



You will join the Sixth Form in September and will be in the Upper School with all the attendant privileges and responsibilities. Your A Level years are potentially the most exciting and rewarding of your school career. We know that you will want to make the most of your opportunities, so that you secure the greatest possible benefit from your time in the Sixth Form. Some very important decisions about higher education and careers lie ahead and the options open to you will be determined, in large part, by your approach to Sixth Form life.

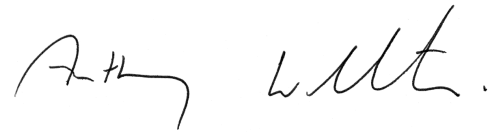
You will be offered all kinds of challenges and opportunities and you are advised to approach these very positively from the outset, with an understanding that talent in any field is something that is grown through putting in hours of deep practice. Academic study is, of course, the main reason why you will be at School and you should consult with Tutors and Heads of Departments to establish your intellectual strengths and needs and to devise strategies for improvement.

A Levels continue to represent the 'gold standard' and hold the key to a university education. While community life at Stowe makes you think about others, the subjects on offer are designed to make you think deeply and to think for yourself. The options open are broad and flexible, they are not a straitjacket into which you either fit or fail. The Extended Project Qualification, in particular, provides a perfect opportunity for you to identify and explore in depth a topic of your choice, demonstrating your ability to work independently which will stand you in good stead for university.

The successful transition from GCSE requires a growing maturity and an ability to organise yourself in a way that reveals a greater capacity for independent study. With the move away from the old modular AS exams, pupils are expected to stay motivated and focused throughout the Sixth Form. We expect hard work. In turn we commit ourselves to helping you to pursue your strengths and interests. You will experience the pleasure of discovery and exploration, of forging ideas and increasing awareness and of deepening your understanding of the world around you. Personal responsibility and self-motivation are essential preconditions of success.

98% of Stowe's go on to higher education each year, so you can see that Stowe's A Level provision is very good indeed.

This booklet summarises the objectives and contents of the Sixth Form courses offered at Stowe. Please think carefully when you make your subject choices.



Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Headmaster

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Introduction

Making the correct choices for the Sixth Form is important, not only in ensuring that you flourish at Stowe over the next two years, but so that you keep the right doors open to you for your future beyond Stowe.

A Levels have been recently reformed to be fully linear, more challenging, and to have more content to cover. Given that universities make their offers primarily on the basis of three A Level grades, we recommend that most pupils choose just three to focus on from the start, in order to maximise chances of achieving top grades in these. However we are also continuing to make it possible for pupils to study four A Levels if desired, though we recommend you talk this over first with the Senior Tutor. For more guidance on choices, please see page 5 of this booklet.

Although the primary evidence for university admissions will be the three A Level grades, they will also continue to look for evidence of academic ambition and extension beyond this. Therefore we also expect Sixth Form pupils who are studying three subjects to complete either an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) or another enrichment elective in addition to their three A Level subjects. A number of these electives are also examined and carry UCAS points, which for some universities will be accepted as part of an admissions offer.

Electives at Stowe range from standalone AS qualifications in Maths, Psychology or Music Technology, to doing a Languages qualification or preparing for Grade 8 Music. We have also recently added BTEC options in Engineering, Business and Sport, which offer AS Level equivalent qualifications, but which are assessed in a more practical way. A provisional list of electives to choose from appears at the back of this booklet.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is perhaps the most respected and most flexible of the electives. The EPQ carries the UCAS weighting of 50% of a full A Level and provides the possibility for pupils to pursue an area of particular interest in a self-designed, assessed project. Universities and employers welcome it because it indicates genuine academic interest and commitment, as well as an ability to reflect and work independently. The EPQ course at Stowe will run from September to June of the Lower Sixth year. For those who wish to stretch themselves that little bit more, it may be possible to choose both the EPQ and another elective.

If you have any questions about the curriculum, or what to consider when making your choices, please feel free to contact us for further advice.

Sixth Form Curriculum - Provisional for 2019-2021

The subjects available to those qualifying for the Sixth Form are set out in the columns below. We expect members of the Sixth Form to take **three** A Levels **and** an elective. Only **one** subject can be chosen from each of the columns. Those wishing to study four A Levels are asked to seek advice in the first instance from the Deputy Head (Academic) or Senior Tutor.

A Level Columns (provisional)				
1	2	3	4	Elective
Biology	Art	Art	Business	EPQ
Design	Business	Biology	Drama	Core Maths
Economics	Chemistry	Chemistry	Further Mathematics	AS Maths or Further Maths
English Literature	Drama	Computer Science	Geography	AS Film Studies
History (Early Modern)	Economics	Design	History (Modern)	AS Music Technology
History (Modern)	English Literature	Economics	Mathematics	AFL
History of Art	German	Film Studies	Music	IELTS
Mathematics	Latin	French	Politics	AS Psychology
Physics	Physics	Geography	Religious Studies	Engineering BTEC
Sports Science	Politics	History of Art		Sport BTEC
	Religious Studies	Politics		Business BTEC
	Spanish	Sports Science		LAMDA
				MOOC
				PALM
				ILM

Please note:

- Further Mathematics may not be taken without Mathematics.
- Business, Economics, History of Art, Film Studies and Politics courses are rarely studied before the Sixth Form. Some other subjects can also accept candidates who lack the GCSE experience. Prospective candidates should negotiate with the Head of Department in question. Generally, it is not recommended that Business and Economics are studied together.
- The School reserves the right to withdraw a subject from the curriculum if there is insufficient demand.
- For more information on each of the elective options, please see pages 35-36.

Choices

Most Stoics follow Sixth Form programmes that lead to three A Levels at the end of two years. In addition, pupils are expected to choose a course from our programme of 'electives' which they will follow for one or two years, depending on the course chosen. These courses are selected to provide breadth to a programme of study, to allow pupils to develop a particular passion or interest, or indeed to provide additional support for their other A Levels. Our curriculum provides the flexibility for pupils to follow bespoke programmes that best suit their interests and aspirations.

It is very important that all Stoics follow a programme that is appropriate to their aptitudes, capabilities and aspirations. All academic departments publish a required GCSE entry grade for progression to study their subject at A Level. For example, a GCSE grade 7 or higher in the relevant subject(s) will be needed to study Maths, Sciences and Modern Languages at A Level; pupils who, in previous years, have started these subjects with a grade 6 or lower have struggled to make the progress required to achieve anything more than a low pass (grade E) at A Level.

Please note that a Stoic cannot continue with a subject to the Upper Sixth without a pass grade in this subject in the Lower Sixth end of year examinations.

One of the most popular 'electives' chosen by our pupils is the Extended Project Qualification which is a highly valued course by universities. It provides pupils with an opportunity to research a topic of their own choice and can take the form of a written essay or an artefact. The qualification assesses the learning process as well as outcome, and demands extended autonomous learning by a pupil with the support of an EPQ supervisor. As such the EPQ provides invaluable evidence of a particular passion in a subject chosen to be studied at university and adds gravitas to any UCAS application.

Which subjects?

Any subject requires commitment for success. Readiness to become deeply involved is based not only on enjoyment of a subject but also on a belief in the subject's importance to future studies. There are four things to consider:

1. How do I choose which subjects to take?

Previous experience of a subject studied at GCSE is often a key deciding factor. However, it is possible to study some subjects at A Level that have not been taken at GCSE. These subjects include History of Art, Film Studies, Politics, Economics and

Business. Some pupils have also successfully taken Drama, Sports Science, Religious Studies, Computer Science and History without having followed the GCSE course. It is important to speak with the Head of Department, or to any teacher of the subject, to find out what is involved in a subject at A Level and whether you are suitably qualified.

2. Which subject combinations work well?

Care must be taken when choosing subject combinations for certain degree courses and for the more selective and competitive universities. Most Science, Psychology or Engineering courses require a minimum of two science subjects at A Level and many also expect Maths. Chemistry is required by candidates for Medical School or Veterinary Science, with Biology and Maths also strongly recommended. Any pupil opting to study a single Science, without the support of Maths or another Science, should proceed with caution. Pupils are advised to seek advice from the Senior Tutor, Head of Sixth Form or Careers Department before embarking on a mixed combination of subjects, or if hoping to pursue a particular career or degree course.

3. Is the subject important to my future?

Current Stoics should consult their Cambridge Occupational Analysts (COA) Report and Interview record which noted any subject or group of subjects required to pursue a future career interest. **Those who are joining Stowe in September 2019 and would like advice on choices please contact the Senior Tutor, Sally Akam, or the Head of Sixth Form, Paul Floyd.**

4. When do I choose?

The starting point for Stowe Fifth Formers is the discussion of the tests of Aptitude and Interest (COA) which are taken in the GCSE year. In January, Stoics attend a briefing on A Level choices, followed by an A Level Fair and the opportunity to attend taster lessons in subjects that are new in the Sixth Form. In mid-March, following GCSE trial exams, aspirant Sixth Formers are asked to make reasonably firm choices. Pupils new to the Sixth Form are invited to an A Level Fair in March and are asked to confirm their choices shortly after this event. We do realise that unexpected results at GCSE may prompt some changes in course options and it is essential that requests for changes are sent to the School prior to the start of term.

Tutorial Provision

The Tutor's Role

It is a Tutor's responsibility to oversee their Tutees' academic and pastoral development as a whole so that they fulfil their potential in all areas. As part of this process, a Tutor provides a vital communication link between Housemaster/Housemistress, teaching staff, parents and pupils. Tutees often require support in achieving a healthy balance of academic and extra-curricular activities including managing impending academic deadlines, attending department clinics and society meetings, and co-ordinating sporting commitments, music and drama rehearsals.

In the Sixth Form, tutor groups are organised on the basis of subject choice and career aspirations. The emphasis is on one-to-one support and the provision of a personalised curriculum for each Tutee, through individual timetabled tutorials on one or more occasions each week. Stoics are assisted in setting academic targets that will stretch and challenge them, and are provided with strategies that will help them to work more independently, efficiently and effectively, and so equip them for higher education and beyond.

It is the Tutor's role to guide Tutees through the UCAS process (or other HE application systems in the UK or abroad) by encouraging research and preparation for degree courses, advising Tutees on personal statements, proofreading their applications and providing academic references. In addition, Sixth Formers are invited to attend a range of careers seminars and presentations held throughout the two years by an exciting range of academics, university admissions officers, and representatives of specific career fields such as Film and Animation, Finance, Engineering, Law, Journalism, Business Management, Medicine and Veterinary Science, Marketing, Public Relations etc.

Monitoring Academic Performance

Twice a term pupils receive Academic Progress Grades (APGs) from each of their subject teachers which are sent by email to parents, together with a Tutor's APG report. Regular assessment grades allow progress to be closely monitored and allow potential problems to be noted as they arise, paving the way for discussions between Tutor/teachers and Tutor/tutee. Individual action plans are agreed which provide strategies and support for further progress. Plans may include the need to attend academic clinics; assistance with coursework planning and management; supervised study periods; Tutor or Head of Year reports; Pupil Monitoring meetings; or simply providing additional or temporary help to Stoics to balance their academic and extra-curricular commitments. More detailed feedback of a Stoic's progress is provided in end of term reports.

As at all levels of the School, we would like parents to feel involved in their son's or daughter's education, and in their preparation for university and beyond. Please feel welcome to discuss any matter related to your son's or daughter's progress directly with their Tutor. Clearly, Tutees' meetings are an ideal time for this, but do not feel tied to these occasions only.

