range of other situations with music serving some wider purpose. For example, some pieces are used in dance, while others are for ritual (including worship) or to accompany the moving image in film or television.

A Career with Music...?

It is the obvious choice for anyone with a strong interest in music. It is challenging and worthwhile, and offers a high level of job satisfaction.

Music offers a kaleidoscope of opportunities. There are performers and composers, teachers in institutions and at home, arts administrators, publishers, music therapists, record companies, instrument manufacture and repair, broadcasters and journalists to name just a few! All work in, with and for music.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.edexcel.org.uk or please contact Rosemary Scales (Director of Music) at Leighton Park School.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Head of Department: Rosemary Scales

Exam Board: Edexcel
Syllabus Code: AS: 8MT01
A2: 9MT01

Will the course suit me?

Music technology plays a key role in music of all styles around the world. This qualification is designed to open up a range of exciting and useful tasks to a wide variety of students, including those who do not play a traditional instrument. You are encouraged to explore your musicality and create original materials using technology. There is an emphasis on practical tasks, each of which is appropriate to styles and genres that use music technology.

Course Description

The course equips the student with a wide range of skills and knowledge, which are well connected with the world of professional music creation and production.

The academic component includes three Areas of Study (AoS):

AoS 1: The Principles and Practice of Music Technology

AoS 2: Popular Music Styles since 1910

AoS 3: The Development of Technology-based Music

Using this background knowledge, the practical components include:

- sequencing using MIDI
- sequencing audio using a DAW
- recording live instruments
- producing CDs
- composing using music technology

Course work comprises 55% of the assessment, with a written logbook and exam papers covering listening, analysis, completing a mix and other topics comprising the remaining 45%.

Benefits of the course

The course brings together a mixture of hands on training and experience with background technical, stylistic and historical knowledge. It provokes high levels of creativity and has inspired many past students to pursue professions in the music industry.

Future opportunities

There are many important opportunities in higher education, and many career possibilities for those proficient in handling music technology. The A level in Music Technology has been widely accepted by Universities and Colleges. Music technology careers could include work in:

- sound engineering
- record production
- film/tv/game sound creation
- teaching

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.edexcel.org.uk or please contact Rosemary Scales (Head of Music) at Leighton Park School.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Head of Department: Mark Simmons

Exam Board: AQA
Syllabus Code: AS: 1581
A2: 2581

Will the course suit me?

This course covers a wide range of sporting activities, topics and current issues. You will need to have a good level of sporting ability and interest in current national and international sporting events (Commonwealth Games, Olympics or the World Cup in any sport). The disciplines of the physical and life sciences are basic to the course, as are the historical developments, social aspects and world influences on the nature of sport.

AS Examination

Unit 1. Opportunities for and the effects of leading a healthy and active lifestyle

Section A - Students are required to answer six structured questions. Students are required to answer two questions on each of applied exercise physiology, skill acquisition and opportunities for participation.

Section B – Students are required to answer only 1 question which will examine the application of theoretical knowledge to a practical situation.

Unit 2. Analysis and evaluation of physical activity as a performer and/or in an adopted role/s

Students are assessed on their ability to perform, analyse and evaluate the execution of core skills/techniques in isolation and in structured practice as either:

A player/performer and in an adopted role **or** in two adopted roles

Section A Each candidate will be assessed in their ability to perform effectively in **two** of the following roles in a chosen activity.

- practical performer
- official/referee/umpire/judge
- leader/coach

Section B will look at the theoretical factors that improve performance. Candidates are assessed on this element through the section B question in Unit 1. It will be based on a practical scenario. All candidates will be expected to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and the question will focus on the application and justification of that knowledge in the context of one of the roles from Section A of this unit.

A2 Examination

Unit 3. Optimising performance and evaluating contemporary issues within sport

Students are required to answer three questions, one from Section A, one from Section B and one from Section C.

Section A assesses how exercise physiology can optimise performance.

