

Welcome to Urmston Grammar Sixth Form



We are delighted that you are considering pursuing post-16 study here at Urmston Grammar. Becoming a Sixth Form student is a huge decision and Urmston Grammar is an “outstanding” choice: not just our view, but Ofsted’s too.

Join a dynamic and prestigious Grammar School Sixth Form as your stepping stone to the future, and remember: we meet your needs, work for your successes and support you whenever you need advice, guidance or just a helping hand.

Our Sixth Form is a vibrant community offering exciting, unique and challenging experiences.

You can read about some of our current and past students’ thoughts on life at Urmston Grammar in the speech bubbles throughout this booklet. Here are some to start you off:

The teaching facilities and all the teachers are outstanding at Urmston Grammar Sixth Form. ...Every teacher from every department is willing to take their own time and help you in order to develop your understanding of anything you struggle on. They ensure you have the relevant materials that you need in order to revise and monitor you throughout the year.

AJ, St Antony’s

What I especially like about the atmosphere in the Sixth Form is that there are smaller classes so you can get more attention from your teachers and get closer to people who you share classes with.

CW, Urmston Grammar

Teachers are always happy to help even when they are extremely busy. Students are always prioritised and it is easy to build good relationships with teachers due to their support.

HS, Urmston Grammar

Introduction

Thank you for showing an interest in Urmston Grammar Sixth Form. As a Science College with Academy status, we believe we are unique in providing our students with inspiration, independence and the qualities necessary to meet the challenges of the future.

Not only do you learn in the classroom, but there are opportunities to extend beyond these walls, be it in the IT suites, the school garden, online communities, Urmston neighbourhood or even worldwide, thanks to visits to Ecuador, Iceland and the French Alps, amongst others. All this can be yours if you choose to join us for success!

The purpose of our Open Evening, and the aim of this Information Booklet, is to help you to make two very important decisions:

1. You must be sure that as an individual, you select the best environment to study and one with a proven record of success.
2. The courses you select should be in subjects you are enthusiastic about, areas you are good at and those that will support your future interests and aspirations.

Sixth Form – “an outstanding experience”

There are approximately 160 Sixth Form places available in Year 12 at Urmston Grammar. We offer a wide range of A Level courses which lead around 80% of Year 13 into Higher Education. Others go on to take a well-organised gap year, to pursue a specific career interest, such as in Dance. Some follow Art Foundation courses and others find opportunities in employment, often in Professional Modern Apprenticeships, earning a salary and studying simultaneously.

If you come to Urmston Grammar, you will have access to high-quality facilities, including a Learning Resource Centre for independent learning, ICT suites – including a new suite linked to our Sixth Form Common Room – a free fitness suite, reading library, full size sports hall, astroturf, a lecture theatre, lecture/drama room, many modern science laboratories, a state of the art music facility, and an auditorium in the round. As a Sixth Former, you will have your own dining room and area for group work in the Sixth Form Centre, a common room where you can relax and socialise with friends, and – not least – conference facilities which the Sixth Form use for guest presentations, Young Enterprise and Debating, amongst other things.

In addition, we offer the highest level of personal support to all our Sixth Form; we challenge you to find a more committed and caring team of teachers anywhere.

And so: read this information booklet with anticipation and curiosity; we hope it will lead you to conclude that Urmston Grammar Sixth Form is indeed for you, and that this information will help you to choose your A Levels: your steps to your future.





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What GCSE grades do I need to get a place?

The academic requirement for entry into the Sixth Form from September 2021 is a minimum of five GCSE passes: 2 x 7, 3 x 6 or grade equivalent. You **should** ideally have GCSE at grade 5 in English Language and Mathematics, preferably grades signalling a 'top end' performance, and a **minimum Grade 6 in the subjects you want to study** at A Level. See additional academic requirements below.

Minimum
of 5
GCSEs
with
77666
(or equiv.)

If you wish to study **Mathematics A Level**, we would expect you to have achieved a Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics. If you do not expect to meet the entry requirements, you need to speak to the Head of Mathematics.

To take **Chemistry A Level**, we recommend that you achieve at least one Grade 7 in GCSE sciences and a minimum Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics, preferably Grade 7. If you wish to study

Chemistry A Level but do not expect to meet the entry requirements, you need to discuss your application with the Head of Science, Dr Richards. We also suggest that you only take **three Sciences at A Level** if you have a minimum of Grade 7 in two sciences and a Grade 7 in Mathematics at GCSE.

If you want to study **Business Studies, Economics, Government & Politics, Psychology or Sociology** but have not had the opportunity to take a GCSE in that subject, you must have at least a Grade 6 in a GCSE subject involving similar skills and to take Economics you should also have achieved Grade 6 in English Language and Mathematics. To study **Computer Science** you need a Grade 6, as in other subjects, and you ideally need to have a minimum of Grade 6 in Mathematics, Grade 7 is preferred.

These requirements should be read in conjunction with the Admissions Policy available from here: <https://www.urmstongrammar.org.uk/admissions-policy-september-2021-2/>



How many A Levels will I be able to take?

The majority of students will take three subjects, but the most exceptionally able students may be able to select four subjects after discussion with Miss Lingwood, Head of Sixth Form.

Which A Levels will be on offer in September 2021?

The following subjects will be offered* at A Level in September 2021:

- **Art**
- **Biology**
- **Business Studies**
- **Chemistry**
- **Computer Science**
- **Economics**
- **English Language**
- **English Literature**
- **French**
- **Geography**
- **German**
- **Government & Politics**
- **History**
- **Mathematics and Further Mathematics**
- **Music**
- **Photography**
- **Physical Education**
- **Physics**
- **Psychology**
- **Religious Studies**
- **Sociology**

I chose to come to UG because the ratings are very good and my brother came here and recommended it as a great school. The teaching and support are exceptional and the teachers are very helpful. I also find the extra-curricular support such as revision classes useful. The 6th Form is very welcoming and friendly towards newcomers.

KW, Wellacre

Having been here since Year 7 and enjoying the overall environment, staying here was the only choice. The teaching is faultless and outstanding, and the choice of extra-curricular activities is excellent.

EH, Urmston Grammar

See second half of booklet for specifics of each A Level: 'Subjects Offered'

*There may be some restrictions on the combination of subjects available due to the option lines.

The school may withdraw a subject where the number of students opting for it is too low.



When will I take my A Level exams?

A Level qualifications have recently undergone reform. All exams will be taken at the end of the two-year course, in the summer of Year 13.

Some courses will include coursework, such as English, Geography and History, or another assessment such as MFL orals, which will be taken prior to the Year 13 summer exam session.

Urmston Grammar provided me with the superb teaching and the support needed to achieve good GCSE grades and thus follow through into Sixth Form. The fact that all of my friends were staying on also gave me an incentive to stay; but it doesn't take long before it feels like all the newcomers have always been here, as it is a very friendly and sociable place to study.

VW, Urmston Grammar

I initially chose to come here because it is close to home and easier to get to school without getting up too early. But I have found that there is a lot of teaching support here and I am able to keep on top of my work.

LG, Flixton Girls'

Urmston Grammar has given me the motivation and determination to go on to further my education.

At the start of the year I settled in quickly, as there is a warm and welcoming atmosphere around this school. I have made the right choice.

SJ, Flixton Girls'



Which A Level subjects should I take?

When choosing an A Level you should have an interest in the subject, enjoy studying it and have a good chance of obtaining a high grade – but bear the following points in mind:

- 🌐 If you already have in mind a specific degree or post-18 qualification you wish to pursue after the sixth form, you should check that the subjects you intend to study at A Level fulfil the entry criteria for this. To check these you can use the UCAS website, or the individual university websites to see which A level subjects each course requires.
- 🌐 If you have **no definite career in mind**, then choose the subjects you are most successful in and enjoy. In school, our **Careers Advisor**, Amy Marshall, will meet with every student to support decision-making. Those of you at other schools should arrange an appointment with your Careers Advisor or contact Amy Marshall for additional support when you decide to apply to Urmston Grammar: amarshall@urmstongrammar.org.uk
- 🌐 For certain careers in **Science**, you will need a complete programme of Science and Mathematics if you want to progress to a degree course in these fields, e.g. Medicine, Engineering, Veterinary Science, Dentistry etc. In general, two science A Levels are essential to gain a place to study a science-based degree, and often (but not always) a Grade 7 in Mathematics is also required. Note also, that some universities may accept Geography or Psychology as a science if you are not applying for a pure Science degree.
- 🌐 Degrees in Maths, Economics and Engineering sometimes require Further Maths – you must enjoy Maths!
- 🌐 Some subjects are offered as both BA and BSc qualifications and these may require different A Levels. For example, a BSc in Geography may require Geography plus a science or Mathematics, whereas a BA may not have these requirements. This also applies to Psychology.
- 🌐 For many careers these days, what matters most is proof of your ability to work hard, to achieve good results and to have had appropriate experiences and gained valuable skills.

Urmston Grammar is competitive, but not in a bad way, and it helps me to realise my full potential.

JN, St Bede's



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I am still unsure about my choices...

Our best advice is for you to choose the three (or very exceptionally four) subjects you believe you have the potential and interest in to study for two years. If you are only sure about two choices, then for a third subject you could choose a **contrasting** subject e.g. if you take Mathematics and Physics A Level, you could choose History or German as a contrasting third choice. Alternatively, if you take English Language and Geography, you may like to take Photography or Computer Science as a third A Level.

The best advice is to choose two complementing subjects and one for contrast or interest

Or if your strengths lie on one particular side, go for a complementary choice

Another option is to take a **complementary** subject e.g. if you know you want to take PE and Psychology, you may opt for Biology. Or if you want to do Religious Studies and Sociology, you may opt to go for English Literature or Government & Politics.

If you are in doubt, you should ask your teachers – new applicants to our school can ask at the Open Evening or email

amarshall@urmstongrammar.org.uk

We suggest that you avoid three essay-based subjects or three 'new' subjects – two will most definitely be a challenge. Please note, three sciences or two sciences plus Maths is equally challenging.

These recommendations are simply to assist the difficult decision-making process and to give you the benefit of our experience.

