

Sixth Form Subject Guide

September 2023 Entry



Introduction:

This booklet gives details of the subjects that can be studied at Future Academies Watford and should be read in conjunction with the Future Academies Watford Sixth Form prospectus. Please pay particular attention to the specific subject entry requirements that can be found on in our prospectus.

If you are using the electronic version of this booklet, you will find at the top of each subject page the hyperlink to the exam board website, the specification and the recommended textbook that is used in lessons.

If you have any questions about a particular subject, key contact details are provided. You are also welcome to contact the Sixth Form team: a.naureen@watford.futureacademies.org or g.gardner@watford.futureacademies.org

A reminder of the subjects that we offer at Future Academies Watford:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- English literature
- Geography
- Government and politics
- History
- Languages
- Mathematics
- Media studies
- Physical education
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Sociology

Art

All art and design courses provide a stimulating and exciting exploration into the varied art specialisms. You will develop ideas by researching into other artists and be encouraged to examine the world around you visually. You will work through a variety of techniques and learn to work with appropriate media, materials and processes. As an art and design student, you will need to write about your work, to express personal, creative ideas and produce final outcomes using a range of approaches and methods.

Course Content:

Fine Art involves a wide variety of approaches and ways of creating art, often targeted to your individual skills and interests. You will be producing practical artwork in lessons, presenting the outcomes in your sketchbook and on larger scale. You will discuss your art with your subject teacher on a regular basis, exchanging ideas and sharing thoughts about ways forward, looking at the work of fellow students, developing your own practical and decision making skills, producing annotations and notes and developing your work in a range of materials and approaches. You will explore a range of genres including portraiture; landscape; still life; the human form; animals; abstraction; experimental imagery and narrative. Throughout the course, emphasis is on the student's own creative process, with the aim of producing an in depth personal project on students own decided themes along with an externally set exam theme in which students build up a successful portfolio of ideas, experimentations and outcomes. Visits to local and national art exhibitions are woven into the course to expose students to a range of artists and styles, which they can use or respond to through their own work.

How will I be assessed?

The course comprises 60% coursework and 40% externally set task. The first year involves short projects and workshops exploring key movements including portraiture, figurative drawing, natural forms, landscape and abstraction. This is followed by the first phase of the personal investigation. In the second year there are two assessed components: 'Personal Investigation' in which students specialise in their chosen area of Fine Art and write a supporting essay and 'Externally Set Task' where students will choose from a range of given themes and create a project, this includes a timed practical examination.

Where could this lead to?

Students often progress onto a Foundation Diploma course in art and design or directly onto a degree in a range of art-based or other subjects. Over the years students have gone on to study degrees in Illustration, Graphic Design, Architectural design, Interior design, Car design, Web design, Fine Art, Art Therapy, Three Dimensional design to name but a few.

Many art graduates of fine art or art related degrees go into careers including: Artist, Designer, Illustrator, Technician, Sculptor, Museum Assistant, Stage/ Theatre Design, Advertising, Film, Curating, Art Teacher, Art Therapist, Fashion Design, Web Designer, Graphic designer.

Key contact:

Mrs C Maddock c.maddock@watford.futureacademies.org

Biology

A-Level Biology suits students with enquiring minds and a real interest in the natural world. The course sees students developing knowledge and understanding of biological concepts, principles and facts. The aims of the course are to encourage students to:

- develop their interest and enthusiasm for biology, including developing an interest in further study and careers in Biology
- 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 How Science Works
- develop essential knowledge and understanding in different areas of Biology and how they relate to each other

Course Content

You will complete the AS Level in Year 12, moving on to the full A-Level in Year 13, covering 6 units of content. The first 4 units of content are the same on both the AS and A-Level courses. Module 1 – Development of practical skills in biology Module 2 – Foundations in biology Module 3 – Exchange and transport Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease Module 5 – Communication, homeostasis and energy Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems
Assessment Methods AS:

How will I be assessed?

There are 3 exams at the end of Year 13.

