



Backwell Sixth Form Course Information 2024 - 2026



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Welcome to Backwell Sixth Form

As Year 11 students, I hope that you are excited at the prospect of having more choice over your curriculum and being able to specialise in subjects that really interest you. If you choose to join Backwell Sixth Form you will be joining a thriving community; you will have teachers who are talented, inspirational and committed and you will study alongside students who are intelligent, creative and dedicated.

The purpose of this course booklet is to give you a clear insight into the wide range of courses that we offer and to help you make the right choices for your future plans. Please do join us at our Open Evening on Thursday 2 November 2023 from 5.00 pm to 7.15 pm where you will have the opportunity to talk to subject leaders and current students. Please also remember that whilst your subjects will be at the heart of your Sixth Form experience, your success, the development of your skills and your enjoyment will often go beyond the curriculum. Please do take a look at our "10 reasons to choose Backwell Sixth Form" (Backwell Sixth Form website) for more information about life at Backwell Sixth Form.

At Backwell Sixth Form we are proud of the fact that we help our sixth formers to achieve the academic excellence that enables them to attain places on very competitive Post-18 courses, not only at Higher Education institutes such as Oxford or Cambridge, but also on highly sought after apprenticeships or employment. We are thrilled that Backwell Sixth Formers overwhelmingly achieve a place at their first choice of university and that no student leaves Sixth Form without a clear intended destination. We believe in an inclusive, comprehensive approach to education; therefore, the curriculum and the support offered in the Sixth Form is designed to meet the varying needs of all our students.

The deadline to apply to Backwell Sixth Form is Friday 5 January 2024, after which we will invite you to attend a subject choice meeting in order to ensure that you have made the best subject choices to fit your future plans. If you are new to Backwell School, at this meeting you will have the chance to have a tour of the school and to see the Sixth Form in action; I am confident that you will see students engaged in learning who have excellent relationships with their teachers.

I look forward to meeting you and to welcoming you to our Sixth Form.

Yours sincerely

Rose Haywood
Assistant Headteacher – Head of Sixth Form
November 2023

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Programmes of Study at Backwell Sixth Form

We offer a wide range of courses at Level 3 (A Level or equivalent) including three subjects that are new for September 2024 (Politics, CTEC Media and Core Maths). The standard programme of study for Backwell Sixth Form students is three two-year courses plus, in Year 12 only, either the Extended Project Qualification, Core Maths, an additional AS Level or the Employability Award. Students achieving mostly grades 9 to 7 at GCSE may choose to study four A Levels over two years, and requests of this nature will be discussed at interview and post results day.

Two Year Courses

A Levels

A Levels are Level 3 courses for which exams take place at the end of Year 13 only. A small number of subjects also require the completion of coursework (NEA). Grades available vary from A* to E; this represents an equivalent range of ability to that covered by grades 9 to 4 at GCSE.

Cambridge Technical Diplomas and Level 3 Extended Certificates

These are Level 3 courses equivalent to A Level standard in which students focus on areas of the subjects in an applied way. Assessment is through six or more units over the two years, including exam units taken at different points across the two years. Successful students are awarded either Distinction Star (equivalent to A* at A Level), Distinction (A), Merit (C) or Pass (E).

One Year Courses

AS Levels and Core Maths

AS Levels and Core Maths are assessed by examinations in May of Year 12 and are graded from A to E (there is no A* grade at this level). AS Levels are equivalent to 40% of an A Level in terms of university tariff points, so alongside the intrinsic value of continued learning in a subject, they can boost applications to other courses. Please note that we only offer the following subjects at AS Level: Further Mathematics, Modern Languages and Music. Please see the course pages later in this booklet for more detail on the AS courses that we offer as well as Core Maths.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), AQA

Students undertaking the EPQ will be expected to complete an independent research project which is either a 5,000-word extended report or a more creative or practical outcome with a report of 1,500 words. They deliver an assessed presentation on their work and complete and submit a project log, providing details of their research and how their project developed. At the end of the course, they will be awarded an AQA qualification worth 50% of an A Level. Students will learn through lectures, classes and individual meetings with their project supervisor. Because the project is submitted at the end of Year 12, students will be able to focus fully on their A Levels in Year 13.

EPQ students will develop skills, knowledge and understanding that they will be able to use when tackling similar projects in future study or employment contexts and it is an excellent way of setting candidates apart from their peers in the increasingly competitive world of Higher Education and employment. It allows students to demonstrate independence and extra commitment to their chosen area of study – especially at interview. Consequently, top universities value it greatly and some routinely give alternative offers to students who have studied the EPQ.

Employability Award (EA)

This course is designed to help our students be employment-ready when they leave sixth form, either for post-18 education, work or training. This course will primarily be undertaken by those students for whom a fourth academic subject in Year 12 may not be manageable. It will also appeal to those students who are likely to undertake employment or apprenticeships as a post-18 pathway rather than higher education, as they will receive extra support for applications and interviews and further develop their workplace skills.

This is not an externally accredited course, although employers highly value these types of course and the skills that they prove you have acquired. Similar courses are frequently run at university level and are highly successful.

By completing the Employability Award, you will have:

- Gained awareness of key employability skills and how to develop them.
- Started to gain these key skills.
- Gained some experience of a workplace, as well as the opportunity to hold a position of responsibility.
- Had experience of making a successful job/course application.
- Had experience of an interview and feedback on how to improve further.
- Gained skills in preparing and delivering a presentation.
- Been able to reflect on your progression on the Award and what skills need to be developed in the future.
- Gained a certificate to include in your CV/take to interviews.

What makes up the Employability Award?

There are five elements to be completed over the course of Year 12:

1. Ten skills workshops (online). This includes topics such as leadership, confidence, assertiveness, resilience, communication, interviews and job-seeking.
2. Three employability lectures (delivered by visiting speakers).
3. 20 hours of work experience/volunteering.
4. A mock Interview and feedback with an employer.
5. A short presentation to an audience of staff and employers to demonstrate what you have learned from undertaking the course.

This course will be completed by the end of June 2024, allowing students to focus on the transition to Year 13.

Any questions; please email Mrs Ball, Careers Adviser and Coordinator, at cball@backwellschool.net

Planning Your Study Programme

How to choose your subjects

Many of you will want to continue with subjects that you are good at or enjoy. If so, one obvious person to talk to is your current teacher. However, aptitude and entry requirements are not the only considerations. Some sixth form subjects are not taken at GCSE – are there new subjects that you are overlooking? Some subjects go well together, like Biology and Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. If you have a chosen career direction, which kinds of subjects are required or preferred? If you want to go to university or apply for a degree level apprenticeship, are there particular A Level subjects that you need to study in order to qualify for your university course? In some cases, it will not be enough just to study the degree subject at A Level; other subjects will be needed too. For example, many degree courses in Physics require A Level Mathematics as well as Physics.

If you are thinking of university, you can check out entry requirements on the UCAS website www.ucas.com ; Click on ‘Course Search’ to find out the details for subjects you might want to study at university. The UCAS website also contains information on degree apprenticeship requirements [Degree apprenticeships - Learn more here \(ucas.com\)](http://www.ucas.com). Alternatively, if you are a Backwell student you can use your Unifrog account to carry out research into university and apprenticeship courses.

The following is an introductory guide to certain university courses/degree apprenticeships. Remember it is essential to check the full details for yourself.

University subject	Guidelines
Engineering	Often Mathematics and Physics required. Sometimes other sciences too, depending on your specialism.
Law	A conditional offer is likely to include very high grades, but no particular subject requirement. However, subjects especially favoured by Law Admissions Tutors include History, English Literature, Maths and Modern Languages.
Medicine	At least two A Level sciences are usually required, often Chemistry and Biology. Many universities now welcome an Extended Project with a medical theme, others value a fourth full A Level. Do a course search on “Medicine” as described above.
Nursing	Degree courses often require Science A Levels, especially Biology. Do a course search on “Nursing” as described above.
Science	Science and Mathematics A Levels. Individual subjects differ, so you need to check them out. For example, some Biology courses require Chemistry too, and some Biochemistry courses look for Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics.
Teaching: Primary	GCSE grades 9 to 4 in English, Mathematics and Science required. If you plan to apply for a BEd degree you should take at least one, preferably two, A Level subjects related to the primary curriculum.
Teaching: Secondary	GCSE grades 9 to 4 in English and Mathematics required. If you take a degree prior to teacher training, the degree subject must be relevant to the curriculum subject you want to teach.
Veterinary Science	Generally, Sciences and Mathematics at A Level, especially Chemistry and Biology. Very competitive, both in terms of grades and experience expected. Do a course search on “Veterinary” as described above.

General Entry Requirements

Five GCSEs at grade 9 to 4 including English Language. If a student has not studied a subject at GCSE this does not preclude them from studying it at A Level. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements to study in the Sixth Form or who do not meet subject specific requirements will still be considered in light of their suitability to study their chosen options.

Entry profile for specific subjects

Subject	Grade in subject at GCSE	Additional grade in Core Subjects
Applied Science	44 in Science	4 in Mathematics
Biology	66 in Science or 6 in Biology and 6 in another science	5 in Mathematics
Chemistry	66 in Science or 6 in Chemistry and 6 in another science	6 in Mathematics
Physics	66 in Science or 6 in Physics and 6 in another science	6 in Mathematics
Physical Education*	5 in GCSE PE or Merit in Sports Science qualification.	66 in Science or 6 in Biology and 6 in another science
Mathematics	6	
Further Mathematics	8 (7 for AS level only)	
Core Mathematics	4	
Computer Science*	6 in Computer Science	6 in Mathematics
English Language	5	5 in English Language
English Literature	5	5 in English Literature
Media	5 in English	
Geography*	5	
History*	5	
Philosophy and Ethics*	5 in Philosophy and Religion	
Politics	5 in English Language and Literature	
Modern Foreign Languages	6 in the corresponding language	
Business Studies CTEC		4 in Mathematics
Economics		5 in Maths and 5 in English
Sociology*	5 in Sociology	
Psychology		5 in Maths and 5 in English
Health and Social Care CTEC	General entry requirements	
Music**	5 and Grade 5 or equivalent in an instrument or voice	
Music Technology**	4 (Music)	
Performing Arts**	4 (Music, Dance or Drama) or Merit in Performing Arts qualification	
Drama and Theatre Studies**	4 or Merit in Performing Arts qualification	
Art courses**	4	
DT**	4	

* Where this subject has not been studied at GCSE students will be considered based on their overall academic profile or achievement in core subjects as above.

** If not studied at GCSE a task to assess a candidate's suitability will be set.

OUR COURSES

Art: Art, Craft and Design (A Level, AQA)

This is a broad-based course exploring practical, critical and contextual work through a range of 2D and/or 3D processes and media. Our Art, Craft and Design A level gives you the skills and knowledge to create personal and imaginative work using a range of skills, processes and techniques.

Drawing is an important part of any art course and we start with a project over two terms that will give you the confidence to record and explore abstract compositions, still life and portraiture using a range of traditional drawing media and materials. Later on you will be able to choose the direction and theme you want to take your work in for your first mini project, both contextually and through the choice of media including computer drawing software.