Fancy something new?
(Not offered at GCSE at UG, or significantly different from the GCSE of the same name)
Why not consider:

Economics
English Language
Government & Politics
Psychology
Sociology

I went to several college open days, but nothing compared to the friendly atmosphere, high standards and fantastic teaching here at Urmston Grammar.

BW, Urmston Grammar



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How do I apply to Urmston Grammar?

Applying as a current UG student

We want to give you time to make your choices. You have had an assembly giving you an overview of the Sixth Form and a presentation by students so you can hear their opinions. After Sixth Form Open Evening you will be encouraged to discuss your option choices with your subject teachers in more detail before you make your decision. In January, you will have Parents' Evening and the option to discuss your post-16 options with the Head of Sixth Form who will explain the way that you will be supported from the onset of your course and at key stages throughout KS5. If you have any queries, please contact Miss Lingwood or one of the Sixth Form team.

Applications must be made online by Friday, 15th January 2021 and you will hopefully receive your offer. You must confirm your enrolment for your A levels on GCSE Results Day.

I chose to stay at Urmston Grammar because I am familiar with the school and the teachers, and there is excellent support in your subjects which prepares you well for exams. We have become close as a year group and there is a good atmosphere. GB, Urmston Grammar

Applying as a newcomer to UG

All students from other schools and colleges who would like to join Urmston Grammar should complete an online application found on the Sixth Form tab of the school website.

Your school will be contacted for your predicted GCSE grades and a reference. If these meet our entry requirements, we will offer you a place. You will receive a reply as soon as we have processed your application. **Applications will close Friday, 15th January 2021.**

We hope to be able to invite all newcomers who hold offers to join our sixth form to a 'Newcomer Information Evening' in March. It is possible this may be an online event this year depending on national guidance at the time. We also plan to host an Sixth Form Taster Day later in the summer term to give you a real insight into what studying at Urmston Grammar will be like.

If you obtain the necessary GCSE grades in August, **then you must enrol with us on GCSE Results Day.** Details of our enrolment process will be released closer to the time.

The reason why I chose Urmston Grammar was because I thought that it would be a school with smaller class sizes and a closer support network. This has definitely been the case and I have benefitted from this environment. Furthermore, I receive the monthly Bursary as financial support, and I was encouraged to apply for the Social Mobility Foundation Aspiring Professionals Programme. Since being accepted, I have received two prestigious work experience placements and additional support and contacts. Anon, Flixton Girls'



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Careers represented at our Careers Fair include...

- Accountancy
- Apprenticeships
- Biochemistry/Medical research
- Business
- Creative writing/Playwriting
- Dentistry
- Digital Marketing/Working in
Social Media
- Engineering
- Physiotherapy
- Law
- Journalism
- IT
- Landscape Architecture
- Languages – Interpretation
- Media – TV Production
- Medicine
- Midwifery
- Pharmacy
- Psychology
- Royal Navy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Teaching
- Veterinary Science

I feel I get great support from all the staff in terms of my courses and helping me get experience.

OK, Urmston Grammar

What I especially like about Urmston Sixth Form is the amount of opportunities available to help boost your level of experience.

JN, St Bede's



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Weekly Enrichment Programme

The Sixth Form Enrichment Programme provides you with the opportunity to extend and develop your skills beyond A Level study and the usual classroom environment. It is vital that you develop a range of qualities and skills that go beyond academic results to allow you to compete in an ever-changing and competitive world. University admissions tutors and employers want to recruit students who can demonstrate a variety of talents and transferable skills. The Urmston Grammar Enrichment Programme will enable you develop these skills and have relevant examples that you can refer to in your UCAS personal statement and apprenticeship/job applications.

The Sixth Form Enrichment Programme will enable you to:

- Learn different skills to those acquired in a classroom
- Learn strategies and methods to help you become a successful independent learner
- Develop new interests and skills
- Demonstrate leadership qualities
- Make new friends
- Serve the wider community
- Tackle different challenges
- Have fun

You will be expected to complete 2 activities during the year. These can include community service, work experience and sports, as well as learning new skills such as sign language or Chinese.

This is an eminently enjoyable part of the Year 12 curriculum and operates every Wednesday afternoon thus providing you with opportunities to broaden your life skills and employability.

At the end of the year a report is compiled based on staff observations at the placement itself. These reports are used extensively when Higher Education or employment references are written and depending on your commitments can be very persuasive when added to your qualifications.

Weekly Community Work Experience Placements

Work experience is hugely varied and in the last year has involved working in a solicitor's office, travel agency, newspaper and media industries, and veterinary practices. Most often students arrange their own placement such as:

- Helping in a local primary or special school
- Visiting patients and operating the mobile library at Trafford General Hospital
- Working in old people's homes
- Helping in charity work
- Hospital/health work/care shadowing

This list is not exhaustive and many students come up with their own ideas. You also have the option of pursuing a sporting activity on site, either Fitness Suite or joining the football team.



- 🏆 Football Team in the Sports Hall
- 🏆 Fitness in the Fitness Suite
- 🏆 Forming a politics society to raise and discuss issues with members of the school and local MP
- 🏆 Engineering Education Scheme
- 🏆 Wildlife Garden and horticultural work
- 🏆 Debating Society
- 🏆 Young Enterprise
- 🏆 School Newspaper
- 🏆 School Choir
- 🏆 Volleyball
- 🏆 Well-being ambassadors
- 🏆 Sign Language, leading to a qualification in this worthwhile skill
- 🏆 Italian Lessons
- 🏆 Running a Humanities or Science club for lower school pupils or junior school students
- 🏆 ASDAN Peer Mentoring, which leads to a valuable qualification

Charity Work

Our Sixth Formers give generously of their time and energy to organise functions and sponsored events for charity. Children in Need, Barnardo's, N.S.P.C.C., Senior Citizens and disadvantaged children have all benefited from their efforts.

Support for Students in Year 7–11

There are many opportunities for Sixth Formers to offer support to younger students. There is a team of up to fourteen Senior Prefects, including our **Head Boy, Head Girl** and their deputies. This team is elected by staff and Sixth Form students and, in addition, Sixth Form prefects are attached to every form in the school. These **form prefects play a leading role** in helping teachers with the social and academic development of younger pupils.

Sixth Formers engage with younger pupils in such activities as Lower School Discos, Drama club, football, netball and basketball coaching, fundraising, school productions, giving talks in PSHE and within a small and highly active team of **trained ASDAN peer support mentors**.

Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is a national scheme that enables students to run their own business for one year, giving valuable experience and insight into the business world. Like a real business, a board of directors is elected, shares are sold, a marketing campaign is carried out and financial records are kept. **Communication, organisation and teamwork** are developed by involvement in Young Enterprise. Young Enterprise really does give students true experience of working in business. For anyone looking to venture into a business-related career, or for somebody who wants to supplement their involvement in school life, being part of Young Enterprise in Year 12 is extremely worthwhile.



Enrichment throughout the Year

Work Experience Placement

All Year 12 students have the opportunity to take work experience placements for up to five days in the summer term. We want our students to leave Urmston Grammar with the skills, qualities and experience that employers and Higher Education institutions admire. We believe that active participation in all that the school has to offer, will allow each student to achieve this. We are able to assist with a large number of placements.

Trips Out of School

Opportunities usually exist for you to go on field trips to **Yorkshire** (Biologists) and **Snowdonia** (Geographers). Art students usually visit the **London galleries**. Both French and German students have the opportunity to participate in **exchanges with foreign students**. This year the Sociology students attended a **Revision Conference**, whilst Psychology students visited **Chester Zoo**. Maths students go to the University of Manchester for **Maths Inspiration** and also to **Bletchley Park**; the English department plan theatre trips in Manchester and **Stratford**, as well as visits to the **British Library** and **Portico Library**. These are only examples of the many visits arranged.

A Social Life

In addition to playing an active part in whole school events, there are many opportunities to socialise within the Sixth Form. You will enjoy your own Sixth Form area in the Common Room where you can study and socialise in a more **relaxed** atmosphere. In addition, drinks, sandwiches and **snacks are served all day** and full lunches are available in the Sixth Form Centre, Newton Hall.

Information about **universities and colleges** is available in the Learning Resource Centre and additionally, University Open Day information is constantly updated in the Sixth Form Common Room, meaning that we really do spoil you when it comes to preparation for life after Urmston Grammar and A Levels.

There is a large Sports Hall and all-weather pitch for practices as well as free membership of our **fitness suite**. Seasonal **parties**, such as Halloween and Valentine's Day are organised independently by the Senior Prefects for the Sixth Form. The Upper Sixth organise their own leaving **'Prom'** at a luxury hotel. This is attended by Sixth Form tutors and teaching staff and is a truly memorable night.

I stayed at UG because of the support that the teachers give you. There's a very helpful mentoring system that helps mentors to track your progress and grades to ensure that you have the best support possible.

Also the enrichment programme allows you to gain work experience and to volunteer in the community in order to enhance your personal statement.
CW, Urmston Grammar

Sixth form parties are organised by the prefects and are a great way to meet other students that you wouldn't usually meet in school.

KW, Wellacre

The common room provides a laid back atmosphere where we can work or talk to friends.

JW, Urmston Grammar



Careers and Higher Education Guidance

Advice on careers is readily available to you through tutors, Sixth Form Heads and team, subject teachers, individual mentors and our careers advisor.

Each year, all Year 12 students are taken to a major external **Higher Education convention** in Manchester. During the Sixth Form, the Careers Advisor will interview students who require advice. There is an extensive **Careers Education Module** offered in PSHE from January in Year 12. Moreover, you will also visit a North West Russell Group university for a campus tour and lectures on university life, as well as taster sessions.

You are encouraged to attend university and college **Open Days** as well as courses for prospective applicants in many fields, such as Education, Engineering, Forensic Science, Law, Mathematics, Medicine, Psychology, and Sociology. News of **sponsorships** is given when sent to school. **Speakers** from The University of Manchester, The University of Salford, The University of Liverpool and Manchester Metropolitan University, and often other universities further from home, give presentations to the Sixth Form. A **Gap Year** company also present on the advantages of volunteering overseas and this year we also have an inspiring presentation on undergraduate studies abroad, from a **group specialising in international study**. Individual companies often approach us to give presentations to students and to look for prospective applicants.