1. Biological Processes (37%)
2. Biological Diversity (37%)
3. Unified Biology (26%)

You are also assessed on your practical skills. This is done over the 2-year course in school and will give you a separate practical skills endorsement. It does not go towards your A-Level grade.

Where could this lead to?

Biologists are employed in many areas including agriculture, bioengineering, veterinary science, medical research, medicine, teaching, forestry, marine studies, health care, biochemistry and biophysics. Progression to University This course contains some overlap with A-Level Chemistry and Geography in the areas of biochemistry, environmental science and microbiology – it is essential for medical related degrees where the highest possible grade is necessary.

Key contact:

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Chemistry

The course offers an in-depth study of modern chemistry and provides a sound foundation for university courses in chemistry, medicine, pharmacology and chemical engineering, among many others. Practical laboratory work is an integral part of the course and includes: planning, implementing, analysis evidence and drawing conclusions, evaluating evidence and procedures. Students with enquiring minds and an interest in practical investigation will especially enjoy the subject.

Course Content

You will complete the AS Level in Year 12, moving on to the full A-Level in Year 13. These exams will cover 6 units of content. The first 4 units of content are the same on both the AS and A-Level courses.

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in chemistry

Module 2 – Foundations in chemistry

Module 3 – Periodic table and energy

Module 4 – Core organic chemistry

Module 5 – Physical chemistry and transition elements

Module 6 – Organic chemistry and analysis

How will I be assessed?

There are 2 exams at the end of Year 12: 1.

Breadth in Chemistry (50%)

2. Depth in Chemistry (50%) A-Level:

There are 3 exams at the end of Year 13.

1. Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (37%)

2. Synthesis and analytical techniques (37%)

3. Unified chemistry (26%) You are also assessed on your practical skills.

This is done over the 2 year course in school and will give you a separate practical skills endorsement. It does not go towards your A-Level grade.

Where could this lead to?

University courses in Medicine and Veterinary Science require a qualification in chemistry, as do some other science courses. Any career that requires specific scientific thought including forensic science and research and even accountancy and law can be accessed with a chemistry qualification. Progression to University This course contains some overlap with A-Level Biology in the areas of biochemistry, and microbiology – it is essential for medical and veterinary related degrees where the highest possible grade is necessary and any chemistry based degrees.

Key contact:

Mrs L Sudbery l.sudbery@watford.futureacademies.org

Design and Technology

Equipping students with design skills for the future - Students will be able to recognise design needs and develop an understanding of how current global issues, including integrating technology, impacts on today's world. Encourages creativity and innovation - At A level students will have the confidence to innovate and produce creative design solutions as they develop their own design brief with a client/end user.

Course content:

Students will be required to apply knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials; including modern and smart materials, and processes used in product design and manufacture. They will be required to develop an understanding of contemporary industrial and commercial practices applied to designing and manufacturing products, and to appreciate the risks involved. Students should have a good working knowledge of health and safety procedures and relevant legislation.

Students must have a sound working knowledge of the use of ICT and systems and control, including modern manufacturing processes and systems, and students will be expected to understand how these might be applied in the design and manufacture of products. Designers from the past provide inspiration for present and future designing. Students should be aware of the important contribution that key historical movements and figures have on modern design thinking. It is increasingly important that students develop an awareness of wider issues in design and technology, that design and technological activities can have a profound impact on the environment and on society and that these, together with sustainability, are key features of design and manufacturing practice. Mathematical and scientific principles are an important part of designing and developing products and students will be expected to apply these principles when considering the designs of others.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Principles of Design and Technology

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes 50% of the qualification

Component 2- NEA Component 2: Independent Design and Make Project

50% of the qualification

Students will produce a substantial design, make and evaluate project which consists of a portfolio and a prototype.

Where could this lead to?

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- tertiary education and/or work-based study including product design, engineering and architecture
- further training in the design, creative, engineering and/or manufacturing industries
- employment in a relevant sector.

Key contact: Mrs Muller m.muller@watford.futureacademies.org

Drama

Drama A-Level looks at the development of Theatre and performance over the years, and the influence of practitioners and writers over the ages.

