

Subjects offered at A Level

Art
Biology
Chemistry
Computing
DT Product Design
Drama & Theatre Studies
Economics
English Literature
French
Geography
German
History (Route A – Early Modern)
History (Route B - Modern)
Mathematics
Further Mathematics
Music
Physical Education
Physics
Philosophy & Ethics
Politics
Psychology
Spanish

Joining Pate's Sixth Form

Our Admissions Policy

We welcome applications from both internal and external students who wish to join Pate's Sixth Form for their post-16 education. The minimum qualifying academic requirements apply equally to internal and external applicants.

Admissions Number

We offer a minimum of 200 places for entry into the Sixth Form each year. In a typical year about 120 internal students will qualify to enter the Sixth Form, leaving a minimum of 80 further places for external students. The total number of places offered will be determined with reference to efficiency, the school ethos, capacity of core facilities, projected group sizes in teaching groups and the general purposes of the school.

Admissions Criteria

We look at the top eight predicted GCSE grades, using the following points system:

	IGCSEs*				GCSEs			
Grade	A*	A	B	C	9	8	7	6
Worth	8.5	7	5.5	4	9	8	7	6

Entry into Year 12 will require a minimum of 57 points from the top eight GCSEs.

- 9-5 passes in both English & Maths;
- The expectation of a minimum GCSE grade 7 (A) in subjects to be studied at A level, (and see individual subject requirements listed below).

IGCSEs are graded using the A-C scale

Oversubscription criteria

In recent years there have been more applications from students at other schools for Sixth Form places than places available. In the event of oversubscription offers will be made on the basis of a combination of these criteria:

- The extent to which predicted grades exceed the minimum expectation (and, where necessary, taking into account an individual student's circumstances, including eligibility for pupil premium).

These criteria will determine those students who would qualify for consideration for a Sixth Form place. These students may be offered a personal discussion with a senior member of staff at Pate's. The discussion will not form part of the admissions process.

In all cases the highest priority will be given to 'looked after children' (children in care) who meet the minimum entry requirements.

Subject Requirements

Students would normally be expected to have secured at least an A or a 7 at GCSE in the subject or a relevant subject to continue to A Level with the following exceptions:

Additional information

Physics/Chemistry/Biology - Whilst we will accept students with a minimum grade 7 in either GCSE Double or individual Science we feel that a grade 8 at GCSE is the best preparation for A Level. In addition, at least a 7 in Chemistry (if applicable) will be required for Biology and at least a 7 in Maths will be required for Physics and Chemistry.

Further Maths – You will need to secure at least an 8 at Maths GCSE and have proven exceptional mathematical ability. This could take the form of a teacher recommendation or be demonstrated by a high grade in Additional Maths.

Music: Pupils must gain a 7 in Music at GCSE in order to proceed with the subject at A Level. Practical ability of grade 6 at the commencement of the course is also necessary, as well as sound notational skills. A thorough, working-knowledge of grade 5 standard theory is also essential.

Physical Education: You should have practical ability and a genuine interest in Sport and Physical Education.

New subjects: Where there isn't a directly relevant GCSE course we require a generally strong set of GCSE grades.

Changes to A Levels

Pate's does not offer AS Levels in reformed subjects as they no longer contribute to A Level results and universities invariably do not use them to discriminate between candidates. Consequently, no students at Pate's will sit AS Levels in 2020. Instead, rigorous internal exams will be sat in all subjects.

Please note that in choosing Pate's you are choosing to subscribe to our policy and study the full suite of subjects for the duration of your first year. Other schools will offer different approaches (most ask for 4 subjects in Year 12) but we believe that many will be attracted by the breadth and flexibility offered here.

We ask that you opt for at least 4 subjects (5 *only* if Further Maths is included) because we believe that this offers you the opportunity to work out what you really want to study by the end of Year 12. Surveys have shown that up to 50% of students begin Year 13 with three subjects which are different from the ones they expected to be studying. **Dropping one of the subjects will still be possible at the end of Year 12 and we expect the majority of students to do so.** The Extended Project Qualification EPQ will be available as an optional extra for all students, this being an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the academic attributes required for higher study. **No student will be forced to continue with 4 subjects for two years, though some will be advised to depending on their university course choices.**

We will of course offer advice to students on their choices and any thoughts they may have about further study. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the sixth form team.