We organise a one-day course on '**Interview Technique and Practice**'. All of you have interviews with professionals in your stated area of interest and sit in on those of others, receiving **expert advice** from interviewers, with written feedback to support your future interviews. An **Admissions Tutor** from a local university gives advice on the writing of the UCAS Personal Statement.

All students are shown websites which we believe will help you to make the right individual choice of university and course, but for those of you who seek greater guidance, there is a presentation on the '**Centigrade Scheme**', which enables you to create individual progressions routes. Early in Year 13, Manchester Metropolitan University kindly visit us with their '**Roadshow**' which is to help with applications to university. MMU visit to explain the **Professional Modern Apprenticeships**, for post A Level entry. The Skills and Growth Company present on apprenticeships, how to apply and secure a position.

All Year 12 students have the opportunity to take work experience placements for up to five days in the summer term. We want our students to leave Urmston Grammar with the skills, qualities and experience that employers and Higher Education institutions admire. We believe that active participation in all that the school has to offer, will allow each student to achieve this.

I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after Sixth Form, so I was given two sessions with the Careers Advisor to go through all of my options and talk about school life.

JM, Urmston Grammar



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What Extra-Curricular Activities are available?

Each year teachers put on different activities before and after school, and at lunchtimes. Some of them are exclusive to Sixth Form, whilst others offer integration with the whole school community. Below is a list of the current activities available, just to give you an idea of what may be available next year.

- 🎵 Reading Room
- 🎵 Fitness Suite
- 🎵 String Group
- 🎵 Christianity Explored
- 🎵 Reading Room
- 🎵 Wildlife Gardening Group
- 🎵 Board Games Club

The teaching staff provide many extra-curricular sessions to allow you to improve your grade and gain some extra support in topics which you may be struggling with.

KF, Flixton Girls'

- 🎵 School band
- 🎵 Jazz Group
- 🎵 English Prep
- 🎵 Warhammer
- 🎵 Italian for Beginners
- 🎵 Languages Filmclub
- 🎵 Geography Club
- 🎵 KS4&5 Debating Society
- 🎵 Cipher Challenge
- 🎵 FIFA Club
- 🎵 Chess Club
- 🎵 Chinese Club
- 🎵 Beginner's Spanish Club

I like the friendly environment and I get on well with the teachers who support me well. The atmosphere is good and the options of extra-curricular activities are endless.

GT, Urmston Grammar

- 🎵 Flute Group
- 🎵 A Level Subject Support
- 🎵 Senior Choir
- 🎵 Snow sports at Chill Factor^e
- 🎵 Urmston 132 Blog Club
- 🎵 Knit and Natter
- 🎵 Chamber Choir

I chose to stay at Urmston Grammar because the support I received when doing my GCSEs was impeccable. The atmosphere around the whole school is very friendly and welcoming. There is an incredible selection of extra-curricular activities available to suit everyone in the school, which enables you to make many new friends.

HD, Urmston Grammar

I chose to stay on at Urmston Grammar mainly for the high standard of teaching.

The new atmosphere of Sixth form is very welcoming and there were lots of opportunities straight away to get involved with a number of different groups and societies.

RL, Urmston Grammar





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How will Urmston Grammar help me to excel?

- Staff will help you to develop sound independent learning skills.
- You will have the benefit of listening to, and questioning, a considerable number of external speakers on a huge variety of topics from Study Skills, Managing your Finances and Applying for Courses/Jobs, Interview Techniques, to Business Experience.
- Many free Science lectures are offered by Café Sci, local universities and the Royal Institution. These are all advertised in the Sixth Form areas and your Form Teacher will ensure that you are aware of such opportunities.
- Your Form Tutor will support you on a daily basis and your Mentor will provide formal Mentoring Support, a minimum of six times during the Sixth Form. We will support you with individualised strategies, whenever this would aid confidence and progression.

In Sixth Form, I'm surrounded by like-minded and highly-motivated individuals. This drives me to work hard.

PR Wellacre

My mentor has given me useful support especially in preparation for applying to University and prep gave me extra support and prepared me for my exams. I think the 6th Form 'gels' well together and there is a good atmosphere.

CL, Urmston Grammar

- Subject Mentoring will guide and support you on an individual basis and is provided by your subject teachers.
- Year 12 and 13 Consultation Evenings are there for you if you encounter difficulties. Students and their parents/guardians will be invited to meet individual Heads of Department to discuss strategies to improve grades.
- Additionally, at Parents' Evenings, students and parents discuss progress with each of their subject teachers.
- Our Careers Advisor is available in school ensuring that up-to-date information and advice are available.
- North West Universities and others come in to present information for you on all aspects of applying to university.

I chose to stay here due to the esteem associated with the Sixth Form as well as the high standards the institution sets for itself. The teaching is of high quality, with the student culture being one of not only friendliness, but one of an industrious nature.

JG, Urmston Grammar



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Extended Project Qualification

The AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) will be offered to all of you when you join in September. It is an excellent opportunity to develop and evidence independent research and study skills. Usually, around 20% of our students choose to embrace this opportunity. You will need to make an application, justifying your subject/topic and why you are passionate to extend your learning in this area.

[EPQ] provides an opportunity for students to extend their abilities beyond the A Level syllabus, stand out and prepare for university or their future career. It can also be used to earn extra UCAS points.

Source AQA website

The EPQ is based on an in-depth study which can take the form of an experiment, essay or project. Topic areas don't need to be based on a subject you study at A Level, although this is often seen as an opportunity to extend understanding in an area that may be continued at university. You may choose to base your project on an interest or hobby that is pursued outside school. It is recommended that you spend up to 120 guided learning hours on your project. This includes meeting with your individual supervisor, planning, researching, organising, creating, drafting and writing.

Projects will need to be completed by an agreed deadline and you will have to present your work, in its many forms, to an audience of students, staff, family and possibly other outside guests.

You can read all about the EPQ on the AQA website:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/programmes/aqa-baccalaureate/extended-project/the-aqa-epq>

During my experience of completing an EPQ, my supervisor always put time aside to help me with research and project ideas and was often available to have conversations about my progress outside of the classroom.

HS, Urmston Grammar

It's 'cool to be clever' - no one is embarrassed about being themselves.

BM, Urmston Grammar



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What is this Mentoring system I keep hearing about?

One of the things about Urmston Grammar Sixth Form that our students typically comment on is our mentoring system:

You will be allocated an **experienced sixth form mentor** who usually collaborates with you throughout your time in sixth form

- You will have a minimum of six **one-to-one mentoring sessions** over the two years, at key points during your course, including possible pressure points such as exams
- Your mentor will gain an **overview of your academic capabilities** and **character traits** and use these to write a **strong and well-informed reference** for your job or university application, as well as being able to offer you the **pastoral support you need**
- Your mentor will discuss **personalised targets, revision and coping strategies**, along with anything else they can help you with
- You will be provided with **one-to-one help on your UCAS personal statement** by your individual mentor, who will know you well and will be an experienced member of the sixth form team
- We also provide individual **interview practice** with someone from a local company or organisation
- We host talks from **visiting universities** including Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, Oxford and Liverpool
- We facilitate a **week's work experience** and allow you time to attend other work-related experiences

I especially love the fact that you are assigned mentors. My mentor has definitely helped me in the university application process and has helped me to complete my personal statement. I also really like the careers advisor who has helped me to decide on my future career and she has given me a great insight into what I can do in order to get onto my choice of course.

AJ, St Antony's

The mentoring system ... really helped with both my personal choices and academic abilities, providing me with guidance on university and future career options.

RE, Urmston Grammar



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Will Urmston help me to apply to Oxford or Cambridge University?

As you will have seen in the section above on mentoring, we offer several services to help high achievers to apply to the top courses and universities.

At Urmston Grammar everyone here is consistently highly achieving aiming to fulfil their potential and hoping to exceed expectations based on their GCSEs. In all subjects and all lessons, students are stretched and challenged to not merely achieve their minimum target grades, but to understand what is needed to attain A/A* and top band results across all components. A Level teaching and content is more academic and personalised than at GCSE, and so it is likely that students who would not have been identified as 'Oxbridge potentials' will actually emerge as such during the first year of their chosen A Levels.

For those of you who have your sights on Cambridge University or Oxford University:

- ✚ In Year 12 our linked Oxford and Cambridge Colleges come in to meet with potential applicants and give advice on starting to prepare for the most challenging applications
- ✚ You will be given the opportunity to visit both universities, as well as attend multiple Oxbridge conferences for potential applicants
- ✚ We provide one-to-one help with your UCAS personal statement from a specialist team of Oxbridge-conversant Sixth Form staff members who will liaise with you and your mentor
- ✚ Support for some of the additional tests, such as ENGAA and PAT
- ✚ We provide Oxbridge specialist interview practice, often from our former students
- ✚ In September of Year 13, students attend a local free training session on interview preparation and our link colleges again visit our Sixth Form, to offer support and answer individual questions
- ✚ We run special **sessions for Oxbridge applicants**, and have staff who will liaise with your mentor to write your Oxbridge reference

Will Urmston help me to apply for Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science?

- 🌟 Special training sessions to support applications that require the additional **UKCAT**: the UK Clinical Aptitude Test which is used in the selection process by a consortium of UK University Medical and Dental Schools. An external company – UKCATprep.com – visit our school to give a tutorial on tips for the UKCAT, including follow-up question practice
- 🌟 Support for **BMAT**: the BioMedical Admissions Tests for applicants to Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Biomedical Science and Dentistry courses at certain universities
- 🌟 Discussions about background reading and the selection of material at an appropriate level
- 🌟 Individual communication about a huge range of relevant opportunities offered in the North West and national programmes for students who can access widening participation benefits.
- 🌟 Support through your mentor and your subject specialist with completing reviews of your work experiences and lectures – this will help you to develop a catalogue of reflections on your experiences on specialist software, OSCAR, an online system used for students writing personal statements and teachers composing references
- 🌟 We also offer mock interview practice for both **multiple mini interview** and **panel style interviews**, led by a member of staff with over 10 years' experience in supporting students for these most competitive applications (MMI is an interview format that uses many short independent assessments, typically in a timed circuit)



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What other support can we offer?