The tutorial programme aims to provide pupils with the study skills necessary for academic success and their personal development. These include:

- Positive Mindsets and Attitudes to Learning; Resilience, Resourcefulness, Collaboration
- Self Understanding; Self Review and Reflections on Learning
- Organisation Skills and File Management
- Time and Stress Management
- Revision Techniques
- Exam Technique
- Note-taking and Essay Writing
- Research Skills
- Independent Learning

Oxbridge Applications

Every year both Oxford and Cambridge offer around 3,000 undergraduate places; in turn they will each receive applications from around 17,000 potential students. The vast majority of applicants will be able to boast a stellar exam profile; they will be dedicated, motivated and hard workers who will have spent an inordinate amount of time crafting and perfecting their applications. This presents any would-be Oxbridge student with a particularly tricky challenge: when all your fellow applicants are outstanding how can you make yourself stand out? Every single successful application brings something special to the table. Yet, while the vast majority of applicants will have great exam results, glowing school references and predicted final A Level grades of A's and A*'s, the successful candidate must exhibit something else, something special that says not only is Oxford or Cambridge right for them but also that they are right for Oxford or Cambridge.

Qualities of a Successful Applicant

Knowledge Base: Every candidate must be able to present a convincing academic case and an exceptional exam result profile is usually central to this. Following the demise of AS exams, Oxford and Cambridge are increasingly converging in the relative emphasis that each places on exam results and pre-interview admission tests. While both universities publicly maintain that they have no minimum GCSE requirement, a credible candidate from a school such as Stowe would be expected to have 8 or more GCSEs at A* / 9 / 8 with nothing less than an A / 7. A typical Oxbridge offer for humanities degrees is AAA-A*AA, while many scientific and maths-based degrees may require A*A*A; that said, both universities are looking for A*A*A* candidates.

Personality: Education and tuition at Oxbridge is predicated on a system of tutorials or supervisions, i.e. one-on-one or one-on-two sessions whereby the teaching fellows and their students maximise the possibilities for learning afforded by small group sizes being taught by world experts in their field. At interview, Tutors will wish to be reassured that the students whom they will be teaching for the next few years are of a sufficient academic calibre and appropriate intellectual and interpersonal match for what can be a very intense and intensive style of learning. Candidates are expected to be able to process information quickly, to deconstruct and evaluate arguments and to build effective responses. This demands a voracious appetite for knowledge and understanding, and is achieved through exposure to the broadest possible spectrum of the intended degree subject.

Motivation: Many candidates can be passionate and enthusiastic. However, while passion can be misdirected and enthusiasm superficial, motivation is innate. A successful candidate will evince deep-seated motivation both in their written work and interview. "Why do you want to study this subject?", can lead to some very revealing answers, and Tutors are adept at identifying candidates whose motivation is genuine and who have the eloquence and confidence to express it.

Potential: If the UCAS form records a candidate's academic past, the Oxbridge interview points the way to the future: Tutors will want to know how much further a candidate could take their learning or if they have already reached their academic peak. Interviews will test their ability to think independently and move an intellectual argument forward with nothing else to help them other than their own mind.

Oxbridge at Stowe

The Oxbridge Team will support, to the fullest of our ability and effort, Stoics who are prepared to demonstrate commitment, drive and purpose in the whole application process including drafting PS and UCAS submissions, revising and reading for admissions tests and preparing for interview. However, from an early stage each candidate has to accept responsibility for their own application and drive the process themselves. We will assist rather than replace candidates in their application: we will not do the job for them and we cannot generate momentum or drive where it is absent. This is the only way to construct a successful application, as admissions Tutors have an obligation to weed out students who will not be able to survive when left to their own devices.

The Stowe Oxbridge selection process starts after the Michaelmas Half Term when Lower Sixth pupils are invited to apply to join the Headmaster's Essay Society. From this list of applicants an Oxbridge Squad is selected on the basis of GCSE results, consistently strong academic performance, declared Oxbridge ambition, evidence of flair and potential plus academic commitment and enthusiasm. Prospective candidates will be scrutinised throughout the Lower Sixth, and only at the start of the Upper Sixth will the applicant list be finalised. Tutors will assist them in their UCAS applications; subject-specific mentors will be allocated to deliver extra study; and interview practice will be provided; but the Stoics themselves must provide the impetus and initiative driving their application.

University and College Entrance, UCAS

Further Education after Stowe

At Stowe we recognise the value and benefits of tertiary education and actively encourage pupils to apply for courses that suit their abilities, interests and career ambitions. We believe that the best applications are those in which the pupils themselves invest the most thought, consideration and effort, and consequently Stoics are expected to assume responsibility of this process themselves. While the School offers extensive and expert assistance, Stoics take the initiative in researching courses and destinations and are expected to prepare their applications diligently and conscientiously.

During the Lower Sixth, Stoics are strongly encouraged to formulate and develop their ideas for further education. Over the Summer Term and summer holidays, these ideas should evolve into firm preferences for particular courses and institutions and pupils should return for the Upper Sixth with a good idea of what they would like to study and where they would want to go.

Pupils are guided through the application process by their Tutors. The Tutor has the best overview of a pupil's academic and intellectual capacity and is ideally placed to dispense advice drawn from their experience and information from subject teachers and other staff members at Stowe.

The internet is the first port of call for research and the Stowe Virtual Learning Environment has links and tips for negotiating both the application process and the vast amounts of information online. Pupils can also use *Fast Tomato*, a powerful advisory application that is introduced at the start of their Stowe journey and that will guide them through the process of selecting GCSEs, A Levels, university courses and even careers.

Pupils are encouraged to visit universities and are allowed two trips in term time during the Lower Sixth. University Open Days are widely promoted and Stoics are strongly advised to make as much use of these as possible, ideally during the holidays. When pupils cannot get to the universities, we bring universities to the pupils and the School regularly hosts external speakers from specific universities, university umbrella groups and independent advisory groups.

Universities in the UK

Most pupils will apply to university through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), a process that starts in the Summer Term of the Lower Sixth. The UCAS form is the principal means by which universities select students and so it is critical that applications are prepared with meticulous care. We expect that most pupils will return from the holidays between Lower and Upper Sixth with their UCAS applications well underway and with a provisional personal statement in place.

While the formal deadline is in January, the School encourages pupils to submit their application before Half Term in the Michaelmas Term. There is nothing to be gained from dragging the process out and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some universities look kindly on earlier applications. Any university using interviews will generally call students towards the end of the Michaelmas Term and Stoics will start to receive responses from their selected institutions about the same time. Any Stoic required to attend an interview can expect personalised assistance from their Tutor and the applications team; the School may also make use of external consultants in this field from time to time but there is more than sufficient in-house experience and expertise. For full details of the application process, see the UCAS website (www.ucas.com).

Stowe also provides assistance to those wishing to apply to non-UCAS institutions and courses, such as Art and Drama colleges. Tutors and Careers Advisors can give further information.

Universities outside the UK

Every year the number of Stoics applying to universities abroad increases and the School has a wealth of resources to offer here as well. Stoics have gone on to study all over the world including the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, South Africa and New Zealand. The United States is a perennial favourite and our resident Harvard Fellow, and teacher in charge of international university applications, is on hand to advise anyone making a US application; we also offer specific preparation for SATs with the help of Greene's Tutorial College, Oxford.

Contact

The Head of Sixth Form directs all matters related to further education.

Careers Education and Guidance

Stowe's Careers Education and Guidance Programme aims to provide increasing contact with the world outside throughout a Stoic's time at School, to help them reach the important decisions which affect their future in a well-informed and balanced way. Every encouragement is given to discuss the various options with the Head of Careers Housemasters or Housemistresses and Tutors.

Careers Exploration

The present programme of investigation and research takes pupils through *Fast Tomato*, a careers and higher education profiling programme. This programme helps to provide clear guidelines to assist the choice of an appropriate higher education pathway. *Fast Tomato* provides a report that encourages personal exploration into appropriate university courses and can also be used to investigate apprenticeships.

Careers Events

During the two years spent in the Sixth Form a number of events are on offer which have been designed to help with career planning. They include visits to the Careers Centre, a series of seminars on diverse career fields and participation in a full Careers Fair at Stowe.

Careers Experience Courses

Those at Stowe prior to the Sixth Form are expected to undertake one week of career related work experience in the summer holiday between the Fifth and Sixth Form years. This is invaluable in bringing realism to thinking about the world of work and is increasingly looked upon by employers and university admissions as evidence of maturity and motivation. We encourage the Sixth Form to build a portfolio of work experience and the Careers Centre can help with contacts using a large database of Old Stoic alumni. Currently we use *Fast Tomato* to log details of work experience conducted, and this online resource also provides a CV building tool.

Throughout the Sixth Form there will be opportunities during the holidays for Stoics to attend taster courses specifically aimed at informing them about particular degree courses and careers. These are generally run by professional bodies and commercial concerns. Stoics are encouraged to make effective use of them.

The Careers Centre

This is a room specially set aside for careers use. It is well stocked with relevant informative material about future jobs and higher education opportunities, making full use of access to the internet. The Head of Careers is within the Centre and is available for consultation when required. Early and regular visits to the Centre are vital. In addition there are various computer programmes that can be used to determine higher education courses that match the individual's interests and abilities and to look more widely at future careers.

Sixth Form Careers Programme

Lower Sixth Form

Michaelmas Term

Sixth Form induction.

Career related work experience follow-up.

Introduction to UK and US universities application systems.

Introduction to *Fast Tomato* (online higher education research tool).

Career related seminars.

Careers Fair.

UCAS talk for Parents (November Exeat).

Lent Term

Tutors discuss higher education options with pupils. Preparation for UCAS applications.

Regular use of university research programs and UCAS websites, plus intranet and internet facilities. A range of university taster courses and work experience opportunities are also available.

Summer Term

Introduction to *UCAS Apply*.

Registration on *UCAS Apply*.

First draft of UCAS Personal Statement.

Attend university Open Days.

Upper Sixth Form

Michaelmas Term

Parents' Meeting with Tutors at the start of the first Exeat weekend to discuss higher education plans and academic progress.

Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine UCAS deadline (15 October).

BMAT (Medicine) and Oxford Aptitude Tests.

Opportunities for HAT (History), LNAT (Law) and UKCAT (Medicine) aptitude tests.

UCAS applications for all non-Oxbridge applicants.

Gap Year planning and applications.

Practice interviews available for those called by universities.

Oxbridge Interviews.

Lent Term

Confirm offers (firm and insurance) for UCAS.

Apply for Student Finance.

Tutorial advice on a post A Level results strategy.

A Level results advice document provided.

Cambridge STEP examinations.

August

Assistance available from Stowe for issues arising following A Level results.

Members of Staff with particular responsibility for University Applications and Careers:

Paul Floyd - Head of Sixth Form & UCAS

Dr Gordon West - Deputy Head of Sixth Form & Head of Careers

Jon Murnane - Oxbridge Admissions

Dr Fitz Smith - Non-UK University advice

Michael Righton - Gap Year

Leonard Murphy, Stowe Harvard Fellow - American University advice

Sally Akam - Senior Tutor

Art

A qualification in Art at A Level will allow you to study a wide range of specialist degree courses from Fine Art and Architecture to Computer Graphics, Fashion and Textiles, Theatre Design and Industrial Design. There are also a large number of courses available that relate to the media industry and Art/History of Art are often combined, very successfully, with other courses.

