



CITY OF LONDON
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



A level subject guide

2025-2027

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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SIXTH FORM



This is an exciting time for you all as you start to look ahead to the sixth form next year. From choosing to study the subjects you really love and enjoying time in the sixth form common room with your friends, to your involvement in co-curricular programmes and working more with CLS through City+, you will have greater independence and will increasingly take the initiative as prefects and senior students.

Sixth formers at City start with four A level subjects and typically drop down to three during year 12. A levels offer a greater insight into the subjects that interest you the most, and the small class sizes at City provide a further opportunity for your interests to be extended and challenged.

This guide will give you an overview of each of the subjects available at A level here at City. You can find out much more about life in the sixth form at City in our accompanying booklet, City Sixth, or about the admissions process in our 16+ admissions booklet.

City students never cease to amaze me with their breadth of talent, and we look forward to welcoming you and to helping you make the most of your time here at City of London School for Girls.

Georgie Hankinson, head of sixth form

PREPARING YOU FOR LIFE AFTER CITY

The next two years will be a very important time for you, but at City we guarantee to help you to make the right decisions for your future studies or whatever your next step may be. Students begin sixth form on induction day in September when they meet their tutors and new starters have the whole day to familiarise themselves with the school. At the end of the first term, year 12 start to think about their university applications in earnest and with this in mind, we hold the Higher Education Evening for pupils and parents early in the Spring Term, when everyone has the opportunity to meet many guest admissions tutors from a number of universities that are popular destinations for City students.

This is followed by the Oxbridge afternoon teas, which provide an opportunity for current students, who may be interested in making an Oxford or Cambridge application, to meet former City students who are now undergraduates at these two universities. In the summer term of year 12, a day and a half are set aside to focus on UCAS, when students are encouraged to make a start on their personal statement and to liaise with their tutors who will be important in supporting them in their applications. University open days also take place at this time and students will attend a selection of these as they make important decisions about where to apply.

During lunchtime and form time, several current undergraduates come back to visit the sixth form and offer invaluable advice to the students. Our aim is that all students have made a draft application by the time they leave for the summer holidays. Applications are submitted to UCAS before the October half term, allowing students then to focus fully on their studies.

Enrichment lessons take place in all subject areas and students may attend any number of these. Our students are also supported in their preparation for external university entrance tests such as the TSA, ELAT, HAT, PAT exams via enrichment sessions. Additional support is provided for the BMAT, UCAT and LNAT exams via the medic and law societies which run throughout the two years, alongside one day courses hosted by external providers. This year marks the launch of our joint personal enrichment programme with CLS, City+. The programme will broaden your skillset and cultivate your curiosity outside of the curriculum and your subject choices. A co-educational environment will help prepare you for life beyond City's classrooms, hearing from a broader range of voices and strengthening communication skills. More information can be found in this booklet.

City prides itself on inviting a diverse range of speakers who are willing to visit and inspire. Often these speakers are invited by the students, and they may be current academics, people who have been successful in their career, or have an important story to learn from. All are impressed by the students, whose imagination and inquisitive minds result in lots of questions and open discussion. Sixth formers do not just apply to the conventional UK universities. Applications are also made to art foundation courses and to universities abroad including the US, Canada, Europe and Ireland. They are fully supported by the school in these endeavours, and in fact students are encouraged to use their imagination when looking at courses and institutions. We also offer lessons to support for the American university entrance exams (ACTs and SATs) with our in-school US Counsellor.

It is important that our students gain the confidence to pursue their chosen career after leaving City. We strongly encourage all students to make the most of their time at City to lay strong foundations, thus ensuring bright and fulfilling futures.

A FRESH WAY TO STUDY

During your time as a sixth former at City, you will be intellectually challenged; however, you also have a tremendous amount of support readily available to you in teaching staff, the sixth form team, form tutors, resources and technology.

Most of you will study four subjects in year 12 and three in year 13 although some of you might study four for both years. There are numerous members of staff, including the head of sixth form, head of careers, deputy head (academic) and tutors who are available to help you choose the most appropriate combination of subjects to suit you. You will have the opportunity to study subjects in greater depth within a broader context, and you will be more responsible for your own learning, for the direction of your studies and for planning your private study. In most courses, a good proportion of the work is done in private study time.

Teaching groups are smaller than you are probably used to, and you will be actively encouraged to pursue topics of interest. Classes are akin to tutorials, with vigorous discussions and individual attention given to all students.

Making the most of what our central location has to offer is never easier than in the sixth form, and we recommend that students widen their educational remit by visiting nearby theatres, concert halls, cinemas, art galleries and museums. The reward lies in discovering your own interests and developing into an articulate, self-confident young person, able to work on your own initiative, while gaining valuable qualifications.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

We expect you to achieve at least eight GCSEs or IGCSEs graded at 7 or above for entry to our sixth form, with a Grade 8 in the subjects that you wish to study at A level. For students currently at CLSG, each subject has a standard entry requirement of Grade 8 at GCSE or IGCSE in that subject or a related subject as specified under each subject's entry in this booklet.

If the head of department, based on clear evidence of past performance, has concerns that you are at obvious risk of getting less than a B at A level, you and your parents will be advised against you choosing this subject. For students currently at another school, you will sit entrance exams in each subject to assess suitability.

Once in year 12, you should achieve at least a Grade B in internal end of year exams to guarantee a place on the corresponding course in year 13. In the event that a student achieves less than a B Grade, their progress throughout the year will be carefully considered and a decision will be made by the head of sixth form and the head of department as to whether it is in the student's best interest to pursue the subject in year 13.

WHICH SUBJECTS?

Your choice of A level subjects should be the result of careful consideration and planning. You need to be able to identify which subjects interest you and are appropriate for your future and your higher education plans.

Choose subjects that you know you will enjoy as this is the best guarantee that you will do well in them. It is also essential that you check with the head of careers that your subject combination will be acceptable for the degree you are planning on taking at university. A number of subjects specific to the sixth form will be on offer and you will have the opportunity to find out about them in advance. A broad range of subjects is desirable but, at the same time, you must remember that your results at A level will be used as part of your application to higher education or gap year schemes. You need to be confident you will be able to reach a good standard in each of the subjects you choose.

HOW MANY SUBJECTS?

The normal expectation is that you will start with four subjects but finish with three at A level by dropping one subject at the end of year 12. Some students will drop a subject after the first term. Some of you will keep four subjects going to the end of year 13 but only if we are convinced you have the capacity to get the highest grade you can in all four. We think that starting with three rather than four would unnecessarily limit your choice too early. Allowing you to take four gives you the chance to take a risk on a subject that you are not sure about. It also helps you to keep your options open for longer and enables you to discover your strengths in a sixth form setting. British universities make offers based on students doing three A levels or Pre-Us. You can also choose to do an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This is a research based project of your choice which is equivalent to half an A level and will help you to develop independent learning skills for university.

Students who study further mathematics sit two A level exams, one in A level mathematics at the end of year 12, and one in further mathematics at the end of year 13. The further mathematics A level option therefore counts as two subjects, and you will study two other subjects throughout the sixth form. Students who are exceptional mathematicians but want to study three non maths subjects rather than two may take a course called mathematics plus. The mathematics plus course covers A level maths and AS further maths in the time usually given to a single A level. If you want to study mathematics in the sixth form please see the mathematics subject page to help you decide between mathematics, mathematics plus and further mathematics.

