QUEEN MARY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

MERCIAN

A level Options 2027



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A WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Introduction

We invite you to consider studying A Levels in our highly successful grammar school Sixth Form. This booklet is designed to inform you and your parents about the decisions you have to make, and the requirements you have to meet, before taking up the challenge of courses at Queen Mary's. The Sixth Form is not only an excellent preparation for higher education at university or college, but also for a worthwhile job at 18. This is a crucial decision for you and one that should be taken in an informed and intelligent way.

The School

Queen Mary's Grammar School was founded in 1554 by Queen Mary Tudor, with a handful of pupils next to Walsall Parish Church. The school is now based on a modern, well-equipped site in the south of the town and has around 1400 pupils, of whom 500 are in the Sixth Form. Queen Mary's gained Academy status in 2011 and is a founder member of the Mercian Multi-Academy Trust. It is a traditional grammar school with an excellent academic record and received an "Outstanding" OFSTED grading in March 2023. It is also a friendly community where you will have many opportunities to develop as a person.

Sixth Form expectations and facilities

We have high expectations of our Sixth Formers, both in their commitment to academic study and in their contribution to the school community. You will increasingly take responsibility for your programme of work, hold positions of trust and responsibility, and develop leadership skills. We will work in partnership with you to help you achieve the best possible results in a very competitive world. To give our students the best possible environment in which to learn, we opened the Collier Centre, a new Sixth Form Block, in 2012 and the Sixth Form Annexe in 2023.

Achievement, enrichment and support

We believe that enjoyment and achievement go hand-in-hand. We can offer you:

- **An excellent academic record**: 76% of A-Level grades were at A*, A or B in 2026 and the vast majority of our students go on to study at top universities. We have a long tradition of success in preparing students for medical-related courses and also for Oxbridge applications. We are able to offer a wide range of courses taught by experienced and highly qualified teachers. Our students enjoy learning and it shows in their commitment and enthusiasm.
- **An exciting range of extra-curricular activities:** the spirit of our Latin motto (approximately: "you get out what you put in") gives life to a wide range of activities. We have music and drama, sports teams taking part in rugby, hockey, cricket and other sports, and a nationally-successful Combined Cadet Force with a wide programme of Army and RAF activities. We are particularly proud to own a Field Centre, Farchynys, in the Barmouth Estuary. There will be opportunities to travel, pursue minority interests and to give something back through volunteering and mentoring: it's all part of learning to live life to the full.

We support your wellbeing and personal development:

- We have a large team of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid, including a Safeguarding & Welfare Officer and a Social, Emotional & Mental Health mentor. Both the officer and the mentor are available for you to meet and talk to about your mental health and wellbeing.
- 6th Form students have a fortnightly, timetabled PSHE lesson that provides them with a broad understanding of a range of social, political, cultural and ethical issues. In year 13, they take ownership over this learning and run a seminar on a topic of their choice for their peers, offering the opportunity for them to develop their research, presentation and questioning skills, ready for university study.

Making Decisions

There are many reasons for choosing a particular range of subjects to study, but it is important that you should **not** be influenced by the following:

- What are your friends going to do? Your friends' futures are not yours.
- Is one subject easier than another? There are no easy options at this level.
- Which teachers do you like best? There is no guarantee that you will be taught by a particular teacher.

Instead, we advise you to consider the following:

- Which subjects do you enjoy? Enjoyment goes a long way to promoting success. You should not take subjects that you dislike or find difficult because you think they might be "good" for you. For example, you are likely to have a better future with a grade A in English or French, than a grade E in Maths or Physics.
- In which subjects have you been most successful? The quality of your GCSE grades is one of the most important factors when your UCAS application is considered by universities.
- Do you have a particular career in mind? You should find out if the university courses (or career) which you are considering make specific subject requirements; this, in fact, happens less than people think.

<u>MAT Subjects</u>

When considering subjects in the Mercian block, take account of the timetable and travel arrangements. All subjects on offer in this block will be taught at the same time, either at the beginning or the end of a day, meaning students will only have to make one transfer between sites. Plans have been formulated to make sure that this arrangement supports all students involved.

<u>A Level Options and Careers</u>

For a wide range of careers there is no special subject requirement. The qualification needed is reckoned in terms of your level of attainment. This is why it is best to go for those subjects you like or are good at, because it is in these subjects that you will attain the highest levels.

Among the more obvious careers for which this holds true are: the civil service, journalism and the media, insurance, banking, marketing, accountancy, management, personnel, the armed forces, the police, the fire service, the social services; and there are many others.

It is equally true that, for a wide range of university courses, there is no specific subject requirement: you only need to have good A level grades. Among these are the following: law, accountancy, education, drama, politics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, business studies and very many combined courses.

Of course, for many degree courses, the relevant A-levels **are** required. You obviously need A- level Maths to do a degree in Maths (and you should probably also take Further Maths, depending upon your choice of university), just as you would normally expect to have A levels in languages if you wished to do linguistics. For students wishing to apply to **all** UK medical schools (and thus, the best chance to study medicine) you must study Chemistry, Biology and one other.

Sixth Form commitments and practical arrangements

Volunteering

In addition to your A Level studies, we will also expect that you take on an element of mentoring or volunteering during your time in the sixth form. This may be within the School (such as a STEM ambassador working with younger students) or with a range of our partners (such as other schools or local care homes).

Work Experience

All Year 12 students take part in our compulsory World of Work Week, spending five days in May undertaking work experience or volunteering. This provides an invaluable opportunity to explore potential careers, develop transferable employability skills and gain experience that will support future university, apprenticeship and employment applications.

Extra-curricular Activities

We expect *you* to become an active part of our school community by taking part in an extra-curricular activity. This will help you develop key employability skills, including leadership, teamwork and organisation. You may participate in established activities, such as sport, CCF or an international trip, or run an activity that does not yet exist.

Internal Exams

There will be a period of rigorous internal exams in April/May of Year 12. The results of these exams will determine UCAS predicted grades for university admissions in Year 13. Year 13 mock exams will also take place in January of Year 13.

Progression from Y12 to Year 13

We have a responsibility to support students in making progress and informed decisions about their next steps. We will work with parents to advise on the best outcomes for each student. Where there is evidence that an alternative pathway would be better for an individual, we will always consult with both the student and their parents.

Devices

Queen Mary's Grammar School is a Microsoft School. All Sixth Form students will require a tablet device with a touchscreen and stylus to support them during their two years of study. Compulsory tablets support a blended approach to A-level learning; they do not replace traditional teaching or handwriting. The touchscreen and stylus retain handwriting as part of students' everyday learning. The device gives every student consistent access to digital resources and enables notes and learning materials to be organised effectively through Microsoft 365 and OneNote. It also enables subject-specific activities that would otherwise be difficult and supports greater independence in learning and revision. Using this technology helps prepare students for the increasingly digital environment of university and employment.

Admissions

Current Year 11 students at QMGS and all students applying from other schools should indicate their intention to join the Sixth Form at Queen Mary's Grammar School and submit their initial A-level subject preferences during the application period, which closes every year at the end of January. These preferences will help the school to plan its curriculum and options blocks, but they do not constitute an offer of a place or a guarantee that a particular subject or combination of subjects will be available.

No conditional offers will be made before GCSE results are published. Predicted grades, target grades and internal assessments may be used to support guidance and curriculum planning, but they will not be used to rank applicants or allocate Sixth Form places.

Following the publication of GCSE results in August 2027, applicants will be required to provide verified results and confirm their preferred subjects by the published deadline. Admission will then be determined using the entry requirements and oversubscription criteria set out in the School's Sixth Form admissions arrangements.

Current QMGS Year 11 students who meet the published entry requirements will be eligible to continue into the Sixth Form, subject to the availability and suitability of courses. Where the number of eligible applicants from other schools exceeds the number of external places available, applicants will be ranked in accordance with the School's published oversubscription criteria, using their actual GCSE results.

An offer of admission to the Sixth Form does not guarantee a place on a particular course or combination of courses. Subject places will depend upon applicants meeting the relevant subject-entry requirements, the availability of places within teaching groups and the School's ability to provide the requested combination.

Finally...

Sixth Form life combines academic ambition with opportunities to contribute and grow. Examination success is important for your future, and we expect you to maintain a very high level of attendance, work hard, be independent and pursue academic excellence with determination and discipline. But your two Sixth Form years are not only about examinations. Extra-curricular activities, opportunities for travel and leadership responsibilities in the school will give you the chance to contribute fully and gain the greatest fulfilment from your time here, as a Marian.

We wish you every success.
Richard Langton
Headmaster

SUBJECT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

An offer of admission to the Sixth Form following GCSE results day does not guarantee a place on a particular course or combination of courses. A place on each course depends on the applicant meeting the relevant subject-entry requirements and on places being available within teaching groups. The applicant's chosen combination of subjects must also be compatible with the school's timetable blocking.

Applicants must meet the published subject-specific entry requirements for at least three A-level subjects that they wish to study. The minimum requirements for each subject are set out in the table below.

Where an applicant has not had the opportunity to study the corresponding subject at GCSE, an alternative requirement will apply only where one is stated in the table. Equivalent qualifications will be considered only where they can be independently verified.

Read all three columns for each chosen subject. The final column includes both additional requirements and accepted alternatives; an alternative applies only in the circumstances stated.

Specific Subject Entry Requirements:

A-level subject	Minimum subject-specific requirement	Additional requirement or accepted alternative
Ancient History (MAT subject)	Grade 6 in GCSE English Language	GCSE grade 6 in one of the following will also be accepted: English Literature, History, Geography, Religious Studies
Art	Grade 7 in GCSE Art	No alternative subject requirement.
Biology	Grade 7 in GCSE Biology	Where separate sciences have not been studied, grade 8-8 in GCSE Combined Science.
Business	Grade 7 in GCSE Business	Where GCSE Business has not been studied, grade 7 in GCSE English Language or English Literature
Chemistry	Grade 7 in GCSE Chemistry	Where separate sciences have not been studied, grade 8-8 in GCSE Combined Science.
Chinese: Mandarin	Grade 7 in GCSE Chinese	No alternative subject requirement.
Computer Science	Grade 7 in GCSE Computer Science	ICT GCSE is **not** accepted
Design and Technology: Product Design	Grade 7 in GCSE Design and Technology	All GCSE Design and Technology specifications are accepted.

SUBJECT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A-level subject	Minimum subject-specific requirement	Additional requirement or accepted alternative
Drama & Theatre Studies (MAT subject)	Grade 6 in GCSE Drama	Where GCSE Drama has not been studied, grade 6 in GCSE English Language or English Literature
Economics	Grade 7 in GCSE Economics or GCSE Business	Where GCSE Economics has not been studied, grade 7 in GCSE English Language or English Literature
English Literature	Grade 7 in GCSE English Literature	No alternative subject requirement.
English Language & Literature	Grade 7 in GCSE English Language or English Literature	No alternative subject requirement.
Environmental Science	Grade 7 in GCSE Biology and Grade 6 in Physics	Where separate sciences have not been studied, grade 8-8 in GCSE Combined Science.
French	Grade 7 in GCSE French	No alternative subject requirement.
Further Mathematics	Grade 9 in GCSE Mathematics	A-level Mathematics must also be studied. Further Mathematics must be taken as a fourth A level.
Geography	Grade 7 in GCSE Geography	No alternative subject requirement.
German (MAT subject)	Grade 7 in GCSE German	No alternative subject requirement.
History	Grade 7 in GCSE History	No alternative subject requirement.
Mathematics	Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics	No alternative subject requirement.
Music (MAT subject)	Grade 6 in GCSE Music	Grade 5 ABRSM in a chosen instrument is also required. Where GCSE music has not been studied, grade 5 music theory – ABRSM is required.
Philosophy	Grade 7 in a Humanities subject	Subjects accepted: English Language, English Literature, Religious Studies, History, Geography
Photography (MAT subject)	Grade 6 in GCSE Photography	Where GCSE Photography has not been studied, grade 6 in GCSE Art.