The context of the A Level course is broad and flexible, giving pupils the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and techniques. Drawing is fundamental to the course and we do expect pupils to have achieved a high grade at GCSE. If they have not completed an Art GCSE course, or equivalent, we would expect to see a folder of work at interview.

The term 'contextual awareness' is often used in A Level teaching and this refers to developing a knowledge and critical understanding of the work of artists and designers, both historical and contemporary. Pupils are expected to visit art galleries, such as the National Gallery or Tate Modern, during the holidays to supplement organised trips in school time. We also take Art and History of Art trips to major cultural art centres, such as New York, Venice or Paris each year.

All pupils are expected to keep personal sketchbooks, sheets and notebooks for the exploration and development of their ideas and the Watson Art School is always open during academic and activity time. The Watson Art School has links with the Design Department and with the Theatre and Drama Department, both for Set Design and Theatre Studies A Level.

In terms of entry to further education, an OCR A Level is accepted by most university courses, as well as by all Art Foundation courses, which will normally provide the best route to developing your chosen path within art and design. Career guidance forms a significant part of our work with our Upper Sixth pupils each year, and we give focused help with portfolio preparation and Art School interviews. Each term, the Watson Art School levies a charge to cover the use of specialist materials, canvases etc.

The OCR Art A Level specification requires pupils to follow a lively and experimental skills based course in the Michaelmas Term. As the year progresses, pupils will have more time for the personal development of ideas but they will also continue to learn new techniques and processes throughout the year. There will be time dedicated to contextual themes, which will help to prepare our pupils for their Personal Investigation essay in the Upper Sixth year. With a linear specification we have more time to extend individual projects and create more ambitious work than was possible before. We will have time to spend longer on larger or more detailed drawings, paintings, prints or sculpture and use more involved techniques to produce outcome pieces. Although all pupils' work will be marked internally and regular feedback will be given, there will be no formal assessment by OCR in the Lower Sixth year.

In the Upper Sixth, pupils will work on their 'Personal Investigation' which is the assessed coursework unit. The essay on a related contextual theme is included in this project and is given a separate mark for the first time under the new specification. The Personal Investigation will make up 60% of the total A Level, the other 40% will be awarded for the exam or 'externally set task' unit. This will follow the same structure as the old A Level, with an 'early release' examination paper at the beginning of the Lent Term. The Controlled Assessment of fifteen hours duration will take place after the Easter holidays.

All Sixth Form pupils study life drawing throughout their course in order to make sure their observational drawing skills remain sharp and their output remains fresh.

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Art 6**

Biology

Biology is not only the window into the fascinating world of living things, it is also the door to a lifelong interest in subjects which are vital to solve the problems spawned by the 20th Century.

Advances in biological research have influenced both the content of and opportunities provided by modern A Level Biology courses. Biology is no longer a subject founded purely on the ability to recall vast quantities of factual material. These advances have made Biology an interesting and valuable subject to study to A Level. The practical approach to the subject is both stimulating and rewarding and reflects the modern trends in biological sciences.

The facilities and technical support in the Science Department are excellent and the grounds of Stowe provide a handy resource for the study of biological ecosystems. Extensive use is made of modern equipment, much of it linked to computer technology. You will study in a caring atmosphere in which individual skills are nurtured.

Through the Biomedical Society, pupils will be able to meet and work with leading biologists from across the broad spectrum of the subject.

A Level pupils in Biology will attend a four day field course, usually at a coastal university or Field Studies Council field station. A third of the cost of this course is borne by the School but parents are expected to contribute the remaining two-thirds (£200 currently).

The Department has undertaken biological expeditions to South Africa, Honduras, Mozambique, Indonesia and Namibia.

Choosing Biology

A grade 7 or higher in Biology GCSE is required to embark upon the A Level course. It is possible to combine a number of subjects with Biology, though experience shows that the best results are achieved when Biology is studied alongside another Science or Maths. The column system Stowe offers allows a wide variety of subject combinations which include Biology.

AQA Biology A Level (7402)

The A Level Biology specification is divided into 8 areas of core content which is subdivided into key teaching topics. Biology A Level is a linear course spanning over the two years of study. The specification is assessed over three, 2 hour papers, which include a mixture of short, long

and structured questions including practical techniques along with one essay question from a choice of two titles. A Level grades will be based only on marks from written examinations.

Practical Assessment

At A Level, pupils will be internally assessed based on direct observation of their competency on a wide range of practical skills. The Practical Endorsement involves carrying out 12 required practicals to ensure pupils have experienced the use of a variety of apparatus and techniques. Written papers will assess pupils' understanding and knowledge of these, and the skills exemplified within each practical. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the A Level qualification.

Year One

A variety of areas touched upon at Biology GCSE are developed further. The course content is split into modules covering core content:

- Biological Molecules
- Cells
- Organisms Exchange Substances with their Environment
- Genetic Information, Variation and Relationships Between Organisms

Year Two

- Energy Transfers In and Between Organisms
- Organisms Respond to Changes in their Internal and External Environments
- Genetics, Populations, Evolution and Ecosystems
- The Control of Gene Expression

Careers

It is recognised that the choice of a suitable career is of vital importance to all pupils. The Department, through its Tutors, offers specialist advice should you wish to pursue a career with a biological content. In recent years, many pupils have gained entry to medical schools and several have studied Biological Sciences at Oxford.

In addition to the well established careers in Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry, Physiology, Ecology, Pharmacology, Immunology, and Biochemistry, new career opportunities have arisen in the fields of Environmental Science, Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Genetic Engineering, and Biotechnology. Universities offering degree courses in these subjects frequently state that a study of A Level Biology is advantageous and, in some cases, essential.

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Biology 7 or Dual Award Science 7-7**

Business

Business aims to give pupils a broad understanding of how businesses function effectively. The standard functional divisions within a firm, such as finance, marketing, production and personnel, are studied in their own right. It is also seen how these functions inter-relate with each other and how the business as a whole is affected by the external environment. Thus Business examines how managers can set up structures and mobilise the labour talent and financial resources they have at their disposal, to achieve the organisational goal of producing desirable products and services.

Studying Business at A Level does not guarantee that one will become a future Richard Branson, but a wide variety of subjects will be covered which can be applied to virtually any work experience that you have in future life.

Exam Board: Edexcel

Theme 1: Marketing and People

Pupils will develop an understanding of:

- Meeting Customer Needs
- The Market
- Marketing Mix and Strategy
- Managing People
- Entrepreneurs and Leaders

Theme 2: Managing Business Activities

Pupils will develop an understanding of:

- Raising Finance
- Financial Planning
- Managing Finance
- Resource Management
- External Influences

Theme 3: Business Decisions and Strategy

Pupils will develop an understanding of:

- Business Objectives and Strategy
- Business Growth
- Decision-making Techniques
- Influences on Business Decisions
- Assessing Competitiveness
- Managing Change
- Expansion

Theme 4: Global Business

Pupils will develop an understanding of:

- Globalisation
- Global Markets and Business Expansion
- Global Marketing
- Multinationals

Paper 1: Marketing, People and Global Businesses

Paper 2: Business Activities, Decisions and Strategy

Paper 3: Investigating Business in a Competitive Environment

Combinations

Business is normally studied in combination with other arts and social science subjects, such as English, Politics, Geography, History of Art, Religious Studies, or a language. It would also be a sensible subject choice for pupils who consider themselves scientists, as most scientists do end up in business as managers. Business can be taken alongside Economics, as long as a Business orientated degree is the final goal.

Skills Needed and Requirements

The finance and accounting parts of the course have a very significant amount of numeracy within them, so it is expected that pupils who start the course will have at least a grade 5 in GCSE Mathematics. You must be confident with your ability to read and manipulate sizeable amounts of numerical data.

A good Business pupil is able to apply theories of management to a particular situation. The more subtle one's grasp of the situation and the more one has a feel for potential opportunities and threats, the better.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level: Mathematics 5

Chemistry

Chemistry is about the 'stuff' around us - how atoms and molecules interact and react in our brains, in car engines, in the kitchen and in the skies - and as such it occupies a central position between the physical sciences on the one hand and the biological sciences on the other.

An A Level Chemistry qualification is attractive to many university admissions tutors as it tells them you can analyse and present data, absorb factual material, handle numerical problems, understand and explain complicated concepts, and that you have practical skills gained from laboratory work - that you are in fact a good all-rounder!

Although the varied nature of the subject can make Chemistry a challenging A Level for some, pupils' effort and ability is rewarded as university prospects for those applying to Chemistry or Chemistry-related degree courses are excellent, even in the current, austere climate. Stowe Chemists regularly, indeed usually, win places at top Russell Group Universities, most often Oxford, Bristol, Durham, Imperial, UCL, and Cambridge.

Chemistry remains an important pre-requisite for direct entry into courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science, and Dentistry, as well as most courses in Biochemistry, Chemical Engineering, and Food Science. Many universities now offer courses combining Chemistry with a wide variety of non-science options, such as Management, Business, Law or Economics, as well as a year abroad or a year in industry.

Choosing Chemistry

Whether Chemistry is taken as part of specific higher education plans or as a more general interest subject, you should expect to work hard, have mathematical skills and enjoy problem solving. A good grade at Chemistry GCSE, as well as in Maths, would normally be expected for entry to the course. Pupils who have studied Dual Award Science, as opposed to the full Chemistry GCSE, should contact the Head of Department for details of topics relevant to A Level that they may have missed.

The Chemistry Department

The Chemistry Department at Stowe is lively, friendly and very successful. The Department makes good use of StoweNet - the School's Virtual Learning Environment, and its great strength in teaching lies in the effective combination of modern and traditional teaching methods.

The Department occupies the top floor of the well-equipped Worsley Science Centre. There are six teaching laboratories, each with its own adjacent lecture room equipped with a large demonstration bench and fume cupboard. The Department is extremely well served with technical help from a full time Technician and two Laboratory Assistants.

The Course

The Department follows the linear OCR A Level in Chemistry A (H432) which comprises of six modules:

Module 1: Development of Practical Skills

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

The course has its own textbook which defines the course content and this is supported within the Department by a Chemistry library from which pupils can borrow freely.

Examinations

There are 3 examinations, all of which are taken at the end of the Upper Sixth year.

Paper 1: Content from modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. 2 hours and 15 minutes. Weighting = 37%

Paper 2: Content from modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. 2 hours and 15 minutes. Weighting = 37%

Paper 3: Synoptic covering all modules. 1 hour and 30 minutes. Weighting = 26%

Practical Assessment

Coursework no longer contributes to the overall final grade. Instead it leads to a separate 'Practical Endorsement'. This comprises of 12 exam board defined experiments. Knowledge and understanding of these experiments can also be tested in the written examinations.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Chemistry 7 or Dual Award Science 7-7

Classics

Latin and Classical Greek

To the surprise of some non-classicists, Latin and Greek at A Level and degree level have not only retained their popularity amazingly well, but classical scholarship across the world has never been more vigorous and exciting. From computer analysis to satellite photography, classical scholars have been revolutionising our study of the twin foundations of our European civilisation. At its heart, of course, remains the linguistic knowledge necessary to read Greek and Latin texts in the original, with all the literary and intellectual skills that this develops.

A Level

The A Level examinations are also adapting to the new ways of studying the languages; for example, prose composition from English into Latin or Greek is now optional. Nevertheless A Level Latin and Greek will appeal primarily to those who have gained an A at WJEC Level 2 Latin or at least a grade 7 at GCSE Greek and enjoy a rewarding challenge.

