



Cokethorpe

SENIOR

**Sixth Form
Subject and Application Guide**

2026-2028

WELCOME TO COKETHORPE SIXTH FORM

Congratulations on being about to embark upon the most challenging and rewarding phase of your School life so far. The Sixth Form is a springboard to the world beyond School, and, thus, a period of transition; you will be treated like an adult, you will be supported to become independent-minded, purposeful and kind, and you will be equipped with the qualities to thrive.

We will encourage you:

- **To be curious.** To be inspired to ask meaningful questions, and not to be limited by the scope of the textbook or the exam board's specification
- **To be organised.** To make best use of every hour in the working day to successfully navigate academic study, sporting and cultural commitments, and the university/college application process. To appreciate the importance of a to-do list
- **To be ambitious.** Not to aim high, but to plan high. Not to wait to find out if something is achievable, but to make it achievable
- **To be creative.** To find time in the day to pursue hobbies and passions. To remain grounded and mindful
- **To be hard working.** To be motivated by the positives, and to learn to enjoy working hard and making progress
- **To be thoughtful.** To look after and support each other. To take responsibility for making the School a better place for all, and to lead by example. To remember there is a world beyond Cokethorpe.

Academic life in the Sixth Form is different from lower down the School. You will be taught in smaller groups, study fewer subjects, and be expected to spend a larger proportion of the day studying independently – every hour spent in class should be matched by an hour of out-of-class study (working on class assignments, consolidating content and reading beyond the syllabus). When not in lessons, you will study in the Lower Library and Sixth Form Centre (which serves as an academic, administrative and social hub) – this is where you will make friends, where you will have a last-minute essay panic, and where you will lose your hockey socks. A place, I hope, that you will make your own.

You will find the Sixth Form to be a sociable and supportive community, which affords you the space to discover who you are, and to follow your own distinct path. Please be ambitious, both academically and beyond. Please be kind to others. And please be kind to yourself.

Mr E J Tolputt

Head of Sixth Form
ejt@cokethorpe.org



THE SIXTH FORM EXPERIENCE

WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT IS EXPECTED



The core academic curriculum will be at the centre of your Sixth Form experience. For most this will comprise three A Levels and an EPQ; a small number of you, however, will follow the path of four A Levels or the Extended Diploma in Business (which is a single programme, equivalent to three A Levels).

From page six of this booklet you will find detailed information on the four academic routes, advice on how best to choose Sixth Form subjects, the timeline for decision-making, the GCSE entry requirements, and a full page summary of each of the 23 A Level courses (plus the EPQ).

Your academic development and success will be nurtured at all levels, and you will be expected to regard academic study as your principal purpose. The majority of your time will be spent either in lessons, preparing for lessons, or completing assignments and meeting deadlines; as such, it is important that you are happy and fulfilled because you will be working hard, and not despite it.

Placed alongside the core academic curriculum is the wider Sixth Form experience. For each of you, the balance will vary according to individual strengths, qualities and inclinations. However, you will all be expected to embrace aspects of each of the following areas of growth across your time in the Sixth Form:

Developing Depth: Super-curricular Enrichment

You should develop a deep interest and passion in your chosen subjects, and, to that end, you should study beyond the confines of the syllabus content; you are to become a specialist in your field. Opportunities for super-curricular enrichment will include the Lower Sixth Electives Programme, participation in academic societies, preparing for essay prizes, entering Science and Maths Olympiads, and the huge range of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). You will be advised and supported by your subject teachers; many of you (for example those applying to study Medical/Veterinary Sciences) will receive further subject-specialist mentoring from an Academic Supervisor.

An Extended Project (for more information, refer to page nine) is completed by a large number of Sixth Form students; all of you will sit the taught course element, through which you will develop skills of independent research, project management/organisation, and much more. The EPQ provides an excellent opportunity for you to develop your academic specialism; mentored 1:1 by a teacher, you will produce a substantial 'university-style' research paper or field study (or, for some, a performance or artefact). The EPQ is challenging, and a test of independence and maturity; for this reason, it is held in high regard by university Admissions Tutors.

Developing Breadth: Extra-curricular Enrichment

Your experience will be enriched by a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities, and you will be encouraged to take advantage of the full range: from Choir to Creative Writing to Clay Pigeon Shooting. Sixth Form life will be busy and demanding (both physically and emotionally); creativity (in the form of music, drama, and much more) will promote a wholesome balance, and provide support to your academic studies. Through participation in a variety of activities, you will develop a breadth of interests and hobbies, which you may well continue beyond School.

The Enlightenment Lecture series is a programme of lectures on a wide range of topics, held together by a shared theme. The theme this year is 'Brave New Worlds', and the series includes Dr Andy Hearn (Department of Biology, University of Oxford) discussing new ways to save nature and local MP Charlie Maynard asking if democracy can make for a brave new world. The theme last year was 'Change Makers' and included Professor Eleanor Stride OBE discussing curing cancer and Dr Chris Laoutaris (Senior Lecturer in Shakespeare, Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon) exploring how Shakespeare so nearly remained in obscurity. Through the Enlightenment Lecture Series, you will be exposed to subjects beyond your area of specialism, and will be encouraged to challenge received opinion; you will be provoked to think, without being told what to think.



Developing Skills: Personal and Professional

Through the Sixth Form you will develop the skills and attributes, both personal and professional, to thrive beyond School; you will benefit from several programmes of support, each with a focus on the future.

The Futures programme is run by the Head of Futures, who will meet regularly with you; you will be kept focused on your aspirations, and will be given advice and guidance. You will receive additional support from your Tutor, who will help you with your Personal Statement and the shortlisting of university and subject choices. Those of you facing a subject-specific interview or admissions test for university or college will be assigned a Specialist Supervisor. The programme includes a Futures Fair, a UCAS Morning (including a Personal Statement workshop), and a series of classes relating to the application process. You will be taught to use Unifrog, an online management and resources platform to which all students are registered.

The Sixth Form Skills' Carousel is made up of weekly classes, each taught over four weeks. Through these classes, you will develop valuable skills for life; the classes build confidence under pressure, practical common-sense, and much more. Titles include: 'An introduction to cooking', 'Speaking in public', and 'Personal finance'.

The Study Skills programme develops the skills, techniques and mindset needed for productive academic study; you will take part in small-group seminars, which are as applicable to university and college as they are to the academic demands of the Sixth Form. The programme includes sessions on revision techniques, research skills, creating (and sticking to) an achievable study plan, avoiding procrastination, remaining motivated, and managing time effectively.

Developing Social Responsibility: Community

You will be expected to be active in your support for the School community, and to engage in activities that promote social responsibility; you should be thoughtful of others, both near and far, and be generous with your time, however busy.