Admissions Process

Applications for Sixth Form places should be made via the online application form by the published deadline of Wednesday 27 February 2019 for both external and internal applicants and offers of places will be made by the end of April. Late applications will be considered wherever the circumstances allow. There is the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel in the event of you not being offered a place in the Sixth Form - the Admissions Office at the school should be contacted for more information about the procedure.

Timetable for application for 2020 (TBC)

January	<p>Sixth Form Open Evening: Internal Applicants will have the opportunity to tour departments and speak to sixth form subject teachers from 5.00pm onwards.</p> <p>External Applicants: There will be two presentations for external applicants and you may attend <u>one</u> of the presentations at either 5.30pm or 7.00pm. School tours will also take place during each of the presentations.</p>
January/February	Applications via the online application form available at www.patesgs.org/6thformadmissions should be made by the deadline of (TBC)
March	Discussion meetings at Pate's.
April	Conditional offers/decisions to applicants.
June	If you have been made a conditional offer, we will send you information about the start of term and holiday work.
August	Contact us with your GCSE results in order to secure your place.

Subjects on offer

While our policy is to make every effort to accommodate all combinations of A level subjects, places on a very few specific subject courses may be limited due to staffing constraints. In exceptional cases it may not be possible to run a subject if there are insufficient students applying for it.

In making your choice of the four subjects to study in Year 12, think carefully about these questions and find out as much as you can about the subjects you might want to study:

What are my strengths?

The standards at A level are a significant jump up from GCSE, and so it is important to identify the subjects you are good at. What are your current strengths? Are you better at more practical subjects, or those that involve more theory? Is coursework one of your strengths? Are you good at subjects that are more essay based? Think about your strengths, and look carefully at the subject details.

What do I enjoy?

If you enjoy a subject now, then that is usually a good guide to whether you will enjoy it at A level, even though GCSE and A level may be rather different. You will have to study your subjects for at least one year and in most cases for two years, and so it is vital that you choose subjects you will enjoy or can at least live with. A word of warning: ignore the teacher factor - is it the subject you enjoy, or is it just that you get on well with your current teacher?

Do some subjects mix well?

We allow you a free choice of subjects at the outset, and we try very hard indeed to make sure that as many people as possible can have their first choice combinations - occasionally though we may have to ask you to revise your choice, either because we simply cannot timetable it, or because we feel that it is not a sensible combination. The choice is yours, but there are some subjects which combine well:

Physics backed up by Maths

History & English

History & Politics

Geography & Biology

Geography & Economics

Combining two modern languages

Maths & Further Maths

Economics with a language

Economics and Maths

PE & Biology

Music & Maths

Philosophy & Ethics & Maths

Theatre Studies & English

Biology backed up by Chemistry

Do I need particular subjects?

Some students already have clear career goals (although at this age many do not). Many careers and university courses do not need particular subject choices at this stage, but some do - look at the pages entitled "Looking beyond A levels". If you are in doubt about whether you need to choose a particular subject, do ask for advice.

Subject Availability & Requirements

Below is a list of the subjects which we offer in the Sixth Form, with brief notes about requirements in some of them. If you are in doubt about your chosen subjects you should consult your subject teacher, or the sixth form team.

Details of A level courses

The following notes have been compiled by staff responsible for the A Level courses being offered in our Sixth Form. Very occasionally we cannot run a course if there are not enough students to make it viable.

Art

During Year 12 pupils are encouraged to work with new and unfamiliar art materials, alongside approaches that are challenging. They will extend the boundaries of their experiences and acquire new skills to introduce a progressive approach for all future studies. Over the course of the year, pupils will develop a diverse portfolio of work including at least one extended project. This project will be based on an idea, concept, theme or issue which demonstrates the candidate's ability to sustain and realise their ideas.

In Year 13, pupils will develop their portfolio work further, producing another practical and personal investigation which is supported by a 3,000 word essay to show knowledge and understanding of context, and which complements their practical work. Life drawing classes take place during both years of study.

Assessment is based on a selected portfolio of work (coursework) plus an externally set exam project. Pupils will need to have a genuine interest in art, be resourceful and have a willingness to explore new approaches and challenge their current working practice.