A-level subject	Minimum subject-specific requirement	Additional requirement or accepted alternative
Physical Education	Grade 7 in GCSE Physical Education	Where GCSE Physical Education has not been studied, grade 7 in GCSE Biology or GCSE Combined Science 8-8. Students must also be specialised in at least one sport, which they play regularly outside of school.
Physics	Grade 7 in GCSE Physics	Where separate sciences have not been studied, grade 8-8 in GCSE Combined Science. A-level Mathematics must also be studied
Psychology	Grade 7 in GCSE Psychology	Where GCSE Psychology has not been studied, grade 6 in Biology
Religious Studies (MAT subject)	Grade 6 in GCSE Religious Studies	Where GCSE Religious Studies has not been studied, grade 6 in GCSE English Language or GCSE English Literature.
Sociology	Grade 7 in GCSE Sociology	Where Sociology has not been studied, grade 7 in any of GCSE English Language, GCSE English Literature, History, Geography, Religious Studies
Spanish	Grade 7 in GCSE Spanish	An independently verified equivalent qualification may be considered.

Life in the Sixth Form at QMGS

Studying in the Sixth Form presents very different challenges for pupils. At QMGS we recognise that Sixth Formers are young adults and part of our ethos is to prepare each individual for life at university and the world of work.



The Collier Centre (above) and its annex, opened in 2012, is a facility designated for the Sixth Form. A key element of the Centre is the Bateman Room, which acts as common room for a variety of purposes, including study and socialising.

Study periods are built into timetables and are used to develop independent learning skills. The nature of extended tasks required in A-Level courses means that the efficient use of this time is vital. Pupils will have supervised study periods during the morning, with the chance to gain the privilege of working at home on afternoons where they have no timetabled lessons.



Alongside the main three A-Level subjects, we offer a range of courses and many, many extra-curricular events that allow all Sixth Formers to live life to the full, helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals that can thrive in any setting.

In recognition of their efforts and responsibilities in assisting the smooth-running of the school, we also afford Sixth Form pupils a number of privileges, such as prefects being able to study in the Bateman Room.

A series of Induction events are organised for Year 12 and are designed to build upon the community-feel that the school has. These events will give pupils the chance to meet their peers, subject teachers and Group Tutors (the pastoral team) before the real work begins!

Please have a look at the school's Bluesky feed to see what pupils are involved in recently. The school website also has details of the bursary scheme that is available to provide financial assistance for Sixth Form pupils.

Community; Challenge; Enjoyment. These are the three words I used to encapsulate being a member of the Sixth Form at QMGS at the beginning of the year. A sense of real community and enjoyment should, in my opinion, underpin every activity that each pupil is involved in. The responsibility for challenging our pupils falls with staff to an extent, but primarily it is the responsibility of each pupil to challenge themselves, as this is when individuals begin to develop and progress towards their true potential.

Mr R Matley (Head of Sixth Form)

Welcome to the Mercian Trust

The Mercian Trust is a Multi Academy Trust of twelve schools and over 10,000 students in Walsall and Sandwell. Often referred to as the most diverse family of schools in the country, the Trust comprises of two selective grammar schools, five large comprehensive secondary schools, one primary school, one all-through special school, one technical and vocational Studio School, and two Alternative Provision schools.

All trust schools come together around a common purpose of increasing opportunities and improving outcomes for students and a shared social mobility and social justice mission.

The five Founding Academies were: Aldridge School, Queen Mary's Grammar School, Queen Mary's High School, Shire Oak Academy and Walsall Studio School.

Since January 2019, they have been joined by a sixth school - The Ladder School – which aims to redefine Alternative Provision education in our Borough.

In 2022, the trust expanded to include three schools from the Q3 MAT in Great Barr, Tipton and Langley. In 2025, we welcomed New Leaf, Rushall Primary and Oakwood schools to the Mercian.

Each School has its own distinct ethos and approach, but we have this over-arching aim in common: we prepare all our pupils to enjoy life to the full by inspiring them to:

- Realise their potential as learners
- Thrive in the world of work
- Make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community

The Mercian Trust respects the autonomy of its member schools but, through collaboration, fosters strengths that are greater than the sum of its parts. Working together as a Multi Academy Trust provides a framework for sharing expertise and enthusiasm, resources and ideas.

For the students in the Trust's schools, we have a strong focus on pastoral care and family values. We recognise that good relationships underpin successful education. We aim to ensure that excellent teaching and learning are complemented by care and support which value and applaud each student's gifts and abilities.

As you start making important choices for your future, we hope that The Mercian Trust will increase your range of options and opportunities. Choosing the right School for the Sixth Form is important. We hope that the information in this booklet will help you reach the best decision.

We look forward to welcoming you to our family of schools in Walsall and Sandwell. Please visit the stalls of our partner schools at the open evening and visit the websites of those offering post 16 provision.

THE MERCIAN TRUST

A Level Art
A Level Graphic Communication

Examination board:	OCR (H601, H602)

Course content

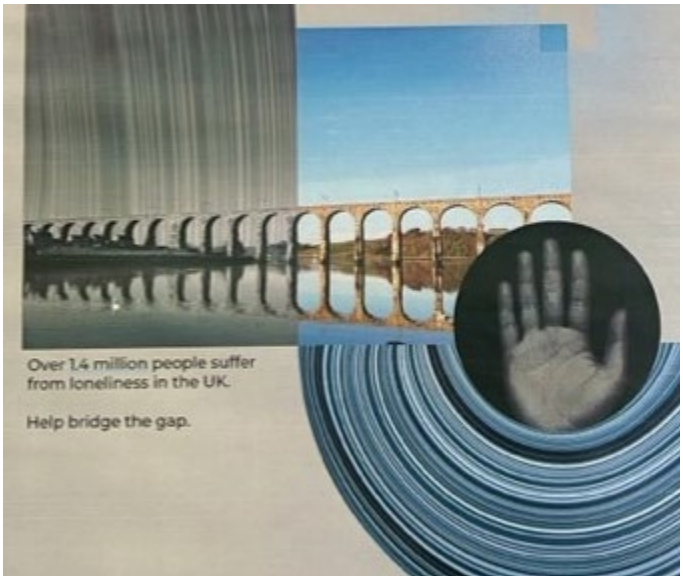
Advanced level Art GCE consists of two components, a personal investigation which makes up 60% of the end qualification grade, and an externally set task which makes up the remaining 40%.

The Personal investigation has two integrated elements, a portfolio of practical work and a related written study which summarises the context of your chosen area of study. The Personal investigation starts in Year 12 with all candidates being given a starting point theme. Candidates use this theme to develop into a unique and personalised response though investigations into art, craft and design practitioners, supported by a series of artistic explorations through a wide variety of art, craft and design mediums. The focus for this personal investigation portfolio is to include work that shows exploration, research, and acquisition of techniques, materials and skills in a unique and personal way.

The Externally set task is a unit where the starting point is outlined from the exam paper that is given to candidates at the start of February during Year 13. From this paper, candidates are expected to select one starting point from which they will generate appropriate work for submission. The work for this unit has three sections; planning, preparation and realisation of outcome and evaluation. The concluding final response from candidates starting points will be produced during the examination which is 15 hours long. This is conducted over three school days, shortly after Easter.

Candidates will be expected to;

1. Independently develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations in response to a given starting point
2. Work from direct observation
3. Document and record from Primary source material
4. Experiment with a range of media and materials

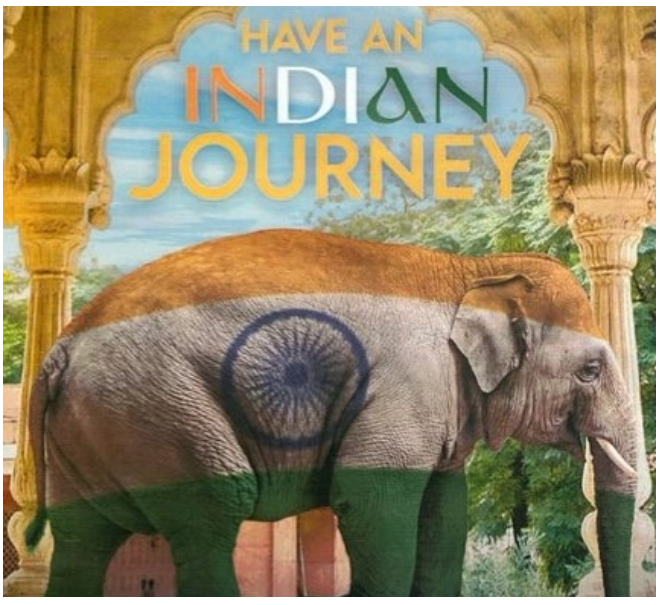

Over 1.4 million people suffer
from loneliness in the UK.
Help bridge the gap.










HAVE AN
INDIAN
JOURNEY

A Level Biology

Examination board:	AQA
Examinations:	**Topics Assessed:** 1. Biological molecules 2. Cells 3. Organisms exchange substances with their environment 4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms 5. Energy transfers in and between organisms 6. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments 7. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems 8. The control of gene expression. **A-level** **Paper 1, topics 1 -4, 35% of A-level** 76 marks: mixture of short and long answer questions 15 marks: extended response questions **Paper 2, Topics 5 – 8, 35% of A-level.** 76 marks: mixture of short and long answer questions 15 marks: extended response questions **Paper 3, Topics 1 – 8 including practical skills, 30% of A-level.** 38 marks: structured questions, including practical techniques 15 marks: critical analysis of given experimental data 25 marks: one essay from a choice of two titles
Coursework:	32 practical tasks are completed over the two years of the course with 16 in each year. 12 of these are the required exam board practical tasks which are examined within paper 3. The additional tasks are to build up the required practical skills in the subject.

Course content:

Biology is a natural science concerned with the study of life and living organisms, including their structure, function, growth, evolution, distribution, and taxonomy. Modern biology is a vast and eclectic field, however, despite the broad scope of biology, there are certain general and unifying concepts within it that govern all study and research, consolidating it into single, coherent fields.

Year 1 of the course gives students an understanding of Biological basics from cells to whole organisms. It then moves on to look at interactions between organisms and genetic information. It is split into the following four topics; Biological Molecules, Cell Biology, Exchange, Genetics.

Biological Molecules are the building blocks of all life. In this topic students will learn how biological polymers such as protein and DNA are formed.

Cell Biology is the study of life in its most basic subunit. Students will study differences between different types of cell and then study the structures and organelles found within cells of higher organisms. The course will then investigate movements into and out of cells before looking at the immune system as an example of cells communication.

Exchanging substances with the environment is a vital process for all living organisms. In this broad topic students will learn how oxygen and other materials are delivered to respiring cells in a range of creatures such as insects, fish and mammals.

Generic Information is found in all living things. This gives an indication of its importance. In this topic students study the structure of DNA and how its sequence is the basis of inheritance.

Year 2 of the course gives students the opportunity to learn at a deeper level and allows for more opportunity to apply their knowledge to a range of biological phenomena. It is designed to give students a complete understanding of the principles of biology to allow them to study a particular field further. It is split into the following four topics; Energy Transfers, Homeostasis, Genetics and finally Gene Control.

Energy Transfers between organisms concerns the study of supply of energy into the ecosystem via photosynthesis and its release via respiration. It then goes on to look at the flow of this energy through different ecosystems.

Homeostasis is the study of how organisms manage their own internal environments. Students will study how nerve transmissions provide quick short acting responses in contrast to longer lasting hormonal responses.

Genetics concerns the study of a single molecule, DNA. Its importance to life is studied in this topic where students will learn how it is inherited and how it codes for all living things.

Finally, students will study **Gene Control**. This topic is concerned with how genes on the DNA molecule can be regulated. We then look at epigenetics as an emerging subject and the uses of genetic engineering.