The Four Components

The A Level specification (Latin: OCR H443; Classical Greek: OCR H444) comprises four components, two linguistic and two literary:

01: Unseen Translation

This component is a language paper worth 33% of the total A Level. Candidates are tested with an unseen translation into English of narrative prose drawn from the historians Livy and Xenophon (for Latin and Greek respectively). There is also a passage of verse for translation and scansion: the Latin verse unseen will be taken from the poet Ovid, and the Greek verse unseen from the tragic playwright Euripides.

02: Prose Composition or Comprehension

This component is worth 17%. The first option is to translate a passage from English into Latin or Greek. The alternative is to answer comprehension and grammar questions, together with some translation, from a prose passage. In Latin this will be taken from any author who does not feature on the list of set texts for the literature papers, and in Greek from one of the many writers of rhetoric.

03: Prose Literature

This component is worth 25%. Candidates will read two or three selections from original classical texts, including elements in English translation. For Latin this could be a powerful speech by Cicero, part of Tacitus' fascinating

narrative of the struggle for the imperial throne or stirring battles on the frontier of the empire in his *Histories* and *Annals*. In Greek you can read Thucydides' account of the heroic events at Pylos in 425 BC, parts of Plato's *Apology* with Socrates or excerpts from Xenophon's tales of adventure.

04: Verse Literature

This component is also worth 25%. Candidates will read two or three selections from original classical texts, including elements in English translation. For Latin we may look at Virgil's wonderful epic, the *Aeneid*, some very modern love poetry by Propertius and Tibullus or delve into the mythological world of Ovid. In Greek we may read Homer's famous account of Odysseus' travels or Sophocles' dramatic tragedy of Antigone's impossible choice between loyalty to her dead brother or to the State, together with some very rude comedy by Aristophanes to lighten the tone.

Subject Combinations

Latin makes an excellent combination with almost any other A Level. Traditionally English, French, History and Mathematics are common co-choices, but anything from Art to Physics and Chemistry can also be a successful combination. Greek A Level is usually available by special arrangement in any of the four columns and should thus be able to be taken with any other subject.

The Classical Society

We seek to maintain a regular programme of visiting speakers in the Classical Society as well as trips to plays and exhibitions.

University and Careers

Both Oxford and Cambridge offer some of the largest and most varied classics degree courses in the world. Many other universities in the UK and elsewhere provide a similarly wide range of excellent classical courses. In addition, Latin and Greek also form an obvious basis from which to start a degree in, for example, Law, Philosophy or Theology.

There is no doubt that a Classics degree is still regarded very highly by employers. Classicists tend to enter as broad a spectrum of careers as any other arts graduates, ranging from Accountancy, Business, Law, the Armed Forces, Government Departments and the Media to professional sport or music.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
WJEC Level 2 Latin A or Greek 7

Head of Department: **Jonathan Murnane**

Computer Science

AQA A Level Computer Science 7517

Entry Requirements:

GCSE Computer Science grade 7 and GCSE Maths grade 7, or equivalent. Individual cases with a different profile will be considered, with an additional requirement of a video or one-to-one interview.

Pupils opt to study A Level Computer Science for different reasons:

- most want the option to study Computer Science itself at university. The AQA A Level gives you a very good grounding in the subject, and also some insight into what computer science really is - and whether it will be a subject you will enjoy
- some plan to study Physics, Chemistry, or Biology at university, and have heard that many such degrees now involve writing programs. To have learned programming to A Level standard provides a good synergy with Science
- some enjoy programming as a hobby and would like the opportunity to learn more advanced skills, like object oriented programming

Programming is a big part of this course. At GCSE we teach the popular Python language, but at A Level we switch to the C# language, using professional software development tools, frameworks, and techniques. C# is less forgiving than Python but, so far, all of our pupils have reported that, very quickly, they have appreciated the advantages of C# and really enjoy using it.

Initially we continue with the 'Procedural' style of programming with which pupils who studied GCSE Computing will be familiar, but by the second term we learn a whole new programming 'paradigm' - object-oriented programming. In the Upper Sixth we learn a third programming paradigm: functional programming, using both C# and the 'pure' functional programming language Haskell.

A Level Computer Science is about much more than just programming: we also learn about hardware, networks, low-level logic and high-level design, data structures and algorithms. We study the intellectual foundations of computer science, using simple theoretical computers such as Finite State Automata, Regular Languages, and Turing Machines (named after one of the first, and greatest, Computer Scientists, Alan Turing).

We are often asked, "Do you need to study A Level Mathematics to do Computer Science?". The answer is no, unless you plan to study Computer Science at degree level, in which case you definitely would need A Level Maths. The Computer Science A Level does not require you to know any of the A Level Maths syllabus, although most pupils who enjoy programming are good at Maths and we would expect a strong grade for GCSE Maths.

AQA A Level Computer Science involves two final year exams of 2 hours and 30 minutes, each comprising 40% of the final grade. The other 20% of the final grade comes from an extended computing project - typically developing a substantial application over the course of nearly a year. Many pupils find the project one of the most enjoyable parts of the course. There is a lot of work involved and pupils are expected to work on their projects over the summer holidays between Lower and Upper Sixth. Previous and current projects include; an occupancy warning system for Biffa waste bins; digitising board games like Draughts & Backgammon; simulation to show out of a Hadron Collider and elements of Genetic Counselling; a golf events/scoring system; an accounting system and a system for the School Shop at Stowe. Most pupils come up with the idea for the project themselves, though teaching staff will make suggestions if required.

"Those who can imagine anything, can create the impossible."

Alan Turing

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level: Computer Science 7. Those with a Mathematics 7 will also be considered.

Design

The Design Department at Stowe will be offering the Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE Specification (2017).

Design and Technology (Product Design) (9DT0)

Thinking about design can be daunting, but not thinking about it can be disastrous and will have a detrimental effect on society as everything we use now, or will be using in the future, will have to be designed.

As Charles Eames said, *“design is a plan for arranging elements in such a way as best to accomplish a particular purpose”*. Design pupils will be taught how to do this by being creative, experimental and to take risks and have fun, in order to develop skills that will allow them to solve the design problems they will tackle.

Design and manufacture is a truly creative and intellectually challenging activity. It is entirely compatible with high levels of numeracy and literacy. The design process itself draws on areas such as Maths, Science, Technology, Communication and Art; developing divergent and creative abilities is a basic function of education. One of our main aims is to inspire and empower our future Designers and Engineers, and excite passion in our teaching so that they can develop products they love with sensitivity to an ever-changing world market and clientele.

We welcome pupils who have a background via GCSE (or other recognised qualifications) in any design-related discipline, and we are also willing to consider pupils who have not studied the subject before but show a passion for design in any area (this is done through a portfolio and interview). It should be noted that the courses are quite demanding of your time but very rewarding as the outcomes are still unknown.

This subject is very useful for a career in any sphere of product or industrial design also engineering, graphics, fashion, theatre or television. It is also a good supporting A Level for degree courses in any of the pure or applied sciences and architecture.

The Pearson Edexcel Product Design syllabus we offer is structured as follows.

Component 1:

Principles of Design and Technology

50% of the total A Level

Pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of a range of modern design and manufacturing practices and contemporary design issues. The modern designer must have a good working knowledge of the use of ICT and systems and control technology in the design and manufacture of products. They must also be aware of the important contributions of designers from the past which may provide inspiration for future design.

Content overview

Topic 1: Overview of a Range of Materials

Topic 2: Performance of Materials

Topic 3: Processes and Techniques

Topic 4: Digital Technologies

Topic 5: Development of Products

Topic 6: Technological Developments

Topic 7: Hazards and Risk Assessment

Topic 8: Manufacturing Industries

Topic 9: Designing a Cleaner Environment

Topic 10: Current Legislation

Topic 11: Information Handling

Topic 12: Further Processes and Techniques

Component 2:

Independent Design and Make Project

50% of the total A Level

Pupils are given the opportunity to apply the skills they have acquired and developed throughout this course of study to research, design and make a commercially viable products that will be fully evaluated.

Pupils will be able to develop a knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials and processes used in the fields of design, so they can develop a greater understanding of how products can be designed and manufactured. Pupils will also learn about industrial and commercial practices, the importance of quality checks and the health and safety issues that have to be considered at all times.

A portfolio of work will be produced that will have four parts:

Part 1: Identifying Opportunities for Design

Part 2: Designing a Prototype

Part 3: Making a Prototype

Part 4: Testing and Evaluating Own Design and Prototype

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Design 6, or other design related discipline 6**

Head of Department: **Martin Quinn**

Drama and Theatre Studies

A Level Drama and Theatre Studies offers pupils the opportunity to study drama as an academic subject. Pupils learn to become young practitioners of this practical art form, in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention. The course comprises close study of a wide range of texts that have been selected to represent significant drama through the ages and plays that have been selected to represent 20th and 21st Century drama. The AQA course promotes balance between theory and practice, as pupils are encouraged to apply their theoretical understanding to become imaginative and independent theatre makers.

AQA A Level Drama and Theatre Studies is a creative, experimental subject with ample opportunity to explore and develop work in a wide range of theatre styles and techniques. The course also requires high level essay writing and analytical skills. Performance is fundamental to the A Level course and a grade 6 or above at GCSE Drama is an excellent preparation. Pupils who have not completed a Drama GCSE course, or equivalent, are expected to discuss suitability at interview.

Pupils enjoy regular trips to see seminal plays, new writing and to attend theatre conferences gaining an insight into all aspects of theatre production, writing, directing, acting and design. Pupils are also expected to visit theatres during school holidays such as The National Theatre, The Royal Court and The Old Vic to develop contextual awareness through experiencing a range of historical and contemporary theatre.

A qualification in Drama and Theatre Studies at A Level will facilitate the study of specialist degree courses including Law, English, English and Drama, Playwriting, Theatre Design, Technical Theatre, Production Management, Theatre Arts, as well as Drama and Theatre Studies. In addition, the A Level is an excellent foundation for Drama School where pupils may follow courses in Acting, Directing, Theatre Design, Production and Technical Theatre.

The AQA accredited course we offer is structured as follows:

Component 1: Drama and Theatre

40% of the total A Level

What is Assessed:

- knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- study of two set plays
- analysis and evaluation of live theatre makers

How it is Assessed:

- written exam: 3 hours
- open book

Component 2: Creating Original Drama (practical)

30% of the total A Level

What is Assessed:

- process of creating devised drama
- performance of devised drama (pupils may contribute as Performer, Designer or Director)

Devised pieces must be influenced by the work and methodologies of one prescribed practitioner.

How it is Assessed:

- working notebook
- devised performance

Component 3: Making Theatre (practical)

30% of the total A Level

What is Assessed:

- practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts each taken from a different play
- methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to extract 3
- extract 3 is performed as a final assessed piece (pupils may contribute as performer, designer or director)
- reflective report analysing and evaluating theatrical interpretation of all three extracts

How it is Assessed:

- performance of extract 3
- reflective report

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Drama 6, or other drama related discipline 6

Economics

Social Science subjects are extremely popular at Stowe. More students study the Social Sciences at university than any other group of subjects and employers recognise the useful work skills they develop.

Economics (AQA)

Economics tries to identify how firms and whole economies should operate if they are to maximise output, profits and welfare. Theoretical models are used to simplify the real world in order to gain a better understanding of key issues. For a thoughtful pupil, Economics provides an invaluable tool for analysing a wide variety of problems faced by governments.

