



THORNTON

**CURRICULUM
INFORMATION
2026 / 2027**

SIXTH FORM

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Thornton College Sixth Form offers students an exceptional experience in a warm and vibrant environment.

In addition to a rich and varied curriculum of A Levels and alternative academic qualifications, students have the opportunity to complete the Extended Project Qualification and to take part in tailored programmes built around their aspirations. Whether students are aiming for competitive UK universities, considering an application to the US, exploring apprenticeships, or looking to enter the world of work, they will be fully supported throughout. From September 2025, Year 12 students will undertake the Sixth Form Tower Programme, which focuses on high quality super-curricular activities.

We are dedicated to blending academic excellence with a richness of opportunity beyond the classroom. Outside speakers and links with other schools ensure that girls benefit from a diverse co-curricular programme alongside their studies. All students pursue a core curriculum of Horizons, RE and Games in addition to their main subjects.

Mrs Ruth Coates
Head of Sixth Form

Learning Development

The Learning Development Department offers continuing support for individual students either on a regular or occasional basis as the need arises on an individual appointment basis. The Head of Learning Development works closely with the Head of Sixth Form, subject specialists and parents to support curriculum access for all and to offer advice and guidance so all students can develop and achieve to their highest potential.

The Learning Development Department offers the following support:

- Advice on using effective study skills and strategies for efficient learning
- Help with time management and organisation
- Advice and guidance regarding referrals to outside agencies and reasonable adjustments where necessary
- Screening to help identify specific difficulties where applicable
- Gathering information in preparation for GCSE Access Arrangements to ensure there is evidence to apply for the appropriate provision of examination access arrangements.

Mrs A Woodruff
Head of Learning Development

Curriculum Information

Sixth Form

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Subject: Art, Craft & Design / Photography

Awarding body: Edexcel (Pearson) – 2015 Specification

**Course codes: Art, Craft & Design – 9AD0
Photography – 9PY0**

Curriculum Intent

The A Level curriculum is designed to prepare students for further study and careers within the creative industries through developing a strong, diversified portfolio and advanced artistic capabilities. Students are expected to:

- Build intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive skills.
- Strengthen analytical, investigative, experimental, technical and expressive abilities.
- Develop independence of mind when generating and communicating ideas.
- Experience working across a broad range of media, techniques, and creative processes.
- Understand how art, craft and design operate within contemporary and historical contexts.
- Develop awareness of the audiences, roles and functions within creative disciplines.
- Gain insight into real-world applications and links with creative industries.
- Engage regularly with exhibitions, museums and cultural sites.

Specification Content

Component 1 – Personal Investigation (60%)

- Supporting studies, practical work, and a written personal study.
- Portfolio of developmental work generated from personal starting points.
- Minimum 1000-word personal study demonstrating contextual understanding (12% of qualification).
- Must address all four Assessment Objectives:
 - **AO1 – Develop:** Investigate and analyse contextual sources to develop ideas.
 - **AO2 – Explore:** Select and experiment with media, materials, and techniques, refining work.

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- **AO3 – Record:** Record observations and insights, reflecting critically on progress.
- **AO4 – Present:** Produce meaningful, personal final outcomes connecting visual and other elements.

Component 2 – Externally Set Assignment (ESA) (40%)

- Externally set theme issued on 1 February each year.
- Preparatory studies completed before the exam period.
- **15-hour timed examination** to produce final outcome(s).
- Students must remain within their chosen discipline (Art, Craft & Design OR Photography).
- Final work contributes to a curated final show.

Skills Developed

- Creative thinking and problem-solving.
- Practical and technical skills in a wide range of media (traditional and digital).
- Visual analysis and critical evaluation.
- Research and contextual understanding.
- Independent project management and sustained inquiry.
- Ability to synthesise ideas into coherent visual and written outcomes.
- Communication skills through both visual presentations and extended written studies.
- Professional portfolio preparation for Foundation and Undergraduate study.

Subject-Specific Assessments

- **Component 1 (Personal Investigation):**
 - Portfolio of supporting studies and practical work.
 - Personal study (minimum 1000 words).
 - Assessed against AO1–AO4.
- **Component 2 (Externally Set Assignment):**
 - Preparatory portfolio responding to set theme.
 - 15-hour supervised practical exam.
 - Assessed against AO1–AO4.
 - Culminates in a final exhibition/show.

Subject: Art & Design – Cambridge Technical Level 3 National Diploma

Awarding body: OCR (Cambridge Technicals)

Course size: Equivalent to two A Levels

Course structure: 12-unit qualification (1 mandatory, 4 pathway-specific, 7 optional)

Curriculum Intent

The programme is designed to provide learners with a substantial foundation in Art & Design, equipping them with the practical, creative and professional skills needed for higher education or employment in the creative industries. It aims to:

- Offer a broad creative experience through the **Fine Art pathway**, with opportunities to explore fashion, textiles, graphics, photography, 3D studies and fine art.
- Support progression to creative HE courses or industry roles by developing sector-specific knowledge and a strong portfolio.
- Enable learners to apply creative and technical skills within work-related contexts and realistic scenarios.
- Encourage independent learning, project management and problem-solving within professional-style assignments.
- Provide a vocational route that complements A Levels or other qualifications as part of a full 16–19 study programme.

Specification Content

Course Structure

- **12 units total** (1 mandatory)
- **Fine Art pathway** offered at Thornton College

Assessment Approach

- **All units internally assessed** and **externally moderated** by OCR.
- No externally marked written exams.

Assignment Format

- Creative, practical tasks tied to **work-related scenarios**.
- Assignments may be completed individually or in groups.
- Tasks mirror workplace and higher-education expectations in both format and time constraints.
- Portfolio creation is central, tailored to the student's chosen specialisms.

Grading Structure

- Units individually graded **Pass / Merit / Distinction**.
- Points from each unit combine to form the final qualification grade.
- All grading conducted internally with external moderation.

Skills Developed

- Creative and practical skills across varied art and design disciplines.
- Technical proficiency using materials, media and processes relevant to chosen pathways.
- Professional practice skills appropriate for workplace or higher-education environments.
- Problem-solving and project management through extended practical assignments.
- Ability to respond creatively to real-world or work-based briefs.
- Portfolio-building skills for HE applications or employment.
- Collaboration and independent working strategies.
- Application of knowledge within industry-relevant contexts. [CTEC | Word]

Subject-Specific Assessments

- **All assessment is internal:**
 - Units delivered and marked by the centre.
 - External moderation ensures consistency of standards.
- **Assessment tasks include:**
 - Practical creative projects over a sustained period.
 - Work-related or industry-informed scenarios.
 - Evidence in sketchbooks, design sheets, digital portfolios, or final outcomes.
 - Group or individual responses to realistic briefs.
- **Final grade** based on cumulative points across 12 units (Pass, Merit, Distinction).

Subject: Biology

Awarding body: AQA – 7402 Specification

Curriculum Intent

The A-Level Biology curriculum, following the AQA specification (7402), is designed to:

- Develop a deep and integrated understanding of biological systems, from molecular processes to whole organisms and ecosystems.
- Engage students with contemporary scientific thinking, encouraging curiosity about developments in modern biology.
- Build confidence in applying mathematical and analytical skills within a biological context.
- Prepare students for higher education and careers in science-related fields such as Medicine, Biotechnology, and Environmental Science.
- Foster independent learning, resilience, and the ability to tackle complex and unfamiliar problems.