There are many challenging and rewarding opportunities that will afford you new experiences and the chance to develop key skills, and these are a valuable part of your personal and academic development. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, community service, Young Enterprise, debating Society and the European Youth Parliament are just a few of the activities which are available to you during school time.

In choosing your A level courses there are four important factors to consider:

- Academic interests
- Abilities, aptitudes and skills
- Career significance and university/college requirements
- The balance and breadth of your courses

We recommend that you seek advice from careers and subject staff, as well as the head of sixth form and the deputy head (academic).

COMBINATIONS

For university entrance, a variety of combinations is possible. Many sixth formers concentrate on arts/ humanities subjects or Science subjects but, 'mixed' A level combinations are common. Please ensure that you check the implications for Higher Education and careers, and keep as many options open as possible. Bear in mind also that certain subjects work better in combination with others than in isolation. The Head of Careers will be able to advise you on this. You should also consider the possibility of pursuing one of your subjects through an EPQ. We try very hard to accommodate your subject combinations. However, if you choose a particularly disparate set of subjects or small ones with only one class it is less likely to be possible to timetable them successfully. Please be aware that some subjects may not run if a very small number of students opt for them. If we cannot offer your choice we aim to tell you in February of year 11 and will help you decide upon the next best alternative.

NO AS EXAMS IN YEAR 12

Like many other schools, we have decided students will not sit AS exams at the end of year 12. We have found that this allows for many benefits including the following:

- It enables year 12 lessons to be less focused on exam practice, therefore making it easier for teachers to plan lessons which are more creative and which promote a love of learning in their subject.
- It promotes students' wellbeing by reducing the number of public exams for which they need to prepare.
- It means that students have more lessons in each subject because we do not need to give year 12 three or four weeks of study leave. This benefit is important because most of the new A level specifications have more content.
- It enables teachers to decide for themselves what order the curriculum should be delivered in, rather than being forced to teach some topics in year 12 and others in year 13.
- It allows for students in year 12 to feel more comfortable with undertaking co-curricular activities.

We recognise that the main disadvantage of our approach is that you will not get a qualification in a subject that you might drop at the end of year 12 as you would have done when we had AS exams. However, if you perform well in the end of year 12 exams in this subject we can make reference to this on your UCAS form. You could avoid this disadvantage altogether by doing an EPQ in the subject you drop. British universities are clear that they do not require more than three A levels or Pre-Us. Our chosen approach maximises the chances of you doing well in the qualifications that really matter: your best three A levels

OVERVIEW OF THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

This is an outline for the sixth form Curriculum for 2025-26. It is likely to be exactly the same for 2022-23 but minor adjustments are possible. Students start four different A level subjects, and have 8 x 40 minute periods per week in each subject. The two exceptions are: further mathematics students who will have 16 periods per week of maths lessons in both years 12 and 13 and two other non-Maths subjects throughout the two years; and mathematics plus students who will have ten lessons per week and start with three non-Maths subjects.

In January of year 12, each department sets in-class tests to check your progress. The results of this testing will be reported to you and your parents in the form of a test grade achieved and a predicted grade. The purpose of these grades is to help you decide whether you would be better off dropping from four to three subjects as soon as possible or whether you should continue with all four until at least the end of year 12. These test grades should also help you decide which subject to drop. If at this point it were obvious you were struggling to cope with the workload of four subjects we would intervene. Following a discussion with you and your parents we might recommend, or even insist, that you focus on three subjects. If a student wanted to drop a subject before the January tests then this would be possible from December with the approval of the Deputy Head (Academic). We would consider whether there was an obvious risk that the student might drop the wrong subject given her attainment so far. If it seemed that she was making a bad choice, we would talk it through with the student. We might insist that she carry on with all four subjects for a few more weeks in order to have her January test scores at hand to help make a more informed final decision. Generally, we recommend that students try the January tests in all four subjects because they might surprise themselves and discover the subject they intended to drop was going better than they realised. However, if you are sure about which subject to drop, we are likely to be content that you only sit January tests in three subjects.

In February, following the test results, students are given another chance to drop from four to three subjects. If a student does not drop a subject in February we expect her to continue with four until the end of year 12 exams. Those who drop from four to three are required to undertake either: an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) with a view to finishing the EPQ by the start of year 13, or alternatives such as charitable work. Those who continue with four subjects indicate which subject they are most likely to drop at the end of year 12 so we can plan the year 13 timetable. Students who choose to carry on with four subjects for the rest of year 12 are still able to do an EPQ if they wish and are given a later finishing date (approximately Easter of year 13).

In May/June, students sit end of year exams. They are given a grade for their internal exam and a UCAS prediction, based on a combination of this exam, their work throughout the year and their teachers' judgement. In light of their results they may decide to change their mind about which subject to drop. We will intervene and insist a student changes her mind if she wants to study a subject for which she is at a high risk of getting less than a B if there is a better alternative choice available. It is therefore important that students take the end of year exams seriously. It is possible that if a student changes her mind we might not be able to accommodate her wishes because the year 13 timetable will already be written, and some classes might be full. For the majority of students, changes at this point will be possible. As soon as the year 13 timetable blocking is determined (usually in March) we will publish it to year 12s so they will have an early warning about which subject combinations will not be possible.

From June in year 12 to the end of year 13 a large majority of students will focus on three subjects and will have 8 periods per week in each subject. Further maths students will have 16 periods per week of further maths lessons and 8 periods per week in two other subjects. A handful (usually fewer than five) of students will do four subjects in year 13. A student can only do four subjects in year 13 if we are convinced she can cope and we are convinced her grades will not suffer and result in university offers being put at risk. City+ lessons take place in a double lesson every week. City+ runs from the start of year 12 until February in year 13. Unfortunately, it is necessary to timetable mathematics plus and sometimes Italian GCSE at the same time as City+ in year 12.

Subjects on Offer

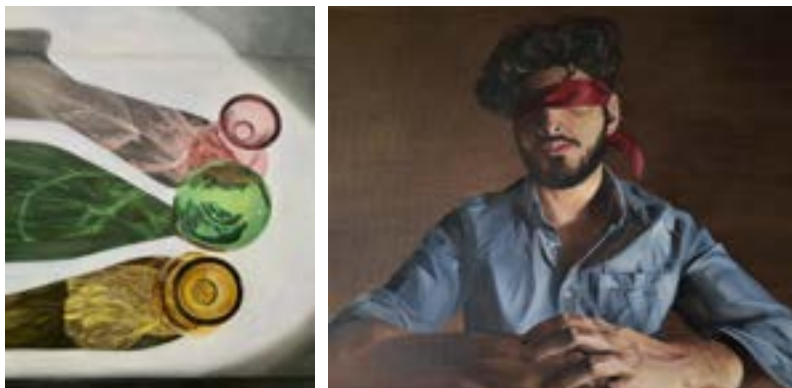
The following subjects will be offered:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Classics:
 - Greek
 - Latin
 - Classical civilisation
- Computer science
- Design and technology
- Drama and theatre studies
- Economics
- English literature
- Geography
- Politics
- History:
 - 20th Century
 - 16th Century
- Languages:
 - Chinese
 - French
 - German
 - Spanish
- Mathematics:
 - mathematics
 - mathematics plus
 - further mathematics
- Music
- Religious studies (philosophy, ethics and theology)
- Physics
- Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

We cannot guarantee that all subjects will be running at the 2025 entry point. This will depend on the number of applicants.