There are many opportunities for community involvement within School, including running AOB sessions and subject-support clinics for younger students, the Peer Mentoring scheme, and Tutor Partnering (you will be allocated to a lower-year Tutor Group with whom you will meet throughout the week). Further community cohesion is provided within the House – regardless of whether you have a specific House responsibility, you will be expected to support the younger students, and to lead House events and competitions. To support the community beyond School, you will be encouraged to organise fundraising events, to volunteer at local Schools (for example, coaching sport at Aston and Cote Primary School), or to volunteer for charity projects (for example, a group of students last year organised a RAG Week to raise money for the Pebbles Project in South Africa). All activities are student-led; you will take responsibility for the creation and delivery of every aspect.

Some of you will take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award; a central requirement of this is to help others through volunteering, and so, for those involved, there is a formal structure to support and assess your charitable and outreach activities.

Developing Physical Health and Wellbeing: Exercise

You will be encouraged to develop your physical health and wellbeing through sport and exercise. The sports programme exists to support the academic programme, and to enrich the wider Sixth Form experience; through sport, you will develop confidence and resilience by exposure to physical, technical and mental challenges which promote strong teamwork and leadership. Moreover, sport is fun – be it competitive, or recreational.

The major sports of rugby, hockey, football, netball, cricket and tennis are complemented by a range of other sports including shooting, sailing, and climbing. Most fixtures take place on a Wednesday; students attend training sessions on Mondays and Fridays.

Some of you will take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, which includes a three-day unsupported expedition. You will also have the opportunity to take part in the Devizes to Westminster Marathon Kayak Race, or, further afield, to become involved with the World Challenge programme.

Developing the Qualities to Inspire Others: Leadership

You will be held in high regard by pupils in the lower years, by your teachers, and by your peers; you will be expected to lead by example, not just through specific leadership responsibilities (being a Prefect, being a Sports Captain, being Head of House, and so on), but through all that you contribute to the life of the School.

You will be relied upon to champion the traits of good leadership, and will learn, and teach others, to behave with:

Integrity – Doing what you know to be the right thing

Courage – Sometimes choosing the difficult option

Empathy – Understanding that other people's views and experiences may be different from your own

Judgement – Knowing when, and when not, to act

Ambition – Challenging yourself to be better

Responsibility – Being relied upon to do the right thing

The Sixth Form Leadership Grants (which run alongside and in addition to the 16+ Scholarships and Awards) recognise exceptional students who demonstrate leadership through their contributions to all aspects of School life, and who promote the traits of good leadership, listed above. By awarding Leadership Grants, we celebrate and develop the qualities to inspire others.

THE CORE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

In 2016, the Department for Education launched wide-reaching reforms of post-16 education. One of the more significant changes was the decision to split the AS qualification from the A Level – thus making the A Level programme a two-year, linear course. This was, in part, because of a want to increase the challenge of the A Level, removing the opportunity for students to re-sit modules to improve their grades. At Cokethorpe, we embraced this decision because we feel that a two-year linear programme better prepares students for university study and ensures that learning has more depth.

Route One: Three A Levels and an EPQ

This is strongly recommended. Universities make offers on the basis of three A Level grades – and even the most competitive admissions teams would prefer three excellent grades to four good ones. Studying three A Levels provides plenty of opportunity to engage in the super-curricular programme offered at Cokethorpe, which goes a long way to making the learning experience more fulfilling. The EPQ is a highly-regarded qualification that provides an important opportunity for students to work independently on a research question of their choosing.

Route Two: Four A Levels

This may be appropriate for some students – particularly those seeking to study Further Maths alongside Maths – but it is not recommended in general. It is possible, within the first few weeks of A Level study, to move from one subject to another. This is a preferred course of action rather than starting with four with a view to dropping one later in the year.

Route Three: The Extended Diploma in Business (BTEC)

This is an excellent opportunity for candidates who prefer a more applied route. The Extended Diploma is worth the equivalent of three A Levels and is recognised by leading universities.

Route Four: The Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Business (BTEC) and an A Level in Physical Education

This route offers a great opportunity for students with a keen interest in sports and exercise to take a Physical Education A Level alongside the more vocational, coursework-based BTEC Diploma.



MAKING CHOICES AT A LEVEL

Until now, the academic choices made by pupils have been reasonably straightforward and low risk. As they move into the Sixth Form, this changes; choices will now have a considerable impact on their future. As a consequence, we encourage pupils to think very carefully about what they are looking for from their A Level experience, and to have plenty of conversations with their teachers about particular subjects that might be of interest.

When thinking about how to go about choosing subjects, it might be helpful to consider the following questions:

- Are there particular combinations of subjects that will be necessary in order to access a particular career?
- Are there particular subjects in which results to date suggest strength?
- Are there specific subjects that stand out as being especially interesting?
- When moving beyond Cokethorpe, what will the profile of A Level subjects show a potential employer or educational institution?



THE PROCESS

The Sixth Form Preview Evening kicks off a process that culminates in September when students return to School after their GCSEs in order to start their A Level programme.

June 2025: Sixth Form Preview Evening

October 2025: Sixth Form Taster Day.

February 2026: Following their mock examination results, all Fifth Form pupils will be interviewed by either the Director of Studies or the Head of Sixth Form. The focus of this interview will be to offer guidance and advice to the pupil.

February 2026: Subject preferences will be submitted to the Academic Administrator.

March 2026: The Head of Sixth Form and Director of Studies will intervene to support pupils who require additional guidance and advice regarding appropriate selections. Once this process is complete, offers will be made to pupils.

All places will be conditional on the achievement of appropriate grades in the final GCSE Examinations.

Route One: Three A Level subjects and the EPQ

Students will be expected to have achieved an average of at least 5.5 points in their GCSEs with the average based on the top eight grades gained at GCSE. Individual grade requirements in the subjects they wish to pursue may also be applicable.

Route Two: Four A Levels

Students will need to have achieved an average of at least 7 points in their GCSEs. Those students who wish to study four subjects must meet with the Director of Studies in advance to ensure that this is the correct course of action.

Route Three: The Business BTEC programme

Students will be expected to have achieved an average of at least 5 points in their GCSEs, including a minimum of 4 in their English and Mathematics.

Route Four: Level 3 Diploma Business BTEC and A Level Physical Education

Students will need to have achieved at least 5 points in their GCSEs, with at least a Grade 6 in PE or Combined Science/Biology. We expect a minimum of 4 in both English and Mathematics.



