

Sixth Form Options information booklet

for September 2026 entry



Please note that this booklet is in draft form at present and will be published in its final form in mid-February 2026.

All information is subject to change until final publication.

This booklet is designed to give you information on the A level courses offered at The Purcell School for Sixth Form studies (years 12 and 13), the alternative pathways available for study, as well as a brief introduction to life in the Sixth Form.

Please also note that not all courses may run each year: the School may adjust the curriculum choices according to demand.

Contents

Contents.....	1
An Introduction from the Head of Sixth Form.....	2
A Day in the Life of a Sixth Former.....	3
Pastoral Support.....	3
Tutors.....	4
Choosing a Pathway.....	5
Deadlines.....	5
The Extended Diploma Pathway.....	6
Choosing Additional Subject(s).....	7
Subsidiary Diploma.....	8
Music.....	10
Art and Design, Fine Art or Photography.....	11
Biology.....	12
Chemistry.....	13
Drama.....	14
English Literature.....	15
French.....	16
German.....	17
History.....	18
Mathematics.....	19
Music Technology.....	21
Physics.....	22



Ziggi Szafranski

Head of Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at The Purcell School is a unique and exciting experience.

Music lies at the centre of life at Purcell, with ample and varied opportunities to develop your performing skills and to prepare for auditions or university entrance. This year, we are excited to be launching the RSL Diploma course as an alternative to the traditional A-Level Music pathway, and you can read more about that later in this booklet. Whichever pathway you choose, however, at the heart of our classroom curriculum you will go beyond the scope of the standard sixth form academic Music courses in order to enable you to deepen your understanding of your art, to make new connections and to capitalise on your performing experience.

For those on the traditional pathway, we ask you to select **two** further subjects to complement your studies in music. We know that the most creative, expert and informed musicianship happens when there is an exciting context for your wider growth as a musician. That's why we ask that you are ambitious about all your classroom learning and why we offer a boutique curriculum with expert teaching in subjects which we know that young musicians enjoy. English as an Additional Language is also offered to any non-native speakers in order to both support your learning in school and to ensure you have the appropriate qualifications to progress to higher education.

Our aim is that, whatever subjects you choose to complement your academic music studies, you will find subjects that inspire you and give you useful qualifications with which to enrich your CV, whether you are destined for conservatoire or university music, or if, like a handful of students each year, you decide to take on a different subject at university or an alternative path.

Choosing your subjects can be a daunting task, especially if you're not yet sure what you want to do after you leave school! Whether you have it all planned out or whether you're taking each day as it comes, my best advice to you is to ask around and find out which course is right for you.

As with any smaller school such as ours, we are unable to offer a full range of all subjects for study within school. Should you wish to study any subject not taught at Purcell you are welcome to arrange for a tutor or self-study and we are usually able to facilitate the taking of the exams, but this will not usually be able to 'replace' one of your three subjects within school.

Speaking to the teacher who teaches that subject is a great way to do this, but it's also worth speaking to students who are currently studying to get their impressions of the course. Please don't hesitate to get in touch, and as Head of Sixth Form I'm always happy to discuss your choices with you. Different future plans require different choices to be made but please don't feel you're alone in doing so! If you have any questions please drop me an email at z.szafranski@purcell-school.org and I'll be happy to help.

A Day in the Life of a Sixth Former

Whether you're a boarder or a day student, you get more flexibility and control of your time when you reach the Sixth Form. You're expected to manage your own time and practise, although we will always be on hand to help you with this!

The day starts at 8am for boarders with registration and breakfast (8:30am for day students' arrival at school) and may be different from one day to the next. However, there are some basics which can help you plan. Every A-Level subject has just under 5 hours' contact time and, as you can see from the sample timetable below, leaves you plenty of time to organise work, practise and, importantly, some down time too!

Monday

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7			
08.40-09.00	09.00-09.40	09.40-10.20	B R E A K	10.40-11.40	11.40-12.40	L U N C H	13.40-14.40	14.40-15.40	B R E A K	16.00-17.00
Assembly	6th Form Choir	Free Period		French	Music History		Free Period	English Literature		Symphony Orchestra

Students have access to practice rooms, the Library and the Sixth Form Common Room throughout the day for self study and instrumental practice, but unless attending an organised activity or rehearsal, day students will usually be expected to leave school by 5pm (3:40pm on Friday).

Pastoral Support

Your wellbeing is key to your ability to thrive here and so we want to make sure you have the best opportunities for pastoral support that we can provide. You will be in a tutor group of around 12 students in your year with a tutor available to provide support on both a pastoral and an academic level; you will usually stay with this tutor throughout your time here. Beyond your tutor, you will also have house staff available alongside medical support and an on-site counsellor who you can speak to, in confidence, should you wish to.

At the Purcell School we believe that everyone has the right to be safe, happy and healthy. Everyone is unique and has their own approach to life and this is something we want to celebrate. We don't have a school uniform and students are encouraged to wear clothes in a style they feel comfortable in; this allows our students a greater form of self-expression than you might find elsewhere. Most of our students will be going off to a conservatoire or university when they leave us and we run a bespoke programme of events throughout the two years aimed at preparing you for life beyond Purcell.

Safeguarding is also a vitally important part of our work together and everyone plays a part. There is a member of the Safeguarding team available at all times when students are on site and are here to

help when things may not go as planned. If you have any questions you can always email safeguarding@purcell-school.org or drop in and see us when you're here.

