OLA
OUR LADY'S ABINGDON

OLA 6th
Subject Information

Introduction

This booklet describes our OLA 6th curriculum. For a small school we offer an enormous range of subject choices and OLA Sphere co-curricular support. We look forward to welcoming you into Lower Sixth. Please read this information carefully and you will have plenty of opportunities to discuss your options with members of staff.

In order for you to study in Years 10 or 11 you will have made some subject choices. The same process will happen in order to decide your OLA 6th curriculum. Choices will have to be made from option blocks of subjects that have to be timetabled together in order for our school to operate. Therefore, the make-up of the blocks is crucial if you are to be able to study the subjects that interest you.

For this reason, we ask that you provide your carefully considered subject ideas and to help you with this the subject staff have provided information about their courses in this book. From your provisional choices, option blocks will be constructed that will allow the maximum number of students to study their preferred subjects.

Entry to OLA 6th

OLA has a policy of welcoming pupils to OLA 6th and many from both OLA Year 11 and other schools take up the chance to study with us. Our key principles for accepting pupils are that they must:

- Be able to benefit from their time in OLA 6th which means that they must have suitable academic qualifications
- Want to study from the broad list of subjects that we offer
- Be able to conform to the values expressed by our Mission Statement and policies

In practice we look on each pupil as an individual to see how they conform to our principles and we usually expect that they will have achieved at least 5 GCSEs/IGCSEs at grade 5 or above with ideally grade 6 or above in the subjects they wish to study at A-Level. However, some of the subjects in which you are interested may not have been taught at GCSE and so it is not possible to specify exact entry requirements for all of our A-Level subjects. We will consider equivalent qualifications gained from other educational systems. Our philosophy for learning is designed to challenge all students in learning and thinking and to encourage and develop a resilient mindset.

In Lower Sixth
As an OLA 6th student, you will study three programmes (which may be a mixture of A-Levels, BTEC Extended Certificates). Some students may wish to study a fourth A-Level or an EPQ as an additional programme. Universities are widely recognised for making offers based on 3+ programmes and there is now no added entrance benefit to studying a fourth subject. We encourage students to pursue their interest in a fourth subject via the EPQ. Our EPQ results have been outstanding for many years. In addition to their selected programmes, students will also participate in PSHCE sessions, careers support sessions and Core Religious Studies. For students considering the Oxbridge route for university, there is a dedicated programme of support in place which runs throughout OLA 6th. Lower Sixth students will spend their free periods in supervised study settings, to encourage good study habits from the outset.

In Upper Sixth
In Upper Sixth you will carry on with your three chosen programmes. At the end of Upper Sixth you should have an excellent set of examination results because students have consistently achieved this in the past, under the guidance and support of our knowledgeable staff. To help you progress from those results you will have had careers advice and made an application to University through UCAS if that is your intended route forward. Similarly, you will be able to receive appropriate advice and support should you wish to go into employment or a course other than at University. The Oxbridge programme of support is used in Upper Sixth to support students entering this process.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award
In addition to other co-curricular opportunities and enrichment, there is the opportunity for OLA 6th students to enrol in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at the Gold level. For this, they have to show commitment towards:

- Developing a skill
- Following a physical activity
- Volunteering in the community, for at least 12 months
- They must also complete an expedition over 4 days (with 3 nights camping) and organise a residential activity over a period of 5 days

The participants are encouraged to arrange the various activities, to suit their own interests.

The OLA 6th garden is the result of a joint project by Year 11 and OLA 6th students from the Design Technology Department. If you have an opportunity to visit, then please do, as this showcases what our OLA 6th students can achieve through subject and co-curricular activities.

We hope that you enjoy your visit and that this booklet gives you a flavour of the exciting choices and opportunities available in OLA 6th. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions.

Abbreviations used in this booklet

AQA is the 'Assessment and Qualifications Alliance'

OCR stands for 'Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations'

Pearson is the name of one of the main Awarding Bodies; it still uses the name of Edexcel for some of its products

UCAS is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Key dates

OLA 6th Information Evening	www.ola.org.uk/open
OLA 6th Taster Day	www.ola.org.uk/open

Library and Study Arrangements

Continuing your education at the age of 16-plus is an exciting and challenging prospect. In OLA 6th, the more focused curriculum and change in learning require extensive and effective use of a wide range of specialist information resources. The library also offers you a welcoming space for private study upstairs – in the silent OLA 6th area, or the light and airy mezzanine.

The library supports learning and teaching across all subjects. Through printed archives and materials, as well as online resources, you have unlimited access to support coursework, exam revision and EPQ research, as well as wider reading for pleasure.

The library has become a more virtual, modern space over the last years. In OLA 6th, you will attend a study skills workshop, where you will become proficient in using and applying online resources to boost the quality of your own work. Liaison between the Librarian and subject departments throughout the year will give opportunities to develop and refine information skills.

Books

Fiction: The fiction stock caters for reading for pleasure, as well as providing for specific courses, such as A-Level English Literature, and supporting wider reading of other subjects.

Non-fiction: The non-fiction stock, classified by Dewey Decimal System, is essential to support teaching and learning in all subjects. There are also non-fiction materials for your own personal wider reading, as well as further reading to build secondary sources within coursework.

Sixth Form Section: Resources (books and journals) specific to the OLA 6th are located upstairs.

Online resources

As a school, we have access to a multitude of academic digital resources: JSTOR, Hodder A-Level Magazines, Massolit, Gale in Context Databases, Very Short Introductions, Philosophy Now, National Theatre Online, Complete Issues etc

Being able to use these resources confidently teaches students how to identify, navigate and make use of reliable online sources, to improve their research and referencing skills, and therefore the overall quality of their academic work. This also provides students with an excellent research foundation as they prepare for life beyond secondary school.

Art and Design: Fine Art

Awarding body: AQA **Specification: 7202**

The A-Level course is structured to meet the needs of students who wish to pursue a career in Art and Design or as part of a range of subjects for application in associated fields of work such as architecture, engineering, marketing, publishing and media. Success at A-Level requires above all enthusiasm, determination and dedication. It is a busy course with an emphasis on problem solving and lateral thinking, with research and development of visual ideas being pursued with ambition and purpose.

Learning opportunities
The main purpose of any course in art is to develop an ability to appreciate the visual world, respond to it in a personal and creative way and develop a working knowledge of materials, practices and technology within art. The development of creative powers, an appreciation of art history and an understanding of the place of art in society is at the heart of the course. In practical terms students will be offered opportunities to express their ideas through a variety of media, thereby gaining a practical grounding in skills and techniques such as Drawing and Painting, Sculpture, Printmaking, Textiles, Ceramics, Installation and Photography.

Requirements
It is recommended that students have studied Art and Design at GCSE Level but it is not a prerequisite.

Further study
There is a vast number of higher education courses available in the visual arts with future career prospects in fine art, architecture, product design, fashion, ceramics, printmaking, photography, teaching, research and museum work to name but a few.

Course structure: A-Level
The A-Level is a two year course, with the first two terms of the first year being dedicated to developing skills across a range of activities in Drawing, Paint, Print, Ceramics and Photography. This will be supported by extensive contextual discussion and investigation; looking at the place of art in the world. We will also be visiting galleries, writing art appreciation/history of art essays and inviting visiting artists to provide specialist workshops. All of this work will be integrated into the development of individual portfolios where the pupils will be encouraged to follow particular routes of interest and work up specific ideas and projects. The final term of the first year will be spent beginning to think about the Personal Investigation. We expect everyone to have started this component by the end of summer term and be ready to push ahead with the investigation over the summer break.

The first term of the second year will be spent completing the Personal Investigation, which will be handed in for marking by the end of January. Preparation for the Externally Set Assignment will begin on February 1 of the Upper Sixth year.

Assessment

Component 1 – Personal Investigation – 60% of the A-Level
This is a practical investigation supported by written material. Students are required to conduct a practical investigation, into an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by written material. The focus of the investigation must be identified independently by the student and must lead to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes. The investigation should be a coherent, in depth study that demonstrates the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning from an initial starting point to a final realisation. The investigation must show clear development from initial intentions to the final outcome or outcomes.

Component 2 – Externally Set Assignment – 40% of the A-Level
A question paper will be set by the examining board. This will consist of a choice of eight questions to be used as starting points. Students will be required to select one. Examination papers will be provided from 1 February, or as soon as possible after that date. Preparatory work can be presented in any suitable format, such as mounted sheets and/or sketchbooks. Following the preparatory period students must complete 15 hours of unaided, supervised time in which they must produce a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes, informed by their preparatory work.

If you love looking, drawing and making you will enjoy this course. If colour, advertising, architecture, product design, dress design, textiles, photography and all things creative grab your imagination then Art and Design is for you.

Preparing for A-Level Art in OLA 6th
Preparation for the A-Level art course can begin over the summer break prior to the start of Lower Sixth. It is recommended that pupils become familiar with some of the bigger galleries in London, preferably through visits. Pinpoint specific exhibitions and become familiar with well-known art critics by reading reviews on line or in the papers. If you happen to be abroad seek out exhibitions or galleries in the area and begin the habit of collecting images and information. It all feeds in to your development as an active viewer, artist and art historian.

Art and Design: Textiles

Awarding body: AQA **Specification code: 7204**

A-Level Textiles is a two year course which is all assessed at the end of the second year. The assessment comprises of two parts:

- A portfolio of work built from the best work over two projects set by the school
- An extended design and make project, responding to a design brief released by the exam board.

Learning opportunities
Students will be offered the opportunity to discover the exciting world of Textile design. We provide students with a grounding in art practices such as drawing, photography and colour theory to form the starting point for each project. We then offer a series of in-depth workshops in various textile techniques before we move into the Assessment components. Students should produce practical and critical/ contextual work in one or more areas of study, for example, fashion design, fashion textiles, costume design, digital textiles, printed and/or dyed fabrics and materials, domestic textiles, wallpaper, interior design, constructed textiles, art textiles and installed textiles.

Requirements
It is recommended that students have studied Textiles at GCSE Level but it is not a prerequisite.

Further study
This specification directly supports progression to further and higher education in Textile Design and related subjects as well as providing students with a platform to inspire a lifelong interest in an enjoyment of this area of Art and Design.

Assessment
Component 1: Personal Investigation – Students are required to conduct a practical investigation, into an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by written material. The focus of the investigation must be identified independently by the student and must lead to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes. The investigation should be a coherent, in-depth study that demonstrates the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning from an initial starting point to a final realisation.

The written material must:
- Be a coherent and logically structured extended response of between 1000 and 3000 words of continuous prose
- Include specialist vocabulary appropriate to the subject matter

96 Marks (60% of A-Level)

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment – Response to an externally assessed assignment. Preparatory period plus 15 hours supervised time.

The question paper will consist of a choice of eight questions to be used as starting points. Students are required to select one. Students will be provided with exam papers at the start of the new year.

