

STRATHEARN SCHOOL



A LEVEL SUBJECT CHOICE BOOKLET 2026

	Page
Introduction	3
AS and A Level Courses	4
Collaboration Subjects	5
University Courses and Careers	6
Criteria for Entry into Sixth Form	7
Art and Design	9
Biology	11
Business Studies	13
Chemistry	15
Digital Technology	17
Drama & Theatre Studies	18
English Literature	19
Geography	20
Government & Politics	22
Health and Social Care	23
History	25
Mathematics	27
(Further Mathematics)	
Media Studies	29
Modern Languages	30
(French, German and Spanish)	
Moving Image Arts	32
Music	34
Nutrition & Food Science	35
Physics	37
Religious Studies	38
Technology and Design	39

INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains information about each of the AS/A-level subjects from which you may choose. You will spend a long time studying each of your subjects, so it is well worth taking time to find out all you can about them. Before you make your choices, you should:

- find out all you can about the kinds of career you might be interested in,
- read the relevant pages in this booklet,
- talk to pupils already doing the subjects at AS/A-level,
- talk to your teachers,
- talk to your parents,
- talk to Miss Griffith (Head of Careers) or any member of the Careers Department in School,
- talk to the Careers Advisor from the Department of Economy whom you have already met this year.

No matter what subjects you choose, you will find AS/A-level work very different from GCSE.

Here are some of the differences which sixth form pupils have highlighted:

- There is more work in 3 or 4 AS/A-levels than in 9 GCSEs.
- You have to do more work on your own initiative and independently.
- You have to apply your knowledge to a greater extent, not just learn facts.
- There is a lot more extra reading 'around the subject'.
- You will find it more difficult to succeed if you have too many commitments outside schoolwork, for example a part-time job which takes up a lot of your time.

Some of the questions which pupils ask themselves when choosing AS/A-levels are:

1. *Do I enjoy the subject?*

This is a very important question, since you will spend a lot of time studying each of your AS/A-level subjects.

2. *Am I good at the subject?*

Look at your test and exam results and the feedback from homework. Also ask your teacher. You should expect to achieve at least a grade B at GCSE in any subject which you hope to study at AS or A-level.

3. *Do I need the subject for the university course/career which I want to do?*

This question is considered in detail later in the booklet.

AS and A Level Courses

Pupils study either 3 or 4 subjects in Lower Sixth and must study at least 3 in Upper Sixth.

A-level Media Studies is a 2-year linear course, so no AS level qualification will be awarded. This may also be the case for some other subjects offered through collaboration. Please see the detail on each subject later in this booklet.

Pupils will not necessarily have the same teacher(s) in U6 as in L6.

How many AS subjects should you do in Lower Sixth?

In the first instance pupils are asked to choose 3 courses they would prefer to follow in Sixth Form. Following the issue of GCSE results, Form 5 pupils entering Lower Sixth will have an opportunity to choose a 4th subject to study at AS Level. They may meet with a careers teacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the most suitable options, considering each pupil's GCSE results and career aspirations.

4 AS levels are beneficial for some of the most competitive universities and courses (and required for many courses in the Republic of Ireland). However, if your GCSE grades suggest that you would find 4 AS subjects too much, then you should do 3 and concentrate your efforts on these to get the best possible grades.

If you are not sure what to do at any stage, you should consult Mr Anderson or Miss Griffith; but no decisions on a 4th AS needs to be made until you receive your GCSE results.

Can you repeat exams at the end of Upper Sixth?

Yes. If you receive a disappointing result at the end of L6, you can repeat one or more AS module exams at the end of U6, although this obviously adds significantly to the workload at A2 level.

Feasibility of classes

It may not be possible for us to provide every subject combination, as some may lead to classes which are too small or do not allow the maximum choice for all pupils.

If this happens, you will be advised of this and the possible options will be discussed.

Collaboration Subjects

If you opt for one of our collaborative courses hosted by one of our partner schools, it will necessitate travelling by taxi between the school sites. Strathearn use a reputable taxi company for this purpose and we ensure that they have the necessary insurance details to transport our pupils.

Collaboration usually occurs on a Monday and Tuesday morning and on a Thursday and Friday afternoon. Where collaboration occurs for period 1 or finishes period 9, a pupil is required to make their own way to or from the 'host' school.

NB

- **You may select only one collaboration subject as these subjects are all timetabled together. You may therefore only choose one subject from the following:**
 - **French (hosted by Strathearn School)**
 - **German (hosted by Campbell College)**
 - **Media Studies (hosted by Strathearn School)**
 - **Moving Image Arts (hosted by Ashfield Boys')**
- **Places in collaboration subjects hosted by partner schools are dependent on availability of places in the class and will not be confirmed until the first week of September 2025.**
- **Whilst collaboration with our partner schools at 6th Form has run successfully for a number of years, choosing to study an A-level subject through collaboration inevitably brings extra challenges, e.g. lost time travelling between sites, different school holidays, different reporting and assessment schedules and procedures. It is our experience that it takes a high degree of personal commitment and organisation to make the most of subjects completed through collaboration.**

University Courses and Careers

You should bear the following points in mind:

- For many university courses/careers, any 'AS'/'A' level subjects are suitable.
- For some university courses/careers, certain 'AS'/'A' level subjects are desirable but not essential.
- For other university courses/careers, certain 'AS'/'A' level subjects and specific grades (often an A or B) may be essential.

How do you find out what applies to the university course/career to which you aspire?

First of all, it is **your** responsibility to find out! You should do some or all of the following:

- 1 Talk to someone who is currently doing, or has **recently** done the course, or is **recently** qualified in the career (things can change from year to year, so make sure the information is up to date!).
- 2 Talk to a member of the Careers staff — Miss Griffith, Mrs Staples, Ms Kimber, Mrs Roberts, Mrs Browne or Mrs Douglas-Smith.
- 3 Study the information available in the Careers Room, which is open before Registration in the morning, at break, lunch time and after school. Useful books to consult are the **HEAP** books.

The following are useful information sources:

- (i) Careers ServiceNI (www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers) and www.investigatecareers.com (resource directory password: lobster) can be accessed on the internet. These resources will help you to find out about careers which may interest you.
- (ii) The Russell Group of Universities has lots of very relevant information on its website, <https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/>, and has developed an additional site to help 6th year students make informed choices: <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>
- (iii) UCAS and university websites have current information on subject requirements for courses starting in September 2026. There is also information on alternative pathways post-18, e.g. Apprenticeship and Further Education options.
- (iv) Local FE colleges e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College (www.belfastmet.ac.uk) and South Eastern Regional College (www.serc.ac.uk).
- (v) [Workplus for many local apprenticeship opportunities \(https://www.workplus.app/\)](https://www.workplus.app/) .

There is also a lot of very useful information regarding subject choices and university courses on the 'Useful Careers Websites' section on our **School Website**. If you are interested in finding out more about where the likely growth areas are for future job opportunities in Northern Ireland, please visit the 'Useful Websites' section of our Careers page and look under the heading '**Labour Market Information**'.

In the Careers room there are many books that will help you with your research. For example, there are career related books such as: the 'Getting into...' series; The HEAP Guide, University Degree Course Offers' (this also gives information on likely subject requirements at GCSE and A Level); 'Guide to not going to University'.

Criteria for Entry into Sixth Form

Strathearn School, Belfast

Criteria for Entry in Sixth Form (Year 13)

Strathearn will give preference to pupils on the basis of academic achievement. Academic achievement will be judged with reference to:

- the grades achieved in GCSEs*
- the relevance of the subjects taken
- information from recent school reports.

The minimum required for entry into the Sixth Form will be seven passes in relevant GCSE subjects at grades A to C with at least four passes at grade B (English Examination Board Equivalent 6) or better. Relevant subjects will include no more than one Short Course GCSE and excludes Learning for Life and Work.

If there are more girls who are eligible than there are places available, places shall be awarded in the following order:

1. Applicants with the highest total GCSE point score in relevant¹ GCSE subjects – an applicant's GCSE point score will be calculated on the basis of grades in full course GCSEs and no more than one Short Course GCSE (excluding Learning for Life and Work) as follows:

English Examination Boards	CCEA / WJEC	Point Score Full Course	Point Score Short Course
9	A*	4	2
8/7	A	3	1.5
6	B	2	1
5	C*	1.5	0.75
4	C	1	0.5

2. In the event of a tie, priority will be given to the girl whose home is closer to the School. Distance will be measured in a straight line using an Ordnance Survey web distance measurement tool from the front door of the girl's home to the School's Reception. Home will be taken to mean the girl's address as it appears on the Application Form.