This course looks at a range of plays by a variety of writers and allows students to explore a wide range of theatre styles and concepts. This subject also looks at how theatre has shaped and responded to changes in society over time, and how theatre can be used to raise awareness of issues and make a difference.

This subject is a literary rich subject, so would interest students who like to read plays and compare performance styles.

Course Content:

There are three main areas of study for Drama. We look at theatre from the perspective of a performer, a director and a designer. Using the works of a wide range of practitioners from the 19th, 20th and 21st century, we explore plays from Ancient Greece (translations of Medea, and Lysistrata), to modern day. We will visit the theatre a number of times, including a trip to the Globe, West End and independent performances.

Students will have the opportunity to explore lighting, sound, set design, costume design and make up, as well as the production of a complete theatre piece.

How will I be assessed?

There are three assessments for this course. Component 1 asks students to compose and produce their own piece of theatre, using a practitioner and text as a starting point, for an educational purpose. Component 2 is a performance unit which sees students performing a complete text as a group, plus a monologue. Finally Component 3 is the written exam, which is in three parts. Part one is a critical review of a live performance, part 2 is an analysis of an ancient translation of a play and part 3 is a discussion of design of a modern play.

Where could this lead to?

Students often go on to complete a degree in Acting, Theatre Design. However, this is a gateway A-Level for English Literature, History, Sociology.

Key contact:

Mrs J Langdon: j.langdon@watford.futureacademies.org

English Literature

A-Level English Literature is a course reliant upon independent study, a love of the written word and the ability to absorb and appreciate the experiences and feelings of writers that span different times and cultures. It requires an open and inquisitive mind and an ability to appreciate literature as an art form and as a medium for creative expression.

Course Content

The English Literature A-Level course involves the study of 'Love through the ages' and 'Texts in shared contexts'. The central approach of this course is one of the historicist method of studying literature. At GCSE, students are introduced to a range of texts and encouraged to reflect on the impact that the social and historical context have on both the writer's attitude and view and the reception of the text by different audiences. This exploration is continued at A-level, with a focus on the idea that no text is produced in isolation, but is a product of the time in which it was written. Students will study a range of texts from drama, to poetry and prose and will be encouraged to deepen their understanding through extensive wider reading. Equally, students are given the opportunity to compare two texts independently as part of their Non-Examination Assessment.

Assessment Methods

Examination Paper 1: Love through the ages

Students study three texts: **one** poetry and **one** prose text, of which **one** must be written pre-1900, and **one** Shakespeare play. They will also respond to **two** unseen poems in the exam.

Examination Paper 2: Texts in shared contexts

Students will study three texts: **one** prose, **one** poetry and **one** drama text, at least **one** of which must be written post-2000. They will also respond to an unseen prose extract in the exam.

Non-Examination Assessment: Independent Critical Study

Students complete one piece of Non-Examination Assessment and this is self-directed and marked both internally and externally.

Where could this lead to?

An English Literature A-Level is highly desirable with many top universities. A-Level English Literature not only deepens understanding of a range of literary texts, but develops analytical skills, written communication and the ability to reflect on the influence of historical and social factors. Possible careers include journalism, editing, advertising, law, public relations, marketing, publishing, media and project management. The possibilities really are endless.

Key contact:

Mr Cranfield: t.cranfield@watford.futureacademies.org

Geography

A-level geography allows students to gain a deeper understanding of the complex world in which we live. You will learn about the socio-economic and environmental challenges that influence local and international governance. Geography at A-level also allows students to explore and debate different ways in which to help solve the many challenges that we face.

The course requires to those who have an enquiring mind and an interest in geographical concepts.

Course Content

Component 1: Physical geography

- Water and carbon cycles
- Coastal systems and landscapes
- Hazards

Component 2: Human geography

- Global systems and global governance
- Changing places
- Population and the environment

Component 3: Geographical fieldwork investigation

Students collect data in the field which is used to answer a research question which can relate to any part of the course.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Physical geography – 2 hours 40% of the overall grade

Paper 2: Human geography – 2 hours 40% of the overall grade

Component 3 is a 4,000-word accounting for the remaining 20% of the A-Level.