Biology

The aim of our course is for students to build on their interest and enthusiasm for Biology, which can lead to further study at university and a wide range of careers. We also welcome students who want to study Biology for the sheer enjoyment of it without an intention to take the subject beyond A Level.

Students learn by research, group work and practical activities, alongside traditional classroom methods. Students are encouraged to read widely and to subscribe to the 'Biological Sciences Review' Magazine, written specifically for 6th form students. The department offers a number of optional trips throughout the two years, including a valuable and enjoyable field study course which gives students hands-on experience relevant to several areas of the specification. For the past three years this course has been held at Nettlecombe Court, a Field Studies Council centre in Somerset.

The OCR specification we will follow is divided into topics, each covering different key concepts in Biology. Teaching of practical skills is integrated with the theoretical topics and assessed within the final exams as well as part of a separate 'practical endorsement'.

The Biology A-Level is split into six modules:

Module 1: Development of practical skills

Module 2: Foundations in Biology

Module 3: Exchange and transport

Module 4: Biodiversity, evolution and disease

Module 5: Communication, homeostasis and energy

Module 6: Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

Assessment of all modules is by three exams, sat at the end of year 13.

Whilst we will accept students with a minimum grade 7 in either GCSE Double Science or GCSE Biology, and at least a 7 in GCSE Chemistry, (if applicable) we feel that a grade 8 at GCSE is the best preparation for A Level.

Chemistry

Chemistry is a very practical subject and the emphasis on this course is to learn the key concepts of the subject through active experimental work. This also leads to the development of a range of useful laboratory and life skills such as planning, dexterity, observation and powers of analysis and evaluation. The course aims to emphasise the importance of the subject in modern society by highlighting the contribution it makes to social, economic, environmental and technological aspects of life, and to explain the chemical properties of matter by referring to changes at a particle level. Students will experience a wide range of chemical substances and reactions from across both inorganic and organic Chemistry.

Whilst we will accept students with a minimum grade 7 in either GCSE Double Science or GCSE Chemistry, we feel that a grade 8 at GCSE is the best preparation for A Level. We also ask for a minimum of grade 7 in Maths.

Computing

A Level Computing covers the theoretical aspects of Computer Science and programming. This course prepares students for a career or further study in Computer Science, but will also be appropriate for students who are aiming to continue developing their skills in this area. The majority of assessment is via written examination covering topics under the general headings of computer systems and algorithms and programming. Additionally, as part of the A Level, there is the opportunity for coursework focused on coding and programming. The skills learnt on the course will be transferrable to any high-level computer language.

Drama and Theatre Studies

There is a full Theatre Studies A Level running at Pate's, with classes in both year 13 and Year 12. Theatre Studies lessons are run as practical, skills-building classes, similar to those delivered at professional performing arts schools. We reinforce earlier studies of theatre practitioners and introduce new ones such as Stanislavski, Artaud, Brecht, Frantic Assembly, Kneehigh, Punchdrunk, DV8, Edward Gordon Craig and Jacques LeCoq (the list continues!). We also analyse and appreciate plays from a variety of periods and genres, exploring theatre from the perspective of an actor, a director, a designer and a member of the audience.

Assessment takes the form of practical exams, written/oral coursework and a written exam. Students prepare a text interpretation in the style of a practitioner, a devised piece and a performance of a published play text. Alongside this they prepare a creative log (written or video blog) justifying their choices and evaluating their work. At the end of the course students sit an exam where they are asked to analyse and prepare production concepts for three texts ranging from *Hedda Gabler* to *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. We aim to visit professional theatres at least twice a term to see live performances to facilitate the development of the ability to respond knowledgeably and critically to a variety of productions. Students also have the opportunity to experience workshops from renowned theatre companies and practitioners such as *Splendid Theatre Company*.

Students are welcomed to explore whatever discipline they are passionate about whether that be lighting design, costume design or acting! Ultimately, the A Level course is designed to challenge students to take risks, develop their confidence and to nurture their love of the performing arts.

Economics

Economics is about scarcity and choice, and the impact of our choices on each other. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families to the structures created by governments and firms. An economic way of thinking can help people to make better choices. Economics is the right subject for you if you enjoy:

- debating economic issues such as inequality, immigration and how we should pay for healthcare
- using and interpreting data to analyse economic problems
- discussing alternative courses of action for example in the Budget or when setting interest rates
- understanding international trends, such as why poverty is falling so fast around the globe

Most students at A Level haven't studied economics before. You might have an interest in economics and want to know more about the impact of government policies on the world around you. You might want to investigate

some of the stories you hear in the news – Why do some economies grow and others don't? What will trade be like after Brexit? Will there be another global financial crisis? This course will help you to understand all this and more.

