



# Girls' Sixth Form Prospectus

[merchanttaylors.com](http://merchanttaylors.com)

**Merchant Taylors'**  
School

Ambition | Character | Excellence





## A Warm Welcome

**By choosing to become part of the Sixth Form at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School (MTGS), you are allowing yourself the opportunity to become the extraordinary woman that you have the potential to be.**

Speech Day, at the end of Upper Sixth, never fails to move me as I listen to all the accomplishments, applaud all the triumphs and observe how ready each girl is to start the next chapter of their lives.

The Sixth Form at MTGS is very special. Not only will you be able to enjoy all the benefits associated with a single sex education, you also have the chance to work collaboratively with the boys from Merchant Taylors' Boys' School, both in the classroom and through our extensive co-curricular programme. Joining us in the Sixth Form will bring you new found freedoms and privileges whilst enabling you to develop and hone your teamwork and leadership skills. Together with your peers and parents, we are given the opportunity to celebrate your innovation, enthusiasm and, above all else, you!

Everyone within our School community is proud to be part of the journey that will help to shape and define your future over the two years. Although we are an independent school, we pride ourselves on the fact that you can be yourself, such that each of you will be able to feel comfortable in your own skin and will be accepted for who you are regardless of

your background. You will be encouraged to enjoy and engage in your learning, to develop your intellectual curiosity and to therefore become the best that you can be. You will be supported to excel in areas where you have strengths and you will be encouraged not to be afraid to make mistakes, to stumble or to fall. As you will come to recognise, that most of the time, the greatest reward comes from undertaking the things that scare you the most.

Each of you will have your own ideas about what you would like to achieve by the time you leave MTGS. I hope that both our prospectus, and the wonderful community you will encounter on our Open Days, will give you a flavour of what to expect and, as a result, you are excited by the possibilities that we can offer you.

**Mrs Claire Tao**  
Headmistress MTGS



## Life in 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 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. This is especially the case when they apply to, and enter the workplace, Apprenticeships or Higher Education.



## 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 study rooms with individual study cubicles
- Students also have access to the Ian Robinson Sports Centre which includes a gym, sports hall, dance studio and swimming pool.



## 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 for support. They also have access to a named pastoral team who can provide 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: Mrs J Mayne**  
Head of Sixth Form  
j.mayne@merchanttaylor.com

## Sport, Drama, Music (Co-Curricular)

### 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. We also offer opportunities to be part of regular hockey and netball Sports Tours to destinations which have included Australia, Singapore, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

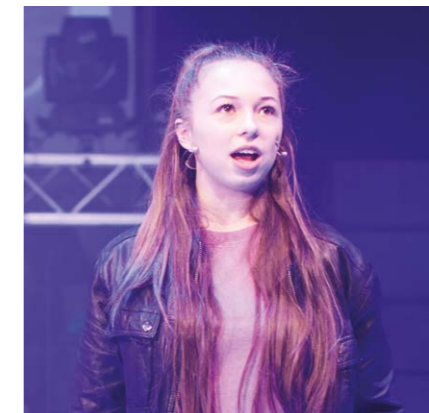
Our focus is to encourage our Sixth Form girls to maintain their involvement in an active lifestyle and to gain a sense of achievement through their participation in sport. We also enable our senior girls



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.

### Music

Sixth Form girls benefit from a variety of established extra-curricular activities that enrich their academic studies and support personal development through the acquisition of self-confidence, creativity and performance skills.



Sixth Form take part in off-site events such as the joint Merchant Taylors' Schools' Concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall in addition to events at Merchant Taylors' Hall, London, St George's Hall, Liverpool, the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and local community venues.

Sixth Form can take part in various choirs, orchestra, instrumental groups, the annual Music Competition and there is a Joint Schools' Band. Leadership opportunities include the roles of Music Captain & Vice Music Captain, supporting the Director of Music in departmental events and providing leadership for the younger pupils. The Music Committee provides Sixth Form with another platform to develop their leadership skills through the organization and promotion of musical events.

### 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.

**CONTACT: Mrs E Moore**  
Head of Sport  
e.moore@merchanttaylor.com

# Leadership

Alongside the wide and varied programme of extra-curricular provision 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; this includes the Head Girl team, the Sports, House and Music Captains or Chair of the School Council.

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

- Charities
- Debating
- Form Assistants
- Functions
- International
- Library
- Listening Service
- Magazine
- Music
- Snack Shack
- Sixth Form Ambassador Programme.

*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.*



# Careers

Merchant Taylors' Senior Girls' School is committed to offering full support for students and parents in an age where exploring career options has become more vital than ever for Sixth Formers.

## The provision includes:

- Opportunity to discuss career goals post 18 through one to one career guidance interviews
- All students in Lower Sixth will have access to UniFrog to help support their post 18 decisions
- Annual Careers Fair
- Lectures, working lunches, workshops and webinars, all designed to help inform and advise
- Support with UCAS guidance - in particular course research and choices
- Mock Interviews
- Annual Networking Breakfast
- We are constantly developing our network with the Old Boys and Old Girls to help support, mentor and advise.

Our aim is to provide students with a framework for making proper decisions about their future development. The components of this are:

1. Realistic analysis of academic interests, strengths and weaknesses
2. Accurate awareness of the nature of particular areas of study and work and the range of choice available to them
3. Access to information on courses, institutions and careers and the qualifications required to enter them
4. Access to guidance, which is both supportive and impartial and helps the individual to become aware of the options open to her and to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of particular choices.