Where could this lead to?

“Geography: it’s the must-have A-level.” The Guardian

“Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world’s current problems boil down to geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them.” Michael Palin

Geographers are employed in a wide variety of industries such as town planning, tourism, resource management, teaching, meteorology, climatology, volcanology, environmental or development agencies, charities and within Government (foreign relations). However, studying geography does not only restrict you to geography related careers. Some geography students have gone onto work in areas including journalism, business, law, accountancy and banking.

Geography can help further your education whether you choose to continue studying Geography at university or if you choose another subject. Geography is a cross curricular subject which has links to history, business, science, politics, sociology and economics. The knowledge gained about the world and current issues is beneficial for further study in many subjects. Geography is considered a strong academic subject, so universities look at Geography students favourably.

Key contact:

Miss Gallagher c.gallagher@watford.futureacademies.org

Government and Politics

This course is lively, relevant, and can be controversial. Covering news and current affairs from the UK and US, it helps you understand how the UK country is run and develops research, written communication and debate skills. It also helps grow your confidence. With an incredible series of unexpected and unpredictable events at home and abroad in recent years, the study of Politics has never been more relevant or more fascinating and it's a great subject for those with enquiring minds and a desire to find out just what is going on in the world today and why.

Course Content

A level Politics is divided into a number of components covering a broad spectrum of political themes.

UK Politics and UK Government: You will study and discuss such questions as 'What is Brexit all about and why is it happening?', 'What powers does the Prime Minister have?', 'Why was the result of the 2017 General Election such a surprise?', and 'Is Britain truly democratic?'

Political Ideas: You will examine some of the great ideas that have shaped our world for good or ill, including Liberalism, Socialism, and Conservatism; and at the work and influence of key political thinkers such as Karl Marx, Mary Wollstonecraft and Edmund Burke.

US Politics: Find out the answers to questions like 'How did Donald Trump become President?', 'Why it so easy to have a gun in the USA?', and 'Why is race such a big issue in America?' You will also have the opportunity to compare and contrast US and UK politics.

Assessment methods

This course is 100% exam based. There are three exams, all sat in the summer of Year 13.

They cover:

- Government and politics of the UK
- The government and politics of the USA
- Comparative politics
- Political ideas

All exams are 2 hours and questions are a mixture of medium length 'explain' and essay style questions.

Where could this lead to?

This course is ideal if you're considering studying politics, sociology, ethics, advertising or journalism at university and is highly regarded by employers in industries including politics, international organisations, the media, government and the civil service.

Key Contact:

Mr Faccini: m.faccini@watford.futureacademies.org

History

If you have an interest in the past, enjoyed GCSE History and are considering doing an essay-based subject at university, then A-Level History would be a good choice for you. History at A-level encourages students to examine historical events at a greater depth and understanding; it develops analytical and research skills; as well as challenging perceptions that we have of the past.

Course Content

At A-Level, there are 2 taught units, as outlined below:

The Tudors: 1485 – 1603: This unit explores England as a nation from 1485 under Henry VII through to the death of Elizabeth I. It looks at the changes in society, domestic and foreign policy as well as the many plots and rebellions against the monarch of the day.

The Cold War: 1945 – 1991: This is the modern unit of study covering the changing relationship between USA and USSR. It builds upon the GCSE course by looking at events in this period in more depth to examine the role they played on the modern nations of USA and Russia. In addition to this the Independent Investigation allows more freedom, the study can be of your own choice but must be something the department can support you with.

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed in 2 stages, 2 exams are sat in June and the Independent Investigation is submitted in March of Year 13.

Exam 1: The Tudors 1485 - 1603 3 Questions 40%

Exam 2: The Cold War 1945 - 1991 3 Questions 40% Independent Investigation:

Topic of Choice Independent Essay 20% The best news about the A-level is it is the SAME technique for both exams, just on different subject content. Which means for 2 whole years, exam practice can be worked on and perfected, so our students go into the exam with confidence in their exam skills.