Lower Sixth

Individuals, Firms, Markets and Market Failure

Basic tools of economics are introduced, together with insights about how firms behave in various competitive situations. The Government's impact on the economy is considered. Reasons why Governments should and should not intervene in the economy are analysed. Many topical issues such as the minimum wage, welfare state and pollution are discussed.

The National and International Economy

Macro-economic issues are considered such as inflation, unemployment and trade. Government policies which affect interest rates, taxation and trade, etc. are analysed and their drawbacks assessed. This module gives pupils a working knowledge of recent trends and developments in the economy. A brief introduction to the workings of financial markets will be given.

Upper Sixth

Individuals, Firms, Markets and Market Failure II

More detailed micro-economic models are studied including perfect competition, monopoly and oligopoly. Pupils will analyse how decisions are made by firms in these market structures and the limitations of the models in the real world. This module also studies the labour market and the factors which influence relative wage rates and the distribution of income and wealth.

The National and International Economy II

Developments in the UK will be seen in the context of the globalisation of the world economy and membership of the European Union. Assessment of the effectiveness of current Government policy and alternative courses of action will be considered.

Combinations, Skills Needed and Requirements

A good economist is able to use abstract theories and apply them to everyday problems so that real-world policies can be sensibly evaluated. Pupils with an arts background have an advantage in terms of being able to write fluently about policies and problems. A grade 6 in GCSE English is strongly recommended and competence in a Social Science subject such as Geography or History must also have been demonstrated.

Economics bridges the arts/science divide and is excellent for those wishing to broaden their subject choice. An ideal combination would be with Mathematics, Politics and either History, Chemistry or Physics. However, it would also go well with English, Religious Studies, and Geography. It is equally likely to be taken by those who consider themselves to be scientists or interested in the arts.

Maths

It is generally true that pupils coming from a mathematical or science background tend to have a strong ability in terms of understanding the basic theory, and this is especially important as the course will be becoming slightly more mathematical than that taught in previous years. Mathematical marks will count for 20% of the A Level grade. Those with less than a grade 6 at GCSE Maths are likely to struggle significantly.

After university, economists go on to a wide variety of careers from the Civil Service to the City. Their abilities to apply ideas are highly valued by employers.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
English 6, Mathematics 6

English Literature

The Course

The A Level English Literature course comprises the close study of a wide range of literary texts. Successful candidates usually enjoy reading sophisticated literature and discussing their ideas with others. They are likely to have a high grade in English Language at either IGCSE or GCSE and a further high grade in English Literature.

Candidates at Stowe are entered for the linear Edexcel A Level (9ETO) qualification in English Literature. We start the year with an overview of Pre-Victorian literature in order to establish an understanding of literary contexts and hone the skills of close reading and analysis.

The course includes four components:

Component One: Drama

30% of the total A Level

Assessed by written examination lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes

Pupils Study:

- one Shakespeare play and one other drama from either tragedy or comedy
- critical essays related to their selected Shakespeare play. Pupils' preparation is supported by a critical anthology of essays to do with their Shakespeare play

Component Two: Prose

20% of the total A Level

Assessed by written examination lasting 1 hour

Pupils Study:

- two prose texts from a chosen theme. At least one of the prose texts must be pre-1900

Component Three: Poetry

30% of the total A Level

Assessed by written examination lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes

Pupils Study:

- poetic form, meaning and language
- a selection of post-2000 specified poetry
- a specified range of poetry from: either a literary period (pre- or post-1900) **or** a named poet from within a literary period

Non-Examination Assessment (Coursework)

20% of the total A Level

Pupils write one comparative essay of 2500 - 3000 words based on two texts of their choice, as agreed by their teacher. Pupils must undertake extensive independent research and essays will be informed by literary criticism, theory, and contextual knowledge. This aspect of the course will be directed, but not taught, by teachers, and is completed in the Upper Sixth year. As this is a two-year course, pupils are expected to work on their coursework during the summer between their Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth years.

In total, candidates study eight texts for this qualification (a Shakespeare play, one other play, two poetry texts, two prose texts and a further two texts of their own choice). Please note that teachers are encouraged to choose texts about which they are both passionate and in which they have a particular expertise. This means that different classes may study different texts, depending on which teachers they have.

The Literary Society

All Sixth Form English Literature pupils at Stowe are members of the Literary Society. In addition to the range of distinguished guests, the Literary Society also stages annual events such as the National 'Poetry by Heart' competition, Burns' Night, day trips to academic conferences, writing workshops, joint events with other Departments, and at the end of the academic year, a Leavers' dinner.

Stowe is well-placed for theatres in Stratford, Oxford, Northampton, London, Birmingham and Milton Keynes. Theatre trips (and occasional excursions to galleries or museums) are included in Literary Society schedules.

Academic Extension Classes and Oxbridge

For those Sixth Form pupils who wish to extend their knowledge beyond the confines of the classroom, there are weekly academic extension classes, which explore a range of genres and periods. In the Michaelmas Term we join forces with the History Department to look at significant moments through the lenses of literature and history. Pupils wishing to apply for Oxbridge or to Russell Group Universities are also offered specific tuition in preparing for and making these applications.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
English Literature 6, English Language 5

Film Studies

"The first step - especially for young people with energy and drive and talent, but not money - the first step to controlling your world is to control your culture. To model and demonstrate the kind of world you demand to live in. To write the books. Make the music. Shoot the films. Paint the art."

Chuck Palahniuk (author of Fight Club and award winning journalist)

The Film Studies A Level course comprises the close study of a wide range of film texts, together with a component of practical coursework. Successful candidates enjoy engaging in close textual analysis, discussing new ideas and debating theory. They also enjoy the creative process, creating their own scripts, storyboards and films. A high grade in English Language or Literature GCSE is desirable as this is primarily an essay-based subject. Pupils do not need prior practical film making experience.

Choosing Film

Film Studies is a rigorous, academic subject that combines theoretical analysis, contextual understanding, critical debate and practical production. Learners develop analytical and creative skills, plus their communication, teamwork and problem solving skills. They also improve their ability to work independently, developing their skills of self-reflection.

The subject is wholly relevant to the contemporary world. Films have a powerful overt and covert influence on our lives; encoding key messages, themes, values and ideologies. They are often called 'the modern art form' and as such deserve to be studied closely. Film Studies allows pupils to combine learning about culture and society with examining matters of ideology, narrative, auteur theory and the effect of advances in film making technology.

Many leading universities provide undergraduate and/or postgraduate courses in Film Studies. Pupils studying Film go on to a wide range of universities, including many leading Russell Group Universities. Some courses, such as the University of Warwick, are theoretical, whereas other universities offer more practical courses. Pupils studying Film at A Level may go on to choose a wide range of courses and careers including, but not limited to, Media Studies, PR, Advertising, Journalism, Education, Art, Drama and English. Film Studies can be taken with any

combination of subjects. It works well alongside A Levels in English, Art, Business, Economics, Politics, and Religious Studies. Pupils also take it with subjects like A Level History, Drama, Geography and Sciences to demonstrate a breadth of study and an understanding of contemporary issues.

The Course

Pupils follow a linear course across two years and will be entered for the WJEC Film Studies A Level.

Examinations take place at the end of the Upper Sixth year. The exams consist of two papers alongside a practical component as follows:

Component 1:

Varieties of Film and Filmmaking

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes
35% of the total A Level

Topics:

- **Section A:** Hollywood 1930-1990 (2 film comparative study)
- **Section B:** American Film Since 2005 (2 film study)
- **Section C:** British Film Since 1995 (2 film study)

Component 2:

Global Filmmaking Perspectives

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes
35% of the total A Level

Topics:

- **Section A:** Global Film (2 film study)
- **Section B:** Documentary Film
- **Section C:** Film Movements - Silent Cinema
- **Section D:** Film Movements - Experimental Film (1960-2000)

Component 3:

Production Non-Exam Assessment

30% of the total A Level

This component assesses one production and its evaluative analysis. Learners produce:

- either a short film (4-5 minutes) or a screenplay for a short film (1600-1800 words) plus a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay
- an evaluative analysis (1600-1800 words)

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
English Language 5 or English Literature 6

French

A Level French gives learners the opportunity to develop and deepen their awareness and understanding of the language as well as to increase their knowledge of the French speaking world through the study of the language in its cultural, literary and social context.

The level of language required at A Level is different from GCSE as it is more sophisticated, thus allowing for greater depth and subtlety to language. As at GCSE, the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are assessed.

Language work includes areas of study that are contemporary, age-appropriate and engaging. These should inspire pupils to take part in French discussions. One of the most important aspects of this course is the opportunity to develop opinions and defend points of view in the target language.

Course Content

Four main themes are covered at A Level:

- **Changes in French Society** (the family, education and the world of work)
- **Political and Artistic Culture in the French Speaking World** (music, cinema and festivals and traditions)
- **Immigration and the French Multicultural Society** (integration, multiculturalism and the rise of the extreme right)
- **The Occupation and the Resistance** (life under the Vichy regime, collaboration, the importance of Jean Moulin and Charles de Gaulle, the French Resistance)

These areas of study form the basis for conversation, comprehension and translation. In addition pupils study one literary text and one film. Two essays, one on the film and one on the text, are written in Paper 2 as part of the final assessment at the end of the course.

A Level linguists also complete an individual research project that is discussed in their speaking exam.

Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation

1 hour 50 minutes

40% of the total A Level

Listening and reading comprehension and unseen translation French to English.

Paper 2: Writing

2 hours 40 minutes

30% of the total A Level

Two essays and unseen translation English to French.

Paper 3: Speaking

21-23 minute exam (with 5 minutes preparation)

30% of the total A Level

Discussion of a stimulus card on one of the main themes and a presentation and discussion of the pupil's independent research project.

All pupils studying A Level French will have a weekly one-to-one speaking lesson with one of our French Assistants in addition to group lessons.

Exam Board: Edexcel

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level: French 7

Geography

The great breadth of Geography as an academic subject is one of its real strengths and has made it an effective bridge between the Sciences and Humanities. The study of Geography in the Sixth Form has changed considerably over the years. A more rigorous, imaginative and theoretical syllabus has emerged through which one can gain a greater and more relevant understanding of the landscape and man's occupation of it. The study of many contemporary issues and the development of a sense of environmental responsibility combine to make Geography one of the most relevant and popular subjects for young people today.

GCSE grades of 9-6 are normally the expected requirement for admission to the A Level course. Studying Geography at A Level will not only improve your understanding of the world in which you live, it will also enable you to develop important skills, including literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This will stand you in good stead in any academic or working environment.

Fieldwork is regarded as an integral part of the A Level course, with coursework accounting for 20% of the final A Level grade. All Sixth Formers will be required to attend a residential field course organised by Stowe's Geography Department to enable research for this coursework to be undertaken. The local area also provides ideal opportunities to practise fieldwork techniques and gather first hand data to test various geographical theories.

Pupils are encouraged to subscribe to a Geographical Journal, written especially for A Level pupils and designed to support studies and broaden interest in the subject as a whole. This is further encouraged through the School's Geographical Society. A large number of our pupils continue to study Geography at a higher level in a wide range of courses and subject combinations. Geography graduates are valued for their literacy and numeracy skills and follow a wide variety of careers including Banking, Commerce, the Armed Services, National and Local Government, Law, Teaching, or in the fields of Town and Country Planning.

