



# A Level OPTIONS

**Michael Hall**  
a Steiner Waldorf School



# Contents

English Literature	Page 4
Mathematics	Page 5
Biology	Page 6
Chemistry	Page 8
Physics	Page 10
Geography	Page 12
History	Page 14
German	Page 16
Spanish	Page 18
Psychology	Page 21
Photography	Page 22
A-Level Art and Design: Fine Art	Page 24
Edexcel Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	Page 25
How to make the best choices	Page 28

# English Literature A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

This A level is an exciting and relevant study which stretches students' imaginative and perceptual faculties; allowing them to develop a capacity to use their thinking and feeling to navigate the moral world making subtle and insightful judgements and expressing them eloquently.

### Who studies English Literature?

Anyone who has good English skills and wishes to develop their interest in reading, writing and talking about Literature may discuss the possibility of advanced level study with the English Teachers.

During the course you will read widely, critically and independently, across centuries, gender and genre, and experience an extensive range of views about texts and how to read them. You will be encouraged to explore comparisons and connections between texts and to appreciate the significance of cultural and historical influences upon readers and writers.

English Literature works well alongside other Humanities subjects, such as History and Art. It can also act as a good balance to Science subjects and is a passport to the widest range of degree courses.

Students prepared to read and to work hard at essay writing skills can achieve excellent examination results.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

ENGLISH LITERATURE- AQA Specification 7717B

### EXAM PAPER

A-level English is a two-year course and involves three modules:

#### Paper 1

Literary Genres: Aspects of Comedy or Tragedy. Three texts, one Shakespeare and two others examined in a 2.30hr exam.

This counts for 40% of the overall qualification.

#### Paper 2

Texts and Genres: Elements of either Crime Writing or Political Writing examined through three texts in a 3hr exam.

This counts for 40% of the overall qualification.

#### Non-Examined Assessment (Coursework)

Theory and Independence: involves the independent study of two texts examined through two coursework essays

This counts for 20% of the overall qualification.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

The AQA Specification 7717B has useful information for students on mark schemes and sample essays. Useful website links will be recommended as the time arises.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

There will be a few Theatre trips and A-level lectures in London. These trips will be billed directly.

# Mathematics A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

The magic of learning starts by discovering our students' strengths and the unique way they relate to Mathematics. One of the pleasures of teaching comes from the fact that each individual is unique and has a unique way of looking at the Mathematics, that we teach. The AS and A-level curriculums in Mathematics in England include:

- Linear structure: AS has been decoupled from A-level, and all assessment will take place at the end of the course. Exam questions may draw on the content of the whole A-level.
- Emphasis: There is more emphasis on problem solving, reasoning and modelling, and a requirement for the use of technology to permeate teaching and learning.
- Content: The content of AS and A-level Mathematics is fixed. It includes Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics (including analysis of large data sets).

### Who studies Mathematics?

The skills learnt on a Mathematics course will include:

- Analytical ability
- Logical thought processes
- Problem solving
- Investigative and communication skill

A-level Maths is useful in all walks of life and a wide range of employers value them. Science students, particularly those wanting to read Physics, find Mathematics a very useful companion. It is also a requirement for some of the financial and Business Degrees offered at universities.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Specification 9MA0

### EXAM PAPER

The Edexcel Maths A-level will be taught from a linear syllabus. Students will start learning the material in September and will take three exams in May/June two years later.

Exam 1 – Pure Mathematics, out of 100 marks.  
Counts for 33.33% of the qualification.  
Duration of 2 hours.  
Paper code: 9MA0/01.

Exam 2 – Pure Mathematics, out of 100 marks.  
Counts for 33.33% of the qualification.  
Duration of 2 hours.  
Paper code: 9MA0/02.

Exam 3 – Statistics and Mechanics, out of 100 marks.  
Counts for 33.33% of the qualification.  
Duration of 2 hours.  
Paper code: 9MA0/03.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Khan Academy  
Exam Solutions

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

Students will need a Scientific calculator Casio FX991EX-ClassWiz

# Biology A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

All exams are now sat at the end of the 2-year A-level course, so the students don't have interruption in their learning, to do AS exams.

Practical exams have gone, swallowed up into the ordinary theory exams, with an added certificate of endorsement of practical skills from the teacher. This frees up more time for teaching, as there is no longer any coursework/ISA to prepare for. It is possible to stop after 1 year and sit the AS exams instead, as the content is the same as the first year of the A-Level.

Subject content included for both AS and the full A-level qualification:

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- Organisms exchange substances with their environment
- Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms

And for A-level only:

- Energy transfers in and between organisms
- Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- The control of gene expression

The course has a logical sequence but leaves much of the detail to the discretion of the teachers. This, added to the extra time available (due to not stopping half-way through to revise for AS papers) allows for both a more relaxed and more in-depth experience for the students.

## Who studies Biology?

The entry requirement is generally that students have reached at least grade 7 in GCSE Double Science, although students with a lower grade may be successful if they have shown a particular aptitude for Biology in the past.