EPQ

Three A Levels and an EPQ is the preferred programme for Cokethorpe's Sixth Form students. The EPQ can be taken with any combination of three A Levels.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an optional programme involving a project chosen by the student, and leading to a 5,000-word essay or an artefact. It is worth half an A Level and is highly prized by universities for the academic skills it promotes. In previous years, essay topics have included the extinction of the dinosaurs, early political philosophy, the ethics of fashion, and the chemistry of psychotomimetic drugs. Artefact projects have included building a cob house, programming an alarm clock and designing a speedboat.

To help make this possible, we offer all Lower Sixth students a course covering the necessary academic skills of organisation, research, writing, and presentation. Students then have a year to research and develop their ideas (with the help of a supervisor), before completing the project in December of their Upper Sixth year.

The EPQ programme allows students to extend their curiosity into new and fascinating areas, and to master a range of key skills from project-management to academic research. In short, the EPQ makes them better learners, and better candidates for university.

EXAM BOARD

AQA



“ The most valuable thing I did at Cokethorpe was the EPQ. It taught me about planning and persistence, and academic skills like referencing. It gave me a real advantage at university. ”

ART AND DESIGN

The Art A Level course is perfect for anyone who wants to develop their artistic, creative and analytical skills. The course may be taken in one of the following titles: Fine Art or Textile Design. Students who choose Art at A Level tend to be passionate about it, and their love of the subject and the time they are willing to invest in their work is evident in the artwork that they produce, and the grade that they attain.

Students will be taught to record experiences and observations, in a variety of ways, using drawing or other appropriate visual forms; undertake research; gather, select and organise visual and other appropriate information. They will explore relevant resources; analyse, discuss and evaluate images, objects and artefacts; and make and record independent judgements. They will also use knowledge and understanding of the work of others to develop and extend thinking and inform own work and generate and explore potential lines of enquiry using appropriate media and techniques.

Students who study A Level Art, Fine Art or Textiles can go on to study in a variety of creative industries. Consider the following career options: architecture, landscape design, graphic design, illustration, animation, film making, computer game design, fabric design, fashion design, web design, 3D design, portrait artist, contemporary artist, photographer, jewellery, ceramic design, designer maker, to name a few.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Students should gain a Grade 6 in GCSE Art, Craft and Design or in one of these specialisms: art textiles, graphic communication, fine art, 3D design and photography.



“ *Art helps me to be analytical and gives me the confidence to experiment with my own ideas, it helps me have a creative mind-set, to not be afraid to take risks and learn through discovery. The teachers are really encouraging and honest about your progress.* **”**

“ *Henri Matisse once said ‘creativity takes courage’, during the course I was given the courage to create final pieces I was over the moon with.* **”**

BIOLOGY

Studying A Level Biology gives students a fascinating insight into life and the world around us - it is a deep dive into the core mechanisms that allow for the complex life that surrounds us.

Biology is an incredibly interesting and relevant subject, and with the inclusion of many modern techniques in the new syllabus, such as genetic fingerprinting, students are left with an excellent understanding of science in the news.

Biology is a vital component for entry on to a huge number of degree courses. Having A Level Biology can open up a world of opportunities in both university choices and career options.

For those considering applying to study Biology, Zoology, Ecology, Animal Science, Marine Biology, Life Sciences, Medicine, Environmental Science, Forensic Science or any other subject related to the natural world, then this A Level is essential, with many other courses also preferring applicants to have this qualification.

Practical work is at the heart of Biology so we place it at the heart of our schemes of work. As well as the embedded practicals, students carry out a minimum of twelve assessed practicals, allowing them to develop the essential practical skills that they need.



EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An enquiring mind and an interest in understanding the natural world are essential. A minimum of a Grade 7 GCSE in Combined or Separate Science Biology and Maths.

“ The Biology course was hugely interesting and really well taught. With my predicted grade I have secured offers to study Medicine at university. ”



BTEC BUSINESS (EXTENDED DIPLOMA)

The Cokethorpe BTEC Business course is a predominantly coursework-based programme and is well suited to those individuals who find that traditional public examinations do not paint a true picture of their abilities. The course is 42% external assessment with the remaining 58% internally assessed coursework. Equivalent to three A Levels, it has been specifically designed to offer an opportunity for enthusiastic and motivated students to succeed.

The course also provides clear routes to university which can make it an attractive proposition to many. As part of the BTEC Business course, students undertake regular work experience. The work experience is the perfect opportunity to put into practice what is learnt in the classroom. Work experience also supports one of the key benefits of the BTEC Business which is the development of practical employment skills that remain in high demand from employers.



EXAM BOARD

Pearson, BTEC Extended
Diploma in Business

“ The BTEC course has given me an alternative route into university, and the work experience has given me a head start over many other students. ”

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An interest in the business world, an entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to put theory in to practice in the real world.

BTEC BUSINESS (LEVEL 3 NATIONAL DIPLOMA AND A LEVEL PHYSICAL EDUCATION)

Alongside the Level 3 BTEC National Extended Diploma in Business, students can also opt for a combination of the Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Business and A Level PE. This means that they are accredited with the equivalent of two A Level grades through their Business programme, and an A Level grade through their PE.

The benefit of this programme is that it enables students with a particular interest in sports and exercise to progress with an A Level PE course whilst benefiting from the more vocational, coursework-based BTEC Diploma.

To learn more about this, please read the BTEC Extended Diploma page along with the A Level PE information.

EXAM BOARD

Pearson, BTEC Level 3 National Diploma
Edexcel A Level Physical Education

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An interest in the business world, sport and exercise, an entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to put theory in to practice in the real world.

“The course really suited my skillset and, although it was hard work, it was all worthwhile.”



BUSINESS STUDIES

Business Studies investigates the relationship between businesses and their environment. To be successful in this subject it is important that students learn to think critically and are informed about the world around them. Students will learn how to make justified decisions in a business context, sometimes considering far-reaching questions such as business ethics and globalisation.

Business Studies trains students to be effective problem solvers. Think of what a business consultant does; they learn about a business situation quickly and then use their knowledge and skills to help them solve a business problem. That is essentially what we do in A Level Business Studies, read a case study and solve a problem.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An interest in business news and current affairs is essential. Effective essay writing skills are also required. GCSE Business Studies is not necessary.

“ I found the course really interesting as everything we covered was evident in the world around us. I would like to run my own business one day and knowing how to solve business problems will be a great asset. ”



CHEMISTRY

A Level Chemistry offers an exciting insight into the contemporary world of chemistry. It covers key concepts and practical skills which combine to provide academic challenge with an applied focus. Students learn about chemistry in a range of different contexts and the impact it has on industry and many aspects of everyday life. Students will also learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

A wide range of Chemistry topics are covered and students will also develop transferrable skills including investigating, problem-solving, research, decision making and analytical skills.