We understand that while the Sixth Form years can be two of the most rewarding and memorable ones of your life, they can also be quite stressful. Sometimes existing or unexpected situations crop up and you need extra support.

School Nurse

We have a school nurse who offers confidential personal support for any of you encountering non-academic difficulties.

Counsellor

Perhaps you need a few regular support sessions to cope with personal issues – our counsellor may be able to help you with this. Everyone will be introduced to Kooth, a free web-linked counselling advice service.

Safeguarding

Maybe you are concerned about a friend or indeed your own situation at home and are not sure where to turn. Whilst you can speak to any member of staff at all, in confidence, we also have two dedicated members of staff who specialise in safeguarding and are available whenever you need to talk to them.

Special Needs

Being a diverse and inclusive sixth form, we are used to helping those of you with additional needs, be it dyslexia, visual stress or another specific need, we have a specialist team of support staff who can liaise with you and your parent/carer prior to your starting your A Levels and at regular intervals during your time here, so that all of us can support you in the best way for you, ensuring there are no barriers to your learning and excelling.

I chose to stay at Urmston Grammar as I enjoy the environment and the support given by the teachers. I also appreciate how supportive everyone is. The teachers and Form Tutors will help you in any way they can.

SM, Urmston Grammar

Form Tutor and PSE

Because at Urmston Grammar we care about you, our Sixth Form students, throughout your time here, the person you will see consistently each morning will be your form tutor, a member of the Sixth Form Team. Each morning there is a short registration period, in which you can let off steam, catch up on news, enjoy silent reading or engage with the excellent programme of PSE activities we have designed specially to benefit Year 12 and 13 students to steer their way through the choppy waters of A Levels and the exciting but sometimes daunting prospect of life after school. We also introduce a 'Growth Mindset' programme within Key Stage 5. You will each have your own work book, designed specifically for A Level students; you are guided through topics by your Form Teacher. The Growth Mindset programme develops the fundamentally important elements of your character that underpin all your academic endeavours. For example, it helps to build resilience, through identifying your 'VESPA' qualities (sorry no not the cute Italian scooter, but the Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice, Attitude).



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Subjects offered

ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

A Level (AQA)

100% A*-B
in 2020

Head of Department: Mrs. L. Nanvazadeh

Join the Creative Economy Every good company realises that creativity and good design are important factors in generating new business. So your creativity isn't just a way of satisfying your artistic soul, it can open the door to exciting career opportunities as well. This popular A Level is a practical course that allows you to be as creative as you want to be.

A Diverse Course During your A Level you will find out about a whole range of different media, techniques and processes. From charcoal to computers, you cannot have enough ideas when it comes to expressing yourself. The course is big on hands-on experience too; it is the work you produce that counts. Make sure to look around the corridors at Urmston Grammar and the school's Twitter account to see past student work.

The Department teaches a wide range of techniques using materials as part of the curriculum delivery such as:

- Watercolour, acrylic and oil painting, dry pastel, oil pastel, charcoal and graphite
- Textiles, mixed media approaches, batik, fabric painting, bonding, machine and hand embroidery
- Printing: mono printing, collographs and screen-printing
- Digital photography and image manipulation using commercial software used in the professional industry

Key Learning Topics The emphasis in this course is learning by doing, so you'll be able to create imaginative personal work.

The Department offers a number of enrichment opportunities to students including a trip to London, The Clothes Show Live and the chance to apply to attend a residential week-long course in Tuscany, Italy run by practising artists.

Where will Success Take me? Many students go on to take higher education in Art and Design including courses at the Ruskin School of Fine Art at Oxford University and The University of Arts, London, then aim to join the world of advertising as graphic designers, illustrators, typographers or become painters, sculptors, textile designers, fashion designers, photographers to name just a few. For those ambitious to become architects, this is an essential subject choice for university entry.

A Level Component 1: Personal Investigation

- 60% total A Level
- Candidates develop a personal investigation supported by between 1000 and 3000 words

A Level Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

- 40% total A Level
- An exam based assignment set by AQA
- Preparation time + 15 hours supervised time

You will build on experiences gained at GCSE where you will continue to explore and develop your use of materials and associated techniques. Your ideas will be linked closely to extension work and developed through your knowledge of historical and critical studies. It is intended that the courses we offer will encourage you to extend your knowledge of Art and Design through individual observation, expression and invention. Practical sessions are supported by theoretical studies, which explore the ways in which artists and designers from different periods and cultures have used materials to express and communicate beliefs and values.



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BIOLOGY

A Level (AQA)

Head of Department: Dr. O. G. Richards

76% A*-B
in 2020

A Level Biology is usually taken by:

- Students who wish to pursue a career in Science, Medicine or Dentistry, either after a course in higher education or after completing A Level studies. In this case it is usually studied with at least one other A Level Science subject.
- Students who enjoy Biology but do not wish to study Biology at a higher level. In this case it may be studied in conjunction with any other A Level subject.

The topic areas studied are:

Year 12

1. Biological molecules
2. Cells
3. Organisms exchanging substances with their environment
4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms

Year 13

5. Energy transfers in and between organisms
6. Organisms responding to changes in their internal and external environments
7. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
8. The control of gene expression

You are required to complete twelve specified practical investigations for A Level Biology and your understanding of practical Biology will be assessed in the written examinations.

A Level Biology students attend a residential field study course in September of Year 13. Essential practical skills are experienced and developed and are essential for the assessment of these.

You are supported throughout the course by a team of highly experienced subject specialists who provide one-to-one support, additional tutorials, subject clinics and revision sessions. Almost all subject staff are also experienced AQA examiners.

In addition, students are provided with the opportunity to participate in a variety of extension activities including: museum visits, practical DNA workshops, zoo visits, Biology Olympiad and lecture events. A 3-day residential field study excursion takes place in Year 13.

Further information is available on the school website or from Dr. Richards.



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BUSINESS

A Level (Edexcel)

Head of Department: Mr. D. Kearns

The Business and Economics department regularly achieves excellent results and has received awards from the Good Schools Guide for its performance nationally.

It is important to note that you do not need to have studied the subject at GCSE in order to take the A Level, and the performance of students is equally impressive regardless of whether or not they took GCSE Business Studies. It is more important that you have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in business and economic affairs and a desire to explore new ideas and challenge your views on the world today.

The Edexcel Business syllabus consists of four themed modules; themes 1 & 2 comprise the first year of the A Level course, whilst themes 3 & 4 are only studied in the second year of the A Level course. Themes 1 & 2 introduce entrepreneurial and managerial concepts from generating business ideas and assessing market potential, through financing and start up, to managing and growing a business in the UK market; themes 3 & 4 develop a greater depth of understanding with a focus on strategic decision making, managing change, competitiveness in international markets and global economics. Businesses are the principal source of wealth creation in society and, as such, their performance and management is crucially important. The investigation and study of real-life business lies at the heart of this course which has been designed to analyse the management and behaviour of firms within a competitive market and investigate their interaction with consumers, competitors and government, both domestically and internationally.

The A Level course is examined at the end of Year 13 through three exams – Paper 1 covers themes 1 & 4, Paper 2 covers themes 2 & 3, and Paper 3, which is based on a pre-release context, draws from all themes. The four main areas of study are:

- **Theme 1: Marketing and People**

This theme covers the characteristics you need to develop to be successful in business and how businesses generate and test their ideas through market research to develop an effective marketing mix; it also considers how best to manage people in organisations.

- **Theme 2: Managing Business Activities**

Here we look at the activities in which you may be involved if you were to set up and manage any size of business. It introduces key management tools in Operations and Finance and considers revenue generation and external influences such as competition, the economic climate and the Government.

- **Theme 3: Business Decisions and Strategy**

Through this theme, you will learn how to assess the competitiveness of a business through performance indicators and analyse corporate objectives and strategy; you will also consider the cause and effects of change on business and examine effective risk management.

- **Theme 4: Global Business**

The aim of this theme is to introduce you to the world of international business, global economics and the issues facing multi-national corporations. It covers identifying new markets, global branding and the increasing economic power of China and India.

Accepted by all the major universities, including Oxbridge and LSE, as a foundation for further Business or Economics studies, the course examines the essential link between theoretical perspective and successful business decision-making. Business subjects are now the most popular courses at university, and their graduates command some of the highest salaries. They open the door to careers in management, sales and marketing, accountancy and finance, economics, human resources and the most prestigious and highly sought after graduate career, management consultancy.

82% A*-B
100% A*-C
in 2020



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CHEMISTRY

67% A* - B
84% A* - C
in 2020

A Level (AQA)

Head of Department: Mr. T. Parker

Chemistry is a very important science complementing Biology and Physics. As well as being the foundation for further study in Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Biochemistry, Pharmacology, Environmental Science, Polymer and Colour Chemistry and much more, it is also the one essential A Level for Veterinary Science, Medicine and Dentistry. The skills needed to succeed in Chemistry are wide-ranging, from the analysis of data through to the synthesis of ideas. Chemists, therefore, have many marketable skills which may lead to careers in Law, Personnel, Management and others as well as Chemistry itself.

We have chosen to follow the AQA specification because it follows on well from the Additional Science at GCSE and builds on the concepts of 'How Science works' that ensure relevance to contemporary issues. This new model follows the key themes of the highly popular former AQA specification, updated in-line with the new QCA Science criteria.

AQA A Level is a natural next stage from the GCSE course and so there are many recognisable topics that are taken a stage further. Some topics, such as atomic structure, are studied in greater detail while others, such as equilibria, broaden the GCSE experience and then use Mathematics so that qualitative understanding becomes more quantitative. The biggest content difference at A Level is the great increase in the amount of organic chemistry. This includes many more functional groups, an understanding of the mechanisms of reactions as well as beginning an understanding of the mechanisms of the reactions and synthetic routes.

To take Chemistry A Level, we recommend that you achieve at least one grade 7 or above in GCSE Combined Sciences (Trilogy) or GCSE Separate Sciences and a minimum grade 6 in GCSE Maths, although grade 7 is strongly recommended. Applicants failing to meet these criteria must be enrolled by the Head of Chemistry or the Head of Science.