## Work Experience

Work experience placements during the Sixth Form do much to inform students about employment and career options. The School has accumulated a substantial list of parents and alumni who are able to provide a wide variety of opportunities for our students. We encourage students to start thinking about their work experience early in their Sixth Form career and make enquiries early. A good number of our students then take up further placements during the summer holidays and even beyond into their undergraduate years.



## Gifted & Talented



### The Inspire Programme

The Inspire Programme aims to develop life-long independent learners who can cope easily with the vagaries of exams, take on enrichment projects at A Level and make the transition from school to university with ease.

### Harrison Group

Y12 and 13 students are invited to join the Harrison Group, which offers girls the opportunity to attend forums led by staff, keynote lectures from outside speakers and presentations given by their peers.

The Upper Sixth presentations are a great opportunity for girls to research a topic of interest and practise their presenting skills ready for university interviews and EPQ presentations. Girls who take an active role in the Harrison Group will be invited to the annual Harrison Dinner, which is a prestigious formal event at the end of Year 13.

## 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 student's dedication to independent learning and the transferable research skills they develop are valued by higher education institutions. An EPQ is worth more than 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: Ms M Hutchins**  
EPQ Co-ordinator  
[m.hutchins@merchanttaylors.com](mailto:m.hutchins@merchanttaylors.com)



### Personalised Study Programme

Most of you will be choosing 3 A Level subjects and some of you may also look to undertake an extended project qualification (EPQ).

You should seek to choose subjects which inspire you, play to your strengths and offer you the greatest scope to enhance your decision-making for the future.



# Art & Design

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Art & Design?

If you have an interest or passion for art, fashion, film, television, animation, textiles, photography and design, then choosing Art is something to consider.

Ideally you should achieve a 7 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.

## What does Art & Design entail?

You will explore and develop ideas using a wide range of materials and processes including print, ceramics and photography.

We teach AQA Art, Craft & Design and the specification comprises of:

- A Personal study (60% of the overall grade)
- An externally set assignment which includes preparatory studies followed by a 15hr supervised time element.

The first two terms of Year 12 involve students developing their skills through

an exciting series of workshops and exploring the potential of different media to exploit visual language.

After deciding on a theme for your Personal study, you will research different artists' approaches and develop your own ideas, experimenting and refining work towards a personal response. This will also be supported by a 1,000 word essay.



## Enrichment within Art & Design

During the course we visit different galleries and in recent years have organised trips to Berlin, Edinburgh and the Hepworth Museum.

This year our students have also enjoyed a photography workshop at Liverpool City College and a creative textiles day

at Shore Cottage on the Wirral. We have strong links with Liverpool School of Art and Liverpool Hope University and have hosted talks from lecturers and artists.

A number of artists also visit the school to use our printmaking facilities and to share their expertise with our students.

**CONTACT: Mrs L. McWatt**  
Head of Art & Design  
l.mcwatt@merchanttaylor.com



# Biology

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Biology?

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 2018, 30% of our A2 cohort progressed to study one of the latter, prestigious courses.

The study of Biology at Merchant Taylors' 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.



The Biology Department recommends GCSE grade 7 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.

The new separate science Biology GCSE has had new content added to it, and a similar compulsory practical structure, which thus provides excellent continuity for the A Level course.

## What does Biology entail?

The content in each of the two years is divided into four distinct modules.

In Year 12, topics covered include the study of biological molecules, such as DNA, the functioning of the immune system, and the importance of genetic diversity in Biology.

In Year 13, we consider how organisms respond to their environment and how gene expression is controlled, including the fascinating topic of gene technology. Three examination papers are taken at the end of Year 13, the third of which is synoptic in nature, and requires students to write an essay.

Practical work takes place in three well-resourced laboratories and involves observation of biological material and fieldwork.



## Enrichment within Biology

The Biology Department has always taken great pride in offering its A Level students increasingly important extra academic enrichment.

Activities include National Competitions, such as the Biology Olympiad (where our 2017 cohort were very successful, gaining Bronze medals and many commendations) and the academic, debating challenges of Oxbridge and Harrison Group Scientific Studies.

Our Head of Careers has also organised a number of seminars for successful biologists to come back into School to share their experiences since leaving Merchant Taylors'.

For the 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.

**CONTACT: Mrs J Johnson**  
Head of Sciences  
j.johnson@merchanttaylor.com

# Business

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Business?

A level 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 A level Business specification requires no previous knowledge of GCSE Business. It 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 and assessment should encourage students to follow business developments and think critically about contemporary business issues.

Most of the assessment material is based on real business situations, examining and thinking critically about real business situations. Students will gain an insight into different contexts which will help them to understand the key issues facing businesses.

## What does A level Business entail?

The specification will enable students to gain a thorough grounding of what really matters in modern businesses and pupils are introduced to the challenges and issues involved in a business such as research and planning, as well as the factors that determine success.

The A level Business examination consists of 3 written papers, each 2 hours long.

The questions range from multiple choice questions, short answer questions, data response questions to questions based on case study scenarios.

Business Studies helps 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.

## Enrichment within Business

We have strong links within industry, local universities and their Business Schools. Our alumni and strong Merchant Taylors' network also provide opportunities for the development and practical support to make Business come alive. We welcome past pupils and Business professionals to give lectures within the school and whenever possible we attend external lectures.