Applicants applying from outside Northern Ireland must satisfy the School that their academic achievement is equivalent to the standard set out above. In addition, pupils for whom English is an additional language have to complete a CEFR B2 Level assessment for entry into Sixth Form. A score of 60% is required for the candidate to be considered.

The Admissions Criteria have been drawn up and approved by the Board of Governors; their application has been delegated to the Principal.

¹ Relevant Subjects are those offered at AS/A2 Level in Strathearn School, and/or deemed by the School to provide suitable preparation to undertake an AS/A2 level course offered in Strathearn.

Criteria for any extra places made available by the Department of Education for admission into Sixth Form (Year 13).

The Department of Education may, at the School's request, increase the number of pupils that the School can admit to its Year 13. Places that become available in this way shall be allocated only to pupils who meet the basic eligibility criteria for sixth form study (as above) and shall be allocated in the order determined by the criteria to be applied in the following order:

1. Pupils who have most recently completed Year 12 in Strathearn.
2. Pupils from other schools where admission to an extra place at Strathearn has been agreed by the Department of Education.**

****Parents should note how the Department of Education (DE) will, in response to a school's request, increase the school's enrolment number in order to allow an extra post-16 pupil to enrol. DE will first check whether there is another school or schools of a type suitable for that pupil within an hour's journey of where the pupil lives. If there is, DE will then check whether this other school or schools may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue. If these checks find that no other suitable school may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue - then DE will agree a school's request for an extra place.**

What is a school of a type that is suitable for a pupil?

To determine this, DE first considers all schools to be one of 4 types: (1) denominational (2) non-denominational (3) Integrated and (4) Irish-Medium. A school requesting an extra place for a post-16 pupil will belong to one of these 4 types and DE will consider any other school or school from this same type as suitable for the pupil. DE will also consider as suitable for the pupil any school from the same type as the type of school that the child attended in Year 12.

Requirements for Upper Sixth (Year 14)

Pupils will be admitted to Upper Sixth (Year 14) who have shown by their academic progress and positive attitude to date that they will benefit from the educational provision available in Strathearn in Sixth Form.

New entry into Year 14 would be in exceptional circumstances only. The examination boards and modules of AS courses already completed would need to match the curriculum offer in Strathearn. References and recent reports would be sought from the candidate's previous school.

Appeals Procedure

If a pupil does not meet the entry requirements and wishes to make an appeal and/or claim special circumstances, he/she may make an appeal to the Board of Governors. This appeal should be supported by documentary evidence of an appropriate nature. When considering such appeals, the Governors will take account of a pupil's commitment to the school (e.g. attendance and behaviour) as one of the criteria they use in arriving at a decision.

ART AND DESIGN

The AS and A Level specification in Art and Design progresses naturally from GCSE Art and Design. The course is suitable for any student who has enthusiasm and aptitude for the subject. A passion for creative learning is essential, and working independently outside of allocated class time is the key to success. Studio periods, a lunch time, an after school Art Club and organised gallery visits are provided by the department to support our young artists, but a commitment to expanding one's own knowledge of Art and Design is also important.

Advice on portfolio preparation is also given to those students who wish to apply for Higher Education courses in the subject after Sixth Form.

Specification Overview

The course is usually team taught, so students can benefit from the ideas and input of two members of staff.

Students are given a theme set by the exam board which will allow for personal interpretation and development. Skills established in GCSE will be revised and developed further.

Exciting new approaches are introduced in painting, printmaking, ICT, ceramics, photography, drawing and textiles. Students have a choice of four pathways in; Combined Studies, Photography & Lens-based Media, Three Dimensional Design and Textiles.

During the course you will:

- Demonstrate skilful use of the visual elements: line, tone, texture, pattern, form and colour.
- Build on your recording skills; drawing in a range of media and developing skills in photography.
- Experiment with a broad range of media, techniques and processes in fine art & design.
- Develop, analyse and communicate ideas to give your work personal meaning.
- Undertake self-review of your progress.
- Gain insights into the work of other artists who will inspire your work and ideas.
- Produce a final outcome that reflects your skill and creative investigations.

AS Course

September – February:

Experimental Portfolio Coursework; the theme is set by the Examination Board (CCEA).

February- May:

Personal Response; production of a final outcome as a result of the experimentation undertaken.

During both the experimental portfolio coursework and personal response components, work is carried out in class and also independently in the student's own time.

- For the **Experimental Portfolio**, a **sketchbook** is produced along with preparatory work for display.
- **The Personal Response** (final outcome) will be in a media of the student's choice and is accompanied by evidence of planning and a range of trials.

The Personal Response concludes with a timed, controlled **exam session lasting 10 hours in total.**

A2 Course

The structure, timing and requirements of the course are similar to Lower Sixth, but the final, controlled exam is **15 hours**. The coursework element also contains a **Written Investigation** (2000 word essay which is externally marked by CCEA). Students will identify and study the work of contemporary and historical artists & designers and write about them. This, in turn, will inform and inspire their practical work. Staff work closely with each pupil to help them identify a topic and structure their essay.

During both the **Personal & Critical Investigation** coursework and **Thematic Outcome** components, work is carried out in class and also independently in the student's own time.

- For the **Personal & Critical Investigation**, a **sketchbook** is produced along with experimental work for display.
- The **Thematic Outcome** will be in a media of the student's choice and is accompanied by evidence of planning and a range of trials.

How is the subject assessed?

L6 Assessment (AS)

AS 1	Experimental Portfolio	50% of AS	(20% of 'A' Level)
AS 2	Personal Response	50% of AS	(20% of 'A' Level)

U6 Assessment (A2)

A2 1	Personal & Critical Investigation	60% of A2	(36% of 'A' Level)
-------------	-----------------------------------	-----------	--------------------

Incorporating 2 linked elements:

(1)	Practical work – sketchbooks and experimentation in chosen media	40% of A2	(24% of A Level)
(2)	Written Investigation – an illustrated essay of 1000 – 2000 words	20% of A2	(12% of A Level)

A2 2	Thematic Outcome	40% of A2	(24% of 'A' Level)
-------------	------------------	-----------	--------------------

Student work is internally marked by the school, and externally moderated by the examination board (except the Written Investigation at A2).

Students are asked to present an exhibition of their work for assessment purposes at the end of both years.

Where can I get more information?

All of the Art staff in the department are involved in teaching Sixth Form Art and Design and will be happy to advise.

BIOLOGY

Biology is the study of living things. The AS/A2 course is a continuation from GCSE or Double Award Biology and so you will recognise some of the topic titles below but of course they will be studied in much greater depth. It is important that you have an enquiring mind and want to develop your scientific skills, whilst enjoying the challenge of increasing your knowledge about the natural world.

Specification Overview

The course studies organisms at different levels of organisation. This starts with how the cell works, including some biochemistry.

Ecology is a topic studied at both AS and A2 ensuring that organisms are considered in their natural habitats, not just in isolation. The specification includes Northern Ireland perspectives, particularly with respect to biodiversity.

Some pupils choose to study biology because it links to their current career aspirations, but if you don't have specific careers in mind and just enjoy the subject, then it can be a suitable choice for you. It is important to be aware, however, that many pupils tell us that it is a very content-heavy subject with lots of factual learning, so it's helpful if you are prepared for a significant jump from GCSE to A-level Biology.

Pupils who have completed GCSE Double Award Science or GCSE Biology are able to carry on to AS study in this subject (providing all GCSE exams are taken at Higher tier).

Moving on from GCSE, you will find that there is a lot to do and to learn. It is important to bear this in mind if you are considering the subject at AS and/or A2 level.

AS Course

AS1 Molecules and Cells

In this module you will learn about Molecules, Enzymes, Viruses, Cell Structure, Cell Physiology, Cell Division and Tissues and Organs.

AS2 Organisms and Biodiversity

In this unit you will learn about Transport and Exchange Mechanisms in Plants and Mammals, Adaptations of Organisms and Biodiversity.

AS3 Practical Skills

There are a large number of practical classes which will allow you to develop a high degree of skill in the lab. Assessment of practical skills takes place both in the classroom and by a written exam and is worth 25% of the final AS score.

A2 Course

A2 1 Physiology and Ecosystems

In this unit you will learn about Homeostasis, Immunity, Co-Ordination and Control in plants and animals and Ecosystems.

A2 2 Biochemistry, Genetics and Evolutionary Trends

In this unit you will learn about the Biochemistry of Respiration and Photosynthesis, DNA as the Genetic Code, Gene Technology and Plant and Animal Kingdoms.

A2 3 Practical Skills

The development of practical skills continues at A2. The focus is on the analysis of data and the evaluation of methods.

These topics are written to stretch and challenge you as your knowledge increases and there will be opportunities to discuss ethical issues related to science.