Recently Geographers have been prominent in the organisation of environmental conservation measures and the provision and control of recreational facilities in areas of outstanding beauty.

The Course

The OCR A Level course is detailed below:

Physical Systems (01)

1 hour 30 minute written paper
22% of the total A Level (66 marks)

- Landscape Systems (Coasts)
- Earth's Life Support Systems
- Geographical Skills

Human Interactions (02)

1 hour 30 minute written paper
22% of the total A Level (66 marks)

- Changing Spaces: Making Places
- Global Connections (Migration and Power and Borders)
- Geographical Skills

Geographical Debates (03)*

2 hours 30 minute written paper
36% of the total A Level (108 marks)

Optionality - study 2 of 5

- **Climate Change**
- Disease Dilemmas
- Exploring Oceans
- Future of Food
- **Hazardous Earth**
- Geographical Skills

(The options we will study are Climate Change and Hazardous Earth).

Investigative Geography (04/05)*

Non-examination assessment
20% of the total A Level (60 marks)

- Independent Investigation

*Indicates inclusion of synoptic assessment.

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Geography 6**

German

A Level German gives learners the opportunity to develop and deepen their awareness and understanding of the language as well as increase their knowledge of the German speaking world through the study of the language in its cultural, literary and social context.

The specification has been designed to be studied over two years. The suggestions below relating to content for year one and content for year two are based on the knowledge that the course will generally be taken over two years.

The level of language required at A Level is different from GCSE as it is more sophisticated, thus allowing for greater depth and subtlety of language. As at GCSE, the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are assessed. To feel confident and cope with a language at A Level, you must achieve a least a 7 at GCSE.

Language work includes areas of study that are contemporary, age-appropriate and engaging. These should inspire pupils to take part in German discussions. One of the most important aspects of this course is the opportunity to develop opinions and defend points of view in the target language.

Course Content

Four main themes are covered at A Level. Pupils may study all sub-themes in relation to any German-speaking country or countries.

1. Aspects of German Speaking Society

- The Changing State of the Family
- The Digital World
- Youth Culture

2. Multiculturalism in German Speaking Society

- Immigration
- Integration
- Racism

3. Artistic Culture in the German Speaking World

- Festivals and Traditions
- Art and Architecture
- Cultural Life in Berlin, Past and Present

4. Aspects of Political Life in the German

Speaking World

- Germany and the European Union
- Politics and Youth
- German Re-unification and its Consequences

These areas of study form the basis for conversation, comprehension and translation. In addition pupils study one literary text, *Der Vorleser* and one film, *Das Leben Der Anderen*. Two essays, one on the film and one on the text, are written in Paper 2 as part of the final assessment at the end of the course.

A Level linguists also complete an individual research project that is discussed in their speaking exam.

Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
(100 marks)
50% of the total A Level

Translation into English; a passage of a minimum of 100 words (10 marks)

Translation into German; a passage of a minimum of 100 words (10 marks)

Paper 2: Writing

Written exam: 2 hours
(80 marks in total)
20% of the total A Level

Paper 3: Speaking

21-23 minute exam (with 5 minutes preparation)
30% of the total A Level

Discussion of a sub-theme with the discussion based on a stimulus card (5-6 minutes). The pupil studies the card for 5 minutes at the start of the test (25 marks). Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9-10 minutes) of individual research project (35 marks).

All pupils studying A Level German will have a weekly one-to-one speaking lesson with our German Assistant in addition to group lessons.

Exam Board: AQA

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
German 7

History

Overview

History is primarily about curiosity and argument. It involves studying the past and reaching conclusions about it. You will be concerned with all aspects of human activity: politics, economics, society, religion, ideas and culture. You will examine how things have changed, why they have changed and with what results. You will be asked to research information, assess its merits and communicate your own opinions. You will both defend and criticise the views of others. You do not need to have studied History at GCSE but, being an essay-based subject, you will need to have a good foundation in written English.

The Value of History as an Academic Subject

The subject provides a broad and respected qualification. It teaches the crucial skills of writing, argument and research. It is an ideal springboard for a wide variety of degrees and an excellent foundation for professions in law, the civil service and journalism, as well as providing the clarity of reflection and analysis useful for careers in any branch of finance.

Studying History at A Level

Your study will be based around the researching and writing of essays. This will involve wider reading, planning and executing essays on topics studied and discussed in class. The School Library has an excellent History section and the Department has its own stock of relevant titles.

Course Specifics

The Department offers two clear programmes at A Level. Pupils are given a choice of whether to follow an early modern or modern pathway with the Edexcel Exam Board.

The History Society

The Department will encourage you to widen your historical interests by inviting distinguished historians to address The History Society, which all pupils will be invited to join. The group will also meet regularly to discuss and debate important cultural issues around a particular country or theme.

Minimum Required Grade

We would expect A Level Historians to begin their course with a minimum of a grade 6 at GCSE History. If GCSE History is not taken, grades in comparable subjects, such as English, could also demonstrate the required level.

Course Summaries

Early Modern

Unit 1: England 1509-1603

Unit 2: Luther 1515-1555

Unit 3: England 1399-1509

Unit 4: Coursework Investigation

Modern

Unit 1: Britain 1918-1997

Unit 2: USA 1955-1992

Unit 3: British Empire 1763-1914

Unit 4: Coursework Investigation

A Level Units

Unit 1: Breadth Studies with Interpretations

Each Paper 1 option has two points of focus: themes (breadth) and historical interpretations (depth). The four themes focus on developments and changes over a broad timescale and two controversies provide an opportunity for more detailed study.

Unit 2: Depth Study

Each Unit 2 option is focused on depth, requiring more detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic, and over a shorter time period. The content is organised into four key topics.

Unit 3: Themes in Breadth with Aspects in Depth

This option comprises two parts: the Aspects in Breadth focus on long-term changes and contextualise the Aspects in Depth, which focus in detail on key episodes.

Unit 4: Coursework

The purpose of the coursework is to enable pupils to develop skills in the analysis and evaluation of interpretations of history in a chosen question, problem or issue as part of an independently researched assignment. Current coursework topics examine interpretations of Mary I for the early modern course and approaches to the Partition of India for modernists.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
History 6, or other essay writing subject 6

History of Art

History of Art is studied at A Level at Stowe, which makes for the ultimate backdrop to a comprehensive engagement with the subject. Understandably, few pupils will have much prior knowledge of the subject and none is expected. Provided you are committed to hard work, this new visual language offers a fresh understanding of beauty in all its artistic manifestations: from works considered in the classroom, to those viewed in a museum context, to those we will encounter abroad.

Qualifications

Given the demand for essay writing, at least a 6 is expected in GCSE English Language for entry to this course. We expect a strong commitment to independent study as well as a willingness to engage critically and intelligently with objects in order to gain the fullest enjoyment from this fascinating subject.

Course Aims

We aim to show what an exciting academic discipline Art History continues to be in our own image-saturated culture. We consider the materials, styles and techniques of artists while situating art and architecture in its social and historical context. Political, religious and cultural history are all crucial frames through which works are considered on our course, in addition to the visual analysis of works themselves. The study of art in both its historical and contemporary forms provides a crucial knowledge of world civilisations, not to mention visual and analytical tools that can be applied in many walks of life. Coming to terms with how images and objects shape our social and political identities is our daily task and one that serves to enrich all those who choose to engage with global culture today. This course allows you to develop particular strengths and interests, encourages lifelong learning and provides access to higher education and university degree courses in Art History and related subjects, as well as careers in the art world and beyond.

Course Requirements

Weekly preps are set, both visual exercises and essays, together with note-taking and class discussion. You will be taken on regular visits to London, Oxford and elsewhere to study works of art first hand. You are also expected to visit galleries and museums and to read and research widely in your own time.

Visits Abroad

Paris, Florence, Rome, Venice and New York are just some of the cities we have visited in the past.

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Paper 1A: Visual Analysis

Pupils in their first year study the visual language of art throughout history to equip them with the tools to analyse three previously unseen works in the exam. Stowe itself serves as much as an object of study as a backdrop in this phase of the course.

Paper 1B: Themes

Pupils will consider how both Nature and Identities have helped to shape the production and reception of works in both Western and non-Western contexts throughout history.

Paper 2: Periods

With the requirement for two periods of in-depth study, pupils will consider the Renaissance in Italy (1420-1520) as well as Modernism in Europe (1900-1939). These topics are studied over two years.

Societies

The History of Art Society meets during term with guest speakers. The purpose of the Society is to expand pupils' knowledge and experience beyond the confines of the exam specification and to experience something of the discipline as it is practised beyond the School.

Course Value

This subject is considered a full academic A Level by universities and because of its breadth and cross-curricular requirements, it is welcomed as a highly regarded Humanities subject, one that complements both Arts and non-Arts subjects. Past pupils report that the vital critical, visual and essay skills which one acquires on this course helped them tremendously in their university careers and beyond. Equally importantly, they have also enjoyed the subject and welcomed the opportunity to travel and see works of art at first hand. There is no doubt that two years spent in the study of Art History furnishes both concrete and intangible skills that only boost pupils' academic profiles.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
English Language 6, or other essay writing subject 6

Mathematics

Mathematics is one of the most useful A Levels, being either necessary or preferred for many degree courses in a variety of subject areas. The skills learnt will be useful for those wishing to study Sciences (laboratory and social), Medicine, Architecture, and Economics, and is essential for those considering courses in Maths, Statistics or Engineering. Learning Mathematics is not just about memorising techniques and formulae, it teaches you thinking skills that will last a lifetime. However, the main reason to choose Mathematics in the Sixth Form is because you have enjoyed the subject at GCSE.

Mathematics A Level

Mathematics A Level expands on many of the topics studied at GCSE and is recommended for pupils who achieved a grade 7 or higher in their GCSE.

Pupils will also learn about completely new subject areas such as Calculus and Logarithms. The ideas of proof, problem solving and logical reasoning are key to Mathematics and play a greater part in the A Level course than they did at GCSE.

The A Level consists of 3 papers worth 100 marks each. Two of the papers are Pure Mathematics, and the last one is Applied Mathematics (Mechanics and Statistics). All three papers contribute a third of the overall grade and are 2 hours long.

After the first year of teaching, pupils will have covered the content of an AS Level qualification which is roughly half the content of an A Level and less challenging. Pupils who do not pass the end of first year internal exam will have the opportunity to sit the AS level paper at the end of Upper Sixth.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level: Mathematics 7

Further Mathematics A Level

We offer Further Maths at both AS and A Level. Pupils opting for either course should be strong Mathematicians. The minimum expectation is (alongside a motivated enthusiasm for the subject) a grade 8 or 9 at GCSE and experience of some extension mathematics, such as Additional Mathematics, is desirable.

A Level Further Mathematics is another complete A Level and has to be taken in conjunction with Mathematics A Level. Pupils must start Lower Sixth with four A Levels if one is Further Mathematics.

Pupils will be working through the Further Mathematics AS content in the first year. In the Upper Sixth the pupils will then focus more on the more challenging Further Mathematics content. Anyone wanting to study Mathematics beyond the Sixth Form, or Physics, Engineering and Chemistry at Oxbridge, should be seriously considering Further Mathematics.

The Further Mathematics exams consist of 4 Papers, each worth 25%, tested in 1 hour 30 minutes. Pupils are able to choose between various modules in two of these papers. We follow the Edexcel specification for Maths and Further Maths A Level.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level: Mathematics 8

Other opportunities within the Mathematics Department

Pupils entering the Sixth Form who have not achieved a grade 4 or above at GCSE are required to retake their Maths GCSE at the end of their first term in the Lower Sixth year. Regular classes are provided so that the specification content can be thoroughly revised. These classes are usually very small and pupils benefit greatly from the individual attention.