Section B assesses how the application of psychological knowledge can optimise performance.

Section C evaluates contemporary influences in sport and their impact on the performer.

Unit 4. Optimising practical performance in a competitive situation

Students are assessed on their ability to perform, analyse and evaluate their own performance in a competitive/performance situation as either a player/ performer or in an adopted role.

Then using their knowledge and understanding candidates identify their weaknesses; suggest the causes of these weaknesses and the appropriate corrective measures.

All candidates will be assessed in **three** sections;

Section A.

The ability to perform and analyse relevant core skills/techniques as a performer, official or leader/coach within a competitive situation.

Section B.

The ability to analyse and critically evaluate their own/others. Weaknesses within a fully competitive/equivalent situation in relation to an elite level performer.

Section C.

Their ability to identify theoretical causes for weaknesses in performance and suggest appropriate corrective practices to optimise performance.

Benefits of the course

The course will develop students' ability to analyse and critically evaluate their own and others' performances. They will excel in their chosen sport and understand both training and coaching principles. The course will broaden their understanding of the way in which governments develop elite performance and assist the mass population to improve their general health and fitness.

Outside the classroom

Each year we attend a number of revision conferences for both AS and A2 and also a science workshop at the University of Gloucestershire. There is an opportunity to improve fitness through coursework and hobbies, run and coach younger year groups and attend Level 1 courses for individual sports.

Future opportunities

Nationally, the Sport and PE course is recognised as a valuable stepping stone to a wide range of Higher Education degrees. All will lead directly into Sports Studies, PE teaching, coaching and Sports Management at University but also this could lead to many more courses including careers in marketing, fire and police service, armed forces, sports development, physiotherapy, sports science, sports nutrition, sports psychology, grounds management, elite performer, leisure centre attendant, sports agency, sports law, sports administration and lecturing.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Mark Simmons (Head of PE) at Leighton Park School.

PHYSICS

Head of Department: Irene Bell

Exam Board: AQA
Syllabus Code: AS:1451
A2: 2451

Will the course suit me?

You will need to have a good GCSE grade in physics (at least grade B) and be competent at maths in order to do well on the course. A Level maths is strongly recommended to support the A Level physics course.

A level physics is recommended by the physics department for students who are very likely to apply to university to study physics, engineering or mathematics and whose strengths clearly lie in the area of physics/mathematics

Course Description: AQA GCE Physics A

AS Level

- Unit 1: Particles, quantum phenomena (40% and electricity
- Unit 2: Mechanics, materials and waves (40%)
- Unit 3: Investigative skills assignment (ISA) in AS physics (20%)

A2 Level

- Unit 4: (40%) Fields and Further Mechanics (40%)
- Unit 5: (40%) Section A: Nuclear and Thermal Physics (40%)
Section B: Turning Points in Physics (including special relativity)
- Unit 6: (20%) Investigative skills assignment (ISA) in A2 Physics (20%)

Benefits of the course

An A Level in Physics is highly regarded by universities. It is a good training in clear, logical thinking and in applied Mathematics. Physicists are in short supply at the present time and so are valued highly by employers and universities.

Outside the classroom

Particle Physics Masterclass at Oxford University.
'Headstart' taster university courses for a week at the end of the Lower Sixth, in Science and Engineering.

Future opportunities

A Level Physics is a very good basis for university courses in Physics, Maths, Engineering, Architecture, and Medicine. Many physics graduates go on to work in accountancy and finance, as well as in the areas of science and technology. Bursaries are available at universities to encourage students to study physics at a higher level.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Irene Bell (Head of Physics) at Leighton Park School.

PSYCHOLOGY

Head of Department: Helen Taylor

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus: 1181

Will this course suit me?

You will need an interest in investigating human behaviour using a scientific approach. You will also require good organisational and time management skills, as there is an individual learning emphasis in the course.