**CONTACT: Mrs H Irwin**  
Head of Business  
h.irwin@merchanttaylor.com

# Chemistry

Specification – OCR Chemistry A Spec code; H432

## Why choose Chemistry?

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. We recommend that at least a grade 7 in GCSE Chemistry is needed in order to embark on A Level study and preferably a minimum grade 7 in Mathematics also.

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.

## What does the Chemistry entail?

The Chemistry A Level course encompasses three elements:

- Physical Chemistry - including Atomic Structure, Kinetics and Thermodynamics
- Inorganic Chemistry - Group Chemistry and Transition Metals
- Organic Chemistry - including Alkanes, Alkenes and Alcohols.

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. We run a rigorous practical schedule alongside bespoke notes and homework exercises and we provide extra support sessions each 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.



## Enrichment within Chemistry

The Chemistry department provides a range of enrichment and extension activities to enhance the work covered in class. This enables aspirational chemists 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, the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge for the Lower Sixth and Spectroscopy workshops run by Liverpool University.

Competitive opportunities are also offered to Chemistry students of all ages, including the Top of the Bench and Young Analysts competitions, which involve Years 9 to 11 and Lower Sixth respectively.

**CONTACT: Mrs V. Copley**  
Teacher of Chemistry  
v.copley@merchanttaylor.com

# Classical Civilisation

Specification – OCR



## Why choose Classical Civilisation?

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.

You will develop a wide range of transferable skills through this subject, such as analysing sources and developing independent, critical and evaluative approaches.

You learn to formulate and support an argument and develop a valuable understanding of cultures very different to your own.

Classical Civilisation A Level can lead to the university-level study of Classics, Drama, English, History, History of Art, Philosophy and Politics. Classical Civilisation is listed on UCL's list of preferred A Level subjects and it is also listed on Trinity College, Cambridge's list of Generally Suitable Arts A Levels.

It is also listed as a useful subject for degrees in Classical Studies and Philosophy in the Russell Group 'Informed Choices' document.

Information from UCAS shows that students who studied Classical Civilisation went on to study in such diverse disciplines as Medicine, Veterinary Science and Chemistry.

It is not only those looking to attend university who benefit from the study of Classical Civilisation. The proven ability to write a well-structured extended response to the acknowledgement of the views of others, and a culturally sensitive approach to these, puts Classics students in an excellent position to seek employment and opportunities.

You do not need to know any languages, all the texts are studied in English translation, and it doesn't matter if you haven't studied the Greeks and Romans since primary school; all you need is an interest in the ancient world and its cultures.

## What does Classical Civilisation entail?

Studying Classical Civilisation will allow you to explore, through some of the oldest extant literature and archaeological sources, the cultural pillars of Western society.

From women in the ancient world, to the study of religious beliefs and ancient acts of intolerance, Classical Civilisation involves interesting discussions that are directly relevant to today's world:

*"... men grappled with exactly the same issues that we do: life, death, gods, sex, love, family, children, education, the nature of the world, our origins and development, the past, money, health, status, other cultures, friendship, power, patriotism, politics, law, crime, justice, empire, war."*

**Peter Jones, advisor to Classics For All, 'Taking the Long View'**

Throughout the two year course 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 war 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 Greeks' artistic, religious and societal values and ultimately came to influence our own concepts of art and beauty.

## Enrichment within Classical Civilisation

Trips to Italy, Greece, London, various museums and theatres are offered throughout the course.

We also regularly share talks and ideas in our Symposium jointly with Merchant Taylors' Boys' School, giving you the opportunity to develop independent research and presentation skills while discovering more about the wider ancient world beyond the curriculum.

**CONTACT: Miss J Johnson**  
Head of Classics  
j.d.johnson@merchanttaylor.com



# Computer Science

Specification – OCR

## Why choose Computer Science?

Computer Science qualifications will inspire and challenge students to apply the knowledge they gain alongside the creative and technical skills they acquire.

The new qualification will be focused on programming and will build on GCSE Computing and emphasise the importance of computational thinking as a discipline.

## What does Computer Science entail?

### Unit 1:

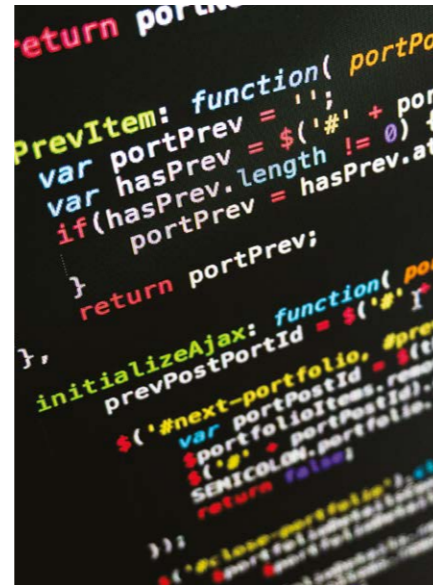
This component will introduce learners to the internal workings of the Central Processing Unit (CPU), the exchange of data and will also look at software development, data types and legal and ethical issues. It is expected that learners will draw on this underpinning content when studying computational thinking and developing programming techniques.