High attaining pupils and curious Mathematicians are encouraged to take part in the Maths Society: 'The Gaussian Group'. In addition to this, a weekly Oxbridge group session 'Local Maximum' is offered to Sixth Formers who are considering courses related to mathematics at Oxbridge and STEP papers.

Head of Department: **Mikkel Møller**

Head of Sixth Form Maths: **Sophie Penrhyn-Lowe**

Music

Music is everywhere: it's used in restaurants to make a relaxed atmosphere and stimulate conversation; it's used to heighten dramatic moments in films and television programmes; and it often accompanies key moments in someone's life. Research has shown how the heartbeat changes and mimics the music you listen to, and that listening to music releases the hormone dopamine (associated with feeling good). But why does music have such an effect?

Our popular and highly engaging A Level Music course opens up the world of music, to find out why certain songs and pieces are the way they are. Old Stoic musicians include Harry Gregson-Williams (the composer of *Chicken Run* and *Shrek*) and award-winning composer Howard Goodall. Pupils study everything from the music of *Batman* and *Psycho*, to The Beatles and Courtney Pine, via Debussy, Bach and Mozart. They also get the opportunity to write their own music (including, for example a pop song or film soundtrack), and develop their skills in performing the music they enjoy.

The course allows for all styles of music to be explored including Classical, Popular and Jazz. It is advisable for pupils wishing to take this A Level to be at least Grade 7 standard on one instrument before embarking upon the course. Pupils are expected to have Grade 5 Theory before taking this course. Pupils also simultaneously study for Grade 8 Theory during the course.

Performing Music (30%)

This gives pupils the opportunity to perform in public as soloists. Pupils can choose music in any style, and can perform either as a soloist or part of an ensemble. Any instrument and/or voice combinations are acceptable as part of a performance lasting a minimum of eight minutes. The performance is recorded after 1 March of their Upper Sixth year.

Composing (30%)

Pupils compose two pieces; at least one composition must be to a brief set by Edexcel. Pupils may either compose a second piece to a second brief, or produce a free composition. The first composition must be at least four minutes in length, whilst the second composition must be at least one minute long. The total time for both compositions must be not less than six minutes.

Developing Musical Understanding (40%)

This unit assesses pupils' knowledge of musical elements and contexts. Pupils study three pieces from six areas of study, including Instrumental Music, Music for Film, Popular Music and Jazz, Fusions and Vocal Music. Pupils sit a two hour paper. All A Level pupils are given regular performance opportunities with specialist coaching.

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Grade 7 on one instrument, Grade 5 Theory**

Physics

"Not only is the Universe stranger than we think, it is stranger than we can think."

Werner Heisenberg

Physics is crucial to understanding the world around us, the world inside us, and the world beyond the stars. It is the most basic and fundamental science. In Physics, we study the universe on a grand scale - from black holes and supernovae, to the world of quantum mechanics, particle interactions and processes within the nucleus.

Physics challenges our very intuition - with relativity bending the rules with regards to time and space. Technologies we now take for granted, such as lasers, computers, MRI scanners, memory foam mattresses and the internet, were all invented by Physicists (often with no practical objective in mind).

Some may ask - what is the point? A physicist responds that knowledge **is** the point. It is the end goal. It is what drives us, what motivates us and what inspires us to delve deeper into the universe than ever before.

Physicists are problem solvers. Their analytical skills make Physicists versatile, adaptable, and desirable in so many careers. Physicists bring a broad perspective to any problem. They develop the ability to consider problems from a variety of situations and are not bound by context. This incentive thinking makes Physicists excellent Journalists, Lawyers, Financiers, Doctors, Engineers, Computer Scientists, Astronomers, and Researchers.

What makes a good Physicist?

The key ingredient is a curious, questioning mind. Physicists deploy a mixture of experimental and analytical skills, and creative flair, but there is no norm. Some have a theoretical leaning; others excel as practical or computational investigators. Some are very analytical in their approach to the subject, others more intuitive.

A Level is one of the most enjoyable times to study Physics. It is complicated enough to be an intellectual challenge, but still possible to visualise. At Stowe, we follow the OCR Physics A curriculum which provides a fascinating introduction to advanced level physics, while retaining the Newtonian mechanics that is the basis of so much around us.

Practical Work

A list of practical activities which pupils must carry out is supplied by the examination board and examination questions will be based around these practicals. However, many more practicals will be performed to reinforce the concepts being taught. Physics is a practical subject and this is an important element of the course.

First Year

Module 1: Development of Practical Skills in Physics

Module 2: Foundations of Physics

Module 3: Forces and Motion

Module 4: Electrons, Waves and Photons

Second Year

Module 1: Development in Practical Skills in Physics

Module 5: Newtonian World and Astrophysics

Module 6: Particles and Medical Physics

The final examinations consist of three papers:

Paper One: Modelling Physics (37%)

Content - Modules 1, 2, 3, and 5

Written exam - 2 hours 15 minutes

Paper Two: Exploring Physics (37%)

Content - Modules 1, 2, 4 and 6

Written exam - 2 hours 15 minutes

Paper Three: Unified Physics (26%)

Content - Modules 1 to 6

Written exam - 1 hour 30 minutes

"Physics is, hopefully, simple. Physicists are not."

Edward Teller

**Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Physics 7, Maths 7 or Dual Award 7-7**

Examination Board: Edexcel

A Level Government and Politics studies how Governments work and how people interact with their political system. It explores ideologies and compares the democratic performance of different political systems. The Edexcel course offers a broad range of exciting and stimulating topics including political philosophy and comparative political science. It has been divided into three components.

Component 1:

UK Politics and Core Political Ideas

Component 1 consists of study of elections, parties, pressure groups and democracy in the United Kingdom. It also covers the three core political ideologies of Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism in some detail, which includes the study of prominent thinkers in each ideology.

Component 2:

UK Government and Optional Political Ideas

Component 2 looks at the British Constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and relations between institutions as part of the study of government. The optional ideology of choice will be Ecologism which includes study of ecocentric and anthropocentric approaches alongside key thinkers such as EF Schumacher, Murray Bookchin and Carolyn Merchant.

Component 3:

Comparative Politics

The comparative study in Component 3 focuses on government and politics of the United States. This includes the core institutions of Government; The Constitution, Congress, President and Supreme Court, along with democracy, participation and civil rights as the focus of the politics element. Candidates will then compare these concepts with their counterparts in the UK.

Assessment

The A Level is assessed in three examinations at the end of year two. Paper 1 is two hours and is worth 84 marks. 60 marks are allocated to UK Politics and 24 marks are allocated to Ideologies. Paper 2 is the same as paper 1 with 60 marks allocated to UK Government and 24 marks allocated to the Optional Ideology. Paper 3 is also the same structure, with 24 marks allocated to comparative questions and 60 marks allocated to pure US Government and politics. Candidates are required to answer questions worth 30 marks and 24 marks for Components 1 and 2. Component 3 consists of 30 mark and 12 mark questions.

Combinations, Skills Needed and Requirements

Politics can be studied with other Humanities and Social Sciences, such as Economics, History and Geography. Politics may also be chosen by those who are primarily Scientists but who are looking for a broadening, third subject. The most important skills for success in Politics are literacy, writing, reading, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation. Pupils who take an interest in the contemporary news are also at an advantage. At least a grade 6 at GCSE is required in English or a Humanities subject. Politics is an extremely popular university course with 40% of 2016 Stowe Politics leavers going on to study the subject at degree level. Politics is also highly regarded for those pupils considering studying Law at university. Political scientists then progress to a wide variety of management careers.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
English 6, or other essay writing subject 6

Religious Studies

Examination Board: Edexcel

Religious Studies offers four areas of study, allowing pupils to choose the three they wish to study, from Philosophy and Religion, Religion and Ethics, New Testament Studies and a study of a chosen religion which will all be assessed through three externally-examined papers.

The specification facilitates enquiry into, and develops insightful evaluations of, ultimate questions about the purposes and commitments of human life, especially as expressed in philosophy, ethics and religion. This will enable pupils to reflect on and develop their values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their studies.

It develops transferable skills for progression to higher education - pupils will use ideas from a range of approaches to the study of religions and beliefs in order to research and present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, which engage profoundly with moral, religious and spiritual issues. This will enable pupils to make a smooth transition to the next level of study.

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion (9RS0/01)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of total A Level (80 marks)

Content overview

Pupils will engage with arguments and debates on religious and non-religious views of life. Arguments for the existence of God - Design, Cosmological, Ontological, Religious Experience; Atheism; Problem of Evil & Suffering; Life after Death; Religion & Science; Religious Language.

Paper 2: Religion and Ethics (9RS0/02)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of total A Level (80 marks)

Content overview

The content for this paper is focused on exploring both common ground and controversy in dealing with issues that arise in the areas of morality and religion in the context of the modern world. Environmental ethics; Equality; Ethical theories - Utilitarianism; Situation Ethics; Natural Moral Law; Virtue ethics; Applied ethics - War & Pacifism, Sexual ethics; Meta-ethics; Religion & Morality; Deontology; Issues in Medical ethics.

Paper 4: Study of Religion (9RS0/4A-4F)

Written examination: 2 hours

33.33% of total A Level (80 marks)

Options

The content for this paper comprises a focused and in-depth study of a chosen religion - 4D: Islam.

Content overview

Religious beliefs, values and teachings; Sources of wisdom and authority; Practices that shape and express religious identity; Social and historical developments; Works of scholars; Religion and society; Primary texts.

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Religious Studies 6, or other essay writing subject 6

Spanish

Studying Spanish at A Level gives learners the opportunity to develop their understanding of not only the Spanish language, but also the Hispanic world, through the study of Spanish in cultural and literary contexts.

The language used at A Level is more sophisticated than that which is used at GCSE and all four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are assessed. In order to cope with studying Spanish at A Level, all learners must have achieved at least a 7 at GCSE.

Language work is focused on areas of study that are contemporary, age-appropriate and engaging. These should inspire learners to take part in lively discussions and debates. One of the most important skills learners will develop is the ability to express and defend different points of view in Spanish.

Course Content

Four main themes are covered at A Level.

Pupils may study all sub themes in relation to any Spanish-speaking country or countries.

1. Aspects of Spanish Speaking Society

- Modern and Traditional Values
- Cyberspace
- Equal Rights

2. Multiculturalism in the Hispanic World

- Immigration
- Integration
- Racism

3. Artistic Culture in the Hispanic World

- Modern Day Idols
- Spanish Regional Identity
- Cultural Heritage

4. Aspects of Political Life in the Hispanic World

- Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Citizens
- Monarchies and Dictatorships
- Popular Movements

These areas of study form the basis for conversation, comprehension and translation. In addition, pupils study one literary text and one film. Two essays, one on the film and one on the text, are written in Paper 2 as part of the final assessment at the end of the course.

Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes

100 marks

50% of the total A Level

Translation into English; a passage of a minimum of 100 words (10 marks)

Translation into Spanish; a passage of a minimum of 100 words (10 marks).

Paper 2: Writing

Written exam: 2 hours

80 marks in total

20% of the total A Level

Either one question in Spanish on a set text from a choice of two questions and one question in Spanish on a set film from a choice of two questions, or two questions in Spanish on set texts from a choice of two questions on each text.