Content Overview

The course is split into 3 distinct traditional Chemistry areas: Physical, Inorganic and Organic.

Required practical exercises for A Level are integrated into the specification.

The new AQA specification has separated the areas into physical, inorganic and organic chemistry to help you clearly identify which branch of Chemistry you are studying. This is particularly useful for students wanting to study Chemistry at university and take up research opportunities in your chosen specialised field.



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COMPUTER SCIENCE

63% A*-A
88% A*-B
2020

A Level (OCR)

Head of Department: Mr. S. Verma

Computing is offered at A Level. This course focuses on Computing aspects and Programming.

Students will study aspects of theory as well as how to program using Python and/or VB.

The structure of the course at Advanced Subsidiary level course will take the following format:

Paper 1 based on: **Computer Systems**

- Software and software development
- Exchanging data
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues
- Processors, input and output devices

Paper 2 based on: **Algorithms & Programming**

- Elements of computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms

Paper 3 Programming Project:

This unit will assess the student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained from the programming language that they have learnt. They will then investigate a practical problem and solve it using the programming language.

A summary of each unit can be seen below:

Paper 1 (Written exam, 140 marks, 2 hours 30 minutes, 40% of A-level)

This paper tests a student's ability to program as well as their theoretical knowledge of Computer Science.

Paper 2 (Written exam, 140 marks, 2 hours 30 minutes, 40% of A-level)

This paper will test a student's ability to answer subject content listed above under Paper 2.

Paper 3 (Project, 70marks marks, 20% of A-level)

An exam board set project must be completed within the allocated time and will be assessed via class teachers in school

This course is ideal preparation for university Computing courses.



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ECONOMICS A

50% A*-A
85% A*-B
in 2020

A Level (Edexcel)

Head of Department: Mr. D. Kearns

Economics is about choice and the impact that our choices have on each other; it relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families, to the world fashioned by governments and businesses. An economic way of thinking can help everyone make better choices.

To study A Level Economics, it is important to note that you do not have to have studied any Business oriented subject at GCSE, however, a grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics and English Language is required; you should also have a keen interest in the world in which you live, the ability to think logically and clearly, and you should enjoy healthy debate where you challenge conventional thinking by researching evidence from which you form your own judgements. Economists often hold differing views on fundamental issues such as employment, price levels, taxation, international trade and poverty and it is this controversy that makes Economics lively and interesting. Economics does require a level of mathematical ability and, because of the nature of the course, you must be comfortable working with numbers, formulae and graphs.

The A Level course is examined at the end of Year 13 through three exams – Paper 1 covers themes 1 & 3, Paper 2 covers themes 2 & 4, and Paper 3 draws from all themes.

YEAR 12

- **Theme 1: Markets and Market Failure**

This theme introduces the nature of economics and examines how the price mechanism allocates resources in markets, exploring market failure and its potential remedies, and the application of Supply and Demand analysis to real-world situations.

- **Theme 2: The UK Economy – Performance & Policies**

Here, we look at the key measures of economic performance and the objectives and strategies of economic policy. We assess demand and supply-side policies in managing the economy, predicting the impact of such policies and arguing for different approaches and identifying criteria for success.

YEAR 13

- **Theme 3: Business Behaviour and Labour Markets**

The aim of this theme is to analyse pricing and output decisions in differing contexts, examining the impact of the number and size of firms in a market on the nature of competition, and exploring the concept of government intervention to promote competitive markets.

- **Theme 4: A Global Perspective**

The application, analysis and evaluation of economic models is central to this theme, as well as the ability to assess policies used to deal with economic problems such as poverty and inequality. An awareness of trends and developments in the global economy over the past 10 years will be developed.

Understanding Economics lies at the heart of understanding the world in which we live; the understanding of how individuals, businesses, governments and countries behave; their rationale; and the effect of their behaviour on others within our increasingly globalised society. Our study is clearly focussed on the real world, using the current economic, political and social landscape to illustrate the influence of economic models on decision-makers the world over.

A well regarded, traditional, academic subject, Economics is the cornerstone of successful, highly paid careers in multi-national corporations, government, global NGOs, international finance and law, industry analysis, and environmental/sociological consultancy.

Please note that for study at university, Mathematics is often required, but not always, as a complementary A Level.



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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

38% A*–A
88% A*–B
in 2020

A Level (AQA)

Head of Department: Mrs. L. C. Derby

A Level English Language explores the study of English Language both as a medium of communication and as a topic in its own right, with an emphasis on your ability to pursue lines of enquiry, debate different views, and work independently to research aspects of language in use. Language is seen as a creative tool for expression and social connection, as well as for individual cognition. The study of language as a symbolic system used to assert power in society is also fundamental to the scope of this course. You will create texts and reflect critically on your own processes of production, while analysing the texts produced by others.

Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society: 2 hours 30 minutes – 40% of A Level

The aim of this part of the course is to introduce you to language study, exploring textual variety and children's language development. It introduces you to methods of language analysis to explore concepts of audience, purpose, genre, mode and representation. It also introduces you to the study of children's language development, exploring how children learn language and how they are able to understand and express themselves through language.

Topics Studied in A Level Language

gender
power
accent and dialect
conversation analysis
language change
history and future of English
occupational language & jargon
individual and group identity
sociolinguistics
child language acquisition
phonetics
language and ethnicity
creoles and lingua francas

Paper 2: Language Diversity and Change: 2 hours 30 minutes – 40% of A Level

The aim of this area of study is to allow you to explore language diversity and change over time. You will study the key concepts of audience, purpose, genre and mode and will explore language in its wider social, geographical and historical contexts. You will explore processes of language change. This part of the subject content also requires you to study social attitudes to, and debates about, language diversity and change.

Language Investigation & Original Writing – Non-exam assessment: Language in Action – 20% of A Level

The aim of this area of study is to allow you to explore and analyse language data independently and develop and reflect upon your own writing expertise. It requires you to carry out two different kinds of individual research:

1. Language investigation (2,000 words excluding data)
2. Original writing and commentary (750 words each)

What transferable skills does English Language promote?

Employers want people with proven motivation, intelligence, and ability to work independently. An English Language A Level shows that you have all of

these qualities. Additionally, the ability to communicate is very valuable for almost any job. Studying English Language teaches you how to write clearly and effectively, which is required in most careers, for example when giving presentations and seminar discussions. You will also develop your ability to understand and express sophisticated ideas and theories. That ability to read, reflect, and critique – and then synthesise conclusions clearly – is essential to most kinds of work – as is the ability to construct and defend an argument.

Which careers does English Language lend itself to?

In essence any career that requires good communication skills, analysis, inference and argument – i.e. virtually all careers. But the typical destinations of English Language students include: management, administration, teaching and other education work, writing, publishing, PR, journalism, speech therapy. No matter what career you pursue, or course you apply for, the first impression you create will be through your written expression: an English Language A Level is the only one that explicitly teaches you how to refine your written expression as well as master a range of writing styles.



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ENGLISH LITERATURE

A Level (AQA)

Head of Department: Mrs. L. C. Derby

91% A*-B
100% A*-C
in 2020

The OCR A Level in English Literature will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE, introducing you to the discipline of advanced literary studies, and covers reading of the major literary genres of poetry, prose and drama. It will extend these studies in breadth and depth, further developing your ability to analyse, evaluate and make connections. You are required to study a minimum of eight texts at A Level, including at least two examples of each of the genres of prose, poetry and drama across the course as a whole.

Drama and Poetry Pre-1900 Exam – 40%

This offers you the opportunity to engage in close reading and study of Shakespeare's use of language. You will answer a two-part question; the first part will focus on an extract from your chosen Shakespeare play (to exhibit close textual analysis despite this being a closed text exam) and the second part will be an essay question that will assess your wider knowledge of the play as a whole. In the second section you will have to apply a combination of one drama text and one poetry text to a set of non-text-specific but literary questions.

Comparative and Contextual Study Exam – 40%

This will consist of a close reading (unseen) exercise and a comparative essay. The paper will be split into different topic areas. Chosen topics include: American Literature 1880-1940, The Gothic, Dystopia, Women in Literature and The Immigrant Experience. You will have free choice of texts (from a list of core set texts and suggested set texts) from within your chosen topic area. For the first part of this exam you will approach an unseen prose extract, from within your chosen topic area. The inclusion of this 'supported unseen' helps promote wider reading throughout the course because the more familiar you are with literature from within your topic area, the more confident you will be about approaching the unseen in the examination. The second part of the exam will offer you a choice of three questions of which you must answer one on the set texts you have studied in your chosen topic area.

Coursework – 20%

The coursework component requires you to study three texts from across the genres of poetry, drama and prose. Task One offers a choice between a critical piece and a re-creative piece with a commentary and Task Two is a 'linked texts' essay focusing on connections and comparisons between two texts.

What transferable skills does Literature provide?

Employers want people with proven motivation, intelligence, and the ability to work independently. An English Literature degree shows that you have all of these qualities. Additionally, the ability to communicate is very valuable for almost any job. Studying English Literature teaches you how to write clearly and effectively, required in most careers, for example when giving presentations and seminar discussions. You will also develop your ability to understand and express sophisticated ideas and theories. That ability to read, reflect, and critique – and then synthesise conclusions clearly – is essential to many kinds of work – as is the ability to construct and defend an argument.

Which careers does Literature lend itself to?

In essence any career that requires good communication skills, analysis, inference and argument – i.e. virtually all careers. But the typical destinations of Literature students include: management, administration, teaching and other education work, writing, publishing, PR, journalism, and writing.

A knowledge of the classics of English Literature is well recognised by all university courses and employers as being of immense benefit: to know your Shakespeare and your Dickens is seen as an important part of being well-educated, and for this reason an A Level in English Literature is highly regarded by all Universities.