Where could this lead to?

A-Level History is a versatile qualification that provides many transferable skills applicable to all manners of life, whether it is a university application, a school leaver graduate scheme, a job or an apprenticeship. History, because of the analytical and communication skills you develop, complements many university courses, such as Psychology, International Relations, Philosophy & Ethics, Politics, English Language, as well as providing a solid grounding for a degree in History.

Key contact:

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Maths

A-level maths is one of the most popular choices across the country. Maths A-level is suitable for students that have achieved a grade 7 or higher at GCSE. It is necessary for any student who wishes to read any STEM subject at University and highly recommended for Geography, Economics, Computing, Psychology and Business Studies amongst others. Maths is known as a 'facilitating' subject, rated highly by universities for entry to any course.

Course Content

Two thirds of the course is Pure Mathematics: algebra, calculus, trigonometry and proof, and one third is Applied Mathematics: mechanics and statistics.

How will I be assessed?

Each paper is 2 hours long and has equal weighting towards the overall grade.

Paper 1: Pure Mathematics

Paper 2: Pure Mathematics

Paper 3: Statistics and Mechanics

Where could this lead to?

Just about anywhere! People with Maths degrees and other qualifications can go into: accounting, medicine, engineering, forensic pathology, finance, business, consultancy, teaching, IT, games development, scientific research, programming, civil service, design, construction and astrophysics to name a few...

A spokesperson for the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications says: "A-level maths is tremendously important. It provides a firm foundation for all scientific, technical, engineering and mathematical careers and a flying start for many other types of career, such as those in finance, medicine, agriculture ... etc. The list is endless! "

Key contact:

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Media

A-level media is suitable for those students wishing to look at a wide range of media platforms from a practical and theoretical perspective. Students wishing to take this course would have an interest in media across all the platforms (print, film, tv, e-media), and will have some knowledge of programmes for editing and creating (Premier, Photoshop).

Course Content

This course is designed to allow students to develop a theoretical knowledge of media, develop a critical eye, analyse media forms and create their own media. Students will look at representations, genres, demographics, and media concepts and language. Students will apply this knowledge to a practical project as well as in an exam setting. Entry Requirements Grade 5 in GCSE Media Studies and/or Grade 4 in GCSE English

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Written examination – 35% Students will focus on a set issue / topic and will answer a series of questions around this area. The exam looks at: An argument surrounding the topic/issue, and theoretical framework analysis.

Paper 2: Written examination – 35% Students will study and analyse a series of media products in relation to theoretical framework. They will be expected to answer questions comparing and discussing the chosen media products.

Unit 3 – Coursework unit – Media Production 30% Students will complete a practical project producing a cross-media production piece based on a topic taken from a choice of 7 themes. Students will need to submit PreProduction materials and a final production piece cross-media platforms (For example a Music Video plus working website and social media page)

Where could this lead to?

This is an academic A-Level which will allow students to continue studying Media and Production. It complements A-Levels in Art, Sociology and English Language. Students studying this course will develop skills in analysis, evaluation, and creation as well as the technical editing skills desirable in a wide range of roles within the Multi-Media industry and outside.

Many students who take media at A-Level, studying a related course at university.

Key contact:

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Physical Education

Students who have previously studied GCSE Physical Education as previously acquired knowledge of examination PE will underpin learning at this level. There is also an increase in the amount of scientific study, together with the inclusion of data analysis requiring mathematical skills.

Course content

A-level Physical Education qualifications allow students to play to their strengths and gain dynamic theoretical and practical skills for further education or work. Throughout the course students will cover the following subject content:

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Skill acquisition
- Sport and society
- Exercise physiology
- Biomechanical movement
- Sport psychology
- Sport and society and the role of technology in physical activity and sport
- NEA – Students assessed as a performer or coach (please note this is not completed in school; participation outside of school is essential)

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport, 2 hours, 35% of A-level

Section A: Applied anatomy and physiology

Section B: Skill acquisition

Section C: Sport and society

Paper 2: Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport, 2 hours, 35% of A-level

Section A: Exercise physiology and biomechanics

Section B: Sport psychology

Section C: Sport and society and technology in sport

Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport, Internal assessment, external moderation, 30% of A-level. Students assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity. Plus: written/verbal analysis of performance

What could this lead to?