Studying economics will help you develop transferable skills that will prepare you for studying at university or moving into the world of work. These include skills in data interpretation and essay writing. With an Economics A Level and related degree you can work in a variety of different fields from stock broking, finance and banking, public policy, sales and marketing, civil service, journalism, insurance and actuarial work.

Five years after graduation, the income gap between students who studied the subjects that attract the highest and lowest salaries can be considerable. Economics comes second highest after medicine and dentistry, taking home an average of £40,000 five years after graduation, according to the IFS in 2017.

The most important thing is that you enjoy what you study, and do not feel that you need to understand everything the first time that you see it. Economics gets your brain “muscle” working! “It’s a great subject for those with questioning minds, curious about what goes on around them. And what’s more, it’s fun!” Lucy Rock, News Editor, The Observer

English Literature

The English department has opted to offer the Pre-U, a qualification that is challenging, enjoyable and responsive to the needs and talents of you, the students. The course is based entirely and unashamedly upon a study of literature and rewards those with a passion for exploring their literary heritage. We look at historical texts across a range of genres, exploring what they may have to say to us in the 21st Century and what they say about their own times. Modern texts are studied both as new voices and as part of a tradition. You need a genuinely enthusiastic approach to reading challenging texts in prose, poetry and drama, an open mind and fluency on paper to express your ideas to full advantage. You will be assessed by three terminal exams and a Personal Investigation, the latter of which will contribute 25% of your final mark.

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

The Extended Project is a qualification which, as its name suggests, is designed to offer students the opportunity to engage in learning which goes beyond their curriculum studies. It is an undertaking which requires enthusiasm and independence, and many universities have indicated that they see it as a valuable qualification. A similar message comes from our students once they are at university, where they find that the EPQ has provided a welcome grounding for undergraduate work. The qualification is worth the equivalent of a full AS for UCAS.

Students are expected to devote around 90 hours of their own time to independent guided learning towards the project; in addition, there will be workshops and sessions promoting skills in areas such as referencing and research methodologies and students will be expected to enrol with on-line courses to develop these skills. Work on the project commences in the Spring term of Year 12, with submission at Christmas of the next academic year. Results come with their A Level results in the following August. Students undertaking an EPQ will:

- Choose an area of interest
- Draft a project title
- Draft aims of the project

- Plan, research and carry out the project
- Provide evidence of all stages of project production
- Deliver a presentation to a specified audience.

There will be guidance at all stages from an appointed mentor and assessment will be overseen by the mentor and the Centre Co-ordinator.

Pate's Baccalaureate (Pate's Bacc)

This is an optional short course taken over around 30 periods in Year 12 (usually during TPM). It aims to promote academic skills like critical thinking, planning and academic writing, actively promoting debate and discussion around topics such as Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Film. Completion of the course requires a short essay and presentation, produced in the summer of Year 12. A Pate's Certificate of Achievement is awarded to all who complete the course. We will be recruiting students for the Pate's Bacc in September 2019.

French

Parlez-vous français?

While continuing your study of the French language and developing your language skills on this course, you will gain insight into the history, culture and social issues facing French speaking countries today. The first year of the course concentrates on topics which link to and stretch beyond subjects covered at GCSE, whilst in the second year you will discuss and debate more controversial social and political issues. The exciting, revised specifications provide the super opportunity to enjoy and discover French film and selective, engaging and accessible French texts in both Y12 and Y13.

With a chance to develop not only communication and comprehension skills, but also to hone translation from and into French, this course is designed to nurture multiple language skills. The 1st year will not be externally assessed, and we thoroughly recommend that students consider a language for breadth and towards career prospects in our global, multilingual society. A2 components are both assessed at the end of the two years and there is a substantial oral component in the exam. You will access regular conversation lessons with our French Foreign Language Assistant to improve your fluency, whilst gaining up-to-date insights into current affairs. Furthermore, we set out to offer the opportunity to take part in Work Experience to improve your French further and immerse yourself in French language and culture during Y12. It can be an invaluable way of increasing language skills as well as building up personal contacts and real experience of French life.

