



MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOLS

Girls' Sixth Form Prospectus 18/19



MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

With a consistent 100% pass rate at A Level and over two thirds of all grades at A* to B, our academic reputation is the best in the area.

A warm welcome

At Merchant Taylors' Girls' School, we aim to provide a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum, in a caring single sex environment. We hope to fulfil the aspirations of the students, teachers and parents using the best of modern technologies, together with traditional teaching methods. We encourage the development of knowledge, skills and confidence for the worlds of study, work and family, as well as within the wider social context. We know that girls leave MTGS as articulate, confident young women, whose achievements both in and outside school are recognised and valued. They leave equipped to go out into the world and make a difference.

A Sixth Form Education at MTGS brings together everything that is best about post 16 education. There is an extensive range of opportunities: academic, extra curricular and social.

We are fully committed to offering the experiences in all the areas that top universities look for: leadership, teamwork, work experience, personal skills and voluntary work.

Our school has earned a well deserved reputation for academic excellence. Much statistical analysis shows that girls perform best at Advanced Level in single sex girls' schools.

The high quality of teaching here is exacting, knowledgeable and personal; the warmth of student teacher relationships is not at the expense of academic rigour or challenge. The atmosphere in classrooms is calm, friendly and disciplined. Academically, you will be encouraged to stretch yourself, whilst having the chance to develop and excel in many other ways.

Selecting MTGS to take your education forward is a wise choice.

I very much look forward to welcoming you to the learning community of Sixth Form students.

Mrs Louise Robinson
Headmistress MTGS



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Life in the Sixth Form

The Sixth Form provides students with an unmatched opportunity to gain and to give a great deal.

Not only will they rise to the challenges of advanced academic study, but through the duties and responsibilities expected of them, they will play, for the first time, a real and stimulating part in running the school.

In addition, the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered at this stage will enable girls to develop those essential personal and social skills that, together with high academic achievement, will give them an advantage over their contemporaries when they apply to, and enter, Higher Education.

It is a unique benefit of belonging to a traditional single-sex Sixth Form.

The Sixth Form centre

Students have access to their own Sixth Form Centre which has a range of facilities:

Common Room which includes:

- Comfortable seating.
- Kitchen equipped with microwaves, fridges and kettles
- Cafe style eating area.
- Large scale fixed projector screen with a high quality audio system.
- WiFi connection.

Sixth Form computer suite and study rooms with individual study cubicles.

Students also have access to the Ian Robinson Sports Centre.

Leadership

In addition to the wide and varied programme of extra-curricular provision in the School from which the students have already benefited, as Sixth Formers, they will revel in the opportunity to become even more involved in the daily life of the School by taking on leadership roles.

The range of transferable and employability skills that the students develop from leadership roles gives them the competitive edge at university and makes them highly marketable in the world of work.

Through a well-established democratic process, students can become part of the leadership team of the School that includes the Head Girl team, the Sports Captains and House Captains.

The Sixth Form Committees also provide students with a chance to take on other leadership roles by becoming a member or even a Chairperson of one of the following committees:

- Charities
- Debating
- Form Assistants
- Functions
- International
- Library
- Listening Service
- Magazine Service
- Music
- Snack Shack
- Marketing

Students are also given the valuable opportunity to become Youth Leaders by helping run the Youth Club which is for the younger members of the Merchant Taylors' Schools.

Enrichment

Students are given the opportunity to participate in a range of enrichment and volunteering activities that take place on a Wednesday afternoon. They include:

Community Service Programme – students really enjoy taking an active role in the local community in primary schools, charity shops, care homes, hospitals and charitable organisations. Not only are they helping others, they are also developing a range of skills and experiences which helps their personal development. Students can also complete the Lions Award and gain awards for 50 hours (Silver Seal) and 100 hours (Gold Seal) of voluntary service.

In Upper Sixth students can choose to continue with their Community Service placements or participate in an in-house enrichment programme, which includes the following elements:

- Mandarin – an Introduction to the Mandarin language and an opportunity to explore Chinese culture.
- Health and First Aid – this course covers staying safe, basic first aid and health issues relevant to young people.
- Sport and Recreation – girls can take part in a range of bespoke sporting activities and gain a leadership qualification.
- Cooking on a Budget - students prepare for life at university by learning how to cook healthy, low-cost meals.

CONTACT: Mrs L Syms -
l.syms@merchanttaylor.com



Pastoral



The transition from Year 11 to Sixth Form is carefully managed. With greater emphasis on independent learning, self-discipline and self-motivation, students in the Sixth Form receive a great deal of individual support from personal tutors and the pastoral team.

Each student is placed in a tutor group of about twelve students and it is through the tutor's daily contact that pastoral care is delivered in the first instance. The tutor will normally be the first person to whom a student will turn to for help and support. They also have access to a named pastoral team that they can turn to for help and guidance in solving issues and concerns. Every student feels valued and knows that any concern is dealt with the utmost sensitivity and professionalism by the pastoral team.

In the Lower Sixth, students participate in a PSHE programme that helps them to become effective independent learners, hone their time management skills and develop strategies to cope with stress. Tutor time in the Upper Sixth is not only devoted to university applications but developing the life skills to equip the students for Higher Education and beyond.

CONTACT: Mr F Lawell, Head of Sixth Form - f.lawell@merchanttaylor.com

Sixth Form Dress Code

Our sixth form dress code encourages a professional approach to study.

- Black suit or trouser suit.
- Hip length jacket, black buttons – no coloured external stitching.
- Flared / bootleg trousers - not too baggy or with turn ups.
- Straight, knee length skirt.
- Plain material, cotton / polyester – not denim, leather, linen, corduroy, or lightweight fabric.
- No waistcoats.
- Pale blue blouse or blue striped blouse.
- Black tights or natural coloured tights (not patterned).
- Black shoes with a sensible heel – no sling backs or backless shoes. Ankle boots may be worn with trousers.
- Black outdoor coat without fur or other trimmings – not to be worn around school.
- Scarf - not to be worn around school.
- Discreet jewellery - pierced ears only. No nose, eyebrow or tongue studs or multiple ear piercing.
- Natural hair colour / highlights.
- In winter a plain v-neck jumper may be worn in addition to suit jacket not instead of suit jacket.



Art and Design

Specification - AQA



If you have an interest or passion for art, fashion, film, television, animation, textiles, photography and design then choosing Art is something you should consider. Ideally you should achieve an A at GCSE level to be eligible to enrol but enthusiasm can be just as important. Universities and industries place increasing emphasis on students and employees being creative, imaginative and independent thinkers. You will explore and develop ideas using a wide range of materials and processes.

We teach AQA Art, Craft & Design and the new AS specification comprises of a portfolio of work (60% of the overall grade) and an externally set assignment which includes preparatory studies followed by a 10 hr supervised time element. Students who choose the A level option spend Year 12 developing their skills through an exciting series of workshops exploring a full range of media and processes. During Year 13, students undertake a practical, personal investigation of a theme or art movement supported by written work. This is worth 60% of the A level award whilst the externally set assignment, which concludes with supervised time of 15 hours, is worth 40% of the total grade.