Staffing may change slightly from year to year but are currently planned to be as follows for the 2026 - 2027 academic year:

Tutors

Year 12 (Lower Sixth)

Mr Shiner
Academic Music



Mrs Mehta
Biology



Dr Patel
Chemistry



Year 13 (Upper Sixth)

Dr Fardon
Academic Music



Mr Matthews
German



Mrs Whitty
Learning Support



Medical and Counselling

Rosie McManus
Registered Nurse
Daytime



Nicky Morris
School Counsellor
Monday - Thursday



Carol Morgan
Registered Nurse
Evenings and Weekends

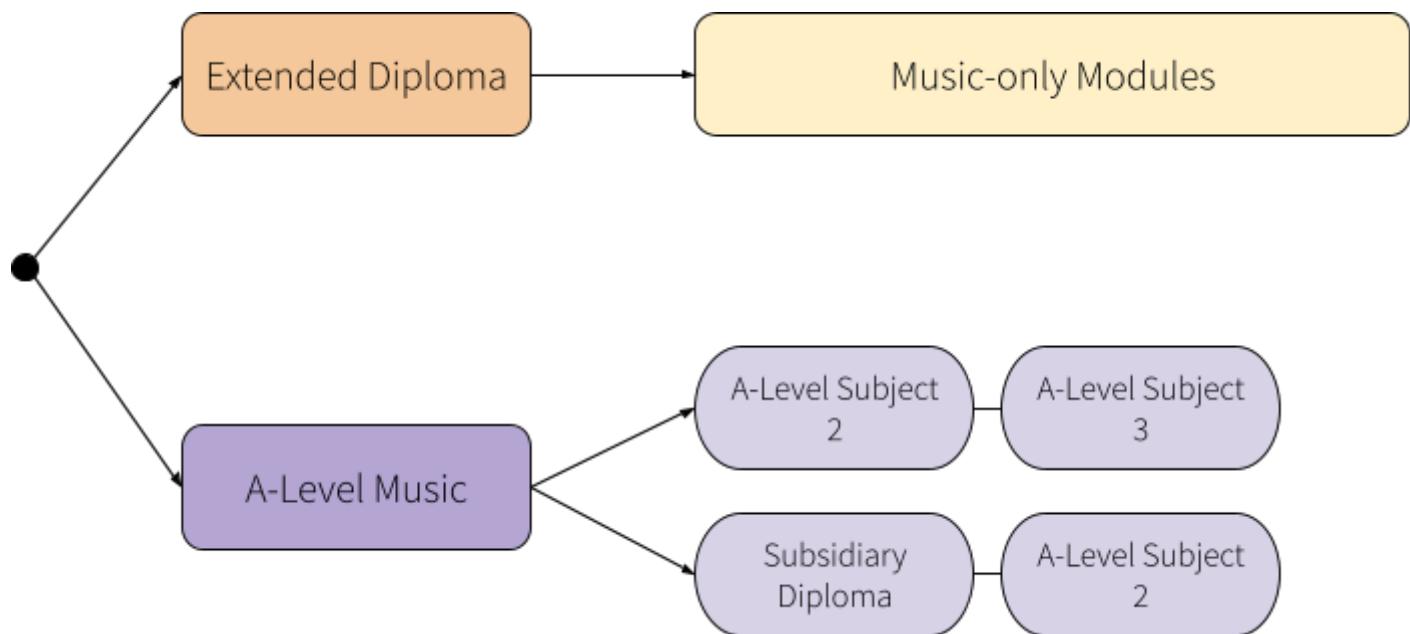


Dr Sarah Upjohn
Physiotherapist
Wednesdays only



Choosing a Pathway

This year we are excited to be able to offer a new pathway for students, particularly those who have not followed the traditional studies before arriving at Purcell. There are two main pathways to choose from, each with their own benefits.



Students who choose the Extended Diploma will be taking a course equivalent to 3 A-Levels. This is a stand-alone course in which students will opt for a specialist pathway: Classical Performance, Jazz and Commercial Performance, Composition or Music Production. In addition, these students will study a broad range of units, developed to suit the specialist music school environment. For those who want to study a broader curriculum, we offer A-Level Music as a qualification, with modules that go beyond the standard course and mirror conservatoire courses. Alongside A-Level Music students will either choose two additional A-Level subjects, or to take the Subsidiary Diploma and one additional A-Level subject. You can read more about these options in the additional subjects section below.

As we are in the process of finalising timetables at present, we don't know exactly which subjects will be timetabled against one another. To begin with, we are asking everyone to complete an initial form (scan the QR code to the right or click [this link](#)) which will give us an indication of which pathway you'd be interested in following. This is not a binding decision, but is intended to give us an idea of what your next two years here could look like.



Deadlines

Initial indication of choice Tuesday 31st March 2026

Firm Choices made Wednesday 1st July 2026

Final deadline for changes Friday 25th September 2026

The Extended Diploma Pathway

RSL Diploma in Creative Music Industries

The Extended Diploma is a new course offered in association with RSL and is similar in many respects to a BTEC course. However, this course offers a pre-conservatoire style education in music bespoke to our school and may be an alternative to those who haven't experienced a 'traditional' musical education before arriving at Purcell.

The course is structured over the two years with ongoing assessment from the start. Whilst this has the benefit of not having a final examination at the end of the Upper Sixth (Year 13), this does mean that **all** work you do through Years 12 and 13 will form part of your final assessed grade. The first year of the course is structured to give all students a similar grounding in key skills, with options for specialised modules available in the second year.

Below is an indication of the course of study over the two years, although final choices of module availability will not be made until the end of next year and will be dependent on the student cohort.

Year 12 (Lower Sixth)

Session 1	Music History and Analysis	Harmony	Arranging	Sequencing	Musicianship	Outreach	Study Skills
Session 2			Composition	Studio Skills		Community	Music Industry

Year 13 (Upper Sixth)

Music History	Creative Practice		Musicianship	Project
Analysis	Composing for Media	Orchestration	Improvisation	Dissertation
Contextual Studies	Harmony	Studio	Aural	Music and Media
	Style Composition	Sequencing	Practical Musicianship	Outreach Project

Assessment

This diploma course is assessed constantly through all relevant work done from the start of Year 12 through until the Summer of Year 13. This includes first-study instrumental lessons, chamber and orchestral rehearsals and concerts as well as dedicated module assessments as appropriate. The format of assessment is dependent on the student's individual progression and may take the form of practice diaries, concert reflections or recorded material. There will not be a final examination in Year 13.