Course Description

This specification was chosen to provide a broad introduction to the scope and nature of psychology as a science. The emphasis is on applying knowledge and understanding, rather than just acquiring knowledge, thereby developing students' transferable skills of analysis, evaluation and critical thinking. The course has an element of individual learning, as students use online interactive materials, in conjunction with lessons and tutorials. The course consists of two units:

Unit One: Cognitive and Developmental Psychology and Research Methods

Unit Two: Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Difference

Psychology is currently offered at AS level only.

Benefits of the course

Psychology combines well with other science subjects and maths as well as being an accessible science subject for students whose other AS choices are more arts or language based. The course teaches a range of analytical and evaluative skills that can be applied across other subjects.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Catherine Cheeseman at Leighton Park School

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Head of Department: Shazia Taj

**Exam Board:
Syllabus Code:**

**OCR
AS: H172
A2: H572**

Will the course suit me?

Yes, if you are inquisitive about the meaning of life – if you find yourself pondering the timeless questions and wondering about man's quest for the truth – if you like a good debate which exercises your mind – if you like bouncing ideas off people and engaging with the deeper issues – if you want to probe the nature of spirituality and to explore the foundations of philosophical and religious thinking – if you have a curiosity about Theology – or if you simply want to find out more about the spiritual dimension of existence.

Yes, if you can discuss reflectively, evaluate texts, write lucidly, develop an argument – or if you want to learn how to do these things better.

Course Description:

AS.

For those who seriously want to ground their understanding of philosophy and religion more firmly, this course leads to a self-contained qualification and offers the opportunity to extend skills of essay-writing, textual analysis and philosophical debate:

Module 1: Philosophy of Religion – traditional arguments for God, and challenges to these from the problem of evil, and from psychology, sociology, and science.

Module 2: Religion and Ethics - Natural Law, Kantian Ethics, Utilitarianism, Religious Ethics. Applied Ethics: Abortion, Euthanasia, War and Peace, Genetic Engineering.

A2 Level.

Module 3: Philosophy of Religion – issues of mind, immortality and evil; revelation and experience. The nature of human experience and the ways in which humans have claimed to experience God.

Module 4: Religion and Ethics - Ethical Topics and Theories: Meta-Ethics, free will and determinism, Conscience, Virtue Ethics. Applied Ethics: environmental, business and sexual ethics.

You develop the ability to think analytically, to probe and to reflect.

You gain major insights into the great philosophical and theological thinkers.

Religious Studies 'A' Level combines well with English, ancient history, history, politics, psychology, art, theatre studies and music.

Outside the Classroom:

Study days - Philosophy Conferences - Visiting lecturers.

Future Opportunities:

Highly respected as an academic discipline in all universities, a background in Philosophy and Theology opens all sorts of doors from teaching (at all levels) to the law, from politics to journalism, from diplomacy to human resources and management in a commercial environment – in fact, anywhere where the ability to think clearly, to make informed judgments and to show initiative and foresight is valued: not to mention, of course, a vocation to ministry.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Shazia Taj (Head of Religious Studies) at Leighton Park School.

SPANISH

Head of Department: Deborah Duggan

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: AS: H077
A2: H477

Will the course suit me?

You need to have proved your linguistic competence with an A or A* in your Spanish GCSE. If you have obtained such a grade, enjoy reading and writing, and are interested in Spain/Spanish speaking countries and cultures, you will enjoy learning Spanish.

Course Description

Modern Language courses at AS and A2 build upon the skills acquired at GCSE, namely listening, speaking, writing and reading but go beyond the basic transactional language (asking the way, shopping etc.) At A Level, students learn the skills needed to analyse and appreciate texts, formulate opinions in the foreign language, organise arguments and translate.

These skills are taught through a range of topics related to the culture of the countries where the language is spoken.

At AS Level, the topics studied are: the media, advertising, the arts, daily life, food and drink, sport and pastimes, travel, transport and holidays and human interest news items.

At A2 Level: Social issues, the Environment, Education Law, and order, Politics and Technological and scientific advances.