Preparatory work should be presented in any suitable format, such as mounted sheets, design sheets, sketchbooks, workbooks, journals, models and maquettes.

Following the preparatory period, students must complete 15 hours of unaided, supervised time. The first three hours of the supervised time must be consecutive. In the 15 hours students must produce a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes, informed by their preparatory work.

96 Marks (40% of A-Level)

Who should study Textiles?
Anyone with a keen interest in design, fabric and pattern. It's for those who love to think creatively and work with their hands. You may already be aiming apply to art school or for a career as a Textile Designer. This course will provide you with the skills required to pursue careers in textiles, fashion, interior design, surface pattern design, costume design and other related pathways including styling and journalism.

Preparing for A-Level Textiles in OLA 6th fabric study
- Collect samples of fabrics
- Drawing
- Sewing at home using follow along YouTube videos such as Debbie Shore and Sew Over It

- Watch Textiles TV: Keep your eye out for programmes on the television that would aid your wider knowledge. Any topic that is related to textiles, e.g. work of designers, ethical fashion (fair-trade etc.):
  - The Alexander McQueen Documentary – Netflix
  - Secret world of haute couture – YouTube
  - Blood, sweat and t-shirts – YouTube
  - Stacey Dooley: Fashion's Dirty Secrets – YouTube
  - The Great British Sewing Bee – BBC2
  - The Devil Wears Prada
- Join the A-Level Textiles – Oxford Facebook Page: We have created an A-Level textiles Facebook group, the membership is small, but growing, and includes what past students are now doing. It is a wonderful medium for sharing information about Textiles. It is a great forum for sharing links and general fashion news. Please ask for details of how to join this page. We would like you all to contribute any websites, ideas, TV programmes, or links etc. that you feel are related to the textiles course.

Business

Awarding body: AQA **Specification: 7132**

Business at A-Level is a popular option at OLA. It is an exciting and relevant course with the focus on acquiring the necessary business skills to help in decision making and problem solving.

The reality is that students will enter the world of work at some time; gaining knowledge and understanding of how organisations of all types are run and managed is a useful and valuable life skill. This is important whether the intention is to run your own business or to play an important part in the management of another. Career aspirations in the traditional professions of law or accountancy will be enhanced by the study of Business.

The specification is stimulating and up-to-date. In Year 1 focus is on the four functional areas of business: marketing, finance, human resource management and operations, with emphasis on decision-making. In Year 2 pupils study more complex strategic decision making, looking at strategic direction and planning to manage change in the business environment. Examination of the internal and external environment in which all organisations operate, is key. The specification requires students to have an appreciation of the local, national and international business environment and examination questions include case study stimulus materials.

Emphasis is placed on student-based learning wherever possible and the course is particularly suited to those prepared to offer their views and opinions about the real world business environment. Keeping up to date with current business news stories is essential and lessons incorporate real business examples where appropriate.

The increasing importance and relevance of business is reflected in the wide range of Management and Business courses on offer at universities. As a preparation for life it is invaluable and if you have a genuine interest, a desire to succeed and an enquiring mind then it may be the course you are looking for!

Subject content

1. What is business?
2. Managers, leadership and decision making
3. Decision making to improve marketing performance
4. Decision making to improve operational performance
5. Decision making to improve financial performance
6. Decision making to improve human resource performance
7. Analysing the strategic position of a business
8. Choosing strategic direction
9. Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
10. Managing strategic change

Assessment of the A-Level

Paper 1: Business 1	**Paper 2:** Business 2	**Paper 3:** Business 3
What is assessed All subject content	**What is assessed** All subject content	**What is assessed** All subject content
Assessed by • Written examination: 2 hours • 100 marks in total 33.3% of A-Level	**Assessed by** • Written examination: 2 hours • 100 marks in total 33.3% of A-Level	**Assessed by** • Written examination: 2 hours • 100 marks in total 33.3% of A-Level
Questions Three compulsory sections: • Section A 15 multiple choice questions worth 15 marks • Section B short answer questions worth 35 marks • Sections C and D two essay questions (choice of one from two) worth 25 marks each	**Questions** Three data response compulsory questions worth approximately 33 marks each and made up of three or four part questions	**Questions** One compulsory case study followed by approximately six questions

Preparing for A-Level Business in OLA 6th

Be aware of the world. As discussed above, we draw on situations which occur in the world around us. An interest in current affairs is essential to good performance in Business. Try to catch up with the news as often as you can, ideally every day but certainly a couple of times each week. The following are good places to start:

- Download news apps to your phone – Try the BBC News app and personalise your newsfeeds to include UK Business, World, Technology and Politics. Also, try 'Flipboard' and again tailor your newsfeeds.
- News on the TV – BBC News and Channel 4 News tend to have the best coverage of business and economic issues. Aim to make a particular point of watching programmes based on how businesses work such as 'The Apprentice'
- Newspapers and Journals – The Times, The Independent, The Daily Telegraph Business pages and The Guardian offer both UK business and International business news. The Financial Times is good but maybe a little too technical at this stage in your studies. Be aware of ideological bias in the news and try to get a balanced view. The Economist is a very good source of information.

Read books: A growing number of businesses and entrepreneurs are choosing to publish their stories. These can be useful sources of information about what makes businesses successful and the challenges which need to be overcome. There are several out there and you can choose businesses which you find interesting. The ones listed below are companies you may have heard of:

- The Everything Store (Stone)
- Grinding it Out (Kroc)
- How Google Works (Schmidt & Rosenberg)
- Megachange: The World in 2050 (The Economist)
- What you see is what you get (Sugar)
- The Upstarts: How Uber and Airbnb are changing the world (Stone)
- Business for Punks (Watt)

Alternatively look at books such as:

- No Logo (Naomi Klein)
- 23 Things they didn't tell you about Capitalism (Ha-Joon Chang)

Computer Science

Awarding Body: AQA **Specification: 7517**

A-Level Computer Science is an option suitable for students who are considering pursuing a career in the subject, including in software engineering, network security or data science. We follow the AQA Computer Science A Level specification, which focuses heavily on problem-solving and practical programming. The course is particularly beneficial to those who already enjoy programming in their own time and want to take their skills a step further. Thanks to small group sizes, we can tailor the course in each year to interests and ambitions of individual students.

Subject content

- Programming paradigms: procedural, object-oriented, and functional
- Algorithms and data structures
- Mathematical theory of computation
- Data representation (including number systems and file formats)
- Computer systems: organisation and architecture
- Communication and networking (including security)
- Databases, including big data
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Consequences of uses of computing (ethics and law)
- Practical programming and managing computing projects

How is the course examined?

On-Screen exam (40%) tests student's ability to program and their theoretical knowledge of programming paradigms, data structures, algorithms, and theory of computation. About half of the marks on this paper are for programming tasks that students attempt during the examination.

Written exam (40%) tests student's ability to answer questions on the theoretical and mathematical part of the course. It contains mostly short-answer questions (1-6 marks) on computer architecture and networking, as well as mathematical problems in topics such as number systems or Boolean algebra.

Non-Examination Assessment (20%) is completed by our students throughout their Upper Sixth year, partly in class and partly at home. The NEA is a programming project of student's choice (of sufficient complexity), designed and implemented with a specific customer in mind.

What background do I need?

Python programming experience, at least at strong GCSE level, is essential to start the AQA A-Level Computer Science course. Hence, a GCSE in the subject is a requirement for all those who plan to study this A-Level at OLA. An exception can be made for those with strong mathematical skills and independently obtained Python programming experience – they should discuss their choice in advance with the Subject Coordinator.

A significant part of the course is heavily mathematical. While the content covered is different to this in A-Level Mathematics, it still requires logical reasoning and applying mathematical processes. We do not require Computer Science students to also study A-Level Mathematics, but we would only recommend the course to candidates with at least a grade 7 in Mathematics GCSE. If you find mathematics enjoyable and interesting, then you will also like Computer Science.

When can it lead?

A-Level Computer Science is naturally a strong subject to take if you wish to go on to do computer science at degree level, and although most computing-based degree courses don't require Computer science A-Level there are several software engineering courses which do. There are also other, more specialised, degree courses, such as cybersecurity or game design, where a Computer Science A-Level will be particularly useful.

It is not necessary to complete an academic degree for most Computing-related careers. The AQA A-Level course provides our students with practical skills that will enable them to apply for an entry-level industry job in software engineering, network security, and other related fields. Specifically, the NEA is an excellent start to a professional portfolio, and the skills obtained while studying A-Level are those that are tested at technical interviews in the industry.

Creative Digital Medial Production

(BTEC Extended Certificate)

Awarding Body: Pearson Edexcel **Specification: 603/1147/2**

BTEC Media Production is a practical course that allows students to study media without the pressure of a single, final examination. The course is the equivalent of one A-Level meaning that students can complete a single A-Level in a year.

The OLA Media Production course allows students to learn about media whilst also applying their knowledge and understanding practically. The course contains a mixture of assessment methods and works very well for students who favour coursework portfolios over exam assessments. Students are given an insight into the film and television industry and OLA has links with a number of key employers. Students will meet a number of industry experts and attend a variety of trips associated with this subject.

This course prepares candidates very well for undergraduate study in a number of disciplines. The mixture of academic and practical skills means that candidates have a breadth of options and students are well prepared for degrees in theory or practice. The creative arts are one of the most significant contributors to the UK economy and talented, creative people are in high-demand. This course allows you to develop and apply these skills whilst also creating a portfolio that you can use to progress to either university or employment.

Requirements
There are no formal entry requirements to study BTEC Media Production. However, students would benefit from having a grade 5 or above in English Literature or Language. Students will also benefit from having studied GCSE Film or Media Studies but this is not essential.

Course structure
A vocational course differs from A-Level, as it allows for continuous assessment. Students studying this course will undertake their first key assessment in January. This assessment will count towards their final grade. The course is comprised of three core units and one optional unit, which students can choose from a list of options. The three core units are:

- Unit 1: Media Representations
- Unit 4: Pre-Production
- Unit 8: Responding to a Commission

Assessment
Unit 1 is assessed via an online examination in January. Unit 4 and the optional unit are internally assessed by OLA and moderated through the exam board, Pearson Edexcel. Unit 8 is externally assessed but is a controlled assessment, meaning that students complete a practical task under timed conditions and are supervised, much like an examination.

Subject combinations
Media Production works very well with other subjects that contain practical elements, such as A-Level Art, Textiles and Design Technology. Students would be expected to study two A-Level subjects alongside this course. Media Production is well suited to students studying essay-based subjects, such as English, History and Psychology. Media Production also compliments A-Level Film Studies very well.