A Level Physical Education is an excellent base for a university degree in sports science, sports management, healthcare, or exercise and health. Physical Education can also complement further study in biology, human biology, physics, psychology, nutrition, sociology and many more.

A Level Physical Education can open up a range of career opportunities including: sports development, sports coaching, physiotherapy, personal training or becoming one of the next generation of PE teachers. The transferable skills you learn through your study of Physical Education, such as decision making and independent thinking are also useful in any career path you choose to take.

Key contact: Mrs Launay: k.launay@watford.futureacademies.org

Physics

This course has been designed to appeal to both students who wish to spend a further two years studying a subject that develops their interest in and understanding of science, engineering and medicine. Someone who has enjoyed the physics topics in GCSE science will enjoy this course; you should be competent at maths and therefore confident about rearranging formulas and trigonometry. It is also important to have an interest and curiosity into why things in our universe behave as they do!

Physics will of course suit anyone who is interested in answering the searching questions of: 'What are we doing here?' 'How did the universe start?' 'What is time dilation?' and 'Who ate my last Rolo?'

Course Content

- Measurements and their errors
- Particles and radiation
- Waves
- Mechanics and materials
- Electricity
- Further mechanics and thermal physics
- Fields and their consequences
- Nuclear Physics
- Astrophysics
- Medical physics
- Engineering physics
- Turning points in physics
- Electronics

How will I be assessed?

3 papers 2 hours weighted 34%, 34%, paper 3 32% each total 80 marks each

Paper 1 and 2 – separate sections of the syllabus

60 marks of short and long answer questions and 25 multiple choice questions on content.

Paper 3

Section A: Compulsory section: Practical skills and data analysis

Section B: Students enter for the chosen optional unit

45 marks of short and long answer questions on practical experiments and data analysis.

35 marks of short and long answer questions on optional topic.

Where could this lead to?

Physics students are in demand in all areas especially finance where your analytical skills are definitely in demand.

An A Level in Physics will prepare you for courses such as: Pure Physics, Applied Physics, Astrophysics/Cosmology, Mechanical, Electrical or Engineering, Medicine, Medical Physics, Nanotechnology, Robotics plus many joint degrees.

There is a national shortage of people able to study any type of Physics and related Engineering subjects. The grades you will need to get into a quality university will be a lot less than the many oversubscribed subjects! Many courses may offer you a gap year where you can work in industry and earn some money and decide upon the direction of your paid career

Key Contact: Miss Arnold: c.arnold@watford.futureacademies.org and Miss Rabee: s.rabee@watford.futureacademies.org

Psychology

Students who choose Psychology should have an interest in science and how science works, as well as being curious about people and what makes them behave the way they do. This is because the course includes learning about research studies designed to test psychologists' theories.

You will learn about the strengths and limitations of this type of research, as well as conducting some psychology research of your own. Although the ability to write coherent and accurate English is required, the essays you will need to write in the second year are only about 400 words long, and can be written using a straight forward, formulaic approach which can easily be mastered. There is also a certain amount of specialist terminology which needs to be acquired.

The course requires a reasonable level of numeracy.

Course Content

In the first year, we study social influence (for example: conformity, obedience, independence), memory (including eye witness testimony), infant/carer bonding, psychopathology (including how society decides whether someone is mentally ill), biopsychology (including the fight or flight response), research methods, issues and approaches. In the second year, we focus on human relationships (including on-line relationships), stress and forensic psychology, as well as revising what was covered in the year before. The course involves continually applying these topics to real life examples, and discussing the issues around psychologists' theories and research studies. Class discussions can be quite lively and humorous at times.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology - Social Influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology.

Paper 2: Psychology in Context - Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology, Research Methods and Scientific Handling.

Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology - Issues and Debates, Stress, Forensic Psychology and Relationships.