You must include at least two areas of specialism within the Unit 1 coursework project; Fine Art, Graphic Design and Illustration, Photography or 3D. Your teachers will guide you with finding the right direction for your work and how to use your strengths and interests. During Year 12 you will be introduced to these specialist areas through a series of workshops in term three including painting, printing and dry point etching, clay and 3D, photography and darkroom processes, graphic design, computer software such as Illustrator and Photoshop, and illustration techniques.

The course is structured to support the understanding of the four assessment objectives, whilst giving you the freedom to experiment with ideas in depth. You will be expected to use four hours of time out of lessons a week to develop work and complete projects to meet deadlines.

Entry Requirements

GCSE Grade 4 in Art. Good drawing skills are essential. If you have not taken Art and Design GCSE you will be expected to show work of the expected level before coming to the induction session and starting the course.

Course Content

Unit	%	When?	Content
Component 1: Personal Investigation	60%	September to December (Year 1)	Drawing Project: You will explore accurate, expressive and inventive ways of recording your experiences and observations through drawing. Over the first term you will have teacher led lessons developing confident drawing skills, leading into an independent project over term two taking ideas and themes from this drawing project into final outcomes.
		January (Year 1) to January (Year 2)	Personal Investigation: your choice of theme Inspiration Book – finding inspiration from a range of sources - learning how to research, analyse and respond to art, craft and design. Responding and experimenting with ideas – developing skills Trip to Art Galleries – recording experiences to inspire your own project.

			<p>Essay – 1000-3000 word essay that makes links with your own art and shows critical and contextual understanding.</p> <p>Practical project resulting in final outcomes – you will start the main project in September of Year 2.</p>
Component 2: Externally Set assignment	40%	February to May (Year 2)	<p>Choose from eight given starting points from the exam board.</p> <p>Preparation work over three months to develop ideas. Fifteen hours (three days) of supervised sessions to complete your final outcomes.</p> <p>All work is assessed as a whole project for final grade.</p>

Career Links

Students who have done Fine Art frequently go on to degree courses via an Art Foundation course and have ended up pursuing careers in Painting, Architecture, Art Therapy, Teaching, Theatre Design, Film and Media work, Sculpture, Graphic Design, Arts Administration and Gallery work. Some go directly on to degree courses in subjects like those above, but also Art History and combined courses.

For further information see Mrs J Lewis, Ms Burchell or Ms Wolfe

Art: Photography (A Level, AQA)

This course introduces you to a variety of approaches when working with photographic images including portraiture, landscape, still life and experimental imagery. You will look at photography in a historical context and consider how it has developed over time informing contemporary practice and current trends.

The course is well resourced, including having a fully working darkroom and studio, and a full time technician. The course starts going back to the basics of photography to develop stronger skills when considering perspective, movement, composition, rule of thirds, depth of field and the elements of art.

You will explore the different styles, genres, processes and techniques available to the photographer and start to plan what area of photography you will like to investigate independently including film. You are taught how to work with digital and film SLR cameras taking shoots on location and in the studio. You will also learn how to manipulate images using Photoshop and darkroom derivatives to help you achieve more original, experimental and skilful outcomes.

Entry Requirements: GCSE Grade 4 in Photography. Good DSLR camera skills are essential and you will need to develop these skills alongside digital editing using Apple Mac computer software. If you have not taken Photography at GCSE you will be expected to show work of the expected level before coming to the induction session and starting the course.

Course Content

Unit	%	When?	Content
Component 1: Personal Investigation	60%	September to December (Year 1)	Elements Project: the theme of the first project is based on the elements of art and will be given to you during the induction day, so you have the summer to start developing your work. Over the first term you will have teacher led lessons developing photographic skills, leading into an independent project over term two taking ideas and themes from this Elements project.
		January (Year 1) to January (Year 2)	<p>Personal Investigation: your choice of theme</p> <p>Inspiration Book – finding inspiration from a range of sources - learning how to research, analyse and respond to art and photography.</p> <p>Responding and experimenting with ideas – developing skills</p> <p>Trip to Art Galleries – recording experiences to inspire your own project.</p> <p>Essay – 1000-3000 word essay that makes links with your own art and shows critical and contextual understanding.</p> <p>Practical project resulting in final outcomes – you will start the main project in September of Year 2.</p>

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment	40%	February to May (Year 2)	Choose from eight given starting points from exam board. Preparation work over three months to develop ideas. Fifteen hours (three days) of supervised sessions to complete final outcome. All work is assessed as a whole project for final grade.
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Career Links

It is especially appropriate for students seeking to go on to an Art Foundation course or for those who wish to study degree courses in Photography, Media and Film Production, Photojournalism, or careers in Marketing, Advertising, Publishing and in the Film Industry.

For further information see Mr Ray

Art: Textile Design (A Level, AQA)

This course introduces you to a variety of experiences that explore a range of textiles processes and techniques, both old and new. Throughout the first year, you will experience a number of workshops that aim to develop your skills and give you a sound core knowledge of textiles processes that will be used in your course work. You will learn printing techniques, pattern and surface decoration that will enable you to design and produce your own fabrics leading on to pattern drafting and the construction of garments. During the second year, you will be able to choose the direction you want to take your work in, both contextually and through the choice of media. You will cover a wide range of modern and traditional techniques and skills with a focus on fashion and interiors.

Entry Requirements

GCSE Grade 4 in Art or Art Textiles. If you have not taken Art or Textiles GCSE you will be expected to show work of the expected level before coming to the induction session and starting the course.

Course Content

Unit	%	When?	Content
Component 1: Personal Investigation	60%	September to December (Year 1)	Experiences: You will be taught a wide range of construction skills, including pattern drafting, mannequin draping and basic tailoring. You will explore techniques using a variety of different media and fabrics that all relate to significant experiences in your life. You will make a garment of your choice as a result of your experiments and research.
		January (Year 1) to January (Year 2)	<p>Personal Investigation: your choice of theme</p> <p>Inspiration Book – finding inspiration - learning how to research, analyse and respond to photographers and artists.</p> <p>Responding and experimenting with ideas – developing skills.</p> <p>Further experimentation of a wide range of techniques building on the skills acquired in the first project including pattern drafting and garment construction.</p> <p>Essay – 1000-3000 word essay that makes links with your own textiles work and shows critical and contextual understanding.</p> <p>Practical project resulting in final outcomes – you will start the main project in September of Year 2.</p>

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment	40%	February to May (Year 2)	<p>Choose from eight given starting points from the exam board.</p> <p>Preparation work over three months to develop ideas. Fifteen hours (three days) of supervised sessions to complete your final outcomes.</p> <p>All work is assessed as a whole project for final grade.</p>
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Career Links

Students who have done Textiles frequently go on to degree courses via an Art Foundation course and have ended up enjoying a wide range of related careers such as Textiles and Fashion Design in Industry, (this can include a wide range of high street and designer fashion houses) Fashion Journalism, Interior Design, Fashion buying and selling, Marketing, Branding, Environmental development of new fibres, Sportswear technology and design and many more. The Textiles industry is the biggest in Britain.

For further information talk to Ms S Walton

Biology (A Level, Pearson Edexcel)

SNAB (Salters-Nuffield Advanced Biology) is largely taught in context through real-life biology. For example, we start with an account of cardio-vascular disease and then go on to look at the factors that make it more likely that any one of us will suffer from a stroke or heart attack. This allows us to introduce the biochemistry of fats and carbohydrates bit by bit, as you need to know them to understand about strokes and heart diseases, rather than all at once.

Some parts of the course are very practically based and you should be prepared to become involved in practical work to develop the necessary skills. Reading around the subject is also important as this will broaden your understanding.

Entry Requirements:

In Combined (Double) Science: Grade 6 in both exams.

In Separate (Triple) Sciences: Grade 6 in GCSE Biology, plus another 6 in another science.

Grade 5 in GCSE Mathematics.

Course Content and Assessment

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1	33.3	May/ June 2026	Topic 1: Lifestyle, health and risk This topic builds on students' knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the circulatory system and the importance of lifestyle choices to health. Topic 2: Genes and health This topic considers several biological principles related to cystic fibrosis. The topic also allows for discussion of the social and ethical issues surrounding genetic screening for genetic conditions. Topic 3: The voice of the genome This topic follows the development of multi-cellular organisms from single cells to complex individuals. Topic 4: Biodiversity and natural resources This topic focuses on biodiversity and the wealth of natural resources used by humans. Topic 5: On the wild side This topic covers ecosystems, climate change and our responsibilities as stewards of the environment. Topic 6: Infection, immunity and forensics This topic covers forensic pathology, bacteria and viruses, and the evolutionary battles that take place between invading pathogens and their hosts.
Paper 2	33.3	May/ June 2026	In addition to topics 1 - 4 above, the paper will also examine: Topic 7: Run for your life This topic is centred on the physiological adaptations which enable humans/animals to undertake strenuous exercise. Topic 8: Grey matter The nervous system, brain imaging and the regions of the brain are covered.

Unit 3	33.3	May/ June 2026	The paper will include synoptic questions drawn from two or more different topics from the specification. A pre-released scientific article will be available from Easter. A significant proportion of the paper will consist of comprehension questions based on the article.
Practical competency	Pass/ Fail		Course endorsed practical skills are assessed continuously by the teacher(s) and only at the completion of the course is a pass or fail assessment submitted to the exam board.

All three papers will include questions that target the conceptual and theoretical understanding of experimental methods.

All three papers will include questions that target mathematics at higher level GCSE. This will equate to a minimum of 10% of the marks across all three papers.

There is no longer any assessed coursework, but students will expect to demonstrate practical competency. There may be an opportunity for a short field trip at the end of Year 12.

Career Links

The course provides a sound grounding in Biology for those wishing to pursue a variety of biologically based courses and careers. There is an emphasis on Human Biology in a number of areas on this course that provide a good introduction for those interested in pursuing Medicine and related subjects.

For further information, please see Mr Bonney

Business (OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical)

Business is the investigation of how businesses work efficiently in all aspects of their operations. It focuses on the internal functions of business and the formation of strategy, and it also examines the external environment with which the business must interact in order to meet the needs of its customers.

A Business classroom is an exciting place to be. Active discussion is encouraged and students will be able to draw upon their own knowledge of the wider world to better inform their understanding of the topics. The Cambridge Technical qualification allows students to be assessed through both external examinations and internally assessed ongoing coursework. The qualification will give learners skills, knowledge and a thorough understanding of business; it is equivalent to one full A level and will allow learners access to higher education on business-related programmes.

Entry Requirements: GCSE grade 4 in Mathematics.