Geography

Cambridge Pre-U Geography offers the opportunity to explore a range of geographical environments, issues, themes and hazards.

It combines a good grounding in physical processes with challenging and contemporary themes in human geography which provide the depth and rigour required for a future university degree course. The Cambridge Pre-U course places particular stress on the global perspective. As a geographer you will be interested in the world around you, asking questions and discussing issues such as: Why can we not end world poverty? Is climate change causing an increase in natural hazards?

Throughout the course we develop our geographical understanding by synthesising all aspects studied previously within the context of global issues, both environmental and economic. The syllabus encourages the acquisition of specific geographical skills and abilities, in particular the skills of independent research, fieldwork, analysis and effective communication. We encourage independent learning, wider reading and understanding of current issues to support the development of well-informed and independent-minded geographers capable of applying their skills to meet the demands of the world as they will find it. Our studies are supported by a wide variety of fieldtrips, conferences and lectures, including a three day residential trip to the Lake District.

Geography complements both arts and science subjects and is a popular A Level option. Around 40% of our students continue Geography at university, including Oxford and Cambridge. Cambridge Pre-U Geography course equips learners with the skills required to make a success of a wide variety of courses at university, including architecture, planning, engineering, medicine, law and accountancy.

German

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

While continuing your study of the German language and developing your language skills on this course, you will gain insight into the history, culture and social issues facing German speaking countries today. The first year of the course concentrates on topics which link to and stretch beyond subjects covered at GCSE, whilst in the second year you will discuss and debate more controversial social and political issues. The exciting, revised specifications provide the excellent opportunity to enjoy and discover German film and selective, engaging and accessible German texts in both Y12 and Y13.

With a chance to develop not only communication and comprehension skills, but also to hone translation from and into German, this course is designed to nurture multiple language skills. The 1st year will not be externally assessed, and we thoroughly recommend that students consider a language for breadth and towards career prospects in our global, multilingual society. A Level components are both assessed at the end of the two years and there is a substantial oral component in the exam. You will access regular conversation lessons with our German Foreign Language Assistant to improve your fluency, whilst gaining up-to-date insights into current affairs. Thanks to our 40+year-old exchange programme with Bad Kreuznach, students are also able to take part in Work Experience to improve their German further and immerse themselves in German language and culture during Y12. It can be an invaluable way of increasing language skills as well as building up personal contacts and real experience of modern German life.

Government and Politics

We currently offer a two year course focused on the current developments in the UK system of government, political participation, the core political ideologies and comparative global politics. If you are interested in

current events, their causes, management and consequences and are keen to engage in group work, presentations, seminars and discussion you will find this a stimulating subject.

You will need to read widely and with an open mind. The A Level course is assessed by exams at the end of June of Y13. No entry requirements: you should have good communication skills and an interest in current affairs.

History Route A Early Modern History OCR

Year 12

Y107 England 1547-1603: the Later Tudors (Enquiry topic: Mid Tudor Crises 1547-1558)

Y213 The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774-1815

Year 13

Y312 Popular Culture and the Witchcraze of the 16th and 17th Centuries

Coursework which is a 4000 word essay of your choice.

Y100 You will be required to undertake considerable amounts of reading and the study of contemporary accounts and documents. You will find that group work and discussion are distinctive features of the course. All three Examined Units will be assessed at the end of Year 13. Please refer to the OCR website for further details of these courses which can be found on the A Level History Specification section.

History Route B Modern History OCR

Year 12

Y112 Britain 1900-1951 (Enquiry topic: England and a New Century c.1900-1918).

Y223 The Cold War in Europe 1941-1995

Year 13

Y314 The Challenge of German Nationalism 1789-1919

Coursework which is a 4000 word essay of your choice.

Y100 You will be required to undertake considerable amounts of reading and the study of contemporary accounts and documents. You will find that group work and discussion are distinctive features of the course. All three Examined Units will be assessed at the end of Year 13. Please refer to the OCR website for further details of these courses which can be found on the A Level History Specification section.

Mathematics

We follow the MEI structured course. The A level has a linear structure so all external assessment will take place at the end of the two-year course.