Preparing for BTEC Media Production
Students would benefit from starting to learn software related to their chosen optional unit, such as Adobe Premiere or InDesign and you can find many useful tutorials on YouTube. However, this is not essential. Students would also benefit from looking at diversity in media representations by reading newspapers and journals, such as Media Magazine or The Guardian. Watching behind the scenes videos and looking at how films and television programmes are made would also prove useful.

Design Technology: Product Design

Awarding Body: Edexcel **Specification codes: 9DT0**

Inspiring innovative design
If you are looking for a course that will give you excellent progression of knowledge, understanding and design/making skills, then A-Level Design Technology is the course for you. It provides you with a coherent experience of moving from the breadth of the GCSE to the specialisation depth of A-Level and beyond.

The specification provides students with design skills for the future so that they are able to recognise design needs and develop an understanding of how current global issues, including integrating technology, impacts on today's world.

Students will be encouraged to take design risks and innovate in a situation where it is safe to test and refine ideas, giving them the confidence at A-Level to further develop these skills in their own design brief with a client/end user.

The A-Level course is assessed by a written examination
2 hours 30 minutes which is worth 50% of the qualification 120 marks.
The following topics are covered:

Topic 1: Materials
Topic 2: Performance characteristics of materials
Topic 3: Processes and techniques
Topic 4: Digital technologies
Topic 5: Factors influencing the development of products
Topic 6: Effects of technological developments
Topic 7: Potential hazards and risk assessment
Topic 8: Features of manufacturing industries
Topic 9: Designing for maintenance and the cleaner environment
Topic 10: Current legislation
Topic 11: Information handling, Modelling and forward planning
Topic 12: Further processes and techniques

The other 50% of the qualification is in the form of a Non-examined assessment which involves:

- Students individually and/or in consultation with a client/end user identify a problem and design context.
- Students will develop a range of potential solutions which include the use of computer aided design and evidence of modelling.
- Students will be expected to make decisions about the designing and development of the prototype in conjunction with the opinions of the client/end user which may have an impact on the environment.
- Students will realise one potential solution through practical making activities with evidence of project management and planning for production.
- Students will incorporate issues related to sustainability and the impact on their prototype.
- Students are expected to analyse and evaluate wider issues in design technology, prototypes/products made by themselves and others including social, moral, ethical and environmental impacts.

Preparing for A-Level Product Design in OLA 6th
If you are considering opting to study A-Level Design Technology then these are the tasks that you will need to work through in the summer. You will be required to present them to the Head of Design Technology in September.

- To carry out a product analysis and development task. You need to choose a household item e.g. Computer mouse and using sketching and notes carry out an in depth analysis of the product. Research other similar products on the market and use sketching to develop the product to make it more aesthetically pleasing or to have another function.
- To research a famous designer or architect and produce an information page that could be presented to an A-Level group highlighting facts such as key characteristics, the history of the product/designer and the products that have made them famous.

Drama: Theatre Studies

Awarding body: AQA **Specification: 7262**

Is Theatre Studies fun?
If you enjoy reading plays, acting in plays, thinking about plays, discussing plays and watching plays, the answer is 'Yes'. If you are interested in set, costume, make-up, lighting, sound or stage management, the answer is 'Yes'. If you enjoy working together with others, the answer is 'Yes'. You will certainly need to involve yourself in lessons!

What will I learn?
You will learn about the history and the terminology of theatre and study some of the world's greatest literature. The course ranges from texts written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ to plays written by playwrights living in the 21st Century. You will develop your creativity, your communication skills and your powers of analysis.

The course is very practical and you need to be willing to participate in drama either in a performing or a production role. You may spend an afternoon rehearsing a play and then have to go out to the theatre for homework.

Will any expense be involved?
It will help if you are willing to buy your own copies of plays so that you can highlight and annotate them. We will need to visit the theatre, but we will try to limit the cost of this whenever we can.

What is the course content and assessment for A-Level?

Component 1: Drama and Theatre

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of two set plays
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers
- Written examination: 3 hours

Component 2: Creating Original Drama (practical)

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer, designer or director)
- Devised piece must be influenced by the work and methodologies of one prescribed practitioner
- Working notebook
- Devised performance

Component 3: Making Theatre (practical)

- Practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts (Extract 1, 2 and 3) each taken from a different play
- Methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to Extract 3
- Extract 3 is to be performed as a final assessed piece
- Reflective report analysing and evaluating theatrical interpretation of all three extracts
- Performance of Extract 3
- Reflective report

Which subjects go well with Theatre Studies?
All subjects go well with Theatre Studies, but it particularly complements Art, English, History, Modern Languages and Textiles.

Preparing for A-Level Drama in OLA 6th

Read the following introductory books:

- National Theatre: All About Theatre (2017) ISBN: 978-1406373394
- The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies (2011) ISBN: 978-0521672238

Task 1: Choose a few of the following Drama practitioners and do some research:

- Performers: Antonin Artaud, Steven Berkoff, Augusto Boal, Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook, Complicite, DV8, John Godber, Nicholas Hytner, Mike Leigh, Punchdrunk, Max Stafford-Clark, Konstantin Stanislavski.
- Designers: Alison Chitty, Bob Crowley, Gareth Fry, Gecko, Bill Mitchell, Tom Piper, Mic Pool, Malcolm Rippeth, Ray Smith, Julie Taymoor, 1927.
- For each practitioner you research, outline what sort of theatre they are known for and why they are considered notable.

Task 2: Go to the theatre and write a review of what you have seen. Write about:

- What were the aims of the production? Was it effective and why? Discuss an aspect of performance and design that impressed you and explain why.

Economics

Awarding body: AQA **Specifications: 7136**

Why do oil prices fluctuate? Why does the government provide free health care to its citizens? Why do economies experience recessions? The study of Economics provides us with answers to these questions and many more.

Why study Economics at A-Level?
Economics is a fascinating subject especially in the current climate of change. Economics helps you to look more deeply into the world around you and it can give new perspectives on some of the most pressing and challenging problems facing society today. Few decisions are taken that are not influenced to some degree by Economics. It explores the role of government, producers and consumers and explains many of the issues and debates that feature in world economic affairs and in society.

A-Level Economics is a thought provoking course which enables you to learn about traditional and more recent economic theories; it challenges your inherent views and examines national and international economic events. Economics is a current, relevant and dynamic.

What will I study?

Individuals, firms, markets and market failure

- Economic methodology and the economic problem
- Individual economic decision making
- Price determination in a competitive market
- Production, costs and revenue
- Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly
- The labour market
- The distribution of income and wealth: poverty and inequality
- The market mechanism, market failure and government intervention in markets

The national and international economy

- The measurement of macroeconomic performance
- How the macro-economy works: the circular flow of income, AD/AS analysis and related concepts
- Economic performance
- Financial markets and monetary policy
- Fiscal policy and supply-side policies
- The international economy

Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop a critical approach to economic models and methods of enquiry. The skills of analysis and evaluation are developed throughout the course.

Assessment of the A-Level: Three compulsory papers
Paper 1 and Paper 2: Are each a 2 hour written examination; 80 marks worth 33.3% of the A-Level. Section A has data response questions worth 40 marks and section B allows you to choose one essay question from three titles worth 40 marks.

Paper 3: Is a 2 hour written examination; 80 marks worth 33.3% of the A-Level. Section A has multiple choice questions worth 30 marks and section B is a case study question worth 50 marks.

Further study and careers in Economics
Whilst not a prerequisite to study Economics at university, A-Level Economics provides an excellent basis for further study in this area or many related subjects. Degrees are offered in Economics or as part of a joint degree with Politics, Management, History or Mathematics. Careers for Economics graduates include roles in finance, accountancy, research or advisory roles for banks, government or business.

Preparing for A-Level Economics in OLA 6th
Be aware of the Economic and Political environment. As we progress through the course, as discussed above, we draw upon situations which occur in the world around us. An interest in, and an understanding of, current affairs are essential to good performance in Economics. Brexit, UK and overseas Government economic policies are often in the news. Try to read the news as often as you can, ideally every day but certainly a couple of times each week. The following are good places to start:

- Download news apps to your phone – Try the BBC News app and personalise your newsfeeds to include Economics, UK Business, World, Technology and Politics. Also, try 'Flipboard' and again tailor your newsfeeds.
- News on the TV – BBC News and Channel 4 News tend to have the best coverage of economic issues.
- Newspapers and Journals – The Times, The Independent, The Daily Telegraph Business pages and The Guardian offer both UK business and International news on. The Financial Times is good but maybe a little too technical at this stage in your studies. Be aware of ideological bias in the news and try to get a balanced view. The Economist is a very good source of information.

- **Read books –** An understanding of Economics is becoming more popular and, as such, there are an ever-increasing number of accessible economics books out there. Here are some you can try. They are arranged in approximate order of complexity so it is better to start at the top of the list:
  - Freakonomics/Superfreakonomics (Levitt & Dubner)
  - The Economic Naturalist (Frank)
  - Fifty Things that Made the Modern Economy (Tim Harford) – a book to go alongside the podcast which looks at everything from concrete to baby formula and insurance.
  - The Undercover Economist (Harford)
  - 50 Economics Ideas You Really Need to Know (Conway)
  - No Logo (Naomi Klein)
  - 23 Things they didn't tell you about Capitalism (Ha-Joon Chang)

English Literature

Awarding body: Pearson/Edexcel **Specification: 9ET0**

Advanced study of English Literature gives you the opportunity to read, study and share your opinions and enjoyment of not only the great works of the past but also novels, plays and poems which are being written right now, both tear-jerkers and side-splitters!

How some of our Sixth Form students have described English Literature:

- I would recommend English to anyone who enjoys reading, writing and exploring the worlds which come out of a writer's imagination.
- English is a good way to do something you love and call it work! The lessons are interesting and are very entertaining.
- The A-Level style of teaching is very enjoyable as everyone is encouraged to make an input; you may not have realised before how much you can learn just from listening to other students.
- A-Level goes far deeper below the surface of literature than the IGCSE.
- Do not take this A-Level if you are not genuinely passionate about literature, but if you love books and don't mind writing essays then English is the subject for you.
- In A-Level English you get to study more interesting books, but you have to concentrate and read the books to do well and fully understand.

Studying English will help you to communicate more effectively in conversation and on paper, to improve your analytical and evaluative skills and to work and think with independence, providing you with an excellent foundation for success in any subject at university and any future career. Students buy their own texts so that they can annotate them.