Paper 3: Speaking

21-23 minute exam (with 5 minutes preparation)

30% of the total A Level

Discussion of a sub theme with the discussion based on a stimulus card (5-6 minutes). The pupil studies the card for 5 minutes at the start of the test (25 marks).

Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9-10 minutes) of individual research project (35 marks).

All learners studying A Level Spanish will have a weekly one-to-one speaking session with one of our Spanish Assistants in addition to group lessons.

Exam Board: AQA

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Spanish 7

Sports Science

Sports Science is well established at Stowe, with a very experienced department of teaching staff.

Requirements for A Level Candidates:

- A minimum of Grade 6 in GCSE Sports Science/PE or Grade 7 in GCSE Science (Dual or Biology) and English Language
- A high level of sporting ability (minimum A team school level) in at least one sport/activity
- A deep interest in sport in its broadest sense

Candidates will study the following areas:

Physiological Aspects

In this section of the course the pupils learn about the body and how it is affected by exercise and training. Topics include anatomy, the muscular system and the mechanics of movement, nutrition for sport, sports injuries, a study of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, the components of fitness and how to test them. The following are also covered in depth: the physiology of muscles; causes of fatigue and recovery; physiology of elite athletes; the energy systems and biomechanics.

Psychological Aspects

This section leads to an understanding of how psychological factors affect performance, how skills are learnt and improved and how information is processed, as well as the most effective methods of practice. With further study of the ways in which the mind can affect the performance for elite sportspeople considered, with topics including group dynamics, leadership, stress management, aggression and personalities.

Sociological Aspects

The pupils study the influence of sport on society. The effects of racism, gender inequalities, impairments and class issues which performers face in modern sport are investigated. The effect of the following on sport are considered: commercialism, media, professionalism, drugs in sport, talent identification, technology and hooliganism. The impact of World Games, such as the Olympics are studied in depth.

Non-Exam Assessment (30%)

Pupils are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity. The candidates will also need to analyse, understand and correct areas of weakness in their performance by applying the physiological, psychological and cultural aspects learned in the theory side of the course.

Careers

Many of our pupils go on to study a sports related degree at top universities, for example Bath, Loughborough and Exeter. Due to the broad nature of the subject, there are several potential career opportunities such as sports scientist, physiotherapy, sports business and management, sports participation, professional teaching/coaching, media, sports marketing, or as an elite performer.

Examination Assessment (70%)

Paper 1

2 hour theory paper
35% of the total A Level

Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport.

Section A: Applied Anatomy and Physiology

Section B: Skill Acquisition

Section C: Sport and Society

Paper 2

2 hour theory paper
35% of the total A Level

Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport.

Section A: Exercise Physiology and Biomechanics

Section B: Sport Psychology

Section C: Sport and Society and Technology in Sport

Exam Board: AQA

Required minimum GCSE grade entry level:
Sports Science/PE 6 or Science (Dual or Biology) 7

Upper Sixth Leavers 2018	
UK University (2018 entry)	111
UK University (2019 entry)	32
Non-UK University (2018 entry)	2
Non-UK University (2019 entry)	2
Gap Year/Apply 2019	19
Total	166

Stowe University Places (125 Leavers and 22 Old Stoics)			
Russell Group		University Alliance	
University of Exeter	18	Oxford Brookes University	13
Newcastle University	14	Nottingham Trent University	5
University of Edinburgh	7	University of the West of England	2
University of Bristol	5	Manchester Metropolitan University	1
University of Leeds	5	University of Lincoln	1
Cardiff University	4	Million+ Group	
University College London	4	Bath Spa University	2
University of Birmingham	4	Other	
Queen Mary, University of London	3	Northumbria University	3
University of Manchester	3	King's College London	2
University of Nottingham	3	Leeds Beckett University	2
Durham University	2	University of Bath	2
Imperial College London	2	University of Reading	2
University of Liverpool	2	University of Surrey	2
University of Cambridge	1	University of Westminster, London	2
University of Oxford	1	Bournemouth University	1
University of Warwick	1	Falmouth University	1
University of York	1	Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh	1
1994 Group		Leeds College of Music (UCAS)	1
Loughborough University	4	Loughborough College	1
Royal Holloway, University of London	3	Swansea University	1
University of Leicester	2	The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama,	
University of Sussex	2	University of London	1
Lancaster University	1	University of Kent	1
School of Oriental and African Studies	1	University of Roehampton	1
Overseas		University of St Andrews	1
Various locations in the USA and continental Europe		University of the Arts London	1

Subjects Studied			
Business & Management	24	Modern Languages	3
History of Art	7	Physics	3
Architecture	6	Psychology	3
Engineering	6	Agriculture & Related Disciplines	2
English	6	Anthropology	2
Geography	6	Art	2
Sports Science	6	Journalism	2
History	5	Mathematics	2
Media Studies	5	Accounting	1
Philosophy	5	Advertising	1
Sociology & Social Sciences	5	Archaeology	1
Biology & Zoology	4	Chemistry	1
Law	4	Classics	1
Medicine & Medical Sciences	4	Design	1
Politics & International Relations	4	Drama	1
Design	3	Fashion	1
Economics	3	Geology	1
ICT	3	Natural Sciences	1
Liberal Arts	3	PPE	1
Music	3	Urban Planning	1

Programme of Electives

The Extended Project Qualification

The EPQ builds on the skills honed in the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) at GCSE level. It carries the same UCAS weighting as half a full A Level and provides the possibility for pupils to pursue an area of particular interest. It involves a significant amount of independent study and can take the form of either an extended essay of 5,000 words or an artefact with a written report. Universities and employers welcome it because it indicates genuine academic interest and commitment as well as an ability to reflect and work independently. Those taking an EPQ are allocated a designated supervisor who will help the pupil through the learning process.

AS Maths

A two year course with an entry requirement of grade 7 or higher in GCSE Maths. It is appropriate for strong mathematicians who do not wish to take the full A Level but who would benefit from some maths to support their university applications. This course would typically suit those taking Science A Levels or those wishing to pursue a degree course requiring some mathematical ability e.g. Psychology. AS Maths is harder than Core Maths, and two thirds of the content is Pure Maths. The AS course is not generally accepted in support of Physics or Engineering at university, which require the full A Level.

AS Further Maths

A two year course designed for A Level Mathematicians who would like further extension. Pupils wishing to take this elective should have achieved at least a grade 8 in GCSE Maths and it must be taken in conjunction with A Level Maths.

Core Maths

A two year course leading to a Level 3 qualification, similar to an AS Level, and is useful for pupils who would like to develop their practical mathematical skills beyond GCSE to support A Level subjects that require a particular degree of numeracy such as Biology, Business, Economics and Geography.

Engineering BTEC

This Level 3 BTEC course will be delivered through Stowe's partnership with the UTC in Silverstone on Wednesday afternoons over two years. It is a largely practical and coursework based course which is equivalent to a full A Level and is well regarded by universities for those seeking entry on to a broad range of engineering degree courses. The BTEC is likely to be attractive to pupils who wish to gain this engineering qualification in addition to their three A Level programme, but may also be very helpful to those who have a keen interest in engineering but who struggle to access Maths and Physics A Levels.

AS Film Studies

A two year course which includes a practical assessment in the form of a short film or screenplay (20% of the final marks) and an essay based theory paper (80%). Modules include Hollywood films; Modern US films; British films; non-English films. It will be of particular interest to arts and humanities pupils who are interested in media but also may provide an interesting contrast for those following more traditional science programmes.

AS Music Technology

A two year course perfect for those interested in popular music and its production; recording and sound engineering. The course is both creative and technical and will include both exam and coursework modules in year two. You will be required to record a cover version of a song, compose a piece of music based around two audio samples given by Edexcel, as well as demonstrate an ability to analyse the technical aspects of the music that you listen to. It is preferable for pupils taking this course to have a grade 5 in Music Theory and to be confident in the use of technical software.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

This is an essential course for those pupils for whom English is their second language and who have not studied in the UK and taken English Language as a GCSE, as most UK universities will require a high IELTS pass score from these students as part of their admissions offer. The course will prepare you for the IELTS test, which assesses all of your English skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Programme of Electives

AS/A Levels in Additional Foreign Languages

International pupils who are bi-lingual and who wish to study German, French or Spanish are strongly encouraged to choose their language as one of their three, or four, A Levels within the curriculum. Pupils wishing to take examinations in other native languages may be supported in preparing for exams which can be taken at the end of the Upper Sixth year and private tuition can also be provided (at a cost). Taught lessons are not provided within the curriculum although our Modern Languages department may be able to provide non-specific support in preparation for the topics examined in the written papers during 'language club' in extra-curricular time.

AS Psychology

A two year course designed to give an introduction to this popular degree subject. Psychology is an excellent subject to study because it not only teaches a number of transferable skills, it also gives an insight into the way people think. The mind is something intangible that exists within our brain; an unseen process of enzymes, chemicals and electric currents. But why is it that some people suffer from stress or mental illness? Or that others are considered abnormal for deviating from social norms? Psychology looks at questions such as these and more. It's a fascinating science with cutting edge research with real world applications that you are bound to find interesting. Pupils selecting this option are likely to be studying one or more Science A Levels or Mathematics.

Business BTEC

This Level 3 BTEC course allows pupils to build their practical skills in business and to gain a qualification attracting the same UCAS points as an AS or A Level depending on how many modules are taken. The finance and marketing units of the course have numeracy within them, where pupils will need to be able to manipulate and interpret data; so it is expected that pupils who start the course will have at least a grade 4 in GCSE Mathematics. Extended writing is part of the assessment criteria for all parts of the course; so it is expected that pupils who start the course will also have a grade 4 in GCSE English Language. The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Business is a suitable study route for all pupils who have a genuine interest in learning about the business sector. This course is designed as an enrichment elective and should not be taken alongside A Level Business.

Sport BTEC

This Level 3 BTEC course is a largely practical and coursework based course which is equivalent to a full AS or A Level depending on the number of units taken. It is well regarded by universities for those seeking entry on to a broad range of sport-related degree courses. This course offers effective training in the theoretical, practical and biological aspects of sporting performance and coaching. This course is designed as an enrichment elective and should not be taken alongside A Level Sports Science.

Institute of Leadership and Management Qualification

This course, available to CCF cadets only, consists of two modules: Understanding Leadership, and Leading and Motivating a Team. It leads to a civilian recognised Level 3 qualification awarded by the Institute of Leadership and Management. The course will be delivered in lessons and in CCF activity time, and combines practical and essay writing skills.

LAMDA

A LAMDA exam is the speech and drama equivalent of a music grade and just like music grades the exams culminate at grade 8. There are additional charges for this elective, which is taught by peripatetic staff. There are different entry levels but those who have not taken these courses previously would be looking to start at level 3, which is equivalent to grade 6, 7 and 8 (bronze medal, silver medal and gold medal). The exam requires a performance which may consist of a monologue or a duologue, or a recital of a poem, or a piece of prose, or a presentation on any chosen subject.

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

These are university-level courses without the need to complete an entire programme of study and are becoming increasingly popular. Resources are available online through a distance learning approach. Completion of modules (which may vary in length from three week courses to one year courses) indicate genuine immersion in a subject that a pupil may wish to read at university.

Preparation for Advanced Level Musicians (PALM)

This recognises the significant hours of additional music practice required by those taking advanced music grades or diplomas in one or more instruments. Pupils choosing this elective will be supervised in the Chung Music School.



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