Specification Content

The course follows a content-led structure, organised into eight key modules:

- **Unit 1 – Biological Molecules:** Structure and function of proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, and nucleic acids.
- **Unit 2 – Cells:** Cell structure, membranes, transport mechanisms, and cell division.
- **Unit 3 – Organisms Exchange Substances with Their Environment:** Gas exchange, digestion, mass transport in animals and plants.
- **Unit 4 – Genetic Information, Variation and Relationships Between Organisms:** DNA, genes, biodiversity, and classification.
- **Unit 5 – Energy Transfers in and Between Organisms:** Photosynthesis, respiration, and energy flow.
- **Unit 6 – Genetics, Populations, Evolution and Ecosystems:** Inheritance, evolution, and ecological systems.
- **Unit 7 – Organisms Respond to Changes in Their Internal and External Environment:** Nervous and hormonal responses, homeostasis.
- **Unit 8 – The Control of Gene Expression:** Gene regulation, biotechnology, and modern genetic techniques.

Students also engage in a programme of wider reading, research, presentations, and independent study to deepen their understanding of biological concepts and current developments.

Skills Developed

Students develop a wide range of advanced academic and practical skills:

- **Practical Skills:** Conducting and evaluating experiments, using specialist equipment, and working safely and accurately.
- **Analytical Skills:** Interpreting data, evaluating evidence, and applying knowledge to unfamiliar contexts.
- **Mathematical Skills:** Handling data, using statistical tests, and applying mathematical concepts within biological contexts.
- **Scientific Enquiry:** Designing investigations, forming hypotheses, and understanding variables and controls.
- **Independent Learning:** Researching beyond the specification, engaging with scientific literature, and presenting findings effectively.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** Presenting ideas clearly through discussions, presentations, and written work.

Subject-Specific Assessments

Assessment follows A-Level requirements:

- **Written Examinations:**
 - Paper 1 (2 hours, 35%): Biological molecules, Cells, Organisms exchange substances with their environment, Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
 - Paper 2 (2 hours, 35%): 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
 - Paper 3 (2 hours, 30%): Synoptic paper assessing all content and practical skills
- **Practical Skills Assessment:**
 - Students complete a range of required practical activities throughout the course.
 - Practical knowledge and understanding are assessed within written examinations.
- **Ongoing Assessment:**
 - Regular tests, exam-style questions, and practical write-ups to monitor progress and support exam preparation.

Subject: A Level Business

Awarding body: AQA

Course code: 7138

Curriculum Intent

The A Level Business course aims to develop students' understanding of how businesses operate in dynamic and competitive environments. Students explore how decisions are made across key functional areas and how these are influenced by internal and external factors.

The course encourages students to:

- Think critically about real-world business issues
- Analyse data and make informed decisions
- Understand the interdependent nature of business functions
- Apply knowledge to contemporary contexts, including digital change, ethics, and globalisation

Specification Content

What is Business? (Managing marketing and finance)

- Business objectives and strategy
- Forms of business and stakeholders
- Marketing management (market analysis, strategy, decision-making)
- Financial management (sources of finance, profitability, financial performance)

Managing People and Operations

- Human resource management (recruitment, motivation, organisational structure)
- Operations management (production, quality, efficiency, supply chains)
- Business culture (A Level only)

Business in a Wider Context

- Business and society (ethics, CSR, ESG)
- External environment (economic, technological, legal influences)
- Business strategy (decision-making, growth, competitive positioning)
- Managing change

Skills Developed

Students will develop a range of transferable and subject-specific skills, including:

- Analysis and evaluation of business decisions and strategies
- Application of knowledge to unfamiliar business contexts
- Quantitative skills, including interpreting financial data
- Decision making and problem solving
- Critical thinking in response to real-world business scenarios

Subject-Specific Assessment

Linear qualification – all exams taken at the end of the course. Mid-and end of year examinations and unit tests are scheduled throughout.

- Assessment is based on:
 - Data response questions
 - Case study analysis
 - Extended responses (including evaluative essays)
- Questions require:
 - Application to real business contexts
 - Use of quantitative and qualitative data
 - Justified decision making and evaluation
- Assessment focuses on developing:
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - Application
 - Analysis and evaluation

Subject: Careers

Sixth Formers either progress to university or apprenticeships at the end of Year 13. The Sixth Form Careers Programme allows students to explore higher education options as well as opportunities to go into the workplace. Mrs Jo Scott, Careers and Enterprise Leader, creates a bespoke package for Year 12s so they can explore the different pathways available to them. She is available to offer support and advice to students on an ongoing basis, throughout their journey in the Sixth Form.

Employer workshops, careers presentations and university encounters are arranged throughout the year and these include regular Spotlight Careers Talks informing students about roles and sectors they may not have previously been aware of. An Alumni Careers Event in the Autumn gives students the chance to talk to old girls about how they made their careers choices and helps build networking skills. Our annual STEM event in January provides opportunities to develop relationships with companies such as KPMG, BP, Sir Robert McAlpine, Tesla, Network Rail, Nifty Lift, HMGCC, Volkswagen and Grant Thornton. The full Careers Calendar is available for students and parents to access on the school website and includes a wide-ranging number of events including Law Fest, NHS Careers in Healthcare, Careers in Film and Television, Sky Academy Studios, MK Schools Lit Fest and a visit to MK Magistrates Court

Students build their university applications with Mrs Scott in Year 12 and universities are invited into school to deliver workshops on how to choose courses, ensuring that information is current.

Students are able to contact Mrs Scott for meetings at any time, in addition to a termly 1:1 session.

Subject: A Level Chemistry

Awarding body: AQA

Course code: 7405

Curriculum Intent

The A-Level Chemistry curriculum, following the AQA specification (7405), is designed to:

- Develop a deep understanding of chemical principles, from atomic structure to complex organic and industrial processes.
- Build on GCSE knowledge to explore chemical reactions, bonding, and energy changes in greater depth.
- Equip students with strong analytical, mathematical, and problem-solving skills essential for modern science.
- Foster curiosity about the chemical world, encouraging students to question, investigate, and apply their knowledge to real-world contexts.
- Prepare students for higher education and careers in fields such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, and other scientific disciplines.

Specification Content

The course is structured into Physical, Inorganic, and Organic Chemistry, taught across Lower Sixth (Year 12) and Upper Sixth (Year 13):

Lower Sixth (Year 12)

- **Physical Chemistry:** Atomic structure, the mole, bonding, energetics, kinetics, equilibria (K_c), redox chemistry, thermodynamics.
- **Inorganic Chemistry:** Periodicity, Group 2 elements, Group 7 halogens.
- **Organic Chemistry:** Introduction to organic chemistry, alkanes, alkenes.

Upper Sixth (Year 13)

- **Physical Chemistry:** Rate equations, equilibria (K_p), acids and alkalis, electrode potentials.
- **Inorganic Chemistry:** Period 3 elements, transition metals, ion analysis.
- **Organic Chemistry:** Alcohols, halogenoalkanes, organic analysis, aromatics (arenes), carbonyl compounds, carboxylic acids, amines, amino acids, polymers, chromatography, NMR, and organic synthesis.