Costs

The total cost over the two years for scores and other resources is around £45, though this is slightly variable depending on which elective modules are chosen.

Entry Requirements

GCSE Music is not required, although a discussion must be had with the Head of Academic Music prior to a student taking this course. It is expected that students will have achieved passes in at least 5 GCSE subjects including English Language and Mathematics.

Progression

We expect that students taking this course will progress either to a conservatoire on completion of this course, or to a related university-level course in contemporary or creative music. This course is not suitable for students wishing to apply to study Music at university, nor for those wishing to apply to Oxbridge courses.

Choosing Additional Subject(s)

This booklet is designed to enable students to make informed decisions about their subject choices and gives information for each subject on course content, costs and entry requirements.

All students who choose to study A-Level Music will be expected to choose two further subjects to study from those below. Our subjects are arranged in blocks, which means that all subjects in each block have timetabled lessons at the same time. We have not finalised the blocks for next year yet, but will provide you with them before you make your final choices in the Summer Term. Those who wish to study the Subsidiary Diploma alongside A-Level Music will need to select one other subject to study.

At this point, we are asking you to give us a provisional indication of the subjects you would like to study. In the Summer Term 2026 we will ask you to make your firm decision as to the subjects you want to study and the pathway you wish to follow. Obviously, we very much hope that students will enjoy the courses they start in September. However, should you realise early in the course that you have made the wrong choice, we will try to facilitate a change provided the request comes before the first exeat weekend in the third week of term. Given the size of the school, we also want you to be aware that the school may not be able to run subjects if insufficient numbers of students opt for them.

We offer the following subjects for A-Level study:

Art or Photography	English Literature	Mathematics
Biology	French	Music Technology
Chemistry	German	Physics
Drama	History	

Once you are ready to make your initial selection of subjects, you can do so by filling out an online form which you can access by following [this link](#), if you're looking at the digital version of this booklet, or by scanning this QR code with your phone:



Deadlines

Initial indication of choice	Tuesday 31 st March 2026
Firm Choices made	Wednesday 1 st July 2026
Final deadline for changes	Friday 25 th September 2026

The RSL Subsidiary Diploma in Creative Music Industries is available for students to study alongside A-Level Music. This diploma is equivalent in size to 1.5 A-Levels and can be combined with traditional A-Level courses as well, subject to timetable constraints. For this course, students will be focused mainly on your core specialism:

- Classical Performance
- Jazz and Commercial Performance
- Composition
- Music Production

Like other equivalent courses, this diploma does not have a final examination at the end of the two year course but instead is assessed throughout the two years through classwork and coursework.

Course Overview

Specialism: Classical Performance

The Classical Performance specialism is for all students who study a first-study classical instrument in school. There are both compulsory and elective modules and students may take one or both of the electives.

Core Modules		Elective Modules	
First Study Instrumental Lessons	Chamber Music Rehearsals	Final Recital	Chamber Music Concert

Specialism: Jazz/Popular Performance

The Jazz/Popular Performance specialism is for all students who study a first-study jazz or popular/commercial instrument (including voice and songwriting) in school. There are both compulsory and elective modules and students may take one or both of the electives.

Core Modules		Elective Modules	
First Study Instrumental Lessons	Jazz/Commercial Band Rehearsals	Featured Artist	Band Performance

Specialism: Composition

The Composition specialism is for all students who study Composition as their first-study in school. There are both compulsory and elective modules and students may take one or both of the electives.

Core Modules		Elective Modules	
First Study Composition Lessons	Composition Seminars	Portfolio	Collaborative Concert

Specialism: Production

The Production specialism is for students who study music production as a first-study in school. There are both compulsory and elective modules and students may take one or both of the electives.

Core Modules		Elective Modules	
First Study Production Lessons	Studio Work	Digital Recording	Live Sound Project

Assessment

This course is assessed constantly through all relevant work done from the start of Year 12 through until the Summer of Year 13. This includes first-study instrumental lessons, chamber and orchestral rehearsals and concerts as well as dedicated module assessments as appropriate. The format of assessment is dependent on the student's individual progression and may take the form of practice diaries, concert reflections or recorded material. There will not be a final examination in Year 13.

Costs

The total cost over the two years for scores and other resources is around £45, though this is slightly variable depending on which elective modules are chosen.

Entry Requirements

GCSE Music is not required, although a discussion must be had with the Head of Academic Music prior to a student taking this course.



All students at the Purcell School study A Level Music. Additional musicianship classes are also available.

Course Overview

Area 1: Music History and Analysis

All students will study the two core modules and choose **two** elective modules.

Core Modules		Elective Modules (choose 2)			
Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven	Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band	Developments in Instrumental Jazz 1910 to the present day	Religious Music of the Baroque Period	Programme Music 1820–1910	Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day

Area 2: Harmony, Composition and Composition Techniques

All students will study the three core modules and choose **one** elective module.

Core Modules			Elective Modules (choose 1)			
Fundamentals of Harmony	The Bach chorale style	Composition	Eighteenth Century Composition Techniques	Classical and Romantic Instrumental Music	Twentieth Century Composition Techniques	Jazz and Popular Composition Techniques

Assessment

Component	Duration	Assessment	Weighting
1: Listening and Appraising	2 ½ hours	Written paper. Externally set and marked.	40%
2: Performing	Minimum 6 minutes	Two contrasting pieces. Performances in school, marked externally.	25%
3: Composing	Coursework	Compositions with a combined duration of at least 8 minutes. One to a brief set by OCR. One to a brief written by the learner.	25%
4: Extended Project (choose performance or composition)	Coursework	Option 1 - Performance: At least one additional piece. Option 2 - Composition: Three technical exercises.	10%

Costs

The total cost over the two years for scores and other resources is around £45, though this is slightly variable depending on which elective modules are chosen.