Course Content

Year 12	%	When	Content
The Business Environment (External exam)	33.3%	May of Year 12	<i>The Business Environment</i> will give learners an understanding of the wider external contexts in which businesses operate and of internal business functions and their interdependencies. The unit will allow learners to appreciate how legal, financial, ethical and resource constraints can affect business behaviour and the influence that different stakeholders can have and how businesses must respond.
Customers and Communication (Internally assessed coursework)	16.6%	June of Year 12	<i>Customers and Communication</i> will allow learners to appreciate how vital customers are to the success of a business. It will give learners an understanding of how important it is for businesses to know their customers and what influences customer behaviour. In this unit, learners will understand how to communicate with customers.
Year 13			
Working in Business (External exam)	16.6%	January of Year 13	<i>Working in Business</i> will give learners an understanding of the type of critical skills needed when working in business, such as organisation, prioritisation and effective communication. The unit will allow learners to learn how to use different business documents and about organisational protocols that most businesses would expect employees to follow.
2 x optional units (Internally assessed coursework)	33.3%	June of Year 13	The optional units cover a wide range of topics to give learners the opportunity to take a unit that is relevant to a specific aspect of business; for example marketing, accounting, human resources or business planning. Learners will also develop transferable skills such as communication, planning, teamwork, research and analysis.

Career Links

The Cambridge Technical in Business could help you go on to further study in a range of areas, e.g. Business, Management, Marketing, Accounting and Finance. With a growing service sector economy, employment prospects for students with a sound understanding of business are good.

If you have any further queries, please contact Mr Langford in the Business and Economics Department

Chemistry (A Level, Edexcel)

This course teaches the theoretical and practical skills necessary to become an advanced chemist. There will normally be one or two practical sessions per week backed up by theoretical work. The course is designed to relate to real-world chemistry and each topic is framed by the context in which the chemistry can be applied. Our course still involves pops and squeaks, colour changes and smells. You will gain new skills which are useful in the subject, but many are also transferrable. Chemistry is a subject of endless possibilities; many of our ex-students are involved in cutting edge research into new drugs and materials. In order to do well on this course you will need to work very hard outside the classroom, solving problems and assimilating new ideas.

Entry Requirements:

In Combined (Double) Science: Grade 6 in both exams.

In Separate (Triple) Sciences: Grade 6 in GCSE Chemistry, plus a 6 in another Science GCSE.

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Mathematics.

Course Content

A-level Topics in Year 12	
Topic 1	Atomic structure and the periodic table
Topic 2	Bonding and structure
Topic 3	Redox 1
Topic 4	Inorganic Chemistry and the Periodic Table
Topic 5	Formulae equations and Amounts of Substance
Topic 6	Organic Chemistry 1
Topic 7	Modern Analytical Techniques 1
Topic 8	Energetics
Topic 9	Kinetics 1
Topic 10	Equilibrium 1

A-level Topics in Year 13	
Topic 11	Equilibrium 2
Topic 12	Acid-base Equilibria
Topic 13	Energetics
Topic 14	Redox 2
Topic 15	Transition Metals
Topic 16	Kinetics 2
Topic 17	Organic Chemistry 2
Topic 18	Organic Chemistry 3
Topic 19	Modern Analytical Techniques 2

Assessment

Assessment consists of three exams at the end of Year 13, Papers 1 and 2 cover separate topics with Paper 3 being a synoptic paper which has a stronger focus on the practical elements of the course. There is also a practical endorsement. Course endorsed practical skills are assessed continuously by the teacher(s), including during 16 Core Practical assessments throughout Years 12 and 13. Only at the completion of the course is a pass or fail assessment submitted to the exam board.

Study Tips

- Be organised! Have a folder for each teacher that contains dividers for each of the current topics, and have a large file at home to transfer your work to at the end of each topic.
- Keep up-to-date with your home learning. You will receive feedback on your home learning tasks in lessons so if you fail to keep up with this you will miss out on valuable advice on how to progress.
- Review your work regularly, not just before assessments.
- Use a wide range of resources to develop your understanding of each element of the course and also how they link together.
- Do not let anything you don't understand to pass by without being addressed. You may need to see your teacher on a one-one basis or in a small group. They will be more than happy to arrange an appropriate time to do this.

Career Links

Students who have studied Chemistry at Backwell have gone to university to study for degrees in Chemistry, Biochemistry, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy, Pharmacology, Environmental Sciences and various Engineering degrees. A level Chemistry is a qualification that is highly valued by universities and employers as they demonstrate abilities in analysis and problem solving which are sought after skills.

If you have any further queries, please contact Dr A Hancock

Computer Science (A Level, OCR)

Computer Science is a practical subject where students can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real world systems. While the assessment is based heavily on two paper based final exams, the course is very much centred on practical programming and students spend the majority of their time developing programming skills. It is an intensely creative subject and one that really develops the students' problem-solving skills by learning about something called computational thinking. This is a tool kit for finding solutions for big problems. A skill that is very transferable.

The aims of this qualification are to enable students to develop:

- an understanding of, and ability to apply, the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science including; abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation
- the ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems including writing programs to do so
- the capacity for thinking creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- the capacity to see relationships between different aspects of computer science
- mathematical skills
- the ability to articulate the individual (moral), social (ethical), legal and cultural opportunities and risks of digital technology

Entry requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE Computer Science (Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics if Computer Science not previously studied).

Unit	%	When?	Content
Unit 1 Computer Systems	40%	June of Year 13 2 ½ hour exam 140 marks	Characteristics of contemporary processors. Software and software development. Programming Exchanging data. Data types, structures and algorithms. Legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues.
Unit 2 Algorithms and programming	40%	June of Year 13 2 ½ hour exam 140 marks	Elements of computational thinking. Programming and problem solving. Pattern recognition, abstraction and decomposition. Algorithm design and efficiency. Standard algorithms.
Unit 3 Programming Project	20%	Coursework submitted in April of Year 13 70 marks	Analysis of a problem to enable students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the assessment objectives. Students will need to analyse the problem, design a solution, implement the solution and give a thorough evaluation.

Career Links

This course is ideal for students wishing to pursue Computer Science, Information Systems, Multimedia, Software Engineering, Computer Networking, e-Business and Information Management at degree level, or for anyone considering any kind of career in computing. It is also a good additional subject for any student considering taking Mathematics, Engineering or Sciences.

For further information contact Mrs M Hepworth.

Design and Technology: Product Design (A Level, AQA)

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. This course encourages students to use creativity and imagination when applying an iterative design process to develop and modify designs, and to design and make prototypes that solve real world problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants, aspirations and values.

This Product Design course enables students to identify market needs and opportunities for new products, initiate and develop design solutions, and make and test prototypes.

Key features:

- The first year will allow students to develop an understanding of many different materials classifications and the various methods for processing these materials. Students will also design, analyse and develop their practical skills through a range of investigation, design and make activities.
- By the end of the first year and through the second year, candidates will be involved in a sustained design and make project (a Non-Exam Assessment or NEA), based on a design brief developed by the candidate. They will research, design, develop and manufacture a high quality product which would be appropriate for its intended purpose.

Entry Requirements: GCSE grade 4 or higher in Design Technology or other related subject.

Course Content

Year 12	%	When?	Content
			<p>Technical Principles Candidates will study the various materials categories, their properties, and applications. We will investigate how to take a concept through to a final product including investigation into design rights, environmental impacts, designing for repair.</p> <p>Designing and Making Principles Candidates will be given the opportunity to solve contextualised problems and develop advanced manufacture skills through a range of small design and make tasks. Candidates will discover various methods of communicating their designs and industrial and commercial viability.</p> <p>Our project tasks in this first year of A Level will not be assessed by the exam board, but will be designed to generate and consolidate knowledge of materials, components and systems, as well as improve designing and practical skills and instil growing confidence in working independently in the workshop.</p> <p>Work will begin from June in Year 12 on the assessed, final project (NEA).</p>
Year 13			
Design and Make Project (NEA)	50%	Start June of Year 12 to	Substantial design and make task, incorporating practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles and specialist knowledge.

		Finish March of Year 13	<p>Evidence will be provided in an A3 presentation design portfolio, any prototypes created as part of the process and the working final prototype.</p> <p>This major task must demonstrate the candidate's ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a concept idea through the iterative design process. • Design and make a high quality product which can be tested and evaluated by his/her target market/client. • Apply relevant knowledge and understanding, including key skills, to a range of technological activities, e.g. testing of materials/systems/mock-ups. • Relate work to relevant industrial and commercial practices. • Communicate to relevant audiences their ideas, understanding and decision-making processes. <p>Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) (approx. 80 hours). 100 marks. This unit is marked by the teacher and moderated by AQA by a visiting moderator.</p>
Paper 1: Technical Principles (Exam)	30%	June of Year 13	<p>Assessing the candidate's knowledge and understanding of technical principles, along with their ability to analyse and evaluate the wider issues in Design and Technology (e.g. moral, social, environmental concerns; global manufacturing; new technologies, etc.).</p> <p>A mixture of short answer and extended response questions. Written Examination (2 hours 30 minutes). 120 marks</p>
Paper 2: Design and Making Principles (Exam)	20%	June of Year 13	<p>The exam assesses the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the designing and making process including product analysis and commercial manufacture.</p> <p>A mixture of short answer and extended response questions. Written Examination (1 hours 30 minutes). 80 marks</p>

Costs associated with this course

A revision guide is recommended at around £15. In Year 12 £20 is charged to cover the cost of materials. In Year 13 students will need to purchase the materials they need to manufacture their final project in the NEA. Costs for this will vary depending on the project chosen by the student.

Career Links

Design skills and the ability to visualise new ideas can be useful in many job families such as architecture, product design, arts crafts and design, graphic design, construction, engineering (various), aerospace, maintenance and manufacturing and many more.

There are further higher education courses available to degree level in Design and Technology: Product Design and other Design and Technology associated subjects, e.g. Architectural and Transport Design, leading to jobs in associated fields.

For further information about the course contact Ms R Lavelle

Drama and Theatre Studies (A Level, AQA)

Explore practical and theoretical aspects of performance at an advanced level, drawing on the work of key practitioners and play texts.

Entry Requirements: A grade 4 in Drama if taken at GCSE or a Merit in Performing Arts qualification, or a grade 5 in English.

Course Content

Units	%	When?	Content
Component 1: Drama and theatre	40%	May/ June of Year 13	What's assessed: Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre through the study of two set plays and the analysis of the work of live theatre-makers. How it's assessed: Written exam.
Component 2: Creating original drama (practical)	30%		What's assessed: Process of creating devised drama through the creation and performance of a devised drama piece (students may contribute as performer, designer or director). The devised piece must be influenced by the work and methodologies of one prescribed theatre practitioner. How it's assessed: Working notebook and devised performance.
Component 3: Making theatre (practical)	30%		What's assessed: Practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts each taken from a different play (the methodology of a prescribed theatre practitioner is applied to the exploration of one of the extracts). Students record and analyse the practical exploration / interpretation of the extracts in a reflective journal. How it's assessed: Performance of a play extract and a reflective report.

Career Links

Drama and Theatre Studies compliments further study in Drama, English (language or literature) or the humanities at undergraduate level. Some of our students have gone on to successfully secure places at specialist drama schools.

For further information talk to Miss Merry or any of the Drama Department staff

Economics (A Level, AQA (7136))

Do you want to understand how the world *really* works? Then Economics is the subject for you. Economists face one central dilemma: the needs and desires of humans are near limitless whilst the resources available to them are finite. This means that humans must make choices about their consumption. Economics is the study of these choices: What should we produce? How should we produce it? For whom should it be produced?