Students are also required to engage with a range of practical activities throughout the course, supporting understanding of theoretical concepts.

Skills Developed

Students develop a range of advanced scientific and transferable skills:

- **Practical Skills:** Planning and carrying out experiments, making accurate observations, and evaluating methods.
- **Analytical Skills:** Interpreting experimental data, identifying patterns, and drawing valid conclusions.
- **Mathematical Skills:** Applying quantitative chemistry, including calculations involving moles, concentrations, energy changes, and rates.
- **Problem-Solving:** Applying chemical principles to unfamiliar contexts and complex scenarios.
- **Scientific Enquiry:** Developing hypotheses, understanding variables, and evaluating evidence.
- **Independent Learning:** Engaging with wider reading, consolidating knowledge, and making connections across topics.

Subject-Specific Assessment

Assessment follows A-Level requirements:

- **Written Examinations:**
 - Paper 1 (2 hours, 35%): Physical and Inorganic Chemistry content with practical skills
 - Paper 2 (2 hours, 35%): Physical and Organic Chemistry content with practical skills
 - Paper 3 (2 hours, 30%): Synoptic paper assessing all content and practical skills
- **Practical Skills Assessment:**
 - Students complete a range of required practical activities throughout the course.
 - Practical knowledge and understanding are assessed within written examinations.
- **Ongoing Assessment:**
 - Regular tests, exam-style questions, and practical write-ups to monitor progress and support exam preparation.

Subject: Drama and Theatre

Awarding Body: EDUQAS (Part of WJEC)

Course code: N/A

Curriculum Intent

The Eduqas A Level Drama and Theatre course aims to develop learners as creative, independent and collaborative theatre makers, with deep understanding of the artistic, social, cultural and historical contexts that shape drama. It encourages students to:

- Engage critically with performance texts, recognising how context influences dramatic meaning.
- Work as actors, designers and directors, making informed artistic choices.
- Participate both as theatre makers and as analytical audience members.
- Use practitioner techniques to explore and reinterpret text, strengthening originality and creative thinking.
- Build evaluative skills by analysing their own work and the work of others.

Specification Content

Component 1: Theatre Workshop Internally assessed and externally moderated. 20% of qualification

Students can be assessed as either actors or designers:

- Creating, developing and performing/designing a piece of theatre based on a **reinterpretation** of an extract from a text, chosen from a list supplied by exam board. The piece must be developed using the techniques and working methods of **either** an influential theatre practitioner **or** a recognised theatre company
- A creative log.

Component 2: Text in Action Externally assessed by a visiting examiner. 40% of qualification

Students can be assessed as either actors or designers:

- Creating, developing and performing/designing **two** pieces of theatre based on stimuli provided by the exam board:
 1. A devised piece using the techniques and working methods of **either** an influential theatre practitioner **or** a recognised theatre company (different to that chosen for Component 1).
 2. An extract from a text in a different style chosen by learner.
- Written process and evaluation report.

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Component 3: Text in Performance Written examination: 2 hrs 30 mins. 40% of qualification

Sections A & B: Open book – clean copies (no annotations) of the **two** complete texts chosen must be taken into examination.

- **Three** questions based on **two** different texts, one written pre-1956 and one written post-1956.

Section C: Closed book – the extract needed will be in the exam paper

- A question based on a specified extract from *The Book of Dust la Belle* by Lavery, Bryony Sauva. Details of the 10-15 minute extract will be released during the first week of March, in the year in which the examination is due to take place.

Skills Developed

Learners will develop:

- Creative theatre-making skills: devising, interpreting text, applying practitioner methods, collaborative problem-solving.
- Performance and design skills, including voice, movement, staging, lighting, sound, costume or set work.
- Research and analytical skills, including contextual interpretation, practitioner theory and evaluative writing.
- Independence, creative decision-making and reflective practice through logs and performance evaluations.
- Understanding of professional theatre roles and processes in contemporary theatre practice.

Subject-Specific Assessments

Internal assessment throughout the course. External assessments:

Component 1: Theatre Workshop – 20%

- NEA, internally assessed, externally moderated
- Acting or design
- Reinterpretation of a text extract using practitioner/company methods
- Creative log + performance realisation

Component 2: Text in Action – 40%

- NEA, externally assessed (visiting examiner)
- One devised piece + one text extract performance
- Acting or design routes available

Component 3: Text in Performance – 40%

- Written exam
- Analysis of set texts (grouped by pre-1956 and post-1956 according to assessment year)
- Evaluation and interpretation of theatrical performance

Subject: English Literature

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel

Course code: 9ET0

Curriculum Intent

This course aims to give students the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the study of different forms of literature by encouraging a deeper awareness and understanding of a variety of texts through close analysis and discussion. The key intellectual skills are an enquiring mind and a willingness to engage in literary debate. The ideal student would enjoy reading all types of prose, novels, plays and poetry; be able to write coherently and enjoy discussing meanings in literature.

Specification Content

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Literature consists of three externally examined papers and one coursework component. The qualification requires the study of eight literary texts plus unseen poetry.

Component 1: Drama will allow students to study aspects of the form of drama via two plays. The central focus of the drama study is the literary text. Students will need to explore the use of literary and dramatic devices and the shaping of meanings in their chosen plays. Students study a tragedy or comedy drama by Shakespeare and a tragedy or comedy drama by another playwright.

Component 2: Prose is where students will study aspects of prose via two thematically linked texts, at least one of which must be pre-1900.

Component 3: Poetry will allow students to consider the concerns and choices of modern-day poets in a selection of contemporary poems. Students will apply their knowledge of poetic form, content and meaning, and develop their skills in comparing an unseen poem with an example of studied poetry. Students will also develop depth of knowledge about poetic style by studying a selection from the work of a single named poet, *or* a selection from within a literary period or movement.

Component 4: Non-examination assessment will be assessed via two texts. There are no prescribed texts but centres must select complete texts which may be drawn from poetry, drama, prose or literary non-fiction. The selected texts may be linked by theme, movement, author or period.

Skills Developed

- Wide, Independent and Critical Reading
- Advanced Literary Analysis and Evaluation
- Comparative Literary Study
- Critical and Creative Engagement with Texts
- Analytical and Academic Writing
- Independent Research and Extended Study
- Understanding Literary Genres and Traditions
- Contextual and Thematic Awareness

Subject-Specific Assessments

Students' work is assessed regularly with practice questions marked using exam mark criteria. In addition to regular in-class assessments, students sit mock examinations in January and May.

Subject: **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)**

Board: **AQA**

Syllabus code: **7993**

Curriculum Intent

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is designed to give students the opportunity to undertake a substantial, independent project that mirrors the expectations of higher education and professional environments. The intention is to develop students' autonomy, intellectual curiosity and academic rigour through the exploration of a topic of personal significance - either linked to their A-Level studies or a broader area of future interest. The EPQ helps students cultivate advanced academic skills, strengthens university and apprenticeship applications, and develops the research competencies needed for success in post-16 and post-18 pathways. The qualification is recognised by universities and carries UCAS tariff points equivalent to an AS-Level (A*–E).