### Unit 2:

This component will incorporate and build on the knowledge and understanding gained in Unit 1. However, there will be a greater emphasis on the practical application of skills that have been taught. This will ensure that students understand the principles of solving problems by computational methods so that they will be able to use algorithms in readiness for the Programming Project (Unit 3).

### Unit 3:

The Programming Project is a substantial piece of work which assesses a variety of different skills including the development and demonstration of computational thought processes (Unit 2). Students will need to choose, in liaison with their teacher, a well-defined user driven problem. Students then embark upon using their software skills to develop a solution to the defined problem.



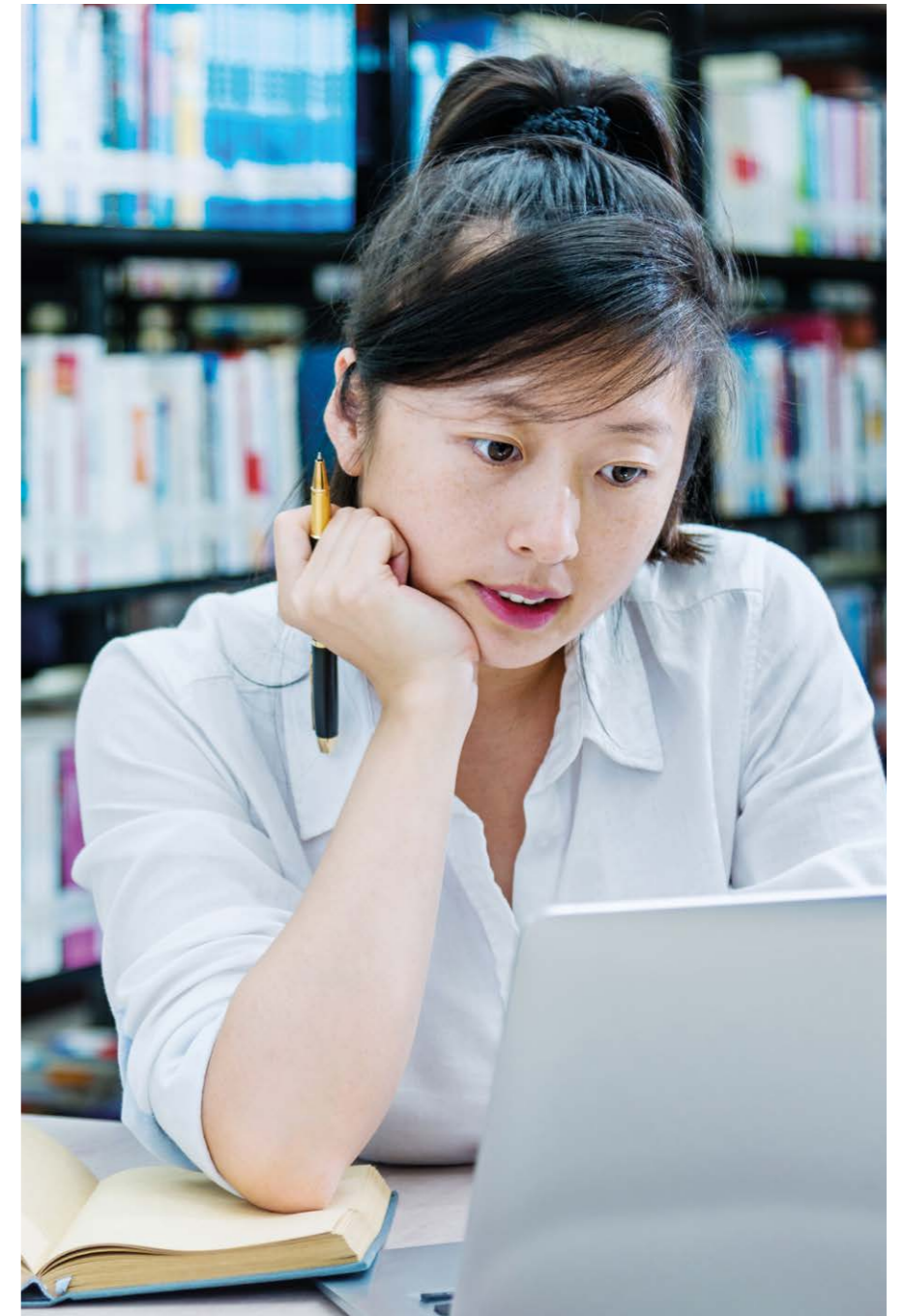
## Enrichment within Computer Science

One area in which enrichment is offered is through the celebration of technology, diversity and inclusion in sport. Joining forces with Liverpool Football Club will bring you an insightful evening of tech talks from their LFCTV and media team, with an inspirational keynote from Peter Moore, the clubs current CEO.

In November of Year 12, we will be discussing the rise of digital fashion. Our industry professional speakers represent some of the best in the area – we will have experts in UX, digital marketing and digital transformation. Each speaker will give a short enlightening talk on their area of expertise.

Working with universities in Liverpool, girls have access to a myriad of opportunities to further underpin their theoretical and practical knowledge.

**CONTACT: Mr J Power**  
Head of Computing & ICT  
[j.power@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:j.power@merchanttaylor.com)



# Drama & Theatre Studies

Specification – OCR

## A Level Drama & Theatre Studies

A Level Drama follows the AQA specification and is taught on a co-curricular basis between both boys and girls schools. Challenges are diverse – from studying and performing play excerpts to devising and performing one's own plays for an audience. Girls can also specialise in technical fields. Each year A Level students have the opportunity to take part in workshops with visiting theatre companies and practitioners.