Art

Exam Board: Edexcel



Students have the opportunity to produce a portfolio of exciting, sophisticated work developed through a process of experimentation, research and idea development. Outcomes are informed by a knowledge and understanding of contemporary and historical artworks, gained through lectures, tutorials and visits to nearby international art galleries; in the autumn term students have the opportunity to participate in a study tour, previous visits have included trips to the Venice Biennale, Basel and Copenhagen. The fine art course covers broad areas of study including drawing, painting, mixed and digital media, installation and sculpture. Studios are well equipped for all mediums and supported by an extensive library. Through the course students develop a mature understanding of the creative process and build their confidence in working from observation through weekly life drawing sessions. Each year, many students decide to take an art foundation course prior to a specialist degree course in the field of art and design. Others apply to study art-related degrees such as architecture and art history. We celebrate the practical achievements of our students through an annual A level art exhibition in the summer term.

Course structure

The A level course consists of two units:

- Personal investigation, which includes a written personal study
- Externally set assignment

Student requirements

A level candidates will usually have achieved at least grade 8 at GCSE level.



Biology

Exam board: Edexcel Biology A (9BN0)

We follow Edexcel's specification at A level. We study biology through real life contexts rather than through theory alone. For example, most A level biology courses start with cell biology or biochemistry, we do not. We start with an account of Mark, a 15-year-old who had a stroke, and Peter, an adult who had a heart attack. We then study the biological principles needed to understand what happened to Mark and Peter and factors that make it more likely that any of us will suffer a stroke or heart attack.

We encourage an active approach to learning. You will develop a wide range of skills, including data analysis, critical evaluation, communication and collaboration. With rapid developments in Biology, we are faced with an increasing number of decisions. For example, advances in gene technology present us with ethical dilemmas. Should embryonic stem cells or human-animal hybrid cells be used in medicine? Which genes should be tested for in prenatal screening? At A level you will develop the ability to discuss and debate these issues knowledgeably. Examinations reward your ability to reason scientifically and to use what you have learned in new contexts, rather than merely recalling large amounts of information.

Student requirements:

You will need to have an outstanding knowledge of IGCSE (or GCSE) biology, with a minimum Grade 8. It is a demanding but enjoyable A level and you will be expected to work hard! Do speak to your teacher or students in the year above if you would like to know more about the course.

Course content

Topic 1: Lifestyle, health and risk

- What is cardiovascular disease?
- What are the risk factors and how can they be reduced?

Topic 2: Genes and health

- How exactly does a disease like cystic fibrosis affect the body?

Topic 3: Voice of the genome

- How do genes control body development and how are they affected by the environment?

Topic 4: Biodiversity and natural resources

- Why are there so many species on Earth and how might we use them? Should we use them?

A minimum of 10% assessment will require mathematical skill including calculation of standard deviation, selecting an appropriate statistical test and explaining what it shows in terms of statistical significance and probability.



Topic 5: On the wild side

- Is the climate really changing?
- Which species will adapt and which will die out?

Topic 6: Infection, immunity and forensics

- How can we use forensic evidence to determine time of death?
- How does the body respond to infection?

Topic 7: Run for your life

- What happens in the muscles to enable the body to move?
- What happens when athletes overdo it?

Topic 8: Grey matter

- How does the brain work and how do we make sense of what we see?

Chemistry

Exam board: AQA (7405)

A level chemistry provides students with a varied and challenging course which builds upon various fundamental principles studied at GCSE. A new model of the atomic structure is introduced straight away, shedding new light on the arrangement of the elements in the periodic table. Trends across periods and down groups are studied in detail, and the chemistry of the transition metals is explored in detail for the first time.

Student requirements

Students are required to have studied chemistry at GCSE and to have achieved a grade 8. A grade 8 in mathematics GCSE is also highly recommended. Whilst it is useful to study mathematics A level alongside chemistry, there is no requirement to do so.

Students are expected to carry out a significant level of independent work alongside their studies in class, guidance for which will be given by your teachers.

Course structure

The AQA chemistry course is divided into three main areas; Organic, Inorganic and Physical Chemistry. The content of the course is assessed in three papers at the end of year 13, each paper is two hours. There is no coursework, however students are expected to carry out 12 core practicals as advised by the board.

Topics studied include:

Organic

Alkanes, haloalkanes, alkenes, alcohols, aldehydes and ketones, aromatics, amines, amino acids, carboxylic acids, NMR spectroscopy, isomerism, proteins and DNA

Inorganic

Periodicity, Group II – the alkaline earth metals, Group VII – the halogens, properties of period 3 elements, transition metals, reactions of ions in aqueous solution

Physical

Atomic structure, amount of substance, bonding, energetics, kinetics, equilibria, redox, thermodynamics, electrode potentials, rate equations, acids and bases

Why study chemistry A level?

- Chemistry is well known for being a challenging, intellectual and highly regarded A level. It compliments a range of other subjects, both humanities and science-related.
- The skills gained from studying chemistry are very transferable, to include numerical, analytical and evaluating skills.
- Chemistry is useful for those wishing to study anything Science-related courses at university – biochemistry, biology, physics, chemistry, pharmacology, engineering, chemical engineering, natural sciences...
- Chemistry A level is an essential requirement for anyone hoping to study medicine, veterinary science or dentistry.

Classics: Latin and/or Greek

Exam board: OCR

Students read in the original language some of the most influential works of poetry and prose in Western Literature, and gain a deep insight into the way language works through the medium of interesting and thought-provoking texts. As well as being worthwhile languages in themselves, Latin and Greek are a fantastic resource for developing advanced thinking skills which are valued highly by employers. Classical subjects do not commit you to one degree or another. They lead precisely to the same job as any non-vocational subject. All of the above combine well with all arts subjects, and many students who study science enjoy them as a contrast.

Student requirements

You need to have studied Latin or Classical Greek to GCSE level, with a minimum grade 8, to commence the relevant language.

Course structure:

A level Latin comprises four papers:

- Unprepared translation of both prose and verse (33%). The prose unseen author will be Livy and the verse unseen author will be Ovid. We build up confidence in unseen translation work gradually over the two years but introduce verse passages early in year 12.
- Prose composition or comprehension (17%). We normally prepare for the prose composition, which is a translation of an English passage into idiomatic Latin. We build up knowledge of syntax and grammar over the first term before moving onto extended passages.
- Prose Literature (25%). The texts will be a selection from Cicero's Pro Caelio and Tacitus' Annals book 14.
- Verse Literature (25%). The texts will be a selection from Virgil's Aeneid book 2 and Ovid's Fasti book 2.