During the course we visit different galleries and in recent years have visited Berlin & Edinburgh. We also plan to visit some important exhibitions in London. Last December, students enjoyed a 3 day workshop with Patrick Wagner, Head of the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. This year, all of our A level pupils will take part in specialist photography and ceramic workshops with visiting artists and will meet with lecturers from our partnership with Liverpool School of Art and Hope University.

CONTACT: Mr M Gill -
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Biology

Specification - AQA



Biology is a very popular A Level choice which is taught by four subject specialists and offers a stimulating course that prepares students effectively for a wide range of university courses. These vary from Genetics, Microbiology and Biochemistry to the highly competitive courses such as Medicine, Dentistry, Biomedical Sciences, Pharmacy and Biological Sciences. In 2017, 26% of our A2 cohort progressed to study one of the latter, prestigious courses.

The Biology Department recommends GCSE grade A as a minimum requirement to begin the A Level course. A minimum grade of 7 in Chemistry and Mathematics GCSE would be a distinct advantage.

Those pupils who have followed the Trilogy Science route are also eligible for A Level study, provided they have obtained at least a grade 7 in both the Biology and Chemistry elements of the course. Both routes provide good continuity for the A Level course. Practical work takes place in three well-resourced laboratories and involves observation of biological material and fieldwork. The new, reformed A Level specification puts increased emphasis on compulsory class practicals, which will now be tested in a written paper, and integrated into lessons. There is also renewed emphasis on the importance of mathematical skills in Biology, and their use in analysing data. The latter now counts for 10% of the marks.

The Biology Department has always taken great pride in offering its A Level students increasingly important extra academic enrichment. Such activities include National Competitions, such as the Biology Olympiad (where our 2017 cohort were very successful, gaining two Bronze medals and many commendations) and the academic, debating challenges of Oxbridge and Harrison Group Scientific Studies

For last three years we have had several students awarded prestigious Nuffield Bursaries for Biology Study, and Scientific research will form the basis for the enrichment EPQ study of some A Level students.

The study of Biology at MTGS actively promotes many of the skills of analysis and self-reliance now expected to secure places at the most competitive Science Courses at the top Universities. The Biology Department feels many leading students flourish in their A Level study, promoting the Aims of the Department, namely to fulfil their academic potential while developing their natural curiosity in the living world.

CONTACT: Mrs J Johnson -
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Business

Specification - AQA



Business investigates the nature of organisations and how they manage their activities. These organisations can include small private firms and large public companies together with non-profit making concerns. The principles of management and decision making are examined and then applied to case studies. These case studies demonstrate the way in which organisations face a number of inter-related problems.

The Business specification offered by AQA requires no previous knowledge of GCSE Business and has been designed to provide students with a critical understanding of the internal functions of contemporary business organisations of all types together and the dynamic external environment within which businesses operate. The specification has been split into three units covering topics such as how established businesses might improve their effectiveness by making tactical decisions at a functional level. The main functional areas covered include; Finance, People in Business, Operations Management, Marketing and the Competitive Environment. The specification will enable students to gain a thorough grounding of what really matters in modern businesses and students are introduced to the challenges and issues involved in a business such as research and planning, as well as the factors that determine success. You will look at a range of moral and ethical issues and learn how to put your point of view across fluently.

Business Studies help to develop skills such as:

- Interpreting data
- Developing an analytical argument
- Making judgements based on available evidence.

These skills will help you in your other A Level subjects and at university. At the end of the course, students should have a good understanding of the skills needed for successful business management and will be familiar with problem solving techniques. This should enable you to understand the issues which are of current interest and importance to businesses in Britain. A Level Business gives a useful insight into the nature of management and can stimulate higher education study in related fields of Business Management and Economics. It can be linked with another subject to provide a wide range of alternatives, for example, marketing combined with a modern foreign language.

CONTACT: Mrs H Irwin -
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Chemistry

Specification - AQA



Chemistry is a demanding yet rewarding A Level course, taught by four subject specialists in three purpose-built laboratories. An A Level in Chemistry is essential for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and many other science-related courses and we recommend that at least an A grade in GCSE Chemistry is needed in order to embark on A Level study. Indeed, the transition to A Level can be a taxing one and the department introduces students to the Lower Sixth with a "pre A Level" course. This covers the major principles of the subject visited at GCSE, with a view towards ensuring a firm grounding prior to A Level studies.

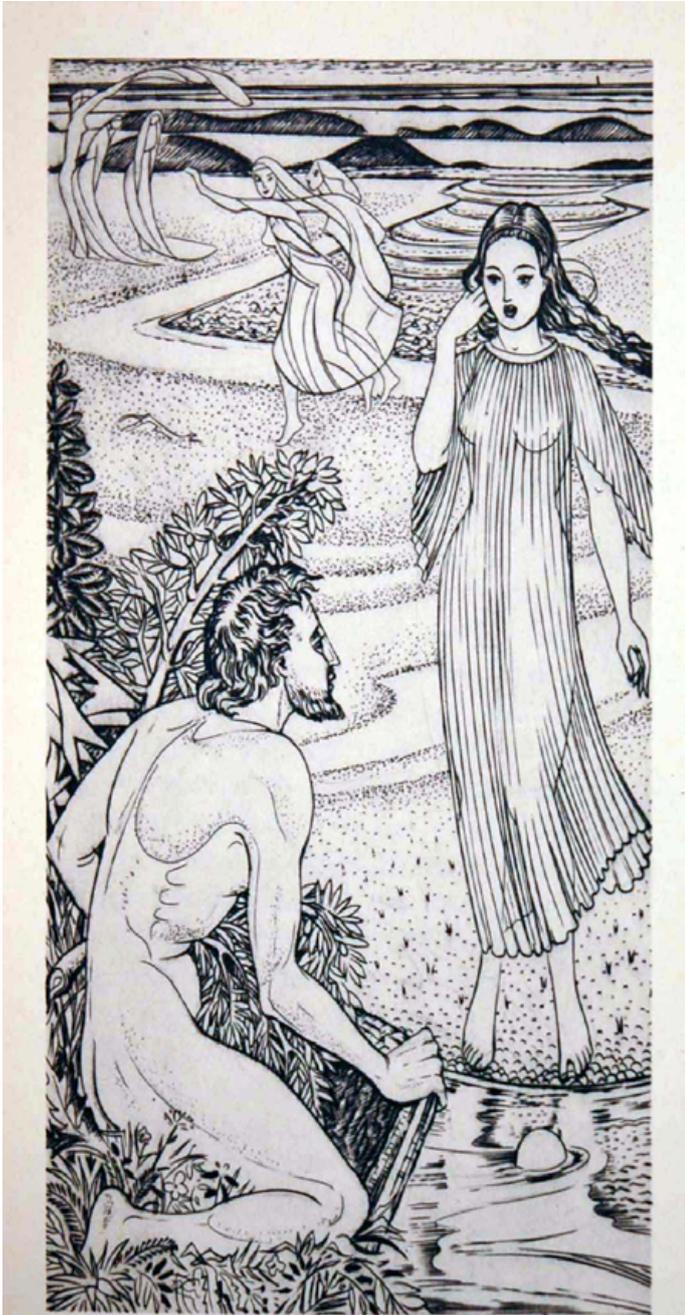
Having an innate interest in and active curiosity for the subject is a prerequisite to the study of Chemistry at A Level. The department provides a range of enrichment and extension activities to enhance the work covered in class, and to enable aspirational scientists to demonstrate the independence of thought required to access demanding courses at reputable universities. Events are organised through the Royal Society of Chemistry, including the Olympiad for students in the Upper Sixth and spectroscopy workshops run by Liverpool University.