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FRENCH

A Level (Eduqas)

Head of Department: Mr. T. Elston

100% A*-B
in 2020

Year 12

Year 12 offers you the opportunity to learn more about life in France and French-speaking countries by studying authentic French material covering issues of interest to young people today:

- Contemporary youth culture including personal identity, trends, entertainment, media and digital culture, and youth sub-cultures
- Travel and exploration including working and studying abroad, and local culture and festivals in France and French-speaking countries and communities

Year 13

You will learn about:

- Diversity including migration and integration, cultural identity, marginalisation, enrichment, discrimination and celebrating difference
- France 1940–1950: The Occupation and post-war years including life in Occupied France and the cultural dimension (théâtre, cinéma, littérature), and 1945–1950: rebuilding and restructuring

Skills developed and assessed at French A Level

Speaking spontaneously, listening and reading, translation from and into French, essay writing on both a film and a literary text, and a deeper understanding of French grammar.

French classes and beyond

You will usually be taught in small classes of up to 12 students with opportunities to work in smaller groups or pairs. The Languages Faculty has a digital language laboratory as well as a French assistant to give weekly conversation practice to each of you. In addition, we run a very successful annual school exchange trip with the Lycée Saint Paul in Lille, in northern France.

French A Level provides access to many combined degree courses at university. Examples include French and Law, and French with Business Studies. Many of these involve a year's study in France and lead to a variety of exciting career prospects. Studying French also helps you develop your skills in English – essay writing, for example – so is highly desirable for careers in fields such as Law, Journalism, Advertising and Teaching.

Languages and employers

“Employers ranging from law firms to multinational banks, to major aid and development organisations confirmed that **applicants with languages** were, at the very least, **viewed more favourably** than those without.

“Some state categorically, that **they would not employ people who spoke only English**. For some companies, the specific languages were immaterial: they saw **students with languages** as much **more flexible** and adaptable, more **likely to appreciate the need for intercultural communication skills and more able to build relationships** with counterparts or clients in other countries.”

The Independent



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GEOGRAPHY

A Level (OCR)

Head of Department: Mrs. C. Bramwell

Year 12

Physical Systems (Unit 1)

Landscape Systems:

- Factors affecting the landscape
- Landform development
- Influence of climate change
- Impact of human activity

Human Interactions (Unit 2)

Changing Spaces; Making Places:

- Two contrasting places at a local scale
- How place is understood and represented
- Economic change and social inequality
- What contributes to creation of place

Geographical Debate (Unit 3): Disease Dilemmas

This topic allows debate on a number of features of disease e.g.:

- the role economic development plays in the world pattern of disease
- how weather hazards influence disease
- whether disease can be eradicated

Both written papers have a separate resource booklet and both contain a mixture of short answer and extended response questions. Geographical skills are tested within the Unit 1 and 2 papers.

At the end of Year 13, you sit 3 written exams:

Unit 1 from Year 12 and 13 together with skills; it is 1 hour 30 minutes long and worth 22% of the total. Another tests Unit 2 from Year 12 and 13 together with skills and this too is 1 hour 30 minutes long and worth 22% of the total. The third paper is worth 36% of the total and is longer, at 2 hours 30 minutes. It tests knowledge and understanding of both Unit 3 debate topics. The remaining 20% comes from the independent investigation.

Fieldwork

This is integral to both Year 12 and Year 13 – with at least 4 days over the course.

OCR request that fieldwork is carried out for Units 1 and 2 so there will be an opportunity to carry out physical and human fieldwork; your independent investigation should be based in part on one of these fieldwork opportunities.

72% A*–B
90% A*–C
in 2020

Year 13

Physical Systems (Unit 1) – Earth's Life Support Systems

Requiring the study of the following elements:

- The importance of water and carbon to life on earth
- Case studies of Tropical Rainforest and Arctic Tundra
- Changes over time
- Links and interdependence between the carbon & water cycles

Human Interactions (Unit 2) – Global Connections

Option B – Global Migration

- Dynamic flows of people
- International migration and socio-economic development
- Refugees
- Economic migrants
- Case studies

Option C – Human Rights

- What are human rights
- Patterns of human rights violations
- Gender inequalities & case study of women's rights
- Governance and human rights organisations

Geographical Debate (Unit 3)

This is a second debate topic and is based on another contemporary topic –

The Future of Food:

- Defining food security and assessing current trends
- Causes of food insecurity, including a case study
- Globalisation of the food industry
- Impacts of food insecurity
- Opportunities and solutions

Independent Investigation (Unit 4)

In this extended study you independently research a topic from those already studied in class. You set the issue to be investigated and use skills, primary and secondary data to investigate the issue- it is worth 20% of the overall A level.



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GERMAN

A Level (Eduqas)

Head of Department: Mr S Cummins

75% A*-A
100% A*- B
in 2020

The A Level German course offers the opportunity to learn more about life in Germany and other German-speaking countries, by studying authentic German material covering issues of interest to young people today:

- Travel and exploration of the wider world, including working and studying abroad, and local culture and festivals in Germany and German-speaking countries and communities
- Contemporary youth culture, including personal identity, trends, entertainment, media and digital culture, and youth sub-cultures
- Diversity and tolerance, including migration and integration and cultural identity
- The making of modern Germany from 1989 onwards, and the initial and subsequent process of reunification and social cohesion in present-day Germany. The economic impact of a united Germany

Our students are usually taught in groups of up to 12, with opportunities to work in smaller groups or pairs. The Languages Faculty has a digital language laboratory with IT facilities for individual and independent study. We are also lucky enough to have a German Assistant to give weekly conversation practice and support.

German A Level provides access to many interesting and combined degree courses at university, including German and Law, and German with Business Studies. Many of these courses involve a year's study in Germany, and lead to a variety of exciting career prospects. Studying German also helps you develop your skills in English – essay writing, for example, which is highly desirable for careers in fields such as Law, Journalism, Advertising and Teaching.

Languages and employers

“Employers ranging from law firms to multinational banks, to major aid and development organisations confirmed that **applicants with languages** were, at the very least, **viewed more favourably** than those without.

“Some state categorically, that **they would not employ people who spoke only English**. For some companies, the specific languages were immaterial: they saw **students with languages** as much **more flexible** and adaptable, more **likely to appreciate the need for intercultural communication skills and more able to build relationships** with counterparts or clients in other countries.”

The Independent



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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

A Level (Edexcel)

Head of Department: Mr. P. Corrigan

50% A* - A
100% A* - B
in 2020

Why study Government and Politics?

Government and Politics is a well respected A Level course accepted at all of the top universities. The course is designed to develop a wider understanding of the role of politics in the modern world, from the philosophical origins of the concept of the modern state to the internal workings of the state itself. It is also designed to encourage debate on the key issues affecting the UK today such as the EU and electoral reform. Through these issues you are able to develop both your written and oral communication skills. You are also encouraged to form your own political opinions and express them through persuasive argument. The course also aims to improve your independent research skills and teach you to view various sources of information with a critical eye.

Due to the wide range of skills being developed, Government and Politics is compatible with a wide variety of other subject options. It links in particularly well with humanities-based options such as History, Geography, Sociology, and Business Studies as well as less obvious subjects such as Maths and Environmental Sciences. Government and Politics is also useful in a variety of career paths such as Business, Law, the Civil Service and Journalism, as well as the study of academic subjects such as History.

Course Overview

A Level Politics consists of three components, each assessed by a 2 hour examination.

Component 1: UK Politics

This comprises two sections. The first will cover Political Participation. You will study democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems and voting behaviour and the media. The second section involves the study of the core political ideas of Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism.

Component 2: UK Government

This also comprises two sections and will involve studying the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and the executive, and the relationship between the different branches of government. In the second section you will study one of the following optional political ideas: anarchism, nationalism, feminism, multiculturalism or ecologism.

Component 3: Comparative Politics – USA

This paper involves the study of the US Constitution, US congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court, democracy and participation and civil rights. Questions will focus on comparing the UK and US political systems.



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HISTORY

A Level (AQA)

54% A*-A
82% A*-B
in 2020

Head of Department: Dr. M. McPartland

UNIT 1: Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603–1702

This option allows you to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:

- How far did the monarchy change?
- To what extent and why was power more widely shared during this period?
- Why and with what results were there disputes over religion?
- How effective was opposition?
- How important were ideas and ideology?
- How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?

Part One: Absolutism Challenged: Britain, 1603–1649
Monarchs and Parliaments, 1603–1629
Revolution, 1629–1649

Part Two: Monarchy restored and restrained: Britain, 1649–1702
From Republic to Restored and Limited Monarchy, 1649–1678
The Establishment of Constitutional Monarchy, 1678–1702

UNIT 2: America: A Nation Divided, c1845–1877

This option provides for the study of a period of major change in American history, which saw the disintegration of the country into Civil War, demanding a subsequent reconstruction. It explores concepts such as political authority, abolitionism and social justice. It also encourages you to consider what creates social tension and harmony, the idea of nationhood and the issues surrounding political compromise.

Part One: The origins of the American Civil War, c1845–1861
North and South in c1845
Attempts to maintain the Union, c1845–1854
The outbreak of Civil War, 1854–1861

Part Two: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877
The War, 1861–1865
Early Reconstruction, 1865–1867
Radical Reconstruction, 1867–1877

UNIT 3: Coursework module: African-American Civil Rights 1877–1980

This module is an investigation of the black struggle for equality in the USA from the end of reconstruction to the 1980s. It examines the role of individuals such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and Booker T Washington in that struggle as well as the role of the federal government (President, Congress and Supreme Court). You select a question which encompasses the whole 100 years and you write a 3000-4000 word essay for assessment in the summer of Year 13.

Year 12	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Teacher 1	Unit 1	Unit 1	Unit 1
Teacher 2	Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 2 & Unit 3 coursework
Year 13	Term 1	Term 2	
Teacher 1	Unit 1 and Unit 3 coursework	Unit 3 coursework	
Teacher 2	Unit 3 coursework and Unit 2 revision	Unit 2 revision	



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MATHEMATICS

66% A*-B
100% A*-E
in 2020

A Level (Edexcel)

Head of Department: Mr D Penney

The two year course comprises ten lessons of one hour per fortnight and is taught exclusively by Maths specialists; we are proud that the Department's expertise has allowed us to make a seamless transition to the new A Level specifications. The popularity of the subject allows us to offer it on two option lines.

All examination boards now offer the same 100% core material and this comprises topics in Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics.