The A-Level course

Component 1 – Drama 30%

- One Shakespeare play and one other drama text
- Written examination, open book, lasting 2 hours 15 minutes
- Students answer one essay question on Shakespeare incorporating ideas from wider critical reading and one essay question on the other text

Component 2 – Prose 20%

- Two prose texts from a chosen theme; at least one text should date from pre-1900
- Written examination, open book, lasting 1 hour 15 minutes
- Students answer one comparative essay question

Component 3 – Poetry 30%

- Poetic form, meaning and language, together with a selection of 21st century poetry, and poetry from a second period or a named poet
- Written examination, open book, lasting 2 hours 15 minutes
- Students compare an unseen poem with a studied 21st century poem as well as answering one essay question on their literary period/poet

Component 4 – Coursework 20%

- Two texts for study will be chosen by the teacher to suit the group
- Students write one essay of 2500-3000 words comparing their texts

The future

English Literature is a wonderful subject to offer if you are thinking of a career in the media, journalism, law, teaching or any future which relies on good communication skills. English Literature will stand you in good stead when applying for a vast range of degree courses; it gives evidence of the serious study of ideas and the power of the written word.

Preparing for A-Level English Literature in OLA 6th

Before the summer holidays at the end of Year 11, you will be given a reading list with details of the texts you will be studying in Lower Sixth. Reading these over the summer will give you a great start in your A-Level course and mean you can participate fully in class discussion. As well as reading the set texts, we recommend that you:

- Read widely for pleasure – novels, plays and poetry – thinking about how stories are told and the way writers use language.
- Read other novels by the authors or your two prose texts to give you a wider understanding of their work.
- Watch film versions of your set texts, or see them at the theatre if you can, to help you think about the characters, settings and ideas being presented.

Although it's impossible to provide a comprehensive reading list for English Literature, listed below are some recommended novels that may help you find your way around a library or website when choosing what to read.

Prose reading list for English Literature A-Level

These are merely suggestions to help you get started – find authors and genres you love and enjoy their work. Don't forget poetry and drama as well!

Fiction

Chinua Achebe	Things Fall Apart
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	Purple Hibiscus, Americanah
Monica Ali	Brick Lane
Margaret Atwood	The Handmaid's Tale, Oryx and Crake, The Blind Assassin
Jane Austen	Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Sense and Sensibility
Charlotte Brontë	Jane Eyre
Emily Brontë	Wuthering Heights
A.S. Byatt	Possession
Angela Carter	The Bloody Chamber, Nights at the Circus,
Joseph Conrad	The Secret Agent, The Heart of Darkness
Charles Dickens	Great Expectations, Hard Times, Bleak House
Daphne Du Maurier	Rebecca
George Eliot	The Mill on The Floss, Middlemarch
Sebastian Faulks	Birdsong, Charlotte Gray
F. Scott Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby, Tender is the Night
E.M. Forster	A Room with a View, A Passage to India
Elizabeth Gaskell	North and South, Wives and Daughters
Gabriel Garcia Marquez	Love in the Time of Cholera
Graham Greene	Brighton Rock
Thomas Hardy	Far from the Madding Crowd, Tess of the D'Urbervilles
L.P. Hartley	The Go-Between
Ernest Hemingway	For Whom the Bell Tolls, A Farewell to Arms
Khaled Hosseini	A Thousand Splendid Suns, The Kite Runner
Aldous Huxley	Brave New World
Kazuo Ishiguro	The Remains of the Day, Never Let Me Go
James Joyce	Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Dubliners
D.H. Lawrence	Sons and Lovers, Women in Love
Harper Lee	To Kill a Mockingbird
Andrea Levy	Small Island
Hilary Mantel	Wolf Hall, Bring out the Bodies
Ian McEwan	Atonement, Enduring Love
Toni Morrison	Beloved
Iris Murdoch	The Bell, The sea, the sea
George Orwell	Nineteen Eighty-Four

Arundhati Roy	The God of Small Things
Sylvia Plath	The Bell Jar
Annie Proulx	Postcards, The Shipping News
Jean Rhys	Wide Sargasso Sea
John Steinbeck	The Grapes of Wrath, East of Eden
Bram Stoker	Dracula
Alice Walker	The Colour Purple
Sarah Waters	The Little Stranger
Jeanette Winterson	Oranges are not the only Fruit
Zadie Smith	White Teeth, NW, On Beauty
Virginia Woolf	Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse

Non-fiction:

Anon	I Am The Secret Footballer
Maya Angelou	I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings
Allie Brosh	Hyperbole and a Half
Bill Bryson	The Lost Continent, Notes from a Small Island
Alan Bennett	Writing Home
Vera Brittain	Testament of Youth
Truman Capote	In Cold Blood
Jenny Diski	Skating to Antarctica
Margaret Forster	Hidden Lives
Anna Funder	Stasiland
Anne Frank	The Diary of a Young Girl
Robert Graves	Goodbye To All That
Stephen Grosz	The Examined Life
George Orwell	Down and Out in Paris and London
Alexander Masters	Stuart: A Life Backwards
Helen Macdonald	H is for Hawk
Nelson Mandela	Long Walk to Freedom
Solomon Northrop	Twelve Years a Slave
Jeannette Winterson	Why Be Happy When You Could be Normal?
Xinran	What the Chinese Don't Eat

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Awarding Body: Pearson/Edexcel **Specification: ZPJ30**

What is the EPQ?
Edexcel's Extended Project qualification (EPQ) at Level 3 helps students of all abilities and interests to acquire independent learning skills. Students can use these new skills in their other A-Level subjects as well as to prepare for higher education and working life. The project offers huge flexibility and allows you to choose how you present your work. For example, your project might take the form of:

- A written dissertation
- A scientific investigation/field study
- A performance
- An artefact (designing and making an object)

How does the EPQ relate to UCAS applications?
The EPQ is equivalent to half an A-Level and attracts up to 28 UCAS points.
It is graded from A* to E.

What will you get out of it?
The EPQ enables you to enhance your qualifications by pursuing an interest of your choice. Therefore, it can really broaden your studies and give a scientist a chance to be an artist for example or vice versa! It helps to develop key skills such as independent learning, research and critical thinking which are valued by both employers and universities. The EPQ gives students the opportunity to:

- Learn more about an area that interests them or research a subject not available through other qualifications
- Develop independent research and project management skills
- Learn time management
- Learn skills that will help in higher education or the workplace.

The EPQ is recognised and recommended by universities, schools, colleges and students for the valuable skills it provides.

Complementary subjects
As a project can be almost about anything, EPQ complements any subject that you study at A-Level or a subject that you might be interested in after your time at OLA. That is what is so great about an EPQ.

How does it work?
The EPQ has been designed so that students can either choose a project title that relates to their current study, or a topic that they are personally interested in or passionate about.

Students work with a tutor-mentor, as well as working independently to plan, manage, complete and evaluate a single piece of work. The work is assessed by a set of criteria that the mentors refer to as the work progresses.

There are no exams. Instead, students will produce one piece of coursework, accompanied by a formal presentation to teachers to present and evaluate their work. Students are marked on their ability to plan, manage, complete and review their project.

The EPQ is completed during the Lower Sixth year and is marked by teachers, before being sent to Edexcel to be moderated.

OLA successes
There have been special circumstances where universities will consider reducing a grade requirement if you apply with a high grade EPQ. In that way a successful EPQ can help towards your further educational goals. As part of their projects students have made contact with specialists in their field; from academics, to celebrity cookbook authors, to business leaders.

Food Science and Nutrition Level 3 Diploma

Awarding Body: WJEC **Specification: 4563**

Learning opportunities
A course which will allow students to learn about the relationship between the human body and food as well as developing practical skills linked to experimental work and the cooking and preparation of food. The course is adaptable as candidates are able to have some choice in the second year selecting the units that they are more interested in.

What skills will I develop?
- Skills required for independent learning and development
- The ability to solve problems
- The skills of project-based research, development and presentation
- The fundamental ability to work alongside other professionals, in a professional environment
- The ability to apply learning in vocational contexts

Requirements
It is preferable if pupils have studied Food at GCSE level but not a necessity.

Course structure: A-Level
The WJEC Level 3 Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition is assessed through a combination of a written exam and external assignment set and marked by WJEC and two centre marked assignments. Learners will be involved in weekly practical sessions and will build on the skills and knowledge developed at GCSE level.

Meeting the Nutritional Needs of Specific Groups – This involves a practical food show case and an externally marked written examination. Learners will demonstrate an understanding of the science of nutrition and nutritional needs in a wide range of contexts. Students will experience on–going practical sessions, to gain a wide range of high-level skills to produce quality food items to meet the needs of individuals.

Ensuring Food is Safe to Eat – This is externally marked and involves experimentation and written research. This unit allows learners to develop their understanding of the science of food safety and hygiene; essential knowledge for anyone involved in food production in the home or wishing to work in the food industry. Again, practical sessions will support the gaining of theoretical knowledge and ensure learning is a tactile experience.

Experimenting to Solve Food Production OR Current Issues in Food Science and Nutrition – Studying one of the two optional units allows learners the opportunity to study subjects of particular interest or relevance to them, building on previous learning and experiences.

Grading
Awards are from Distinction* to Pass and are recognised in UCAS points and for university applications:

	DISTINCTION*	DISTINCTION	MERIT	PASS
DIPLOMA	140	120	80	40

Further study
An understanding of food science and nutrition is relevant to many industries and job roles. Care providers and nutritionists in hospitals use this knowledge, as do sports coaches and fitness instructors. Hotels and restaurants, food manufacturers and government agencies also use this understanding to develop menus, food products and policies that support healthy eating initiatives. Many employment opportunities within the field of food science and nutrition are available to graduates.

Learners will gain the required knowledge to be able to use the qualification to support entry to higher education courses such as:

- BSc Food and Nutrition
- BSc Human Nutrition
- BSc (Hons) Public Health Nutrition
- BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology

Preparing for A-Level Food in OLA 6th
Nutrition is a key part of the course and you will need to have a clear understanding of nutrients and healthy eating.

Explain what a healthy diet is and the key elements of the Eatwell Guide.

Explore the concept of energy intake, expenditure and energy balance.

Task:

- What is energy?
- Why do we need to eat food?
- How much energy do we need?
- What are the factors that affect 'energy out'?
- What is energy balance?

Food Presentation: It is important to understand how to layout food products in order to improve their visual appearance. Use the following websites and videos to investigate what makes food look good. You are welcome to search for other tips and guidance on food presentation techniques. This is partially important, as you will be required to photograph the products you make.

Task: Write a list of tips and ideas for successful food presentation. Have a go at some of the techniques and evidence through photos

www.howtocookgourmet.com/foodpresentationtips.html

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Udzs_MPNpMQ

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YBnczqciHI

Food in the news: Create a "food in the news" media folder. Between now and the beginning of September collect any articles that you find referring to Food and Nutrition. The Guardian and Observer newspapers, the BBC news and the BBC Good Food Magazine are good starting places. You could also look at the free papers and magazines available at food retailers.

Task: Select two articles that you think are important/news worthy. Summarise the key points and explain why you think that each article was published/written. If you enjoy cooking, have a passion and interest in food, want to develop your practical skills and experiment with new foods then this is the course for you.