The course will contain Pure Mathematics as well as Statistics and Mechanics. This broad range of maths and its applications will complement other A levels and could be the appropriate Maths course to choose if you were looking to support Physics, Engineering, Economics, Business Studies, Geography, Biology, or Psychology as well as being a fascinating subject in its own right.

Further Maths

We follow the MEI structured course. The linear A level Further Maths course is offered to those students with a high potential in the subject, who may wish to pursue a Maths-related degree course or who are looking for extra challenge. A Level Mathematics needs to be part of your A level profile if you are to take this subject. You will meet fascinating new concepts such as imaginary numbers and matrices, and study a wide variety of real-world applications.

Music

Music is a subject that offers a broad academic education at Sixth Form level and a valuable qualification leading to entry to a variety of courses and careers. As well as studying Music, former students of A Level Music have gone on to study Medicine, Languages, Physics, Chemistry, Maths and English, both at Oxbridge and at other prestigious institutions.

You would all follow courses in History of Music, Free Composition, Harmony, Aural, and Performance on your chosen instrument(s).

We expect to find in our students both an inquisitive mind and the ability to pursue individual research. An interest in music of all periods and genres is essential, as is a willingness to examine music in the light of social and other historical developments. Assessment at the end of Year 13 is by one written examination, one recital and a combination of compositions completed in controlled assessment conditions at the end of the course.

Requirements: Pupils must gain a 7/A in Music at GCSE in order to proceed with the subject at A Level. Practical ability of grade 6 at the commencement of the course is also necessary, as well as sound notational skills. A thorough, working-knowledge of grade 5 standard theory is also essential.

Philosophy, Theology and Ethics

If you have an enquiring mind and enjoy lively discussion, you will find Philosophy, Theology and Ethics both challenging and interesting, regardless of whether or not you have a religious background.

You will be expected to grapple with difficult philosophical theories and moral dilemmas and understand more recent developments in Christian thought. You will be challenged to revisit your assumptions and beliefs about morality, existence, the possibility of knowledge, life after death, sexual ethics, language, conscience and gender. You will need to engage with a range of texts and be willing to read extensively in your own time. You will be supported and encouraged to develop your essay writing skills and to participate effectively in class discussion and group work. Previous students have told us that their study of ethics has forever changed their awareness and method in moral decision making and that their work in Philosophy has given them radically different ways of looking at the world.

This subject will impact what you study in every other field. Philosophy, Theology and Ethics works well with sciences, both in terms of medical ethics and in terms of questioning the path to truth. It will also be of interest to those interested in Physics and Cosmology. For those going forward to study PPE and various mixed humanities courses, Philosophy, Theology and Ethics will help you hone your critical evaluation skills and your ability to untangle arguments in order to challenge the constituent parts and underlying assumptions. Philosophy, Theology and Ethics also obviously sits well with History, English and Psychology. Sections on Religious Experience will have significant overlap with knowledge drawn from Psychology and sections on Language will relate well to English, as well as the deeper understanding of Christian theology being useful to

understanding all kinds of texts studied in English. A sense of the development of philosophical thought will inform your historical studies. We have also had students who have become interested in the Philosophy of Art and in the place of Music in religious experience.

The course will be supplemented by trips and speakers where appropriate.

Requirements: GCSE Grade 7/8 (A/A*) in a humanities subject is preferred but not essential. A willingness to read extensively in your own time.

Physical Education

Have you ever wondered how our brain learns new physical skills, why some of us are very quick or our national sport is football? This A level is for students who are interested in sport and the various ways in which it affects individuals and society as a whole. This is an academic subject which mixes theory with practice. You will study the anatomical and physiological implications, the psychological demands and the sociological and historical contexts of the subject. You will need to be an able physical performer, as the subject requires a committed study in one sport/activity. The course is 70% theory and 30% practical, of which 10% is a verbal analysis of performance. The course is examined at the end of Year 13. Students have combined PE with other subjects and moved onto University to study all sports degrees, medicine, veterinary science, dentistry and finance degrees.

Physics

This course is for students who are curious about the universe around them and who seek to explain the phenomena we encounter in our daily lives. We explore the physical laws that govern the behaviour of the universe from the very small quantum world to the cosmological scale of stars and galaxies.