The Chemistry A Level course encompasses three elements – Physical Chemistry (including Atomic Structure, Kinetics and Thermodynamics), Inorganic Chemistry (Group Chemistry and Transition Metals) and Organic Chemistry (including Alkanes, Alkenes and Alcohols). The structure of the course provides the opportunity for students to take the AS Level examinations at the end of the Lower Sixth. Practical tasks are performed alongside the subject content, the knowledge and application of which will be examined as part of the written papers at the end of the full A Level course. The department prides itself on its thorough approach to teaching, and aside from a rigorous practical schedule, bespoke notes and homework exercises, provides extra support sessions a week in which students have the opportunity to bring any issues that require clarification. In short, the course is carefully engineered to give students every chance to reach their potential; ultimately, however, success at A Level Chemistry relies heavily on the commitment of the individual student towards continual revision and a desire to meet challenging topics with intent.

CONTACT: Dr M McWatt -
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Classical Civilisation

Specification - OCR



The Greeks and The Romans played a vital part in the development of the language, thought and culture of modern Europe. Having an understanding of the Ancient World will help you make sense of the modern one. This course is ideal for anyone who enjoys challenging discussions and appreciates beauty – both visual and literary.

Stories represent the human desire to communicate ideas and beliefs to future generations. Even in today's increasingly technological world there is no communication more intense than a story with the power to stir an emotional response. Studying Classical Civilisation will allow you to explore, through some of the oldest extant literature and archaeological sources, the cultural pillars of Western society.

You will be exposed to myths, heroes and villains, gods and mortals:

How the hero Odysseus struggled to return home after the Trojan War, fighting his way through hideous monsters, and restore order to a community invaded by a lawless mob and save his besieged wife.

How love was viewed in ancient times, from the powerful and evocative poetry of Sappho (one of very few female voices to survive from the ancient world) to the fun and flirtation of budding romance in Ovid; how ethical questions raised by these ideas of love, desire, sex and sexuality continue to be wrestled over today.

How, after watching his city destroyed by rampaging Greeks, Aeneas flees the smouldering ruins and leads a band of refugees in a desperate search for a safe home while still haunted by the final image and words of his wife who was lost during the fall of Troy.

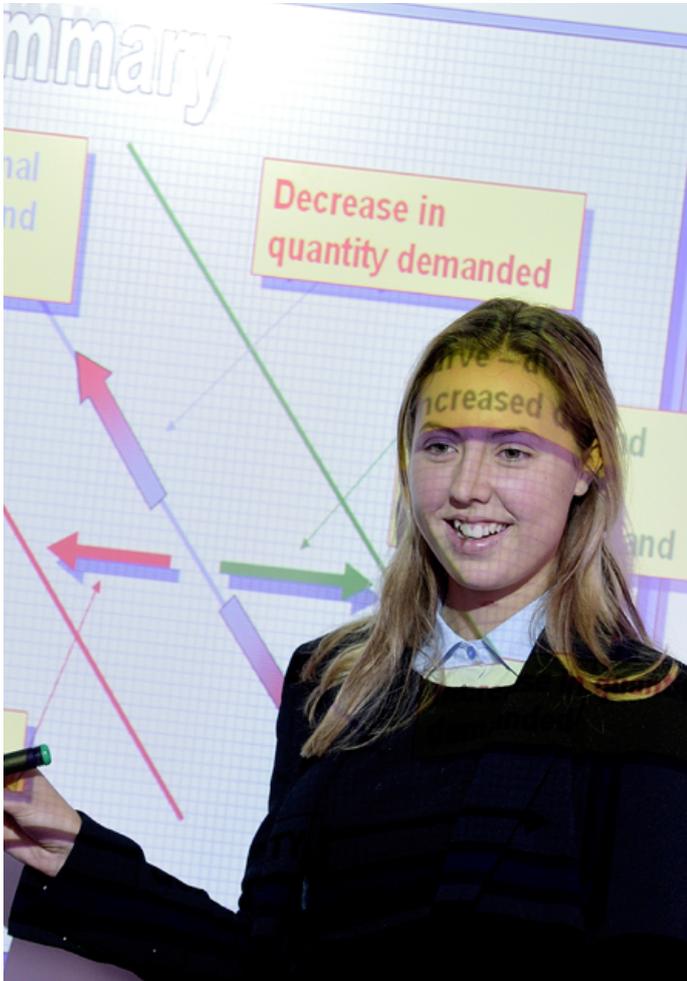
How the beautiful, awe-inspiring art of Ancient Greece (statues, vases and temples' sculpture) developed over time, reflecting the Greek's artistic, religious and societal values and ultimately came to influence our own concepts of art and beauty.

Trips to Italy, Greece, London, various museums and theatres are offered throughout the course. All topics are studied in English.

CONTACT: Miss J Johnson -
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Economics

Specification - AQA



There is no one universally accepted answer to the question "What is economics?" There are various definitions:

The Economist's Dictionary of Economics defines economics as "The study of the production, distribution and consumption of wealth in human society."

Wikipedia defines economics as: "Economics is a social science that studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses (Lionell Robbins, 1935). Economics is the study of the trade-offs involved when choosing between alternate sets of decisions."

Economics is the study of how individuals and groups make decisions with limited resources as to best satisfy their wants, needs, and desires. We hear daily of unemployment, inflation, interest rates, productivity and the balance of payments. The state of the economy affects our current and future standard of living and has come to dominate the media.

The study of Economics examines these issues, explains the way the economy works and provides the basis to forecast what is likely to happen to the economy in the future. Economics is the discipline that investigates how society can make efficient choices so that we can maximise our living standards.

Studying Economics will enable pupils to:

Develop an understanding of economic concepts and theories through a critical consideration of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life.
Analyse, explain and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the market economy and the role of government within it.

No prior knowledge of the subject is required. However: Economists need to be good at working with figures. They should enjoy looking at a page of numbers and working out what they mean. Mathematical and information technology skills are essential. Therefore, it is recommended that pupils have attained GCSE Mathematics at level 7 or above and are studying Mathematics at AS or A Level would be an advantage.

Economists need to be able to explain their ideas simply, in plain English, to non-specialists. They should not be swayed easily by the views of others and should be decisive, logical and be able to cope with pressure.

At the end of the course pupil may wish to continue studying Economics at University. Economics can be studied alone or combined with a wide range of other subjects such as a language, banking and finance, Mathematics, Politics and Philosophy.