Geography

Awarding body: AQA **Specification: 7037**

Geography is the integrated study of the earth's places, peoples, environments and societies. At its core lies the understanding of the relationships and impacts between people and the environment. It is unique in bridging the social sciences (Human Geography) with its understanding of the dynamics of societies, cultures and behaviour, and the earth sciences (Physical Geography) in the understanding of physical landscapes and the dynamics of environmental processes.

Geography puts this understanding of social and physical processes within the essential context of places and regions – recognising the great differences in cultures, political systems, economies, landscapes and environments across the world, and the links between them. As it is a practical subject there is an emphasis on Geographical skills in this specification and students have to complete an individual fieldwork investigation.

Entry requirements and content of the A-Level course
It is possible to take Geography at A-Level without having studied it at GCSE.
Note: Topics in bold are those which OLA students study

Physical geography

- **Water and carbon cycles**
- Hot desert environments and their margins
- **Coastal systems and landscapes**
- **Hazards**
- Ecosystems under stress
- Cold environments

Human geography

- **Global systems and global governance**
- **Changing places**
- Contemporary urban environments
- **Population and the environment**
- Resource security

Geography Fieldwork Investigation

Geography, other subjects and your future
Geography will complement both Science and Humanities at A-Level because of the topics covered. In addition you will learn transferable skills such as collection, analysis and interpretation of data, the application of methodical working techniques, the ability to view problems from a number of angles and some general knowledge of the world. Students who have taken A-Level Geography have studied subjects as varied as Biological Sciences, Law, Nursing and Civil Engineering at university and gone onto jobs in sectors such as marketing, teaching, urban planning, law and conservation.

Assessment for the A-Level

Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Assesses: Physical Geography from a choice of environments	**Assesses:** Human Geography including a choice of topics	Students complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field.
Written examination for 150 minutes using multiple choice, short answer and extended prose responses	Written examination for 150 minutes using multiple choice, short answer and extended prose responses	The write-up is to be from 3,000 to 4,000 words. It is marked by teachers and externally moderated.
120 marks	120 marks	60 marks
40% of the A-Level grade	40% of the A-Level grade	20% of the A-Level grade

Preparing for A-Level Geography in OLA 6th
It is recommended that students conduct preparatory reading from the following sources;

Water and Carbon Cycles:
Hydrological Summary for the United Kingdom, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, December 2014

Coastal Systems and Landscapes:
Harvey, A. (2012) Introducing Geomorphology: A Guide to Landforms and Processes. Dunedin Academic Press

Hazards:
Bankoff, G. (2015) Culture of Disaster: Society and Natural Hazard in the Philippines (Routledge)

Global Systems and Global Governance:
McKinsey Global Institute – Global Flows in a Digital Age
OECD Report – A Global or Semi Global Village? (1990s to today)

Population and the Environment:
Climate-Resilient Agriculture: What small-scale producers need to adapt to climate change

Changing Places:
Anderson, J. (2015) Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces (Routledge)

Advise on complimentary subjects
Business Studies and Economics work very well with Geography as the concepts learnt within the Human aspects of the geography course such as 'economies of scale' and the 'multiplier effect' overlap with these subjects. In addition, the numerical and graphical interpretation skills utilised within geography can also be applied to Economics and Business Studies.

Biology also works well with geography as concepts such as ecosystems, the water and carbon cycle covered within physical geography overlap with the content taught within Biology.

Progression information
University destinations, success stories

Laurie Davies studied GCSE Geography at OLA and has recently gained a place at Cambridge University to read Geography.

Isabella Boyce Parr achieved an A grade at A-Level Geography and gained a place at Bristol University to read Geography.

History

Awarding body: Pearson/Edexcel **Specification: 9H10**

What will I study?

Communist States in the Twentieth Century

In the Lower Sixth you will study two Twentieth Century Communist states – the USSR and China. Communism was one of the most significant ideologies of the Twentieth Century. It directly affected the lives of millions of people who lived under communist rule, but it also had indirect effects on countless others around the world.

The world's first Communist state was the Soviet Union. You will learn about the ways in which the Soviet Union controlled the people, the politics and the economic life of the country, from Lenin's creation of a communist state, to Stalin's purges, Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's 'excesses' and the stagnation of the Cold War era. You will also make a special study of why the USSR collapsed in 1991.

Another country rapidly growing in importance is Communist China. You will discover how a Communist regime was established in China over seventy years ago and what impact it had on Chinese people – from the unbinding of women's feet and the attempt to make steel in every backyard, to the crackdown on dissent and opposition.

Studying two different countries allows you to develop a greater understanding of the nature of communist, and totalitarian, rule and to see similarities and differences between them.

Protest, Agitation and Popular Reform in Britain, 1780–1928

In contrast to your Lower Sixth studies, the Upper Sixth History course focuses on the quest for democracy in Britain. You will look at the roles of ordinary people and popular protest in bringing about political change, including studying the Chartists' campaign in the 1830s and 1840s for votes for all, the Suffragettes' increasingly violent attempts to gain votes for women and what motivated Trade Unions to declare a General Strike in 1926.

Your own enquiry

In the Upper Sixth you will carry out your own enquiry into an issue arising from your other A-Level work in History, which will enable you to develop skills of investigation and enquiry that will provide an excellent foundation for university work in any subject. The focus of this is on understanding the nature of the historian's work. You will investigate one controversy or debate between historians.

Controversies and debates

In both years you will be able to dig deeper as historians, looking at issues that are hotly debated between history professionals to understand how these writers can hold such different views about the same events and to decide what you think.

Is History for me?

This course will appeal to you if you:

- Have an enquiring mind, enjoy investigation and like to make up your own mind
- Want to develop your analytical skills
- Enjoy studying people – as individuals, finding out why they have had such an influence, and as members of society
- Have an interest in how the modern world has developed

What will I gain from studying History?

History is useful because it involves you in:

- Learning to locate and weigh up information, to recognise propaganda and myth and to make informed judgements – useful in any walk of life.
- Communicating what you've learnt clearly and effectively and having the confidence to defend your conclusions – most jobs involve presenting information.
- Learning about some of the key events, personalities and issues that have shaped the modern world.
- Understanding the past in order to make sense of the present. To participate in society and to exercise your political rights you need to understand how they work.

How will I learn?

- A-Level History builds well on your GCSE studies, developing your source skills and analytical writing skills further.
- It will be an active learning experience – there will be lots of opportunities for discussion and debate, exchanging opinions, listening to others and developing your own ideas.
- You will be able to make your own short presentations. Written work is varied – by no means just essay writing – although you will learn how to write a good essay!
- You may be able to hear noted authorities speak about their special subjects at sixth form conferences.

History offers you:

- A subject that has variety, interest and relevance,
- An active and stimulating learning experience
- A whole range of skills that employers and higher education value
- Preparation for many top jobs

The skills and knowledge developed in History A-Level sit comfortably with other Humanities subjects, such as Geography, Economics and RS; all are trying to understand and explain how the world works. A-Level Psychology students particularly enjoy investigating the extreme personalities of Stalin and Mao. Those studying English, Music or Art appreciate the cultural aspects of the A-Level History course and soon discover that an understanding of past societies is based as much on its culture as it is on politics.

A-Level History students often go on to study the subject, or Politics and International Relations-based courses at a range of Russell Group and even US universities.

Summary of assessment

Paper	Title	Assessment
Paper 1	Russia, 1917–1991: From Lenin to Yeltsin	**Written examination:** Two essays and one question assessing the ability to analyse and evaluate historical interpretations. 30% of the A-Level grade.
Paper 2	Mao's China, 1949–1976	**Written examination:** One question assessing source analysis and evaluation skills and a choice of essays. 20% of the A-Level grade.
Paper 3	Protest, agitation and parliamentary reform in Britain, c1780–1928	**Written examination:** One question assessing source analysis and evaluation skills and a choice of essays. 30% of the A-Level grade.
Paper 4	Coursework – assessing skills of historical enquiry, analysing and evaluating historical interpretations and organising and communicating the findings	Coursework essay. 20% of the A-Level grade.

Preparing for A-Level History in OLA 6th

There is no set preparatory task for A-Level History; you need to recharge after GCSEs and we recommend your reading in the subject is for pleasure, to stimulate your intellectual curiosity, rather than for a specific outcome. Historical fiction and memoirs allow you to get a feel for a period and, although clearly dramatised and sometimes a little selective with the truth, can provide very human insights into events, personalities and life in the past.

- Alexander Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich. Based on the author's experiences in a Stalinist labour camp.
- Simon Sebag Montefiore, Sashenka, One Night in Winter & Red Sky at Noon (these are loosely a trilogy set in Russia in the last century).
- Amor Towles, A Gentleman in Moscow. Gentler observations of the changing USSR.
- Julian Barnes, The Noise of Time. Composer Dmitri Shostakovich worries about living through the Stalin era.
- Jung Chang, Wild Swans. The story of Communist China told through the author's family history.
- Ha Jin, Waiting. A doctor's quest for happiness against the odds during the Cultural Revolution.
- Dai Sijie, Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress. The story of life in a re-education camp. Also a film.
- Tim Marshall, Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need To Know About Global Politics. Fascinating chapters here on how both Russian and Chinese culture, politics and society have been shaped by more than human factors.

Latin

Awarding body: OCR **Specification: H443**

Latin A-Level gives you further training in logical thinking and insight into the structure of language. It also offers you the chance to enjoy a wider range of interesting and thought-provoking Roman literature, both poetry and prose.

As well as being very rewarding in its own right, Latin is still a deservedly impressive subject to have on your application forms for university or future employment. It supports the study of English, History or Modern Languages, but is also studied with great success alongside Mathematics and Science.

Language

You will start by revising and refining your understanding of the grammar and syntax you learnt at GCSE as well as meeting new and more sophisticated constructions. These you will practice initially through exercises, with much more emphasis on translating from English into Latin than at GCSE. Gradually you will gain the expertise to translate not just sentences but whole paragraphs of English into stylish, idiomatic Latin. Although this may seem rather daunting at first, most students are surprised to find how much fun it is, how much it improves their command of the language and how satisfying it is to get all the grammar right and produce a paragraph that really reads like Latin! At the same time, you will gain further confidence and fluency in translating from Latin by reading a selection of different authors and genres, which can be chosen to suit the interests and tastes of the group. In your Upper Sixth year you will concentrate on two specified authors – the historian, Livy and the poet, Ovid – in order to become familiar enough with their characteristic vocabulary and style to tackle extracts from their work unseen.

Literature

A-Level Latin offers you the chance to study key texts in much greater depth, which we will enjoy reading and discussing together in class, with particular emphasis on their literary qualities. These could include a compelling first-person account of the fall of Troy from the second book of Virgil's epic poem, 'The Aeneid', an entertaining critique of Roman society from the satirist, Juvenal, or Ovid's poetic account of all the Roman festivals in February and their origins. In prose you will be able to study Tacitus' devastating portrait of the infamous emperor, Nero, a selection of letters about day-to-day Roman life from Pliny, or one of the most famous speeches written by Cicero, Rome's most brilliant barrister: a rhetorical tour de force which must have had the jury in fits of laughter one moment and weeping the next. To broaden and deepen your appreciation of context, you will also be expected to look at related literature in English translation.