Practical work forms an integral part of the course with students being required to show proficiency in a number of techniques such as handling hazardous microorganisms, microscopy and dissection. Students will be assessed on these skills throughout the course and an understanding of these skills is required for the external examinations.

Biology, alongside Chemistry and Physics/Maths, is a requirement for the study of medicine. However, the study of Biology goes well beyond the human body. It is vital that students of Biology have an intellectual curiosity about the huge range of living organisms and should be interested to learn about a wide variety of animals, plants and microorganisms. The course will teach students how to apply complex phenomena to make sense of the world around them. As such it is important for students to read widely of the different organisms and their myriad interactions with each other and the world.

A Level Business

Examination board:	Pearson Edexcel
Examinations:	3 x 2 hour examinations (See below for more detail)
Coursework:	None

Course overview:

A Level Business is an interesting alternative to Economics in that it maintains the same academic rigour and is accepted by all top universities such as Oxford, however, has greater application to how businesses work and the environment in which they operate.

Year 12 begins with an introduction to core business concepts and will allow students to develop a broad understanding of how businesses work before they consider the decision-making tools that help a business to grow. Students will learn this through examining the four main activities of business which include marketing, human resources, finance and operations. These 4 topic areas will be covered in themes 1 and 2.

In Year 13, students develop an understanding of current global issues that impact on business, preparing them for their next steps in today's global world. This will build on learning from year 12, linking concepts such as marketing and finance to growing businesses and globalisation. These topics will be covered in themes 3 and 4 in year 13.

The aim of the course is to develop a holistic understanding of business where students investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues. Building on this, and by using both qualitative and quantitative methods, students are encouraged to take a more strategic view of their decisions and recommendations.

One key element to a Business A level is the real-business focus and the skills that will be developed. The lessons encourage students to contextualise the theory and respond to real-life business case studies and evidence in the assessments. Students are encouraged to keep up with current affairs, which will embed their understanding of business in the real world. Alongside that students will develop a multitude of skills, including numeracy, communication and an understanding of research methodology in order to make a smooth transition to university or other post-18 pathways. The department use a range of different activities to enable students to develop important work-related skills over the two years such as carrying out presentations, interviews, writing important business documents and carrying out boardroom role plays, designed to enhance their understanding of working in different industries but also develop their learning.

Do I need to have studied GCSE Business?

The short answer is no! The content of A Level Business will build on the understanding developed at GCSE, avoiding unnecessary repetition while also ensuring that learners new to the subject are appropriately supported. Students who have completed GCSE Business will find that there is a huge amount that they need to learn to build on their learning at GCSE.

Course content:

Theme 1: Marketing and people*	Theme 2: Managing business activities*
Students will develop an understanding of: • meeting customer needs • the market • marketing mix and strategy • managing people • entrepreneurs and leaders	Students will develop an understanding of: • raising finance • financial planning • managing finance • resource management • external influences
Theme 3: Business decisions and strategy	**Theme 4: Global business**
Students will develop an understanding of: • business objectives and strategy • business growth • decision-making techniques • influences on business decisions	Students will develop an understanding of: • globalisation • global markets and business expansion • global marketing

*Indicates content will be a feature of the first year of study (Year 12)

Examinations:

Paper 1: Marketing, people and global businesses (35% of A-level)

Overview of content

Paper 1 will assess marketing, people and global businesses. Questions will be drawn from Themes 1 and 4, and from local, national and global contexts.

Assessed: written exam: 2 hours (100 marks)

Paper 2: Business activities, decisions and strategy (35% of A-level)

Overview of content

Paper 2 will assess business finance and operations, business decisions and strategy. Questions will be drawn from Themes 2 and 3, and from local, national and global contexts.

Assessed: written exam: 2 hours (100 marks)

Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment (30% of A-level)

Overview of content

Paper 3 will assess content across all four themes. Questions will be drawn from local, national and global contexts. For Paper 3, there will be a pre-released context document. This will focus on a broad context, such as an industry or market in which businesses operate.

Assessed: written exam: 2 hours (100 marks)

A Level Chemistry

Examination board:	AQA A-level (7405)
Examinations:	This is a linear qualification; this means that students will sit all three of the A-level exams at the end of their two-year A-level course. **A-level** *Paper 1* • 2 hour exam • 35 % of the A-level • 105 marks of long and short answer questions covering a mixture of inorganic chemistry and physical topics as well as practical skills learned throughout the course *Paper 2* • 2 hour exam • 35 % of the A-level • 105 marks of long and short answer questions covering a mixture of organic chemistry and physical topics as well as practical skills learned throughout the course *Paper 3* • 2 hour exam • 30 % of the A-level • 40 marks of questions on practical techniques and data analysis • 20 marks of questions testing across the specification • 30 marks of multiple choice questions
Practical Assessment:	A-level grades will be based only on marks from written exams. A separate endorsement of practical skills will be taken alongside the A-level. This will be assessed by teachers and will be based on direct observation of students' competency in a range of skills that are not assessable in written exams.

Course content:

Summary

This specification is designed to encourage candidates to:

- gain hands-on practical skills and data analysis skills
- appreciate how science works and its relevance beyond the laboratory
- develop an enthusiasm for Chemistry
- demonstrate a synoptic understanding
- study Chemistry in a contemporary context

Course structure

The specification is arranged into the traditional three branches of physical, inorganic and organic chemistry.

Physical Chemistry

Atomic structure, amount of substance, bonding, energetics, kinetics, chemical equilibria and Le Chatelier's principle, oxidation, reduction and redox equations, thermodynamics, rate equations, equilibrium constant (Kc) for homogeneous systems, electrode potentials and electrochemical cells, acids and bases.

Inorganic Chemistry

Periodicity, Group 2 the alkaline earth metals, Group 7(17) the halogens, properties of period 3 elements and their oxides, transition metals, reactions of ions in aqueous solution.

Organic Chemistry

Introduction to organic chemistry, alkanes, halogenoalkanes, alkenes, alcohols, organic analysis, optical isomerism, aldehydes and ketones, carboxylic acids and derivatives, aromatic chemistry, amines, polymers, amino acids, proteins and DNA, organic synthesis, NMR spectroscopy and chromatography.

Extra-Curricular

There is a weekly Chemistry Society, where pupils present on a range of chemistry topics that go beyond the exam board specification. Pupils may also participate in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and the Chemistry Olympiad, run by the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Beyond the Sixth Form...

Chemistry A level can lead to many different degree courses such as chemistry, material science, pharmacy, biochemistry and chemical engineering; it is a prerequisite for medicine, veterinary science and dentistry degrees. However, it also appreciated by admissions tutors in many other subjects, including law, due to its logical nature.







A Level Chinese (Mandarin)

Examination board:	**Pearson Edexcel Advanced GCE in Chinese - spoken Mandarin (9CN0)** https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/chinese-2017.html
Examinations:	**Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation (Paper code: 9CN0/01)** Written examination 2 hours 40% of the qualification 80 marks **Paper 2: Written response to works and translation (Paper code: 9CN0/02)** Written examination 2 hours and 40 minutes 30% of the qualification 120 marks **Paper 3: Speaking (Paper code: 9CN0/03M)** Internally conducted and externally assessed Total assessment time: 23 minutes including 5 minutes' preparation time 30% of the qualification 72 marks • Task 1 discussion on a Theme which is prescribed by the exam board • Task 2 Part 1 independent research presentation Part 2 discussion on independent research
Controlled assessment:	*NONE*

Curriculum Intent

China is a vast country with a diverse culture and a rich, long history. It is also the second-largest economy in the world, playing a crucial role in shaping global dynamics in the 21st century. Therefore, it is important to help young people in the UK develop a deeper understanding of Chinese history, culture, and society. The acquisition of highly competent Chinese language skills will facilitate communication and cooperation with Chinese-speaking regions, companies, and individuals. This two-year A Level Mandarin course enables students to acquire advanced language skills to function in a Chinese-speaking environment. Students are encouraged to develop skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, while also conducting extensive research on Chinese history and culture. The course provides ample opportunities to develop higher-order thinking skills.

Course Content

Theme 1: Changes in Contemporary Chinese Society

- Family structure: multi-generational households and new family dynamics; Generation gap
- Family planning; changing attitudes towards relationships and marriage; China's aging population
- School life and student issues; education systems and school types; Public examinations

- Education and training; higher education provision
- Job preparation and opportunities; career planning, job qualifications, and routines
- Work-related issues such as unemployment and the decline of traditional industries
- Maintaining work-life balance

Theme 2: Chinese Culture

- Traditions and customs; their significance in contemporary life
- The creative industries (music, art, drama) and their social impact
- The impact of social networks on popular and work culture

Theme 3: Evolving Chinese Society

- Social issues related to economic activities and urbanization
- The role of technology in everyday life
- Evolving economic policies and their impact
- Environmental protection, green energy, and emerging industries

Theme 4: Post-1978 China

- Urban and rural life in China; the rise of China's mega-cities
- China's role in addressing global environmental challenges
- Sino-UK relations
- Collaboration between the UK and China in education, culture, and business

Literature study (Required):

- A Very Special Pigeon《一只叫凤的鸽子》（作者 曹文轩), 2014 (short story)
- Film study:《请投我一票》（导演 陈为军), 2007 https://youtu.be/KD1QSX2hOnk

A Level Computer Science

Examination board:	OCR (A - H446)
Examinations:	2 x 2½ hrs written papers (140 marks & 40% weighting each)
Coursework:	A practical/coursework project (20% weighting)
Entry requirement:	Grade 7+ in GCSE Computer Science

Course content:

At its heart lies the notion of computational thinking: a mode of thought that goes well beyond software and hardware, and that provides a framework within which to reason about systems and problems. Computer Science is a practical subject where learners can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real world systems. It is an intensely creative subject that combines invention and excitement and can look at the natural world through a digital prism.

Computer Science will develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand the power and limits of human and machine intelligence. Learners will develop an ability to analyse, critically evaluate and make decisions. The project approach is a vital component of 'post-school' life and is of particular relevance to Further Education, Higher Education and the workplace. Each learner is able to tailor their project to fit their individual needs, choices and aspirations.

Computer Science will encourage learners to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It will provide insight into, and experience of, how computer science works, stimulating learners' curiosity and encouraging them to engage with computer science in their everyday lives and to make informed choices about further study or career choices.

The key features of this specification encourage:

- emphasis on problem solving using computers.
- emphasis on computer programming and algorithms.
- emphasis on the mathematical skills used to express computational laws and processes, e.g. Boolean algebra/logic and comparison of the complexity of algorithms.

The specification is divided into three units of work:

Unit 1: **Computer systems:** Assessment: 40%

This component will introduce learners to the internal workings of the Central Processing Unit (CPU), the exchanging of data and looks at software development, data types and legal and ethical issues. It is expected that learners will draw on this underpinning content when studying computational thinking, developing programming techniques and devising their own programming approach in the Programming project component (03). Candidates gain an appreciation of: the characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices; Software and software development; Exchanging data; Data types, data structures and algorithms; Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues.

Unit 2: **Algorithms and programming:** Assessment: 40%

Candidates gain an appreciation of: Elements of computational thinking; Problem solving and programming.

This unit relates principally to problem solving skills needed by learners to apply the knowledge and understanding gained in unit 1.

Unit 3: **Practical project:** Assessment: 20%

The candidate will choose a computing problem to work through according to the guidance in the specification: Analysis of the problem; Design of the solution; developing the solution; Evaluation.

This unit is a practical portfolio-based assessment with a task that is chosen by the teacher or learner and is produced in an appropriate programming language of the learner's or teacher's choice. Appendix 5e of this specification gives a list of programming languages which OCR will accept. If the task demands another choice of language that does not appear in the list, the task outline, the details of the programming language and the reasons for the choice of this language can be submitted to OCR for consideration.

