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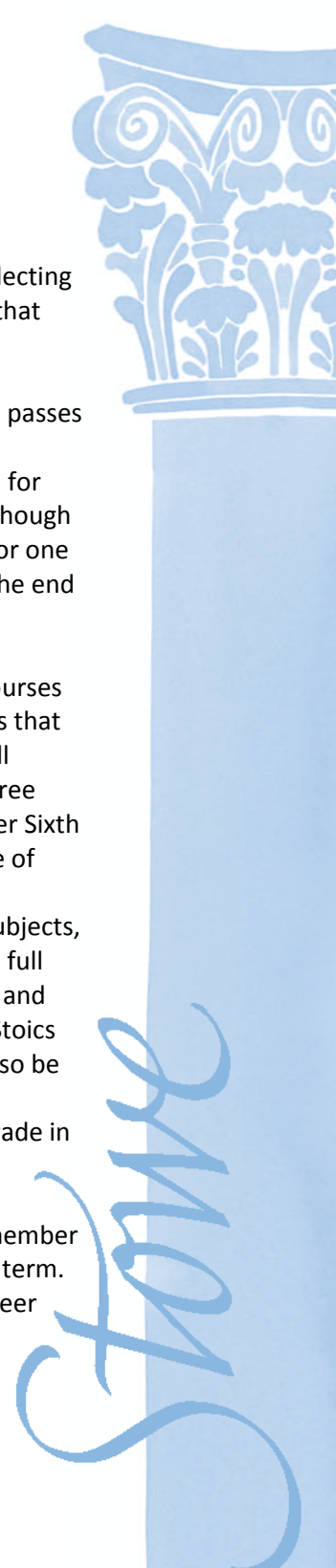
## Information about A Level Choices

Enclosed is our Sixth Form Courses Guide which we hope will be useful in researching and discussing your son's/daughter's A Level choices for the Sixth Form. The whole process of selecting appropriate programmes of study for the Sixth Form is in its early stages and it is important that you are fully briefed and involved in their decisions.

The entry qualification for automatic progression to the Sixth Form is a minimum of six GCSE passes at grade B or above. Last year saw the launch of the new A Level reforms, introduced by the government as part of their plans to return to linear examinations and to better equip pupils for higher education. From September 2016 most subjects will follow the new specifications, although Mathematics, Politics and History of Art will continue to follow the legacy modular courses for one further year, with AS levels taken at the end of the Lower Sixth and the A2 examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth.

The introduction of linear courses means that the choices made at the start of the A Level courses have to be taken very carefully indeed. Pupils are asked to select a set of four subject choices that they are both passionate about and in which they are predicted to perform well up to the full A Level standard after two years. Universities will continue to make offers on the basis of three A Level grades and therefore many pupils may choose to drop from four subjects in the Lower Sixth to three by the Upper Sixth. It is clear that Universities will also continue to look for evidence of academic ambition and extension and we therefore recommend that most Sixth Form pupils complete an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in addition to their three or four A Level subjects, from the January of the Lower Sixth year. The EPQ carries the same UCAS weighting as half a full A Level and provides the possibility for pupils to pursue an area of particular interest. Tutors and teachers will need to provide careful guidance to pupils and their parents to ensure that all Stoics follow a Sixth Form programme that is most suited to their needs and ambitions. It should also be noted that pupils will not automatically be able to continue with a subject in the Upper Sixth without a pass grade in school progress exams (for the new linear specifications) or a pass grade in the AS exam (legacy specifications) taken at the end of the Lower Sixth year.

During the week beginning 7 December, Fifth Form pupils had a feedback interview with a member of the Cambridge Occupational Analysts (COA) following the aptitude tests taken earlier this term. The interview considered the suitability of different subject options in relation to various career possibilities and preferences to make sure that Sixth Form programmes keep open as many opportunities as possible for Higher Education courses.



The Fifth Form will all attend a briefing on 'Making Informed A Level Choices' on Monday 18 January, followed by an informal A Level Fair where the Stoics can speak to their teachers, as well as Heads of Departments, about the content of the A Level courses. In addition, pupils will have the opportunity to attend Taster Lessons in subjects offered in the Sixth Form that are not available at GCSE (Economics, Business Studies, History of Art, Media Studies and Politics) with a view to understanding the particular skills and aptitudes required for success in these subjects. Towards the end of January the Stoics will be asked to make their provisional A Level choices to assist us with planning our staffing for the next academic year, but please be reassured that discussions between pupils, teachers, Tutors and parents will be ongoing throughout the term.

I hope that you will be able to come to a Presentation on our Sixth Form Curriculum at Stowe at 12.00 noon on Friday 4 March in the Ugland Auditorium. This is followed immediately by a full Parents' Meeting in the Drayson Hall, when you will have the opportunity to discuss your son's/daughter's provisional A Level choices with their teachers. It will also be an occasion to discuss current progress, following the GCSE trial exams taken in the week beginning Monday 22 February. The Heads of Department of those subjects not currently offered at GCSE, but available in the Sixth Form, will be present at the Meeting.

The pupils will be asked to confirm their A Level choices by Monday 7 March. Notification of any subsequent changes to confirmed A Level programmes, including any arising in the light of GCSE results, will have to be made in writing to the Senior Tutor as early as possible and prior to the start of the Michaelmas term 2016. Please note that although we will endeavour to facilitate late changes, it may not be possible to accommodate all requests, for staffing reasons.

Sally Akam  
Senior Tutor

The logo for Stowe, featuring the word "Stowe" in a light blue, elegant, cursive script font, positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.