A Level Chemistry is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare, such as Medicine and Dentistry, as well as the Biological Sciences, Physics, Mathematics and Pharmacology. Chemistry can lead to a range of career opportunities in a wide range of professions, including forensics, environmental protection and pharmaceutical industries.

EXAM BOARD

OCR

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Students should have either a high 7-7 Grade in Combined Science or at least a high Grade 7 in Separate Science Chemistry in order to access the course. In addition, students must be aware that the A Level programme involves dealing with complex mathematical equations. As such, it is strongly recommended that students only embark upon the course with a Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics and preferably, but not necessarily, in conjunction with A Level Mathematics.

“I am applying to study medicine at university so chemistry is a must-have for me. However, I have found the course to be tremendously enjoyable and a broad base on which I can continue my studies. ”



COMPUTER SCIENCE

In today's digital age, Computer Science is at the heart of almost everything we do—from the apps on our phones to the algorithms that drive global innovation. Choosing A Level Computer Science means diving into the fascinating world of how computers work, how software is created, and how data is processed and protected. It is a subject that combines creativity with logic, and theory with real-world application. Whether you are interested in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, game development, or simply want to understand the technology shaping our world, this course offers a strong foundation. Coding, in particular, is an invaluable skill that opens doors across several industries—from healthcare and finance to media and entertainment.

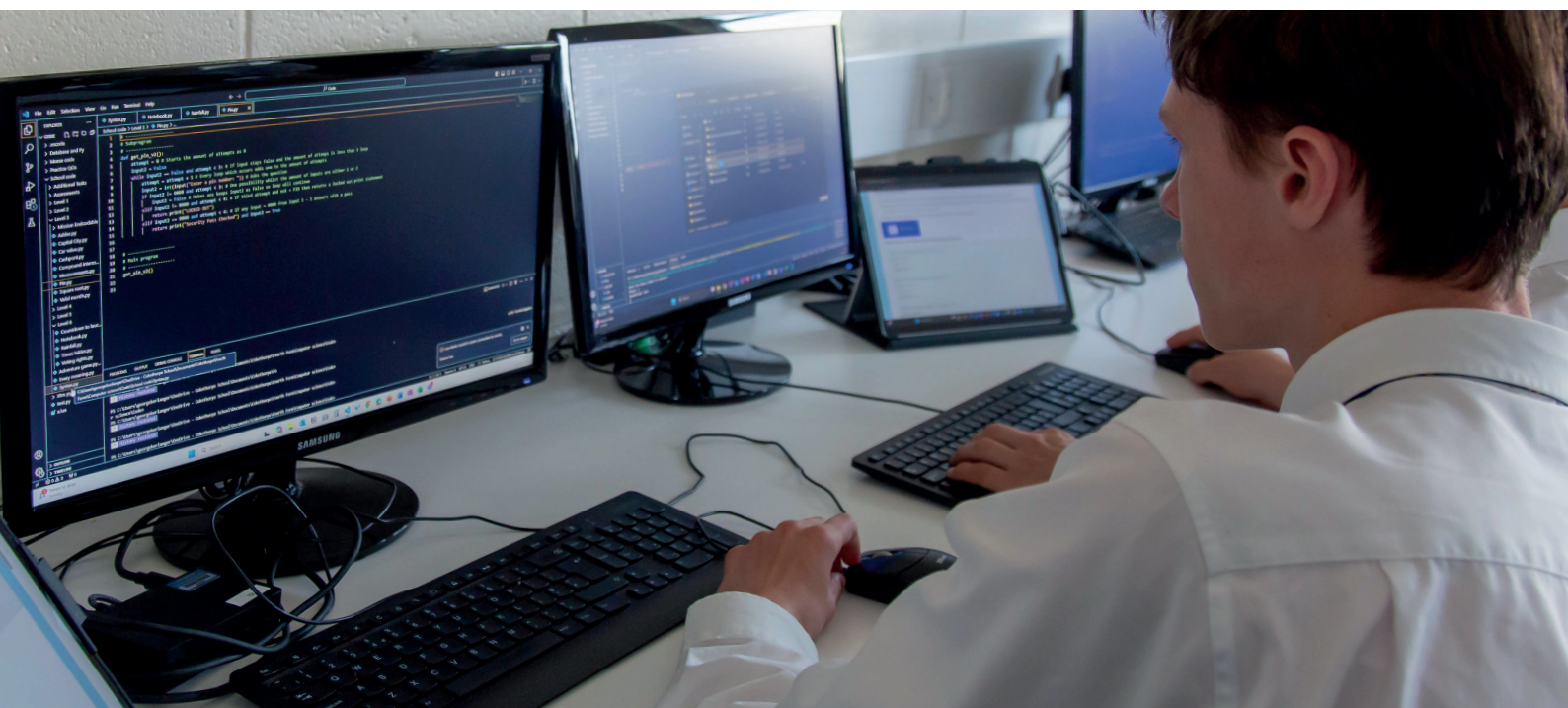
Computer Science is not just for aspiring software engineers. It complements subjects like Mathematics, Physics, and Economics, but also adds a unique dimension to any combination of A Levels. The ability to think computationally, solve complex problems, and design efficient systems is highly sought after in today's job market. As the demand for digital skills continues to grow, so do the opportunities—whether in tech startups, global corporations, or academic research. Simply put, Computer Scientists are some of the most in demand professionals across every area of potential employment. While the course is intellectually challenging, it is equally rewarding for students who aim to make a difference through creative problem-solving and logical thinking.

EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Grade 7 in Mathematics GCSE
Grade 7 in Computer Science GCSE
Adept user of Python as a
programming language



DRAMA AND THEATRE

This course allows students to develop skills offered by no other A Level and is welcomed by all universities, including Oxbridge, as an accepted qualification for admission as part of the three A Levels. Students will have the chance to devise, perform and/or design original work for a live audience and analyse challenging theatrical texts and practitioners. Students will be involved in research that examines the world in which they live. Their ideas and beliefs may be challenged as they begin to develop a wider world view and consider what it is to be human. Work is completed autonomously and as part of a team, developing skills invaluable for university life and the workplace. Students will participate in thought-provoking and creative tasks that will not only further their knowledge but will also test and develop cognitive and interpersonal skills such as critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, self-presentation, organisation and communication.

Drama is an extremely useful qualification for students wishing to pursue a career in the arts, law, education, PR, marketing, diplomacy, journalism, politics or any occupation that involves the exchange of ideas and people-related skills.

*“ I have learnt so much in Drama.
I have really enjoyed taking
ownership of my learning and being
encouraged to take risks.
You develop a really close bond with
the people you work with, and it has
significantly boosted my confidence
both creatively and personally. ”*

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

A genuine interest in Drama and performance and at least a Grade 6 in GCSE English Language and Drama.



DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

Any student who aspires to develop skills that enable them to work with a high degree of independence, nurture a genuine ability to solve problems, overcome setbacks, innovate, create and inspire, would find Design and Technology an excellent option at A Level.

Design and Technology can provide a forum for a diverse range of talents and skills to be explored. Some students excel as a result of having an analytical, logical and enquiring mind, choosing to study Design and Technology alongside Maths, Physics or Chemistry, others choose Design and Technology to make the most of their creativity, aesthetic awareness and ingenuity, perhaps choosing Design and Technology alongside the Arts or Humanities. Whatever the skillset, Design and Technology will enable students to demonstrate their strengths through a unique and individual experience.

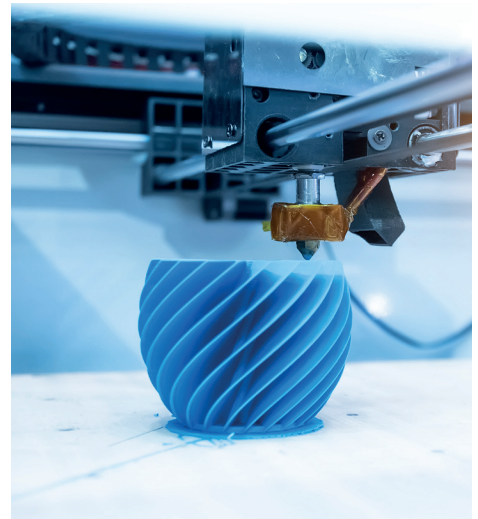
This course is designed to encourage students to develop a broad view of Design and Technology. Students not only develop their capacity to design and make products but also learn to appreciate the complex relationship between design, materials, manufacturing and marketing.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

GCSE Design and Technology Grade 6 or above.



“ I plan to go on and study Jewellery and Silver Smithing so Design and Technology has really added to the depth of my portfolio. The coursework was quite heavy (taking two creative subjects), but when I applied for the Art Foundation Course I found I had more experiences and skills to talk about. ”

“ My project work and theory work in DT has enabled me to apply some of the knowledge from my other subjects to real situations. The crossover from Maths and Physics has been really useful, and it has worked well in supporting my ambition to become an engineer by giving me plenty of hands on experience. The industrial visits to BMW, Williams F1 and JSP were a great insight into modern manufacturing techniques. ”



ECONOMICS

Economics is the study of how people make choices. In this course students will be required to think like an economist and carefully weigh up the costs versus the benefits of many decisions.

As individuals, households, businesses and nations we do not have enough scarce resources to fulfil all our wants, therefore scarcity exists and forces society to make choices. Economics gives us the tools to explain how we make those choices. In some cases we choose to over-consume goods and services that are detrimental, for example tobacco, while in other cases we under-consume goods and services such as education and healthcare. The job of the economist is to develop strategies to provide either disincentives or incentives to influence the choices that people make.

Many careers require an understanding of key economic concepts, such as law, journalism, public policy, diplomacy, education, environmental science, medical administration and international affairs.

EXAM BOARD

OCR

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Students should have an interest in current affairs, effective essay writing skills and an ability to analyse complex situations.

Students considering reading Economics at university should consider studying Mathematics at A Level. However, this is not required for A Level Economics.

“ *Although challenging at times, Economics was incredibly thought-provoking. I had no idea how much of the world we live in is influenced by economics.* ”



ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

This course combines rigorous literary and linguistic analysis, providing students with the opportunity to connect close readings of texts with broader real-world issues. We study a wide range of literary and non-literary materials, such as novels, plays, poetry, journalism, memoir, graphic novels, films, and performances. Exploring and evaluating how language works in different contexts helps to build all the communication skills required for university and diverse professions, including journalism, publishing, screenwriting, media, and numerous other fields. The coursework component extends students' research skills, allowing the freedom to pursue a topic of their choosing in greater depth.

EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Grade 6 in GCSE English Language and Literature.

“I decided to study English Language and Literature because I want to pursue a career in law, thus strengthening my essay writing skills, reading speed, and analysis are vital.”

“I decided to chose English Language and Literature, because it has more varied topics. I am also interested in a journalism career and this will help me in the future.”





ENGLISH LITERATURE

The study of Literature is a window into the past and a mirror to the present. The ways of looking at texts are limitless, and studying Literature develops the skills of analysis alongside the ability to justify perspectives and opinions, whilst understanding the views of others like no other subject can. Whether a student is a budding philosopher, psychologist, anthropologist or Politician, Literature will enthuse them as they reflect upon the world of the writer and that which we inhabit as readers. Students will develop an understanding of how important the choices we make are when writing and enhance their ability to understand others; to listen and to communicate with empathy and passion.

The world of work is crying out for the soft skills of communication and there is no better evidence of a student's ability than with a literary qualification. Whether planning a career in business, publicity, journalism or the law, Literature is directly relevant, but it is equally important in any field where communication and understanding are desirable qualities.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Grade 6 in GCSE English Language and Literature.

“Literature has taught me more about myself than it has about the great works of literature. To read with insight is a revelation and to know that a text is mine when I read it is a very powerful idea.”

“Studying Literature has given me a confidence, not only in my ability to study texts but also for study more generally. I know that I can get my ideas across powerfully and with passion. The texts were all enjoyable and reading is now an important part of who I am.”



GEOGRAPHY

The world we live in is constantly changing. Geography allows students to understand why and how this change occurs and the reformed A Level focuses strongly on how issues might be resolved in the future. Geography enhances communication skills, literacy and numeracy, team working, problem-solving and environmental awareness. As a subject that spans both the Sciences and the Arts, Geography combines well with most subjects.

“Pupils need geography field trips to inspire them.”
Michael Palin (former president of the Geographical Association).

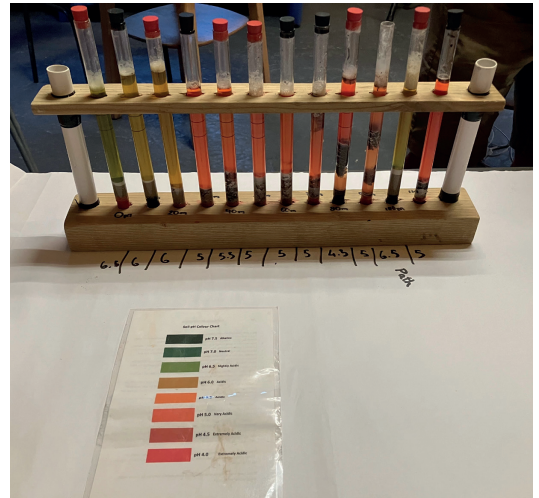
Fieldwork is an integral part of the course and students are required to complete a minimum of four days of fieldwork, which goes towards a written project worth 20% of their overall A Level grade. Field trips allow students to observe in detail, measure and quantify the real world, rather than simply studying it from the classroom.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

The A Level course builds on knowledge and skills gained at GCSE and a minimum of a Grade 6 in GCSE Geography is required. It is possible for students to sit A Level who have not taken the subject at GCSE but it is only recommended for highly motivated and hard-working candidates.