Residential trips to New York and London take place on a biannual basis and provide Sixth Form students with the opportunity to participate in workshops, tour performing arts colleges and watch professional Broadway or West End shows, as well as visit places of cultural and historical interest.

## Performance Opportunities

Girls have the opportunity to be involved in a wide array of productions, regardless of whether they study Drama academically. Shows are designed to not only provide a platform for the outstanding and talented to take their Drama to the next level, but also to urge the apprehensive and shy to experience the thrill of theatre and be a part of something special. The major showpiece of the year is the Autumn Production, where students from the senior girls and boys schools combine to create a

truly extraordinary piece of live theatre. Students can participate as actors, musicians, dancers, stage managers, lighting and sound technicians, set paints, prop makers, costumiers, stage crew and front of house staff.

## Edinburgh Fringe Project

Following completion of their A Level examinations, year 13 students have the opportunity to put together their own performance which they showcase at the Edinburgh Fringe festival. In August 2019, year 13 performed James Chalmers' 'A Payment Unkind' at the Sweet Venues Grassmarket Venue.

## LAMDA

LAMDA courses in Acting and Public Speaking are offered to 6th form students from Grade 6 upwards. As well as accruing extra UCAS points, LAMDA gives the students the opportunity to enhance their performance and presentation skills whilst building their confidence and self-esteem. Lessons are taught to girls as individuals or in paired duologues by Drama and Theatre specialist teachers.

**CONTACT: Ms E Gregson-Burt**  
Head of Drama & Theatre Studies  
e.gregson-burt@merchanttaylor.com



*'The creative industries, for nearly a decade, are the fastest-growing part of the economy. UK's creative industries contribute almost £90bn net to GDP. They account for one in 11 jobs, a rate rising more quickly than all other parts of the economy. These jobs are also among the least likely to be lost to automation.'*

(Creative Industries are Key to UK Economy' The Guardian 1st January 2017)

# Economics

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Economics?

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.

A level Economics applies economic theory to support analysis of current economic problems and issues, and encourages students to appreciate the interrelationships between microeconomics and macroeconomics. Students develop the knowledge and skills needed to understand and analyse data, think critically about issues and make informed decisions.



The specification is split into two main sections, the first section introduces students to microeconomic issues and the second section covers mainly macroeconomic issues. However, students should appreciate that microeconomics and macroeconomics are not entirely distinct areas of study.

For example, microeconomic principles often provide fundamental insights into understanding aspects of the macroeconomy.

## What does Economics entail?

The study of Economics 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.

The A level Economics examination consists of 3 written papers, each 2 hours long. The question papers use a variety of assessment styles including real-life case studies and data exercises to better prepare students for further study and employment.

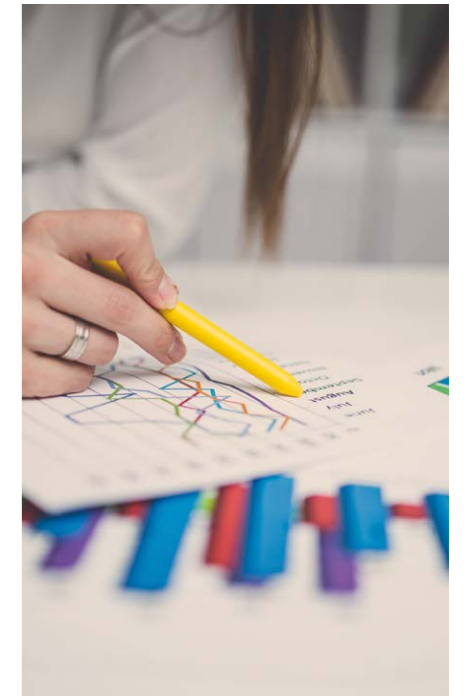
No prior knowledge of the subject is required. However, Economists need to be good at working with figures. They should enjoy looking at a page of numbers and working out what they mean.



Mathematical and information technology skills are essential. Therefore, it is recommended that students have attained GCSE Mathematics at level 7 or above and studying Mathematics at A Level would be an advantage.

At the end of the course pupils 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.

Economics has the potential to open many career opportunities beyond school and university due to the nature of its content and the flexible skills that those who study it then develop.



## Enrichment within Economics

We have strong links within industry, local universities and their Business Schools. Our alumni and strong Merchant Taylors' network also provide opportunities the development and practical support to make Economics come alive. We encourage pupils to join our vibrant Economics Society and we welcome visiting speakers from our local universities and Industry.