Specification Content

- Completed over the course of Year 12.
- Students select a topic of personal interest, which may:
 - extend their A-Level studies,
 - explore a career-related field, or
 - address a wider academic, scientific, creative or social theme.
- Project Types: Students may choose one of the following formats:
 - a 5,000-word academic research report
 - a performance (e.g., dance, drama, music) with a 1,000-word report
 - an artefact (e.g., product design, software, artwork, business concept) with a 1,000-word report
 - a community project, also accompanied by a 1,000-word report

Taught Component provides instruction on:

- *research skills*
- *academic writing*
- *referencing and ethics*
- *data handling*
- *presentation and communication*
- *project planning and organisation*

Supervision: Students meet regularly with a supervisor who guides them through the planning, research, development and evaluation stages.

Skills Developed

The EPQ builds a comprehensive portfolio of academic, organisational and analytical skills essential for university and employment. These include:

- Research & Academic Skills
- Project Management
- Critical Thinking & Analysis
- Communication & Presentation
- Transferable Employability Skills

These skills are highly valued by universities, apprenticeship providers and employers.

Subject-Specific Assessments

The EPQ is assessed through both the process and the final product.

- **Production Log:**
A formal record of planning, decision-making, research activities and reflective evaluation.
- **Final Outcome:**
Depending on the chosen format:
 - 5,000-word report
 - performance + 1,000-word report
 - artefact + 1,000-word report
 - community project + 1,000-word report
- **Presentation:**
Students deliver an individual presentation to an audience, demonstrating their research journey, findings and evaluation.

Marking & Moderation

- Internally assessed by supervisors and the EPQ co-ordinator
- Externally moderated by the awarding body
- Awarded grades A–E*, with UCAS tariff points equivalent to an AS-Level

Subject: **Geography**

Board: **AQA**

Syllabus Code: **A-Level Geography (7037)**

Curriculum Intent

A Level geography offers a selection of new, interesting topics not covered at GCSE level, and allows you to go into greater depth in some key elements previously studied. It covers both the physical and human environments and the complex interaction of processes that shape our world. It will also, importantly, show the applied side of the subject - how human intervention affects the environment and how people adapt and mitigate the effects of processes on their environment. Geography gives students the chance to apply their wider knowledge to actual issues that are happening in the world today, it provides some context as to why students have developed such complex skills across a range of subjects during their academic lives.

Geography is highly valued by universities as an A Level choice, and combines well with both arts and science subjects. It can be a facilitating subject - that is a subject most likely to be required or preferred for entry to degree courses. Choosing facilitating subjects will keep more options at the university-level; geography opens doors to other degrees such as business and administrative studies, law, engineering and technology, and the other social physical sciences.

Specification Content

AQA A Level Geography explores a range of contemporary physical and human geographical issues, encouraging students to understand the interactions between people, places and environments at local, national and global scales.

Students study topics including water and carbon cycles, coastal or glaciated landscapes, natural hazards, ecosystems, globalisation, changing places, urban environments, population, and resource security. The course examines sustainability, climate change, inequality, development and governance, while developing an understanding of how physical and human processes shape the world.

Students also complete an independent geographical investigation based on fieldwork, applying research, data collection, analysis and evaluation skills to a chosen enquiry question. Throughout the course, students develop cartographic, statistical, analytical and critical thinking skills, alongside the ability to interpret and evaluate geographical information and debates.

Skills Developed

AQA A Level Geography develops students' analytical, research and communication skills through the study of contemporary global issues and physical environments. Students learn to interpret and evaluate data, construct balanced arguments, think critically, and apply geographical theory to real-world contexts. Through fieldwork and independent investigation, they also develop skills in enquiry, teamwork, problem-solving, statistical analysis, and academic writing, preparing them well for higher education and a wide range of careers.

Subject-Specific Assessments

Component 1: Physical Geography

40% of the full A-Level. External examination at the end of Year 13

Section A

- Water and carbon cycles

Section B

- Coastal systems and landscapes

Section C

- Hazards or Ecosystems under stress

2 hour 30 minute examination. Question types: multiple choice, short answers, extended prose.

Component 2: Human Geography

40% of the full A-Level. External examination at the end of Year 13

Section A

- Global systems and global governance

Section B

- Changing places

Section C

- Contemporary urban environments or Population and the environment or Resource security

2 hour 30 minute examination. Question types: multiple choice, short answers, extended prose.

Component 3: Geographical Investigation

20% of the full A-Level

An independent investigation of 3000 – 4000 words based on fieldwork.

Subject: Health and Social Care

Awarding Body: Cambridge OCR

Qualification: Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification

Course code: H125

Curriculum Intent

The curriculum aims to develop students' applied knowledge, understanding and professional skills relevant to health and social care practice. Students apply theory to realistic scenarios, assignments and case studies, preparing them for progression into higher education and future roles in health, care and community settings. The qualification promotes independence, reflection, problem-solving and ethical awareness, enabling students to understand people, systems and services and to deliver compassionate, evidence-based support in real-world contexts.

Specification Content

Principles of Health and Social Care

- Equality, diversity, rights; types and impacts of discrimination.
- Hazards, risk management, incidents and responses in care environments.
- Key health and social care legislation and safeguarding requirements.

Anatomy and Physiology for Health and Social Care

- Cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, musculoskeletal, regulatory and reproductive systems.
- Causes, symptoms, monitoring, treatment and impacts of common conditions.
- Effects of lifestyle factors and prevention strategies.

Person-Centred Approach to Care

- Person-centred values, co-production and independence.
- Communication, interviewing, planning and creating person-centred care information.

Supporting People with Mental Health Conditions

- Definitions, views and stigma surrounding mental health.
- Types of conditions, signs/symptoms, risk factors and impacts.

Optional NEA Units

Supporting People with Long Term Physiological Conditions

- Types, causes and progression of long-term conditions; monitoring and treatment.
- Daily/long-term impacts, barriers to care, and local service provision.

Supporting People in Relation to Sexual Health, Pregnancy and Postnatal Health

- Contraception, STIs, sexual health guidance, and informed consent.
- Pregnancy, birth and postnatal physical and emotional needs.
- Creating and delivering individualised advice and guidance.

F097 – Supporting Healthy Nutrition and Lifestyles

- Dietary needs, nutritional guidelines and food labelling.
- Planning balanced meals for varied individual needs.
- Barriers to healthy eating and strategies to support individuals.

Skills Developed

Students develop a strong blend of scientific understanding, analytical thinking and applied research skills through exploring body systems, health conditions and care practice. They also build clear, sensitive and professional communication skills—verbal, non-verbal and written—essential for working effectively with individuals in health and social care contexts. Throughout the qualification, learners strengthen personal and professional attributes including independence, organisation, problem-solving, empathy, ethical awareness and person-centred thinking. Together, these skills equip students for future study and employment in the health, social care and related sectors.

Subject-Specific Assessment Summary

- 40% externally assessed across two written exams.
- 60% internally assessed through three NEA units and two optional units, centre-assessed and externally moderated.

Additional Assessment Features

- NEA uses a compensatory grading model, meaning students accumulate criteria rather than needing to meet every pass/merit/distinction band.
- Exams assess knowledge, application, analysis and evaluation, while NEA also assesses skills and practical processes.

Subject: History

Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 7042

Curriculum Intent

At A level, history students develop both breadth and depth of understanding through studying topics that cover a wide chronological range. They are expected to write balanced arguments and form their own judgements on areas of historical debate. They develop the ability to assess the value of historical evidence and the strength of historians' arguments using their contextual knowledge. Our chosen topics offer students the opportunity to explore contrasting political, social and cultural developments in England and the wider world.