“ Geography at Cokethorpe promises never to be dull. I had the most fun in the Geography classroom; the teachers were beyond supportive and the course was a real mix of topics, and there was something that suited everyone. One thing that pleasantly surprised me was the fact Geography could be hands on; lessons were interactive and often involved little practicals or demonstrations, especially when it came to the physical side of the topic which kept everyone fully engaged in the subject throughout the two years of A Level. ”

HISTORY

The past is full of fascinating stories, insightful knowledge, painful realisations and heart-stopping moments! History students learn about the events that have shaped the world in which we live but also develop critical-thinking skills. Focussing on different interpretations of past events, they learn how to synthesise and evaluate the validity of arguments. Source material enables students to learn how to analyse information, and interrogate it in order to ascertain its credibility and utility. History teaches effective argument, allows students to develop their own ideas and use evidence to underpin their ideas.

History provides an ideal basis for a wide range of academic courses and careers. Careers in law, politics and journalism often begin with an academic background in History. Furthermore, History sits naturally alongside any combination of subjects, building readily transferable skills.

“ I have been surprised by how much I've enjoyed studying History this year. My teachers really know their stuff and have helped me to develop my essay-writing technique. I would recommend it to anyone! ”



EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

A minimum of a Grade 6 in GCSE History.

“ Since arriving at university, I've realised just how useful it was to study History at A Level. I know how to read articles quickly, how to find information in books and how to draw all this together to form an argument. ”

LATIN

The Latin A Level course challenges students to dissect, analyse and articulate the Latin and English languages; to translate not only the words and sentences used by the Romans, but also to reflect on the idioms of each language and examine their very nature; to read and evaluate some of the most influential literature of western civilisation, including works of Virgil, Ovid and Cicero, writers whose power and artistry are felt to this day.

Few subjects can claim to cultivate as wide a range of academic skills, which are as valuable in practice as they are on a university application. Above all, the study of Latin requires students to exercise their minds across the academic spectrum, considering the creativity of language alongside the logic of syntax and coupling grammatical analysis with artistic interpretation. It is the subject for a student interested in the ancient world, keen on academic endeavour and with the ambition both to improve their skills of communication and to deepen their thinking.

Top universities such as Oxford and Cambridge view an A Level in Latin very favourably, as a mark of intellectual rigour. Latinists regularly go on to a wide variety of careers including medicine, law, banking, the civil service and academia. Latin can be a rewarding complement to Language, Arts and STEM subjects alike.

EXAM BOARD

OCR

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

It is important that A Level Latinists should have a strong grounding in the language from GCSE. The minimum requirement is a Grade 7 in GCSE Latin.

“ I love the challenge of Latin A Level and getting so close to the ancient authors and audiences through reading poetry and prose texts in the original language. The study of grammar and vocabulary has helped me to communicate better in all my subjects, and my teachers have supported and stretched my interests throughout the course. ”





MATHEMATICS

Qualifications in Mathematics are incredibly versatile and can lead to any number of careers and areas of further study. While research, engineering, finance, space exploration and business are some of the obvious areas where Mathematics is useful, careers in law, languages, journalism and many more also value the A Level. Mathematical analysis and computational modelling are important for solving some of the most significant and pressing problems of our time, such as risk management, new energy resources, diabetes prevention and cure, and climate change. There are extensive and well paid opportunities for mathematicians in finance, forecasting and actuarial fields. For those students studying the Sciences, Mathematics is a clear companion, but it should not be dismissed by any student who wants to add breadth to their study. At the end of the day, Mathematics is all about problem solving, and that is a skill that is highly desired in today's workplace. While the A Level cannot be described as easy, it will certainly be very rewarding for those who put in the hard work!

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Grade 8 in Maths at GCSE.



“ I have found Mathematics at A Level very interesting and have loved the challenge. I particularly enjoyed the Statistics topics, which includes probability and hypothesis testing. It really helps if you enjoy Mathematics because then you will find it easier to work harder and gain a top grade. I hope to study Mathematics and Finance at university. **”**

FURTHER MATHEMATICS



For those with a desire to delve even deeper into the realms of Mathematical knowledge, Further Mathematics is for you. Topics such as complex numbers, matrices, hyperbolic functions and higher order differential equations are just some of the delights that await you. Those thinking of studying a STEM course at university will find this greatly beneficial. While there is compulsory pure content, there are also other options available in this A Level, so whether Statistics, Mechanics or more Pure is your interest, there are options to match.

There will be some flexibility over which options are selected for the course and this will depend on the other A Levels and likely degree courses that students wish to follow.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

A Grade 9 in GCSE Mathematics is essential. Experience of Additional Mathematics or other equivalent qualifications would be highly beneficial.



“ *Mathematics at A Level provides me with the confidence I need to be able to study scientific subjects at university. My plan to study Engineering will include all aspects of Mechanics and Pure Mathematics that the A Level course covers. The support I have had here at Cokethorpe enables me to not only succeed in Mathematics, but also enjoy the challenge of studying Further Mathematics.*

”



MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH AND SPANISH



Studying languages at A Level is not simply about learning a language. We discuss a wide variety of subjects and modern world articles drawn from the news every day. Students are kept up to date with what happens now, what matters around the world currently and are encouraged to develop an open mind towards our society. We watch, read and analyse films and novels, we study and understand the consequences of key historical events and we look at our future with the development of science and our responsibility in the environment. At the end of the course, students will have gained maturity and the ability to think creatively. Any career choice values languages as a bilingual person shows adaptability to change, social and communicational skills, approachable characteristics and eloquence.

EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An interest in languages but also of different cultures and their place in the world. A good GCSE grade in the preferred language is essential (Grade 6 or above).

“ Learning a language gives you the ability to communicate with millions more people worldwide and this is a fantastic skill to have simply when on holiday or even more importantly in the business world. Personally, I have really enjoyed the A Level course as we have been given the opportunity to study many thought provoking cultural and political topics in another language and this has not only improved my ability at the language but also my awareness and interest in global affairs. ”

MUSIC

In the words of Plato, 'Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.' A Level Music allows students the opportunity to develop a critical understanding of how music is constructed through the study of performance, composition and aural analysis.