CONTACT: Mrs H Irwin -
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English Literature

Specification - AQA



Specification A from AQA A Level English Literature at MTGS encourages students to explore the relationships between texts and the contexts within which they were written, received and understood. The course approaches the study of English Literature through passage-based questions, unseen material and set texts from all three genres. Students build on the skills and knowledge gained at GCSE and develop their approach to independent learning.

The course is divided into three sections:

- Love Through the Ages involving a study of three set texts, unseen poetry, a Shakespeare play and a three hour examination paper worth 40% of your grade.
- Texts in Shared Contexts involving three set texts and a two and a half hour examination paper, worth 40% of your grade, which includes an unseen extract question.
- Non Examination Assessment involving an Independent Critical Study of two texts and an extended essay worth 20% of your final grade.

The subject is designed to promote an enjoyment of English Literature and, as one would expect, will involve reading a wide range of poetry, plays and novels including 'Othello', 'Skirrid Hill' and 'The Great Gatsby'.

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Geography

Specification - AQA



Geography is an exciting, dynamic and challenging subject to study at A Level. The world we live in is rapidly changing, perhaps more so now than ever. Geography increases students' awareness and understanding of headline global issues and empowers them to consider how these issues can be tackled to enable sustainable futures. It can be combined with any other subjects – arts, sciences or languages – as it contains human, physical and environmental elements.

Students also further develop a wide range of skills throughout the AS and A Level courses, including literacy (essay and report writing), numeracy (including statistical analysis), data collection and data presentation, sense of place, understanding of values and attitudes, teamwork, problem solving, decision making, independent learning and use of information and communication technology.

Fieldwork, research and independent learning are very important aspects of the AS and A Level courses and students will undertake 4 days of fieldwork. This includes a residential fieldtrip to Blencathra Field Study Centre in the Lake District as well as field work investigations in the local area. There is also an optional bi-annual fieldtrip to Iceland in order to investigate coastal, glacial and volcanic landscapes.

Throughout Year 12 and 13, students also have the opportunity to attend lectures given by leading academics.

Many girls continue with Geography at university, either Russell group or Oxbridge and find a whole raft of careers available to them. Geography graduates are extremely employable as they have multiple skills.

CONTACT: Mrs C Mason -
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Government and Politics

Specification - AQA



Learning about Politics helps students to understand the world in which they live. Through a study of newspapers, textbooks, and news programmes, the course develops the students' political awareness. This gives them an insight into current issues and debates, such as the factors which influence voting behaviour, electoral reform and the influence of pressure groups and protest movements on the government. Students need to keep abreast of recent political developments such as the UK General Election and the Congressional Elections in the USA. This is what makes Politics an 'up to the minute' A Level. Politics can be combined with many A Level subjects. The connection between Arts and Humanities subjects is clear; the skills being developed are similar. However, science orientated students also benefit from being able to develop structured and analytical work. Many of our students go on to study Politics at university, often in combination with subjects such as Economics and History. Politics A Level is a good preparation for those wishing to pursue a career in Journalism, the Civil Service and Law. One of our ex-pupils has worked in the European Parliament in Brussels, but we have yet to produce our first MP.

For the student, Politics is a new subject, so no prior study of Politics is needed, although it is expected that students will have an interest in current affairs. It is taught by two subject specialists whose passion and enthusiasm for their particular areas of interest transfers to the girls. The department is very proud of its commitment to extra-curricular enrichment; Sixth Form girls are keen to pass on their enthusiasm to younger girls by leading the Debating Society to encourage lively discussion and development of opinions. They have the opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament and participate in workshops on the law-making process.

CONTACT: Mr G Evans -
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History

Specification - AQA



IG Challenge and transformation: Britain, c1851-1964

2N Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917-1953

3: Historical Investigation: This is a personal study based on a topic of student's choice. This should take the form of an essay of 3000-3500 words covering the context of approximately 100 years.

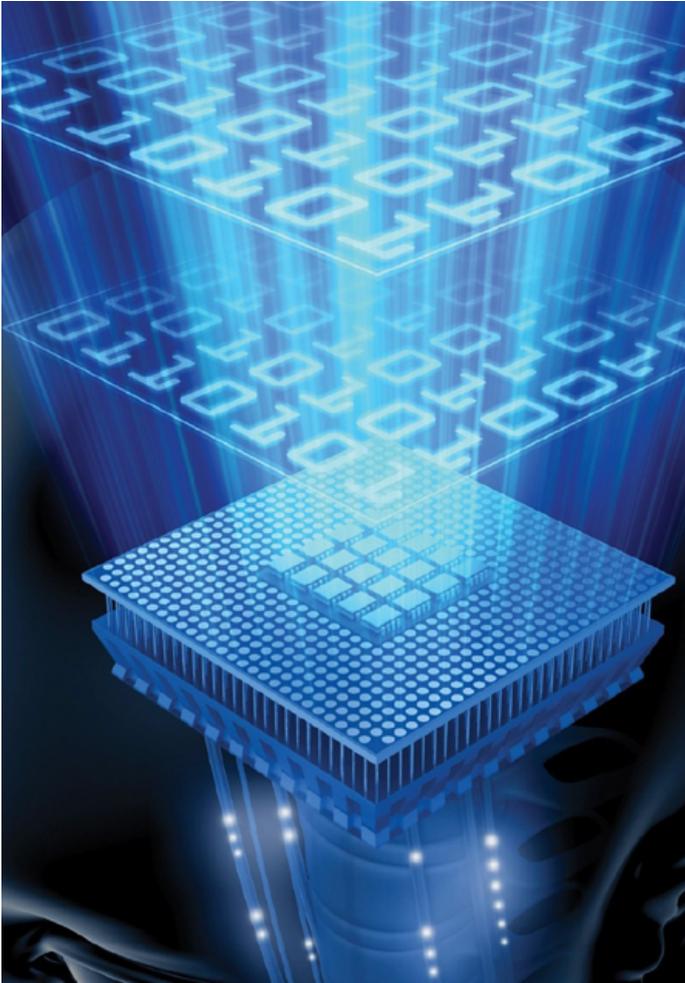
History is a thriving A Level subject at MTGS and the number of students moving from the A Level course to study History at university, either as a single subject or a combined degree, demonstrates the continuing popularity and academic desirability of the subject. The skills provided by History include the ability to select and organise information to put forward coherent arguments and to reach independent conclusions. These are central to Arts, Humanities and Science subjects at degree level. Employers also value the academic rigour and the resulting abilities in analysis and evaluation. History is taught by three subject specialists whose passion and enthusiasm for their particular areas of interest transfers to the girls. The department's aim is that all girls finishing their Sixth Form study have immersed themselves in a variety of historical periods in a number of countries and have the ability to evaluate the validity of differing historical interpretations and a good understanding of historiography.

The department is very proud of its commitment to extra-curricular enrichment; Sixth Form girls are keen to pass on their enthusiasm to younger girls by taking a lead in the History Club. They have the opportunity to attend conferences featuring eminent academics. In addition, promising historians are encouraged to enter, and are supported in, prize essay competitions often run by Oxbridge colleges, and many enjoy widening their experience of historical debates by attending the Debate Chamber, run annually by the University of London Union.

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Computer Science

Specification - OCR



Why Choose Computer Science?