**CONTACT: Mrs H Irwin**  
Head of Business & Economics  
[h.Irwin@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:h.Irwin@merchanttaylor.com)

# English Literature

Specification – AQA

## Why choose English Literature?

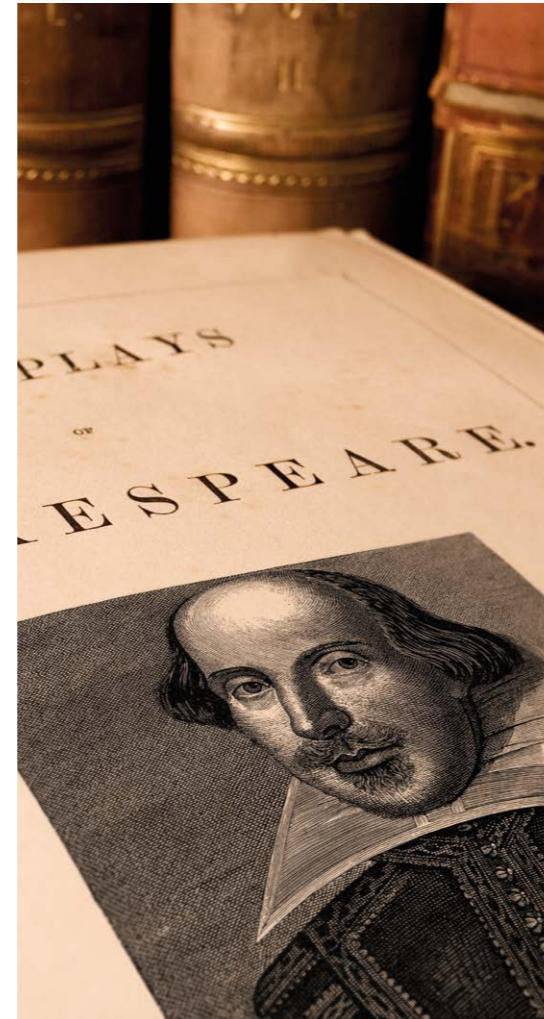
A Level English Literature is the perfect course for students who have a love of reading and a passion for discussion. Through the study of texts from a broad range of historical periods, you will learn how to formulate critical viewpoints and express your ideas and opinions persuasively. Discussion and debate will form an integral part of A Level English lessons, and you will write essays regularly. Therefore, English Literature A Level is the ideal complement to other humanities subjects, as you will refine both your verbal and written communication skills.

English literature is a challenging subject and is therefore valued by a range of universities and subject departments, including Law departments. The communication skills that you will perfect are essential for a range of careers, including journalism, publishing, marketing, public relations, politics, law and media.

## What does English Literature entail?

We follow the AQA A specification. For the examined papers, there are two key themes: 'Love through the Ages' and 'Texts in Shared Contexts'. For both papers, students enjoy undertaking an interdisciplinary approach, whereby responses to texts are framed by an understanding of their historical, political and social contexts. You will have the opportunity to study canonical texts which have been influential in the development of English literature, such as *Othello* and *The Great Gatsby*, but also the exciting chance to discover new favourites, such as Owen Sheers' poetry collection, *Skirrid Hill*.

For most students, the highlight of the course is the independent critical study: texts across time (Non-Examined Assessment i.e. coursework). This involves making an individual choice of two texts for comparison and most students take the opportunity to write about texts which have been personally



significant to their own lives. Choices in the past have ranged from *Antigone*, to *Middlemarch*, to *Pride and Prejudice* and students have written on an impressive array of themes.



## Enrichment within English Literature

The English Department encourages students in their creative endeavours outside of the classroom and assists students in entering both local and national writing competitions. Current students have been the recipients of prestigious awards such as the Foyles Young Poet Award and the Cuckoo Young Writers Award and one of our English literature students is the Liverpool Writer in Residence.

In addition, a weekly extension workshop is used to introduce students to a range of wider reading and literary criticism which is directly relevant to the examination texts.

**CONTACT: Ms E Gerrard-Jones**  
Head of English

[e.gerrard-jones@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:e.gerrard-jones@merchanttaylor.com)



# Geography

Specification – AQA



## Why choose Geography?

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 many other subjects such as arts, sciences or languages, as it contains human, physical and environmental elements.

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.

## What does Geography entail?

The Geography A Level looks at:

- Three Physical Geography topics - Glacial Systems and Landscapes, Water & Carbon Cycles, and Hazards
- Three Human Geography topics - Changing Places, Population and the Environment, Global Systems and Global Governance.

Students must also complete a fieldwork investigation of between 3,000 – 4,000 words on any aspect of the specification and this is worth 20% of the overall marks available.

In addition, students further develop a wide range of skills throughout the A Level course, 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.



## Enrichment within Geography

Research and independent learning are very important aspects of the A Level course and students will undertake four days of field work. 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 field trip to Iceland in order to investigate coastal, glacial and volcanic landscapes.

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

**CONTACT: Mrs R Hames**  
Head of Geography  
r.hames@merchanttaylor.com

# History

Specification – AQA

## Why choose History?

As well as being academically rigorous, and well-respected by all universities, History is accessible to all abilities.

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.

This course gives you the opportunity to work collaboratively and/or independently and will teach you transferable skills which will help you in other subjects, further studies and your future job.

History is an important subject if you want to study History, Archaeology, Politics at University. Some subjects at university also like you to have History as an A Level – e.g. Law, Journalism, Business, Forensics, to name a few.



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.

**CONTACT: Mrs C Grindley**  
Head of History

[c.grindley@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:c.grindley@merchanttaylor.com)

## What does History entail?

### UNIT 1

#### 1G Challenge and Transformation: Britain c1851–1964

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period.

#### Part One: Victorian and Edwardian Britain, c1851–1914

- Reform and Challenge, c1851–c1886
- Challenges to the status quo, c1886–1914

#### Part Two: The World Wars and their Legacies: Britain, 1914–1964

- The Great War and its impact, 1914–1939
- Transformation and change, 1939–1964

### UNIT 2

#### 2N: Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917–1953

This option provides for the study in depth of the coming and practice of communism in Russia. It explores concepts such as Marxism, communism, Leninism, and Stalinism, ideological control and dictatorship. It also enables students to consider issues of political authority, the power of individuals and the inter-relationship of governmental and economic and social change.