Pure Mathematics topics will be:

Proof
Algebra and functions
Coordinate geometry
Sequences and series
Trigonometry
Exponentials and logarithms
Differentiation
Integration
Vectors
Numerical methods

Topics in Statistics will be:

Statistical sampling
Data presentation and interpretation
Probability
Statistical distributions
Statistical hypothesis testing

In Mechanics, the topics will be:

Quantities and units in mechanics
Kinematics
Forces and Newton's laws
Moments

Further Mathematics
A Level is also on
offer...

About two thirds of the work will consist of topics in Pure Mathematics and the remainder will comprise the applications of these to Statistics and Mechanics.

Examinations

Students will sit internal examinations throughout the course and three external examinations will be taken in the summer of Year 13. To reflect the balance of topics studied, these will comprise two papers in Pure Mathematics and one which will be split between Statistics and Mechanics. Each paper will be worth 100 marks and will take two hours, giving a maximum 300 marks over the 6 hours. Calculators are allowed in all papers.

General

A Level Mathematics is an excellent companion for a wide range of other A Level courses, either for its rigour in supporting the Sciences and Social Sciences or because it offers a logical way of thinking; students who include Biology, the Arts subjects or the Social Sciences in their A Level choices will tend to find that Statistics supports them while those who choose Physics, or who wish to follow an Engineering career, will find that studying Mechanics complements their studies. Mathematics is highly valued by universities and employers as evidence of students' logical and problem solving abilities.

Entry requirements

For entry to Mathematics at A Level, the minimum requirement would normally be a Grade 7 obtained at GCSE; a Grade 6 student would find this subject challenging as the more difficult GCSE topics will become the baseline for A Level courses.



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FURTHER MATHS

100% A*-A
in 2020

A Level (Edexcel)

Head of Department: Mr D Penney

For students taking A Level Mathematics on Line C, it is possible to also opt for A Level Further Mathematics on Line A. Please note that to take Further Mathematics, it is a requirement that you also take A Level Mathematics so that the choice would be:

Line A: Further Mathematics

Line C: Mathematics

All examination boards offer the same 50% core material and we have chosen Edexcel's A Level in Further Mathematics.

Further Pure Mathematics topics will be:

Proof
Complex numbers
Matrices
Further algebra and functions
Further calculus

Further vectors
Polar coordinates
Hyperbolic functions
Differential equations

Building on A Level Mathematics, we have chosen to offer:

Further Statistics topics will be:

Discrete probability distributions
Poisson, binomial and geometric distributions
Hypothesis testing
Central limit theorem
Chi squared tests
Probability generating functions
Quality of tests.

Topics in Further Mechanics will be:

Momentum and impulse
Work, Energy and Power
Elastic strings and springs
Elastic collisions in one and two dimensions

This is an exciting course which means that up to two thirds of the total A Level time will be Mathematics; applicants will need to really enjoy and be committed to the subject in order to make this a viable option. It is especially important that prospective Further Mathematics candidates discuss their intentions with their Mathematics teacher and the Head of Faculty.

Examinations

Students will sit internal examinations throughout the course and four external examinations will be taken in the summer of Year 13, reflecting the topics studied. Two papers will test Further Pure Mathematics with the remaining two examining the applied topics. Each paper will be worth 75 marks and will take one and a half hours, giving a maximum of 300 marks over the 6 hours. Calculators will be allowed in all papers.

Entry requirements

Because of the extra demands, if you wish to take Further Mathematics you should have gained a Grade 8 or 9 at GCSE.

General

Homework is set after every lesson in both Mathematics and Further Mathematics and it is a requirement of the course that this is completed punctually. Mathematics is a linear subject in the more general sense, so that homeworks are necessary to the understanding of subsequent lessons and ultimately to success at this level. Only students with a good homework record are likely to succeed. The above information provides guidelines only. Any student who requires further information on any aspect of these courses should consult a member of the Mathematics Faculty who will be happy to advise. Mathematics is equally suitable for girls and boys studying a wide range of other A Level subjects and successful former students have studied Arts, Sciences or a combination of both.

The Mathematics Faculty has a proven reputation for supporting students at all levels and both encourages and expects that sixth formers will use their free time seek any help that they need.



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MUSIC

A Level (Eduqas)

Head of Department: Miss J Langham

NEW IN 2019!
First results
due in 2021.

Music activity helps young people develop leadership skills, enhance self-esteem, foster a work ethic and a dedication to excellence. Music experience cannot be replaced by any other. It is one of the few subjects where a student can develop their own ideas to their completion and not be constrained. Self-expression and personal development are key ingredients of a course of study which is as much about developing as a person as it is developing new skills.

Many subjects combine well with Music, from a wide range of Humanities and Languages as well as Mathematics and Science. A qualification in Music is highly regarded by Universities and future employers; it demonstrates an impressive combined skill-set in theoretical understanding, technical proficiency, talent and creativity. Students who have achieved an A-level in music demonstrate that they are committed individuals who have worked for a long time on the development of a practical skill.

A Level Music provides students with a huge number of transferrable skills, however specific careers with link well with Music include:

- Education: primary or secondary teacher; private instrumental teacher.
- Performance: solo or ensemble player in a choir, orchestra or band; an accompanist; professional musical theatre performer.
- Music therapy: music therapist or counsellor.
- Arts Management: working for an orchestra or performance space as an agent; in promotion, administration or sales.
- Composing or Arranging
- Music recording: sound engineer; acoustician; planning and designing sound systems.

The A Level Music course consists of the following aspects:

- The Western Classical Tradition: Development of the Symphony 1750-1900
- Haydn Symphony 104 Set Work
- 20th Century Impression, Expressionism and Neo-Classicism. Debussy and Poulenc Set Works
- Rock and Pop module; pop, rock, progressive rock, heavy metal, folk pop, punk rock, soul, funk, disco, folk and country.

Assessment

35% Performance – Live Recital

25% Composition – Free and Set Brief

40% Written Exam

Entry requirements

All students must be able to perform to a minimum standard of the equivalent of ABRSM Grade 6 at the start of the course.

GCSE music is an excellent pre-cursor to A level and students attaining a Grade 7 or above should consider further study at A Level.

ABRSM Music Theory at Grade 5 is advantageous and students without GCSE music will be expected to have passed Grade 5 music theory prior to the course start in September, to give them the necessary theoretical skills.



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PHOTOGRAPHY

A Level (AQA)

100% A*
in 2020

Head of Department: Mrs L. Nanvazadeh

Join the Creative Economy

You will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of photographic media, techniques and processes. You may use traditional methods and/or digital techniques. Researching the work of other photographers and artists is an integral part of the investigating and making process. You will produce a sketchbook/workbook/journal to underpin your work, documenting your research and recording the development of your own work. You should be able to express ideas and link your intentions to outcomes in a confident and assured manner.

A Diverse Course

Photography is an exciting medium that can be used in many different ways including artistically, commercially, for advertising, personally, industrially, through fashion and architecturally. Photographs can be used on the web or as beautiful printed objects. This course will teach you to look at the world in a creative way. The creative potential stimulated in this course will enable you to apply creative, analytical and critical thinking to any other course that you do.

Throughout the course, you will learn about a variety of photographic media, techniques and processes including hands-on experimentation with traditional and digital media. You will develop an awareness of critical analyses of artists' work, helping to develop their own ideas through awareness, practical application and written reflections. You will use sketchpads and workbooks to demonstrate all practical learning, ideas development and critical analysis. Tuition is enjoyable, structured, friendly and supportive, resulting in high-grade achievements on this course. Emphasis at the beginning of the course is on traditional photographic techniques, you will also have the opportunity to use digital photography and Photoshop applications.

Photography develops a wide range of skills, which will be useful in university applications and future careers. Photography may offer a highly creative and hands-on alternative to other subjects you may be studying at A Level.

Key Learning Topics

The emphasis in this course is learning by doing, so you'll be able to create imaginative personal work.

The department offers a number of enrichment opportunities to you including a trip to London, The Clothes Show Live and the chance to apply to attend a residential week-long course in Tuscany, Italy run by practising artists.

Where will Success Take me?

Many of you go on to take higher education in Art and Design including courses at the Ruskin School of Fine Art at Oxford University and The University of Arts, London, then aim to join the world of advertising as graphic designers, illustrators, typographers or become painters, sculptors, textile designers, fashion designers, photographers to name just a few. For those ambitious to become architects, this is an essential subject choice for university entry.

Component 1: Personal Investigation

- 60% total A-Level marks.
- Candidates develop a personal investigation supported by between 1000 and 3000 words.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

- 40% total A-Level marks.
- An exam based assignment set by AQA.
- Preparation time + 15 hours supervised time.

You will build on experiences gained at GCSE where you will continue to explore and develop your use of materials and associated techniques. Your ideas will be linked closely to the extension work and developed through your knowledge of historical and critical studies. It is intended that the courses offered by the Department will encourage you to extend your knowledge of Photography through individual observation, expression and invention. Practical sessions are supported by theoretical studies, which explore the ways in which artists and designers from different periods and cultures have used materials to express and communicate beliefs and values.



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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A Level (AQA)

Head of Department: Mr. M. Bradshaw

Physical Education provides a course of study that expands on many ideas and concepts already encountered at Key Stage 4 and a natural progression for candidates who have additionally studied GCSE Physical Education. It provides a transition for those intending to go on to further study. It provides a balanced broad based course worthwhile in its own right.

**60% A* - B
100% A* - C
in 2020**

Paper 1: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport

What's assessed?

Section A: Applied anatomy and physiology

Section B: Skill acquisition

Section C: Sport and society

How it's assessed: Written exam: 2 hours 35% of A Level

Paper 2: Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport

What's assessed?

Section A: Exercise physiology and biomechanics

Section B: Sport psychology

Section C: Sport and society and technology in sport

How it's assessed: Written exam: 2 hours 35% of A Level

Practical Performance: 30% of A Level

What's assessed?

You are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity.

Plus written/verbal analysis of performance.



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PHYSICS

A Level (AQA)

70% A*-B
82% A*-C
100% A* - E
in 2020

Head of Department: Mr. R Murray

The A Level course follows AQA Spec. A, with sections 1 to 5 taught in Year 12 and sections 6 to 9 taught in Year 13.