Traditionally Biology is studied in conjunction with the other sciences or with Mathematics and leads onto a scientific or medical career. It is a vibrant Science with high levels of investment and varied job opportunities. It is now equally popular with students who wish to follow the Arts or Humanities path but also wish to retain a link with the disciplines of a science based subject.

Biology leads to the development of many skills valued by universities and employers or indeed for life in general. It requires keen observational and language skills as it seeks to describe, understand and explain. Students will also be faced with dealing with a wide range of variables and will need to interpret and make judgments. Another transferable skill, statistical analysis is also introduced. It is hoped that students will be able to empathise with other living things, to be aware of ourselves and our limitations, both biologically and environmentally, whilst at the same time being capable of making informed and responsible decisions in a world increasingly facing difficult ethical questions as biotechnology progresses.

**EXAMINATION BOARD**

BIOLOGY- AQA Specification 7402

**EXAM PAPER****Paper 1**

- Written exam: 2 hours
- Counts for 35% of the overall qualification.

**Paper 2**

- Written exam: 2 hours
- Counts for 35% of the overall qualification.

**Paper 3**

- Written exam: 2 hours
- Counts for 30% of the overall qualification.

**ONLINE RESOURCES**

Students will be directed to various resources as the need arises.

# Chemistry A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

As in other subjects, the AS and A-level qualifications are now 'decoupled' which means that the AS marks no longer contribute towards the full A-level qualification, so the A-Level course is no longer broken by the AS exams.

In Chemistry, the content of the AS and A-level qualifications are split into three sections, which is a traditional approach, based on Physical, Organic and Inorganic Chemistry.

There is no practical examination, but that does not mean in any way that there is no practical content to the course. Students are awarded a separate endorsement of practical skills, assessed by teachers. This will not be graded. If students pass, it will be recorded on their certificates. Otherwise it is not recorded.

Topics (The list is extensive): Physical Chemistry is studied first and the topics include Atomic Structure; Amount of substance; Bonding; Redox reactions; Energetics; Kinetics and some Equilibria. Some of these subjects are studied at GCSE, but, as with all A-levels, the knowledge and understanding is both broadened and deepened.

At A-level, in addition to the above, Acids and Bases are explored in quite new ways and the full extent of their reactivity in a variety of chemical reactions is brought to the fore. Also included at A-level are Thermodynamics and Electrochemical cells.

Inorganic Chemistry looks in more depth at the structure of the Periodic Table, focusing initially on Group 2 (The Alkaline Earth Metals) and Group 7 (The Halogens).

At A-level, this is extended to Period 3 Elements and their Oxides; Transition Metals as well as looking at the behaviour of ions in aqueous solution. Organic Chemistry develops the themes established at GCSE. Alkanes, Alkenes and in addition the Haloalkanes and their importance in industrial processes are studied. Alcohols and organic analysis complete the AS section of this course.

At A-level, additional Homologous series are studied; Aldehydes and Ketones, Carboxylic Acids and Derivatives, Aromatic Chemistry (Benzene and its variants), Amines, Polymers, Amino Acids, Proteins and DNA, Organic Synthesis (useful in understanding drug synthesis and industrial processes) and the analytical techniques of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Chromatography.

## Who studies Chemistry?

'.....nearly everything you look into leads you back to Chemistry in the end and nearly all of it is really interesting.' *Bill Bryson*

Chemistry is an excellent A-level choice. The impact that Chemistry has on the world we live in is vast. It touches on everything from smart materials being used in the most incredible ways, to chemists working with paleontologists to discover the colour of dinosaurs! Chemists also play a crucial role in modern Medicine, designing drugs to tackle diseases that affect the global population. There is bound to be something that sparks an interest and makes you think 'there could be a career in Chemistry for me'. However it is also considered one of the most difficult A-levels: there are challenging concepts certainly, Mathematics in new contexts and a lot of new vocabulary and facts to come to terms with. Students will need to work hard to make the most of their course, but there is lots of help out there and it will be very rewarding.



**EXAMINATION BOARD**

AQA Specification 7405

**EXAM PAPER**

Paper 1

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 35% of the overall qualification.

Paper 2

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 35% of the overall qualification.

Paper 3

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 30% of the overall qualification.

Knowledge and understanding of practical work will be assessed in written exams.  
About 15% of total marks in our AS and A-level exams will be based on practical questions.

**ONLINE RESOURCES**

None

**TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT**

All conforming safety equipment is provided, however students may prefer their own pair of UVEX safety glasses

# Physics A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

Physics attempts to explain the physical world around us including its laws and the phenomena we encounter in our everyday lives. It is a continual quest to understand the underlying order in the universe, and the knowledge gained along the way has led to many technological advances that have been beneficial to society. Studying Physics will equip students with the necessary problem solving and analytical skills to enable them to face the challenges of the future, whichever path they eventually decide to take.

In order to take this course, students will need to have achieved a grade 7 or above in Mathematics and Double Award Science GCSEs. Normally the A-level will be taken as a two year course with no separate AS exam. If during the second year a student feels they would rather consolidate their existing knowledge than extend to the full exam then an AS award will be considered.