#### Part One: The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929

- Dissent and Revolution 1917
- Bolshevik consolidation 1918–1924
- Stalin's rise to power 1924–1929

#### Part Two: Stalin's Rule 1929–1953

- Economy and Society 1929–1941
- Stalinism, politics and control 1929–1941
- The Great Patriotic War and Stalin's Dictatorship 1941–1953

### UNIT 3

#### Historical Investigation

- This is a personal study based on a topic of the student's choice.
- It is an internally assessed essay of 3000–3500 words.
- 40 marks
- 20% of the A Level

We are opting to study the Witch-hunts of the 16th and 17th Centuries although students can work completely independently and choose a different topic if they wish.

- Factors contributing to the development of the Witch-crazes
- Groups involved in the Witch-hunts
- Reasons for the decline of the Witch-hunts



## Enrichment within History

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. Many enjoy widening their experience of historical debates by attending Master Classes at Oxford and the Debate Chamber, run annually by the University of London Union.

# Latin

Specification – OCR



## Why choose Latin?

Latin is a fascinating subject, designed to inspire, motivate and challenge students as well as encouraging them to read widely to gain a deeper understanding of the life and culture of the ancient world.

Employers, such as GCHQ and MI5, often seek to recruit Latinists, because of their language skills and code-breaking abilities, and Cambridge University ranks its Classicists as one of their most employable Arts graduates because of the array of transferable skills the subject offers.

The Romans once lived in our country and changed our history fundamentally. Latin opens a window into our past, allowing us to experience the culture and literature

of the ancient Romans, showing us the beauty and clarity of the language our ancestors spoke.

Latin demands academic rigour and a sustained level of high quality thought. 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.

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.

## What does Latin entail?

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 challenging 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 world's 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..."

## Enrichment within Latin

Trips to Italy, Greece, London, various museums and theatres are offered throughout the course. We also regularly share talks and ideas in our Symposium jointly with Merchant Taylors' Boys' School, giving you the opportunity to develop independent research and presentation skills while discovering more about the wider ancient world beyond the curriculum.

**CONTACT: Miss J Johnson**  
Head of Classics

[j.d.johnson@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:j.d.johnson@merchanttaylor.com)

# Mathematics and Further Mathematics

Specification – Edexcel

## Why choose Mathematics?

Do you enjoy the challenge of problem-solving and the satisfaction of solving a question? Are you analytical, logical and hard-working? Do you like to make connections between different aspects and topics within mathematics, science and the real-world that may seem unconnected to others?

Both Mathematics and Further Mathematics are versatile qualifications, well-respected by employers and are both ‘facilitating’ subjects for entry to a wide variety of higher education courses. The mathematical skills you learn in A Level Mathematics are of great benefit in other A Level subjects too, such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Computing, Geography, Psychology, Economics and Business Studies.

Girls who have studied mathematics are in the fortunate position of having an excellent choice of career. There is still a huge national demand from employers in science, engineering and manufacturing who have a need for students who can think logically and analytically.

Through solving problems at A Level you will develop resilience and will be able to think creatively and strategically.



The writing of structured solutions, proof and justification of results will help you to formulate reasoned arguments.

Throughout the course you will develop excellent numeracy skills and the ability to process and interpret data.

For progression to many courses at university it is important to have strong demonstrable mathematical skills.

For most STEM degree courses A Level Mathematics is a requirement and A Level Further Mathematics is often a preferred or desired subject.

## What does Mathematics entail?

Mathematics A Level is a 2 year linear course with 3 exams taken that cover both Pure and Applied topics.

Pure Mathematics further develops your understanding of algebra, equations, co-ordinate geometry and trigonometry from GCSE and introduces new concepts such as radian measure, exponential and logarithm functions, calculus and sequences.

Applied Mathematics involves both statistics and mechanics. You will recognise statistics topics from GCSE: probability and probability distributions, data representation, data analysis and correlation.

Mechanics involves forces and motion, constant and variable acceleration, kinematics, moments and projectiles.

Both applied sections use mathematical modelling that require you to answer qualitative questions that ask you to interpret answers in the context of the model.

The Mathematics A Level course is designed to give you plenty of rigorous and consistent practice of mathematical techniques, with structured, unstructured and challenge questions as your understanding and confidence increases. Our entry requirement to study A Level Mathematics is a minimum of level 7 at GCSE.

Further Mathematics A Level can be taken in addition to Mathematics A Level, but can only be taken as a fourth option. This is a 2 year course with exams for both the AS and A Level taken at the end of the 2 years.

The course content includes Core, Decision and Further Mechanics. Core maths involves some further pure content, for example: complex numbers, further calculus, sequences and series, and matrices. Decision Maths includes algorithms, critical path analysis and linear programming. Further Mechanics looks at momentum and impulse, energy and power, elastic strings and elastic collisions.



The Further Mathematics course is more challenging than Mathematics and so our entry requirement is a minimum of level 8 at GCSE. However, having A Level Further Mathematics on your university application is an excellent way to make it stand out.

## Enrichment within Mathematics

Support is available through regular Maths Clinics, which girls can use to either work independently or for help with homework. We encourage our Sixth Form girls to pass on their enthusiasm to younger girls by taking a lead in Maths Clinics and acting as Maths Ambassadors to younger pupils.