All components of the course demand discipline and dedication and students will be expected to have a good command of their chosen instrument. They will develop their understanding of the art of performance through individual lessons with their specialist teacher, attending masterclasses and playing regularly in recitals. All of this will culminate in a recital which will be held in their final year of study.

Building upon the GCSE course, students will undertake an in-depth examination of set-works and wider listening from a wide variety of styles. Topics offered for study include the history of the symphony, music of the early twentieth century, and a choice of jazz, rock and pop, and musical theatre. They will look at not only theoretical aspects but also the historical and social context in which these pieces were composed.

An academically rigorous subject, valued very highly by universities, especially as a foil to STEM subjects (including Medicine, History, and Law). A Level Music develops a variety of transferable skills including persuasive writing, analysis, logical reasoning, creative thought, and communication. Many students also find the fact that 60% of the Music A Level is coursework-based a real boon come exam season.

“ I have always loved performing and this was something I was able to develop throughout this course. However, I also had the opportunity to learn how to compose my own music and I have now started to write my own songs. ”

EXAM BOARD

Eduqas

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

A love of Music and at least Grade 5 on your instrument or voice. Have either sat Grade 5 Theory or be working towards sitting it in the Lower Sixth year.
A grade 6 or above at Music GCSE.





PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education at A level offers a comprehensive exploration of physical activity and sport, combining theoretical knowledge with practical experience. It covers key areas such as the physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of physical activity, providing pupils with a deep understanding of how the body responds to exercise, the mental strategies required for peak performance, and the role of sport in society. The course includes practical assessments where pupils demonstrate their skills in a chosen sport, alongside written exams that test their grasp of complex concepts. With a focus on both practical and theoretical components, the AQA Physical Education A Level equips students with valuable skills for further education in sports science, physical education, or related fields, as well as for careers in coaching, sports management, and fitness.

Students can explore careers in sports coaching, where they can train and mentor athletes; sports psychology, focusing on the mental aspects of performance; or sports management, overseeing teams and sporting events. Additionally, the knowledge gained from this course is invaluable for roles in sports science research, physiotherapy, and education, where they can contribute to the development and well-being of individuals through physical activity. The A Level PE qualification not only enhances one's expertise in these fields but also equips students with critical thinking and analytical skills applicable to numerous professions.



EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

A strong foundation in GCSE Physical Education (Grade 6 or above) or a related subject, demonstrating both theoretical understanding and practical ability.

Pupils should exhibit a keen interest in sports and exercise, as well as good physical fitness and commitment to regular participation in sport and physical activities. Additionally, a solid grasp of science subjects, particularly Biology, is beneficial due to the course's focus on human anatomy and physiology. Strong analytical and research skills are also important, as the course involves evaluating and interpreting data related to physical performance and health. Enthusiasm for teamwork and leadership in sports contexts can further enhance a student's suitability for this A Level.





“ I thoroughly enjoyed my GCSE PE course so it was an obvious decision that I would continue in this field through to A Level. The course is extremely challenging, yet the results I have received are very rewarding. The teachers go above and beyond to make every lesson enjoyable and I have found learning the new content that the A Level PE course included easier through applying the theoretical content in practical lessons. ”

PHYSICS

Studying Physics at A Level will lead you into the exciting and challenging world of understanding how everything in the universe works. At first sight many of the topics we meet will seem familiar from your GCSE studies including forces, waves, radioactivity, electricity and magnetism, but as we look closer and develop our understanding of particle physics and cosmology we start to understand how these ideas all interconnect and begin to appreciate the universal principles that apply to everything from the smallest subatomic particle to the largest of galaxies.

Practical work is used to complement and illustrate the theoretical concepts but it also offers a privileged opportunity to experience some of the most amazing and unexpected consequences of the fundamental laws of Physics that we unknowingly take so much for granted. The sixteen assessed practicals you will meet through the two years form an essential component of the A Level qualification, as well as providing the opportunity to build an array of skills from planning to processing data, report writing and presentation delivery, dealing with uncertainties, assessing risk and managing technical equipment.

A Level Physics is, of course, vital for most Science and Engineering courses, but it is also a subject recommended by the top universities and one that will keep most options open for those who are yet to decide on a specific career direction. Perhaps more importantly, the skills you will inevitably develop can be transferred to just about any other area of work. Physicists can be found working in a huge variety of areas, from saving the planet to setting up a business, working in medicine or the UK Space industry, developing films and computer games, journalism, product design and law, to name just a few.

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

Students should have either a high 7-7 Grade in Combined Science or at least a high Grade 7 in Separate Science Physics. In addition a high Grade 7 in Maths GCSE with a demonstrated competency in algebra and trigonometry.

Should I study A Level Maths along with A Level Physics? It is highly recommended but not essential, however, A Level Physics is a mathematical subject and more than 40% of the marks assess mathematical skills.

Physics is a fascinating subject that answers all sorts of fundamental questions about the world in which we live. It is quite a jump from GCSE, but the detail covered allows you to build an understanding of the links between different concepts as well as apply mathematical skills to real problems.



POLITICS

We may not always like politicians, the decisions they make or the actions of our government but, without doubt, the business of politics touches every aspect of our lives. Politics is a complex and constantly changing part of the human experience. Societies function with different forms of government, and in the western world we believe that a democratically elected body provides what could be described as a fair system of representative government. However, effective politics relies on opinions, on argument and discourse. The degree to which governments are fair and effective is open to debate, and that is the essence of studying Politics at A Level.

This A Level gives students the knowledge to understand how government works in the UK and globally. It helps students to engage with topical debates, current affairs and the big issues that affect us all. Politics is a fascinating subject in its own right and is also extremely valuable for those considering careers in the political arena, in journalism, business or in public service.

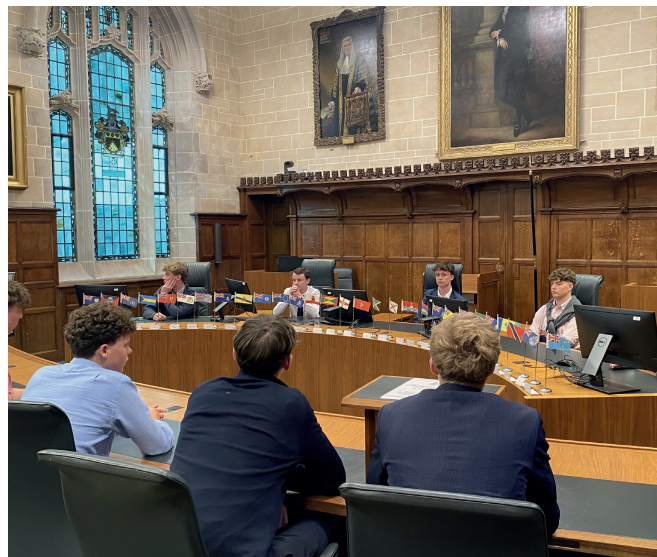
EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

An interest in politics and the political system is highly desirable and an enjoyment of reading, and an interest in current affairs is essential. Above all, a passion for learning and debate is key.