Economics is the perfect subject for those with an interest in current affairs. You'll learn economic theory at micro and macro levels that will give you insights into individual and social behaviour. It is impossible to understand global events without a grasp of economics. You'll learn why countries lurch between booms and busts; why the global economy collapsed in 2008; how prices in markets determine the supply of and demand for products; how the corona virus pandemic has affected global markets.

Economics is the perfect subject for humanities students wishing to demonstrate and maintain their maths skills and for maths and science students that wish to develop their essay writing skills. You'll be required to analyse and interpret data, but also to present logical, coherent arguments concerning economic policy at an individual and governmental level. You will leave the course a more rounded, worldly person, with a deep understanding of human behaviour in a world of scarcity.

Entry requirements: GCSE grade 5 in Mathematics and grade 5 in English.

Course Content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Markets and Market Failure	33.3%	June of Year 13	<p>This unit focuses on microeconomics: the choices made by individual economic agents (individuals and firms) in markets. Will think about how market forces allocate resources within individual markets and what happens when that mechanism fails. Microeconomic models such as demand and supply, perfect competition, monopoly, the operation of the price mechanism and the causes of market failure are central to this part of the course. Other key models relate to the operation of labour markets, wage determination and causes of inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth.</p> <p>This material is assessed via one set of context questions requiring the student to interpret, analyse and comment on economic data, and one essay question. The content of this paper is taught over Year 12 and 13.</p>
Paper 2: The National and International Economy	33.3%	June of Year 13	<p>This unit focuses on macroeconomics: how national and international economies function together. It will build a good knowledge of developments in the UK economy and government policies over the past fifteen years and will explore developments in the world economy, including the European Union, and how these have affected the UK. A range of economic objectives will be considered, including growth, controlling inflation, tackling unemployment and achieving satisfactory trade balances. The impact and effectiveness of current government policies to deal with these issues will be taught, as well as considering alternative policies and approaches.</p>

			This material is assessed via one set of context questions requiring the student to interpret, analyse and comment on economic data, and one essay question. The content of this paper is taught over Year 12 and 13.
Paper 3: Economic Principles and Issues	33.3%	June of Year 13	This paper assesses from across the course. It has multi-choice questions which test knowledge and a case study section comprised of short format questions requiring comparison, application and analysis as well as a longer format essay question requiring evaluation. It is a great opportunity to show what you have learned.

Career Links

Economics is regarded as an entry qualification for courses at elite universities in such areas as PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics), Accounting, MORSE (Mathematics, Operations Research, Statistics and Economics), Management Science, Business Administration, and International Business Economics. Many of our A level students go on to study for degrees at Russell Group Universities in related subjects and then progress into careers in accountancy, actuarial science, financial analysis, investment analysis and the like. Economics is a well-respected A Level that appeals to many employers in both the public and private sectors.

For further information contact Mr Langford in the Business and Economics Department

English Language (A Level, Edexcel Pearson)

The study of English Language or Linguistics will help you understand how people communicate and assign meaning (semantics), how they do things with words (pragmatics) or how language relates to social factors (sociolinguistics), psychological aspects (psycholinguistics), or power and injustice (discourse analysis). Studying these subjects will open your eyes to a world that has previously been hidden in plain sight.

By studying language in depth (using data and theoretical frameworks), you will develop critical awareness and gain invaluable skills for your future working life – vital communication, analytical and critical skills. But importantly, such critical awareness will allow you to be a conscious, critical human being who is able to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions, understand the role of language in social control, propaganda and manipulation, and be able to use this understanding to make the world a less oppressive, more equal and just place.

Entry Requirements: At least a grade 5 in GCSE English.

Course Content

Units	%	Content
Component 1: Language Variation 2 hours 15 minutes	35%	<p>Individual Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 30-mark essay question on two unseen 21st-century linked texts/data. • Candidates explore how language choices reflect and construct identity. <p>Variation over Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 30-mark essay question on two thematically linked texts/data from two different periods. • Candidates explore variation in the English language from 1550 to present day
Component 2: Child Language 1 hour 15 minutes	20%	<p>Child Language Acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One section. One 45-mark essay based on a set of unseen data. • Exploration of language acquisition between the ages of 0 and 8. • Phonemic symbols and signs provided.
Component 3: Investigating Language 1 hour 45 minutes	25%	<p>Investigating Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates select a research focus from five topic areas with a subtopic pre-release in December and undertake their own independent research. • Section A: one 15-mark question on unseen data from the subtopic candidates have researched. • Section B: one 30-mark question from the subtopic candidates have researched making links to their own investigation.
Non-Examined Assessment: Crafting Language	20%	<p>Crafting Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates produce two assignments. • Assignment 1 – two pieces of original writing from the same genre. • Assignment 2 – one commentary reflecting on the two pieces of original writing. • 2500-3000 words.

Career Links

English is particularly desirable for working in journalism and publishing; marketing; education and training; counselling and social services; and advertising and management. It is increasingly considered a desirable social science needed within an increasingly digitalised society.

For further information contact Miss Jackson

English Literature (A Level, AQA specification A)

English Literature offers an opportunity like no other A Level: the chance to explore the lives, narratives and worlds of others. Through reading some of the greatest works of the literary imagination, you will dive into strange and unique worlds, vicariously live lives that you never dreamed possible and experience the joys and struggles of your fellow man. Through analysing the literary canon, you will develop close analysis skills and your own unique interpretations of texts. You will cultivate a love of language and the writer's craft. In classroom debates and critical discussion, you will be challenged to voice your own opinions and your critical imagination will flourish.

Entry Requirements: At least a Grade 5 in GCSE English Literature. To complete this course, you are also expected to be a committed reader who is prepared to read widely throughout the course.

Course Content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Love Through the Ages (3 hours)	40%	End of Year 13	You will study three texts that will allow you to explore the theme of 'Love Through the Ages'. This unit will also allow you to develop your confidence in responding to unseen poetry texts. The three-hour examination will test your close reading skills as well as your broader knowledge of the texts you have studied.
Paper 2: Texts in Shared Contexts. (2 hours 30 minutes)	40%	End of Year 13	This 2 ½ hour examination will allow you to study a further three texts of all genres. You will explore the key concerns of Twentieth Century Literature through reading and comparing texts that explore the post Second World War world. The exam will require you to respond to unseen texts as well as writing individual and comparative essays on the texts you have studied.
Non-examined assessment: Independent Critical Study	20%	Term 3 of Year 13	In this non examined assessment you will have the opportunity to write a sustained, 2,500 word comparative essay of two texts, one of which must be written before 1900. In this essay you will be expected to prove that you have the skills to be a confident, independent reader through selecting a text of your own that you wish to compare to a text you have studied in class.

Course associated with this course

You will need to buy your own copies of: *Othello*, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Feminine Gospels* and *The Great Gatsby*

Career Links

English Literature is a rigorous and highly academic A Level that is sought after by all Russell Group universities. Students of English Literature can go on to study Law, History, Politics, Journalism, Advertising and Media, as well as literature-based degree courses. The critical thinking, creative skills and development of a formal, professional writing style offered by the subject make it a perfect complement to arts or science subjects. Students who have taken English Literature at Backwell have gone on to study English Literature at degree level or have taken higher education courses in such subjects as Sociology, History, Psychology or Journalism. Literature students have gone on to gain employment in a range of areas.

For further information contact Miss Jackson

French (A Level, AQA)

“It is arrogant to assume that we can get by in English or that everyone else will speak our language. Learning a foreign language is polite, demonstrates commitment – and in today’s world is absolutely necessary.”

Sir Trevor MacDonald, Chair, Nuffield Language Inquiry

The A level French course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. You will gain a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity. As well as developing your language skills, you will widen your knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and societies where French is spoken. Examples include technological and social changes, highlights of French-speaking artistic culture, including francophone music and cinema, and who wields political power in the French-speaking world. The most successful A level linguists have always shown a commitment to and an enjoyment of the subject which extends way beyond the classroom. We encourage you to read foreign language magazines, newspapers and books, participate in theatre and cinema visits, and attend lectures out of school. We also encourage you to arrange an exchange visit, a study trip or work experience in a French-speaking country.

Entry Requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE French.

Course Content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing 2 hours 30 minutes	50%	June 2026	Listening and responding to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources Reading and responding to a variety of texts written for different purposes, drawn from authentic resources Translation from French into English Translation from English into French
Paper 2: Writing 2 hours	20%	June 2026	Either one Question in French on a set text, or one question on a set film, or two questions on set texts. Questions will require a critical and analytical response to the work studied.
Paper 3: Speaking 21 - 23 minutes	30%	May 2026	Discussion of a sub-theme based on a stimulus card (5 - 6 minutes) Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9 - 10 minutes) of individual research project

A one year AS qualification in French is also available and will be examined in May/June 2025.

Costs associated with this course

Essential: Textbook: AQA French A level and Year 1 (ISBN: 978-0-19-836688-1) Paperback 19/05/2016 Cost approximately £28, second hand books are often available.

Recommended: A good French grammar book- e.g. Action Grammaire (ISBN: 978-0340915240)
Mot à Mot vocabulary book (ISBN: 978-1510434806)

Career Links

You could study French at degree level either alone or as part of a combined degree, and you will have developed the skills to learn new languages. A variety of career options is open to students of French, whether you choose to work at home or abroad, for example in business, engineering, scientific research, technology, journalism, international aid, media, entertainment, the leisure industry or teaching.

For further information see Miss Young

Geography (A Level, AQA)

This engaging and relevant course will give you the opportunity to;

- engage with the relationship of human populations to each other over space and time.
- study the relationship between human populations and their physical environment at a variety of scales from the local to the global.
- consider your own role in relation to themes and issues being studied and the roles, values and attitudes of others including decision-makers.

You will gain an appreciation of current events in both human geography and in physical geography. You will learn how to design and implement a fieldwork investigation involving the collection of both primary and secondary data, the clear presentation of your results and accurate analysis of the trends and patterns you have identified. You will acquire a wide range of specific skills for the presentation and analysis of geographical information in the form of maps, graphs, sketches, annotated diagrams, photographs, statistics and extended writing.

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in GCSE Geography.

Course Content

Physical Geography	%	When?	Content
Component 1	40%	June of Year 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and carbon cycles • Glacial systems and landscapes • Hazards <p>This unit is assessed by a 2½ hour written paper (120 marks)</p>
Human Geography			
Component 2	40%	June of Year 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global systems and global governance • Changing places • Population and the environment <p>This unit is assessed by a 2½ hour written paper (120 marks)</p>
Fieldwork			
Component 3	20%		<p>Students complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by the student relating to any part of the specification content. Students are expected to submit a written report of 3,000 - 4,000 words.</p> <p>To help students develop the field skills required to undertake their own individual study, we will be taking them on four days of fieldwork over the course of the two years.</p>

Costs associated with this course

We recommend you purchase the course textbook, which is around £40, and we also give you the opportunity to subscribe to the *Geography Review Magazine* which is roughly £15 for the year. As part of the course, we must complete four days' fieldwork so there will also be a charge for that. In the past, we have undertaken residential trips, which cost around £350-500. Following Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis, we made changes to the fieldwork and last year the cost was £150 for 4 individual fieldwork days taken in the local area. For two of the days, we used the expertise of Field Study Council staff and superb geographical locations at Nettlecombe Court Field Study centre.