How is the subject assessed?

CCEA exam board is used.

AS

There are 3 written exam papers at the end of the year. Modules AS 1 and AS 2 are primarily used to assess knowledge, understanding and scientific skills. Practical skills are assessed both in class by carrying out a series of experiments and by a written exam (Module AS 3).

A2 is similar to AS with further assessment of skills and knowledge by 3 written papers. Modules A2 1 and A2 2 cover the course content. Module A2 3 is an external exam assessing practical skills added to the result of internal assessment of practical skills carried out in class.

Where can I get more information?

Your GCSE teacher can answer any questions you may have, and it is important to have a discussion with them if you are considering A-level Biology.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Specification Overview

The Business Studies course at AS and A2 Level encourages students to:

- develop a lifelong interest in business;
- gain a holistic understanding of business and the international marketplace;
- develop a critical understanding of organisations and their relationship with key stakeholders;
- evaluate the role of technology in business communication, business operation and decision making;
- generate enterprising and creative solutions to business problems and issues;
- understand the ethical dilemmas and responsibilities faced by organisations and business decision makers;
- develop advanced study skills that help them prepare for third level education; and
- acquire a range of relevant business and generic skills including decision making, problem solving and interpretation of management information.

AS Course

AS 1: Introduction to Business

This unit introduces students to the business world. It begins, as many businesses do, with the entrepreneur and what motivates individuals to develop business enterprises. Students become familiar with different business ownership structures and the key stakeholder groups that may have an interest in how a business is managed.

Students acquire a critical understanding of the importance of quality and its significance in the competitive marketplace, including recruiting and training a quality labour force and the production process. Students should appreciate the impact of management and leadership styles on employee motivation and business operations.

Students may use a calculator in the examination for this unit.

AS 2: Growing the Business

Students explore the role of technology in growing a business and how it helps with decision making. They also understand the impact of competition on a business.

Students develop a critical understanding of the marketing process, marketing strategy and the use of e-business.

Students also develop an appreciation of the role of accounting and financial information in business decision making and financial control.

Students may use a calculator in the examination for this unit.

A2 Course

A2 1: Strategic Decision Making

Students identify business objectives and the potential for these to conflict with those of various stakeholder groups. Students analyse and evaluate stakeholder management strategies.

Students gain an insight into business planning and the need to manage risk and uncertainty when developing business strategies. They also analyse the importance of accounting and financial information in making strategic business decisions.

Students demonstrate quantitative skills **without** the use of given formulae. They may use a calculator in the examination for this unit.

A2 2: The Competitive Business Environment

In this unit, students examine the macroeconomic framework that businesses operate in. They evaluate the impact of globalisation on business activities. Students develop an appreciation of the importance of ethics and sustainability on business decision making and culture. They also evaluate the influence of stakeholders on business operations.

Students examine how businesses are affected by and react to change in the dynamic and technology-driven business environment.

Students demonstrate quantitative skills **without** the use of given formulae. They may use a calculator in the examination for this unit.

How is the subject assessed?

The examination board is CCEA

- **AS 1: (Introduction to Business)**
2 compulsory structured data responses (80 marks)
1 examination (1 hour 30 minutes)
50% of AS and 20% of A Level
- **AS 2: (Growing the Business)**
2 compulsory structured data responses (80 marks)
1 examination (1 hour 30 minutes)
50% of AS and 20% of A Level
- **A2 1: (Strategic Decision Making)**
5 compulsory structured data response (90 marks)
1 examination (2 hours)
30% of A level
- **A2 2: (The Competitive Business Environment)**
6 compulsory structured data responses (90 marks)
1 examination (2 hours)
30% of A Level

Where can I get more information?

Mrs White or Mrs McDonald (U10 beside the library) or http://ccea.org.uk/business_studies/ or check the Business Studies page on the school website.

Please note: It is possible to take up Business Studies at A-Level without completing the subject at GCSE. However, if the AS class is oversubscribed, priority will be given to those candidates with the GCSE Business Studies qualification.

CHEMISTRY

This course is most suited to those interested in understanding how Chemistry impacts and underlies virtually everything from the global community to the basis of life itself. It is open to those who have successfully completed either GCSE Chemistry or GCSE Double Award Science.

Specification Overview

GCE Chemistry is the study of elements and the compounds they form. It involves the study of Physical, Organic, Inorganic Chemistry as well as periodic trends, analytical, transition metals and electrochemistry.

This course is suitable if you wish to further your education in chemistry. You can take this course as a one year AS level course which would be beneficial for use with many subjects you may wish to study in the future and it would also be beneficial for a variety of careers. If you go on to study the full GCE (i.e. both the AS and A2 course) then it provides a good foundation for further study at university e.g. medicine, dentistry, chemical engineering etc or for students going into the world of work.

If you have:-

- an interest in and enthusiasm for Chemistry, the further study of Chemistry and careers in the subject area.

If you want to develop:-

- an appreciation of how scientific decisions are made and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society;
- A deeper understanding of how science works and the knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other.

Then you should consider this course.

AS Course

There are three units in the AS course

AS 1: Basic Concepts in Physical and Inorganic Chemistry

In this module you will learn about atomic structure and bonding as well as the shapes adopted by molecules and ions and the intermolecular forces existing between them. There is a general introduction to the Periodic Table with an in-depth study of Group VII. Redox reactions are introduced while analytical chemistry consists of acid-base titrations.

Basic calculations and equations are an integral part of this module.

AS 2: Further Physical and Inorganic Chemistry and Introduction to Organic Chemistry

Organic chemistry forms a major part of this unit with work on the chemistry of alkanes, alkenes, haloalkanes and alcohols. There is an introduction to equilibrium and kinetics while thermochemistry is covered in some depth. The analytical chemistry aspects are covered by IR spectroscopy and qualitative analysis. There is also further work on basic calculations.

AS 3: Practical Assessment

In this module you will complete practical booklet A lasting 1 hour, consisting of a variety of practical tasks which are worth 25 marks and practical booklet B lasting 1 hour 15 minutes consisting of questions relating to practical techniques which is worth 55 marks. Practical booklet A is completed in a laboratory, practical booklet B is completed in the examination hall.

A2 Course

There are three units in the A2 course.

A2 1: Periodic Trends and Further Organic, Physical and Inorganic Chemistry

In this module there is further development of equilibrium and kinetics you will also learn about Lattice Enthalpy and Entropy. The study of organic chemistry is continued with units on isomerism, aldehydes and ketones, carboxylic acids and esters, fats and oils. Periodic Trends and environmental chemistry complete this module.

A2 2: Analytical, Transition Metals, Electrochemistry and Further Organic Chemistry

In this module you will learn about analytical chemistry through units on mass spectrometry, spectroscopy, volumetric analysis, colorimetry and chromatography. The inorganic chemistry studied is based mainly on Transition metals with specific reference to Cr and V. Organic nitrogen compounds form the backbone of the work on organic chemistry and there is a final unit on polymer chemistry.

A2 3: Practical Assessment

In this module you will complete practical booklet A, consisting of practical tasks and practical booklet B consisting of questions relating to practical techniques. Practical booklet A is completed in a laboratory, practical booklet B is completed in the examination hall.

How is the subject assessed?

The examinations board is CCEA and the course is assessed by written examination and practical coursework. Each of units AS 1 and AS 2 are worth 40% of the AS course and 16% of A Level. The exam consists of a 1 hour 30 minute written paper containing multiple choice and structured questions.

The AS 3 Practical Assessment unit is worth 20% of the AS course and 8% of A Level. It consists of a 1 hour 15 minute practical examination (laboratory based) and a 1 hour 15 minute written paper on practical techniques (completed in the examination hall).

Each of units A2 1 and A2 2 is worth 40% of the A2 course and 24% of A Level. It consists of a 2 hour written paper containing multiple choice and structured questions.

The A2 3 Practical Assessment unit is worth 20% of the A2 course and 12% of A Level. It consists of a 1 ¼ hour practical examination (laboratory based) and a 1 ¼ hour written paper on practical techniques.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like any more information about the Chemistry A' Level course, please speak to Miss Stewart, Mrs Armstrong, Miss Griffith or Dr Keown.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

If you wish to learn more about the latest technological developments in the world of ICT, this is the subject for you. With the increasing dependence on ICT in every walk of life it is valuable to obtain a qualification which prepares you for the world of work and demonstrates your ability in this area. Equally, undertaking the full A level qualification gives you the opportunity to progress to higher education leading to professional IT management careers.