Mathematical skills are embedded throughout the content of the three components. They will be assessed in the written papers and through the practical assessment unit where appropriate. While not essential for this course, to study Computer Science at University you would need to choose A-level Maths.

See the full specification:
http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-computer-science-h046-h446-from-2015/

A Level Design & Technology: Product Design

Examination board:	AQA 7552
Examinations:	Two examinations sat during the summer examination period (50% of the A level) **Paper 1** 2 hours 30 minutes 30% of the A level **Paper 2** 1 hour 30 minutes 20% of the A level 15% of the marks available in the examinations will be awarded for the application of mathematics
NEA: Non-examined Assessment:	NEA: Non-examined Assessment A substantial design and making task to be undertaken in the second year of the course 45 hours 100 marks 50% of the A level A design folder (ePortfolio) and a final prototype to be submitted The first year of the course will be used to build up skills, knowledge and understanding through a series of short learning experiences.

Course content:

Examination Board: AQA

The course has been designed to:

- Encourage students to take a broad view of design and technology.
- Develop the student's capacity to design and make products and to appreciate the complex relationship between design, materials, manufacture and marketing.
- Provide opportunities for students to be creative (top marks are reserved for those students who demonstrate innovative thinking and creativity).
- Provide opportunities for students to apply scientific and mathematic knowledge through designing and making prototypes.

A LEVEL OPTIONS

There are four assessment objectives. The examination and non-examined assessment will measure how students have achieved the following:

- AO1: Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities to address needs and wants.
- AO2: Design and make prototypes that are fit for purpose.
- AO3: Analyse and evaluate:
  - Design decisions and outcomes, including for prototypes made by themselves and others.
  - Wider issues in design and technology.
- AO4: Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of:
  - Technical principles.
  - Designing and making principles.

Students should be highly motivated and have a passion for designing and making real products. Good drawing skills, creative energy, ICT, CADCAM and fine making skills are important. A genuine interest in design and technology in society and the work of professional designers is also needed. An ability to apply mathematical and scientific principles will also be required.

Some relevant career paths include engineering (with Maths and Physics as other A levels) product design, architecture and furniture design.

Sixth form D&T students are encouraged to become STEM ambassadors and work with younger year groups through the mentoring scheme.

Students in Design and Technology have access to a wide range of wider experiences, including trips to a number of engineering organizations (e.g. JCB and JLR) and entrance into nationally recognised competitions (SMEG design competition below left and the £1 coin design (bottom right).





A Level Economics

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Examination board:	AQA
Examinations:	A level 3 x 2 hour examinations (See below for more detail)
Coursework:	None

Course content:

A-level Economics will give you an excellent understanding of how economies allocate their scarce resources to meet the needs and wants of their citizens. You will develop a greater understanding of the economic problems which face individuals, firms and governments on a local, national and global level and the alternative ways these problems can be resolved.

You will investigate microeconomic topics such as how individual decisions impact economic outcomes, the importance of competition, how markets operate and why they fail and how the distribution of income and wealth is affected. At the same time you will learn about macroeconomics, looking at the 'big picture' of how our national economy fits into the global context, the global impact of financial markets and the operation of the international economy.

The A level covers the following 14 topic areas: (*Indicates content will be a feature of Year 12)

Individuals, firms, markets and market failure

- 1 Economic methodology and the economic problem*
- 2 Individual economic decision making
- 3 Price determination in a competitive market*
- 4 Production, costs and revenue*
- 5 Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly*
- 6 The labour market
- 7 The distribution of income and wealth: poverty and inequality
- 8 The market mechanism, market failure and government intervention in markets*

The national and international economy

- 9 The measurement of macroeconomic performance*
- 10 How the macro economy works : the circular flow of income, AD/AS analysis, and related concepts*
- 11 Economic performance*
- 12 Financial markets and monetary policy*
- 13 Fiscal policy and supply-side policies*
- 14 The international economy

Examinations:

Paper 1: Markets and market failure (33.3% of A-level)

What's assessed	Questions
Content 1–8 above Written exam: 2 hours 80 marks	Section A: data response questions requiring written answers, choice of one from two contexts worth 40 marks Section B: essay questions requiring written answers, choice of one from three worth 40 marks

Paper 2: National and international economy (33.3% of A-level)

What's assessed	Questions
Content 9–14 above Written exam 2 hours 80 marks	Section A: data response questions requiring written answers, choice of one from two contexts worth 40 marks Section B: essay questions requiring written answers, choice of one from three worth 40 marks

Paper 3: Economic principles and issues (33.3% of A-level)

What's assessed	Questions
All content 1–14 above Written exam: 2 hours 80 marks	Section A: multiple choice questions worth 30 marks Section B: case study questions requiring written answers, worth 50 marks

Further study and career options

You may choose to pursue a career in a directly related field such as banking or finance. The A-level course in Economics will stand you in good stead by giving you an insight and understanding of the economic forces that affect your day-to-day activities.

Alternatively, you may decide to follow a career path which isn't directly related to your course of study. The analytical and evaluation skills that you will have developed will be useful whatever path you choose in the future.

A Level English Language and Literature (EMC)

Examination board:	OCR H474
Examinations:	There are three examinations at the end of this course. 1. **Exploring non-fiction and spoken texts (Component 01)** is a one-hour closed-book examination worth 16% of the total A Level. 2. **The language of poetry and plays (Component 02)** is a two-hour closed-book examination worth 32% of the total A Level. 3. **Reading as a writer, writing as a reader (Component 03)** is a two-hour open-book examination worth 32% of the total A Level.
Coursework:	**Independent study: analysing and producing texts (Component 04)** comprises the remaining 20% of the A Level and is assessed by a coursework portfolio consisting of: • an essay analysing and comparing two non-fiction texts from the true-life crime genre • a piece of original non-fiction writing showcasing an understanding of the student's chosen genre, plus use of linguistic and literary devices.

Our combined *A Level English Language and Literature* course allows you to study great works of literature and develop your own creative talents, as a writer, at the same time. Historically a favourite of a wide range of QMGS students, including future doctors and lawyers, this unique subject means that you see texts in an applied sense, living in the real world of language change and all the social constructs which surround us. With links to the sciences, through linguistic analysis, and media, via the world of non-fiction writing, the subject offers you a distinctive contrast to the more familiar discipline of the English Literature A level.

A Level English Language and Literature encourages learners to apply linguistic and literary approaches to texts and develops their ability to do so. Students develop the essential transferable skills of analysis, evaluation, and production of texts. In doing so, you will study a wide range of spoken and written texts from different times including three substantial texts, which include non-literary texts, drama, poetry and prose.

The A Level English Language and Literature qualification enables you to:

- Engage creatively and critically with a wide range of texts.
- Explore how texts relate to each other and the social and historical contexts in which they are produced and received.
- Develop your skills as a producer and interpreter of language.

Learners are required to show awareness of the different language levels, drawn from:

- Phonetics, phonology and prosodics
- Lexis and semantics
- Grammar, including morphology
- Pragmatics
- Discourse analysis

Set texts are drawn from over four centuries of writing and speech and can include:

- An anthology of non-fiction (written and spoken) which spans diverse time periods, cultures and genres.
- Selected poems from *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* by William Blake.
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.
- *Jerusalem by Jez Butterworth*
- *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams.
- *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote
- The poetry of *Carol Ann Duffy*
- *Down and Out in Paris and London* by George Orwell
- *Say Nothing* by Patrick Radden Keefe

What can you expect?

Studying A Level English Language and Literature will extend your reading and writing skills far beyond GCSE level, furthering the ability to analyse, evaluate and make connections. To support you in this endeavour, the English department will encourage an appetite for wider reading and other literary experiences through theatre visits, a sixth form reading group, university lecture days and opportunities to help mentor younger pupils. Confidence will grow as you develop oral and written communication skills, embrace the challenge of mastering new linguistic terminology, and establish reading habits that stand you in good stead for both university and the personal and professional life beyond.

If you enjoy reading and producing texts, and are keen to study fiction and non-fiction, this course is for you. You will develop your reading and writing skills, further your understanding of human communication and have an excellent foundation for pursuing a wide range of career pathways at university.



A Level English Literature

Examination board:	OCR H472
Examinations:	There are two closed-book examinations at the end of this course. Each examination is 2 hours and 30 minutes long, and each is worth 40% of the A Level: • **Drama and poetry pre-1900 (Component 01)** • **Comparative and contextual study (Component 02): Dystopia**
Coursework:	**Literature post-1900 (Component 03)** comprises the remaining 20% of the A Level and is assessed by a 3,000-word coursework portfolio consisting of: • *either* a piece of re-creative writing plus a commentary (1,000 words) *or* a close, critical analysis (1,000 words) based on a section of a text • *and* one comparative essay (2,000 words) based on two studied texts.

Do you wish you knew how writers captivate their readers? Are you fascinated by the gateway into society that books, old and new, offer to modern readers? Does your favourite author's life and times intrigue you? Might improving your communication skills help your career prospects? Or are you just keen for an excuse to read more? All of these are reasons QMGS students have chosen to study A Level English Literature.

The A Level English Literature qualification enables you to:

- explore and understand a wide range of texts.
- develop transferable skills valued by universities, such as sustained research and advanced literacy.
- read widely and, in Component 03, write on a choice of texts you enjoy (these must include drama, poetry and prose texts written after 1900; one of the three texts must be post-2000)
- choose to write creatively for the coursework if you wish.

Set texts embrace influential literature drawn from over four centuries of literary history and include:

- *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
- *Othello* by William Shakespeare
- *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen
- Selected poems by Christina Rossetti
- Poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- *The Merchant's Tale* by Geoffrey Chaucer
- *White Teeth by Zadie Smith*
- The poetry of Seamus Heaney
- *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard

Other texts studied may include *Jerusalem* by Jez Butterworth, Thomas Hardy's poetry, *1984* by George Orwell*, The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *Native Son* by Richard Wright, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Passing* by Nella Larsen, *Paradise Lost* by John Milton and *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy.

What can you expect?

Studying A Level English Literature will extend students' reading and writing skills considerably beyond GCSE level, furthering learners' abilities to analyse, evaluate and make connections. Students are required to study a minimum of eight texts at A Level, including at least two examples of prose, poetry and drama.
The English Department will encourage an appetite for wider reading and other literary experiences through theatre visits and opportunities to help mentor younger pupils. Meanwhile, students must strive to develop their communication skills and keep up with rigorous reading requirements.

Provided you enjoy immersing yourself in texts, by the end of the course you will have developed a passion for reading. You will find pleasure and excitement in the study and discussion of literature and will have begun to develop a personal style of writing and speaking enabling you to hold your own in literary circles.

A Level Environmental Science

Entry Requirements: Grade 7 in Biology and Grade 6 in Physics

Examination board:	AQA
Examinations:	**Topics Assessed:** 1. The living environment 2. The physical environment 3. Energy resources 4. Pollution 5. Biological resources 6. Sustainability 7. Research methods. **A-level** **Paper 1,** Topics 2, 3, 4 and 7. 50% of A-level **Paper 2,** Topics 1, 5, 6 and 7. 50% of A-level

Course content:



Students who enjoy a multi-disciplinary approach to learning and have a keen interest in the sustainability of our planet will find this new subject engaging and thought provoking. Environmental Science is an exciting and hugely relevant course that provides a detailed picture of our planet and our relationship with it: the living and physical environment, its biological and natural resources, and how these are interconnected. This multidisciplinary course will be taught by the Biology and Physics departments. This is a great accompaniment to A-levels in geography, chemistry, biology, physics and maths and develops key skills including communication, teamwork and critical thinking.

Interdisciplinary Skills:

Environmental Science combines large parts of Biology, Physics and research skills. Additionally, the course teaches mathematics in a practical, applied setting, with statistical analysis of results. This is relevant to many university courses and careers that use mathematics. Alongside this, there is also an extended essay writing part of the course which will teach you to confidently structure your arguments. This combination of mathematical analysis and convincing reasoning are key skills for future leaders in many industries.