AS Level and A2 Level both consist of two units of assessment:

AS Level

- Unit 1: Speaking (role play and presentation of a topic) 15 minutes
- Unit 2: Listening, reading and writing

A2 Level

- Unit 3: Speaking and reading 15 minutes
- Unit 4: Listening, reading and writing

Benefits of the course

Competence in Modern Languages is becoming more desirable than ever, now that the job market is increasingly centred on Europe. Therefore, students should seriously consider the study of a language as an AS subject and with the study of languages no longer compulsory in state schools beyond Year 9, language skills are going to be increasingly in demand.

- World vision
- International understanding
- Global citizenship

Outside the classroom

Students will be given the opportunity to undertake work experience abroad; also to participate in another visit to a language school if they so wish at the end of the Lower Sixth. Visits of cultural interest to events organised by the Instituto Cervantes will also be offered as and when they arise.

Future opportunities

A large number of degree courses particularly in the business world, international law, tourism and journalism now have a language option (and often offer the opportunity of spending a year studying abroad) particularly under the Erasmus scheme. An AS or A2 in a modern language is often a requirement for access to these courses which are increasingly sought after by employers.

Students who would like to take a language degree course, even in a different language should consider studying two modern languages to increase their chances of obtaining a place in a top university.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.ocr.org.uk or please contact Deborah Duggan (Head of Spanish) at Leighton Park School.

THEATRE STUDIES

Head of Department: Geraint Thomas

Exam Board: AQA
Syllabus code: AS: 1241
A2: 2241

Will the course suit me?

All students taking the course should have a real love of the theatre and the arts in general. You should enjoy sharing your work with others although it is not essential to be a good actor. You must be prepared to work in a group and take responsibility for creating the original practical presentations the course demands. It is important that you are able to communicate your ideas both in the studio and on paper. We expect energy, commitment and a desire to experiment. In return, we offer the opportunity to challenge yourself and your ideas in a creative, fun environment. A sense of humour also helps.

Course Description

AS Level

There are 2 modules to be studied.

After a general introduction to Theatre, as opposed to drama, we begin immediately with our study of a set text. The main focus of our work is how the play would be staged. All classes are in a workshop style. Considerable emphasis is placed on research, seminar and independent learning. This work is complemented by regular visits to the theatre. The students record their ideas and answer a question in the final examination.

Module 2 focuses on practical performance. The students choose an extract from a published play to research, rehearse and perform. Their rehearsals are underpinned by the production of a working portfolio of background notes in which they explain their influences and the development of their project.

There is one written paper and a practical examination.

Theatre studies combines well with all other subjects. English, history and politics have a particular relevance, but many of our students in the past have been involved in science and art.

Benefits of the course

It will allow you to use your imaginative and creative resources on a daily basis and constantly challenge your perceptions of life and art. The course develops critical thinking and analysis and challenges you to use all aspects of your experience and personality. It will develop your ability to work as a team and respect the ideas and opinions of others. The course will develop your personal performance and communication skills. It should challenge you at all times, but give a true sense of fulfilment.

Outside the classroom

Students are expected to rehearse outside lesson times.

Theatre trips are organised on a regular basis and participation is a requirement of the course. Some expense will be incurred. Theatre studies students are expected to participate in school productions and gain experience by taking responsibility to further their skills on courses, seminars and other external events organised by the department.

The drama department offers the opportunity to take part in major school productions. All we expect is enthusiasm. We are currently planning a full programme for 2010/2011. So, even if you have never considered it before, be involved in the arts at Leighton Park.

Future opportunities

Theatre studies provides a good foundation for further study of drama at higher levels including vocational courses at drama schools. It is a good subject for any course or career that requires good written or oral communication skills.

The personal confidence developed is beneficial in all areas particularly marketing, media and teaching.

More information (specification and specimen papers) is available online at www.aqa.org.uk or please contact Geraint Thomas (Head of Drama) at Leighton Park School.