**Year 1 (and AS) outline:** The Year 1 specification builds on previous studies in Physics at GCSE level as well as introducing new topics. It is often a surprise to discover that what was previously taken as truth was only an approximation, and that science is a process of continual refinement as we deepen our powers of observation and understanding. Individual and team investigations will support students' learning throughout the course and practical skills will be assessed within the context of the main areas of study:

- Measurements and their errors
- Waves
- Electricity
- Particles and radiation
- Mechanics and materials

Particle Physics is introduced and students learn to classify the fundamental building blocks of matter and how they interact. Quantum theory is touched upon in the areas of photoelectricity, atomic energy levels, light spectra, and wave- particle duality. The principles governing electricity in both direct current and alternating current circuits are explored, and a strong practical element is included. Students build upon their understanding at GCSE level of Mechanics, Materials, and Waves. They analyse the forces that maintain objects at rest or in uniform motion. The concepts of work, energy, and power are applied to applications such as drag forces and efficiency. Properties of materials including density and elasticity are explored. The study of waves encompasses the properties of refraction, diffraction, and interference, leading to the formation of stationary waves and total internal reflection as applied in the area of optics.

**Year 2 outline:** In Year 2 the specification builds on Year 1 and requires more rigour in the approach to the subject and questions about it. Exciting specialist topics are included which give students a taste for the scope and depth which are possible should they choose a career in the field. Individual and team investigations will again support students' learning throughout the course and practical skills will be assessed within the context of the main areas of study:

- Further mechanics (periodic motion)
- Thermal physics
- Gravitational, Electric, and Magnetic fields and their consequences
- Nuclear physics

Plus one optional topic:

- Astrophysics - how fundamental principles of physics and key devices such as CCDs and telescopes are used to gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, including stars and galaxies as well as objects such as quasars and black holes and concepts such as dark energy

- Medical physics
- Engineering physics -- how fundamental physics can be applied to rotating devices such as motors and wheel-based appliances, and the vast area of thermodynamics is explored including engines, efficiency, pressure/volume/ temperature relationships, and heat transfer devices such as refrigerators
- Turning points in physics – the development of exciting ideas especially around the turn of the 20th century such as the discovery of the electron and quantization of charge, wave-particle duality and electron microscopes, and Einstein's theory of special relativity
- Electronics

Students learn about force and energy in the contexts of collisions and explosions, circular motion and oscillations, electric, gravitational and magnetic fields, thermal physics and nuclear energy. They revisit important ideas such as electric potential and meet new theories such as binding energy in nuclear physics and kinetic theory of gases. Applications such as capacitors, generators, transformers, and nuclear reactors are studied.

### Who studies Physics?

Many desirable key skills are incorporated in the Physics A-level curriculum. These include: thinking outside (and inside) the box, communication, information technology, application of number, working with others and problem solving. Social and ethical issues are also raised.

Physics graduates are in high demand by employers for a wide range of careers, including - beside the obvious - medicine, law, journalism, engineering, business, economics and banking!

#### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA Specification 7408

#### EXAM PAPER

##### Paper 1

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 34% of the overall qualification.

##### Paper 2

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 34% of the overall qualification.

##### Paper 3

- Written exam: 2 hours - Counts for 32% of the overall qualification.

**Section A:** Compulsory section: Practical skills and data analysis

**Section B:** Students enter for one of sections: Astrophysics, Medical Physics, Engineering Physics, Turning Points in Physics or Electronics

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

None

#### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

All conforming safety equipment is provided, however students may prefer their own pair of UVEX safety glasses

# Geography A-level

## **COURSE CONTENT**

Edexcel is our chosen examination board for Geography. First examination took place in the Summer of 2018. The specification aims to enable students to engage critically with real world issues and places and apply their own geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to make sense of the world around them and be able to apply geography to all aspects of their life, whatever they choose to do in the longer term. It offers an issues-based approach to studying geography, enabling students to explore and evaluate contemporary geographical questions and issues such as the consequences of globalisation, responses to hazards, water insecurity and climate change. The content gives students the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of physical and human geography, of the complexity of people and their relationship to the environment and to become critical, reflective and independent learners.

### **Who studies Geography?**

Students develop a particularly deep feeling for the world and those who occupy and use it, this equips them well for further academic study or for the world of work.

Basic Geographical skills are put into the context of contemporary case studies and students are expected to be alive to current affairs and to read widely around the subject.

This course provides an excellent basis for many careers and degree courses including Environmental Science, Engineering, Journalism, Sociology, Geography, Geology, Accountancy, Business Management, Urban Development and Planning, Surveying, International Relations, Government, Diplomacy, Politics, Development Work, Teaching, Conservation and a host of related careers. Geography is a popular degree choice and all Geography departments have seen considerable growth and development in recent years.

## EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Specification 9GE0

### EXAM PAPER

**Paper 1** - Written examination: 2 hours and 15 minutes - Counts for 30% of the qualification

**Section A** relates to Topic 1: Tectonic Processes and Hazards.

**Section B** relates to Topic 2: Landscape Systems, Processes and Change. Students answer questions on Coastal Landscapes and Change.