Course Content:

The Living Environment: The emphasis here is on the interaction of living organisms with each other and their abiotic environment, and how an understanding of this can inform decisions that lead to sustainable

human activities. Students apply their understanding of these interactions in a wide range of contexts throughout this area.

The Physical Environment: Students study how anthropogenic activities are inter-connected with physical processes, to formulate management strategies and plan sustainable activities. Supplies of renewable and non-renewable physical resources are investigated.



Energy Resources: The importance of energy resources in both past and future developments in society is analysed. The impact of future energy supply problems is evaluated. In doing so, students understand how improvements in technology can provide increasing amounts of energy from sustainable sources.

Pollution: Students study how the properties of materials and energy forms interact to result in environmental change. They apply this knowledge to suggest solutions to minimise current pollution problems and prevent future problems.

Biological Resources: Students develop an understanding of the challenge posed by the need to provide food and forest resources for a growing human population without damaging the planet's life support systems. The interaction with other areas of the subject is key to their understanding.

Sustainability: The subject principles that are the focus in the previous topics are used to develop a holistic understanding of sustainability and the circular economy. Examples are taken from throughout the areas of study to gain an understanding of the interconnected nature of environmental problems and solutions to these problems.



Research Methods: These include details of the methods used to investigate a wide range of environmental issues. Like all Science A-levels, there are required practical skills and students must understand the general principles of scientific methodology and be able to apply these to a wide range of environmental situations and techniques. As will all Sciences at QMGS, a very thorough practical programme will be followed, to fully embed practical skills above and beyond the specification.

University and Employment Prospects:

Environmental Science degrees are available at most Russell Group universities. A-level Environmental Science is useful for a range of other science or engineering-based courses (source: Informed Choices – Russell Group) due to its mathematical as well as scientific content. As Environmental Science is a multidisciplinary course, it is applicable to a wider range of university courses than traditional science A levels. The employment prospects for those employed in Environmental Science are strong. There are a variety of legal and technical routes into employment with the ability to become a Chartered Environmental Scientist.

A Level Geography (new specification)

Examination board:	AQA
Examinations:	Paper 1 – Physical Geography (40% of A-Level) - Water and carbon cycles - Hot desert systems and landscapes - Hazards Paper 2 – Human Geography (40% of A-Level) - Global Systems and Global Governance - Changing Places - Population and the Environment
Controlled assessment:	Geographical Fieldwork Investigation (20% of A-Level) - *Independent written project based on field data*

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Course content:

"Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future" – Michael Palin

Geography A-Level is a wide-ranging and varied course which seeks to understand the complexities of the natural and human world. The subject is well placed to investigate and explain key issues on a local to global scale, from the cause and consequence of migration to the impact on people and communities of climate change. It is a subject that prepares students well for whatever their future may hold; working as a team in challenging environments, developing skills in problem-solving with limited data and being able to communicate and present complex ideas.

Year one of the A-Level course introduces the students to both human and physical topics. A systems-based approach is used to investigate the physical topics of 'Water & Carbon Cycles' and 'Hot Desert Systems and Landscapes'. Both cover physical topics whilst retaining an emphasis on the relevance and importance of sustainable management of water, carbon, and hot desert environments. Human geography is the focus in the new topic of "Changing Places" which seeks to understand our perceptions of place and how the change in places can be perceived, represented, and studied through cultural geography such as art, media, and music. The two case studies of Digbeth and Stratford provide opportunities for fieldwork to collect data which highlights the changing nature of these two places and observe first-hand the forces who are facilitating this change. The other human geography topic covered this year is titled "Global Systems and Global Governance, which is a far-reaching module that includes the management of shared areas such as Antarctica. You will also investigate explaining the Justin Bieber phenomenon and focus on the topic of globalisation to understand how the humble shipping container changed global patterns of trade.

Year two includes the study of Hazards, from tectonic (earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunami) to climatic (tropical storms and wildfires). With the emergence of megacities in vulnerable regions and the impact of climate change, these topics are likely to be only brought further into global prominence.

A LEVEL OPTIONS

The final human geography topic covered will be “Population and the Environment”, where a rapidly expanding global population will cause stress on physical landscapes, leading to issues of food security, increased deforestation as well as greater levels of soil erosion and deforestation. A look into global health highlights how now more than ever, we should be aware of our relationship with the physical environment and the impacts this has on disease prevalence. Also covered are the themes of migration, population ecology and global population futures, which make this an interesting and important topic in understanding how our actions now, will impact the future.

The second year of the course will also focus on an independent study which accounts for 20% of the A-Level course. Students must choose an independent title, related to the syllabus, and collect both primary (field) and secondary data, culminating in a written report of 3,000 – 4,000 words.

Four days of fieldwork are a requirement of the course, which will allow us to incorporate fieldwork in year 12 with recent years visiting North Wales, Birmingham, and London. The department is also committed to running foreign fieldtrips every two years. Recent trips have visited Iceland, Naples the SW USA and Tenerife. A trip to Iceland is planned for 2027.

The Geography Department have been continually active in providing opportunities to students that reflect the wide and varied nature of the subject. Our collaborations range from attending GA talks nearby, providing workshops with professional bodies such as the British Cartographic Society and hosting university visits (Sheffield, Newcastle, Birmingham, Southampton, and Imperial College) to discuss life beyond A-Level.

Growing numbers of applications for university courses in Geography and related subjects in recent years are proof of the engaging and challenging nature of the teaching and of the enjoyment pupils have and the relevance that they see in the subject.







A Level History

Examination board	AQA
Examinations	**Component 1: Breadth Study** **1K The Making of a Super Power: USA 1865-1975** You will explore how, within just a lifetime, the United States went from the ravages of civil war, to become a Superpower as the world entered the atomic age. The Vietnam war not only showed how despite immense wealth and military might the US was limited as to what it was capable of, but also of an American society that was still deeply divided from within. The period covers four Presidential assassinations, the end of the Frontier, Watergate, civil rights, politics, fears over immigration, cold war politics and phenomenal economic growth. How united was the United States? How was it that this country came to dominate the world and be its first Superpower? **Course Content** Part One: From Civil War to World War, 1865- 1920 Part Two: Crises to World Power, 1920 - 1975 **What's assessed** The study of significant historical developments over a period of around 100 years and associated interpretations **Assessed** 2 hours 30 minutes written exam Three questions (one compulsory) 80 marks 40% of A-level Follow us @QM1554 **Component 2: Depth Study** **2T The Making of Modern Britain, 1951–2007** This unit will enable you to study, in depth, the key changes which helped to mould Britain in the second half of the 20th century. It explores the fierce election battles between Labour and the Conservatives and challenges students to look at the complex concepts of class, social division and cultural change. It encourages students to reflect on Britain's changing, and arguably declining, place in the world as well as the intricate interrelationship between government policy, economic developments and political survival. **Course Content** • Part One: Building a new Britain, 1951–1979 • Part Two: Modern Britain, 1979–2007 **What's assessed** The study in depth of a period of major historical change or development and associated primary evidence

	Assessed 2 hours 30 minutes written exam Three questions (one compulsory) 80 marks 40% of A-level
Coursework:	**Component 3: Historical Investigation (coursework)** **<u>A personal study based on a topic of student's choice</u>** **The Wars of the Roses, 1377 to 1487** This unit will allow you to engage with one of the most tumultuous periods in British history; a time when nobles and kings fought for power and control. You will study a variety of key individuals, from the inept Henry VI, to the fearsome and manipulative Margaret of Anjou, exploring a host of themes such as kingship, aristocracy and the role of women in late Medieval politics. **Course Content** The authority of the Crown in 14th and 15th century England. The role and influence of the aristocracy in politics and government. The origins of the baronial wars between the Houses of Lancaster and York. The role and significance of key personalities. 40 marks 20% of A-level

History has been a popular A Level choice at Queen Mary's for many years. Many of our pupils have gone on to read the subject at University. Many other students opt to combine History with a variety of other A levels options, realizing its intrinsic value and high academic regard, as well as its role as a subject, which fits in well with a wide variety of alternative Degree courses, and future career options – whether this be the Law, PPE, Politics, business, teaching, management and administration.

The teaching staff within the Department are all highly experienced, competent and enthusiastic tutors, and experts in their subject. We've served as markers and examiners for a wide variety of Examination Boards. This has guaranteed a long tradition of academic success at A Level and university entrance, including Oxbridge entry.





In July 2018 we had a wonderful opportunity to visit New York, Philadelphia and Washington DC and visited sites such as The White House, The Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, Times Square and the Statue of Liberty among others.

A Level Mathematics

Examination board:	OCR B MEI H640
Examinations:	Pure and Mechanics paper $36\frac{4}{11}$% Pure and Statistics paper $36\frac{4}{11}$% Pure and Comprehension paper $27\frac{3}{11}$% All examinations 1hr 30 minutes

Course content:
The essence of Mathematics is the study of pattern and structure, particularly in relation to numerical and spatial systems. At A Level, there is a shift towards greater abstractions, and the methods developed are powerful and rich in application.

A-Level maths is the most popular A-level taken throughout the country, is it the same here at QM. It is a requirement for many university courses and either desirable or recommended for a great deal more; it opens doors to a vast number of career opportunities.

The Pure Mathematics is the core of the course but we also study applications of mathematics in mechanics and statistics.

Pure Mathematics. These modules have a strong algebraic content. The study of Differential and Integral Calculus is introduced which enable us to quantify rates of change and, therefore model countless real world problems. Trigonometry is developed which helps us analyse periodic phenomena. Other work developed is series, with many applications in finance.

Mechanics. Newtonian Mechanics dominates this study. The topics covered involve analysing motion in 1 and 2 dimensions, vector methods, forces, moments, collisions are some of the applications.

Statistics. The section on offer covers collection of data, analysis of the data and the presentation of the data. Concepts such as Regression and Linear Correlation are introduced. Probability theory is developed and distributions such as the Normal and Binomial Distributions are introduced and Hypothesis testing is applied in different circumstances.

If you are thinking of studying Mathematics at university you **must** also study Further Mathematics because we are an educational institute who offer it. Also if you are thinking of studying any engineering (especially Mechanical, Aeronautical, Electrical or Chemical), Economics, Computer Science or Physics; having Further Mathematics as part of your A-Level profile makes your application much more attractive, as universities know you can manage the more demanding mathematical content in the degree.

A Level Further Mathematics

Examination board:	OCR B MEI H645
Examinations:	Mandatory Core paper 2hr 40 minutes 50% As well as choice of: either three minor option papers each 1hr 15min, $16\frac{2}{3}$% each

Pupils taking A-level Further Mathematics, **MUST** take A-level Mathematics as well. This page should be read after a reading of the page relating to A-level Mathematics. Further Mathematics should be taken as a fourth option (alongside 3 other A-levels). Which you should identify on your application form.

We study three minor options in the Further Mathematics A-Level: Mechanics Minor (Y431), Statistics Minor (Y432) and Numerical Methods (Y434). This choice allows a diverse range of mathematics to be covered and also accommodates the variety of different degree subjects which pupils go on to study at university.

The standard Mathematics A-level is an excellent general maths qualification. However, it is not designed for the most talented, and never has been in the 50 years that we have had A-levels. It does not stretch the ablest students, nor does it include some very important topics such as complex numbers, matrices and differential equations (beyond the simplest). It also fails to give students the algebraic fluency that many university courses require.

Further Maths addresses these problems directly. Students who are lucky enough to take it in the sixth-form have a major advantage over their peers at university.

Any pupil who is considering any degree with a high mathematical content such as economics, computing, physics, or any type of engineering, not just Mathematics itself, should consider the study of Further Mathematics. This is desirable by many universities, but they do not request it because of the limited educational centres that can offer it as an A-Level due to low uptake or insufficient expertise.