Entry Requirements

All students on the A Level pathway will take OCR A Level Music. Additional support is available for all students as required.

Additional Information

For more information on the course: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/music-h143-h543-from-2016>

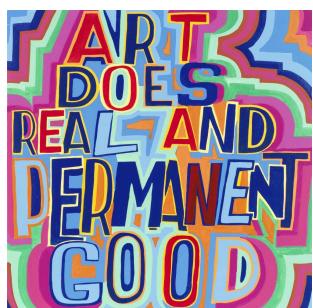
Are you creative and imaginative? Do you enjoy exploring ideas and looking at things in different ways? If so, you should consider a course in Fine Art or Photography.



Photography. The course is about looking, learning, thinking and communicating. You will enjoy developing your understanding of the visual world, learning practical skills and responding to ideas and issues in ways that are personal to you. You will develop your understanding of creative processes, your ability to observe and to think, to solve problems and to communicate in a visual way. It will enable you to work independently and to



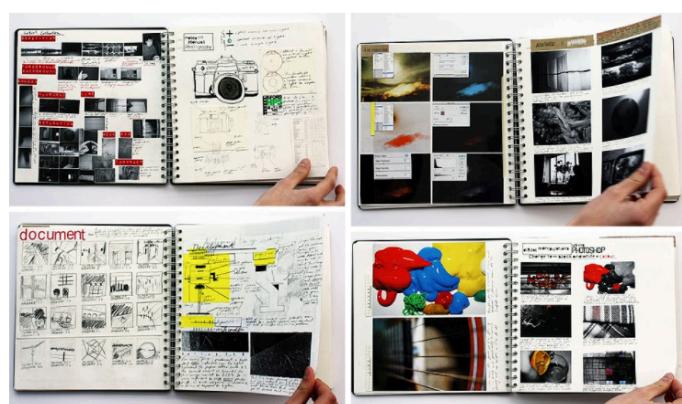
make your own discoveries by exploring ideas, other artists' work, different materials and techniques. This is a broad-based course exploring practical, critical and contextual work through a range of processes and media. Students can choose to focus on a specialist area of study to suit their individual interests and abilities. Art is a great companion to all other subjects as it develops creativity, imagination & problem-solving skills.



Students will experience artworks first hand, and regular visits to galleries and museums are an important part of the course. A term's programme of weekly life classes will also form the foundation for the coursework units. Regular workshops are given to familiarise students with a variety of mediums. Students will be encouraged to develop their own ideas and independence of mind.

Fine art: drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, ceramics, installation, printmaking, moving image (video, film, animation), photography, mixed media and textiles. There is, therefore, an in-built flexibility that allows for developing skills, in a broad variety of specialisms

Photography: portraiture, landscape photography, still life, documentary, photojournalism, fashion photography, experimental imagery (pinhole, cyanotype), multimedia, photographic installation & moving image (video, film, animation)



Assessments : During Component 1 they will develop work for a personal investigation into an idea, issue, concept or theme supported by written material, 60% of the total A-level marks, this will also include a 3000 word Essay. In Component 2 they will produce personal work in response to one of eight exciting starting points, 40% of the total A-level marks.

Costs: The following materials are issued and billed at cost: A-Level art pack, containing a range of materials (brushes, pencils, sketchbooks etc.) to enable students to work within school and at home. It would be beneficial for students to have access to a digital camera, however the department has a range of DSLR and SLR cameras available to sign out.

Entry Requirements: None, although an ability to work independently and a keen interest in the subject is desirable. It is desirable for you to have taken an Art/Design based subject at GCSE or equivalent. To support students throughout the course the department operates an open studio policy, allowing students to gain access to the art room during the day, evenings and weekends. In addition, a weekly after school art club, run by a member of the department, provides an opportunity for students to get extra technical help and access to more specialised equipment.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/as-and-a-level/art-and-design/specification-at-a-glance>

A-Level Biology will give you an exciting insight into the world around us. As biology is fundamentally an experimental subject the required practical activities will allow you the opportunity to link theory to reality and to embed your skills and knowledge. There is no coursework, but your performance during practicals will be assessed. At least 15% of the marks are based on what you learn in your practicals.

A Level Biology will give you the skills to make connections and associations with all living things around you and open the door to a fantastic range of interesting careers.

You should study biology if;

- You have an interest in and enjoy biology;
- You are interested in the natural world and biology;
- You enjoy problem solving and applying your knowledge to unique situations;
- You want to pursue a career in some aspect of biology including medicine, physiology, virology and immunology, ecology.



The aims of the course are to encourage candidates to:

- develop your interest in and enthusiasm for biology, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject;
- appreciate how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society;
- develop and demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods;
- develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of biology and how they relate to each other.

Topics covered in the first year of A Level: 1. *Biological molecules*, 2. *Cells*, 3. *Organisms exchange substances with their environment and Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms*.

Topics covered in the second year of A-Level: 5. *Energy transfer between organisms*, 6. *Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments*, 7. *Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems*, 8. *The control of gene expression*.