Both the AS and A Level Computer Science qualifications will inspire and challenge students to apply the knowledge they gain with the creative and technical skills they acquire. Here are some of the key benefits of the new Computer Science specification:

- The new qualification will be focused on programming and will build on GCSE Computing and emphasise the importance of computational thinking as a discipline.
- There is an expanded maths focus, much of which will be embedded within the course.
- The ICT content of the new specifications is appropriate to a Computer Science qualification.
- The AS consists of two components, which will be externally assessed and weighted at 50% each.*
- The A Level consists of three components, two of which will be externally marked question papers making up 80% of the qualification.
- The other 20% is the coursework project with an emphasis on coding and programming with a simple assessment model and marking criteria.

*The AS will not have a coursework component.

What Will I Study?

AS Level

- Characteristics of contemporary systems architecture.
- Operating systems Software and software development.
- Introduction to programming Exchanging data. Databases, networks and web technologies Data types, representation and structures.
- Using Boolean algebra Legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues Computing-related laws.

A Level

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices. Components of a computer and their uses. Software and software development.
- Types of software and the methodologies used to develop them Exchanging data.
- How data is exchanged between different systems Data types, data structures and algorithms.
- How data is represented and stored in different structures and the use of different algorithms. Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues Laws surrounding the use and ethical issues that can arise from the use of computers.

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Latin

Specification - OCR



"Latin is a dead language! It's not spoken therefore there's no point learning it."

If you actually believe this statement then you need read no further.

However, this would be to fail to acknowledge the huge benefits provided by learning Latin. Firstly, Latin is difficult; it demands academic rigour and a sustained level of high quality thought. Secondly, the skills required to learn the underpinning grammatical concepts and produce a fluent and meaningful translation will gift to a Latinist the process of knowledge acquisition itself – once this is mastered then learning anything becomes easier. Thirdly, Latin provides you with the power of reaching a reasoned conclusion even when the terminology becomes dense (never be confused again by the complexity of a sentence): such high order thinking is vital in today's fast paced working world. And finally, but only for this tetracolon, Latin is fun! There is no other academic satisfaction equal to the eureka moment of solving the final piece of a difficult translation.

Throughout the A Level course you will continue to develop your language skills to a point where you will be able to tackle complex unseen passages with confidence and flair. This difficult skill takes time and dedication but, increasingly, you will notice how your mind becomes more attuned to using words with precision and pertinence (and all the positive effects this will have on your other studies). You will also read some of the words greatest literature in the original language (no more dependent on the nuanced translations of others, you will be able to hear the author's voice for yourself).

Imagine listening to the rhetoric of Cicero as he lambasts the Senatorial jury to side with his argument. Swoon when Catullus whispers to you of life's precious brevity and the need to find pleasure in human contact as a ward against despair. Blush as Ovid catches you unaware and fills your ears with words of such desire that the world melts away and you could quite forget that you are in a public place... or slap him down for his cheeky suggestions. React how you will to these and other Roman writers, just do not ignore them for as Cicero says "to know nothing of our past is to remain forever children", and if Cicero's words do not work then perhaps those of Catullus just might as he whispers: live with me, my darling, and let us love.....

CONTACT: Miss J Johnson -
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Modern Languages

Specification - AQA



The school offers French, German (providing numbers are sufficient) and Spanish at A Level. The department is based in four self-contained classrooms and one small conversation room. There are six subject specialists and girls will enjoy small class sizes and the support of native French, Spanish and German speakers for additional speaking lessons. There are also weekly grammar clinics to help girls improve their linguistic competence.

The study of a Modern Foreign Language extends naturally from the skills developed at GCSE and it is normally expected that girls wishing to study A Level will have achieved at least a level 7 at GCSE. The study of a Modern Foreign Language at A Level is highly valued by both Universities and employers alike.

Work for an advanced level language is wide and varied and is designed not only to develop skills in using the language but also to develop knowledge and understanding of the culture and issues concerning the country of the language being studied. Lessons will be conducted as far as possible in the target language and the skills of listening, reading speaking and writing will be constantly developed. Students will work with spoken and written materials from sources such as radio and TV programmes, articles from magazines, books and brochures. The department uses the latest online courses to deliver the syllabus and girls have the use of iPods in lessons and individual playback facility in assessments and examinations. The department encourages girls to use all forms of technology, eg the Internet to resource their topic work.

Girls are encouraged to visit the country relevant to their A Level studies and there will be opportunities to accompany one of the organised school visits such as the Paris trip. Over recent years many sixth form language students have undertaken work experience in France, Germany or Spain. Such ventures enable girls to gain invaluable skills for their A Level studies and have proved highly successful in the past and the department actively supports such schemes.

CONTACT: Mrs C Y Whalley -
y.whalley@merchanttaylors.com

Music

Specification - AQA



Students opting to study A Level Music in Merchant Taylors' Girls' School join a thriving department and have the opportunity to take part in the numerous extra-curricular activities as well as studying the subject academically.

A Level Music offers opportunities to develop both performance and composition skills. In the composition unit students will create music which draws on their own experience and enthusiasm. In their performances students can present solo and ensemble pieces. The course builds on the knowledge and skills gained from GCSE Music and through the compulsory Area of Study 'Western classical tradition 1650-1910' and two optional Areas of Study, students will develop a secure grounding in musical history and analysis. Theoretical and aural skills are a fundamental aspect of the course and provide excellent preparation for the study of music in higher education. Musicians from Merchant Taylors' Girls' School have gone on to study music at degree level at prestigious universities and music colleges.

The department has a number of practice rooms and peripatetic staff have their own rooms. The department also has a computer suite with a range of software, including Sibelius 7.

Students studying A Level Music are expected to take an active role in the department, not only attending rehearsals but also assisting whenever possible. The music committee run a series of lunchtime concerts, take assemblies and organise a variety of ensembles and A Level Music students would be expected to play an integral role in these activities.

In recent years, the MTGS Choir and Orchestra have gone on tour to Europe and students are always encouraged to take part. Furthermore, there are regular opportunities for performance, including the annual in-house Music Competition. *Crescendo!* is our Saturday Morning Music School and students can undertake work experience at the school, gaining invaluable experience in working with young musicians.

CONTACT: Mr S Newlove -
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Physical Education

Specification - OCR



A full A Level in Physical Education takes the candidates through a rigorous programme of academic study drawing upon elements of sports science, sports psychology and the sociological study of sport in society. Candidates should have an aptitude for the sciences and should have achieved a minimum of a B grade in their GCSE Science. It is also essential that aspiring A Level Physical Education students have an active commitment to competitive/high performance sport either in or out of school.

Currently students studying A Level Physical Education benefit from small class sizes with the use of the state of the art Ian Robinson Sports Centre, complete with its own teaching block. Currently there are staff delivering the course from both the Boys' and Girls' Schools whose areas of expertise dovetail effectively with the demands of the course.