Many people perceive studying Further Maths as narrowing their options; this is wrong. The breadth of diverse application and advanced skills achieved from studying Further Maths is hugely beneficial to students who wish to study a university course which demands high levels of mathematical aptitude.

A Level Philosophy

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Examination board:	AQA Philosophy 7172
Examinations:	Two 3 hour written examinations on the following topics: ☐ Epistemology (the Theory of Knowledge) ☐ Moral Philosophy (Ethics) ☐ Metaphysics of God ☐ Metaphysics of Mind

Course Content

Epistemology: In this unit you will discover if anything is really real; if we live in a simulated reality; if computers could become intelligent; and how we can know anything at all.

Moral Philosophy: In this unit you will study the science of human nature, and find out if we can justify lying; if we can justify the existence and extent of the state; if we should enjoy simulated sex and killing; and what it means to be moral.

Metaphysics: In this unit you will discover if you have a mind; if there is a God; why there is evil; why we can't have brain transplants; whether you survive your death; why we have language; and whether suicide is ever justified.

Philosophy is the science of thought. We look at the world around us, with its cozy assumptions, and we scrutinize them to discover if they are true or whether we should abandon them completely and look elsewhere for truth. We use logic and evidence to subject thought, theory and belief to rigorous investigation and the aim is to discover clear and distinct ways of knowing about who we are, how we relate to others and what our place is in time and space.

If you aspire to have a career in Law, Politics, the Civil Service, Intelligence or Journalism then you should seriously consider studying Philosophy since the skills (of lucidity, clarity and critical thinking) it imparts are important features of these careers. These are no "soft skills", but rather the very apparatus of thought, precision and intelligence. Do well here and nobody will doubt your abilities.

A Level PE

Examination board:	OCR

Course content

Advanced level Physical Education consists of five components;

1. Physiological factors affecting performance - 30% of total grade

This component will assess the following:
- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Exercise physiology
- Biomechanics.

2. Psychological factors affecting performance - 20% of total grade

This component will assess Skill acquisition and Sports psychology.

3. Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport - 20% of total grade

This component will assess:
- Sport and society
- Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport.

4. Practical Performances - 15% of total grade

This component will assess either:
- Core and advanced skills in performing one activity
- Core and advanced skills in coaching one activity.

5. Evaluating and Analysing Performance for Improvement - 15% of total grade

This component draws upon the knowledge, understanding and skills a learner has learnt throughout the course and enables them to analyse and evaluate a peer's performance in one activity.

Course Criteria

Although previous experience of GCSE PE will be an advantage it is not essential.
We would recommend that candidates possess at least a Level 7 in Biology.
We also recommend that pupils are specialised in at least one sport (play regularly outside of school).

A level Physics

Examination board:	AQA Specification Code 7408 AQA Physics Website
Examinations:	**3 papers, all sat at the end of Year 13**. ***Paper 1:*** 2 hours, 85 marks, 34% of A level. 60 marks of a mix of long answer, short answer and 25 multiple choice questions. ***Paper 2:*** 2 hours, 85 marks, 34% of A level. 60 marks of a mix of long answer, short answer and 25 multiple choice questions. ***Paper 3***: 2 hours, 80 marks, 32% of A level. 45 marks on practical experiments and data analysis. 35 marks on optional topic.
Coursework:	*No coursework as such. Experiments done in fortnightly double lessons will prove the students' skills are good enough and will prepare for the Paper 3 practical section.*

Course content:

An important part of Physics is the description of phenomena using mathematical models to help understand the physical ideas. For this reason, a good grasp of the fundamentals of mathematics is essential. The syllabus studied (AQA), is designed to suit not only those who wish to go on to study further physics, but also those who go on to other studies, such as Medicine, Chemistry, Economics and Engineering, where Physics skills are used.

Practical work forms an integral part of the course and helps you to appreciate how theoretical ideas can be tested and justified. It also helps to develop an understanding of, and the ability to use, some of the main instruments and techniques of experimental Physics.

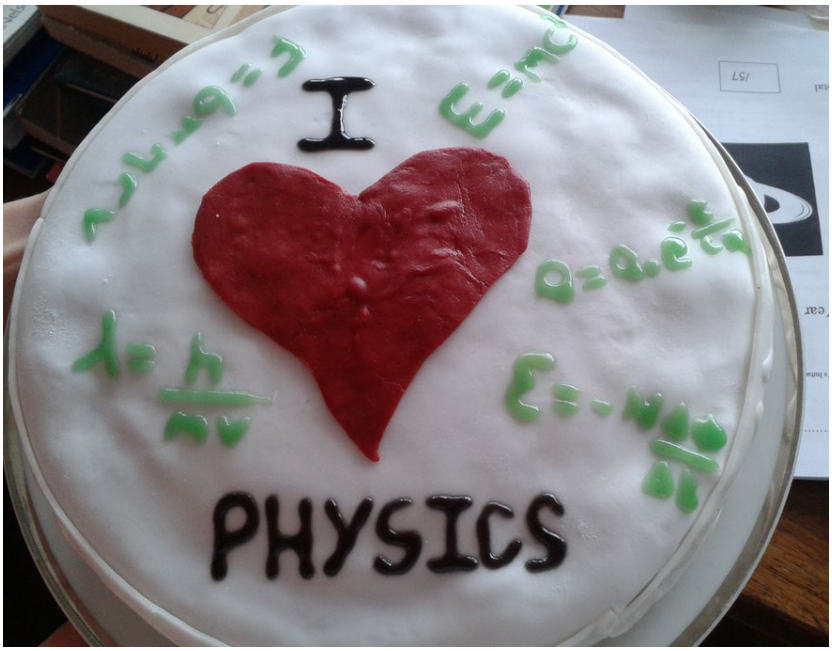
Students of Physics should have intellectual curiosity; they should want to know, and how to find out, about the physical world in which they live. Students should derive interest, enjoyment and a sense of achievement from their study of Physics and should, at the end of the course, be willing and able to learn more about the subject.

They will be taught to understand the main ideas and methods of Physics but they will need to supplement their study by wider reading about new ideas, about the many uses of Physics in everyday life and about the considerable economic and social implications of the use of Physics in our society.

In recent years the department has enjoyed great success with the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO) awards in Year 12 and Year 13, and the BPhO Experimental Project. The department also offers preparation sessions for the Physics Aptitude Test (PAT) and the Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT) to prepare pupils for applications to top universities for both Physics and Engineering.

Year 1 Topics	**Year 2 Topics**
• 1 Measurements and their errors • 2 Particles and radiation • 3 Waves • 4 Mechanics and materials • 5 Electricity	• 1 Measurements and their errors • 6 Further mechanics and thermal physics • 7 Fields and their consequences • 8 Nuclear physics • 9 Turning Points in Physics





A Level Psychology

Examination board:	AQA (7182)
Examinations:	*3 papers taken at the end of Y13. Each paper carries equal weighting (96 marks) and is 2 hours long.* *At least 10% of the overall assessment of psychology will contain mathematical skills equivalent to Level 2 or above. At least 25–30% of the overall assessment will assess skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research methods.*
Controlled assessment:	There is no controlled assessment

Psychology is the study of human behaviour, and related aspects of human mentality ("the Mind"). It is fundamentally multidisciplinary, drawing on aspects of philosophy, ethics, sociology and science. Metaphysically, psychologists are committed to the existence of a thing called the human mind; ethically, psychologists ask, "why did you behave in that way?" rather than the philosophical question, "why *should* you behave in that way." Psychology involves scientific case studies, experimentation and mathematical analysis: the goal is to establish general truths that capture the wonder of the human mind by scientific methods and rigorous analysis of data. The papers are:

Paper 1: Introductory Topics (Social Influence; Memory; Attachment; Psychopathology)
How do humans behave individually and in groups and why do they behave in this way? How do humans communicate thoughts, ideas, intentions and desires, and how does language develop? How does language influence behaviour? Finally, we explore the link between mental health and criminality, deviancy and disordered conduct, such as depression, stress, psychopathy and addiction.

Paper 2: Psychology in Context (Approaches in Psychology; Biopsychology; Research Methods; Issues and Debates)
Psychologists face a fundamental, metaphysical problem. What exactly is it that they are studying? The natural sciences work by means of the observation of physical phenomena; but the "mind" is not, and has never been claimed to be, a "physical phenomenon". But psychologists are clear their subject is not quackery, pseudoscience or a worldview. Hence, much theoretical psychology is written as a way of squaring this somewhat pernicious circle that has seen psychologists denied status in both the natural and the social sciences.

Paper 3: Issues and Options (Aggression; Schizophrenia; Relationships)

Within the field of psychology, study of impairment and mental illness is a vital component of both theory and practice, since it is usually only when the brain (or mind) goes wrong or deviates that we make substantive discoveries about the nature of the ordinary, or healthy, mind. Like psychopathy, schizophrenia is one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented mental illnesses and often associated with or expressly identified as split personality, insanity or multiple personality disorder. Naturally, we explore what it really is, how it really affects people, and how those people who suffer with it recover, cope and help us push the boundaries of mysterious mentality of the human condition further and further back.

Why are some people aggressive, whereas others are passive? We look at the various types of aggression, including aggression in prisons, in order to work out the extent of our personality's development from our genetic inheritance or the environment where we find ourselves. We explore violent, psychopathic killers and our response to them, as well as considering the events that lead to the most loathsome crimes. At the heart of this topic is this question: did I do what I did, do I like what I like, am I who I am, because of my nature, or because of my nurture (the way I was brought up).

The course will be a combination of fieldwork, research-based experimentation, case studies and classroom-based theoretical ideas. Candidates will have to be competent dealing with data analysis and will need to have an inventive and curious mind and be eager to develop meaningful experiments to test psychological theories. Psychology is not conducted in a lab, but it employs scientific methodology in settings that encourage humans to express behaviour.

People study Psychology for a host of reasons. Many do so because they are crazy, or think they are; some do it for attention or therapy; some want to learn how to manipulate people, influence people or improve their personal resilience. But the best reason of all is because it's interesting, and because it has something to contribute to political discourse, social awareness and cohesion, justice and toleration. Mummy issues, daddy issues, sexuality, crisis, aggression, conformity, mind control; Lector, Bundy, Dahmer and Fish; Freud and Jung and Skinner and Piaget; brains and minds and souls and persons; yourself, your behaviour, your relationships, your hang-ups, obsessions, quirks and dislikes; your fancies and dislikes; everything that stirs your pot, floats your boat and flicks your switch… It's all here and we'd love you to join us.

A Level Sociology

Entry Requirements: Grade 7 in Sociology or a 7 in one/more of English, History, Geography or Religious Studies if Sociology was not studied at GCSE.

Examination board:	AQA (7192)
Examinations:	Three written exams, each two hours in duration, sat at the end of Y13. These are each worth 80 marks and 33.3% of the A-Level grade. **Paper 1:** Education with Theory and Methods: Topics 1, 2, 3. **Paper 2:** Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods: Topics 3 and 4 **Paper 3:** Topics in Sociology: Topics 5 and 6 **Topics Assessed:** 1. Education 2. Methods in context 3. Theory and methods 4. Crime and deviance 5. Culture and Identity OR Families and Households OR Health (TBD) 6. Beliefs in Society OR The Media (TBD)

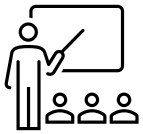
'Sociology is primarily an act of imagination, as it is really about seeing things differently.'
– Peter Berger



To study Sociology is to look beyond the surface of everyday life and imagine how the world might appear through different eyes. Sociology A-Level invites students to question the familiar: to explore how social structures, cultures, and institutions shape behaviour, and how individuals and groups, in turn, influence society.