**Section C** relates to Topic 5: The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity and Topic 6: The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security.

The examination may include short open, open response and resource-linked questions. The examination includes 12-mark and 20-mark extended writing questions. Calculators may be used.

**Paper 2** - Written examination: 2 hours and 15 minutes - Counts for 30% of the qualification

**Section A** relates to Topics 3 and 7: Globalisation/Superpowers.

**Section B** relates to Topic 4: Shaping Places.

Students answer questions on Topic 4A: Regenerating Places.

**Section C** relates to Topic 8: Global Development and Connections. Students answer questions on Topic 8A: Health, Human Rights and Intervention.

**Paper 3** - Written examination: 2 hours and 15 minutes - Counts for 20% of the qualification

An externally-assessed written examination. A resource booklet will contain information about the geographical issue. All questions in the examination draw synoptically on knowledge and understanding from compulsory content drawn from different parts of the course. The examination may include short open, open response and resource-linked questions. The examination includes 8-mark, 18-mark and 24-mark extended writing questions. Calculators may be used.

**Paper 4** - Non-examined assessment - Counts for 20% of the qualification

The investigation report is internally assessed and externally moderated.

The student will produce a written report of 3000–4000 words.

Not having a GCSE in Geography is not a bar to entering the A-Level programme though it would be advisable for any prospective student to talk to our Geography teacher prior to making the choice.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Various online resources will be highlighted according to the topics studied. The Edexcel Exams Board website for A-level Geography is very useful.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

One 4 day field trip in the Autumn Term of Class 12. This is an additional cost of approximately £400.

# History A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

### **Why should one study History?**

Do you like reading stories? Finding out what happened and why? If so, then this is the first step towards choosing this subject. History is, at its core, the narrative of human adventures in this World. It is about how we, humans, turned out to be the way that we are; it is about how and why we acted as we did; it is the story of us then, in the past – far or recent. Are you interested? The formal learning of History provides you with essential approaches/skills applicable to everyday life, that everyone should possess: answer questions specifically, using evidence to back up your arguments and judgements; research independently; comprehend that very different narratives (viewpoints) could be generated from the very same facts; empathise with other people: your ancestors, humanity's ancestors.

There are many professions that the study of History would support; but most importantly, it will make you aware of human affairs, close and far, in space and time.

### **Why these History topics rather than others?**

The selection of Historical periods, events, times is not open-ended: examining boards provide lists of topics and set criteria and limits to their combination. My selection of History topics for the students at Michael Hall follows a rationale explained below.

I have chosen Exploration (Unit 2) and Renaissance (Unit 3) together because the latter frames the context in which the prior (Exploration) occurred. The stories narrated in these two Units allow students to explore great art, powerful institutions, cultural, political, artistic and philosophical turmoil and innovation; exceptional individuals and the adventurous and dramatic exploration of the 'New World' and the making of the 'Modern World'. All that has had a long-lasting impact on the history of Europe and the World.

Unit 1 (Britain 1951-97 with Churchill) covers British recent History which provides a stark counter-narrative to Units 2 and 3 (the start of European domination and its imperial expansion) with a close look at the issues faced by the last major, waning European empire: Britain. This unit also offers students the possibility to analyse one of the most revered and controversial figures of 20th century Britain, Winston Churchill.

In my opinion, having scrutinized all examining boards, this is the best set of options, for breath, depth, drama, controversy and beauty. I hope that you, students, will enjoy these stories too.

Unit 4 (topic-based essay) is an opportunity for each student to 'play the Historian'. Students will be guided through an independent research on a topic of their choice: any topic, any period, any time. The essay question, selected by the student and approved by me, their teacher (and the examining board), should be analysed in a 3000-4000 word essay, drawing from a range of primary and secondary sources. Very exciting!

### **What do I expect from the students?**

Cooperation, participation and nothing but their best, consistent effort every week.

## EXAMINATION BOARD

OCR

### EXAM PAPER

#### **Unit 1** 1h 30 - 25% of A-level - 50 marks Class 12

British Period Study and Enquiry; unit entry code Y113. Britain 1930-1997; Enquiry topic: Churchill 1930-1951

Assessment overview for British Period and Enquiry:

##### **Section A:** the Enquiry, Churchill 1930-1951

Students will answer one compulsory question, requiring them to analyse and evaluate four primary sources in their historical context in order to test a hypothesis. This part of the paper is worth 30 marks.

##### **Section B:** period study Britain 1930-1997

Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two. This part of the paper is worth 20 marks.

#### **Unit 2** 1h - 15% of A-level - 30 Marks - Class 11

Non-British Period Study; unit entry code Y205 Exploration, Encounters and Empire 1445-1570 Assessment overview for Non-British Period

##### **Study:**

Students will answer one two-part question from a choice of two. The first part of the question will require learners to compare two factors and to make a judgement about their relative importance. This is worth 10 marks. For the second part of the question students will write an essay on a different part of the period. This question is worth 20 marks.