1: Measurements and their uncertainties

Practical work is very important in Physics and will be studied in all sections of the course. At least 12 practical activities are identified by AQA, and these will be tested in exams.

2: Particle Physics and quantum concepts

This introduces you to exciting new ideas in Physics, such as, quarks, leptons and conservation laws. Quantum concepts include the photoelectric effect, energy levels in the atoms with photon emission and wave-particle duality.

3: Waves

This covers interference of light, diffraction, refraction of light, total internal reflection and fibre optics.

Section 4: Mechanics

Vectors and their treatment are introduced followed by a development of energy, forces and motion. Materials are considered in terms of their bulk properties and tensile strength.

5: Electricity

A full practical study of this topic is undertaken, including important applications, such as resistivity and superconductivity.

6: Further Mechanics and Thermal Physics

This unit considers the link between oscillations, waves and circular motion via simple harmonic motion. Thermal aspects of ideal gases are studied, including molecular kinetic theory which is studied in depth.

7: Fields and their consequences

Key applications of fields are developed, including satellite motion, capacitors, transformers and alternating current generators. A quantitative study of fields explores gravitation, magnetism and electric fields. This unit uses many ideas from mechanics and electricity from earlier in the course.

8: Nuclear Physics

This section covers radioactive decay and nuclear densities. It builds on the work of particles and radiation to link the properties of the nucleus to the production of nuclear power.

9: Option topic

An option will be selected by each centre. We study 'Turning Points in Physics', which considers how the electron was discovered, wave-particle duality and Einstein's theory of Special Relativity.

Paper 1 – 2 hours 85 marks – (34% of A Level)	Sections 1 to 5	Short and long answers (60 marks) 25 multiple choice
Paper 2 – 2 hours 85 marks – (34% of A Level)	Sections 6 to 8 Plus aspects of sections 1 to 5	Short and long answers (60 marks) 25 multiple choice
Paper 3 – 2 hours 80 marks – (32% of A Level)	Section 9 - (Option topic) Practical experiments and data analysis	Short and long answers (45 marks) Short and long answers (35 marks)

Good mathematical skills are a pre-requisite for the course and a minimum Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics is expected. Clearly it is an advantage to study Mathematics at A Level but this is not essential and the Physics department does provide extra help for those who prefer not to do this. Full details of the Mathematical requirements are provided in the specification and this can be found on the AQA website.

Practical work is an important part of the course and you are trained to become proficient in using a wide variety of scientific apparatus. This rewarding and enjoyable aspect of the course is designed to reinforce theoretical work and is assessed by the required practical tasks and subsequent questions in the final examination paper.

A Level Physics is clearly important for further study in Science and Engineering subjects, but is also highly regarded by employers and can provide a route to more diverse areas of further education and employment. As such, career opportunities arising from Physics qualifications are numerous and wide-ranging.



PSYCHOLOGY

A Level AQA (B Specification)

Head of Department: Mrs. B. Dooley

41% A* - A
77% A* - B
in 2020

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

Psychology is the 'scientific study of people', how they think, act and interact. Psychology is concerned with all aspects of behaviour and the thoughts, feelings and motivations underlying such behaviour. As well as exploring human behaviour, psychologists also use their understanding to help people with difficulties and bring about change for the better.

Why Study Psychology?

- It is an **academic**, well respected subject
- It is **interesting** – what you learn on the course will make you think very differently about yourself and the world you live in
- For **career opportunities** – the understanding and analysis of human behaviour and experience is relevant to most fields, especially those oriented towards people
- You will gain **transferable skills** such as numeracy, I.T., problem solving, communication and practical ones such as how to conduct and write up experiments
- It is classified as a **science** subject by universities and accepted for courses in dentistry, medicine and veterinary science.

Course Content

COURSE CONTENT	TOPICS COVERED
Key Approaches in Psychology	Approaches: Bio-psychology, Biological, Behaviourism, Social Learning Theory, Humanism, Cognitive & Psychodynamic.
Physiological Psychology	The genetic basis of behaviour & study of the nervous system
Gender Development	Explanations for gender development including biological and psychological perspectives.
Research Methods	Planning research, experimental & non-experimental methods, representing data, descriptive statistics and ethics.
Psychopathology	Definitions of abnormality, with a focus on anxiety disorders such as OCD & phobias. Explanations & treatment of these disorders.
Social Influence	Types of Conformity and explanations for it, explanations of obedience and disobedience. Minority influence and the role of social influence processes in social change.
Memory	Models of memory and explanations of forgetting and eye witness testimony.
Attachment	Infant-caregiver interactions, explanations of attachment, the effects of institutionalisation and the influence of attachment on childhood and adult relationships.
Stress	The physiology of stress and stress management.
Forensic Psychology	Measuring crime, explaining criminality and treatment of offenders.
Gender	The role of chromosomes and hormones in determining sex and gender. Psychological explanations of gender development; atypical gender development and sex-role stereotypes.
Debates In Psychology	Debates: Freewill vs. determinism; nature vs. nurture; holism vs. reductionism; idiographic vs. nomothetic; psychology & science



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RELIGIOUS STUDIES

55% A*-A
78% A*-B
100% A*-C
in 2020

A Level (OCR)

Head of Department: Mrs. H. Stedman

You are encouraged to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion. It is open to anyone with a commitment to intellectual inquiry, academic study and a willingness to engage with, understand and challenge arguments. This thought-provoking course is designed to develop your understanding of the modern world and establish a deeper knowledge and appreciation of world religious thought. The emphasis is on enabling you to respond critically and engage with a wealth of philosophical, ethical and religious concepts, equipping you with analytical skills that are readily transferable. Religious Studies is a recognised qualification for entry onto many academic courses in Higher Education.

PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS & DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Year 12

- 1. Philosophy of Religion** – this addresses the philosophical issues that arise from attempts to describe and explain the nature of God, the evidence used to prove or disprove his existence, the problem for believers with the reality of evil, and the relationship between the mind, body and soul. Questions such as is there life after death and what can we learn from religious experiences are also addressed.
- 2. Religion and Ethics** – this addresses the issues of what we believe to be right and wrong and how and why we reach those judgments by exploring normative ethical theories such as Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics and Utilitarianism. These theories are then applied to two issues of importance: Euthanasia and Business Ethics, allowing you to explore contemporary issues and deepen your understanding of the ethical theories.
- 3. Developments in Religious Thought** – in this component, you have the opportunity to undertake a systematic study of key concepts within the development of Christian thought. You will explore religious beliefs, values and teachings, the interconnection between moral principle and moral action, how they have developed historically and how they are presently discussed in relation to contemporary social issues.

Year 13

- 1. Philosophy of Religion** – In addition to Year 12 component 1, the focus shifts to the language used to express religious beliefs and values and the nature of God in Judeo-Christian thinking.
- 2. Religion and Ethics** – In addition to Year 12 component 2, the focus is on the study of Ethical language. You will explore key concepts and the influence of key thinkers, you will study the idea of conscience and these will be applied to Sexual Ethics.
- 3. Developments in Religious Thought** – In addition to Year 12 component 3, the focus shifts on to the challenge of secularism to Christianity, the consideration of religious pluralism and theology as well as religious pluralism and society and how some Christians have responded to secularism.

You are assessed by written examination in which you attempt essay-style questions.



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SOCIOLOGY

A Level (AQA)

Head of Subject: Mrs. N. Kinder

59% A*-A
94% A*-B
in 2020

Sociology is the study of how society is organised and how we experience life. Sociology's subject matter is diverse, ranging from crime to media, from the family to the state, from the divisions of race and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture, and from social stability to radical change in whole societies.

It raises questions such as "How does the media influence our behaviour?" and "Why do people commit crimes?" It is not a subject that provides quick answers but it helps you think about the underlying issues.

Sociology makes you look at the world in new ways and challenge existing ideas.

Progression routes

Employers, training providers and universities accept Sociology qualifications at this level as an entry qualification. The A Level qualification may lead to:

- Undergraduate study in a wide range of social sciences, humanities or vocational subjects
- Vocational training in a wide range of occupations, including policing, social work and social care, public relations, politics, journalism in all its forms, teaching and management, amongst others. The list is endless, as you learn a range of research and communication skills which are highly valued in today's society.

In Sociology you also acquire generic skills as you progress through the course. For example –

- Critical Thinking i.e. not accepting facts and figures at face value
- Literacy – writing essays, as well as summarising key concepts
- Evaluative and analytical skills
- Research skills
- Communication skills

Year 12

Families and Households – you will consider changing patterns of marriage, divorce and cohabitation, the law and the family and power relationships within the family

Research Methods – you will consider how sociologists conduct their research and the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations that influence research

Education – you will consider the purpose of education, why certain groups have different rates of achievement within the education system and the relationship between teachers and pupils. You will also look at how sociologists conduct their research into education

Year 13

Media – you will examine media representations of different groups in society, impact of the new media and selection and presentation of the news

Crime and Deviance – you will consider different explanations of crime, deviance, social order and social control, as well as globalisation and crime in contemporary society

Theory and Methods – you will examine different sociological theories in depth and consider the relationship between sociology and social policy



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Option Blocks

Timetable constraints mean that each subject on offer falls within one or more option blocks. Below are the option blocks we currently plan to use for Year 12 in September 2021. When selecting subjects to study, students can only pick one subject per option block.

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D
English Language	Biology	Art & Design	Business
History	Chemistry	Biology	Chemistry
Maths	Computer Science	German	French
Further Maths	Economics	History	Politics
History	English Literature	Maths	Music
PE	Geography	Photography	Physics
Physics		Religious Studies	Psychology
Psychology		Sociology	

If your preferred combination of subjects is not possible, please select an alternative combination of subjects which **does** fit with the option blocks when completing your application. Please then email Mrs Plano, the Sixth Form Secretary, via jplano@urmstongrammar.org.uk informing us of what your preferred choice of subjects would be. Once applications have been made, and offers have been sent to students, we will then consider whether any changes can be made to the option block combinations in order to accommodate as many students as possible with their first choice subjects.





Urmston Grammar is a selective school and an Independent state academy.

The school works in partnership with The Urmston Alliance, The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University.

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