Future steps

You will find geographers working in every sector of the economy, including the City, local businesses, not-for-profit organisations, leading highly relevant research or as key decision makers in local and national government.

Use the Royal Geographical Society's website to give more ideas for careers with Geography:
<http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Study+Geography/Careers/Careers+with+geography.htm>

For further information please see Mrs George

German (A Level, AQA)

„Wer fremde Sprache nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen.“
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The A level German course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. You will gain a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity. As well as developing your language skills, you will widen your knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and societies where German is spoken. Examples include: The changing state of the family, immigration and integration, festivals and traditions, cultural life in Berlin, and Germany's role in Europe. The most successful A level linguists have always shown a commitment to and an enjoyment of the subject which extends way beyond the classroom. We encourage you to read foreign language magazines, newspapers and books, participate in theatre and cinema visits, and attend lectures out of school. We also encourage you to arrange an exchange visit, a study trip or work experience in a German-speaking country.

Entry Requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE German.

Course Content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1 Listening, Reading and Writing 2 hours 30 minutes	50%	June 2026	Listening and responding to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources Reading and responding to a variety of texts written for different purposes, drawn from authentic resources Translation from German into English Translation from English into German
Paper 2 Writing 2 hours	20%	June 2026	Either one question in German on a set text, or one question on a set film, or two questions on set texts. Questions will require a critical and analytical response to the work studied.
Paper 3 Speaking 21 - 23 minutes	30%	May 2026	Discussion of a sub-theme based on a stimulus card (5 - 6 minutes) Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9 - 10 minutes of individual research project)

A one year AS qualification in German is also available and will be examined in May/June 2024.

Costs associated with this course

Textbook: AQA German A level and Year 1 (ISBN: 978-0-19-836689-8) Paperback 02/06/2016. Cost new approximately £25, second hand books are often available.

Career Links

You could study German at degree level either alone or as part of a combined degree, and you will have developed the skills to learn new languages. A variety of career options is open to students of German, whether you choose to work at home or abroad, for example in business, engineering, scientific research, technology, the leisure industry or teaching.

For further information see Mr Furnival

Health and Social Care *(OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical)*

This vocational is designed to provide an understanding of the many and varied aspects of health and social care services. The Level 3 Cambridge Technical provides a grounding that can be used to access higher education, further training or employment within the sector. An interest in pursuing a future career in, or related to, health or social care is important.

The **Level 3 Extended Certificate** is equivalent to one A Level. It involves studying six units over two years – three of which are internally assessed (assignment-based) and three of which are externally assessed (examinations). One of the exams is worth 1.5 units and one of the assignment units is only worth 0.5 units, which means:

58% exam + 42% assignment

There are four compulsory units:

- **Building positive relationships** in health and social care (assignment work - internally assessed)
- **Equality, diversity and rights** in health and social care (exam - externally assessed)
- **Health, safety and security** in health and social care (exam - externally assessed)
- **Anatomy and physiology** for health and social care – 1.5 unit size (exam - externally assessed)

Two other units have been chosen by the teachers (both are internally assessed):

- **Nutrition** for health (0.5 unit size)
- **Sexual Health, Reproduction and Early Development**

Assessment: The internally assessed units involve assignments and project work, which requires a high level of workload management and organisation from students. These are internally marked and moderated by OCR. External assessment in this qualification will involve written examinations including case studies and scenarios related to the health and social care sector which students will need to apply their knowledge and understanding to.

Overall award levels

At the end of the two years, you will receive a Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*. Pass is equivalent to a grade E at A level, Merit is equivalent to a grade C, Distinction to a grade A and Distinction* to a grade A*.

UCAS points available

Cambridge Technicals provide a base for progression to university, apprenticeships or work and are recognised for UCAS tariff points (although it is important to check individual course requirements when considering university options). A Pass is worth 16 UCAS points, a Merit is worth 32 points, Distinction 48 points and a Distinction* 56 points.

Entry requirements: General Sixth Form entry requirements. The scientific demands of the 'Anatomy and Physiology' exam unit needs to be fully considered by any student wishing to take this course.

Career Links

This can lead to further study at university or to careers in health or social care settings such as nursing, elderly care, nursery nursing, social work, early years education, mental health, special educational need support work.

For further details speak to Mrs Milsom or Mrs Griffiths (Science).

History (A Level, AQA)

Our students will understand that History is a constructed narrative, dependent on perspective and can be contested, while also understanding that within this one can strive for truth and identify falsehood through gaining knowledge and interrogating sources. Importantly we guide and support students to combine all of these skills together and to develop a strong line of argument and well supported judgement within their essays. Through our teaching Backwell students will develop into critically informed citizens. The ability to think and work independently is essential to success at A Level and students will be expected to undertake extensive reading to support their studies. In History teachers and students work together as a team, with a mixture of teacher led sessions and seminar work where pupils become the masters of specific topics and take responsibility to teach one another. Our approach ensures students always feel well supported by their teachers, but are also empowered to develop individual autonomy over their learning.

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in GCSE History.

Units	%	When?	Content
Unit 1C: The Tudors: England, 1485–1603	40%	May 2024	Breadth Study This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How effectively did the Tudors restore and develop the powers of the monarchy?• In what ways and how effectively was England governed during this period?• How did relations with foreign powers change and how was the succession secured?• How did English society and economy change and with what effects?• How far did intellectual and religious ideas change and develop and with what effects?• How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?
Unit 2L: Italy and Fascism c.1900- 1945	40%	June 2024	Depth Study This option provides for the study in depth of a period of Italian history during which democracy gave way to Fascism. It requires an exploration of concepts such as liberalism, extremism, Fascism and authority. It also encourages students to reflect on the reasons for political change, the interaction of economic and governmental developments and the factors which promote and sustain dictatorship.
Unit 3: Personal Study: The Holocaust	20%	March 2024	Historical Investigation A personal study based on the Holocaust. Students will be able to choose which question they investigate and will focus on the arguments made by historians about the Holocaust.

Career Links

People sometimes think “You can’t do anything with History”. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Good historians have the ability to read, understand and process a lot of information quickly in order to produce confident, concise, articulate and rational judgements. They ask searching and pertinent questions and are not easily fobbed off. As a result, they are highly sought after in a number of occupations: broadcasting, journalism and the legal profession for example. Some of us just prefer to teach!

For further information please speak to Mrs Butler.

Mathematics (A Level, AQA)

This is a linear two-year course covering Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics, thus giving all students a good grounding in a variety of Mathematical areas. The course emphasises understanding and application of new theory. The final examinations consist entirely of problems to solve, rather than reproduction of lesson notes. So, although you will undoubtedly make notes as you progress through the two year course, the most important aspect of your studies will be practising solving problems and applying the theory covered. To be successful, you must have, or develop, a willingness to tackle questions and become involved with the work. Good students regularly use their private study periods to see staff for one-to-one consultation and this practice is actively encouraged.

Entry Requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE Maths.

Course Content

Exams	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Pure Mathematics (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	Includes all aspects of pure mathematics, including proof, algebra and functions, sequences, trigonometry, exponentials and logs, calculus and numerical methods.
Paper 2: Pure and mechanics (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	Includes all content from paper 1 plus mechanics content (vectors, kinematics, forces, Newton's laws, moments)
Paper 3: Pure and statistics (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	Includes all content from paper1 plus statistics content (statistical sampling, data presentation, probability, distributions, hypothesis testing)

Costs associated with this course

Claswiz calculator fx-991EX - £20 and an online textbook at a cost of approximately £10 for the two years.

Career Links

An A Level in Mathematics is highly regarded by the majority of employers and universities, precisely because of the demands it makes and the skills it develops. Mathematics is a requirement for certain degree qualifications such as Engineering, Physics and Statistics, and is also useful for those interested in apprenticeships in Accounting, Engineering and Technology. An A Level in Maths can lead to a wide variety of careers, for example as an actuary, business analyst, software engineer, technology analyst, information engineer, air traffic controller to name but a few.

For further information please speak to Mrs Manson or Miss Morris

Further Mathematics (A Level, AQA)

The Further Mathematics course is aimed at those people who want a mathematically challenging experience! Conceptually demanding, but very enjoyable and rewarding, the course is excellent preparation for the study of Mathematics at university (or a Mathematics-related subject).

Further Maths A level is always taken alongside A level Maths and there is a significant overlap between the contents of the two A levels.

Entry Requirements: AS Level Further Mathematics (1 year course): GCSE grade 7 in Maths
A Level Further Mathematics (2 year course): GCSE grade 8 in Maths

Course Content

Exam	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Pure (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	Contains Pure Mathematics topics, and includes further work on algebra, polar coordinates, complex numbers, matrices and hyperbolic functions.
Paper 2: Pure (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	The same content as Paper 1
Paper 3: Applied (2 hours)	33%	June of Year 13	This question paper will cover two of the applied units from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics • Discrete Maths • Statistics Decisions on which applied topics to be studied will be made during the course.

Students taking Further Mathematics as an AS qualification only would complete the following exams at the end of Year 12:

AS Exams	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Pure (90 minutes)	50%	June of Year 12	Contains Pure Mathematics topics including complex numbers, further calculus, polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions and further algebra and functions.
Paper 2: (90 minutes)	50%	June of Year 12	This question paper will cover two of the applied units from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics • Discrete Maths • Statistics Decisions on which applied topics to be studied will be made during the course.

Costs associated with this course

Claswiz calculator fx-991EX at £20 and an online textbook at a cost of approximately £10.

Career Links

An A level in Further Mathematics is very highly regarded by employers and universities alike, not necessarily for the content of the FM course but rather the ability to demonstrate excellent problem solving and analytical skills at a very high level. An A level in Further Maths certainly makes you stand out from the crowd academically. This A level qualification is ideal preparation for further mathematical or scientific study at university level.

For further information please speak to Mrs Manson or Miss Morris.

Core Mathematics *(Level 3 equivalent to AS Level, AQA)*

Core Maths is a Level 3 qualification to be taken alongside your other three A Level subjects. The course is aimed at students who want to develop their mathematical skills beyond GCSE.

Core Maths focuses on using and applying maths to solve meaningful problems drawn from other subjects, work, and real life. Students will learn how to critique information presented to them in news articles or journals and learn how data can be used to mislead people, as well as a focus on financial maths, including working with exchange rates, interest rates and taxation.

The Core Maths course includes new content such as statistics, financial maths, the use of spreadsheets for optimisation and making sensible estimates in real life scenarios.