Other information
Latin can take you anywhere! There are many exciting university courses in Classics and also many combined courses: Latin with English, Modern Languages or History, as well as many other possibilities. Latin is also useful to anyone wishing to read English, Theology, Philosophy, Law, History, Archaeology, or Modern Languages, or anyone interested in museum or library work. Former OLA Latin students who have gone on to study Medicine or Veterinary Science say that it really helps with learning all the anatomical and other scientific vocabulary. Computer companies and many branches of the business world look favourably on people who have studied a formal language like Latin.

To enjoy Latin and make good progress requires a sound understanding of the work covered at GCSE and an interest in language and literature.

Preparing for A-Level Latin in OLA 6th
Take home a copy of Oxford Latin Course 2 which is based on the life of the poet, Horace, and the exciting period of history through which he, Catullus, Cicero, Virgil and Ovid lived. Read through the stories and background information and try some English into Latin sentences in the Grammar and Exercises section at the back.

If you enjoy historical fiction, there are some excellent books which will take you into the atmosphere of the Roman world:

- Robert Harris: Imperium, Lustrum and Dictator – a very good introduction to the study of Cicero.
- Steven Saylor: Any of his Roma Sub Rosa series featuring a detective called Gordianus the Finder and Cicero again, but in a rather less attractive light!

Or on a lighter note:

- Lindsay Davis: either the Marcus Didius Falco series, which starts with 'The Silver Pigs' or the Flavia Albia series, which starts with 'The Ides of April'.

Watch any of Mary Beard's programmes about Rome.

If you find yourself near a Roman site or museum in this country or abroad, take a look.

Mathematics & Further Mathematics

Awarding Body: OCR Mathematics A **Specification: H240**

Mathematics at A-Level is a course worth studying, not only as a supporting subject for the physical and social sciences but also in its own right. It is challenging but interesting and as well as building on the work that you will have already met at IGCSE/GCSE, new topics will also be introduced. The course is composed of aspects of Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics. In the Pure Mathematics you will extend your algebraic, trigonometric and calculus (differentiating) skills, as well as meeting new topics including logarithms, exponential functions, binomial expansions, radians and integration (the inverse of differentiating). The Statistics includes using familiar and new techniques in analysing large data sets, hypothesis testing and work on probability. The Mechanics involves working with vectors and deals with the effects of forces on the motion of particles and on larger objects.

The examination consists of three 2 hour papers:

- Pure Mathematics
- Pure and Statistics
- Pure and Mechanics

Mathematics is not an easy option and you will need to have achieved at least a grade 7 (preferably an 8 or 9) at IGCSE, to enable you to access the course. You need to be able to work independently and be able to persevere with problems to a satisfactory conclusion.

You will probably be taught by two teachers, both teaching the Pure Mathematics, with one concentrating on the Statistics and the other covering the Mechanics.

Whilst studying Mathematics you will be expected to:

- Use mathematical skills, knowledge, argument and logic to solve quite complicated problems. This may include techniques of proof.
- Simplify real-life situations (modelling) so that you can use Mathematics to show what is happening and what might happen in different circumstances.
- Use a calculator effectively and appropriately; understand calculator limitations and when it is inappropriate to use such technology. You will need a suitable calculator, which includes statistical and distribution functions. We would recommend the Casio fx-CG50 graphical calculator; alternatively, you could choose a more basic calculator, such as the Casio Classwiz FX-991CW.

Higher education courses or careers that either require A-Level Mathematics or are strongly related include:

- Economics (often required)
- Medicine
- Architecture
- Engineering
- Accountancy (often required)
- Actuarial Profession
- Psychology
- Environmental Studies
- Computing (often required).

Preparing for A-Level Mathematics OLA 6th

During the summer between IGCSE and A-Level we would advise you to work through the booklet "Bridging the Gap" which we can provide and which consolidates the work on algebra, trigonometry and graphs from IGCSE, enabling you to make a smooth transition to the A-Level work.

Further Mathematics

Awarding body: OCR Further Mathematics A **Specification: H245**

Further Mathematics is an A-Level in its own right, but you must also study Mathematics A-Level to do this course. It is more challenging than the Mathematics A-Level, but again covers more advanced topics in Pure Mathematics, including matrices, complex numbers and further techniques in calculus. The Mechanics extends to include momentum and collisions, circular motion and centres of mass and the Statistics includes permutations and combinations, correlation and regression lines and further statistical distributions.

There are many university courses for which Further Mathematics would be helpful, but at present no course makes it a requirement. However, some universities will give reduced offers for Engineering, Mathematics and Physics if you are studying Further Mathematics. In fact, it would be considered very difficult to get into a top university (Oxbridge, London, Warwick, etc.) in these subjects, without some qualification in Further Mathematics.

The examination consists of four 90 minute papers:

- Pure Core 1
- Pure Core 2
- Two options from Statistics, Mechanics, Discrete Mathematics and Additional Pure Mathematics – we normally choose Statistics and Mechanics

You may have one or two teachers, depending on the timetable.

Modern Foreign Languages: French and Spanish

Awarding body: AQA

Specifications: French 7652
Spanish 7692

Studying A-level languages offers numerous benefits. Firstly, it fosters cultural understanding by delving into literature, film, and societal norms, promoting appreciation for diverse cultures. Secondly, it enhances communication skills, vital in careers like business, diplomacy, and international relations. Moreover, being multilingual provides a global job market advantage, as companies seek employees who can communicate effectively across linguistic barriers. Proficiency in a second language also opens doors for travel opportunities, enriching experiences and connections abroad.

Furthermore, A-level language qualifications lead to diverse career opportunities, from translation to journalism to diplomatic services. Multilingual individuals often enjoy higher earning potential due to their ability to navigate global business environments. Additionally, learning languages offers intellectual benefits, stimulating cognitive functions and enhancing problem-solving skills. On a personal level, it promotes personal enrichment by broadening perspectives and fostering empathy.

"Parler une langue, c'est posséder un second monde." – Victor Hugo
"To speak another language is to possess a second soul."

"Aprender un idioma es tener una ventana más desde la que observar el mundo." – Carlos Ruiz Zafón
"Learning a language is like having one more window from which to observe the world."

Skill level needed to study languages at A-Level
A strong proficiency across all four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) is crucial for successfully undertaking a language course at Sixth Form level. Excelling at GCSE level equips students with the necessary foundation to navigate more comprehensive studies at the A-Level. The language curriculum in OLA 6th expands upon GCSE study techniques. Over time, there's a gradual shift towards fostering independent research and study, utilising contemporary course materials and a diverse range of resources, including the Internet. This emphasis on independence enables students to cultivate organisational skills and a sense of responsibility, which will serve them well in future academic pursuits and professional endeavours.

Themes	French topic areas	Spanish topic areas
1	Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends • The changing nature of family • The 'cyber-society' • Voluntary work	Aspects of Hispanic society • Modern and traditional values • Cyberspace • Equal rights
2	Aspects of French-speaking society: Current issues • Positive features of a diverse society • Life for the marginalised • How criminals are treated	Multiculturalism in Hispanic society • Immigration • Racism • Integration
3	Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world • Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment. • Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power? • Politics and immigration	Aspects of political life in Hispanic society • Today's youth • Politics • Monarchies and dictatorships
4	Artistic culture in the French-speaking world • A culture proud of its heritage • Contemporary francophone music • Cinema: the 7th art form	Artistic culture in the Hispanic world • Modern day idols • Spanish regional identity • Cultural heritage
Works	Students are required to study one literary text and one film over the course of the two years.	
	• Book: "Un sac de billes" by Joseph Joffo • Film: "La Haine" directed by Mathieu Kassovitz (1995)	• Book: Laura Esquivel Como agua para chocolate • Film: Volver Pedro Almodóvar (2006)

Component	Description	Weighting
Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation	Listening, reading and translation and summary	50%
Paper 2: Writing	Students will answer an essay question in French for each of the two works they have studied. Students will have a choice of question on each book/film. All questions will be in French and will require a critical and analytical response	20%
Paper 3 Speaking	The test will be in two parts. Part 1 will be the discussion of one sub-theme from those in this specification, lasting 5–6 minutes, and Part 2 will be the presentation and discussion of the student's individual research project	30%

Music

Specification Pearson: Edexcel **Course Code 9MU0**

A-Level Music is a varied, creative and enjoyable course that combines the practical and academic study of music. It is designed to be accessible to musicians with a wide range of different interests and performing specialisms.

Like GCSE, there are three components to the course: performing, composing and appraising.

Performance: You prepare a performance of 8-12 minutes of music on your chosen instrument or voice. This is recorded and examined externally. In order to achieve the highest grades, students should be performing music of grade 7 standard or above. All styles of music are acceptable, and students are likely to do best performing the type of music they enjoy most. The assessment takes place towards the end of Upper Sixth.

Composition: You learn to structure and develop creative ideas in various styles and genres. You submit a portfolio consisting of one free composition, and one technical exercise. The free composition is a piece lasting four minutes or more, which may be in response to a brief set by the exam board, with a wide choice of instruments and genres. The technical exercise will demonstrate your ability to use harmonic or contrapuntal procedures from a specific musical genre with control and stylistic understanding; these skills are taught during the A-Level course. Students submit a score and a recording of their compositions. Work for examination will be completed during the Upper Sixth, and is marked by an external examiner.

Appraising: You learn about a wide range of set works in different musical styles. You develop your skills of analysis and evaluation, and learn how to relate music to its historical and cultural context. About half the music studied comes broadly from the western Classical tradition; the syllabus also covers music for film and television, popular music and Jazz, and music influenced by non-European cultures.

Who is suitable for this course?

In order to do well in A-Level Music, you need to have a wide interest in music, and to have participated in music reasonably extensively. It is not a technical requirement to have taken Music at GCSE but it is strongly recommended.
To be able to achieve high marks in the performing component, students should have reached Grade 5 standard or better by the time they start the course, although they need not necessarily have taken the exam. Students will need to continue with their instrumental or vocal studies throughout their time in OLA 6th.
All instruments (including voice) and all genres of music are acceptable; the essential thing is a high quality of performance. Parts of the course are notation-based, and students must be able to read music.

Where does it lead?
If you are considering applying for Music at University or Music College, the A-Level is a required entry qualification. Former Music A-Level students at OLA 6th currently hold Organ scholarships at Oxford, and instrumental scholarships at Trinity College of Music. It is also an academically rigorous and widely-respected course, which is accepted as an entry qualification for nearly all degree courses. A prominent member of the Law Society was recently quoted as saying that he would rather offer a Law training contract to a Music graduate than to one in any other subject. Music A-Level students have also gone on to study History, Languages, Drama, English, Engineering, Theology and Creative Writing at University.