The course examines major themes such as education, crime, culture, identity, power, and social change, asking why societies develop as they do and how inequalities are maintained or challenged. By combining theoretical insight with real-world research, Sociology develops the ability to analyse evidence, construct arguments, and think critically about complex issues. Above all, it encourages students to see the world not as fixed, but as something that can be understood, questioned, and transformed.

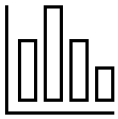
Course Content



Education

Explore how schools shape people's opportunities, identities, and beliefs, and why some groups achieve more than others. You'll also consider how government policies, pupil-teacher relationships, subcultures, peer groups, pupils' identities and global influences affect the experience of education today.

Methods in Context



Learn how sociologists investigate the world by designing research, collecting data, and applying methods such as interviews, surveys, and observations to different social contexts and real issues like education or crime. You will learn about the ethical, practical and theoretical issues inherent to social research.

Theory and Methods

Discover how different perspectives and critical theories (including functionalism, Marxism, feminism, interactionism and postmodernism) explain society and human behaviour, and how evidence is gathered and used to support ideas. This topic helps you think critically about what counts as 'truth' in research and how different sociologists conceptualise social structures, conflict, consensus and change.



Crime and Deviance



Examine why people break laws, how society responds to crime, and how factors such as gender, class, and culture shape both criminal behaviour and public attitudes to it. How do we decide who is 'deviant'? What role do the police, courts, prisons, the law, methods of surveillance and peer groups play in our idea of crime?

Culture and Identity / Families and Households / Health *(one option studied)*

Investigate how people's lifestyles, family relationships, or experiences of health are influenced by culture, gender, class, power relationships and social change in modern Britain and beyond.





Beliefs in Society / The Media *(one option studied)*

Analyse how religion, science, or the media influence what people think and do, how information is shared, and how globalisation and technology are transforming belief and communication.

How would studying Sociology complement other A-Level options and where could it take me?

Sociology complements both STEM and humanities A-Levels by developing a distinctive combination of analytical, evaluative, and communication skills. It equips you to think critically about evidence, explore how societies function, and understand how human behaviour interacts with wider social structures, skills that are highly valued across a wide range of university courses and careers.

Through the study of research methods, theory, and applied examples, you learn to interpret data, evaluate arguments, and communicate complex ideas with clarity and precision. These abilities strengthen applications to disciplines such as medicine, law, psychology, and public policy, where evidence-based reasoning, ethical reflection, and clear communication are essential.

Sociology also fosters empathy, ethical awareness, and cultural understanding, encouraging you to approach real-world issues with insight and sensitivity. These attributes are increasingly sought in professions centred on people, such as healthcare, education and social research, and they complement the scientific and technical training provided by STEM subjects.

Medicine, Health and Public Policy: Sociology offers a deeper exploration of the social determinants of health: how income, education, culture, and environment influence physical and mental wellbeing. Students examine patterns of inequality and gain awareness of how social structures operate within diverse societies. Understanding these factors helps future medics and health professionals consider treatment in context, learn how to communicate effectively with patients, and engage ethically with issues such as consent, access to care, and public health interventions.

Engineering, Technology and Data Science: Modern innovation does not occur in isolation from society. Sociology helps students analyse the relationship between technology and social change, from the ethics of artificial intelligence to the environmental and social consequences of engineering decisions. It introduces ideas about surveillance, digital inequality, and how power structures influence who benefits from new technologies. For those designing or analysing systems, these insights encourage more responsible, inclusive, and sustainable innovation.

Humanities and Social Sciences: Students of History, Politics, Philosophy, English, or Religious Studies will find natural overlap with Sociology in its exploration of ideology, culture, and social transformation. The subject sharpens theoretical understanding while grounding abstract ideas in empirical evidence. It enhances the ability to interpret data, texts, debates, and historical processes through a sociological lens, linking individual experience to wider social structures. Sociology enriches the study of any discipline concerned with people, ideas, and change.

By combining rigorous analytical thinking with an understanding of people and society, Sociology prepares you for a wide variety of pathways, from medicine and law to journalism, business, and public service, making it an ideal complement to almost any A-Level combination. It would serve as an excellent fourth A-Level for those students desiring a broader suite of subjects and real academic stretch and challenge.

Beyond A-Level

Sociology leads naturally into degrees in Sociology, Criminology, Social Policy, and related social sciences, but also supports study in Law, Psychology, Medicine, Public Health, and Education.

Graduates with a background in sociology go on to careers in healthcare, law, the civil service, journalism, education, social work, research, and business. The ability to understand human behaviour and interpret social patterns is increasingly relevant in an interconnected and data-driven world.

Sociology is, at its heart, about people and their relationships with one another and with society. It offers both depth and breadth – a subject for those interested in how the world works and how it might be changed for the better.

A Level Spanish

Examination board:	AQA
Examinations:	**<u>A Level</u>** *Paper 1* – 2h30 - Listening/Reading/Translation to/from Spanish *Paper 2* – 2 hours – 2 essays on a book (La Casa de Bernarda Alba) and a film (El Laberinto del Fauno) *Paper 3* – Speaking – 21-23 minutes – Discussion of card (with 5 mins' prep) + presentation/discussion of a chosen topic
Controlled assessment:	*NONE*

Course content:

If you want access to Spain and South America, a thorough working knowledge of the second most spoken language in the world and some insight into countries with civilisations ranging from the Aztecs, Incas and Mayans to the Moors of North Africa, then Spanish in the Sixth Form is probably for you.

Spanish offers to the future employer a student who is able to communicate, aware of intricacy and detail, confident when dealing with others and a person open to new experiences, challenges, hard work, full of opinions and with the ability to think outside the box; in short, an asset to their company. Above all, it is a subject that brings much to the students themselves.

A Level Spanish is therefore for students who want to travel and see something of another land, meet interesting people and experience another culture. Ability to deal with others is prized by all employers and many students have been mentors for Years 7-11 and run a Spanish Club.

We benefit from the help of our native speaker for supplementary conversation classes once a week and look out for cinema, theatre and other cultural experiences to add variety and interest to the studies. Frequent use is made of up-to-date material from the Spanish and Latin American press to give real insight into the modern and changing world.

In Year 12, the course naturally builds on the vocabulary and structures of GCSE. The topics of 'Social issues and trends', 'Artistic culture' and the study of a literary text or film, guide the student from GCSE through to a more advanced content and degree of interest. In the upper sixth, the content moves to further studies of social issues and trends, political and artistic culture and literary texts and films such as La Casa de Bernarda Alba (one of the best-known plays ever to come out of Spain).

Follow us on **Bluesky QMGS Spanish and French**





Specialist Subjects across the MAT

By working together in The Mercian Trust, our plan is to offer a full range of subject options, whatever your academic interest and aptitude may be.
Each school will continue to offer its own curriculum (as you will have already seen in this booklet) but, since September 2017, we have been collaborating to provide the opportunity to study a subject, which may not be on offer in the school where you are registered as a pupil (and will spend most of your time).
We have done this by creating a *Mercian Block:* part of the working day, which will be timetabled not just in one school, but across all the schools working together in the Multi Academy Trust. You can choose to do a subject from the Mercian Block in a different school. (You can, but you don't have to!) This may mean a bit of extra travelling a couple of times a week, but it will be worth going the extra mile if it allows you to take a subject which really interests you and prepares you for the post-18 pathway you have in mind.
You can find information about Mercian Block subjects in the next few pages. You may not have thought about some of these opportunities before. It is worth taking a look and finding out more.
The Mercian Trust will give you access to 35+ A Level courses and a range of specialist technical and vocational programmes. At a time when many schools and colleges are having to cut their curriculum offer, we think that our collaboration is something to celebrate!

Exciting Enrichment

Our aim is clear. We want to use the Mercian Trust partnership to your advantage, giving you the opportunity to participate in activities and trips organised by different schools in the MAT.
Within The Mercian Trust, we have access to our own Field Centre in Wales. We can offer Biology and Geography Field Courses or an Oxbridge immersion weekend at affordable rates. You can benefit by collaborating with students from other schools.
You might be interested in a ski trip or a sports tour abroad; you might be attracted to the experience on offer in a Cadet Force or join a cohort preparing for the Duke of Edinburgh Award; or you might enjoy the chance to get involved in a big-scale concert or drama production.
Joining a Mercian Sixth Form gives you access to more than we can provide as single schools. A new opportunity has opened up across the Borough and you can be part of the story.

A Level Ancient History

Entry Requirements:

Grade 5 in English and/or Grade 5 in one the following; History, Geography, Citizenship or RST.

Exam Board/Spec: OCR

Method of Assessment:	**Method of Assessment:** Two exams at the end of Year 13. These will assess knowledge and understanding of the topics but also of the ancient source materials studied • ***Greek component exam*** (2 hours 30 mins) will test your understanding of the Greek depth and period study; Greece and Persia: The Rise of Macedon • ***Roman component exam*** (2 hours 30 mins) will test your understanding of the Roman depth and period study; the Julio-Claudian emperors; Roman Britain There is little as illuminating as civilisation's distant past, especially as we move towards a global age of increasing tensions. In the same vein, there are few subjects like Ancient History— within which our ancient pasts can be rediscovered and learnt from. Take the rise of 5th century Athenian demagogy against modern American politics, for example: the likes of Cleon vs. Donald Trump serve as a clear parallel and prove the eternal relevance of the classical world"
Subject Content	An A Level in Ancient History will allow you to study the ancient world, its momentous events and its larger than life personalities including Alexander the Great, Caligula and King Leonidas of Sparta. You will see how ancient civilisations like the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians have shaped the world that we live in today and develop a passion and curiosity for antiquity. The course will also allow you to gain a greater understanding of the literature of the period, including the first great historians like Herodotus, Thucydides and Livy.
Career Prospects:	Many of our students enjoy the subject so much, that they go on to study this subject at University, taking degrees in Ancient History and Classics. Given the critical thinking skills that Ancient History develops, students can also enter a wide variety of careers, including law, journalism and the media in general; advertising, accountancy, business management, marketing, public relations, the armed forces and the police; the civil service, the dramatic arts and education at all levels.

A Level Drama & Theatre Studies

Examination Board	AQA	**Level offered**	A' Level
Assessment Model	***Drama is assessed through both practical components and a final written examination.*** **Written Examination:** Drama and Theatre (3 hours) 40% of total A- level **Practical Assessment One:** Creating original Drama 30% of total A-level **Practical Assessment Two:** Making Theatre 30% of total A-level		
Introduction	Drama and Theatre studies is a challenging subject suited to students who are creative, questioning and observant. Students who enjoy reading and watching plays, taking part in them; acting and directing will find this course extremely stimulating and rewarding. Group work and collaboration is at the heart of this course and students learn through experience, seeing theatre and making theatre for themselves. It is a varied course with students studying a wide range of theatrical styles, plays, practitioners and theatre conventions; learning about approaches to theatre and applying knowledge to practical and theoretical components. The teachers in the Drama department are experienced and work to encourage students to become independent learners; a learner who is self-motivated, disciplined and confident. During the course you will develop your acting skills, take part in workshops and develop your understanding of 'The Art of Performance'. You will also develop your writing skills as you critically analyse scripts and performances over the duration of the two years. <u>Skills:</u> Pupils of Drama will develop skills such as: • Knowledge and understanding of a range of practical drama skills including: Acting: Directing: Costume: Set designing: Technical design • Understanding of the major theatrical styles • Performance techniques – interpretation, voice, physicality, stage relationships with others • Collaborative skills with others to present a performance piece • Communication and problem solving skills • Design skills – interpretation, visual and design impacts and set creation • Technical abilities – lighting and sound design, special effects, technology and appropriate equipment • Practical skills – from making masks and building sets to creation of period style and make-up • Confidence, team-building, communication and other life skills.		
You will be given the opportunity to devise original work, develop your understanding of how plays relate to historical, social and cultural context and consider the connections between theory and practice. In addition to Drama lessons, students will go and see a number of live performances, access online Digital theatre shows and have the opportunity to work with a Theatre Company in a workshop context.			