A level Classical Greek comprises four papers:

- Unprepared translation of both prose and verse (33%). The prose unseen author will be Xenophon and the verse author will be Sophocles. We build up confidence in unseen translation work gradually over the two years but introduce verse passages early in year 12.
- Prose Composition or Comprehension (17%). We normally prepare for the prose composition, which is a translation of an English passage into idiomatic Greek. We build up knowledge of syntax and grammar over the first term before moving onto extended passages.
- Prose Literature (25%). The texts will be a selection from Plato's Republic and Herodotus' Histories book 1.
- Verse Literature (25%). The texts will be a selection from Euripides' Hippolytus and Homer's Iliad book 24.

The content of both the Latin and Greek courses build very much on the skills you have been acquiring at GCSE. Over the two-year course, you will make a step-by-step progression in your ability to translate unseen material and write sophisticated criticism of Latin and Greek literature. Students find the prose composition a very satisfying exercise. Learning to translate a passage of English into Latin or Greek helps consolidate fully your knowledge of syntax and grammar. The specification provides an interesting and stimulating range of set texts. Just as at GCSE, the literature papers require you to show your knowledge and appreciation of the set texts with questions which test both translation and appreciation of literary style, characterisation, argument and literary meaning. There is also an essay (in English) on one of the verse and one of the prose texts.

Classical Civilisation

Exam board: OCR

Classical Civilisation is the study of ancient literature, philosophy, art and culture. You have the opportunity to read ancient authors in translation, consider ancient art and delve into Plato's theories. The course would suit anyone with an interest in the ancient world, history, literature and philosophy. You do not need to have studied or be studying Latin or Ancient Greek.

Course structure

There are three components. All literature is studied in English translation.

Students take one compulsory component: **The World of the Hero** (40% of total A level)

This consists of an in depth study of:

- Greek epic - either Homer's Iliad or Odyssey (at CLSG, we study the Odyssey)
- Roman epic - Virgil's Aeneid

The second component is entitled **Culture and the Arts**. This involves the study of visual and material culture (30% of total A level). At CLSG, we have chosen Greek art which includes the study of free-standing sculpture, architectural sculpture and vase-painting.

The third component is entitled **Beliefs and Ideas**. This involves the study of an area of classical thought, in combination with the study of literature in translation and/or visual and material culture (30% of total A level). At CLSG, we have chosen love and relationships, examining ancient writers' ideas on love and desire and studying Plato, Seneca, Ovid and Sappho.



Computer Science

Exam board: AQA

At the heart of Computer Science lies the notion of computational thinking: a mode of thought that goes well beyond software and hardware and that provides a framework within which to reason about systems and problems. In the Computer Science A Level, students learn to effectively harness the power of technology, developing computing skills relevant to a wide range of future careers, from software engineering and scientific research to economics and finance.

The AQA Computer Science A Level is an exciting and academic course that builds on the computational thinking and programming skills that students have developed studying GCSE. It covers important foundational and applied topics, ranging from Turing machines and programming language design to network protocols and big data. At City, A Level students develop their programming skills in a range of languages, including Python and Haskell.

The A Level NEA Project is a unique opportunity for students to build their own web app or program to solve a genuine real-world problem, gaining creative problem-solving skills and delving into the software development cycle. Students thereby begin their own software portfolio, acquiring skills and experiences that are highly valued in academia and in industry.

Student requirements

Students are required to have achieved least a grade 8 in computer science GCSE or to be able to demonstrate an equivalent level of programming knowledge. Students are also required to have achieved at least grade 8 in mathematics GCSE.

Course structure

Topics:

- Fundamentals of programming
- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Theory of computation
- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Consequences of uses computing
- Fundamentals of databases
- Fundamentals of functional programming
- Fundamentals of data structures
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Fundamentals of data representation
- Fundamentals of computer organisation and architecture
- Fundamentals of communication & networking
- Big Data
- Non-exam assessment – the computing practical project

A level assessment

Assessment Type	Duration	% of the A level	Topics
On-screen Exam	2 hours 30 mins	40%	1-5
Written Exam	2 hours 30 mins	40%	6-13
Coursework	N/A	20%	4 and 14

Design and Technology

Exam board: OCR

The product design A level gives students the opportunity to study design practices that lead to problem-solving real-life situations. The course could lead to a design-based course, but could also be used as a platform to show a wide variety of skills by producing a comprehensive design portfolio. This course would suit students who are creative, practical and enjoy experimentation.

Students will learn to deliver their thinking and design skills through iterative design processes that allow them to explore, create and evaluate, following practices and strategies used by the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries.

It is very beneficial should you be considering a career in the fields of design, engineering, architecture or manufacturing. The learning approach employed teaches you to solve problems logically, develop reasoning skills and work independently and is similar to that experienced in Higher Education and industry.

Student requirements

At least Grade 8 in GCSE DT is usually required. Other subjects that suit design and technology are physics, mathematics or art.

Course structure

Year 12

The first year focuses on learning crucial core design knowledge. The core knowledge enables students to conduct higher-level projects and complete examination papers to a high standard. There are a number of small projects completed throughout the year that equip learners with manufacturing and prototyping skills. Students will gain qualifications to strengthen their university applications, such as health and safety, interview techniques and analysis of data.

Year 13

The second year focuses on the 'iterative design project', which equates to 50% of the A level. It requires learners to undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project. Students identify a design opportunity or problem from a context of their own choice, and create a portfolio of evidence in real time through the project to demonstrate their competence.

Learners are also prepared for two examinations. One focuses on the principles of product design and the other on problem solving.



Drama and Theatre

Exam board: Edexcel

Drama and Theatre Studies is a demanding and a creatively invigorating course. Students study performance from a variety of perspectives: practical, historical, academic and theoretical. While academic excellence is a must, the specification focuses on the practical exploration of performance texts, including exploring them from a practitioner perspective. The performance texts studied for the written exam require students to articulate how they would direct and perform certain roles, design for certain scenes and interpret a full text for performance. The course also develops interest in, and enjoyment of theatre as an audience member building upon students' knowledge and understanding of theatre in social, political and cultural contexts.

A level Drama and Theatre develops skills hugely valued by universities and employers: creative collaboration and practical problem solving under pressure; an awareness of audience response and the impact of creative decisions on others, along with the capacity to communicate and interact with others in a highly effective, engaged and empathetic way.

Student requirements

At least Grade 8 in GCSE drama is usually required, although some candidates may not need to have had GCSE Drama experience to attain top grades in this course. You can be examined as an actor or designer. What is crucial is an excitement about the artistry of theatre in all aspects. All students are expected to participate in acting exercises in class. Drama and Theatre students' commitment to this subject must be total. Co-operation within the group is part of the assessed process. Co-curricular involvement, attendance of live theatre events and reading around the subject is essential.

Course structure

Component 1: Devising. Inspired by a stimulus and in the style of a practitioner, students create their own piece of theatre for an audience. The willingness to collaborate, practically explore ideas, accept failure and creative criticism is an important and necessary part of the process.

Component 2: Text in Performance. Students perform both a published play and a monologue or duologue. This component is externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice. Live theatre evaluation – choice of performance.