Why study music at OLA 6th?

- **Results:** Since 2014 every Music A-Level at OLA has achieved their ALIS prediction or better.
- **Small class sizes:** With a subject that is 60% practical, smaller class sizes do enable more individual feedback from the teachers.
- **Leadership:** At OLA 6th we are keen to provide opportunities for our A-Level musicians to be leaders. This may be through accompanying younger students, taking lead roles in ensembles or even in running/assisting in running groups. If taking rehearsals, arranging music or learning the art of conducting interests you then we will help make this happen.

Preparing for A-Level Music in OLA 6th
To bridge the gap between GCSE and A-Level, you should delve into the detail of one of the pieces you can sing/play well. Ask yourself searching questions about how the composition has been put together. For example pick a bar and explain each note in the bar – why was that particular pitch/rhythm/timbre/expressive dynamic chosen?

Psychology

Awarding body: AQA **Specification: 7182**

The usual definition of Psychology is that it is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. As words go, these sound a little dry and dusty and do not really do justice to what the subject is all about. Psychology has as its remit the huge task of explaining the good, the bad and the ugly in all of us. In essence it is about what makes us tick and why. It draws on many disciplines and we can find the roots of modern Psychology in Biology and Philosophy. It is a science but has as its subject the human being; a sentient, highly intelligent, complicated and often unpredictable creature. Furthermore, different psychological approaches seek to explain our behaviour in radically different ways. For behaviourists, environment, nurture and learning are the shaping forces that make us who we are. Those adopting the biological paradigm look to genetics, physiology, neurotransmitters and hormones for the answers: in their view testosterone may have a lot to answer for! Evolutionary psychology is a relatively new approach which explains all our behaviour in terms of its ultimate adaptive quality. Here, our actions are geared towards two imperatives: to survive and to reproduce and pass on our genes. Of course there are those who disagree and supporters of Sigmund Freud focus on the role of the unconscious mind and unresolved childhood conflicts and fixations. Who would have thought that when and how you were potty trained could explain so much about your adult personality?

This subject is taught only in the OLA 6th and is one of the most popular options at OLA. The specification that will be followed is: AQA Psychology and below is an outline of the course content and structure.

A-Level content
Paper 1:

- Introductory topics in Psychology: Social influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology. 2 hours. (33.3% of A-Level award)

Paper 2:

- Psychology in context: Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology and Research Methods. 2 hours. (33.3% of A-Level award)

Paper 3:

- Issues and debates in Psychology: gender and culture, freewill and determinism, nature-nurture debate, reductionism and holism, idiographic and nomothetic approaches and ethical issues.
- Options in Psychology: Three options are selected from Relationships, Gender, Cognition and development, Schizophrenia, Eating behaviour, Stress, Aggression, Forensic psychology, and Addiction. 2 hours. (33.3% of A-Level award)

There are a range of questions in each paper including multiple choice, short answer and extended writing. There is no coursework.

Mathematical skills
At least 10% of the overall assessment of Psychology will contain mathematical skills. These skills will be applied in the context of Psychology and will be at least the standard of higher tier GCSE mathematics. Students will use descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse data.

At least 25-30% of the overall assessment will assess skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research methods. An understanding of scientific methodology is recommended.

Biopsychology
Students will study the genetic basis of behaviour, the nervous system, synaptic transmission, the endocrine system and localisation of brain function. Biological explanations are also explored in many of the topics such as schizophrenia, addiction, aggression. An interest in Biology and a Level 5 or above in GCSE Science is therefore strongly recommended.

Why study Psychology?
Psychology is an enormous subject and studying even a part of it will result in an improved understanding of the dynamics of human behaviour. Only hermits and social recluses do not need to interact with other people; so whatever path a student chooses after school, what they have learnt in Psychology will, sooner or later, come in handy.

Preparing for A-Level Psychology in OLA 6th
Online: Look at the AQA website for more information on the A-Level Psychology course content.

From the library: 'The Psychology Review' magazine has a range of interesting and relevant articles. 'The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat' by Oliver Sacks is a fascinating collection of case studies into abnormal psychology.

Listen to Radio 4: 'All in the mind' presented by Claudia Hammond, available on Podcast.

Religious Studies

Awarding body: OCR **Specification: H573**

"This is your last chance: after this there is no turning back. You take the blue pill, the story ends; you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes. Remember all I'm offering is the truth, nothing more" Morpheus, 'The Matrix'

"The unexamined life is not worth living" Socrates

Why study A-Level Religious Studies?
Answers to this question may be because:

- You want to find answers to some of life's big questions
- You enjoy debating and putting forward arguments for your point of view.

What is Religious Studies all about?
The specification consists of three parts:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- Developments in Christian thought

The course is a two year A-Level culminating in three two-hour examinations.

Content overview	Assessment overview	
Philosophy of Religion Learners will study: • Ancient philosophical influences • The nature of the soul, mind and body • Arguments about the existence or non-existence of God • The nature and impact of religious experience • The challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil • Ideas about the nature of God • Issues in religious language	Philosophy of Religion (01) 120 marks 2 hour written paper	33.3% of total A-Level

Content overview	Assessment overview	
Religion and Ethics Learners will study: • Normative ethical theories • The application of ethical theory to two contemporary issues of importance • Ethical language and thought • Debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience • Sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs	Religion and Ethics (02) 120 marks 2 hour written paper	33.3% of total A-Level
Developments in Religious thought Learners will study: • Religious beliefs, values and teachings, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world • Sources of religious wisdom and authority • Practices which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition • Significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought – including pluralism and the rise of secularism • Key themes related to the relationship between religion and society including Gender and theology and Liberation Theology and Marxist thought	Developments in Christian Thought (03) 120 marks 2 hour written paper	33.3% of total A-Level

What will I gain from studying Religious Studies?
Students following this course gain:

- The ability to think logically and to analyse the views of others
- The ability to put forward your own opinion both orally and in writing
- An appreciation of the effect of religion in our modern world
- The opportunity to think about your own views of religion and what is right and wrong and to decide whether they are reasonable.

Who can join the course?
Anyone who:

- Has an interest in some of the issues raised above. The course is Christian based, but you do not need to have a religious faith.
- Is ready to have their ideas challenged.
- Is prepared to work hard – the concepts can be hard, and some days you will really need to persevere in order to succeed.

Where can Religious Studies lead?

- The most obvious degrees are Theology and Philosophy
- Many people go on to the ministry or to be teachers (but not the majority!)
- An understanding of ethical issues is required in many professions: Law, accountancy, banking, medicine, anything involving people, and so on
- The ability to think logically and analytically is a vital skill for all career paths
- Universities are often very impressed with candidates who have done Religious Studies because it shows they have the ability to think

What other subjects does Religious Studies go with?

- You can find some topics or skills that complement any of the other option
- Complimentary subjects: English, History, Psychology
- Progression: PPL, Philosophy at Cambridge, Drama
- Links have been made with subjects from all over the curriculum. Remember – Religious Studies offers you a breadth of study that is unique to the subject

Past pupil comments:
Philosophy has really enhanced my skill set. I feel far more confident in expressing my opinion and arguing with greater clarity and measure, in both discussion and writing. It has encouraged me to engage with and evaluate my own views along with taking greater consideration over the views of others. This will serve me well in my future and I can honestly say that after two years of sixth form, Philosophy is the subject that has most developed me as a person.

A-Level RS creates an atmosphere where you feel comfortable to openly question, discuss and state ideas and beliefs. It gives you a greater understanding of and empathy for varying cultures and views. It increases your confidence in your ability to argue a particular point of view, and express and support your own opinions.

There is a very interesting focus on philosophical and ethical examination of varying and balanced religious and atheist perspectives.

Progression:
Success Rates in RS: 2020- 100% A*, 2019- 100% A-B, 2018- 100% B-D

Advise on complimentary subjects:
Humanities subjects work brilliantly with RS – English, History and Psychology for example. You develop your skills in the art of debate, flex your essay writing skills and develop your research skills. If you enjoy discussions, reading and considering the development of ethical and philosophical theories, then RS A-Level is a great opportunity and will support your studies elsewhere.

Preparing for A-Level Religious Studies in OLA 6th

Introductory Reading:
Blackburn, S. Think, OUP 2001
Gaarder, J. Sophie's World, London: Phoenix House 1995
Nagel, T. What Does It All Mean? OUP 1987 (reprinted 2004)
Warburton, N. Philosophy: The Basics (5th ed.), Routledge 2012

Philosophy of Religion:
Vardy, P. The Puzzle of God, Harper Collins (1999)
Davies, B. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, OUP 1993
Keller, T. The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Scepticism,
Hodder and Stoughton, 2009

Christianity:
Lewis, C.S. Mere Christianity, HarperCollins (also free on Audible Audiobooks)
McGrath, A. Christianity: An Introduction, Blackwell Publishing 2015

Ethics:
Dimmock, M. and Fisher, A. Ethics for A-Level, Open Book Publishing
Palmer, M. Moral Problems: a Coursebook for Schools and Colleges,
James Clarke and Co., 2005
Wilcockson, M. Issues of Life and Death, Hodder Education, 2009

Sciences: Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Awarding body: OCR

Sciences at A-Level are a very popular choice in OLA 6th and we have achieved excellent results and value added for our students. Many students have gone on to pursue science or science related subjects at university.

In OLA 6th, you will have the opportunity to continue studying each of the three science subjects. We offer Biology, Chemistry and Physics at A-Level and use the OCR exam board qualifications.

Each of the three science subject specifications assumes that students will have studied the subject as part of the GCSE Combined Science or GCSE Separate Science qualifications, and we have approximately equal numbers of students coming from each of these routes. To embark on a Science subject in the sixth form you will need to have achieved a minimum of level 6 in your relevant science GCSE. Due to the mathematical content involved in studying Science A-Levels, it is advantageous to have achieved a level 7 in Mathematics and/or be planning to study A-Level Maths.

If you are considering taking a science subject, we suggest that you discuss this with your teachers. They will be able to advise you on your expected GCSE grades and their assessment of your ability to succeed at A-Level.

If you are considering any of the A-Level science subjects, you will need to be reasonably competent and confident in mathematics as this is an important part of these A-Levels. The remainder of this science section in this booklet will give you a further insight into the individual science subject courses.

Sciences: Biology

Specification Code: OCR H420
A-Level Biology

Why choose Biology?
Students choose Biology to get into higher education or to pursue a particular career, but above all because they are interested in studying this challenging, innovative practical science and because they enjoy it. It is an essential subject for Medicine and Veterinary Science. A-Level Biology is particularly valued by universities whatever course you ultimately apply for.