Topics covered include

- Classical Mechanics
- Quantum Physics
- Particle Physics
- Radioactivity
- Waves
- Electricity
- Materials

We follow the AQA Physics course and have a strong emphasis on practical skills as well as academic knowledge. Experimental work is an essential part of A Level work and an excellent preparation for university. Lessons are based around exploring the world around us and how Physics seeks to model and explain what we observe.

The assessment for this course is by examination. Whilst we will accept students with a minimum grade 7 in either GCSE Double Science or GCSE Physics, and at least a 7 in GCSE Mathematics, we feel that a grade 8 at GCSE is the best preparation for A Level. There is no requirement to study Mathematics at A Level to study A Level Physics but of course it does help. It is important to consider studying Mathematics A Level if you wish to pursue a scientific based degree in the future as not doing so will exclude you from many degrees. Those aiming

to study Physics and Engineering degrees at Russell group universities should also consider studying Further Maths.

Product Design (Resistant Materials)

Product Design is the study of materials, systems and industrial practice to enable students to solve problems and exploit opportunities by designing and making products. This is an individual and creative course which would suit anyone who has enjoyed completing a good GCSE in Resistant materials, Product Design, Graphics, Electronics or Systems/control, and who might be considering engineering, architecture, product design, graphic design or manufacturing at university.

The A level unit is split into 2 parts: 50% - A Design and Make project with industrial implications resulting in a full-size working prototype product, of which at least 2/3 must be Resistant Materials. 50% - 2 hour exam which concentrates on wider issues of technology within society including biotechnology, use of ICT, design influences on modern products, environmental issues and energy sources.

Psychology

The AQA specification is followed here at Pate's and provides students with many varying approaches and viewpoints within the discipline. Psychology is a highly scientific subject incorporating mathematical elements, with the comprehensive study of statistical tests. Psychology also requires strong extended writing skills to meet the high demands of the examination assessment.

Over the course, you will study topics such as social influence, memory, attachment, psychopathology and schizophrenia to name but a few. The different approaches used within Psychology (Biological, Cognitive, Behavioural and Psychodynamic) will encompass the topics visited and provide a rounded understanding of the many arguments within the discipline. We also learn about, and can try for yourself, some of the research methods used by psychologists. As well as this, you will take an in-depth look at ways of testing your results for significance.

There is no coursework component. Your grade will be provided through examinations which include multiple choice, short and long answer essay style questions. Teaching involves discussion and practical investigation wherever possible and you will be encouraged to critically evaluate the research you meet, an essential skill for higher education. The subject is popular, both in school and at university, attracts a wide range of students studying both arts and science subjects and can lead on to a variety of careers. Up to 25% of our students continue Psychology at university. Others pursue the full spectrum of careers including medicine.

Spanish

¿Habras español?

While continuing your study of the Spanish language and developing your language skills on this course, you will gain an insight not only into the history and culture of Spanish-speaking countries but also the social issues facing

the Spanish speaking world today. The first year of the course concentrates on topics which link to and stretch beyond subjects covered at GCSE, whilst in the second year you will discuss and debate more controversial social and political issues. The exciting revised specifications provide plenty of opportunities to enjoy and discover Hispanic film and some engaging and accessible Hispanic texts in both Y12 and Y13.

With a chance to develop not only communication and comprehension skills, but also hone translation from and into Spanish, this course is designed to nurture all the skills needed to develop into a competent linguist. We thoroughly recommend that students consider a language for breadth and to enhance career prospects in our global, multilingual society. The 1st year of the course will not be externally examined. A level components are assessed at the end of the two years and there is a substantial oral component in the exam. To assist students to this end, the Spanish department provides weekly sessions with a foreign language assistant and organises a week's work experience in Spain where students can live with a family and work in an area that interests them. It can be an invaluable way of increasing language skills as well as building up personal contacts and real experience of modern Spanish life.

Looking beyond A levels

Listed below are some examples of degree courses (this is by no means an exhaustive list), together with the A Level subjects commonly required or expected.

It must be emphasised that rarely do all higher education establishments have the same requirements, and very rarely is there no flexibility at all. On the other hand you must recognise that if you apply with an unconventional combination of subjects for a particular course you may put yourself at a disadvantage with respect to other applicants. Some A level subjects will be listed as 'Required' and are essential and some listed as 'Recommended' and, although are not essential, may be qualifications held by the majority of people applying for that course. The most up to date information is usually on university websites and university Admissions Officers do not mind answering queries if the answer cannot be found on the website.