Practical exploration and study of a complete performance text – focusing on how this can be realised for performance (currently *Machinal* by Sophie Treadwell)

Practical exploration and interpretation of another complete performance text, in light of a chosen theatre practitioner (currently *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes)

Assessment:

■ **Coursework:** A level - Practical work, including preparatory and development work - some areas assessed by your teacher(s), externally moderated, and externally examined. Devised work and scripted performances will be examined in your second year.

■ **Examinations:** A level - written work is externally examined, normally in the summer term.

■ **Trips:** London is the theatre capital of the world and it is our intention to see live performances as often as we can. Students will be able to watch productions and visit theatres as part of the course. Trips are usually compulsory. Every two years, at October half-term, students are given the opportunity to travel to

Economics

Exam board: Edexcel

Gaining a better understanding of the causes and consequences of recent economic events has become essential to being able to participate in the decisions we make as a society. Studying A level Economics at CLSG provides an excellent vehicle to achieve this. Lessons are mainly discussion based and focus on using relevant and exciting examples to gain clarity and depth of knowledge.

Students develop the ability to form their own opinions using economic theory with logical analysis, while being given extensive support in a non-judgmental environment. They are encouraged to read articles in newspapers and journals so that they can engage with current controversies.

Student requirements

Economic analysis does involve mathematics, mainly calculating percentage change and graphical analysis of data. This therefore does not go beyond GCSE mathematics but candidates should be aware that if they intend to study Economics at university they are advised to study A level mathematics alongside A level economics. Economics students at City are expected to have achieved a minimum of Grade 8 for GCSE mathematics.

Course structure

We follow Edexcel's A level course. Students will sit the A level in year 13.

A level

Theme 1: Introduction to Markets & Market failure

Theme 2: The UK economy – performance & policies

Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market

Theme 4: A Global perspective

Assessment

Paper 1: Covers topics on Themes 1 and 3; Includes multiple choice, short answer, data response and essay questions. 2 hours, 35% of qualification.

Paper 2: Covers topics on Themes 2 and 4; Includes multiple choice, short answer, data response and essay questions. 2 hours, 35% of qualification.

Paper 3: Synoptic paper covering all 4 themes; Data response and essay questions 2 hours, 30% of qualification

English Literature

Exam board: Edexcel

Students develop as confident, independent and reflective readers, pursuing their interests in literary studies through reading widely, independently and critically. The course provides students with an introduction to the traditions of English Literature, enables them to express responses effectively through speech and writing, develops an awareness of the context in which texts are written, and considers other readers' interpretations of texts.

Student requirements

A level students of English Literature are encouraged to:

- Read widely
- Venture and discuss points of view, and respond to and respect opinions of others
- Write analytically and critically, developing a full personal response to previously unseen poems, as well as to set texts
- Study eight set texts in depth and study others as part of their wider reading
- Write about texts in the light of social, cultural and historical contexts in which they are written
- Form their own opinions of texts, taking due consideration of interpretations of others and considering how interpretations change over time

Course structure:

Component	Studied Texts		Examination
Component 1: Drama	Hamlet	A Streetcar Named Desire	2 hours 15 minutes (30%)
Component 2: Prose	Tess of the D'Urbervilles	Mrs Dalloway	1 hour 15 minutes (20%)
Component 3: Poetry	Post-2000 specified poetry	The Romantics	2 hours 15 minutes (30%)
Coursework: One comparative extended essay of 2500-3000 words	Beloved	Student choice from a list of 12 texts	Teacher assessed, externally moderated (20%)

All examined components in this qualification allow for clean copies of the texts to be brought into the examination.

Subject requirements

To take English Literature we would expect candidates to have achieved a Grade 8 in English and English Literature at GCSE or iGCSE.

Geography

Exam board: Edexcel

Geography is concerned with understanding the nature and functioning of the physical and human environments within the world, while exploring your relationships to them.

It offers an appreciation of the environment and the impact of people upon their surroundings. The course develops an awareness of some of the greatest challenges facing our world today; from climate change and natural disasters to migration and globalisation.

It could be argued that Geography is more important today than ever before. We all need to understand the relationships that exist between cultures; we are experiencing the opportunities and experiences associated with living in an ever globalising world; we are witnessing global crises from sea level rise to pandemics such as Ebola. Geography matters because learning about problems isn't enough; we have to take action to begin to solve them.

Geography is in a unique position acting as a bridge between sciences and the humanities, allowing it to complement a wide range of subjects and making it accessible and relevant to all students. Studying geography provides students with an extensive set of transferable skills including:

- Essay and report writing
- Fieldwork and primary research
- Statistics and numeracy
- Map skills and GIS
- Planning and problem-solving skills
- Critical thinking and the ability to recognise the moral and ethical issues involved in debates

The New Edexcel A level course includes a balance of human and physical geography, alongside integrated skills teaching and fieldwork.

Year 1

- Tectonic processes and hazards
- Coastal systems, processes and change
- Globalisation and its role in the 21st Century
- Dynamic places; a study of places, their challenges, identities and changes

Year 2

- Water cycle, conflicts and global insecurity
- Carbon cycle and energy insecurity
- Superpowers; the shifting of global economic and political power
- Migration, identity and sovereignty

In addition, all students will complete at least 4 days fieldwork over the course of the two year programme. Alongside their exams at the end of year 2, students will also complete an independent research paper on a topic of their choice.



History

Exam board: OCR

We offer two history courses, both OCR.

■ **16th Century History:** focusing on the Early Tudors, the German Reformation and the rule of Charles V, the golden years of Spain and the witch-craze of the 16th and 17th centuries

■ **20th Century History:** also focusing on the Early Tudors*, the Cold War in Europe, civil rights in the USA and China under Mao and Deng

*The current A level guidelines require students to cover topics from at least a 200 year period.

The two courses differ in content but not skills, and universities make no distinction between them. Each will satisfy your interest in the past and give you valuable transferable skills including the ability to argue effectively, to analyse events and issues and to reach a substantiated judgement. The department recognises the value of overseas trips to extend understanding and arranges these as appropriate. Recent sixth form trips have included Istanbul, Budapest, Vienna and Prague, Moscow and St Petersburg and we have just been to Washington and New York in the autumn term. Our next trip is likely to be in October 2026.

Course structure: 16th Century

Year 12

■ The Early Tudors 1485-1558 ■ The German Reformation and the rule of Charles V 1500–1559

Year 13

■ The witch-craze of the 16th and 17th centuries ■ The Golden Age of Spain

Assessment: All exams will be in year 13 and all four topics covered will count towards your A level. The Tudors will be a 1 hour 30 min exam, combining analysis of primary sources with a choice of essays. The German Reformation will be a one hour exam comprised of a choice of two optional essays. There is a 2 hour 30 minute exam on the witch-craze of the 16th and 17th centuries which consists of three essays, including one on historical interpretation. The Golden Age of Spain will be a 3- 4,000 word coursework essay, marked internally.