#### **Unit 3** - 2h 30 - 40% of A-level - 80 Marks Class 11

Thematic Study and Historical Interpretation; unit entry code Y305 The Renaissance c.1400-c.1600 Assessment overview for the Thematic Study and Historical Interpretation:

**Section A** is the interpretations section. Learners will read two extracts from historians about one of the three depth studies specified for their chosen option, and will write an essay explaining which they think is more convincing. This part of the paper is worth 30 marks.

**Section B** is the themes section. Students will answer two themes questions from a choice of three, each of which requires an essay covering the whole period studied. This part of the paper is worth 50 marks.

#### **Unit 4** - 20% of A-level - 40 marks - End of Class 11 and 12)

Topic based essay: 3000-4000 word essay; unit entry code Y100

Non Exam Assessment. Students will write an essay based on an independent investigation on a topic of their choice. Students, in agreement with their teacher, will select an essay question, based on criteria set by the examining board, which will inform their independent research.

The essay will be marked by the teacher and moderated by OCR.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Google.doc

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

There will be A-level conferences.

Extra reading material will be suggested which students can buy if they wish.

# German A-level

## **COURSE CONTENT**

This 2 year A-level course combines a language and a culture component. In both we develop four main skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening, with grammar as an integral part of all of them. These skills will be tested with an examination at the end of the second year.

We follow the Edexcel course book, use the online course 'Dynamic Learning' and a huge variety of authentic materials.

During the course the students will develop and further their skills and attempt to master the language in every nuance. The emphasis is on topics such as "the Environment, Current Affairs and Education", which gives room for plenty of individual research.

The essential aim of this course is to achieve a personal, independent approach to German culture and gain the ability to form balanced judgments and express them in German.

For the cultural topics, the students find out about the falling of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and life before and since the reunification, and they watch and discuss two films on the subject: "Goodbye Lenin" and "Das Leben der Anderen". They also explore

German Literature by reading and analysing a novel or play by a German speaking writer.

In addition to that, every student will prepare an individual research project on the topic of their choice and present and discuss it in the speaking exam.

## **Who studies German?**

It is useful for anyone to speak a second language. Students who have studied German can go in all directions of Further Education.

We have small groups and are able to focus our lessons on the interests and needs of the individual students.



## EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Specification 9GN0

### EXAM PAPER

**Paper 1** - Listening, Reading and Translation- Written exam: 2 hours

- **Section A:** Listening (30 marks):  
A listening assessment based on a recording, featuring male and female German speakers. Students will respond to comprehension questions based on a variety of contexts and sources.
- **Section B:** Reading (30 marks)  
A reading assessment based on a variety of text types and genres where students will have to respond to comprehension questions.
- **Section C:** Translation into English (20 marks)  
An unseen passage to be translated from German to English.  
This paper counts for 40% of the overall qualification.

**Paper 2** - Written Response to Works and Translation- 2 hours and 40 minutes

- **Section A:** Translation (20 marks)  
Students translate an unseen passage from English into German.
- **Section B:** Written response to works (literary texts) (50 marks)  
Students must write an extended response on either one or two of the literary texts prescribed. Students select one question from a choice of two for each of their chosen literary text(s).
- **Section C:** Written response to works (films) (50 marks)  
Students who answer only one question from a literary text in Section B must now write an extended response on one of the films prescribed.  
Students select one question from a choice of two for their chosen film.  
This paper counts for 30% of the overall qualification.

**Paper 3** - Speaking- Oral exam: between 21 and 23 minutes, which includes a single period of 5 minutes' formal preparation time  
This paper counts for 30% of the overall qualification.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Dynamic Learning

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

None.

# Spanish A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

The A-level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture and society. It fosters a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity, which are valuable to the individual and society.

The specification has been designed to be studied over two years. The approach is a focus on how Spanish-speaking society has been shaped socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In the first year, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of Spanish-speaking countries. In the second year further aspects of the social background are covered, this time focusing on matters associated with multiculturalism. Students also study aspects of the political landscape including the future of political life in the Hispanic world by focusing on young people and their political engagement.

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and society of countries where Spanish is spoken, and their language skills. They will do this by using authentic spoken and written sources in Spanish.

The choice of works (literary texts and films) offers opportunities to link with the themes so that, for example, the play 'La casa de Bernarda Alba' could be linked to the sub-theme 'Modern' and traditional values while the film 'Volver' could be connected to the sub-theme 'Equal Rights'.