Specification Overview

This specification encourages pupils to: -

- develop a genuine interest in digital technology
- understand the system development process through the development of an application
- appreciate the impact and consequences of the use of technology on individuals, organisations and society as a whole
- understand the social, legal and ethical implications of using digital technology
- apply their skills to work-related scenarios
- develop advanced study skills to prepare them for 3rd level education

AS Course

AS1: Approaches to System Development (1 hour 30 minutes examination)

50% of AS

20% of A level

In this unit, pupils develop knowledge and understanding of the various approaches to the development of complex systems, the key stages in the development process and the outputs produced at each stage.

AS2: Fundamentals of Digital Technology (1 hour 30 minutes examination)

50% of AS

20% of A level

In this unit, pupils develop knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of any system such as data representation, computer architecture, software and the user interface.

A2 Course

A2 1: Information Systems (2 hours 30 minutes examination)

40% of A level

In this unit, pupils build on the material learned in AS2 to extend their knowledge and understanding of information systems.

A2 2: Internal Assessment

20% of A level

In this unit pupils have the opportunity to become involved in a real-world situation where they can apply their skills, knowledge and understanding of digital technology to solve a problem for a specified client. Pupils have approximately 60 hours to compile a portfolio showing evidence of the analysis, design, development, testing and evaluation of their application.

More information is available from:

Mrs R Armstrong (rarmstrong779@c2kni.net)

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

WJEC DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES A-LEVEL

Specification Overview

WJEC AS/A Level Drama and Theatre is an exciting and inspiring course. This highly practical specification provides you with opportunity to work either as performers and/or designers.

In the study of A Level Drama and Theatre Studies at 'AS' Level and at 'A2' Level, students can explore intellectual, social, physical, emotional and moral domains through learning that involves thought, feeling and action. A Level Drama fosters self-discipline, confidence and team work and develops skills in interpreting, researching, negotiating, problem solving and decision making.

The course provides an opportunity to study plays from the point of view of a director, designer, performer and critic. It enables students to acquire a greater knowledge and understanding of the language of drama and theatre as well as to develop their performing and analytical skills.

This qualification can be used as part of the entry requirement into other subject areas and by those wishing to pursue any career that involves communication and people-oriented skills.

In addition, the Department offers regular theatre trips locally and a trip to London to expose our students to carefully selected productions (subject to availability).

Please note- this is a new specification for 2026/27 which offers both AS AND A Level options to students.

Course Overview

AS Unit 1: Theatre Workshop 24%

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. You will participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract. You will produce a creative log of based on the rehearsal process, a performance lasting between 5-16 minutes (depending on the number of actors in your group) and an evaluation of the final performance or design. This unit is Teacher assessed and externally moderated.

AS Unit 2: Text in Theatre 16%

Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes You will answer a series of questions based on your chosen set text and on live productions seen during the year.

A2 Unit 3: Text in Action 36%

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. You will participate in the creation, development and performance of two pieces of theatre: a devised piece using the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or company and an extract from a text in a different style. You will also produce a written Process and Evaluation Report. This Unit is externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

A2 Unit 4: Text in Performance 24%

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes You will answer a series of questions based on your chosen set texts and on live productions seen during the year.

How is the subject assessed?

AS Unit 1 – Internal assessment – 60% of AS (24% A Level)

AS Unit 2 – External written examination - 40% of AS (16% A Level)

A2 Unit 3 – Performance assessed by External Examiner – 36% of A Level

A2 Unit 4 – External written examination - 24% of A Level (Upper Sixth)

Where can I get more information?

Mrs Ingram & Mrs Bell

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Specification Overview

English Literature in all its forms asks us to consider what it means to be human: to think about life, death, happiness, sadness, how we live and how we create meaning. It invites us to consider characters like ourselves but also people whose views and behaviour might be very different.

As an A Level, English Literature is regarded as a 'facilitating' subject: it provides you with the opportunity to display your ability to cope with complex, demanding material; it allows you to develop powers of analysis; and it tests whether you can think independently. It is certainly a demanding A Level but it is one which we consider very rewarding.

In this subject you will study poetry, plays and novels. We'll be interested in how stories are constructed and how writers present their themes and ideas. We'll be looking at how literary texts have been shaped by contexts in which they were written. You will use all the skills that you have developed in GCSE English Literature. You'll be expected to have ideas and opinions: this subject is delivered mainly through class discussion.

AS Course

AS Course

AS 1: The Study of Poetry 1900–Present and Drama 1900–Present

You will study Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath, and *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams.

AS 2: The Study of Prose Pre 1900

You will study *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.

A2 Course

A21: The Study of Shakespeare

You will study *Othello*.

A2 2: The Study of Poetry Pre 1900 and Unseen Poetry

You will study Emily Dickinson and you will study a range of poems in preparation for the unseen poetry essay.

A2 3: Internal Assessment

Internal assessment. Students complete a 2500-word essay. In this essay you will compare and contrast two novels, one of which must have been written in the twenty-first century. You will have the freedom to choose your own novels, focus and question.

How is the subject assessed?

AS1: 2 hour exam	60% of AS (24% of A Level)
AS2: 1 hour exam	40% of AS (16% of A Level)
A21: 1 hour exam	20% of A Level
A22: 1 hour 30 min exam	20% of A Level
A23: Internal assessment	20% of A Level

Where can I get more information?

Any members of the English Department

GEOGRAPHY

The Geography Department of Strathearn School is dedicated to every student and our motto is.....

“Inspiring the next generation to understand and engage with the world around them.”

At A-Level, it is our goal to strive for academic excellence and prepare the world’s decision makers of tomorrow with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to contribute positively and sustainably in our changing world.

Specification Overview

A-Level Geography (CCEA) encourages students to explore the world around them and how people interact with it. Geography is the study of the earth: its landscapes, people, places and environments. It encompasses both its physical features and its political and cultural characteristics.

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- ➔ develop a lifelong interest in Geography;
- ➔ draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- ➔ develop higher order thinking skills, for example independent learning, creative thinking and problem-solving, where appropriate;
- ➔ apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations;
- ➔ work with others in groups;
- ➔ carry out research and present their findings in different formats;
- ➔ develop advanced study skills that help them prepare for third level education;
- ➔ provide extended responses and evidence of quality of written communication; and
- ➔ demonstrate through challenging external assessments, that they understand and can apply key concepts.

AS Course (40% of the A Level)

In the AS units, students have the opportunity to study fundamental aspects of both physical and human geography through three core modules. Pupils can normally expect to be taught by two specialist teachers.

AS 1: Physical Geography

In AS 1, students investigate human interaction in fluvial environments, human impact on ecosystems and weather and climate, including global weather issues such as El Niño and hurricanes. This will involve studying a range of local and global case studies.

AS 2: Human Geography

In AS 2, they study aspects of natural population change including the need for fertility policies, planning in rural areas and the challenges posed in urban areas both in MEDCs and LEDCs. Again, local and global case studies will be integrated into all topics.

AS 3: Fieldwork Skills and Techniques in Geography

In this unit students become actively involved in first-hand collecting of geographical data through fieldwork which normally involves a residential based activity at Magilligan Field Centre. Students identify geographical questions and issues, select appropriate sources and methods and establish effective approaches to inquiry in their geographical studies.

There are opportunities for students to use a range of technologies, including GIS.

A2 Course

Students who continue to A2 will study three more modules and will normally be taught by two specialist Geography teachers.

A2 1: Physical Processes, Landforms and Management

Students will explore key themes, including the processes responsible for and challenges posed by earthquakes and volcanoes, the processes shaping our coastline, global climate change and the need for sustainable planning policies to manage global climate change. They will study two options from four available. We will choose from:

Option A: Plate Tectonics: Theory and Outcomes

Option B: Tropical Ecosystems: Nature and Sustainability

Option C: Dynamic Coastal Environments

Option D: Climate Change: Past and Present

A2 2: Processes and Issues in Human Geography

In A2 2, students have the opportunity to study contemporary themes such as cultural geography and the need for sustainability in both settlements and tourism. They will study two options from four available. We will choose from:

Option A: Cultural Geography

Option B: Planning for Sustainable Settlements

Option C: Ethnic Diversity

Option D: Tourism

A2 3: Decision Making in Geography

In A2 3, students investigate real-life issues in a decision-making exercise. This takes the form of a case study whereby students analyse a range of resources, use particular skills and techniques and evaluate the results of analysis. Students are asked to take on a particular role and examine conflicting views.

How is the subject assessed?