Where could this lead to?

Psychology is one of the most versatile qualifications an ambitious student can choose. Psychology is useful for any job that requires interaction with people or an understanding of human behaviour and development. People with skills in psychology are sought after in business, management, teaching, research, advertising, journalism, social work, policing, and all kinds of careers in medicine and healthcare.

You can also choose to go on and study Psychology at university, which would open the door to working in all of the following areas, and more... Sports (helping athletes to build mental strategies to improve their performance and handle pressure; Education (studying child development and helping children experiencing difficulties with their education); Clinical and counselling (treating people with mental health needs); Forensic (assessing and treating criminal behaviour, which can involve working with offenders and victims of crime); Occupational (aiming to increase the effectiveness of an organisation and improve job satisfaction); Neuropsychology (studying how brain structure relates to behaviour, and helping to treat people suffering from brain injuries); Animal psychology (applying theories about how animals interact with one another, the environment, and human beings, or researching how they communicate and learn).

Key contact:

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Religious Education

There are three parts to the GCE Religious Studies course: Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and Developments in Religious Thought. Throughout the course students are encouraged to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach and reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes. Students do not need to have taken a GCSE in Religious Studies in order to take the subject at A Level but they should be interested in philosophical ideas and writing evaluative essays.

Course content:

The Philosophy or Religion paper covers the following topics: ancient philosophical influences; the nature of the soul; mind and body; arguments about the existence or non-existence of God; the nature and impact of religious experience; the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil; ideas about the nature of God; issues in religious language.

The Religion and Ethics paper cover the following topics: normative ethical theories; the application of ethical theory to two contemporary issues of importance; ethical language and thought; debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience; sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs. T

he Developments in Religious Thought paper covers the following topics in the context of Christianity: religious beliefs, values and teachings, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world; sources of religious wisdom and authority; practices which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition; significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought; key themes related to the relationship between religion and society.

How will I be assessed?

External assessment is the end of year 13 in three two hour papers, each with equal weighting.

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

Paper 2: Religion and Ethics

Paper 3: Developments in Religious thought

Where can this lead to?

Religious Studies is a useful stepping stone to many careers where it helps to understand what people believe and how it affects their lives. For example, medicine, social work, law, the armed services, police force, journalism, teaching and many more.

Key contact:

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Sociology

Sociology looks at why society is the way it is; it looks at what has shaped society and how society shapes those who live in it. Sociology is for those who have an interest in how our society affects our behaviour.

This course looks at a range of institutions within society and how our experiences within these institutions are different depending on our age, gender, ethnicity and class. This subject looks at policies made by governments and assesses their impact so it is also ideal for those students who are interested in politics.

This subject is a literacy rich subject so those who like reading other people's viewpoints, discussing these and then writing analytical essays will excel in this subject. It is worth knowing that we do have plenty of debates in this subject!

Course Content:

There are 6 main topics. We look at the education system, the family, the media and crime and deviance. We also look at Sociological theory and methodology. In the family unit we look at questions such as why is divorce increasing, who does more domestic labour and why. In education we look at which groups do best and worst and why. We also look at the factors that cause underachievement whilst assessing different government's ideas to narrow the gaps in education. In media we look at the messages that are transmitted and whether they are harmful or not; we also explore character representations of different social groups. In Crime and Deviance, we look at who commits most crime and why. Finally, in both the theory and methodology we look at how sociologists conduct their work and which viewpoints that are influenced by.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Education, Methods in Context and Sociological Methods (2 hours).

Paper 2: Family and Households; The Media (2 hours).

Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Sociological Theory (2 hours).

There are a range of questions from 4 to 30 marks. Some of the short answer questions ask for key explanations and reasons, whereas the essays ask you to evaluate and assess different viewpoints on topics.

Where could this lead to?

You can complete a Sociology degree or a degree in a related field such as criminology. Sociology, because it is a literacy subject, is also useful for studying other literacy rich degrees such as History or Law. Many sociology graduates go onto working in law, working in local/central government or working with social policy and Think Tanks.

Key contact:

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