Students following this specification will develop their language knowledge, understanding and skills through:

- using language spontaneously to initiate communication; ask and answer questions; express thoughts and feelings; present viewpoints; develop arguments; persuade; and analyse and evaluate in speech and writing, including interaction with speakers of Spanish
- applying knowledge of pronunciation, morphology and syntax, vocabulary and idiom to communicate accurately and coherently, using a range of expression using language-learning skills and strategies, including communication strategies such as adjusting the message, circumlocution, self-correction and repair strategies
- listening and responding to spoken passages including some extended passages from a range of different contexts and sources, adapted as necessary, covering different registers and types, including authentic communication involving one or more speakers
- reading and responding to a variety of texts including some extended texts written for different purposes and audiences drawn from a range of authentic sources, including contemporary, historical and literary, fiction and non-fiction texts, adapted as necessary
- understanding the main points, gist and detail from spoken and written material
- inferring meaning from complex spoken and written material, including factual and abstract content
- assimilating and using information from spoken and written sources, including material from online media
- summarising information from spoken and written sources, reporting key points and subject matter in speech and writing
- translating an unseen passage from Spanish into English and vice versa

Students must also study either one book and one film or two books from the lists in this specification. They must appreciate, analyse and be able to respond critically in writing in Spanish to the work they have studied. Their understanding of the work must include a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation as appropriate to the work studied (eg the effect of narrative voice in a prose text or camera-work in a film).

In addition, students will:

- develop research skills in Spanish, demonstrating the ability to initiate and conduct individual research on a subject of personal interest, relating to the country or countries where Spanish is spoken
- identify a key question or subject of interest and select relevant information in Spanish from a range of authentic sources, including the internet
- use information to illustrate knowledge and understanding of the research subject
- analyse and summarise research findings, elaborating on key points of interest, as appropriate, through oral presentation and discussion.

Students may study the themes listed below in relation to any Spanish-speaking country or countries.

- Aspects of Hispanic society
  - Modern and traditional values
  - Cyberspace
  - Equal rights
- Multiculturalism in Hispanic society
  - Immigration
  - Racism
  - Integration
- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world
  - Modern day idols
  - Spanish regional identity
  - Cultural heritage
- Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world
  - Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
  - Monarchies and dictatorships
  - Popular movements

Students must study either one text and one film or two texts from the list below.

- Federico García Lorca *La casa de Bernarda Alba*
- Gabriel García Márquez *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*
- Laura Esquivel *Como agua para chocolate*
- Ramón J. Sender *Réquiem por un campesino español*
- Carlos Ruiz Zafón *La sombra del viento*
- Isabel Allende *La casa de los espíritus*
- Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer *Rimas*
- Fernando Fernán-Gómez *Las bicicletas son para el verano*
- Luis de Castresana *El otro árbol de Guernica*
- Gabriel García Márquez *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*

### **Films**

- *El laberinto del fauno* Guillermo del Toro (2006)
- *Ocho apellidos vascos* Emilio Martínez-Lázaro (2014)
- *María, llena eres de gracia* Joshua Marston (2004)
- *Volver* Pedro Almodóvar (2006)
- *Abel* Diego Luna (2010)
- *Las 13 rosas* Emilio Martínez-Lázaro (2007)

# Spanish A-level continued

## Future Progression

Students will be able to pursue their interests in Spanish at university, either a specialist or in conjunction with another subject. Employment and career opportunities are greatly enhanced for applicants who can demonstrate a higher level of linguistic competence. With the knowledge of a foreign language, students can pursue a wide range of careers in Law, Finance and Business, Travel and Tourism, Translator, Interpreter and Teaching.

## Suggested Reading/Resources

It is recommended that students watch Spanish spoken films and read Spanish newspapers online.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

SPANISH- Specification 7692

### EXAM PAPER

#### Paper 1

- Listening, Reading and Writing- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes  
Counts for 50% of the overall qualification.

#### Paper 2

- Writing- Written exam: 2 hours  
Counts for 20% of the overall qualification.

#### Paper 3

- Speaking- Oral exam: 21–23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time)  
Counts for 30% of the overall qualification.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

Kerboodle and various sites to be advised on as the need arises.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

There will be a couple of short trips.

# Psychology A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

The compulsory modules are:

- Social psychology with a focus on social influence and conformity
- Attachment psychology
- Psychopathology focusing on OCD, depression and phobias
- Approaches in psychology looking at the learning, cognitive, biological, humanistic and psychodynamic approaches
- Biospsychology
- Issues and Debates in psychology including gender and cultural bias in research, free will vs determinism, the nature-nuture debate, holism vs reductionism, idiographic vs nomothetic approaches and the ethical implications of research and theory.
- Research methods and statistics

Three modules must also be chosen from the following options:

Relationships, Gender, Cognition, Schizophrenia, Eating Behaviour, Stress, Aggression, Forensic Psychology and Addiction.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

### EXAM PAPER (TWO PAPERS)

Three papers, each of which is 2 hours and 33.3% of the final A level mark.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

We have a fantastic online resource which accompanies the book and for which the students will receive login details. This resource contains the whole course book online with annotations and extra material including quizzes, past exam questions, links to helpful websites with Youtube videos or other relevant content and extension material to challenge and stretch students who are aiming for the top grades.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

None

# Photography A-level

## COURSE CONTENT

Smartphones with professional-quality cameras and the sweetening filters of social media have made us all photographers, all of the time. We devour and dispose of images, without pausing to think about what images mean, or the traditions which today's photographs continue. In A-level Photography students investigate the past and present of the photograph, studying the technical aspects and creative potential of image-making, finding a personal focus through projects and workshops. An understanding of the context of their work is important as is experimentation.