All CCEA AS modules are examined at the end of the academic year in which they are taught. External written examinations as follows:

AS 1 – 1 hour 15 minutes (40% of AS, 16% of A-Level)

AS 2 – 1 hour 15 minutes (40% of AS, 16% of A-Level)

AS 3 – 1 hour (20% of AS, 8% of A-Level)

The CCEA A2 modules are examined at the end of the academic year in which they are taught. Details of the external written examinations are as follows:

A2 1 – 1 hour 30 minutes (24% of A-Level)

A2 2 – 1 hour 30 minutes (24% of A-Level)

A2 3 – 1 hour 30 minutes (12% of A-Level)

*Note – there is **no coursework / controlled assessment** element at A-Level. Module AS 3 assesses fieldwork skills but through the final examination process.*

Where can I get more information?

For further information, contact Mr Stevenson (Head of Geography).

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Specification Overview

The study of Government & Politics helps students to develop knowledge and understanding of the role politics plays in relation to current local, national, and global issues, as well as studying key thinkers and political ideas. This subject will teach you not only about issues that will affect every part of your everyday life, empowering you to understand the world around you, but will also allow you to learn a number of valuable skills such as communication, analysis and essay writing. This subject will interest you if you enjoy listening to and challenging the views of others in an analytical and informed manner, and you enjoy keeping up to date with current affairs. There are various co-curricular opportunities on offer such as trips, participation in 'Politics in Action', speakers and Youth Parliament, and the subject lends itself naturally to careers in journalism, law, education, the public sector and business.

AS Course

AS 1: The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland

Students will explore the foundations of the Northern Ireland Assembly, including the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement. They will examine the roles and effectiveness of the Assembly and Executive, as well as the main political parties in Northern Ireland.

AS 2: The British Political Process

Students will evaluate the effectiveness of the Westminster Parliament in performing its main roles of legislation, scrutiny and representation. They will also examine the increasing power of the Prime Minister and the role of pressure groups in influencing the government.

A2 Course

A2 1: Option A – A Comparative Study of the USA and UK

This unit focuses on how the USA is governed and how this compares to the British political system, with specific reference to the legislative and executive branches. In studying this option, students should draw on the knowledge and understanding that they have acquired in Unit AS 2: The British Political Process.

A2 2: Option B – Political Ideas

This includes the ideologies of Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism. This will include analysis of the core texts; Mill's 'On Liberty', Burke's 'Reflections on the Revolution in France' and Marx and Engels' 'Communist Manifesto'.

How is the subject assessed?

The examining board for this course of study is CCEA. At the end of each year of study (AS and A2) students will sit two written examinations (one on each of the units).

Where can I get more information?

For further information, please speak to Miss Carson (HOD) in L9.

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Specification Overview

Advanced GCE (Single Award) in Health and Social Care

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- ☐ develop their interest in health, social care and early years;
- ☐ draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- ☐ develop higher order thinking skills, creative thinking and problem-solving, where appropriate;
- ☐ apply their skills to work-related scenarios;
- ☐ work with others in groups;
- ☐ carry out research and present their findings in different formats;
- ☐ develop advanced study skills that help them prepare for third level education;
- ☐ develop knowledge and understanding relevant to degrees in nursing, allied health professions, social sciences, social policy, social work and early years;
- ☐ develop skills, aptitudes and values for employment in the health, social care and early years sectors;
- ☐ provide extended responses and evidence of quality of written communication; and
- ☐ demonstrate through internal and external assessments that they understand and can apply key concepts.

Please note that students will be required to set up a placement in a health, social care or early years setting. This is the responsibility of the student herself and must sit separately from any other volunteering opportunity undertaken through Strathearn School.

AS Course

Unit AS 1: Promoting Quality Care

In this unit, students explore values of care. By investigating practices in a selected health, social care or early years setting, students learn how care workers apply the values on a daily basis. Students learn how legislation impacts on health, social care and early years settings. They evaluate the effectiveness of policies in promoting quality care. Students research one example of poor practice and its effects on the well-being of service users, potential service users, the staff responsible, families and care workers or the organisation. Students must take care to maintain confidentiality. **This unit is internally assessed.**

Unit AS 2: Communication in Health, Social Care and Early Years Settings

In this unit, students explore communication skills and techniques used in a health, social care or early years setting and develop their communication skills. Students gain an understanding of how important effective communication skills are in developing good relationships and promoting quality care. Students complete a report on the communication skills they observe in a health, social care or early years setting. They also evaluate their own communication skills by carrying out an interaction. This interaction must take place in the setting.

This unit is internally assessed.

Unit AS 3: Health and Well-Being

In this unit, students learn about key concepts of health and well-being, the range of service users' needs and the impact of health and ill health on individuals. They investigate a range of factors that affect health and well-being. Students examine health promotion approaches and investigate a campaign. They consider the roles of a range of organisations responsible for health and well-being. Students recognise the impact of discrimination on health and well-being and the importance of anti-discriminatory practice in health, social care and early years settings.

Assessment for this unit consists of a two hour written examination that requires both short and extended responses.

A2 Course

Details of the units to be completed at A2 will be confirmed by the provider. Students must complete A2 3, in addition to two of the remaining units listed below:

Unit A2 1: Applied Research	Optional
Unit A2 2: Body Systems and Physiological Disorders	Optional
Unit A2 3: Providing Services	Compulsory
Unit A2 4: Health Promotion	Optional
Unit A2 5: Supporting the Family	Optional

How is the subject assessed?

AS Unit 1 – Internal Assessment – 25% of AS – 10% of A Level

AS Unit 2 – Internal Assessment – 25% of AS - 10% of A Level

AS Unit 3 – External written examination – 50% of AS – 20 % of A Level

A2 Unit 3 – External written examination – 30% of A Level

Two from Units A2 2, 3 4 or 5 – Internal Assessment - 15% each (30% of A Level)

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.ccea.org.uk or speak to Mrs Blayney/Mrs Michael.

HISTORY

At A Level, students will, through the study of British, Irish, European and World history:

- develop their interest in and enthusiasm for history;
- understand its value and significance for today's society;
- build on their understanding of the past;
- improve as effective and independent learners.

A range of skills targeted include:

- the ability to ask relevant and significant questions about the past;
- to carry out research and evaluate conclusions;
- argue a case and reach substantiated judgements;
- to organise and communicate historical understanding in an efficient and convincing way.

Specification Overview

The subject content is delivered in four units - two for AS qualification and two for A2. Students should complete the four units for the full A Level.

The AS course provides an opportunity to broaden students' learning and encourages them to become reflective thinkers who have the ability to understand historical events from different perspectives. A2 students will extend their learning by evaluating evidence in greater depth and range. They will also have the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the A22 specification by partaking in a co-curricular trip to Dublin.

AS Course

AS 1: Historical Investigations and Interpretations

OPTION 5: GERMANY 1919-1945

1. The Weimar Republic 1919-1929;
2. The decline of the Weimar Republic 1929-1933 and the rise of the Nazis;
3. Developments in Nazi Germany 1933-1939;
4. The impact of the war on Nazi Germany and the occupied territories in Eastern Europe 1939-1945.

The initial focus of this module is on the Weimar Republic from 1919 to 1933, including an analysis of the factors involved in the decline of the Weimar Republic and the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party from 1929 to 1933. Students examine the political, economic and social developments during the Third Reich until 1939. The consequences of the Second World War are explored in relation to both Nazi Germany and the occupied territories in Eastern Europe by 1945.

AS 2: Conflict and Change in Europe

OPTION 6: Italy's Quest for Great Power Status, 1871-1943:

1. Italy's Quest for Great Power Status, 1871-1914;
2. The First World War and Peace Settlement, 1914-19;
3. The Rise and Consolidation of Fascism, 1919-26.
4. Mussolini's Foreign Policy, 1922-43

In this option, students focus on Italy's relations with the wider world during a turbulent period in its history. They analyse how, between 1871 and 1922, a succession of Liberal governments used foreign policy to bolster Italy's claim to Great Power status and create a sense of shared identity for Italians. Students explore how the failure of this strategy helps to explain the rise of Mussolini after 1922. They also investigate how Mussolini's bolder, more radical approach helped to create a sense of shared identity but ended in catastrophe and his removal from power in 1943.