Specification Content

Breadth Study (Paper 1): 1C The Tudors: England, 1485-1603

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through key questions about political, social and economic change:

- Part one: Consolidation of the Tudor Dynasty: England, 1485-1547
 - Henry VII, 1485-1509
 - Henry VIII, 1509-1547
- Part two: England: turmoil and triumph, 1547-1603
 - Instability and consolidation: 'the Mid-Tudor Crisis', 1547-1563
 - The triumph of Elizabeth, 1563-1603

Depth Study (Paper 2): 2Q The American Dream: reality and illusion, 1945-1980

This option provides for a study in depth of the challenges by the USA at home and abroad as it emerged from the Second World War as a Superpower.

- Part one: Prosperity, inequality and Superpower status, 1945-1963
 - Truman and Post-war America, 1945-1952
 - Eisenhower: tranquillity and crisis, 1952-1960
 - John F Kennedy and the 'New Frontier', 1960-1963
- Part two: Challenges to the American Dream, 1963-1980
 - The Johnson Presidency, 1963-1968
 - Republican reaction: the Nixon Presidency, 1968-1974
 - The USA after Nixon, 1974-1980

Skills Developed

A level History supports the development of a wide range of skills, including:

- Deepening understanding of historical concepts.
- Analytical thinking and writing
- Evaluation, including the testing of arguments using contextual knowledge
- Critical assessment of sources, to understand both their value and their limitations
- Sustaining a clear line of argument in extended writing
- Independent research and writing of a longer essay for the historical investigation.

Subject-Specific Assessment

Students complete exam-style questions and recall tests in controlled conditions and have mid-year and end-of-year internal examinations. At the end of Year 13, students sit two written examinations, each worth 40% of the qualification, and each 2 hours 30 minutes in length. They also complete the historical investigation (NEA), worth 20% of the qualification).

Paper 1: Breadth Study (80 marks, 40% of A level)

- Section A Question: Compulsory question on historical interpretations (30 marks)
- Section B Questions: Two 25-mark essays from a choice of three

Paper 2: Depth Study (80 marks, 40% of A level)

- Section A Question: Compulsory question on sources contemporary to the period (30 marks)
- Section B Questions: Two 25-mark essays from a choice of three

Historical Investigation (40 marks, 20% of A level)

This is a personal study based on a topic of a student's choice (3,500-4,500 words). This should take the form of a question in the context of approximately 100 years. It must not duplicate the content of the Breadth or Depth Study.

The following assessment objectives (AOs) are assessed:

- AO1 Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.
- AO2 Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.
- AO3 Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Subject: **Advanced GCE in Mathematics**

Awarding Body: **Edexcel**

Syllabus Code: **9MA0**

Curriculum Intent

This qualification aims to develop students' confidence, enjoyment and secure understanding of mathematics, providing a strong foundation for further study.

Learners develop the ability to reason logically, identify incorrect reasoning, generalise, and construct and interpret mathematical proofs. They learn to choose and apply appropriate strategies to solve challenging problems, recognising when mathematics can be used to analyse contextual situations and how to represent these using diagrams, graphs and mathematical models.

Students use mathematical reasoning to make deductions, inferences and justified conclusions, and they interpret and communicate solutions clearly within context. They read and comprehend mathematical arguments, methods, formulae, and articles relating to mathematical applications, and can express their understanding accurately.

Throughout the course, students take increasing responsibility for their own learning, reflecting on their progress and developing independence in mathematical thinking.

Curriculum Content

Pure Mathematics

- Proof
- Algebra and functions
- Coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane
- Sequences and series
- Trigonometry
- Exponentials and logarithms
- Differentiation
- Integration
- Numerical methods
- Vectors

Statistics

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

Mechanics

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

Skills Developed

Developing rigorous mathematical reasoning, including constructing logical arguments, manipulating complex algebraic structures and communicating methods with clarity and precision.

Strengthening advanced problem-solving skills, applying calculus, functions, vectors and trigonometry to model, analyse and solve unfamiliar and multi-stage problems.

Enhancing mathematical modelling and interpretation, selecting appropriate methods, interpreting results in context and refining models to account for limitations or assumptions.

Building fluency in statistical and mechanical techniques, including hypothesis testing, probability distributions, kinematics and Newtonian mechanics to interpret real-world systems.

Subject-Specific Assessment

A level in Mathematics is taught over two years and assessed by three papers:

Paper 1: Pure Mathematics 1

Paper 2: Pure Mathematics 2

Paper 3: Statistics and Mechanics

Students must complete all assessment in May/June in any single year.

Each paper is:

- 2 hour written examination
- 33.33 % of the qualification
- 100 marks

Paper 1 and Paper 2 may contain questions on any topics from the Pure Mathematics content.

Paper 3 will be in two parts: Part A is Statistics and Part B is Mechanics.

Students must answer all questions. Calculators may be used in all papers.

It is recommended that students have a Casio fx-GC 100 calculator.

Subject: **Advanced GCE Further Mathematics**

Awarding Body: **Edexcel**

Syllabus Code: **9FM0**

Curriculum Intent

To stretch and challenge able mathematicians and prepare them for university courses in mathematics and related quantitative and scientific subjects.

Further Mathematics is an additional A level qualification taken **alongside** A level Mathematics (please see details on the previous pages). It cannot be taken in isolation. A level Further Mathematics comprises two core Pure Maths papers and at least two additional papers, where you choose to specialise in Mechanics, Statistics, Further Pure Mathematics, Decision Mathematics or a combination of these.

The course is suitable for very able mathematicians considering reading Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Economics or Computer Studies at university, or indeed, anyone who relishes an intellectual challenge.

Specification Content

Core Pure Mathematics (Papers 1 and 2)

- Proof
- Complex numbers
- Matrices
- Further algebra and functions
- Further calculus
- Further vectors
- Polar coordinates
- Hyperbolic functions
- Differential equations

Additional units:

Further Pure Mathematics 1

Further Trigonometry, Further calculus, Further differential equations, Coordinate systems, Further vectors, Further numerical methods, Inequalities.

Further Pure Mathematics 2

Groups, Further calculus, Further matrix algebra, Further complex numbers, Number theory, Further sequences and series.

Further Statistics 1

Discrete probability distributions, Poisson and binomial distributions, Geometric and negative binomial distributions, Hypothesis testing, Central Limit Theorem, Chi-Squared Tests, Probability generating functions, Quality of tests.

Further Statistics 2

Linear regression, Continuous probability distributions, Correlation, Combinations of random variables, Estimation, Confidence intervals and tests using a normal distribution, Other Hypothesis Tests and confidence intervals, Confidence intervals and tests using the t-distribution.

Further Mechanics 1

Momentum and impulse, Work energy and power, Elastic strings and elastic energy, Elastic collisions in one-dimension, Elastic collisions in two-dimensions.

Further Mechanics 2

Motion in a circle, Centres of mass of plane figures, Further centres of mass, Further dynamics.

Decision Mathematics 1

Algorithms and graph theory, Algorithms on graphs, Critical path analysis, Linear programming.

Decision Mathematics 2

Transportation problems, Allocation problems, Flows in networks, Dynamic programming, Game theory, Recurrence relations, Decision analysis.