Though the course is centered on non-commercial artistic genres, students have many opportunities to follow their own specific and personal interests, be that photojournalism, landscape, fashion photography etc.

On the technical side, students will be able to work with a variety of cameras and lenses, with film, developing and printing, studio lighting and of course digital imaging.

This is a two-year linear course:

### Component 1

- Portfolio and Personal Investigation – technical and aesthetic workshops and mini-projects on set topics, including approaches to portraiture, Black & White developing and printing, street photography, the political/social uses of photography, photography in art, commercial photography such as fashion, abstraction and others, set the foundation for the course. Experimentation is essential as is looking at and responding to the work of past and present photographers and artists. Students learn how to work to a brief or specific assignment.
- A main theme is chosen two-thirds of the way through the component which students pursue in a personal manner. Starting with a broad and experimental approach, students refine their area of interest during the component – visiting exhibitions and researching the work of contemporary and historical photographers to inform their own work. Students write a 1000-3000 word essay or piece of creative prose on their area of interest. The personal investigation can be based around a style or genre of photography, be inspired by the work of an established practitioner, based on an aesthetic or visual concept, a cultural or personal theme etc.
- Students produce an extensive body of developmental/experimental work resulting in a selection of final pieces.

### Component 2

- Externally Set Assignment. Students choose a theme or title from a list of eight set by AQA. A preparatory period leads to 15 hours supervised time. Extensive research, context, experimentation and development of ideas are required to support the final piece or pieces. Throughout the course, showing how the end results were achieved and the relationship to the work of practitioners is crucial – demonstrating exploration and development of ideas and themes.

Students are encouraged to regularly visit galleries and museums to see photography in the flesh, to research thoroughly and immerse themselves in the culture and uses of photography in the contemporary world. Field trips, and work-experience possibilities, are integrated with the course.

Though Photography A-level is a demanding course and students should expect to be doing a lot of work outside of the classes, they can expect to have plenty of fun and be challenged in many creative ways through the coursework and regular set mini-projects.

## **Who studies Photography?**

Students considering further study or careers in Art, Photography, Media, Television, Advertising, Film and Animation, Design, Journalism and many other creative areas take this course. In fact, almost anyone interested in current issues and culture can study Photography.

### **EXAMINATION BOARD**

PHOTOGRAPHY- AQA Specification 7206

### **EXAM PAPER**

Component 1 - 60% of A Level

(See full information on opposite page)

Component 2 - 40% of A Level

(See full information on opposite page)

### **TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT**

There is at least one visit each year to a major Photography exhibition in London or to galleries in the South of England, including PhotoLondon fair at Somerset House.

It is essential that students have a DSLR of their own for the duration of the A-level. We recommend something like a used Canon 1200d with an extra 50mm lens for portraits, which can be found on ebay for around £200 and £70 respectively. There is an annual studio fee of £50 per student.

# A-Level Art & Design: Fine Art

## COURSE CONTENT

Students wanting to take A-Level Art will be exploring ideas that are personal to them and looking to refine their skills and critical understanding of Fine Art creative processes, so that they can express their innermost questions and to state them in powerful visual Art pieces to the world. Fine Art enables all individuals to participate in the world and to co-create its values.

In A-level Art students take their Fine Art exploration into a new level, exploring extensively with different media and sources that allows them to broaden up possibilities to build their personal visual language in exciting and insightful ways.

The first year will focus on encouraging students to approach new media and refinement of mark making skills, and to reflect on building a unique personal language and path of thematic exploration. This will include experimental ceramics, textiles, and printmaking. Towards the end of the first year, students will start focusing on their personal investigation, and deepening their contextualization studies. This includes a written essay on their theme of choice where students state their starting points and threads of investigation, referring to artistic contextualization, and personal approaches, and reflecting on the main aspects that lead to the buildup of the visual language of their artworks.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Examination Board - AQA

### EXAM PAPER

In February, an Externally Set exam paper is issued, students work with the same criteria as their Personal Investigation and in the Summer Term they sit a 15 hour Controlled Test over one week, which is supervised under exam conditions.

Component 1 – Personal Investigation and Related study equates to 60% of the A-level.

Component 2 – Externally set task equates to 40% of the A-level.

Internal assessment is carried out by the Teacher which is then moderated by the Examination Board.

### TRIPS OUTINGS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT

There will be a yearly trip to galleries and museums to explore relevant contemporary artwork. Students are also expected to attend galleries independently for research and complete photo shoots to gain primary sources for inspiration.

Equipment - Students receive an initial Art Kit to have a range of basic art materials at home to allow them to complete homework. The art studio is open all day for students to work independently and has most materials.



# Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project Qualification

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project allows learners to study a topic area which extends their learning in their area of study, either as a standalone qualification or as part of a 14-19 Diploma. Learners select one of the four units, which may be completed over one or two years. They should select a project topic which expands their learning in their field of study, in a related area, or that is relevant to their own personal interests. Each of the four units offers a different type of project: a dissertation, an investigation/field study, a performance or an artefact. Learners will be assessed on their ability to plan, manage, complete and review their project. It can be completed over one or two years, and is assessed by a tutor-assessor from within the centre and externally moderated by Edexcel.