A2 Course
<p>A2 1: Change Over Time</p> <p><u>OPTION 4: The American Presidency 1901-2000</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An emerging international presence: Roosevelt and Wilson, 1901–20; 2. The passive presidents: Harding, Coolidge and Hoover, 1921–32; 3. The New Deal: FDR, the Great Depression and World War II, 1933–45; 4. The ‘Imperial Presidency’: Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, 1945–63; 5. The limits of presidential power: Johnson and Nixon, 1963–73; 6. Watergate: the presidency weakened – Nixon, Ford and Carter, 1972–80; 7. ‘Morning in America’: recovery under Reagan, Bush and Clinton, 1981–2000. <p>Through the study of this unit students explore the changing nature of the American presidency between 1901 and 2000, including how external events played a significant impact on various presidencies.</p> <p>A2 2: Historical Investigations and Interpretations</p> <p><u>OPTION 4: Partition of Ireland 1900-1925</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The crisis over the Third Home Rule Bill: 1900-1914; 2. Political developments: 1914-1918; 3. Political developments: 1919-23; 4. Northern Ireland: 1921-25. <p>In this option, students focus on how Ireland was partitioned in the early years of the twentieth century. Students analyse the key developments in unionism and nationalism in Ireland and the role of British governments and political parties in this period.</p>
How is the subject assessed?
<p>CCEA</p> <p>AS1: 1 hour 30 minutes external examination paper. Use of source material and contextual knowledge. 50% of AS [20% of A Level].</p> <p>AS2: 1 hour 30 minutes external examination paper. Choice of questions for brief and extended writing tasks. 50% of AS [20% of A Level].</p> <p>A2 1: 1 hour external examination paper. 1 essay question [20% of A Level].</p> <p>A2 2: 2 hour 30 minutes external examination paper. 3 questions which include the analysis of sources and one essay question. [40% of A Level].</p>
Where can I get more information?
<p>Further information can be found at:</p> <p>https://successatschool.org/advisedetails/210/Why-Study-History%3F</p> <p>http://www.ccea.org.uk/history/</p> <p>http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/courses/history/7-reasons-to-study-history/</p> <p>http://strathearn.org.uk/studying/history.php</p> <p>Or speak to Miss Carson (HOD) in L9.</p>

MATHEMATICS

The programme of study for GCE Mathematics builds on work completed in Form 5 **Further** Maths GCSE. Only pupils who have studied GCSE Further Mathematics are suited to this course. Occasionally pupils who have achieved an A grade in GCSE Mathematics via M4/M8 with very strong Algebra skills may also wish to consider this as an option. **You must make an appointment to speak to your Maths teacher if you are considering A level Maths without having completed GCSE Further Maths. Also note neither M3/M7 nor M4/M7 are suitable foundations for A level study.**

This programme provides an excellent foundation for further study of many degrees with mathematical content. It is a varied and interesting course for those pupils who love Maths and who enjoy challenge!

AS Course (Revised Specification)
<p>Pure 1: has a strong emphasis on Algebra skills. Topics include indices, surds, quadratic functions and their graphs, solution of quadratic equations and inequations, polynomials, the Factor and Remainder theorems, curve sketching, graph transformations, co-ordinate geometry and the straight line, and the calculus topic of differentiation and its application to gradients, tangents, normals, maxima and minima, co-ordinate geometry and the circle, sequences including arithmetic and geometric series, trigonometry including sine and cosine rules, radian measure, simple trig identities and trig equations, the laws of logarithms and log equations, the calculus topic of integration and its application to area under a curve and vectors</p> <p>Mechanics A: topics are kinematics – displacement, velocity and acceleration, s-t and v-t graphs, equations of uniform motion, forces, friction, Newton’s Laws</p> <p>Statistics B: Sampling, Critiquing sampling methods, Locations and dispersion of data, Probability and Relative Frequency, Probability Functions, Discrete and continuous probability distributions, Uniform, Normal and Poisson Distributions</p>
A2 Course (Revised Specification)
<p>Pure 1: Algebra fractions and algebraic division, partial fractions, the modulus function, combinations of graph transformations, parametric equations of curves, binomial series, further trig functions, their graphs and identities, the functions e^x and $\ln x$, exponential growth and decay, further differentiation of trig functions and e^x and $\ln x$, product and quotient rules, the chain rule, further integration, approximate solution of equations, further trig graphs, double angle formulae, parametric and implicit differentiation, differential equations, integration - using substitution, parts or partial fractions - , volume of revolution, vector theory.</p> <p>Mechanics A: Variable acceleration in a straight line, projectiles, moments, impulse and momentum</p> <p>Statistics B: Probability including conditional probability and Venn diagrams, Statistical distribution and Statistical Hypothesis testing</p>
What exams will I take?
<p>Strathearn follow CCEA: AS Pure (1 hour 45mins); AS Mech and Stats (1 hour 15 mins); A2 Pure (2hours 30 mins); A2 Mech and Stats (1 hour 30 mins)</p>
Where can I get more information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maths teacher ▪ CCEA website

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

The GCE Further Maths course again provides challenge and extension for pupils with a greater level of mathematical ability and those likely to pursue a career involving high level Mathematics. Through the completion of this programme we aim to develop in our pupils a love and fascination for Mathematics. It is strongly recommended that pupils who wish to study GCE Further Mathematics have achieved the highest grades at both GCSE Maths and Further Maths.

What will I study?
In Lower 6 th pupils will complete AS and A2 courses as described above.
In Upper 6 th the revised specification for Further Mathematics will be covered: AS Pure : Further Algebra and functions, Matrices, Complex numbers and Vectors. AS Mechanics A : Hooke's LAW, Work and Energy, Power and Circular Motion AS Statistics C : Sampling, Probability, Statistical Distributions, Bivariate Distributions A2 Pure : Proof, Complex numbers, Further Calculus, Polar co-ordinates, Hyperbolic Functions, Differential Equations A2 Mechanics A : Simple Harmonic Motion, damped oscillations, Centre of Mass, Frameworks, Further Circular Motion A2 Mechanics B : Further Kinematics, Further Centre of Mass, Force Systems in 2 dimensions, Restitution
Coursework / Practical
There is no coursework or controlled assessment in GCE Further Mathematics.
What exams will I take?
Strathearn follow CCEA and each of the 6 modules contributes equally to the final grade. Modules are examined by a 1hr 30min paper where calculators are permitted
Where can I get more information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maths teacher▪ CCEA Website

MEDIA STUDIES

Specification Overview

Media Studies is an academic subject in which you will develop an understanding of the influential role played by the media in today's society. The subject will provide you with an enjoyable experience of a wide variety of media texts. You will also be shown how to think critically and work independently. In the coursework component, you will learn skills which will allow you to produce your own media texts.

A2 Course - Please note that this subject is a two year, linear course with no AS level or subsequent AS grade or examination.

Exams

In preparation for this exam you will learn how to analyse a wide range of media texts. You will be encouraged to widen your understanding of the media by referring to wider contexts (social, political, historical and economic) which affect media production, distribution and exhibition. You will have the opportunity to write about major contemporary media debates and issues.

Non-exam assessment (coursework)

This module will take you through the production process of a media text. You will research the codes and conventions of professionally produced media products and you will have the opportunity to create a media product of your own. This section requires you to produce two connected media texts.

How is the subject assessed?

The exam board AQA is responsible for the external assessment of this subject.

2 written exams: 2 hours each, 35% each.

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed coursework, 30% of the A Level.

Where can I get more information?

Dr McBride

MODERN LANGUAGES: French, Spanish & German

The A level specification aims to make language learning an enjoyable and intellectually stimulating experience, offering insights into the contemporary culture and the heritage of the relevant countries, and providing the confidence to communicate confidently in a foreign language, an essential skill in today's multilingual and global society. **Please note that AS/A2 German will be delivered in collaboration with Campbell College and so there may be restrictions on the number of places available on the course.**

Specification Overview

The Modern Language Department will be preparing students for CCEA examinations in French, Spanish and German. The study of an A level language will enable students to achieve oral and written proficiency in French, Spanish or German and will give them a cultural understanding of the countries where the language is spoken. The course is a basis for further study of languages at university but is also an excellent complement to other subjects and a respected academic discipline.

AS Course

You will have two teachers, one who will teach grammar, translation and literature text/film and another who will teach the topics outlined below for listening, reading and speaking. Students practise their oral skills in small groups with the Language Assistant for an additional two periods per week.

Contexts for Learning:

Relationships

Students have the opportunity to understand and explore these issues in the target language:

- different family structures;
- roles, responsibilities and relationships within families;
- challenges for families;
- intergenerational issues; and
- influences on young people, for example peers, family and friends.

Culture and Lifestyle

- physical well-being, for example diet or exercise;
- risk-taking behaviour, for example smoking, alcohol and drugs or extreme sports;
- dealing with stress and challenges, for example school or examinations;
- hobbies and interests, for example sport or music;
- the arts, film, fashion and design;
- social media and new technology;
- holidays, festivals and tourism.

A2 Course

Young People in Society

Students have the opportunity to understand and explore these issues in the target language:

- part-time jobs;
- education and employment;
- career planning – aspirations or intentions;
- young people and democracy;
- European citizenship – advantages, disadvantages and opportunities; and
- societal attitudes and young people

Our Place in a Changing World

- equality/inequality and discrimination/prejudice;
- poverty at home and abroad – causes, consequences and measures to combat it;
- immigration and emigration – causes, benefits and related issues;

- multicultural society and cultural identity – benefits and challenges;
- causes, consequences and resolution of conflict; and sustainable living and environmental issues.