Skills Developed

Developing exceptional algebraic and analytical fluency, including working with matrices, complex numbers, advanced calculus and abstract mathematical structures with precision.

Strengthening the ability to solve highly complex, multi-step problems, selecting from a wide range of advanced mathematical tools and demonstrating deep conceptual understanding.

Enhancing capacity for abstract mathematical thinking, including constructing and evaluating proofs, exploring unfamiliar systems and applying formal reasoning to novel scenarios.

Building advanced modelling and applied mathematics skills, using sophisticated techniques from mechanics, statistics or discrete mathematics to analyse complex real-world and theoretical systems.

Assessment

The A level in Further Mathematics consists of at least four externally-examined papers. Students may opt to do more than two optional units, in which case their two highest scoring options are taken into consideration. Students must complete all assessments in May/June in any single year.

Paper 1: Core Pure Mathematics 1

Paper 2: Core Pure Mathematics 2

Paper 3: Further Mathematics Option 1

Paper 4: Further Mathematics Option 2

Each paper is:

- A written examination of 1 hour and 30 minutes
- 25% of the qualification
- 75 marks

Students must answer all questions

Calculators may be used.

The curriculum aims to develop students' knowledge, understanding and applied skills in mental health and wellbeing across individual, organisational and societal contexts, enabling them to think critically, analyse influences on mental health, and apply strategies to real-world situations. It supports learners in building strong transferable skills - including communication, research, decision making, independent study and problem solving - while promoting personal wellbeing, ethical awareness and social responsibility. Through studying mental health across the lifespan, environments and communities, students are encouraged to challenge stigma, understand diverse experiences and engage with person-centred approaches, preparing them effectively for progression into higher education and future roles in health, social care and related sectors.

- **Fundamentals of Mental Health and the Individual:** Key concepts of mental health and wellbeing, biological and psychological influences, major mental health disorders, and core wellbeing strategies.
- **Supporting and Promoting Mental Health in Organisations:** Factors affecting employee wellbeing, organisational culture and communication, workplace mental health planning, and monitoring approaches.
- **Mental Health, Wellbeing and Society:** Historical and social attitudes to mental health, legislation, national wellbeing data, and media and societal influences.
- **Community-Based Support:** Social connectedness, social prescribing, community organisations, person-centred support planning, and outcomes measurement.

- **Physical Activity for Wellbeing:** Physical activity and mental health links, programme planning, inclusivity, and managing barriers to participation.
- **Outdoor & Creative Approaches:** Nature connectedness, outdoor therapies, creative therapies, and evaluating therapeutic effectiveness.

Skills Developed

- Scientific, Analytical and Research Skills - applying mental health concepts and models; conducting reliable research and interpreting data.
- Critical Thinking and Evaluation - analysing influences on mental health and evaluating strategies, interventions and support approaches.
- Communication Skills - presenting ideas clearly through written work, campaigns and applied NEA tasks.
- Personal and Professional Skills - developing independence, time-management, ethical awareness and reflective practice.

Subject-Specific Assessments

Assessment Summary

- 40% externally assessed across two written exams.
- 60% internally assessed through three NEA units and one optional unit, centre-assessed and externally moderated.

Additional Assessment Features

- NEA uses a compensatory grading model, meaning students accumulate criteria rather than needing to meet every pass/merit/distinction band.
- Exams assess knowledge, application, analysis and evaluation, while NEA also assesses skills and practical processes.

Modern Languages

Subject: French

Awarding Body: AQA

Course Code: 7652

Curriculum Intent

In the A level 2-year qualification, students will be tested on the two topic areas studied in Year 12, in addition to two more in Year 13, also divided into 3 sub-topic areas each. There is also an independent research project for the oral in Year 13.

Specification Content

Year 12 topics:

Aspects of Target Language society and artistic culture in the target language country.

Topic 1: Aspects of French-speaking society

- The changing nature of family
- The 'cyber-society'
- The place of voluntary work

Topic 2: Artistic culture in the French-speaking world

- A culture proud of its heritage
- Contemporary francophone music
- Cinema: the 7th art form film or book chosen from prescribed list

Year 13 topics:

Multiculturalism in the target language country and aspects of political life in the target language world.

Topic 1: Aspects of French-speaking society – current issues

- Positive features of a diverse society
- Life for the marginalised
- How criminals are treated

Topic 2: Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world

- Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment
- Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power?
- Politics and immigration film or book chosen from prescribed list (If a film in Yr 12, then a book in Yr 13)

Skills Developed

Reading, writing, listening, speaking. Also, analysing texts, themes, characters, language.

Subject-Specific Assessment

Paper 1: 2½ hours. Listening, Reading and Writing on the 4 topic areas. Translation into English + French. 40% of A Level.

Paper 2: 2 hours. 2 essays on book/film. 30% of A Level.

Paper 3: 21-23 minutes. (5-minute preparation time). Discussion of a sub-topic from one of the 4 areas lasting 5-6 minutes. 2-minute presentation and 8-10 minute discussion of topic of your own choice. 30% of A level.

Subject: Music

Awarding Body: EDUQAS (Part of WJEC)

Course Code: N/A

Curriculum Intent

A Level Music is a rich and rewarding exploration of musical understanding, creativity, and technical skill. The course develops depth and breadth across the three core disciplines of performance, composition and appraising, encouraging students to think critically, perform confidently, and compose with imagination.

Students study music within its historical, social and cultural contexts, gaining an appreciation for how musical traditions evolve and how composers respond to their world. The curriculum fosters both independent and collaborative learning, supporting students in becoming perceptive, expressive and informed musicians.

Specification Content

Component 1 — Performing Music

Option A (35%)

- Solo recital of at least 3 contrasting pieces
- For students with particular performance strength

Option B (25%)

- Solo recital of at least 2 contrasting pieces

Assessment:

- Final recital assessed by visiting examiner

Component 2 — Composing Music

Option A (25%)

(must be chosen if Option A selected for performance)

- 2 compositions
- Total duration 4–6 minutes

Option B (35%)

- 3 compositions
- Total duration 8–10 minutes

Assessment:

- Coursework externally marked

Component 3 — Appraising Music (40%)

Assessment:

- Written examination 2 hours 15 minutes
- Question types include:
 - Analysis of set works with score
 - Extended written responses exploring wider musical context
 - Questions on unfamiliar extracts (with and without score)
 - Comparison of musical extracts

Areas of Study (AoS):

- **AoS A – Development of the Symphony**
 - *Set Work:* Haydn, *Symphony No. 104*
- **AoS B – Rock and Pop**
- **AoS F – Into the 21st Century**
 - *Set Works:*
 - Thomas Adès, *Asyla*, Movement 3 (*Ecstasio*)
 - Sally Beamish, *String Quartet No. 2 (Opus California)* – Movements 1 (*Boardwalk*) & 4 (*Natural Bridges*)

Skills Developed

Students will develop:

- Advanced **instrumental or vocal performance skills**
- **Score reading** and analytical techniques
- **Composition and creativity**, using a range of musical styles and structures
- Understanding of musical **context, genre, and stylistic development**
- Critical listening and comparative evaluation skills
- **Technical musical literacy**, including harmony, structure and notation
- Time management through preparation of coursework and recitals

Independent and reflective learning

Subject-Specific Assessments

Students are regularly assessed through mid and end-topic tests, mid-year and end of year examinations. Students sit one external written examination in May/June of Year 13:

- **Component 1 Performance:** externally assessed recital by specialist examiner in February of Year 13
- **Component 2 Composition:** coursework portfolio externally marked by Eduqas submitted electronically in May of Year 13
- **Appraising:** formal written examination assessing knowledge of set works, contextual understanding and listening skills in June of Year 13

Subject: **Physics**

Awarding Body: **AQA**

Course Code: **7408**

Curriculum Intent

The A-Level Physics curriculum, following the AQA specification (7408), is designed to:

- Develop a deep understanding of the fundamental principles governing the universe, from subatomic particles to large-scale cosmic phenomena.
- Build on GCSE knowledge to strengthen students' ability to apply mathematical and physical concepts to complex problems.
- Encourage logical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and problem-solving skills essential for scientific study.
- Foster curiosity about how the world works, inspiring students to explore both theoretical and applied physics.
- Prepare students for higher education and careers in fields such as engineering, medicine, architecture, technology, and research.