Assessments

Paper 1: Topics 1 - 4 Students will study Topics 1 - 4 and answer both short and long answer questions, as well as extended response questions. This course will include relevant practical skills.	Written Examination 2 hours	35% of A-Level
Paper 2: Topics 5 - 8 Students will study Topics 5 - 8 and answer both short and long answer questions, as well as extended response questions. This course will include relevant practical skills.	Written Examination 2 hours	35% of A-Level
Paper 3: Topics 1 - 8 Students will study Topics 5 - 8 and answer both short and long answer questions, as well as undertaking critical analysis of given experimental data and one essay question from a choice of two titles. This course will include relevant practical skills.	Written Examination 2 hours	30% of A-Level

Costs

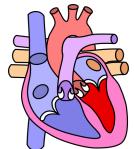
A single textbook covering the whole of the A-Level course (AS and A2) costs around £45.

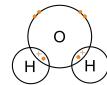
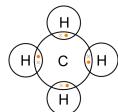
Entry Requirements

You will need a good science GCSE grade (6-6 or above in double science or similar, it is worth looking at the content for the triple award prior to commencing the course). Good maths skills are essential as the mathematical requirements are significantly above GCSE.

Additional Information

For more info on the course: <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/biology/specifications/AQA-7401-7402-SP-2015.PDF>





A-Level Chemistry will give you an exciting insight into the world of chemistry. You will learn about chemistry in a range of different contexts and the impact it has on industry and many aspects of everyday life. As chemistry is fundamentally an experimental subject the required practical activities will allow you the opportunity to link theory to reality and to embed your skills and knowledge.

You should study Chemistry if:



- You want a career in the science industries, medicine, teaching, catering & many other fields
- You want to develop an interest and enthusiasm for chemistry, including developing an interest in further study
- You wish to gain the skills and understanding to make decisions about the way chemistry affects your everyday life by applying concepts into contemporary areas of chemistry, including climate change, green chemistry, pharmaceuticals and chemical research
- You feel you are an effective problem-solver and are able to communicate efficiently both orally and with the written word
- You want a challenge in your academic studies
- You want an A-Level that is highly respected by both employers and universities
- You want to be at the forefront in the development of energy sources (eg. fuel cells used in electric cars) to replace fossil fuels (petrol, diesel, etc). There is now a concerted effort in this area across the world to mitigate the effects of climate and improve air quality.

During the course you will

- Develop a wide range of practical skills. Overall, at least 15% of the marks for the A-Level course will require the assessment of practical skills.
- Learn about how and why reactions take place and how they affect people and the environment
- Improve a large number of skills including problem solving, communication, research and planning skills.



Assessments

Paper 1: Physical and Inorganic Chemistry Students will answer both short and long answer questions on relevant physical chemistry topics and inorganic chemistry. This course will include relevant practical skills.	Written Examination 2 hours	35% of A-Level
Paper 2: Physical and Organic Chemistry Students will answer both short and long answer questions on relevant physical chemistry topics and organic chemistry. This course will include relevant practical skills	Written Examination 2 hours	35% of A-Level
Paper 3: Any content and any practical skills. Students will answer questions on practical techniques and data analysis as well as their understanding of the whole specification. Students will also answer multiple choice questions.	Written Examination 2 hours	30% of A-Level

Costs

A single textbook covering the whole of the A-Level course (AS and A2) costs around £45.

Entry Requirements

You will need a good science GCSE grade (6-6 or above in double science or similar, it is worth looking at the content for the triple award prior to commencing the course). Good maths skills are essential, as the mathematical requirements are significantly above GCSE.

Additional Information

For more information on the course, the specification can be found at:

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/chemistry/specifications/AQA-7404-7405-SP-2015.PDF>

A-Level Drama is an exciting and in-depth exploration into the work of different practitioners and theatrical styles through both practical and theoretical studies.

This course is suitable for students who are interested in:

- Learning about theatrical techniques, forms and structures
- Going to the theatre and analysing performance
- Working creatively in a group
- Creating and performing plays.

There is a requirement for self-led rehearsals and additional work outside the classroom, so students should expect to put in the additional time when required. There is also a written analytical component that requires good self-reflective and written skills in addition to the written examination.

Assessments

Component 1: Devising Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise an original performance piece based on a text and a theatrical practitioner. • Write a 2500-3000 word (or 12-14 minute recorded) evaluation of the performance and the creative process leading up to it 	Coursework Internally Assessed <i>The assessed performance will take place in the Summer of Year 12, with the portfolio to follow in Year 13</i>	40% of A-Level
Component 2: Text in Performance Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform an extract from one play with others in your group. • Perform a monologue from a different play. 	Coursework Externally Assessed <i>An examiner will watch performances in the Spring of Year 13</i>	20% of A-Level
Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an evaluation of a live theatre performance. • Answer two essay questions on a set play text. • Answer an essay question on one other set play text. <p>The two set texts are likely to be <i>Antigone</i> by Sophocles and <i>Accidental Death of an Anarchist</i> by Dario Fo. However, these may change depending on the strengths and interests of the group.</p>	Written Examination 2 hours 30 minutes	40% of A-Level

Costs

Copies of your studied play texts and any required textbooks will be bought as required and re-charged on the school bill at the retail price. There is a requirement to see live theatre performances and these will be charged as notified to parents in advance.

Entry Requirements

GCSE Drama is not a requirement for entry to this course. However, students should have a keen interest in theatre and be prepared to contribute to all lessons by taking an active part physically and vocally. Due to requirements from the exam board this course requires a minimum of three students in order to run.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/drama-and-theatre-2016.html>



The A-Level course is a two year course that encourages students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of a broad range of English literature. They apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation to engage critically and creatively with both set texts and others of their own choosing.