Core maths will support students learning in other subjects as there is some overlap in the skills learned. Specifically Core Maths will help students' performance in: Applied Science, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Economics, Geography, Physics, Psychology, Sociology

Entry Requirements: GCSE grade 4 in maths

Course Content

Exam	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: (1.5 hours)	50%	June of Year 12	Estimation Data analysis Interpreting graphs and charts Financial maths: AER and APR, mortgages, income tax, national insurance, student finance, inflation, budgeting.
Paper 2: Statistical techniques (1.5 hours)	50%	June of Year 12	Critical analysis Statistical techniques: Probability, confidence intervals, correlation and regression

Costs associated with this course

Classwiz calculator fx-991EX at £20

Career Links

Universities recognise the benefits students gain from taking Core Maths, which will not only support their university studies, but also their future career and employment. Some universities will even make alternative offers for students with a Core Maths qualification.

In terms of UCAS tariff points, Core Maths has the same number points as an AS level qualification and therefore contributes to the overall UCAS points required for university admissions.

The problem-solving skills developed during this course are valuable for further study, training or employment.

For further information please speak to Mrs Manson or Miss Morris

Media (A Level, OCR)

Does the media we consume shape our ideas and beliefs or merely reflect them? This is just one of the fascinating questions we'll discuss throughout this A Level.

Media Studies A Level is the exploration of the media that pervades our lives - from TV to newspapers; radio to advertising. You will develop a critical approach to the media that surrounds us, gaining not just new perspectives on media including TV dramas, advertising and the film industry, but a fresh understanding of the wider world. You'll use critical theories to explore a variety of global media products, and you'll also get the chance to create your own. By making your own media, you'll develop technical and project management skills that are highly sought after by employers in a range of different fields. This is an A Level that combines theory and practice, analysis and creativity.

This course would pair well with a range of A Levels including English, psychology and sociology as well as with creative subjects such as photography. If you are looking for a lively, relevant and challenging course, A Level Media could be for you. Be warned, however: this will change the way you watch TV forever.

Entry Requirements: At least a grade 5 in GCSE English.

Course Content

A Level	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Media Messages	35	June 2026	You will conduct two linked in-depth studies that focus on contemporary news in the UK, exploring how and why newspapers and their online counterparts are evolving as media products and the relationship between both online and offline news. You will also use media theory to explore media language and representation, through the following media forms: magazines, advertising and marketing, and music videos.
Paper 2: Evolving Media	35	June 2026	You will explore media industries and audiences, through media products including radio, video games and film. You will also study two long form television dramas: you will engage in an in-depth study of television as an evolving, global media form. You will study one complete episode of a contemporary English language long form TV drama and one complete episode of a non-English language long form TV drama to inform your study.
NEA:	30	Summer 2025	You will create your own media product from a set brief provided by the exam board.

Costs associated with this course

There are useful course textbooks that will be optional to purchase. It would be useful, but not essential, to have access to a Netflix subscription.

Career Links

The skills you will develop through taking this course are highly sought after by a range of employers. Most obvious are careers in film, TV, journalism and other media, but you will also find it useful for a career in public relations, marketing, teaching or business.

For further information please see Mr Elliott.

Music (A Level, Edugas)

Entry Requirements:

- A grade 5 at GCSE Music
- Grade 5 or equivalent on an instrument or voice
- An audition for students who did not take Music at GCSE

Grade 5 Music Theory and regular ensemble playing experience will be a helpful grounding.

Course Content

Exams	%	When?	What?
Component 1: Performing	35/ 25%	<i>Ongoing</i> Examined in Term 4 in Year 13	Option A - Solo and/or ensemble performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance of at least three pieces. At least one must be as a soloist. ▪ Performance should last between 10 and 12 minutes and be of approximately Grade 6 standard. ▪ Pieces must reflect at least two different areas of study. Option B - As above, but six to eight minutes and at least two pieces. Assessed by a visiting examiner.
Component 2: Composing	25/ 35%	<i>Ongoing</i> Submitted at the start of Term 5 in Year 13	Option A – Two contrasting compositions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compositions should be four to six minutes in total ▪ One piece should reflect an aspect of the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. ▪ The second piece is a free composition. Option B - As above, but three compositions that should be eight to ten minutes in total and a third piece should reflect a different area of study.
Component 3: Appraising	40%	Examined in the Summer of Year 13	One written/listening examination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Area of study A: Western Classical Tradition – The Development of the Symphony ▪ Area of study B/C/D: Rock and Pop, Musical Theatre or Jazz ▪ Area of study E/F: Into the 20th Century or into the 21st Century. The exam will consist of: set work analysis, extended responses and wider context, unprepared extracts of music with and without a score, comparison questions.

Career Links

Studying A level Music is excellent preparation for a Music Degree or going on to Music College. It also develops a broad range of skills useful in any sphere of further education.

For more information, please contact Mr Clarke.

Music Technology (A Level, Edexcel)

This course teaches you the theory and practice of Music Technology today. This will be approached through four areas of study. These are:

- Recording and production techniques for both corrective and creative purposes
- Principles of sound and audio technology
- Composition
- The development of recording and production technology

Through these areas of study you will learn how to:

- produce performances using sequencing software in a range of musical styles
- develop the skills required to make high quality digital recordings
- learn how to compose and arrange using music technology
- develop your knowledge of the principles and development of music technology
- learn how to control and interpret data

Entry Requirements: A grade 4 at GCSE Music. It is also possible to start this course without previously taking GCSE Music – please do come and talk to us about your musical skills and interests.

A Level Exams	%	When?	What?
1: Recording	20%	<i>Ongoing</i> Submitted in Term 5 in Year 13	In this unit you will create a recording, chosen from a list of songs. You will learn the production tools and techniques needed to capture, edit, process and mix an audio recording.
2: Technology-based Composition	20%	<i>Ongoing</i> Submitted in Term 5 in Year 13	In this unit you will produce a composition to a brief set by Edexcel. You will learn about creating, editing, manipulating and structuring sounds to produce a technology-based composition.
3: Listening and Analysing	25%	Examined in Summer of Year 13 (1½ hour written exam)	This is a written examination that tests your knowledge and understanding of recording and production techniques and principles, in the context of a series of unfamiliar commercial recordings. There are three areas of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording and production techniques for both corrective and creative purposes • Principles of sound and audio technology • The development of recording and production technology.
4: Producing and Analysing	35%	Summer of Year 13 (2¼ hour practical/ written exam)	This is a written and practical examination that tests your knowledge and understanding of editing, mixing and production techniques, to be applied to unfamiliar materials provided by Pearson in the examination. There are two areas of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recording and production techniques for both corrective and creative purposes • principles of sound and audio technology.

Career Links

This course would be excellent grounding for various Music Technology further education courses, from creative to technical. It would also be useful for going on to a 'straight' music course in conjunction with Music A level. In the past students have also gone on to study Computer Programming and other ICT/Technology courses.

For further information please contact Mr Clarke.

Performing Arts *(OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical)*

The Performing Arts Level 3 certificate, which is equivalent in terms of UCAS points to an A Level, is a broad-based qualification that provides the opportunity for you to explore the world of Performing Arts in a practical way. You will be given the opportunity to specialise in Dance, Drama or Music through mandatory and optional units. As there is no formal written examination, units are assessed through live performance, video evidence, log books and presentation folders.

Entry Requirements: GCSE grade 4 in either Drama, Dance or Music, or a Merit in the equivalent vocational qualification (eg BTEC or OCR).

Course Content

Mandatory Units	Guided Learning Hours	When?	Content
Prepare to work in the Performing Arts sector	120	Externally assessed	<p>This unit will give learners the strategies, attitudes and survival skills for sustaining a career in the performing arts industry.</p> <p>They will learn to self-promote and respond to employment opportunities as well as learning when and how to adapt to a quickly changing economic landscape. It will also give learners an understanding of the expectations of potential employers and bookers so that they can maximise their chances of getting work as a freelancer in a fiercely competitive environment.</p>
Proposal for a commissioning brief	60	Externally assessed	<p>This unit gives learners the opportunity to develop and realise a community arts project.</p> <p>They will consider their creative skills and preferences and think about how these can be utilised in a way that benefits a community or a defined group of participants who may otherwise have little access to the project's content.</p> <p>They will develop knowledge and understanding of administration and planning as well as the creative skills and techniques applicable to a project, learning how to evaluate it in a way that will underpin future projects and professional contexts.</p>
Influential Performance Practice	10	Externally assessed	<p>This unit gives learners the opportunity to find out about genres, styles and periods, social, cultural and historical influences and significant theatrical/performance developments and practitioners.</p> <p>They will develop research skills and experience being able to select, organise and analyse material. This, in turn, will enable learners to present a reasoned argument, and adapt and apply this knowledge into a performance practise, directorial concept, choreographical concept or presentation concept, dependent on the discipline being studied.</p>

Combined Arts	60	Internally assessed	<p>This unit gives the learners an opportunity to research into the history of new performance and influential artistic practice that should reveal a long history of actors, dancers and musicians.</p> <p>They will create a new performance by reinterpreting an existing piece of repertoire. Whether an actor, dancer or musician, learners will find innovative and dynamic ways of combining these disciplines to reimagine the existing piece and making it accessible and fresh for a contemporary audience.</p>
Performing Repertoire	60	Internally assessed	<p>This unit gives the learners the opportunity to work within the discipline and demands of a piece of repertoire and to put their own mark on the material. In this context, repertoire texts and performance pieces are ones that have been performed before and perhaps reinterpreted to reflect the age in which they are revived.</p> <p>They will develop their understanding of the elements that define a piece of repertoire. They will be able to contribute with confidence and focus to dynamic reinterpretations, helping to make repertoire contemporary, up-to-date and engage new audiences.</p>

Career Links

Performing Arts can lead to further study in Performing Arts, Combined Arts, Dance, Drama, Music and Arts Administration at degree and HND level. Students may also choose to use their qualification to go straight into employment, rather than go on to higher education.

For more information please see Miss R Johnson (Dance), Miss Merry (Drama) and Mr Clarke (Music).

Physical Education (A level, OCR)

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in GCSE PE or a merit in a Level 2 'Sport Science' qualification (eg BTEC or OCR). For students who did not complete these courses it is expected that they achieve a grade 6 in Combined (Double) Science, or a grade 6 in Biology and a 6 in another Science.

Course Content

Course component:	Weighting:	Content (<i>and examples of topic areas</i>)
01: Physiological factors affecting performance	30% (90 marks) 2 hour written exam	<p>Anatomy and physiology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body systems; Energy and Recovery. <p>Exercise physiology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet and nutrition; Training methods; Injuries. <p>Biomechanics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of motion; Stability and lever systems.
02: Psychological factors affecting performance	20% (60 marks) 1 hour written exam	<p>Skills Acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills; Methods of practice; Learning theories. • Guidance & feedback; Memory models. <p>Sports Psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual differences. Dynamics; Goal setting. • Attribution; Confidence; Leadership; Stress management.
03: Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport	20% (60 marks) 1 hour written exam	<p>Sport and society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence & evolution of modern sport to 21st century. • Global sporting events <p>Contemporary issues in sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics and Deviance; Modern technology. • Commercialisation; Routes to sporting excellence.
04: Performance in physical education	30% Non-examined assessment (NEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance or Coaching in one activity. • Evaluation and analysis of performance for improvement.