Course Overview:

There are three components to the A-level:

Unit 1: Drama and Theatre:

This unit prepares you for the final written examination and during this module you will develop understanding of the theatrical processes and practices involved in interpreting and performing theatre, how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning and how creative and artistic choices influence how meaning is communicated to an audience. Using a practical approach, you will learn how style, genre, form, structure, language, stage directions and character construction are used and applied to convey meaning and how performance texts are informed by their social, cultural and historical contexts and are interpreted and performed for an audience. Students will analyse and critique live theatre during the course and apply knowledge and understanding. of theatre to interpret two set texts from either a performance or director perspective.

Our set texts are:

- 'A Servant to Two Masters' by Carlos Goldoni: A Commedia Dell'Arte style play, expect huge laughs and lively fun from this physical, energetic comedy.
- 'Our Country's Good' by Timberlake Wertenbaker: A play that is set in the 1780's and explores the relationships between a group of Royal Marines who have been sent over to Australia and the convicts they have been sent over with.

Unit 2: Creating Original Drama:

Students learn how to create and develop original devised ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre making process. You will develop ideas, research relevant processes and theatre practices, apply what you have learnt from live performances, explore devising work, rehearsal methods and refine work in progress. You will study the work and methodology of one influential practitioner and apply working methods, principals, artistic intentions, style and conventions of this practitioner to your final piece. The assessment also includes preparatory and development work, shown through a working notebook.

Unit 3: Making Theatre:

You will learn how to contribute to text-based drama in a live theatre context for an audience. Working in groups to develop and present three extracts from three different plays. You will learn how to interpret texts, create and communicate meaning, realise artistic intention in text-based drama, analyse and evaluate your own work.

The third extract must be influenced by the methodology and practises of an influential Practitioner, Director, Theatre Company or Designer (different to the one studied in the devised module). You will develop understanding and knowledge of the connections between theory and practice in a range of periods, theatrical styles, social, historical and cultural contexts. A reflective report is also submitted which documents, analyses and evaluates the theatrical interpretation of all three extracts.

Career options

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) value and respect the skills our drama and theatre qualifications give students. A-level Drama and Theatre Studies is useful for students considering Higher Education in any arts or humanities subject including English Language and Literature, Journalism, Dance, Music, Art and Design, and Media Studies. Students have also gone on to study Law, Speech Therapy, Drama Therapy, Psychology, Counselling and Teaching.

Further career opportunities for students who study A-level Drama and Theatre Studies include: Arts/Theatre Administration, Arts Journalism, Director, Actor, Designer, Playwright, Stage Management, Theatre Management, Theatrical Agent, Technician, Broadcasting, Media Presenting, Education, Drama therapy and Scriptwriting.

A Level French

Examination Board:	**AQA**
Examinations:	**A Level** Paper 1 2 hours 30 minutes Listening/Reading/Translation to/from French Paper 2 2 hours – 2 essays on a book (No et Moi) and a film (La Haine) Paper 3 Speaking – 21-23 minutes – Discussion of card (with 5 mins' prep) + presentation/discussion of a chosen topic
Controlled assessment:	*NONE*

If you love to talk, have ideas, opinions and an interest in the world and the people around you, then French in the Sixth Form at QM is for you.

With a reasonable grounding from GCSE, the course is accessible to the gifted linguist as well as to those who wish to keep breadth and variety in their studies. French offers to the future employer a student who is able to communicate, aware of intricacy and detail, confident when dealing with others and a person open to new experiences, challenges, hard work, full of opinions and with the ability to think outside the box; in short, an asset to their company. Above all, it is a subject that brings much to the students themselves.

Unlike at GCSE, we explore aspects of the culture of the countries where the language is studied, and delve into history, geography, literature and current affairs. Many of our students go on to further language studies beyond, often picking up an extra language as part of their degree, whether this be purely linguistic or studied jointly alongside other subjects, such as Business or Economics, English or Law.

In Year 12, the course naturally builds on the vocabulary and structures of GCSE, through the areas of Social issues and trends/Artistic culture/ Study of a literary text or film, guiding the student to a more advanced content and degree of interest.

In Year 13, the content moves to further study of social issues and trends / political and artistic culture / and literary texts or films.

In addition to the usual lessons with online materials and the internet in frequent use, we have additional conversation lessons each week with a native speaker, we offer the opportunity to run a French Club for Years 7 and 8, involvement in mentoring from Year 7-11, trips to French films when opportunities arise and involvement in Study Days when available at local Universities.

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A Level German

Examination Board:	AQA
Assessment Model	All exams are taken at the end of Year 13 **Paper 1 Listening / Reading / Writing.** • Aspects of German-speaking society • Artistic culture in the German-speaking world • Multiculturalism in German-speaking society • Aspects of political life in German-speaking society • Grammar **Paper 2 is a written paper assessing:** One text and one film or two texts from the list set in the specification Grammar **Paper 3 is the Speaking Test** with Stimulus Card material followed by a more general conversation assessing: Individual research project One of four sub-themes i.e. aspects of German speaking society or artistic culture in the German speaking world or multiculturalism in German speaking society or aspects of political life in German speaking society.

The course builds upon and develops the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing which have been acquired in GCSE work. An important difference is that the subjects concentrate not on basic transactional language but on wider social, political, economic and cultural issues. The course will develop not only skills, but also understanding of the grammatical systems of the languages studied; and give a better insight into the way of life, history, geography, political system, economic life and customs of countries where the languages are spoken. Students may also have the opportunity to study the literature of the country and where possible to visit the theatre, cinema or watch video and on-line material.

Furthermore, experience of a working environment using languages is underlined by the possibility of a programme of work experience in Europe for Year 12 students and/or a study tour in the Summer.

Course overview

Topics include aspects of daily life, leisure and entertainment, communication, media and popular culture.

Career options

Statistics show that employment amongst language graduates is second only to medicine and law.

More and more employers expect a high level of competence in a modern foreign language and there are now a large number of degree courses with a language component. This is for all MFL entry.

Career opportunities include Teaching, Interpreting / Marketing and Business.

A Level Music

Examination Board:	OCR
Additional Entry Requirements	If students have studied Music at GCSE they require a grade 6 to continue to A-level. Students also need to have Grade 5 ABRSM in their chosen instrument. Students who have not studied Music at GCSE need a pass in Grade 5 Music Theory – ABRSM.
Method of Assessment	Over the two year course students cover Listening, Composing and Performing in three units **Subject Content:** The course offers a variety of alternatives which enable students to submit work demonstrating their strengths in the subject. There are three units of study. External assessments take place in May of Year 13. In Units 1 and 2 Students may opt for Option A or B. This flexibility means they can gain up to 35% in the option for higher study and 25% in the option where they choose the smaller amount of study. **Unit 1: Performing (35% or 25%)** Here students have the opportunity to perform both as a soloist and in ensembles. Performances can take place on any instrument, including voice. A recital is prepared for Year 13 and should last either for six to eight minutes (Option A) or twelve to fifteen minutes (Option B) **Unit 2: Composing (25% or 35%)** Students are required to compose two pieces. One from a brief set by the board and one working from their own brief. For option A, an extension to their composing comprises of four-part harmony and two-part counterpoint. **Unit 3: Listening and Appraising (40%)** This work is undertaken through the study of four areas. Areas 1 and 2 are compulsory and a further two are selected from areas 3-6. They are 1: Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven 2: Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band 3: Developments in Instrumental Jazz from 1910 to the present day 4: Religious Music of the Baroque period 5: Programme Music 6: Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day

Music may be combined with Arts and Sciences and many universities offer combined degree courses. A number of colleges are now offering degree courses in Performing Arts where Music may be studied along with Movement and Drama, Art and Literature. Intending performers would usually apply to music colleges, through the CUKAS system. Music is welcomed by universities and colleges in particular, even if the subject is not to be continued beyond that level. Aldridge School has a long tradition of sending young musicians to further education and has had students at all major conservatoires in the UK and major universities including Oxford and Cambridge It can also lead to a life- long cultural interest in the arts generally. Music brings people together and strengthens the local community. A level Music combines well with a wide range of A level subjects. It is highly regarded as an academic A level but it is practical and enjoyable.

Career Prospects:

Performer, Composer, Conductor, Instrumental Teacher, Sound Engineer, Business Manager, Orchestral / Theatre performer, Session Player, DJ, Orchestrator, Tour Operator, Freelance Musician, Radio & TV.

A Level Photography

Examination Board:	OCR
Additional Entry Requirements	GCSE Photography or Art at Grade 6 or above or a portfolio of work equivalent to this.
Method of Assessment	Photography at A level is an Art and Design based course. **Component 01: Personal investigation:** During the personal investigation you will produce two elements: 1. A portfolio of practical work showing your personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus, devised and provided by you or your staff. 2. A related study: an extended response of a guided minimum of 1000 words. **Component 02: Externally set task** The early release paper will be issued to you by your staff from the exam board and will provide you with a number of themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs and stimuli. During the course you also study a range of themes to extend your photographic horizons. These include topics such as: • Portraiture • Landscape photography • Commercial photography • Still-life photography • Documentary photography • Experimental imagery • Editorial photography • Photographic installation • The photographic process • Moving image • Animation Textile Design **Assessment:** • Personal investigation (01) - 120 marks non exam assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated) this will be 60% of total A level • Externally set task (02) 80 marks - 15 hours non exam assessment.

Opportunities:

A level Photography will give students the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and creative skills within Art and Design, using Photography as a medium to explore and develop their individual ideas. Many of our students enjoy the subject so much, that they go on to study this subject at University or pursue related work.

Related Subjects:

The course will prepare students for further education courses in creative related subjects or enter into employment within the creative industries; as such, students may consider linking photography with Art, Media or Film Studies

Additional academic options

On top of the standard package of 3 A-levels, students are expected to follow an additional academic option. The courses offered in 2025-26 vary in their level and, therefore, in terms of the time allocated to them. Most run in Year 12 only, but some (such as Further Maths and Mandarin) last for both years. Students will find out about the options at the September 2027 induction fair, submitting a separate application at the end of the first week of term.

2025-26 options

- L3 AQA EPQ (additional application required)
- A level Further Maths (must be studied alongside A level Maths; grade 9 at GCSE Maths required)
- Level 3 Core Maths
- OCR Personal Finance Level 3 qualification
- Change Your Mind Programme
- Mandarin HSK Level 4 qualification
- Duke of Edinburgh award
- Ionic Liquids Chemistry Research Project
- Sports Leadership Award
- Young Enterprise
- MOS (Computing)

What will students gain by doing these extra qualifications?

Students will:

- ✓ Develop and improve their own learning and performance as critical, reflective and independent learners
- ✓ Develop and apply decision-making and, where appropriate, problem-solving skills
- ✓ extend planning, research, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, evaluation presentation skills
- ✓ Use learning experiences to support aspirations for higher education and career development
- ✓ Transferable skills developed to other areas of study.
- ✓ Add depth of knowledge in certain subject areas
- ✓ Study a wider breadth of subjects than is possible (and not always available) in the core A-level programme
- ✓ For the EPQ specifically, make a significant contribution to the choice and design of an extended project and take responsibility for an individual task

USEFUL LINKS

Queen Mary's Grammar School

www.qmgs.org
01922 720696
enquiries@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk

Walsall Education

www.walsall.gov.uk/education

West Midlands Travel

www.networkwestmidlands.com

Uniform Provider

Clive Mark
19 Park Place Shopping Centre, Park Street, Walsall WS1 1NP
01922 622995

https://qmgs.walsall.sch.uk/school-uniform-sportswear/
https://clivemark.co.uk/collections/queen-marys-grammar-school

School Meals

Caterers: Queen Mary's Grammar School - Catering

Bursary

https://qmgs.walsall.sch.uk/16-19-bursary/

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