Assessments

<p>Component 1: Drama This involves the study of two texts: Shakespeare's Hamlet A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams This is an open book exam with two sections: students answer one question from a choice of two on their studied text for both Section A and Section B.</p>	Written Examination 2 hours 15 minutes	30% of A-Level
<p>Component 2: Prose This is a Thematic Component which requires the study of two linked texts. Science and Society The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood Frankenstein by Mary Shelley Students answer one comparative essay question from a choice of two on their studied theme.</p>	Written Examination 1 hour 15 minutes	20% of A-Level
<p>Component 3: Poetry Students study a selection of post-2000 specified poetry and the works of John Keats. Two sections: students answer one question from a choice of two, comparing an unseen poem with a named poem from their studied contemporary text and one question from a choice of two on their studied movement/poet.</p>	Written Examination 2 hour 15 minutes	30% of A-Level
<p>Component 4: Coursework This component requires the comparison of two texts of the student's choosing.. This coursework is awarded at the end of the two year course, though its completion date will need to be much earlier in the course.</p>	Coursework 2500 - 3000 words	20% of A-Level

Costs

Copies of your textbooks and literary texts will be bought as required and re-charged on the school bill at the retail price.

Entry Requirements

GCSE English Literature or equivalent qualification. Students without GCSE English Literature will need to demonstrate an understanding of the level of study required in analysing literature in English.

Additional Information

The English Literature course has seven periods a week. For more information on the course:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/english-literature-2015.html>

The Sixth Form language courses build on knowledge acquired at GCSE or equivalent, and will be taught over the two Sixth Form years with the A Level exam taken in May / June of Upper VI (year 13).

In the Sixth Form, students are expected to acquire more independent study skills and supplement class work with individual study such as listening work, vocabulary learning, research for the speaking topic and wider reading. They should be prepared for a more grammatical approach to language learning and should ideally have grade 8 or 9 at GCSE. Although not essential, they will benefit enormously from any visits, exchanges or courses in countries where the target language is spoken so as to build up their spoken fluency.

The courses aim to develop linguistic competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing while also fostering an appreciation of the culture, society, literature and film of the target language countries. Students will develop an understanding of various styles of written and spoken language and strengthen their ability to talk and write fluently and accurately about a range of topics. In addition, they will develop useful transferable study skills such as independent research, critical thinking and analysis, thus equipping them for Higher Education and enhancing their employability profile. Clearly, an A level in a language is hugely beneficial for any musician considering performing or studying abroad, although please note that the A level is much broader in scope than the purely language-focused tests often required for entry to conservatoires abroad, so the two should not be confused.

The specifications prescribe four themes (*Changes in the French society, Political and Artistic culture in French speaking countries, Immigration and multiculturalism in France, WWII in France: Occupation and Resistance*) for Papers 1 and 3, and set literature / film works for Paper 2.

Assessments

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation Various comprehension tasks (and translation)	Written Examination 2 hours	40% of A-Level
Paper 2: Written Response Two essays in the target language (on 1 set literary text and 1 set film)	Written Examination 2 hour 40 minutes	30% of A-Level
Paper 3: Speaking Discussion of one of the prescribed themes followed by presentation and discussion of student's independent research project	Aural Examination 21-23 minutes	30% of A-Level

Costs

The Hodder Education Edexcel A Level textbook is purchased on behalf of students and re-charged, as is the literature text and the 2 study guides (total for all purchased books approximately £60).

Entry Requirements

Ideally a GCSE in French with a grade of 8 or above. For those who have not studied GCSE-level French, an equivalent qualification or existing knowledge of the language is essential.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/modern-languages-2016.html>

The Sixth Form language courses build on knowledge acquired at GCSE or equivalent, and will be taught over the two Sixth Form years with the A Level exam taken in May / June of Upper VI (year 13).

In the Sixth Form, students are expected to acquire more independent study skills and supplement class work with individual study such as listening work, vocabulary learning, research for the speaking topic and wider reading. They should be prepared for a more grammatical approach to language learning and should ideally have grade 8 or 9 at GCSE. Although not essential, they will benefit enormously from any visits, exchanges or courses in countries where the target language is spoken so as to build up their spoken fluency.

The courses aim to develop linguistic competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing while also fostering an appreciation of the culture, society, literature and film of the target language countries. Students will develop an understanding of various styles of written and spoken language and strengthen their ability to talk and write fluently and accurately about a range of topics. In addition, they will develop useful transferable study skills such as independent research, critical thinking and analysis, thus equipping them for Higher Education and enhancing their employability profile. Clearly, an A level in a language is hugely beneficial for any musician considering performing or studying abroad, although please note that the A level is much broader in scope than the purely language-focused tests often required for entry to conservatoires abroad, so the two should not be confused.

The specifications prescribe four themes (typically *Social Issues and Trends* and *Political and Artistic Culture*, plus two language-specific cultural/historical themes) for Papers 1 and 3, and set literature / film works for Paper 2.

Assessments

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation Various comprehension tasks (and translation)	Written Examination 2 hours 30 minutes	40% of A-Level
Paper 2: Written Response Two essays in the target language (on 1 set literary text and 1 set film)	Written Examination 2 hours	30% of A-Level
Paper 3: Speaking Discussion of one of the prescribed themes followed by presentation and discussion of student's independent research project	Aural Examination 21-23 minutes	30% of A-Level

Costs

The Hodder Education A Level textbook (about £35) is purchased on behalf of students and re-charged, as is the literature text (normally about £5-10 each).

Entry Requirements

Ideally a GCSE in German with a grade of 8 or above. For those who have not studied GCSE-level German, an equivalent qualification or existing knowledge of the language is essential.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/german-7662/specification-at-a-glance>



We study the AQA 7042 History syllabus, which contains three components: one British component, one non-British component and a Historical Investigation / personal study.