30% of the final mark is gained from practical performance/coaching and Analysis and Evaluation of Performance For Improvement (EAPI) of a sport or activity from the approved DfE list, with the remaining 70% gained from examination papers examining the four theoretical components of:

Component One

The Physiological Factors Affecting Performance (including Anatomy and Physiology, Exercise Physiology and Biomechanics)

Component Two

Psychological and Socio-cultural Themes in PE (including Skill Acquisition and Sport Psychology)

Component Three

Socio-cultural and Contemporary Issues (including Sport, Society and Technological Influences)

Component Four

Performance within Physical Education (including Performance or Coaching Practical and the EAPI)

During the practical lessons our students will spend time on improving their effective performance and will also spend time on developing their ability to critically evaluate others in their chosen practical activity to prioritise for improvement. Students will be required to produce a long-term (2-3 months) development plan to improve the area of performance identified.

CONTACT: Mrs E Moore -
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Physics

Specification - AQA



Physics has no limits. It starts at the beginning of time and spans everything from sub-atomic particles to the farthest reaches of outer space.

Are you interested in understanding the technology that surrounds you – how it works and how to create ever-more-useful gadgets? Maybe safeguarding our energy supply while saving the planet strikes you as a worthwhile career aim. You might like to improve prosthetic limbs or replacement heart valves, or to develop better instruments and machines to care for the critically-ill or prematurely-born. Former Physics students have blazed indelible signatures across cityscapes by designing iconic structures like The Shard or The Orbit. Countless others were motivated by the opportunity to earn high salaries in finance, management and the law.

Every one of them would testify that studying Physics helped them way beyond the factual content of the course. Its analytical approach to problem-solving, its development of rational thinking skills and its emphasis on investigative and practical skills make Physics a universally-respected A Level for university entrance.

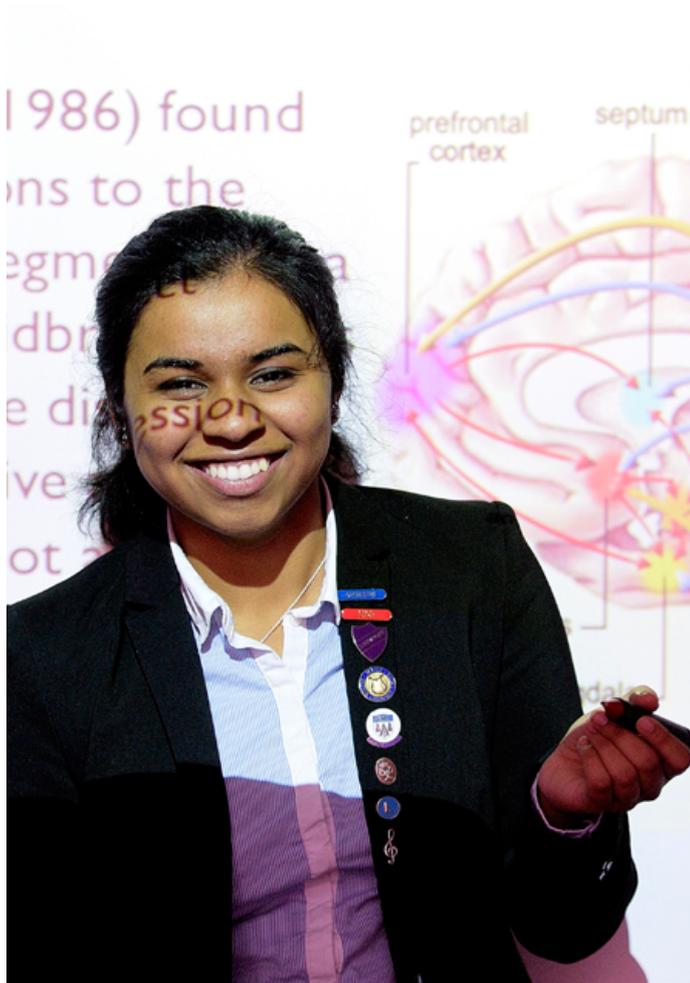
Historically the subject has attracted more male students than female, but the infinite challenges and possibilities facing humanity are much too exciting and far too important to leave to the boys. The opportunities on offer have never been greater. In recent years several of our students have been awarded prestigious Nuffield Research Placements at the end of their lower sixth year. Being part of the Liverpool Ogden Trust Partnership also means that girls who study Physics at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School have the unique opportunities to collaborate with students from nearby schools. Our strong extra-curricular programme focuses on engaging and encouraging our students in all aspects of Physics, whether medical, engineering or astronomy based. Recent activities have seen students attending lectures from leading scientists, trips to CERN, involvement in national competitions and even a trip to NASA, Texas. We encourage girls to take part in a range of activities to develop their skills and further their passion for Physics.

It is not necessary to study A Level Mathematics to achieve the highest grade in A Level Physics. We teach the required mathematical techniques as an Integral part of the course for all students, and also offer additional 'Mathematics for Science' lessons for anyone who needs any extra support. Regular Physics Clinics are run throughout the week at lunch times ensuring that all girls are given the opportunity to seek assistance and further develop their skills, allowing them to reach their true potential. Our entry requirement to study A Level Physics is a minimum of level 7 at GCSE Physics or Trilogy Science, and a minimum of level 7 at GCSE Mathematics.

CONTACT: Mrs J. Lynch -
j.lynch@merchanttaylor.com

Psychology

Specification - AQA



Psychology is a very popular A Level choice and taught by two dedicated teachers who demand the very best from all students studying this course. The Head of Department, Miss Ladbrook, is a Senior Examiner for Psychology (AQA Examination Board).

The department offers a stimulating and engaging theoretical course where students' active curiosity for this subject is developed in preparation for the wide variety of Psychology related courses at university. It is recommended that a GCSE grade of at least a Level 7 in both English and Mathematics is required in order to begin the A Level course. A wide range of enrichment and extension activities are undertaken in order to enhance the material studied in class and to enable aspiring psychologists the chance to develop their analytical thinking skills. An opportunity to attend conferences in the field of applied psychology are offered.

Course Content

Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology (Topics studied: Memory, Psychopathology and Social Influence).

Paper 2: Psychology In Context (Topics studied: Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology and Research Methods).

Paper 3: Issues and Options In Psychology (Topics studied: Gender, Schizophrenia, Forensic Psychology and Issues and Debates in Psychology).

To be an effective Psychology student, it is expected that wider reading and study beyond the specification is undertaken. The department prides itself on excellent examination results and the number of past students who have gone on to read this subject at university.

CONTACT: Miss S Ladbrook -
s.ladbrook@merchanttaylor.com

Religious Studies

Specification - OCR Advanced Level Religious Studies



Are you interested in developing your ability to reason and to argue logically? Are you considering a career in medicine, law, science or politics, where an understanding of ethics will be valuable? Are you interested in considering major philosophical questions such as whether there is proof that God exists? Do you think that you would enjoy considering religious thought? If so, then read on, as Religious Studies may be the course for you.

Religious Studies Advanced Level allows us to study three areas: Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics and Developments in Christian thought.

On the course, you will have the opportunity to discuss your ideas about some of the most exciting issues of our time, such as whether there is a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil and whether we have free will.

The specification is not designed to lead students to a particular religious commitment, but is an intellectually demanding and academic course which compliments both Science and Arts based Advanced Level subject choices. The course accommodates the needs of students who have not completed a GCSE in Religious Studies, whilst allowing others the opportunity to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills already gained.