Curriculum Content

The course is structured into core and optional units:

Core Units (Years 12–13)

- Measurements and their errors
- Particles and radiation
- Waves
- Mechanics and materials
- Electricity
- Further mechanics and thermal physics (A-level only)
- Fields and their consequences (A-level only)
- Nuclear physics (A-level only)

Optional Unit (Year 13) – students study one of the following:

- Astrophysics
- Medical physics
- Engineering physics
- Turning points in physics
- Electronics

The curriculum integrates theoretical knowledge with practical investigations, ensuring students understand both concepts and their real-world applications.

Skills Developed

Students develop a range of advanced scientific and transferable skills:

- **Mathematical Skills:** Applying algebra, trigonometry, and graphical analysis to solve complex physical problems.
- **Problem-Solving:** Breaking down unfamiliar scenarios and applying physics principles logically and systematically.
- **Practical Skills:** Conducting experiments, analysing uncertainties, and evaluating methods and results.
- **Data Analysis:** Interpreting graphs, processing experimental data, and drawing evidence-based conclusions.
- **Scientific Reasoning:** Developing explanations using models, theories, and evidence.
- **Independent Learning:** Engaging with challenging concepts, practising exam-style problems, and consolidating knowledge beyond lessons.

Subject-Specific Assessment

Assessment is fully aligned with A-Level requirements:

- **Written Examinations:**
 - **Paper 1 (2 hours, 34%):** Sections 1–5 and periodic motion; includes short/long answer and multiple-choice questions.
 - **Paper 2 (2 hours, 34%):** Thermal physics, fields, and nuclear physics; assumes prior knowledge from earlier topics.
 - **Paper 3 (2 hours, 32%):**
 - Section A: Practical skills and data analysis
 - Section B: Optional topic
- **Practical Skills Assessment:**
 - Students complete a range of required practical activities throughout the course.
 - Practical knowledge and skills are assessed within written examinations.
- **Ongoing Assessment:**
 - Regular testing, exam-style questions, and practical write-ups to support progress and exam preparation.

Subject: **Politics**

Awarding Body: **Edexcel**

Course Code: **9PL0**

Curriculum Intent

Politics exists because people disagree. They disagree about how they should live (moral questions), about who should get what (resource questions) and about who should make decisions (power questions). As an activity, politics is the process through which people with different ideas, values, opinions and interests attempt to find a way of living together within the same society. Politics A level therefore has a strong emphasis on debate, discussion and argument. It is likely to suit students who have an interest in the world around them, and those who wish to develop an understanding of a range of perspectives to inform their own views.

Specification Content

Paper 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas

Section A: Political Participation:

- democracy and participation,
- political parties,
- electoral systems,
- voting behaviour and the media.

Section B: Core Political Ideas:

- conservatism,
- liberalism,
- socialism.

Paper 2: UK Government and Non-Core Political Ideas

Section A: UK Government:

- the constitution,
- parliament,
- Prime Minister and executive,
- relationships between the branches.

Section B: Non-core political ideas:

- One idea from the following: anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism, nationalism.

Paper 3: Comparative Politics – USA (3A)

- the US Constitution and federalism,
- US Congress,
- US presidency,
- US Supreme Court and civil rights,
- US democracy and participation,
- comparative approaches – comparing aspects of UK and US politics and government; using comparative theories.

Subject-Specific Assessments

Students complete exam-style questions and recall tests in controlled conditions and have mid-year and end-of-year internal examinations. At the end of Year 13, students sit three written examinations, each worth 33% of the qualification, and each 2 hours in length.

Paper 1

Section A: Political Participation

- One 30-mark question using a source from a choice of two
- One 30-mark question from a choice of two.

Section B: Core Political Ideas

- One 24-mark question from a choice of two.

Paper 2

Section A: UK Government

- One 30-mark question using a source from a choice of two
- One 30-mark question from a choice of two.

Section B: Non-core Political Ideas

- One 24-mark question from a choice of two.

Paper 3

Section A

- One 12-mark comparative question from a choice of two (AO1 and AO2 only)

Section B

- One compulsory 12-mark question using comparative theories, (AO1 and AO2 only).

Section C

- Two 30-mark questions from a choice of three.

Subject: Psychology

Awarding Body: AQA

Course Code: 7182

Curriculum Intent

A Level Psychology introduces students to the scientific study of human behaviour, thought and experience. The intent of the course is to develop students' understanding of why individuals behave the way they do, how psychological knowledge is generated, and how theories and evidence can be applied to real-world contexts. Psychology seeks to describe, explain, predict and, where appropriate, modify behaviour.

As a scientific discipline, Psychology requires students to develop strong analytical, mathematical and biological understanding. It is recognised as a second science A Level by many universities for courses such as Psychology, Neuroscience and Biomedical Sciences.

Specification Content

Paper 1

- Social Influence – including explanations for conformity, obedience, independent behaviour, and minority influence.
- Memory (Cognitive Psychology) - including models of memory, explanations for forgetting, accuracy of eyewitnesses and the effects of anxiety and misleading information on memory
- Attachment (Developmental Psychology) - including cultural variations in attachment, effects of maternal deprivation and institutionalisation, and long term effects on relationships.
- Clinical Psychology – including diagnosis of phobias, depression and OCD, biological and psychological explanations and therapeutic approaches.

Paper 2

- Approaches in Psychology – including behaviourist, social learning, cognitive, biological, humanistic and psychodynamic approaches to explaining behaviour.
- Biopsychology – including the nervous system, localisation of function in the brain and functional recovery, split-brain research, and brain scanning techniques
- Research Methods (50% of Paper 2) - understanding how to design psychological investigations, ethical issues and controls, data analysis, descriptive statistics, distributions, probability, significance and inferential statistical testing.

Paper 3

- Issues and Debates – including gender and culture bias, free will / determinism, and reductionism / holism.
- Gender – including biological factors in gender development, social and cultural influences, and gender dysphoria.
- Schizophrenia – including issues with diagnosis, biological and psychological explanations, and therapeutic interventions.
- Aggression – including neural and hormonal influences, genetic and evolutionary explanations, and institutional aggression.