Students will also study a set literary text at A2 level and either a cultural aspect, a historical period or a region for the oral exam.

How is the subject assessed?

AS 1: Speaking

Question 1: Students give a presentation based on an AS level theme related to an aspect of a country or a community where the target language is spoken. (3 minutes)

Question 2: Conversation (8 minutes) about yourself, home, family, hobbies, future hopes, plans and ambitions with a visiting examiner. Total time: 11 minutes

AS 2: Section A – Listening

Students answer two sets of questions based on two discrete passages recorded on disk.

Recording 1: Students answer in the target language.

Recording 2: Students answer in English. (40 minutes)

AS 2: Section B – Reading

Question 1: Students answer one set of questions in the target language based on one passage.

Question 2: Students translate a passage from the target language into English. (50 minutes)

AS 2: Section C – Use of Language

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4: Students complete a series of short grammatical and lexical exercises.

Question 5: Students translate short sentences from English into the target language. (30 minutes)

Total time: 2 hours

AS 3: Extended Writing

Students write one essay of at least 250 words in the target language in response to a set film or literary text. Total time: 1 hour

A2 1: Speaking

Question 1: Students summarise and discuss one individual research project based on either: a cultural aspect, a historical period or a region. (6 minutes)

Question 2: Conversation focussing on AS and A2 themes (9 minutes) with a visiting examiner. Total time: 15 minutes

A2 2: Section A – Listening

Students answer two sets of questions based on two passages recorded on disk.

Recording 1: Students answer in the target language.

Recording 2: Students answer in English. (45 minutes)

A2 2: Section B – Reading

Students answer two sets of questions based on two passages, a summary exercise and a translation.

Total time: 2 hours 45 minutes

A2 3: Section C – Extended Writing

Students write one essay of at least 300 words in the target language in response to a set literary text.

Total time: 1 hour

Where can I get more information?

If you are interested in Languages and communication and you enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life, then this course could be suitable for you. Improving your language skills at AS or A2 can increase opportunities in a number of careers such as Law, Accountancy, Banking, Marketing, Sales, Journalism, the Media, Tourism, PR, the Service Industry etc. A modern foreign language is a facilitating subject for many Russell Group universities. Many linguists combine a MFL with a STEM subject at university. Other linguists choose a beginners' language at university such as Mandarin, Arabic, Italian or Russian in combination with French, Spanish or German. A modern foreign language opens many doors and career pathways. Please speak to the HOD or your language teachers if you have any questions.

MOVING IMAGE ARTS

(Please note this subject will be offered through collaboration with Ashfield Boys' High School.)

The CCEA GCE Moving Image Arts specification is unique in the UK, giving students the opportunity to develop creative, technical and expressive skills as filmmakers and explore and analyse film styles and movements from around the world. Moving Image Arts offers the opportunity to attend film school in school! Areas of study encompass a variety of film styles, genres and movements helping to broaden your experience of audio-visual culture and to inform and inspire your own creative ideas. Moving Image Arts is an ideal choice for students interested in a career in the creative industries. This exciting subject fosters and encourages independence, originality and experimentation and develops critical and creative abilities in all of the key creative areas of film production, including writing, directing, editing, producing and production design. MIA provides an excellent foundation for career pathways into Film & Television, Animation, Game Design and other creative industries, all rapidly expanding areas within the Northern Ireland economy.

The course incorporates two key moving image art forms: **Film** (Live action narrative film); and **Animation** (Rostrum, stop motion and CGI animated narrative films).

Specification Overview

By studying Moving Image Arts you will :

- develop the creative skills of a director, cinematographer, screenwriter, production designer, editor and sound designer with full creative ownership of your own filmmaking process;
- develop knowledge and understanding of the role that moving image has in contemporary society and an awareness of what is involved in moving image production and consumption;
- explore a wide range of filmic styles, genres and movements, broadening your critical understanding and enjoyment of a rich history of film culture;
- learn how to experiment and innovate confidently with digital technologies, applying film language techniques skilfully and purposefully; and
- develop an impressive range of transferable skills for employment, including creativity, enterprise and initiative, teamwork and problem-solving, planning and managing schedules, equipment and human resources, providing leadership and creative direction and demonstrating strategic thinking.

GCE Moving Image Arts is made up of two levels: AS and A2.

The AS course is 40% of overall A level and A2 60% of the overall A level.

AS Course

AS1: Realist and Formalist Techniques and Classical Hollywood Style: Foundation Portfolio (60% of AS)

You will produce a **Foundation Portfolio** exploring the Classical Hollywood Style, Realism and/or Formalism, including:

- a statement of intention (including a synopsis and an evaluation);
- pre-production materials; and
- one 3–4 minute narrative film sequence (or 1½ – 2 minute sequence if animated) produced in response to stimulus provided by CCEA.

The portfolio will be marked by teachers and moderated by CCEA.

AS 2: Critical Response (EXAM) 40% of AS

You will sit an **Online Examination (1 hour 30 minutes)** requiring shorter recall and longer analytical answers in response to unseen film clips taken from the set study areas.

A2 Course

A2 1: Creative Production and Research: Advanced Portfolio (60% of A2)

You will produce an **Advanced Portfolio** exploring your own original creative idea and researching the techniques of a chosen film practitioner, including:

- an illustrated essay (including a synopsis and evaluation);
- pre-production materials; and
- one complete 4–7 minute narrative film (or 2–3½ minute film if animated).

A2 2: A2 2 Advanced Critical Response (EXAM) (40% of A2)

You will sit an **Online Examination (2 hours 15 minutes)** requiring analytical answers in response to unseen film clips taken from the set study areas. You will also draft director's notes in response to an unseen script stimulus.

Where can I get more information?

Miss Whitla (Art Department)

MUSIC

Music at Advanced Level involves the development of a wide and interesting range of skills such as communication, self-management, problem-solving, performing under pressure, critical thinking, creativity and IT skills, which are essential for further musical study and highly transferable to other areas of learning. The course builds on the practical and analytical techniques used at GCSE level and also introduces more extended writing and score reading skills.

Specification Overview

At both AS and A2, students compose, perform, develop their aural perception skills and study music history topics.

AS Course

- **Composing:** specific skills are developed at the start of the year before students create a final coursework project.
- **Performing:** it is essential that students are continuing instrumental or vocal lessons and practising regularly for this element. It is not possible to undertake this component without specialised tuition for the candidate. Grade 6 is the standard required in order for full marks to be possible in the assessment, although Grades 4 and 5 are also acceptable.
- **Aural perception:** general listening skills are developed and a number of set pieces are studied in greater detail.
- **Areas of study:** three topics (orchestral music from 1700 to 1900, musicals and sacred vocal music) are studied in depth. Analysis of written scores is an important new skill.

A2 Course

- **Composing:** skills continue to develop, with a particular emphasis on harmonic techniques. Again, a final coursework project is undertaken.
- **Performing:** lessons and practice must continue in the A2 year. Grade 7 is the required standard for full marks, although Grades 5 and 6 are also acceptable.
- **Aural perception:** again, general skills are developed and a number of new pieces are studied.
- **Areas of study:** the topics for in-depth study are orchestral music in the twentieth century, the mass and secular vocal music. Analysis of written scores continues at a higher level.

How is the subject assessed?

The Music Department currently uses the CCEA specification.

The course is assessed as follows at both AS and A2 levels:

- **Composing:** a coursework project is submitted in March.
- **Performing:** a solo performance is assessed by a visiting external examiner; an assessed discussion is included in this element.
- **Aural perception:** this is assessed in a listening examination.
- **Areas of study:** this is assessed in a written examination which includes score-reading questions and extended writing.

Where can I get more information?

Please contact Ms Kimber for further information.

NUTRITION & FOOD SCIENCE

Specification Overview

Nutrition and Food Science are high in the public's perception and there could not be a better time to develop knowledge and understanding of this subject, given the current global and national food issues. Each day, food choices affect health – how people feel today, tomorrow and in the future. Good nutrition is an important part of leading a healthy lifestyle and can help to reduce the risk of chronic illness and promote overall health.

Nutrition is a fast-moving discipline that focuses on understanding the role of diet in maintaining a healthy human body and preventing disease.

There are many career opportunities within this field of work as scientific knowledge and research develops. The subject can open up a range of possibilities in the world of work, both at home and worldwide, with opportunities for further and higher education.