To succeed in this subject you will need to be ready to do lots of thinking, arguing, reading and practice in essay writing. There are plenty of new concepts to challenge you and to help you to develop the skills universities and employers are looking for, such as the ability to express a reasoned opinion and to critically consider a variety of viewpoints.

CONTACT: Mr B Wilson -
b.wilson@merchanttaylors.com

Gifted and Talented

The Harrison Group

All sixth formers are invited to join the Harrison Group which provides a varied programme designed to offer a 'super-curriculum' exploring areas beyond A Level study.

Most students choose to opt in to this Gifted and Talented enrichment programme and take full advantage of the opportunities to engage with cutting-edge research and debate. This is valuable in order to broaden their experience of academic issues and current affairs and prepare them for continued academic study.

Activities include: Lunchtime Forums: these sessions combine a mini-lecture with a seminar-style discussion of the issues raised in order to give sixth formers a taste of university-style study.

Keynote Lectures take place on a termly basis and feature prominent academic and public speakers talking about their fields of experience and research. Topics have included areas as diverse as the 'Architecture of Liverpool' and 'The Controversial World of Stem Cells'.

Student Presentations: regular lunchtime slots are provided to 'open the floor' to members of the Upper Sixth to present on a subject of their choice, in order to prepare our students for the university interview process. Many girls take this opportunity to reflect on their own areas of further study and present their conclusions to their fellow students and staff... lively discussion usually follows!

The Harrison Dinner: members of the Harrison Group are invited to this formal celebration which is enjoyed by staff and students alike as a lovely occasion to mark their involvement in and contribution to the rich academic life of the school.

CONTACT: Mrs R Hames -
r.hames@merchanttaylor.com

Oxbridge

Students are guided and supported throughout the Sixth Form in their application to Oxford or Cambridge.

Initially within School, sessions focus on outlining what an Oxbridge application involves, the characteristics that Oxford and Cambridge look for in potential students and advice in order to prepare for an application. In the Spring Term, Lower Sixth students are then given the chance to attend the Oxbridge Regional Conference which is usually held at Haydock Park. This provides them with an excellent opportunity to hear from the Admissions Teams, tutors and current students at both universities and gain advice on course choice and the wider application process. In the Summer Term it is usual for there to be a group trip to either Oxford or Cambridge University Open Day is organised to allow students to get a feel for the institutions themselves.

Once a student has made the decision to apply at the start of the Upper Sixth, then support becomes more individually tailored and subject mentors guide students in extending their subject knowledge, preparing for entrance tests and interviews.

The annual Oxbridge Symposium which is a joint venture with the Boys' School, is an important opportunity for applicants to gain experience of discussing their subject in an academic setting, both exploring and defending their ideas: valuable experience when it comes to the rigorous interview process.

CONTACT: Mrs S Heywood -
s.heywood@merchanttaylor.com



University Applications

At MTGS we place great emphasis on helping and supporting students so that they can make the best decisions for themselves regarding higher education choices. For this reason we provide a structured programme of preparation and support for application to university through UCAS, which administers all UK Higher Education applications. During the Lower Sixth year dedicated sessions, as part of the PSHE programme, offer detailed guidance on researching and choosing courses so that students can make informed decisions about their future. For those who choose to study at international universities the same level of assistance is provided throughout what can seem a daunting process. Throughout Lower and Upper Sixth UCAS clinics offer individuals the chance to discuss any aspect of application for degree level study and they are encouraged to talk through their plans from an early stage in their A Level studies.

All students complete a detailed questionnaire, administered by Cambridge Occupational Analysts, in order that interests and academic strengths can be identified, encouraging them to become aware of and consider a wide range of degree courses, often beyond their A Level subjects.

During the Spring and Summer terms each Lower Sixth student may be invited to a guidance interview with our UCAS Director or Career Advisor in order that individually tailored support and advice can be offered; undertaking recommended work or voluntary experience and research in addition to attending relevant courses or other events, can make all the difference when making applications to the most competitive institutions, such as those belonging to the Russell group of universities, as many of our students do. Those girls who wish to consider

Sport and Drama

Sport

Our Sixth Form girls have a range of competitive and recreational sporting opportunities to take part in alongside their academic studies.

In addition to access to the impressive facilities at the Ian Robinson Sports Centre, once trained on how to use the machines in the fitness suite, the girls are able to use these in their free time.

Our sixth form have the opportunity to take part in hockey, netball, swimming, cross country, badminton, gymnastics, football, tennis and athletics. There are opportunities to play and also to coach our younger players in these sports. The PE Department also offers opportunities for Sixth Form girls to join trips to sports events and dance performances in addition to conferences such as the GSA Girls Go Gold conferences which take place each year.

Our focus is to encourage our sixth form girls to maintain their involvement in an active lifestyle and to gain a sense of achievement through their participation in sport. We also enable our senior girls to take on further leadership roles as individual Captains of Sport in hockey, netball, rowing, swimming, cross country, athletics and tennis. This is in addition to their potential role as the School Games Captain or Vice Games Captain.

CONTACT: Mrs E Moore -
e.moore@merchanttaylors.com

options other than university are referred to experts within the Careers Department where bespoke advice is given about career routes.

The final weeks of Lower Sixth include a visit to the Merseyside Higher Education Conference, where there is an opportunity to discuss courses with representatives from a wide range of universities. We then hold an information evening for parents and an intensive preparation period follows, with students working closely with form tutors preparing personal statements, a vitally important element of their application.

Support continues throughout the application process in Upper Sixth, with completion of applications, interview preparation and practice as well as a mentoring programme to meet the specific needs of applicants to Oxford and Cambridge. Our aim is to ensure that each student makes the right decision about her future direction and is well-equipped to pursue it.

CONTACT: Mrs V Copley -
v.copley@merchanttaylors.com



Drama

There is a long established and vibrant involvement by girls in Drama as an extra curricular activity. Each year, over one hundred girls participate in the Joint Schools' productions at the two senior schools. In addition to acting, dancing and singing, girls take responsibility for stage management, lighting and sound operation, prop making, make up and front of house duties. There is a thriving Costume Club where girls of all ages make the costumes for the Girls' School productions, developing their skills year on year, with sixth form helping to supervise and teach the younger girls.

Theatre visits to local and national theatre venues, organised for examination classes, are also available to girls outside the department and have been enjoyable social occasions. We also run a biennial week long cultural visit to New York with a focus on drama activities, but also encompassing visits to galleries and places of cultural and historical interest.

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s.tickle@merchanttaylors.com

Extended Project Qualification



The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) provides students with a valuable opportunity to experience university-style study as they develop their research skills and expand their knowledge beyond the A-level syllabus. Students are required to work independently to research a topic of their choice and produce a final report. Their independent study is supported through a series of taught sessions covering the skills they will need to successfully complete their project including; planning and objective setting, critical analysis, report writing, primary research and presentation skills. Each student is also assigned to a supervisor who acts as a mentor during the project. Completing an EPQ demonstrates a students' dedication to independent learning and the transferable research skills they develop are valued by higher education institutions. An EPQ is worth half an A-level (28 UCAS points) so can be used to earn extra UCAS points and an increasing number of universities are including the EPQ in their offers to students.