A further consideration may be your proposed career direction beyond university. Some degree courses may lead to specific occupations while others are less 'vocational'. You should be wary of letting this aspect totally determine your A Level subject choice and remember that the quality of both A level passes and a degree are widely regarded as a measure of a set of skills which can be applied in any number of occupations. The majority of graduates rarely employ the information gained through their degree but do employ their cumulative skills. In other words, whilst you may want to keep an eye on the future, there is much to be said for choosing subjects in which you are interested and are likely to be successful.

NB. Sustained and relevant work experience may be a requirement for some courses.

Animal Sciences

Biology and Chemistry preferred. Relevant work experience is useful.

Archaeology

History, Geography, English and/or a Science subject may be preferred. 2 Sciences required for Archaeological Science courses.

Anthropology

Biology and Geography preferred for some biological anthropological courses (Social Anthropology)

Architecture / Architectural Engineering

Maths and/or Physics required or preferred for some courses. Art sometimes a requirement and a portfolio of art work often requested.

Art / Design

Art A Level and portfolio of art work required by many courses. You may choose to complete an Art Foundation course prior to university.

Biochemistry / Biomedical Science / Genetics / Physiology

Chemistry required. Biology usually preferred, one or two Maths/Science subjects required.

Business and Management Courses / Accountancy

Maths is often essential or desirable. There is a wide range of courses, some show preference for Economics, Business Studies, Geography, English or a Foreign Language.

Chemistry / Chemical Engineering

Two Science subjects including Chemistry (Chemistry, Physics and Maths is a good combination with Further Maths for some courses).

Computer Science

Maths and Further Maths, with some preference for Physics. STEP used by some universities as part of conditional offer.

Dentistry

Chemistry plus Biology usually required. Another Science subject may be required or preferred. Evidence of manual dexterity must be given (eg model-making or playing an instrument).

Drama / Theatre Studies

English and Theatre Studies may be required. Extensive record of involvement in theatre productions often required. Not all courses involve acting – you need to check.

Economics

Maths and Economics may be required or preferred. Check university websites carefully for other preferred subjects.

Education Studies

A Level in the main subject of choice required plus one or two other A Levels.

Engineering

Maths and/or Physics usually required. Further Maths sometimes recommended. Some universities may use STEP as part of conditional offer.

English

English Literature required. Modern Language required for joint courses.

Environmental Science

One or two Science subjects are usually stipulated. Maths may be required.

Geography

Geography with two other subjects. Maths or Science required for BSc

Geology

Maths / Science subjects usually required. Geography may be accepted as an additional Science. Chemistry, Maths and Physics often preferred.

History

History with 2 other Arts subjects. A Science subject or Modern Language may be considered for a third A level.

Law

A very high standard required in 3 subjects. Preference for at least one essay based subject.

Materials Science

Maths, Physics and/or Chemistry

Mathematics / Statistics

Maths and Further Maths, preference given to Physics. STEP may be used.

Medicine / Dentistry / Veterinary Science

Chemistry and Biology required. Subject requirements vary – check university websites carefully. High grades, relevant work experience essential and an interview will be required. Additional admissions test may also be required (BMAT, UKCAT)

Music

A level Music plus instrumental grade usually required.

Natural Sciences

High grades in 3 Sciences (check individual course requirements). Maths useful as a fourth A Level.

Occupational Therapy

A social science or Science subject required for most courses.

Pharmacy

Chemistry and one or two other Sciences usually required.

Philosophy / PPE - Philosophy, Politics and Economics:

No specific subjects required. Maths is very useful for logic (and Economics) and an essay-based subject can give evidence of ability to expand on ideas.

Physics:

Physics and Maths (and Chemistry sometimes preferred). Further Maths highly desirable for some courses.

Physiotherapy:

One or two Science subjects required.

Physical Education

PE, Sports Science required for some courses.

Politics:

No subjects specified. History or English useful.

Psychology:

A Science subject usually required. Look carefully at individual course outlines – some more science based than others. Maths can also be useful.

Sociology:

No subjects specified.

Town and Country Planning:

Geography may be specified.

Zoology / Animal Science:

Biology and Chemistry preferred.

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