The course content is split into six teaching modules:

1. Development of practical skills in Biology
2. Foundations in Biology
3. Exchange and transport
4. Biodiversity, evolution and disease
5. Communication, homeostasis and energy
6. Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

The teaching of practical skills is integrated within the theoretical topics and they are assessed through written papers and the Practical Endorsement (non-examination assessment)

The assessment overview for A-Level consists of 3 written papers:

Paper 1 – Biological processes
(100 marks. 2 hours and 15 minutes)
This paper assesses the content from modules 1,2,3 and 5
Contributes 37% to the overall assessment

Paper 2 – Biological diversity
(100 marks. 2 hours and 15 minutes)
This paper assesses the content from modules 1,2,4 and 6
Contributes 37% to the overall assessment

Paper 3 – Unified Biology
(70 marks. 1 hour and 30 minutes.
This paper assesses the content from modules 1 to 6
Contributes 26% to the overall assessment

Mathematical requirements
In order to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding in A-Level Biology, the appropriate areas of mathematics relevant to the subject have to be taught.

10% of the marks available within written examinations will be for assessment of mathematics. The areas covered are:
– Arithmetic and numerical computation
– Handling data
– Algebra
– Graphs
– Geometry and trigonometry
– A minimum of Grade 4 in Mathematics GCSE is required

What do we expect from you?
Enthusiasm, hard work, determination, initiative and a willingness to complete work set on time.

Trips
Lower Sixth spend a day at the Oxford Natural History Museum for a series of lectures and workshops given by the university's staff.

In the summer term of Lower Sixth all A-Level Biology students usually go on a residential field course at Dale Fort in Pembrokeshire for which there will be a charge of about £340-£390.

University and careers
Biology is a great subject to have studied whatever your chosen career path. You will develop your ability to: think and work logically, to communicate your ideas accurately and concisely, to evaluate evidence to decide whether it supports a particular argument and to consider the ethics of controversial genetic research.

Which subjects go well with Biology?
Biology goes well with most subjects and many students chose to study other STEM subjects such as Chemistry or Maths with Biology. However, they are not essential and students can still achieve top grades without them. Some of the topics in A-Level Biology have links to Psychology and Physical Education and students have also reported that the analytical skills they develop in Biology are useful for History and languages.

Preparing for A-Level Biology in OLA 6th
There are many interesting and entertaining programmes on a range of media which will help you develop a deeper understanding of Biological issues in the World. You should try to read a popular science book over the summer.
Most large bookshops have a special section. Suggested titles include:

- The Human Brain by Susan Greenfield
- The Language of Genes by Steve Jones
- The Man who mistook his Wife for a Hat by Oliver Sacks

Sciences: Chemistry

Specification Code: H432

A-Level Chemistry is taught via the OCR Chemistry A specification, designed to "sustain and develop an enjoyment and interest in Chemistry, to recognise the value of Chemistry to society and how it may be used responsibly, as well as developing your knowledge and understanding of the concepts and skills essential to the subject". Many of the topics will be familiar to you as they are extensions of those covered in GCSE Chemistry. We will develop the depth of your understanding of these and reinforce the theory with new practical skills.

The content is split into six modules:

1. Development of practical skills in Chemistry
2. Foundations in Chemistry
3. Periodic table and energy
4. Core organic Chemistry
5. Physical Chemistry and transition elements
6. Organic Chemistry and analysis

The practical skills are integrated throughout the course and assessed through the required practical activities (PAGs). The PAGs are 12 different practical investigations that are designed to test the essential practical skills needed in Chemistry.

The assessment overview for the A-Level consists of 3 written papers

Mathematical requirements

Assessment overview	
Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (01) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes (Written paper)	37% of total A-Level
Synthesis and analytical techniques (02) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes (Written paper)	37% of total A-Level
Unified chemistry (03) 70 marks 1 hour 30 minutes (Written paper)	26% of total A-Level
Practical endorsement in chemistry (04) (non-exam assessment)	Reported separately

A-Level maths is not needed in order to do A-Level Chemistry, however you will need to be happy with the following mathematical skills:
– Arithmetic and numerical computation
– Handling data
– Algebra and rearranging equations
– Graphs
– Geometry and trigonometry

Complementary subjects
As the central Science, Chemistry naturally complements Biology and Physics. Although not essential for A-Level Chemistry, A-Level Mathematics is extremely helpful for the study of Chemistry at university as Mathematics is heavily used in Physical Chemistry.

Further progress
Chemistry is an essential subject if you wish to study Chemistry, Biochemistry, Medicine or Veterinary Science, and can lead to a number of career opportunities in the medical field as well as Sciences in general.

Preparing for A-Level Chemistry in OLA 6th
Read the Chemistry CGP Transition Guide to ensure that your knowledge and understanding of GCSE Chemistry is inherent and that you are able to use it and apply it to the A-Level Chemistry course. You will also need to make sure that you are able to rearrange equations.

OLA successes
Students who have studied A-Level Chemistry here at OLA have gone on to further their studies by reading Chemistry at University. Many students go on to apply for Biochemistry and Natural Sciences. The majority of students hoping to get a place on a Medicine course choose Chemistry as it is still a requirement at the majority of medical schools. Our students have enjoyed successful entries into the Russell Group universities and have gone on to work in the scientific field.

Sciences: Physics

Specification Code: Physics A H556

A-Level Physics is taught via the OCR Physics A specification, designed to "sustain and develop an enjoyment and interest in Physics, to recognise the value of Physics to society and how it may be used responsibly, as well as developing your knowledge and understanding of the concepts and skills essential to the subject". Many of the topics will be familiar to you as they are extensions of those covered in GCSE Physics. You will apply your understanding to solve problems on topics ranging from sub-atomic particles to the entire universe! We will develop the depth of your understanding of these topics and reinforce the theory with new practical skills.

The content is split into six modules:

1. Development of practical skills in physics
2. Foundations of physics
3. Forces and motion
4. Electrons, waves and photons
5. Newtonian world and astrophysics
6. Particles and medical physics

The practical skills are integrated throughout the course and assessed through the required practical activities (PAGs). The PAGs are 12 different practical investigations that are designed to develop and test the essential practical skills and use of specialist apparatus needed in Physics.

Mathematical requirements

You do not have to do A-Level maths in order to do A-Level Physics, though it is certainly a definite advantage. However, you will need to be happy and confident with the following mathematical skills:

– Arithmetic and numerical computation
– Handling data
– Rearranging equations
– Using standard form and considering significant figures in answers
– Graphs, including analysis of gradients and intercepts to determine further quantities
– Geometry and trigonometry

The assessment overview for the A-Level consists of 3 written papers

Content overview	Assessment overview	
Content is split into six teaching modules: • Module 1: Development of practical skills in physics • Module 2: Foundations of physics • Module 3: Forces and motion • Module 4: Electrons, waves and photons • Module 5: Newtonian world and astrophysics • Module 6: Particles and medical physics **Component 01** assesses content from modules 1, 2, 3 and 5 **Component 02** assesses content from modules 1, 2 ,4 and 6 **Component 03** assesses content from all modules (1 to 6)	Modelling physics (01) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes (Written paper)	37% of total A-Level
	Exploring physics (02) 100 marks 2 hours 15 minutes (Written paper)	37% of total A-Level
	Unified physics (03) 70 marks 1 hour 30 minutes (Written paper)	26% of total A-Level
	Practical endorsement in physics (04) (non-exam assessment)	Reported separately

Further progress

Physics is a very well respected A-Level course which will help you develop the skills, understanding and knowledge that many employers across a range of industries are looking for. Students develop scientific knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other, problem solving skills, analytical thinking and meticulous practical skills.

Preparing for A-Level Physics in OLA 6th

The best physics students always benefit from reading around the subject and keeping up to date with current points of interest. There are now lots of ways you can do this. There are many good science publications such as BBC Science Focus, New Scientist, Physics Review. There are also many excellent popular science books which will introduce the background to the science that we will study. Bill Bryson's "A short history of nearly everything" is a superb book. There are also some excellent books by Bob Berman, Jim Al-Khalili, John Gribbin, David Bodanis, Brian Cox etc. There are now, also, some excellent podcasts that are available to listen to. Ask your teacher for a recommendation for a topic that interests you.

Sport (BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate)

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel

This BTEC course provides a broad basis of study for the sport sector. The qualification is designed to support a sport related career or progression into higher education when taken alongside other BTEC qualifications and/or A-Levels.

The course includes three mandatory units:

1. **Anatomy and Physiology (Externally assessed through an exam):** This unit provides learners with knowledge and understanding of how the skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular and respiratory systems function and the fundamentals of the energy systems.
2. **Fitness Training and Programming for Heath, Sport and Well-being (Externally assessed through an exam case study):** This unit provides learners with the knowledge and understanding to be able to screen clients, analyse lifestyle and nutrition for individuals and design appropriate training programmes to improve health and well-being.
3. **Professional Development in the Sports Industry (Internally assessed via an assignment:** In this unit learners will explore the knowledge and skills required for different career pathways in the sports industry. They will take part in a personal skills audit, career action plan and practical assessment activities.

These are studied alongside one optional unit (internally assessed) from:

- Sports Leadership
- Application of Fitness Testing
- Sports Psychology
- Practical Sports Performance

NB: The choice of internally assessed units will be selected by staff based on common interests/future aspirations of the group.

Assessments for the BTEC take place over the course of the two years. Students therefore can resit some assessments during the course to improve their result. They must achieve a minimum of pass level in both external assessments and internal assessments to achieve the overall qualification.

Students studying this BTEC receive one grade (Distinction*, Distinction, Merit or Pass)

UCAS Tariff points are awarded as follows:

- Distinction* – 56 UCAS points (equivalent to A* at A-Level)
- Distinction – 48 UCAS points (equivalent to A at A-Level)
- Merit – 32 UCAS points (equivalent to C at A-Level)
- Pass – 16 UCAS points (equivalent to E at A-Level)

Preparing for the BTEC course:

- Watch, read and listen to sport in the news and media. Using the BBC Sport app is a great way of staying up to date with the latest sports related news and headlines.
- Read through the specification – why not highlight what you already understand from GCSE PE?
- Consider researching sports related career options.

A-Level subject ideas form

Please complete this form electronically using this QR Code

The form asks you for the following information:

Surname	
First Name	
Form	

The option subjects that I am thinking of studying:

You need to suggest **three** subjects. Please rank them in order of preference and also note down a fourth subject just in case we cannot make option blocks that allow you to follow your first three ideas. Remember, you do not make your final choice until you are given the option blocks later. So it will be quite understandable if you want to change your ideas before then.

1.		
2.		
3.		
Alternative possibility		
I am also interested in studying for: (You can tick one, two or no subjects here)		
The EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)		

My career interests at the moment:

(This information can be used to advise you and help you to plan for your future.)

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