AS Course

In the AS units, students will explore:

Unit AS 1: Principles of Nutrition

This unit requires the study of macronutrients and micronutrients and other dietary constituents. Nutritional requirements and current dietary recommendations across the life span are also studied.

Unit AS 2: Diet, Lifestyle and Health

This unit requires the study of current research in relation to diet, lifestyle and health. Students will have the opportunity to explore dietary-related disorders and how they impact on health.

A2 Course

Students who continue to A2 will study:

Unit A2 1 Option 1: Food Security and Sustainability

This unit requires the study of consumer behaviour in relation to food purchasing decisions. Students will develop a critical appreciation of the issues affecting our food supply, how they impact upon the environment, and the ethical implications of their choices.

Unit A2 2: Research Project

For this unit all students will select an area of personal interest to study for a research project. The report should not exceed 4000 words. The student should choose their research area from AS 1, AS 2 or A2 1. This will provide the opportunity to develop a wide range of transferable skills and capabilities relevant to higher education and the world of work such as critical and creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, designing a research tool, analytical skills and target-setting.

The project will require the student to:

- identify and discuss issues associated with their chosen research area;
- select and interpret appropriate and relevant information;
- analyse information and judge its relevance to their chosen research area;
- plan and conduct primary research;
- present and interpret findings from research they have undertaken;
- draw conclusions using reasoned arguments; and
- make recommendations for future study.

How is the subject assessed?

The examination board used is CCEA.

- There are four assessment units: three externally assessed and one internally assessed.
- Students will take a written exam in the following units:

AS 1: Principles of Nutrition – One written examination that includes both short answer and extended writing questions (1 hour 30mins)

AS 2: Diet, Lifestyle and Health - One written examination that includes both short answer and extended writing questions (1 hour 30mins)

A2 1: Option 1: Food Security and Sustainability or Option 2: Food Safety and Quality.

For either option – one written examination that includes both structured and extended writing questions (2 hours and 30mins).

Where can I get more information?

Additional information on Nutrition and Food Science provision at Strathearn can be obtained from Miss McMullan, Head of Department.

Further details on specification content are available from any teacher in the Home Economics Department and also on the CCEA website.

PHYSICS

By studying physics you will gain a better understanding of how the world works. The aim of A Level physics is to develop the student's interest in and enthusiasm for physics, including developing an interest in further study and careers in the subject. A good mathematical ability is necessary to succeed in this subject.

Specification Overview

AS Physics is comprised of 3 modules. AS 1: Forces, Energy and Electricity, AS 2: Waves, Photons and Astronomy, AS 3: Practical Techniques and Data Analysis.

A2 Physics comprises 3 modules. A2 1: Deformation of Solids, Thermal Physics, Circular Motion, Oscillations and Atomic and Nuclear Physics, A2 2: Fields, Capacitors and Particle Physics A2 3: Practical Techniques and Data Analysis.

AS Course

Module 1: This unit teaches students to deal with physical quantities and scalars and vectors, which are required in all branches of this subject. Students will build on their knowledge and understanding of Newtonian mechanics and electricity to explain many economic and social applications of physics.

Module 2: The ideas about waves in this topic provide vital links to the study of light and how defective vision is corrected. The section on photons introduces the quantum theory and the concept of wave-particle duality. A section on Astronomy is now included.

Module 3: In this unit students will acquire essential practical techniques, including planning, implementing, analysis, evaluation design and communication. Formal preparation for the practical examination begins here but there are many opportunities for practical work in modules 1 and 2. Our resources allow students to carry out many experiments individually.

A2 Course

Module 1: The work on circular motion and oscillations extends the mechanics foundation included in AS. Thermal physics connects the properties of gases to the basic principles of kinetic theory. The section on atomic and nuclear physics has important social and economic applications and leads to an introduction to particle physics.

Module 2: This is a fundamental area of physics which has numerous applications in everyday life. Students will study action-at-a-distance forces that arise between bodies that are separated from each other. An idea of the work carried out at CERN is studied.

Module 3: In this unit, students will build on the essential practical techniques that they acquired in AS module 3. Independent study is required to support the work carried out in the classroom. The pupils are provided with an A2 CCEA textbook to assist them with this.

How is the subject assessed?

Students are assessed by regular homework and tests. There is a mock examination for each module. CCEA assess each of the AS and A2 modules 1 and 2 in a written examination. Module 3 at AS and A2 is assessed in a practical examination and a Data Analysis examination. There is no coursework in A level physics. The A2 module examinations require knowledge of the AS specification.

Where can I get more information?

Dr. K. Ross (Head of Physics Department)

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

AS/A2 Religious Studies aims to encourage students to:

- develop higher order thinking skills, for example analysis, evaluation, independent learning, critical thinking and problem-solving;
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their learning;
- develop the ability to make responsible judgements on significant textual, theological, philosophical and moral issues;
- develop advanced study skills that help them prepare for third level education and the world of work.

Why Study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies encourages pupils to develop a wide range of skills and personal qualities including critical thinking, extended writing, empathy, enquiry and scholarly debate. Pupils who have studied Religious Studies at A-level have gone on to undertake a wide range of undergraduate courses including law, primary/secondary education, nursing, psychology and business management.

Specification Overview

Students will study 2 units at AS level and a further 2 units at A2 as follows:

AS Course

AS 4 – The Origins and Development of the Early Christian Church to AD 325

This unit explores the beginning, growth and development of the Christian Church in the first three centuries. Students will consider the reasons for the expansion of the Church within the Roman Empire, the causes and course of Roman persecution of the Church, the development of early Christian doctrine and practice and the influence of the Emperor Constantine. Students will engage with primary and secondary historical sources alongside contemporary scholarship.

AS 7: Foundations of Ethics with Special Reference to Issues in Medical Ethics

This unit explores the relationship between science, technology, and Christian ethics. Students will consider possible implications for society, marriage, and the family. In their study of life and death issues, students focus on the moral debates surrounding abortion and the ethics of assisted suicide and euthanasia. Students also explore the relationship between ethics and other aspects of human experience.

A2 Course

A2 4 – Themes in the Early Church and the Church Today

In this unit students will consider the challenge of heresy in the early Church period alongside the development of early Christian literature and Church government. Students will explore the relationship between religious faith and state authority, making consideration of historical and contemporary examples, including the role of religion in issues of reconciliation.

A2 7: Global Ethics

In this unit students learn about global rights, including the historical development of Christian and secular perspectives on human rights. These focus on sexual identity and gender-related issues. Students examine the nature and purpose of justice and punishment and the problems presented by contemporary warfare as global ethical issues. In the final theme on conscience, freedom and tolerance, students consider the notion of moral duty and the link between religion and morality.

How is the subject assessed?

The progress of students will be assessed by their teachers through regular essays.

At the end of each year of study (AS and A2) students will sit two written examinations (one on each of the units). These examinations will take the form of extended essay responses.

The examining board for this course of study is CCEA.

Where can I get more information?

Mr C Jellie (Head of Religious Studies)

Technology and Design

Specification Overview

This course appeals to students interested in engineering, design in general or product design and development in particular. In the course, students will study technology and design in a range of different contexts and scenarios, ranging from the home to community and business through to the world of industry. This course appeals to those who have an enquiring mind, a desire to solve problems and a sense of how the modern world deals with changing trends and demands.

AS Course

AS unit 1- Product Design and Systems and Control: In this unit you will learn about product design including materials and their processing. Within the area of systems and control you will also learn about electronic systems and their uses.

AS unit 2-Coursework: Product Development: In this unit you will investigate and analyse an existing product, re-design, manufacture, test and evaluate the product. You will produce a 3 dimensional model or prototype which represents the practical outcome of the product analysis and development. You will also produce a folio containing both written and graphical design thinking.

A2 Course

A2 1: Systems and Control: This unit is an in depth study of Systems and Control. You will have the opportunity to further the knowledge and understanding which you have gained in the electronic and microelectronic systems sections in AS unit1.

A2 2:Coursework: Product – System, Design and Manufacture: In this unit you will manufacture a technological product or system which provides a solution to an identified problem or need. You will also produce a folio containing both written and graphical information.

How is the subject assessed?

AS 1: Product Design and Systems and Control- Worth 50% of AS

Paper 1: Common Core (1 hour)

Paper 2: Electronic Systems (1 hour)

AS 2: Coursework: Product Development- Worth 50% of AS

Internally Assessed and externally moderated design portfolio and manufactured product.

A2 1: Systems and Control: Worth 50% of A2

Paper: Electronic and Microelectronic Systems (2 hours)

A2 2: Coursework: Product – System, Design and Manufacture: Worth 50% of A2

Internally Assessed and externally moderated design portfolio and manufactured product.

Where can I get more information?

Mr Atkinson or Miss Newburn