Note: A level Biology, Physics, Psychology and Sociology are all subjects that will be beneficial for supporting understanding.

Career Links

- This course offers a solid foundation for degree level studies in Physical Education and related subjects, and it can also be used as part of your entry qualification for a number of other degree courses.
- Examples of undergraduate degrees students continue to study after studying A-Level PE include Sports and Exercise Science; Sports Coaching Science; Sports Therapy; Sports Education.
- Students who wish to continue with sports studies other than at university can consider a GNVQ Leisure and Recreation course or the BTEC National Diploma Science (Sports) award.

For further information speak to Mr Budd, Mrs Groves, Mr Moore or Mr Bergh

Physics (A Level, OCR A)

Our A Level Physics A specification takes a content led approach to the course. This is a flexible approach where the specification is divided into topics, each covering different key concepts of physics. As learners progress through the course, they'll build on their knowledge of the laws of physics, applying their understanding to areas from sub-atomic particles to the entire universe.

We're striving for good science that's straightforward and engaging to teach, with fair, challenging and relevant assessment that works well in centres and promotes practical activity.

In order to be successful you are expected to practise the work we do outside of lessons and to read around the subject to deepen understanding.

Teaching modules:

- **Year 12:** Development of practical skills in physics, foundations of physics, forces and motion, electrons, waves and photons.
- **Year 13:** Newtonian world and astrophysics, particles and medical physics.

Entry Requirements:

In Combined (Double) Science: Grade 6 in both exams.

In Separate (Triple) Science: Grade 6 in the Physics exams, plus another 6 in another Science GCSE.

In addition to the science results, we require a minimum of a grade 6 in Mathematics.

Course content

Units	%	When?	Content
Modelling physics (Component 01)	37%	May/June at end of Year 13	This component is worth 100 marks and is split into two sections and assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. Learners answer all questions. Section A contains multiple choice questions. This section of the paper is worth 15 marks. Section B includes short answer question styles (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. This section of the paper is worth 85 marks.
Exploring physics (Component 02)	37%	May/June at end of Year 13	This component is worth 100 marks and is split into two sections and assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. Learners answer all questions. Section A contains multiple choice questions. This section of the paper is worth 15 marks. Section B includes short answer question styles (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. This section of the paper is worth 85 marks.
Unified physics (Component 03)	26%	May/June at end of Year 13	This component assesses content from across all teaching modules 1 to 6. Learners answer all questions. This component is worth 70 marks. Question styles include short answer (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions.

Practical Endorsement	Pass or Fail	May at end of Year 13	Course endorsed practical skills are assessed continuously by the teacher(s) and only at the completion of the course is a pass or fail assessment submitted to the exam board.
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Costs associated with this course

We recommend students purchase this revision and practice guide:

CGP A-Level Physics: OCR A Year 1 and 2 Complete Revision and Practice [ISBN-10 : 1789080398]

Cost new is typically £16.

Optional - To help bridge the gap between A-Level and GCSE physics we recommend the following: *CGP Head Start to A-Level Physics [ISBN-10 : 1782942815]*. Cost new is typically £5.

You do not need any textbooks to complete the course. We give you access to an online version of the recommended textbook via Kerboodle, and we have copies for students in lessons and in the library.

Details of the textbook below:

A Level Physics for OCR A Student Book (OCR A Level Sciences) Paperback – 2 July 2015 [ISBN-10 : 0198352182]. Cost new is typically £43.

Career Links

A Level Physics is widely respected and highly valued by employers and institutions alike. Students who have studied Physics have gone on to do apprenticeships or study varying types of Engineering, Physics, Computer Science, Law, Product Design, Naval Architecture, Radiography, Audio Technology, Finance and much, much more.

For further information please contact Dr Evans

Politics (Edexcel)

The beauty of Politics is that it is a living, breathing and ever-changing subject and it enables students to understand and orientate themselves in the world in which they live. We live in an exciting and dynamic world and are exposed daily to the changing nature of our society. 24-hour news and current affairs occur not just in our national newspapers but in front of our eyes. So often students are confronted with the issues of our modern day and ask us "...but why?". In Politics we equip them with the knowledge to know why. In lessons we aim to inspire students' curiosity to know more about the world around them and the way it is governed. We aim to train students to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Politics helps students to understand the complexity of society and government, the various forces and factors which influence politics and society, and the debates which have shaped and continue to shape the world we live in.

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in English Literature and English Language

Course Content

A Level	%	When?	Content
Component 1: UK Politics	Written examination: 2 hrs 33⅓ % of the qualification 84 marks	June 2024	1. Political Participation Democracy and participation Political parties Electoral systems Voting behaviour and the media. 2. Core Political Ideas Conservatism Liberalism Socialism.
Component 2: UK Government	Written examination: 2 hrs 33⅓ % of the qualification 84 marks	June 2024	1. UK Government The constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches. 2. Optional Political Ideas One idea from the following: anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism, nationalism.
Component 3: Comparative Politics	Written examination: 33⅓ % of the qualification 84 marks	June 2024	The US Constitution and federalism, US congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court and civil rights, democracy and participation, Comparative theories.

Costs associated with this course

We would recommend you buy the textbook for this course which is approximately £30. Trips are not a compulsory part of the A Level, but there may be trips run to the Houses of Parliament and costs associated with this.

Career Links

Studying Politics can take you down multiple avenues. These include government, journalism, advertising, law, economics, the civil service, Economics, careers in business, public relations or human rights.

For further information please see Ms Butler

Psychology (A Level, AQA)

Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour. It asks why people feel, think and act the way they do. Studying Psychology will help you develop a number of skills, including how to:

- view the world from different perspectives
- develop critical reasoning skills
- put across your point of view fluently
- plan and conduct scientific investigations
- analyse and interpret data

This means that Psychology students are not just knowledgeable of psychological subject matter, but are well equipped for all sorts of study or employment opportunities. A level Psychology involves essay writing, class discussion, reading and research.

Entry Requirements: GCSE grade 5 in Mathematics and a grade 5 in English.

Course content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1	33.3 %	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Multiple choice, short answer questions and extended writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Influence• Memory• Attachments• Psychopathology
Paper 2	33.3 %	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Multiple choice, short answer questions and extended writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biopsychology• Approaches in Psychology• Research Methods
Paper 3	33.3 %	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Multiple choice, short answer questions and extended writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues and Debates in Psychology• Gender• Aggression• Schizophrenia

Costs associated with this course

One textbook each year costing approximately £25 each.

Career Links

Psychology can help your career directly, such as becoming a psychologist (of which there are many different types), therapist or mental health worker. Psychology can also have indirect links to other careers, such as Law, HR, Advertising, Marketing, PR, Teaching and so on.

For further information please see Mr Sare

Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics (A Level, AQA)

This course is the most popular route to Philosophy in the UK, and as such recognised for this at universities. It develops critical and analytical thinking through studying western Philosophy and Ethics. A thoughtful and inquiring approach is required, as well as being able to write in length using academic language. Lively discussions, seminar presentations, videos, and conferences all form part of the course, to enable you to extend your ideas and to become adept thinkers. Topics such as Religion and Science, Medical Ethics and Gender and Sexuality mean that no two years are ever the same as we adapt our ideas and principles to the constantly changing world.

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in GCSE Philosophy and Religion or Religious Studies and/or a grade 5 in English.

Course Content:

Unit	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Philosophy and Religion and Ethics	50%	June of Year 13	<p>Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments for the existence of God; Can we prove God exists? • Evil and suffering • Religious experience • Religious language • Miracles • The Soul – do they exist and do they live on after death <p>Christian Ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical Theories – Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics, Virtue Ethics • Issue of human life and death • Issues of animal life and death • Introduction to meta ethics • Free will and moral responsibility • Conscience; Bentham and Kant.
Paper 2: Christianity and dialogues	50%	June of Year 13	<p>Section A: Study of Religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of wisdom and authority • Gods/gods/ultimate responsibility • Self, death and the afterlife • Good conduct and key moral principles • Expression of religious identity • Religion gender and sexuality • Religion and science • Religion and secularisation • Religion and religious pluralism <p>Section B: The dialogue between philosophy of religion and religion. How religion is influenced by, and has an influence on, philosophy of religion in relation to the issues studied.</p> <p>Section C: The dialogue between ethical studies and religion. How religion is influenced by, and has an influence on, ethical studies in relation to the issues studied.</p>

Costs associated with this course

If students would like their own revision guide for the course, we recommend the AQA Religious Studies Paper 1: Philosophy and Ethics and AQA Religious Studies Paper 2: Christianity and Dialogues.

Students do not need to buy a textbook, but they will need a ring binder for Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity (three in total) and their own lined paper.

Career Links

The subject is useful as a traditional academic subject, providing a secure foundation for any future direction. Students who have recently studied this course have gone to university to read a diverse range of degrees including Law, History, Mathematics and Philosophy, French and Philosophy, and Accounting. Some have continued their interest through Theology and Philosophy degrees. Others have gone into Nursing and Theatre Studies.

For further information speak to Mrs E Brae

Science (Applied) *(AQA, Level 3 Extended Certificate)*

To obtain the extended certificate students must follow a two-year course covering the units below

Entry Requirements: In GCSE Combined (Double) Science: grade 4 in both exams or two at grade 4 from any of the three Separate Science GCSEs, and at least a grade 4 in Maths.

Course Content : Year 12

Units	%	When?	Content
Unit 1: Key Concepts in Science (written exam)	16.6%	Examined June of Year 12	<p>This is predominantly a theoretical unit in which learners develop their knowledge and understanding of key concepts in science and how they are applied to medical, healthcare, food, environmental, pharmaceutical and material industries. Key areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell structure • Transport mechanisms • Heart • Homeostasis • Breathing and cellular respiration • Photosynthesis and food chains • Atomic structure • The Periodic Table • Amount of substance • Bonding and structure • Enthalpy changes • Useful energy and efficiency • Electricity and circuits • Dynamics
Unit 2: Applied Experimental Techniques (portfolio)	16.6%	Submitted June of Year 12	<p>Learners will produce six scientific reports about six different experimental techniques (2 x biology, 2 x chemistry and 2 x physics). The six experimental techniques include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of respiration • Light dependent reaction in photosynthesis (the Hill reaction) • Volumetric analysis • Colorimetric analysis • Resistivity • Specific heat capacity
Unit 3: Science in the Modern World (written exam with pre-release material)	16.6%	Examined January of Year 12	<p>This unit enables learners to analyse and evaluate scientific information, to develop critical thinking skills and to understand the use of the media to communicate scientific ideas and theories. We will also look at the varied roles scientists can perform in an organisation such as biologist, chemist, geneticist, ecologist and material scientist. Learners will cover the benefits of scientific roles to society and the scientifically related skills needed to undertake certain roles.</p>

Course Content: Year 13

Units	%	When?	Content
Unit 4: The Human Body (written exam)	16.6%	Examined January of Year 13	This unit is designed to develop an understanding of human anatomy and physiology. Key areas include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digestive system and diet• Musculoskeletal system and movement• How oxygen is transported in the blood and how physiological measurements can be applied• The structure and function of the nervous system and brain• Nerve impulses
Unit 5: Investigating Science (portfolio)	16.6%	Submitted June of Year 13	The purpose of this unit is for learners to undertake the role of a research scientist. Learners will research a topic and develop an outline for the practical investigation. They will perform the investigation and present their findings.
Unit 6: Microbiology (portfolio)	16.6%	Submitted June of Year 13	Students undertake research looking at the topic of microbiology, including prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, Gram staining and microbes used in biotechnology. This portfolio unit includes both research and practical investigations looking at different techniques for culturing microorganisms and the factors that affect microbial growth.