“ The course has given me a far greater understanding of politics and the impact it has on the world around me. It was incredibly interesting to examine the political events happening in the news. ”



PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is defined as the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. Essentially, Psychology is all about people. We are all amateur psychologists; every time we try and work out why someone acted the way they did or try to predict how someone might behave or react. Psychology tries to find answers to some of these questions by investigating them in a more scientific manner. Using scientific methods, students will explore a range of behaviours including schizophrenia, relationships, as well as the structure and function of the brain.

Students will develop transferable skills that support both study in a wide range of subjects at university and the transition to employment. Students will become familiar with conducting investigations, engaging in quantitative data analysis, as well as report and essay writing. Furthermore, the development and application of mathematical skills helps prepare students for study of Psychology and related courses at university.

Psychology can lead to specific careers in clinical, counselling, educational or forensic psychology, but it is also a useful qualification to have if you are thinking of any career that involves dealing with people. An understanding of psychological procedures and principles would also be useful in careers such as teaching, medical related occupations, law and social work.

This course is for those who have an enquiring mind, like to discuss and wish to gain an understanding of how humans develop, socialise and interact with each other. Psychology is not just an academic subject; it is a life-skill. Psychology is a challenging subject, requiring commitment and hard work. Ultimately, though, the hard work is rewarded with a deeper understanding of people and society, and perhaps even yourself!

EXAM BOARD

AQA

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

To successfully study Psychology, you will need to draw on your knowledge and skills from Maths, Biology and English.

You should have obtained at least a Grade 6 from Mathematics at GCSE

“ Initially, I took Psychology as a complementary subject, but it soon became my main focus and I am now applying to read it at university. ”

“ I have enjoyed the fact that there is such a broad range of interesting topics covered. I feel like I have learnt a lot more about myself and the world around me. ”



SOCIOLOGY

Sociology involves the scientific study of human society. A central concern for many sociologists is the tension between structure and agency. Agency refers to the outcomes of the individual choices and decisions that we make, while structure describes the social forces and influences we are all subjected to. Though most of us would like to think of ourselves as the authors of our own destiny, it is evident that human behaviour is not random, but follows patterns and trends, which are often shaped by forces outside of our control.

Career Pathways: Sociology trains you to answer the ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about human societies, giving you a competitive edge in the job market and providing a strong intellectual background for students considering careers in the professions or business. Here are a few of the possibilities:

Welfare Service: Most health and welfare professionals study sociology in order to better understand some of the larger trends they see among patients and clients. By using the kinds of pattern analysis techniques that sociologists are known for, they can focus their practices on critical needs in their communities.

Journalism: Newspapers and media outlets employ sociologists to help understand the kinds of stories that engage readers, viewers and listeners in a particular region. Sociologists work with editors to identify the right balance between news that audiences expect and the stories that need to be reported.

Police: Many local authorities hire sociologists to understand the impact of tougher laws. Sociologists also help prison and probation officers determine the effects of new programmes and regulations on the prison population.

This course is for those who have an enquiring mind, like to discuss and wish to gain an understanding of how humans develop, socialise and interact with each other. Sociology is not just an academic subject; it’s a life-skill. Sociology is a challenging subject, requiring commitment and hard work. Ultimately, though, the hard work is rewarded with a deeper understanding of people and society, and perhaps even yourself!



EXAM BOARD

OCR

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDY

It is important to understand that you will be expected to produce extended answers by drawing on your essay-writing skills and knowledge from English; a Grade 6 is desirable. You will also build and develop skills in critical thinking, interpretation and evaluation.

It is expected that you carry out specific reading prior to lessons, you engage with current affairs and ensure you read beyond the core text.

COURSE SUMMARY

A Level

Art and Design	History
Biology	Latin
Business Studies	Mathematics
Chemistry	Further Mathematics
Computer Science	Modern Foreign Languages: French and Spanish
Design Technology	Music
Drama and Theatre	Physical Education
Economics	Physics
English Language and Literature	Politics
English Literature	Psychology
Geography	Sociology

BTEC

Business (Extended Diploma)
Business (Level 3 National Diploma and A Level PE)

LOWER SIXTH ELECTIVES PROGRAMME

Every student in the Lower Sixth will take part in the Lower Sixth Electives Programme. He or she will choose three ten-week modules, one for each term. There is a wide choice, covering Technology, History, Philosophy, Music, Politics, Literature and much more. Despite the varied offering, each Elective shares a common goal: to promote learning for learning's sake.

The offering varies from year to year. The following is a list of modules that were offered in 2024-2025:

Coming of Age – a Novel, a Play, a Film, a Song, and maybe a Pantomime

Introduction to Philosophy

Memories and Colour

Music Appreciation - uncovering the magic of music

Production Planning/Strategic Thinking

Provence, Marcel Pagnol and Cézanne – the other France!

Welcome to Dystopia

A World in Conflict – using geography to understand global tension

THE PATHWAY TO SIXTH FORM: KEY DATES

2025

Tuesday 17 June	Sixth Form Preview Evening (for all Fourth Form and their parents)
Tuesday 14 October	Sixth Form Taster Day (for all Fifth Form)
Monday 3 November	16+ Awards: Deadline for Applications
Tuesday 11 November	Assessment Day for 16+ Awards for Sport and Music
Wednesday 12 November	Assessment Day for 16+ Awards for Design and Technology
Thursday 13 November	Assessment Day for 16+ Awards for Drama and Art
Friday 28 November	Sixth Form Experience Day (for external applicants)

2026

Monday 12 January	GCSE Mocks Begin
Friday 23 January	GCSE Mocks End
Thursday 5 February	Fifth Form PRE
Thursday 5 March	Futures Fair
Friday 6 March	Sixth Form Experience Day (for external applicants)
Monday 4 May	Public Exams begin
Friday 19 June	Public Exams end
Wednesday 24 June	Public Exams Contingency Day
Thursday 20 August	GCSE Results Day
Wednesday 2 September	Lower Sixth Induction Day
September	16+ Academic Scholars identified following publication of GCSE results

PLEASE NOTE

All pupils are assumed to be staying into Sixth Form; for any pupil who does not intend to stay, notice must be given in writing to the Headmaster before the first day of the Summer Term. Late notice will incur a full term's fee in lieu of notice.



Cokethorpe

SCHOOL

Cokethorpe School, Witney, Oxon OX29 7PU

admissions@cokethorpe.org

01993 703921

Registered Charity: 309 650

cokethorpe.org