Key features of the Level 3 Extended Project

This qualification will enable learners to:

- have significant input in the choice and design of their project and take responsibility for an individual task or a defined task within a group project
- 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 their planning, research, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, evaluation and presentation skills
- where appropriate, develop as e-confident learners and apply relevant technologies in their studies
- develop and apply skills, creatively demonstrating initiative and enterprise
- use their learning experiences to support their personal aspirations for further education and/or career development.

## Assessment objectives and weightings

There are four assessment objectives for the Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project.

These detail the knowledge, skills and understanding that the learner is required to demonstrate in each unit. They are as detailed opposite, along with the approximate weighting that they are given in each unit.

## Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

1. Be able to identify, plan and manage a dissertation project
2. Be able to undertake research, collect evidence and select information using appropriate methodology
3. Be able to interpret evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished dissertation
4. Be able to present findings, conclusions and an evaluation to an audience.

The assessment evidence presented by the learner must evidence all the above learning outcomes.

## EPQ continued

Assessment objective	Marks available	Weighting
<b>AO1 Manage</b> Identify, design, plan and carry out a project, applying a range of skills, strategies and methods to achieve objectives.	<b>9</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>AO2 Use resources</b> Research, critically select, organise and use information, and select and use a range of resources. Analyse data, apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic.	<b>12</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>AO3 Develop and realise</b> Select and use a range of skills, including, where appropriate, new technologies and problem solving, to take decisions critically and achieve planned outcomes.	<b>24</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>AO4 Review</b> Evaluate all aspects of the extended project, including outcomes in relation to stated objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidenced project outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format.	<b>9</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100%</b>

### EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project Qualification (ZPJ30)

### STRUCTURE OF THE QUALIFICATION

The qualification consists of four units, one of which should be selected. All are equally weighted. All units are internally assessed. Learners must not select more than one unit.

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Extended Project			
Unit	Optional units (one must be selected)	GLH	Level
1	Dissertation	120	3
2	Investigation/Field Study	120	3
3	Performance	120	3
4	Artefact	120	3

### ASSESSMENT

This qualification is assessed by the tutor-assessor. Where marking for this specification is carried out by more than one marker in the centre, there must be a process of internal standardisation in order to ensure that there is consistent application of the criteria laid down in the marking grids.

Marks awarded by the centre will be subject to Edexcel's quality assurance processes. This is to ensure consistency with national standards. A sample of projects will be examined and marks will be adjusted where they are found to vary from the national standard.

### FULL ONLINE INFORMATION

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Project-Qualification/Level-3/2010/Specification/Project-Specification-Level-3.pdf>

Learning outcome number	Learning outcome	Assessment
	The learner will:	The learner can:
1	Be able to identify, plan and manage a dissertation project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the main objectives for the project</li> <li>• provide an appropriate plan</li> <li>• use organisational skills and strategies appropriately.</li> </ul>
2	Be able to undertake research, collect evidence and select information using appropriate methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select relevant information from appropriate sources</li> <li>• obtain information</li> <li>• relate resources to the research question or hypothesis.</li> </ul>
3	Be able to interpret evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• produce a dissertation using appropriate style and structure</li> <li>• interpret evidence gathered</li> <li>• discuss different perspectives</li> <li>• draw conclusions.</li> </ul>
4	Be able to present findings, conclusions and an evaluation to an audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review and evaluate the project and own learning</li> <li>• present the project outcomes in an organised manner, engaging with audience and responding to questions.</li> </ul>

Previous EPQ project titles from students at Michael Hall have included the following:

“How can I tell a story through aerial skills”

“To what extent can I train a group of pupils to be able to present a performance in gymnastics, aerial and acrobalance”

“How self sufficient can I be in making my own tools for a survival situation”

“How do the mechanisms of film engage the modern audience?”

“Building a Hydrogen Fuel Cell”

“Having the courage to write and perform my own poetic work in order to change people’s views on a controversial subject matter.”

“Designing and producing a selection of quilts to explore the theme of colours and their qualities.”

“How can you create a successful catering business in the food industry?”

“Growing vegetables and then creating a bio-dynamic recipe book”

“Producing a recipe book for a diabetic”

“Creating effective and dynamic lighting for the Class 12 play”

“Horses and Dogs and their inter-relationship with humans”

# How to make the best choices for you

All students taking A-Levels will also be benefitting from the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, please see the separate booklet.

We recommend you choose 3 subjects.

There are GCSE grade requirements for some options. Students taking A-levels will need to have achieved certain grades and skills to enable them to succeed in these courses. In English, Mathematics and Science it is GCSE Grade 7. Other subjects also have grade criteria that should be checked with teachers.

You will be asked by your Guardian or the Upper School Assistant Principal to identify your choices before the end of the Autumn Term. We then consider all the students' choices and create a timetable that allows for as many students as possible to study their choices.

All students have an interview with Upper School Teachers to look at the suitability of their choices and ensure an appropriate and well-balanced programme to support current and future aspirations.