Career Links

This qualification is supported by a range of universities and taken alongside other qualifications it can fulfil the entry requirements for a number of science-related higher education courses, including biomedical, forensic and sports science, as well as nursing. This qualification could also support learners in progressing to a related apprenticeship or into employment.

For further information please see Mr Lake or Mrs Thomas

Sociology (A Level, AQA)

Sociology studies the structure, dynamics and 'functioning' of society. Studying sociology offers insights into social and cultural issues. It helps students develop a multi-perspective and critical approach to understanding issues around identity, education, poverty, religion, crime, culture and inequality. The Sociology A level course enables students to develop a number of new skills, including how to:

- use evidence to present arguments
- investigate facts and use deduction
- understand the world around you
- put over your point of view fluently
- be critical of the news/media

As an academic discipline Sociology demands the ability to cope with a variety of theoretical perspectives and the need to be able to write well-structured and evaluative essays. Teaching methods include class discussion, presentations and evaluation of sociological theories and research studies. Written work will be regularly set and students will need to spend time out of lessons consolidating knowledge through wider reading and practising extended writing/essays.

Entry Requirements: Grade 5 in GCSE Sociology (or Grade 5 in GCSE English if Sociology not previously studied)

Course content

Units	%	When?	Content
Paper 1	33.3%	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Short and extended writing questions on the topics of Education and Methods in Context (of Education) . Extended writing question on Theories and Methods in Sociology. All these topics are compulsory.
Paper 2	33.3%	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Extended writing questions on the optional topics. Section A: Families and Households (studied in Year 12). Section B: The Media (studied in Year 13).
Paper 3	33.3%	May/June of Year 13	Two-hour exam. Short and extended writing questions on the topic of Crime and Deviance . Extended writing question on Theories and Methods in Sociology. All these topics are compulsory.

Career Links

Sociology is a great choice of subject for people who want a career in the public sector, such as the Police, Social Work, Nursing or Medicine. However, the subject is also useful in a number of other careers, like Marketing, Advertising, PR, Journalism, Law or Teaching.

For further information please speak to Mrs Milsom (Subject Leader)

Spanish (AQA, A Level)

“It is arrogant to assume that we can get by in English or that everyone else will speak our language. Learning a foreign language is polite, demonstrates commitment – and in today’s world is absolutely necessary.”

Sir Trevor MacDonald, Chair, Nuffield Language Inquiry

The A Level Spanish course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. You will gain a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity. As well as developing your language skills, you will widen your knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and societies where Spanish is spoken. Examples include technological and social changes, highlights of Spanish-speaking artistic culture, including Hispanic music and cinema as well as current issues affecting the Spanish-speaking world. The most successful A level linguists have always shown a commitment to and an enjoyment of the subject which extends way beyond the classroom. We encourage you to read foreign language magazines, news articles and books, participate in theatre and cinema visits, and attend lectures out of school. You will also be eligible to participate in our Exchange visit to Salamanca or organise your own study trip or work experience in a Spanish-speaking country.

Entry Requirements: Grade 6 in GCSE Spanish.

Course Content

A level	%	When?	Content
Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing 2 hours 30 minutes	40%	June 2026	Listening and responding to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources. Reading and responding to a variety of texts written for different purposes, drawn from authentic resources. Translation from Spanish into English. Translation from English into Spanish.
Paper 2: Writing 2 hours	30%	June 2026	Either one question in Spanish on a set text, or one question on a set film, or two questions on set texts. Questions will require a critical and analytical response to the work studied.
Paper 3: Speaking 21-23 mins	30%	May 2026	Discussion of a sub-theme based on a stimulus card (5 - 6 minutes) Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9 - 10 minutes) of individual research project

A one year AS qualification in Spanish is also available and will be examined in May/June 2025.

Costs associated with this course

Textbook: AQA Spanish A level and Year 1 (ISBN: 978-0-19-836690-4) Paperback 26/05/2016. Cost approximately £25, second-hand books often available.

Career Links

You could study Spanish at degree level either alone or as part of a combined degree, and you will have developed the skills to learn new languages. A variety of career options are open to students of Spanish, whether you choose to work at home or abroad, for example in business, engineering, scientific research, technology, journalism, international aid, media, entertainment, the leisure industry or teaching.

For further information see Miss Maguire

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Financial assistance via the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is allocated to the school by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. It is designed to support post-16 students in full-time education with the financial challenges of their continuing education. Funding is constantly under review and the following details are accurate for 2023-24.

There are three parts to the scheme:

- Students who meet certain exceptional criteria (i.e. young people in care or care leavers) are eligible for an annual grant of £1,200.
- Students who are eligible for free school meals are entitled to claim regular monthly payments of up to a maximum of £50 throughout the year.
- Other students whose parents/carers are in receipt of Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit are also able to claim back expenses related to their studies, including transport to school.

Full details and application forms for the 16-19 Bursary Fund will be given to all students during their Induction, again at the start of Year 12 and are also available on the school website, www.backwellschool.net. Please note that the figures above are based on this year's allocation and may be subject to change.

Personal Data

The delivery of examinations and assessments involves centres and awarding bodies processing a significant amount of personal data. Backwell School is required to provide relevant personal data including, but not restricted to, name, date of birth and gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications. In some cases, additional information, which may include sensitive personal data relating to health, will also be collected to support requests for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments and/or special consideration. Backwell School complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and will process all personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Further information can be found in our Data Protection Policy (exams) which is available on request from the Exams Office.

Awarding bodies may be required to provide a candidate's personal data to educational agencies such as the Department for Education (DfE), The Skills Funding Agency, regulators, UCAS, Local Authorities, and Learning Records Service (LRS). Additionally, candidates' personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes. Further information can be found in the JCQ Information for Candidates – Privacy Notice, which is available on the Backwell School website under the 'Curriculum' tab.

Home to School Transport

Concessionary transport: North Somerset does not provide transport beyond the compulsory age of 16, except for those with special needs. There is a concessionary travel scheme whereby a student not entitled to transport *may* be able to take up a spare seat on a hired vehicle. Please contact North Somerset School home to school transport department, on 01934 634715.

School coach service: The school runs a paying coach service covering South Bristol, Long Ashton and Flax Bourton. Sixth Form students are also welcome to apply for a place on one of these buses. Places are limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Please see the Travel to School page of the Backwell School website for more information and how to apply.

Public Bus: Most students travelling by bus from Bristol or Weston obtain a First student bus pass. These can be bought via the First Group website, <https://www.firstbus.co.uk/buy-ticket/students>.

Students in full time education can obtain up to 30% discount on all tickets across the West of England (Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare and Wells). Students must show a form of valid photo ID to the driver on every journey to receive the discount, e.g., a valid NUS card. For further information, visit <https://www.firstbus.co.uk/bristol-bath-and-west/tickets/ticket-types/young-person-16-21-students>.

Train: For students wishing to travel by train, substantial savings can be made on the cost of travel. Students aged 16 or 17 can purchase a 16-17 Saver for £30 per year. This gives you a 50% discount off the cost of adult tickets and adult season tickets. It is valid for one year or until your 18th birthday, whichever comes first. You must keep it with you when you travel (on your phone or wallet). For further information and to apply for a 16-17 Saver, visit <https://www.16-17saver.co.uk/>

GWR offer a 'Scholar' season ticket for 16-17 year olds who are in full-time study. The season ticket is valid for a specific, regular journey to and from school/college on Monday to Friday only, and can be bought either termly, or as a block of three terms (Term 1 is from September to December; Term 2 is from January to Easter and Term 3 is from Easter to July). It must be purchased before the student's 18th birthday and offers a substantial saving on the price of an equivalent standard adult season ticket. If you are interested in purchasing a GWR Scholar season ticket, you will need to call GWR direct on 0345 766 0228. This line is available between 9.00 am and 5.30 pm, from Monday to Friday. Alternatively, you can apply by email to business.direct@gwr.com, stating both your departure and destination station. Payment can be made by credit or debit card.

For students aged 18 and over, it may be worth considering purchasing a season ticket to save substantially on the cost of a regular train journey. For further information, visit <https://www.gwr.com/>

Students may also wish to consider buying a 16-25 Railcard, which will give 1/3 off rail fares; this costs £30 for a year. However, we would point out that this discount does not apply for journeys before 10.00 am (a minimum fare of £12 is payable), so it is therefore not very useful for school travel. For more information and details on how to apply, please visit <https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/>

Car and Motorcycle parking: Students may only park a car or motorcycle in school with a valid permit, obtained from the Sixth Form Office. Please be aware that parking space is extremely limited and in practice permits are only issued to students in Year 13 who are unable to use public transport. Priority is always given to students with a greater distance to travel, and we encourage lift sharing. Due to the obvious health and safety implications, there are rules concerning driving on the school site that are discussed upon issue of the permit. Failure to adhere to these rules will see the permit withdrawn.

Please be aware that there is no vehicle access via the Leisure Centre car park. This car park is the private property of the Leisure Centre and is reserved for the use of their customers only. If you park offsite, please do so sensibly and give consideration to Backwell residents.

Timetable for entry to the Sixth Form, 2023

November	Backwell Sixth Form Open Evening: Thursday 2 November 2023, from 5.00 pm to 7.15 pm
December	Deadline for applications: 4.30 pm on Friday 5 January 2024
February to March	Students currently attending Backwell School and those from other schools who have submitted application forms will be invited to subject choice interviews at Backwell
May to June	GCSE examinations
July	Sixth Form Induction: Friday 5 July 2024
August	GCSE results: Thursday 22 August 2024
September	Term begins on Monday 2 September 2024*

*Information on Inset days is yet to be confirmed

Policy of Year 12 Admissions, September 2024

The maximum size of Year 12 is expected to be 240 students, subject to their fulfilling the entry criteria and subject to class size in their chosen subjects. We are pleased to receive external applications to Year 12 and we typically admit an average of 30 new students each year.

BACKWELL SCHOOL SIXTH FORM



OPEN EVENING

From 5.00 to 7.15 pm **Thursday 2 November 2023**

Arrive anytime between 5.00 - 6.45 pm

Presentations from the Sixth Form Leadership Team at 5.00 and 7.00 pm

From 5.00 - 7.00 pm: Visit curriculum areas; talk to teachers and current students; seek advice from the Sixth Form Team.



Application deadline Friday 5 January 2024

Visit www.backwellschool.net to find out more