Course structure: 20th Century

Year 12

■ The Early Tudors 1485 - 1558 ■ The Cold War in Europe 1941 - 1995

Year 13

■ Civil rights in the USA 1865–1992 ■ China in the twentieth century

Assessment: The new A level is linear and all required exams will be in year 13 and all four topics covered will count towards your A level, combining analysis of primary sources with a choice of essays. The Tudors will be a 1 hour 30 min exam, including a compulsory question on primary sources. The Cold War will be a one hour exam comprised of a choice of two optional essays. There is a 2 hour 30 minute exam on civil rights in the USA which consists of three essays, including one on historical interpretation. China will be a 3-4,000 word coursework essay, marked internally.

Languages

The language courses enables students to further develop their communication skills in a confident, accurate and imaginative manner, while giving you a critical insight into contemporary society, culture, politics, history, literature and cinema.

Chinese

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel

As well as allowing students to develop their Chinese language skills, the Pearson A level syllabus aims to develop an awareness of Chinese culture, film and literature and an understanding of the changes which have occurred in China since the 1979 Reform and Opening Up. Students will follow a rigorous course and be rewarded with an appreciation of modern Chinese culture and society.

Student requirements

To study A level Chinese, students will need a Grade 9 at GCSE and a willingness to undertake independent reading and research.

Course content

Theme 1 Changes in Chinese Society

- Family
- Education and the World of Work

Theme 3: Developments in Chinese Society

- Communications and Technology
- Economy and the Environment

Theme 2: Chinese Culture

- Traditions
- Cultural Activities

Theme 4: The effects of the 1979 Reform and Opening Up Policy on Chinese Society

- Reform
- China and UK Relations

Cinema/Literature: Students will also study two pieces of literature and/or one piece of literature and a film over the two years of the course.

Assessment

Students will be assessed at the end of the second year of the course, building on all their language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing and translation) throughout the two years.

Paper 1: Listening, reading & translation into English (2 hours): 40% of the qualification

Paper 2: Written responses to film/literary works and translation into Chinese (2 hours 40 mins): 30% of the qualification

Paper 3: Speaking, consisting of presentation and discussion of an independent research project: 30% of the qualification

Trips: Students will have the opportunity to visit China during the course, which runs every two years.

Chinese language assistants: All students will have a compulsory speaking lesson with a Chinese assistant in addition to their eight language lessons each fortnight.

French

Exam board: Pearson/Edexcel

Student requirements

- Grade 8 at GCSE level with good grammar basis
- Enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity of contemporary social issues and current affairs in France and French speaking countries
- An appreciation of Francophone cinema and keen interest in literature



Course content

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding by studying both the language and themes relating to the contemporary and historical society and culture of the French-speaking world. The four themes are:

Year 12

- **Theme 1:** Les changements dans la société française (changes in French society)
- **Theme 2:** La culture politique et artistique dans les pays Francophones (political and artistic culture in the Francophone world)
- **Cinema:** study of a film (Les 400 Coups de Truffaut and the New Wave)

Year 13

- **Theme 3:** L'immigration et la société multiculturelle française (immigration and multicultural society)
- **Theme 4:** L'Occupation et la Résistance (Occupation and Resistance)
- **Literature:** study of a novel (Une si longue lettre de Mariama Bâ)

There are a lot of opportunities provided for students to develop their interest and proficiency throughout the two years. We now offer a 4-day trip to Paris. We run a weekly Debating club; pupils participate in the Joutes Oratoires (national debating competition). Students can also take part in a Drama competition, performing in the target language. Last year we won the best prize with our adaptation of *Andromaque*, from Racine. We make the most of our central location to attend workshops relevant to the course such as the BFI study day on New Wave.

French language assistants: All students will have a compulsory weekly 40-minute speaking lesson with a French assistant in addition to their eight language lessons a week in order to enhance their cultural knowledge and oral fluency.

Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation into English (2 hours): 40% of the qualification (80 marks)

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation into French (2 hours 40 mins): 30% of the qualification (120 marks)

Paper 3: Speaking (between 21 and 23 minutes, which includes a single period of 5 minutes' formal preparation time): 30% of the qualification (72 marks)

In addition, the French department offer a DELF evening language course for the year 12 students wanting to obtain a B2 (European framework) certificate.

German

Exam board: Edexcel A level 2016 specification

Student requirements: At least a grade 8 in German at GCSE

The A level course will enable exploration into a wide range of contemporary and historical issues, as well as the study of the rich and fascinating world of German Literature. Students will learn about and research aspects of modern society, current affairs, literature, culture, arts, and the history of German-speaking countries. We will review GCSE grammar and also look at more complex aspects of German grammar.

Students will have access to magazines, films, works of literature and a wide range of other authentic and online resources, as well as a one-to-one speaking lesson with the German language assistant every week.

Students are encouraged to take part in our work experience exchange programme to Trier and to take every opportunity to visit the German-speaking countries. There are many co-curricular options, such as study days, lectures and theatre visits. Recent events in lockdown have included two online lectures on Brecht's 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle' and 'Migration to Germany' by professors from Leeds and Warwick university. Previously, we also attended the art exhibition on Klimt and Schiele at the RA, had a German film study day at the BFI and have had successes in the Oxford German Olympiad competition and King's College essay writing competition. This year we also have a student who has gained a prestigious Dresden Youthbridge scholarship.

Course structure: Students will develop their knowledge and understanding by studying both the language and themes relating to the contemporary and historical society and culture of the German-speaking world. There will be 4 areas of interest:

- Social issues and trends
- Political and/or intellectual and/or artistic culture
- Immigration and German multicultural society
- The reunification of Germany

Students will be assessed on these through listening and reading papers. In addition, students will study 2 pieces of German Literature and/or film. They will also learn how to translate effectively and how to debate and express themselves eloquently in German.

Assessment: A level (2 year course): Listening, reading, translation and grammar, written responses to two pieces of literature or one piece of literature and one film and speaking.

German language assistants: Students spend one period every week with the language assistant to help with oral preparation. This is on a one-to-one basis and is of enormous benefit, aiming to promote fluency in the language.



Spanish

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel A level

Student requirements: At least a Grade 8 in Spanish at GCSE or iGCSE

Enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity of contemporary social issues and current affairs in Spain and the Hispanic world

Course content

Students will develop their knowledge, understanding and fluency in Spanish by studying both the language and themes relating to the contemporary and historical society and culture of the Hispanic world.

There will be two themes studied in year 12:

- Social issues and trends in Spain, including family models, world of work and the impact of tourism.
- Political and artistic culture in the Spanish-speaking world, including the evolution of music, media and cultural heritage.

And a further two themes studied in year 13:

- Immigration and multicultural Spanish society, including the benefits, challenges and integration of migrants in the Spanish society.
- Spanish 20th Century History, starting with the Civil War (1936-39), Franco's dictatorship and the transition to democracy

An additional aspect is the compulsory analytical study of one work of literature (La casa de Bernarda Alba by Federico García Lorca) and a film (El Laberinto del Fauno by Guillermo del Toro) over the course of the two years. In addition to written work, students will gradually develop their abilities to speak spontaneously, express their opinions eloquently and persuasively and tackle challenging authentic listening and reading texts from a wide variety of different genres. Students will also be examined on their abilities to translate into and out of the language.