Assessments

<p>Component 1: Breadth Study: The British Empire c 1857 - 1967 The study of significant historical developments over a period of around 100 years and associated interpretations. This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did the British Empire grow and contract? • What influenced imperial policy? • What part did economic factors play in the development of the British Empire? • How did the Empire influence British attitudes and culture? • How did the indigenous peoples respond to British rule? • How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments? <p>Examination Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – One compulsory question linked to historical interpretations • Section B – Choice of two from three essays 	<p>Written Examination 2 hours 30 minutes</p>	40% of A-Level
<p>Component 2: Depth Study: Democracy and Nazism: Germany 1918-45 This option provides for the study in depth of a period of German history during which a newly developed democratic form of government gave way to a dictatorial Nazi regime. It explores political concepts such as 'right' and 'left', nationalism and liberalism as well as ideological concepts such as racialism, anti-Semitism and Social Darwinism. It also encourages reflection on how governments work and the problems of democratic states as well as consideration of what creates and sustains a dictatorship. For many students this is an opportunity to extend their GCSE studies in this topic area.</p> <p>Examination Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – One compulsory question linked to primary sources or sources contemporary to the period • Section B – Choice of two from three essays 	<p>Written Examination 2 hour 30 minutes</p>	40% of A-Level
<p>Component 3: Historical Investigation A study based on rebellion in the Tudor period (1485-1603). This should take the form of a question in the context of approximately 100 years. It must not duplicate the content of options chosen for Components 1 or 2.</p>	<p>Coursework 4000 - 4500 words</p>	20% of A-Level

Costs

Copies of any required textbooks will be bought as required and re-charged on the school bill at the retail price.

Entry Requirements

A keen interest in the subject and ideally a GCSE in History or English at grade 6 or above.

Additional Information

For more information on the course: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/a-level/history-7042/specification/subject-content>

Mathematics A-Level is for those with real ability in the subject. It helps make sense of the real world by using numerical skills, proof and reasoning and mathematical modelling. It will give you outstanding analytical skills and develop your powers of intellectual enquiry and rational thinking.

It is important that you are keen on the subject and enjoy working out mathematical problems as well as being organised and methodical in your revision and homework assignments. You must be prepared to take responsibility for your learning, for example, by going through the notes after each lesson and catching up promptly with work missed because of instrumental activities. This is particularly important in a subject like A-Level Mathematics which is hierarchical in its progression - new learning builds on previous topics and skills so regular practice each week is vital.

The current A-level syllabus was introduced in Mathematics for students in September 2017. This was designed to follow on from the new mathematics GCSE which was first examined in June 2017. All students will be assessed on their knowledge of Pure Mathematics alongside new topics in Mechanics and Statistics. The assessment objectives include a greater emphasis on modelling, problem-solving and reasoning, so some questions are likely to be longer with less scaffolding. This builds on the increase in problem-solving seen in GCSE. Students achieving the top grade 9 at GCSE will be better prepared for this but the course is still extremely challenging.

The features of the course include:

Linear structure: All assessment will take place at the end of the course. Exam questions may draw on the content of the whole A-level and will link different aspects of the course.

Emphasis: There is an emphasis on problem solving, reasoning and modelling, and a requirement for the use of technology to permeate teaching and learning.

Content: The content of A level Mathematics is fixed. It includes pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics (including analysis and knowledge of the Edexcel large data set).

Assessment Structure and Topics

<p>Paper 1 and Paper 2: Pure Mathematics</p> <p>Paper 1 and Paper 2 can contain questions on any of the topics below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 1 Proof Topic 2 Algebra & Functions Topic 3 Coordinate Geometry Topic 4 Sequences & Series Topic 5 Trigonometry Topic 6 Exponentials & Logarithms Topic 7 Differentiation Topic 8 Integration Topic 9 Numerical methods Topic 10 Vectors 	<p>Written Examination 2 hours for each paper Students must answer all questions Calculators may be used</p>	<p>66.66% of A-Level (33.33% for each paper)</p>
<p>Paper 3: Statistics and Mechanics</p> <p>Section A: Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 1 Statistical sampling Topic 2 Data Presentation & Interpretation Topic 3 Probability Topic 4 Statistical Distributions Topic 5 Statistical Hypothesis Testing <p>Section B: Mechanics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 6 Quantities and Units Topic 7 Kinematics Topic 8 Forces & Newton's Laws Topic 9 Moments 	<p>Written Examination 2 hours Students must answer all questions Calculators may be used</p>	<p>33.33% of A Level</p>

Costs

The full set of A-Level text books currently cost £60. The specific Casio Classwiz FX-991EX calculator is required for additional Statistics content and costs £25. All are available from the Maths Department.