CONTACT:
MsW M Hutchins -
m.hutchins@merchanttaylors.com

Careers



We encourage our students to think for themselves and make informed decisions. To help them in this we provide a continuous, structured programme of careers guidance. Close relationship between staff and students ensure that careers advice is based upon a real understanding of each student's abilities and aspirations.

A Head of Careers is responsible for the careers education in the School. All students are encouraged to use the excellent careers resource at www.merchanttaylors.com/careers which can be accessed from home as well as School and visit the well-stocked Careers Room.

All students in the Lower Sixth complete the Centigrade Higher Education questionnaire which identifies possible career paths. They are encouraged to attend Open Days at Higher Education establishments, 'taster courses', the Liverpool University Higher Education Convention and the Joint Schools Careers Fair.

Students can attend Careers Working Lunches in School where they meet representatives from a range of careers in business, public relations, industry, law, the Arts and Sciences. To enhance their employability skills they attend a Networking Breakfast Event at School and participate in an Employability Skills Day when they return from AS examinations in June of Lower Sixth.

Students are also encouraged to carry out work experience in the Sixth Form and are given access to a vast number of contacts in a range of placements that we have built up over many years. Work experience helps students make informed decisions about career paths and provides a firm foundation to build upon at undergraduate level and beyond.

CONTACT: Mrs V Mee -
v.mee@merchanttaylors.com

Recent A Level Results

This table shows the cumulative percentages of A Level grades attained by the girls who left school in the last three years in comparison with Ofqual's national average statistics.

Grade	MTGS (3 Year Average)	National (3 Year Average)
A*	13.7%	8.2%
A	46.3%	26%
B	74.1%	52.9%
C	89.1%	77.4%
D	96.4%	92%
E	100.0%	98%

Academic

Students are encouraged from the beginning of Lower Sixth to fulfil their academic potential. They are given the tools to do this by attending an Induction Programme at the start of term. Here they are informed of how to achieve high A Level grades and to identify their preferred learning style so that their time in the classroom and during independent study is highly productive and is used to maximise progress.

Students are taught by highly qualified subject specialists in a teaching environment that encourages independent thought and discussion. Enrichment programmes are available so students are continually stretched and intellectually challenged. Equally, academic support is always available in subject clinics to solve any difficulties. The learning environment at Merchants is one where every girl wants to succeed.

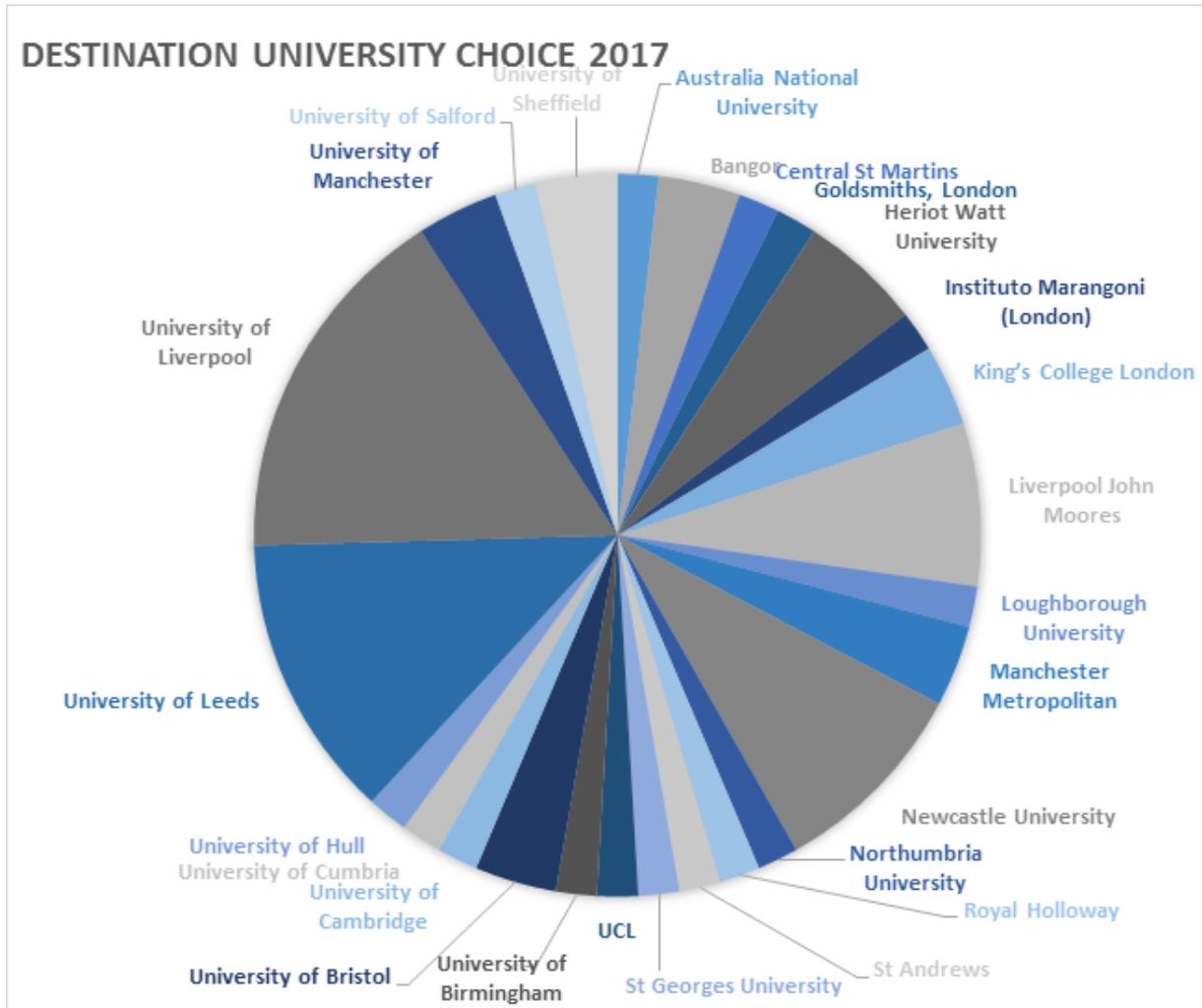
The progress of each student is monitored very carefully by a target setting process, assessments, examinations, reports and parents' evenings. We place a high priority on keeping parents fully informed about their daughter's progress.

Sample Pattern of Annual Assessment & Reporting

Lower Sixth	Assessment Points	Information to Parents
September		L6 Information Evening
November	Assessment Week	Joint Careers Fair
		Grade Cards
December		Parents' Evening
March		Lower Sixth Reports
May	Mock Exam Week	Grade Cards
May/June	AS Examinations	Grade Cards and Reports
Upper Sixth	Assessment Points	Information to Parents
September		
November	Assessment Week	Grade Cards
December		Parents' Evening
February	Mock Examination Week	
March		Grade Cards
		Upper Sixth Reports
May/June	A Level Examinations	

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Leavers' Destinations 2016



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