Assessments

Paper 1: listening, reading and translation into English; **Paper 2:** translation into Spanish and analytical written response to works (literature and film); **Paper 3:** speaking component which includes theme discussion and an IRP (Independent Research Project) of their choice.

Spanish language assistants

Students spend one period every week with the native language assistant to help with oral preparation and a deeper understanding of the topics explored in class. This is on a one-to-one basis and is of enormous benefit.

Trips

As well as a wide range of film and theatre outings in London (BFI study days, Cervantes theatre, etc), the Spanish department usually offers a joint year 12 and 13 trip to Spain or South America around October half term. Past destinations include Cuba, Guatemala and various cities in Spain. During these (optional) trips, the students will receive daily Spanish tuition with lessons specifically tailored to developing their oral fluency and accuracy.

2025-2026 DELE B2 Diploma: The Spanish department will continue to offer a DELE evening language course for those year 12 students willing to obtain a B2 (European framework) certificate or sit a SIELE assessment. They will need to attend one hour lessons after school twice a week.



Mathematics, maths plus and further mathematics

Exam board: Edexcel

Student requirements

- The requirement for A level mathematics is a Grade 8 at IGCSE/GCSE.
- Students applying to study further mathematics should have a Grade 8 at IGCSE/ GCSE.
- Students applying to study maths plus should have a Grade 9 at IGCSE/GCSE and a proven track record of excellence in mathematics. Students should be confident of meeting the demands of the pace of the course.
- For both the further maths and maths plus courses, Level 2 further mathematics or additional mathematics is not an absolute requirement, however if a student has studied Level 2 further mathematics or additional mathematics alongside the IGCSE/GCSE, an A grade would be desirable.
- A student wishing to take AS further mathematics in year 13 will need to demonstrate a strong understanding of the mathematics course covered up to this point by scoring highly in the year 12 summer exam.

Course structure

Mathematics

Two-thirds of the content of the mathematics A level is pure mathematics. Students extend and develop techniques in algebra and coordinate geometry, before learning new concepts relating to functions, calculus and numerical methods. One sixth of the course is statistics, in which students study probability, statistical diagrams and hypothesis testing. The remaining sixth of the course is mechanics, in which students study how to use Newton's Laws, moments, constant acceleration equations and calculus to model motion and forces in static systems. Students have two teachers in year 12, one of whom teaches a mixture of pure maths and statistics, and one of whom teaches a mixture of pure maths and mechanics. The same is true in year 13, though students may have different teachers. The course is designed in such a way as to bring out the connections between different areas of mathematics and to enable students to experience some of the ways it can be applied in the real world. The course is assessed through three examinations in the summer term of year 13. There are two papers on pure mathematics and one covering mechanics and statistics. Each exam is two hours long.

Further mathematics

Students opting to take further mathematics study the whole of the A level mathematics course in year 12, before starting the A level further mathematics course in the summer term. In year 13, students complete the further mathematics course. The further mathematics course covers the same areas of mathematics as the year 12 course, but at a higher level. For example, students learn to use matrices and complex numbers in pure mathematics and learn the skills to attack more complicated problems in statistics and mechanics, such as using energy equations to model colliding objects. The content is split in a 2:1:1 ratio between pure mathematics and two option modules. Depending on numbers, students can select their option modules from statistics, mechanics, further pure and decision maths. Students will have three teachers each year, one teaching pure maths and one for each option or application. The course is assessed solely by examination in the summer terms of year 12 and 13. The three examinations that contribute towards A level

mathematics are normally sat at the end of year 12 and are the same as those described above. The four examinations that contribute towards A level further mathematics are sat at the end of year 13 and consist of two 90-minute papers on pure mathematics, one 90-minute paper on each option.

Maths Plus

The maths plus course is a middle ground between the mathematics and further mathematics courses, leading to an A level in mathematics and an AS Level in further mathematics. Students are taught approximately five-sixths of the mathematics course in year 12. They then complete the remaining sixth of the mathematics course and are taught AS further mathematics in year 13. The AS further mathematics course covers fewer, but similar, topics to the further mathematics course. At the end of year 13, students sit the same three examinations as those sat by pupils on the mathematics course to gain an A level in mathematics and also sit two examinations, one in pure maths and one in mechanics and statistics, to gain an AS level in further mathematics. Students will have four extra lessons per week in year 12 to help cover the extra material.

Which mathematics course is best for you?

Mathematics benefits from being perceived as an important subject. Maths results are used as an entry requirement for some university courses and career paths, there is a strong positive correlation between studying more maths and higher salaries in the workplace. It is also a rich and enjoyable subject, which can be both beautiful and rewarding to those who study it. In fact, almost 75% of year 12 students at CLSG study one of the available maths courses at sixth form.

The **mathematics** course is best suited to students who enjoy mathematics but are not planning to study a subject which uses a lot of high-level mathematics at university (i.e. not subjects such as physics or engineering), students who are planning to take a university course with some mathematical content, or students who haven't decided what to do after school and want to maintain a wide range of options. This is the route most students will end up following.

Further mathematics is required or recommended for most university courses in maths, Physics, engineering and computer science at top universities, and is beneficial to most other science, finance or technology courses. A student wishing to study one of these subjects at university should definitely consider studying further mathematics. Equally, students who enjoy maths at school, enjoy problem solving and are willing to work hard would also be suitable to the further mathematics course, irrespective of intended university course. Students on the further mathematics course who are on track for an A or A* grade are able to take the mathematics exams in year 12 and to boost their university applications with a final, rather than predicted, result. This also means students sit three sets of exams in year 13 but leave with four A levels.

The **maths plus** course would suit students who have taken Additional maths or are on track to do very well at IGCSE and are keen to do more than just the A level in maths. It would also suit students who are considering careers in the fields mentioned above, but who are not yet sure what to do after school and therefore want to maintain breadth of study. All students on the maths plus course must be hard-working and well-motivated to cope with the 4 extra lessons required per week. Students leave school with three A levels and an extra qualification in AS further maths.

The maths plus course has the additional possible advantage that students who perform well during year 12 might be allowed to transfer to the further mathematics course at the start of year 13 if they are prepared to do some independent work over the summer holidays and are prepared to drop one of their other subjects, subject to permission from the head of department. It would also be possible, should a student find the pace too high, to transfer to the maths course at various points in the course.

Music

Exam board: AQA

Studying music at A level will develop and deepen students' appreciation of the subject, across three main areas: through the study of music from a wide historical and geographical span whilst developing aural awareness; writing compositions and becoming more sophisticated in specific techniques; and building upon performing skills. Students will expand their analytical skills and musicianship, helping them to understand and appreciate more fully the music they listen to and perform, and help them draw connections between repertoire from the past and present.

This is a recommended starting point for further study of music at all universities and colleges (whether for an academic or performance-based degree). If not going on to study Music at university, A level music is highly respected as a useful qualification for its large number of transferable skills.

Student requirements: Candidates should start the course at approximately Grade 6 standard on their first instrument/voice. Candidates without GCSE music may be considered at the discretion of the director of music if they have achieved a high grade on an instrument or voice (Grade 7 or 8).