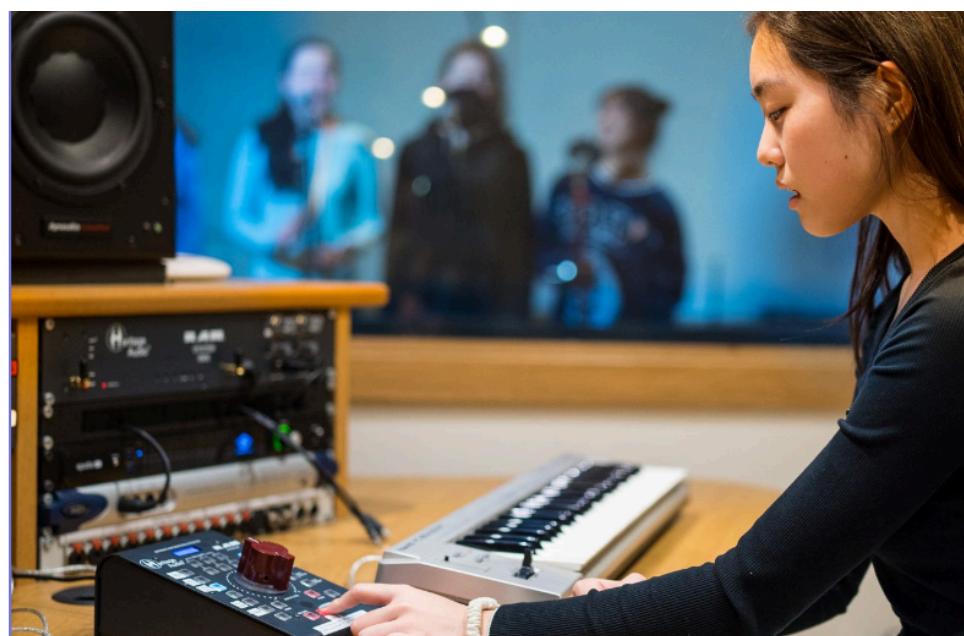
Entry Requirements

You will need to achieve a Grade 8 or 9 in GCSE Mathematics at the Higher Tier. In exceptional circumstances a student with a strong grade 7, with particular strengths in algebra and graphs, may be allowed onto the course following agreement from the Head of Mathematics. Students without a UK GCSE qualification will be required to undertake a formal three week assessment period in Mathematics in order to continue with the course. Further details on suitability of individual students can be discussed with the Head of Mathematics.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/mathematics-2017.html>



Music Technology is the ideal subject for those interested in the wide variety of musical styles connected to studio music: arranging, composing, producing, sound creation and sound engineering. You will learn how to record, mix, sample and sequence through the creation of projects in a range of styles. You will learn how to use the school's professional recording studio, computer software and all the related recording and production.

The course has a strong practical bias with students developing their work into professionally made recordings, arrangements and compositions. During the course you will expand your knowledge and experience through creative coursework projects. The options for these include composition for film, song writing, electro-acoustic composition, advanced multi-track recording, synthesis and sampling and mixing. For the written paper, further study of the practical application of technology.

Music Technology is not a technology course; it is a music course which uses technology for creative musical projects. Knowledge and use of computers before the course is not a requirement. Candidates with little previous experience of technology have achieved good A grades. With Music Technology as one of their A-levels, past students have been offered places at Cambridge, King's College London and the Tonmeister course at Surrey University. Several now have careers as film and media composers, producers and sound engineers.

Music Technology is practical, creative, demanding and immensely rewarding. The skills and creative work developed on the course are presented annually in the two popular Sound Image Movement concerts held in the Spring and Summer terms.

Assessments

- Candidates follow the A-Level Music Technology course set by Edexcel
- Multi-track recording coursework receives 20% of the marks
- Technology based Compositions project coursework receives 20% of the marks
- A practical examination receives 30% of the marks
- Written examination receives 30% of the marks.

Costs

Copies of the course textbooks will be bought as required and charged on the school bill at the retail price. CDs for coursework submission and revision are supplied and charged on the school bill. Three additional booklets and manuals covering activities specific to our studios and the course are produced by the department and charged on the school bill at a minimal price.

Entry Requirements

An enthusiasm for the subject and an open mind.

Additional Information

To support pupils throughout the course the department operates an open studio and computer room policy. Students who have passed the studio proficiency test in the third week of term are allowed to use the recording studios at any time through the department booking system. The computer rooms are available throughout the day. Students have access to additional technical help provided by a member of the teaching staff and our technical manager.

Examples of student work are available from the Music Technology Department.

For more information on the course:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/music-technology-2017.html#tab-1>



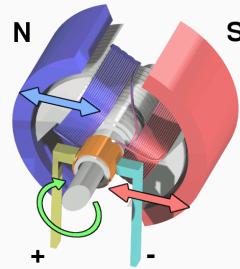
The A-Level Physics course builds on the knowledge, understanding and process skills that were developed in GCSE Science or GCSE Physics.

The aims of the course are to:

- sustain and develop the student's enjoyment of, and interest in, physics
- develop essential knowledge and understanding in physics

A-Level Physics is suitable for a student who:

- Has an interest in, and enjoy physics
- Wants to find out about how things in the physical world work
- Enjoys applying their mind to solving problems
- Enjoys carrying out investigations by the application of imaginative, logical thinking
- Wants to use physics to support other qualifications or progress onto further studies or employment.



Topics covered in the first year: *kinematics, accelerated motion, dynamics, forces, work, energy and power, momentum, matter and materials, electric current, Kirchhoff's laws, resistance and resistivity, practical circuits, waves, superposition of waves, stationary waves, atomic structure and practical skills.*

Topics covered in the second year: *circular motion, gravitational fields, oscillations, thermal physics, ideal gases, uniform electric fields, Coulomb's law, capacitance, magnetic fields and electromagnetism, motion of charged particles, electromagnetic induction, alternating currents, quantum physics, nuclear physics, medical imaging, astronomy, cosmology and practical skills.*

Assessments

Year One

Paper 1: Multiple Choice 40 multiple choice questions, based on first year syllabus content	Multiple Choice Examination 1 hour 15 minutes	31% of AS Level 15.5% of A-Level
Paper 2: AS Level Structured Questions Varied questions that are based on the first year syllabus content	Written Examination 1 hour 15 minutes	46% of AS Level 23% of A-Level
Paper 3: Advanced Practical Skills The paper requires you to carry out practical work in timed conditions and then answer questions on the question paper	Practical Examination 2 hours	23% of AS Level 11.5% of A-Level

Year Two

Paper 4: A Level Structured Questions Varied questions that are based both years' syllabus content	Written Examination 2 hours	38.5% of A-Level
Paper 5: Planning, Analysis and Evaluation Varied questions that are based on practical skills	Written Examination 1 hour 15 minutes	11.5% of A-Level

Costs

A single textbook covering the whole of the A-Level course (AS and A2) costs around £55.

Entry Requirements

Minimum 6 6 at GCSE (Double Award) or 6 or grade B in GCSE Physics. Good maths skills are essential, as the mathematical requirements are significantly above GCSE.

Additional Information

For more information on the course:

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-international-as-and-a-level-physics-9702/>