Skills Developed

A Level Psychology provides excellent preparation for higher-level study and employment through the development of:

- Scientific and Research Skills
- Critical Thinking and Analysis
- Communication Skills
- Personal and Professional Skills

Subject-Specific Assessments

Students are regularly assessed through mid and end-topic tests, mid-year and end of year examinations. Students sit three external written examinations in May/June of Year 13:

- **Paper 1:** 2 hours, 96 marks, 33.3%
- **Paper 2:** 2 hours, 96 marks, 33.3%
- **Paper 3:** 2 hours, 96 marks, 33.3%

Exams assess the following A Level scientific assessment objectives:

AO1: Knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures.

AO2: Application of psychological knowledge to:

- theoretical contexts
- practical or real-world contexts
- qualitative and quantitative data

AO3: Analysis, interpretation and evaluation of evidence to:

- make judgements and draw conclusions
- develop and refine research methods

Subject: **Sociology**

Awarding Body: **AQA**

Course Code: **7192**

Curriculum Intent

The Sociology curriculum aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of contemporary UK society, focusing on how social structures, culture, identities and inequalities shape human behaviour and social life. Students are encouraged to think critically about social processes and social change, to apply sociological theories and evidence to real-world issues, and to analyse and evaluate competing perspectives. The course supports students in becoming reflective, informed citizens who can understand and question the social world, drawing on key topics such as families, religion, socialisation, power, stratification and the role of values in society.

Specification Content

Families and Households

- Changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, divorce, childbearing and the life course
- Gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships
- Childhood and changes in the status of children
- Key demographic trends (birth/death rates, migration, ageing population)

Beliefs in Society

- Ideology, science and religion
- Religious organisations (churches, denominations, sects, cults, New Age movements)
- Religion and social groups (gender, ethnicity, class, age)
- Secularisation, globalisation and the changing role of religion in the contemporary world

Education

- Role and functions of the education system, and patterns of achievement by class, gender and ethnicity.
- School processes such as teacher–pupil interactions, subcultures and the hidden curriculum.
- Key educational policies including selection, marketisation, privatisation and equality of opportunity.

Crime and Deviance

- Definitions and explanations of crime, deviance, social order and social control, including differences by class, gender and ethnicity.
- Globalisation, green crime, human rights violations, and the role of the media in shaping crime.
- Crime control, surveillance, punishment and the role of the criminal justice system and victims.

Core Sociological Knowledge Across Topics

- Socialisation, culture and identity
- Social differentiation, power and stratification
- Research methods embedded across all topics

Skills Developed

- Scientific, Analytical and Research Skills - applying sociological theories and concepts; using and evaluating sociological research methods.
- Critical Thinking and Evaluation - analysing and evaluating sociological explanations, evidence and debates.
- Communication Skills - writing structured arguments and extended essays using sociological evidence and theory.
- Personal and Professional Skills - developing independent study habits, reflective thinking, and understanding diverse social perspectives.

Assessment Summary

- 100% externally assessed — three written exam papers, each worth 33.3% of the final grade.
 - Paper 1: Education with Theory & Methods (2 hours, 80 marks)
 - Paper 2: Topics in Sociology – includes Families & Households and Beliefs in Society (2 hours, 80 marks)
 - Paper 3: Crime & Deviance with Theory & Methods (2 hours, 80 marks)

Subject: Core Religious Education (Sixth Form General RE)

Qualification: Non-examined

Curriculum Intent

At Thornton College, Religious Education remains central to the curriculum, rooted in the school's Mission Statement: *"to educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ's Gospel."*

Core RE in the Sixth Form provides students with a framework to reflect on how they will use their gifts, talents and education as they move into adult life. The course encourages engagement with philosophical, ethical and religious questions, with a focus on real-world issues and the role of faith in contemporary society.

Through this course, students will:

- Reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and identity
- Explore the relevance of Christianity in the modern world
- Engage with ethical issues and historical events (e.g. Holocaust, Civil Rights)
- Develop respect for diverse beliefs and perspectives
- Articulate informed personal viewpoints

Curriculum Content

- **Religion and Society:** role of religion in the modern world, belief and secularism
- **Ethical Issues:** introduction to moral decision-making and contemporary issues
- **Historical Case Studies:** religion and injustice (e.g. Holocaust, Civil Rights Movement)
- **Philosophical Questions:** suffering, justice, and human responsibility
- **Belief and Identity:** personal worldview, vocation and purpose
- **Living Faith:** applying values to life beyond school

Skills Developed

Students develop the ability to:

- Reflect critically on ethical, philosophical and religious issues
- Analyse different viewpoints and real-world case studies
- Engage in discussion and debate
- Articulate personal beliefs with clarity and respect
- Apply religious and moral frameworks to contemporary life

Subject-Specific Assessment

Assessment includes:

- Reflective writing and discussion-based tasks
- Short written responses and presentations
- Ongoing formative assessment of engagement and understanding

Subject: **A Level Religious Studies**
 (Philosophy, Ethics and Development in Christian Thought)

Awarding Body: **OCR**

Course Code: **H573**

Component 1: Philosophy of Religion

Component 2: Religion and Ethics

Component 3: Developments in Christian Thought

Curriculum Intent

At Thornton College, Religious Education remains central to the curriculum, rooted in the school's Mission Statement: *"to educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ's Gospel."*

At A Level, students engage in a rigorous and academic study of religion, philosophy and ethics. The course encourages critical thinking, independent analysis and evaluation of complex ideas, supporting students in their intellectual and personal development.

Through this course, students will:

- Develop advanced knowledge of philosophical, ethical and theological concepts
- Engage critically with key thinkers and schools of thought
- Explore fundamental questions about truth, morality and human existence
- Analyse the impact of religious belief on individuals and society
- Construct well-developed, evaluative arguments

Specification Content

- **Philosophy of Religion:** ancient philosophical influences (Plato, Aristotle), arguments for God's existence
- **Ethics:** normative ethical theories (e.g. natural law, situation ethics)
- **Christian Thought:** sources of authority, nature of God, religious language
- **Philosophy of Religion:** problem of evil, religious experience
- **Ethics:** ethical language and decision-making, application of theories
- **Christian Thought:** human nature, sin and salvation
- **Philosophy of Religion:** challenges to belief (e.g. secularism, science)
- **Ethics:** conscience, free will and moral responsibility

Curriculum Information for Parents: Sixth Form 2026/2027

- **Christian Thought:** person of Jesus (Christology), practices and expressions of faith
- **Philosophy of Religion:** religious language, critiques of religion
- **Ethics:** meta-ethics, applied ethics issues
- **Christian Thought:** gender and theology, liberation theology
- **Philosophy of Religion:** revision and synoptic links
- **Ethics:** revision and application of ethical theories
- **Christian Thought:** eschatology, life after death
- **All Components:** revision, essay practice and exam preparation

Skills Developed

Students develop the ability to:

- Demonstrate detailed and accurate knowledge (AO1)
- Analyse and critically evaluate different viewpoints (AO2)
- Engage with key scholars and sources of authority
- Construct sustained, well-structured essay arguments
- Make synoptic links across philosophy, ethics and theology

Subject-Specific Assessment

Assessment includes:

- Regular essay writing and timed practice
- Knowledge recall and application tasks
- End-of-unit assessments using exam-style questions

External Assessment:

- Three written examinations (2 hours each)
- Each paper = 33.3% of A Level
- Essay-based questions requiring explanation and evaluation (AO1 & AO2)