Course structure: The AQA A level qualification is 100% externally assessed and consists of one written paper and two non-examined assessments.

Component	Overview	Assessment
Performing 35%	Total performance time of 10 minutes. Performance can be solo and/or ensemble.	Total 50 marks
Composing 25%	2 compositions, one free and one brief assessing technique - a total of at least 4 minutes 30 seconds of music must be created.	Total 50 marks
Appraising 40%	7 Areas of Study: Western Classical, Music for Media, Jazz, Popular Music, Contemporary Traditional, Music for Theatre, Art Music of the twentieth century	Exam 2 hours and 30 minutes. Total 120 marks

The music department offers a comprehensive programme of co-curricular and enrichment opportunities for sixth form musicians including chamber music, advanced theory, concert trips and many performance opportunities.

A level music students can look forward to playing a vital role in the life of the department, contributing to performance platforms and masterclasses, having the opportunity to hear their compositions performed live, and collaborating with other City of London schools.



Politics

Exam board: Edexcel

This is a new subject for students, which aims to provide a clear understanding of the theories, motives and values that underpin the political process and government decision-making. Studying Politics provides you with the skills of evaluation, analysis, debate and argument. It is the perfect subject for the student who wants to be better informed on the key issues of the day. National and international political events help to shape the curriculum. We complement our studies with visits to parliament and overseas.

Student requirements

As this is a new subject, there is no expectation that students will have studied a specific combination of GCSE subjects. Politics students should have an interest in finding out more about current affairs, enjoy independent research and reading, and should be able to write clear and well-structured essays. Students will be expected to achieve Grade 7 in the most relevant Humanities subject(s) they study at GCSE.

Course structure

Students study UK politics and political ideologies in Year 12 and US politics in Year 13. Students will be required to evaluate and compare the UK and US political systems. The course will introduce students to the key channels of communication between government and the people and to the major governmental processes. The requirement to evaluate the adequacy of existing arrangements for ensuring representative democracy and participation and to develop a critical understanding of the role and effectiveness of key institutions is addressed through a range of topics, including:

- Political participation and democracy
 - Elections
 - Political parties
 - Pressure Groups
 - Constitutions
 - The role and significance of Parliament
 - The Prime Minister and Cabinet
 - The Judiciary and Civil Liberties
- Students will also gain an understanding of key political ideologies (liberalism, socialism, conservatism and nationalism) and how they have developed and evolved over time.



Assessment

Three two hour papers, containing a mix of shorter questions and longer analytical essay questions which will require students to identify alternative viewpoints or perspectives on an issue or question, as well as the extent of rivalry between these viewpoints.

Religious Studies

(Philosophy, Ethics and Theology)

Exam board: OCR

This A level course offers a hugely exciting and challenging specification which provides a critical approach to the consideration of moral, philosophical and theological issues. Students study the theories of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Ayer, Freud, Marx and Boff. Students are encouraged to present arguments with precision allowing them to think clearly and to argue convincingly about deeply interesting questions. We aim to enable students to think rationally, lucidly, independently and critically, to discuss intelligently, and to argue cogently. As important as the questions are, so is the process of learning to answer them. Philosophy, ethics and theology is the ultimate 'transferable work skill'. We are often asked what philosophy can be used for - the answer is 'absolutely anything'! We study medical ethics which can be directly useful for medical students but all our work requires the analysis and construction of complex arguments, indispensable for a variety of future careers including law, business and technology and highly valued by top universities around the world.

Student requirements:

A GCSE in RS/ RPE is **not** required to study this course.

Course structure:

Philosophy of Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient philosophical influences (Plato and Aristotle) Arguments about the existence or non-existence of God The nature of experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mind-body problem Post-mortem existence Ideas about the nature of God Language
Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normative ethical theories Applied ethics Ethical language Conscience and free will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider influence of ethical thought Euthanasia Business Ethics
Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human nature Christology Knowledge of God Bonhoeffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secularisation theory Pluralism Gender Theology

Assessment: There are three 2 hour exams (one for each paper). Each paper requires the student to choose three out of four essays to answer.

There is no coursework.



Physics

Exam board: AQA

The course aims to sustain and develop students' interest in and enjoyment of Physics. Students will develop an understanding of the links between theory and experiment, and use that understanding to explore big questions such as: "How did the universe begin?", "What are the basic building blocks of matter?" and "How does the sun keep on shining?".

Physics also enables students to express their mathematical understanding of concepts such as forces, cosmology and quantum theory. Physics students develop skills in areas such as problem solving, reasoning, numeracy, ICT and communication.

Student requirements

Grade 8 at GCSE and Grade 8 in maths GCSE

Course content

The physics department follows the AQA physics syllabus, which covers new and exciting concepts that students will not have previously studied. For example, nuclear and particle physics introduces particle accelerators, the concept of annihilation to calculate the energy released; and quantum physics gives the students an opportunity to learn about the Wave-Particle duality of light and to observe experiments that resulted in Einstein being awarded a Nobel Prize.

This physics course is stimulating, challenging and ultimately rewarding. Physics expands your options and is essential for many careers in science and engineering. The skills and knowledge developed studying physics keep the door open for just about anything else.

Written Examinations (100%): The course is assessed through written examinations. These will expect practical knowledge of key experiments that will be introduced through the course. There is a practical endorsement separate from the exams which is based on competency in completing practical work throughout the course. This is assessed using 16 core practicals.



Extended Project Qualification

Exam board: AQA

One of the options available is the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This qualification which can be one of many different things:

- A written research report
- An artefact e.g. a piece of art, music or model with related research focus

Any of these will be produced and researched by you independently with regular one to one meetings with your supervisor as well as skills sessions. The important restriction is that the topic must not be taken directly from any of your A level courses, although it could be taken from an A level course that you begin and do not see through to the end as long as the work you produce is completely your own work. Students decide on a topic and submit a proposal to their EPQ supervisor. The course starts in November of year 12 with a year 13 October submission. Some students who have done the HPQ in year 10 complete in year 12. Students write a 5000-word essay or produce an artefact accompanied by a 1000 plus word report on it. In addition, you must submit a production log mapping your research process and planning, and then finally give a short presentation to a non-specialist audience online.

The EPQ is an incredibly valuable qualification in that it teaches skills such as academic referencing for essays and dissertations at university, as well as providing you with the chance to become an expert in an academic field of your own choosing. In addition, you have the chance to develop planning skills and time management experience which can enhance A levels and future work skills. This qualification is well regarded by universities with an increasing number now including it in their UCAS offers. Examples of previous projects in recent years include exploring Foucault and consent; medical ethics and the history of the NHS; the role of the Catholic Church in the Spanish Civil War; drag; research into cancer treatments; designing a piece of music to reflect the maths in Alice in Wonderland. The list of topics is vast and students are encouraged to add to this ever-growing body of original scholarship. The course is especially suited to students with genuine academic interests and the ability to manage and meet deadlines. We work using a blended learning style of delivery on Teams with after school sessions which has been highly successful.

Assessment:

- A 5000-word independent research essay, or an artefact with a 1000-2000-word report
- A production log of the process
- A short presentation to a non-specialist audience online
- Projects are graded A* to E



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