All Sixth Form mathematicians are entered for the Senior Maths Challenge set by UKMT, with many of our girls receiving Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates in this national competition, with an opportunity for the most successful to progress further to either the National Olympiad or Kangaroo Maths Competition.

Some universities require or recommend girls to take an additional entrance qualification when applying for certain undergraduate Mathematical courses. Staff at the Girls' School provide both one to one tuition for STEP and MAT papers and facilitate access to online preparation courses for independent study.

**CONTACT: Mrs J Angwin**  
Head of Mathematics  
j.angwin@merchanttaylors.com

# Modern Foreign Languages

Specification – AQA



**The school offers French, German and Spanish at A Level. There are six subject specialists and girls will enjoy the support of native French, Spanish and German speakers or 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.

## Why choose a Modern Foreign Language?

The study of a Modern Foreign Language at A Level is highly valued by both universities and employers alike. 17% of the UK's top universities insist on competence in a foreign language in order to study any degree with them.

With 90% of the world's research is conducted outside the UK, language skills are at the heart of many global challenges from terrorism to international crime.

"If you speak to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you speak to a man in his own language, that goes to his heart." Nelson Mandela.

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.

## What do Modern Foreign Languages entail?

The A Level qualification in all three Modern Languages offered at the school is linear.

### Subject Content:

- Social issues and trends
- Political and artistic culture
- Grammar
- Literary texts and films

## What is assessed:

- Aspects of French/ German / Spanish society: current trends
- Aspects of French speaking/ Spanish speaking/ German speaking society: current issues.
- Artistic culture in the French/ German/ Spanish speaking world.
- Grammar

## How it is assessed:

- Paper 1 written examination 2 hours 30 (reading, writing and listening exercises). This paper will include translation from English into the target language and vice versa.
- Paper 2: written examination 2 hours. One question to be answered in the target language on a set text or play and one question to be answered in the target language on a film, text or play.
- Oral examination: 21 – 23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time)
- One of four themes (current issues, Artistic culture, Aspects of political life). Discussion of a sub – theme based on a stimulus card.
- Individual Research Project:
- Presentation and discussion of individual research project (topic chosen by the student).

## Enrichment within Modern Foreign Language

The department uses the latest online courses to deliver the syllabus and girls have the use of iPods in lessons and an individual playback facility in assessments and examinations.



The department also offers a wide range of literary texts, journals and DVDs which give students the opportunity to undertake independent language work outside the classroom.

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 you to gain invaluable skills for your A Level studies and have proved highly successful in the past and the department actively supports such schemes.

**CONTACT: Mrs C Y Whalley**  
Head of Modern Foreign Languages  
y.whalley@merchanttaylor.com

# Music

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Music?

If you want to learn more about performance, historical works, composition and theory then this is the course for you. If you are planning a vocational career in music – be that in teaching, performance or composition, then this course will give you the grounding you need to move on to a specialist degree course. However, it is also suited to those that simply love the subject, enjoy performance and want to develop their skills in this area.

A level Music is a highly regarded subject, either alongside other creative courses or in demonstrating a broader range of skills next to Science, Maths or other non-creative subjects.

Whilst Music can be a useful subject for Arts and Media courses at university, the most obvious pathway is going on to a degree in Music, which can lead to a range of exciting career options, including becoming a professional musician, a sound technician, a music therapist, a teacher, or a private tutor.

Jobs that are less directly related to a Music degree, but where a Music degree could be very valuable include arts administration, and work in radio, theatre and events management.



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.

## What does Music entail?

Although there is a practical element to this course you will learn much about the theories and historical examples that have shaped not only Western high art music but also other musical genres.

A Level Music offers opportunities to develop both performance [solo and/or ensemble] and composition skills.



In the composition component students will create music which draws on their own experience and enthusiasm. They will also learn the rules of harmony and apply it writing chorales in the style of Bach. The course builds on the knowledge and skills gained from GCSE Music through the compulsory Area of Study 'Western classical tradition 1650-1910' as well as studying two optional Areas of Study; students will therefore develop a secure grounding in musical history and analysis.

## Enrichment within Music

Students opting to study A Level Music at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School join a thriving department and can take part in the numerous extra-curricular activities which occur every day of the week. Students take an active role in the department, not only attending rehearsals

but also assisting whenever possible. A Level Music students help run a series of lunchtime concerts and take part in assemblies. They are in effect musical ambassadors and set an example to other girls in the school.

Extra-curricular opportunities include the annual in-house Music Competition, school concerts, visits, tours, attending professional concerts and undertaking work experience. In short, the life of a successful A Level music student is always rich and interesting.

**CONTACT: Mr C. Harrison**  
Foundation Director of Music  
c.harrison@merchanttaylor.com

# Physical Education

Specification – OCR



## Why choose Physical Education?

An A Level in Physical Education is an excellent base for a university degree in sports science, sports management, healthcare, or exercise and health. Physical Education can also complement further study in biology, human biology, physics, psychology, nutrition, sociology and many more.

A Level Physical Education takes candidates through a rigorous programme of academic study across a range of disciplines and topics such as: Fluid Mechanics, Ethics and deviance in sport, Muscle function and types of contractions, Leadership, Aggression and the Emergence of the Olympic Games.

A Level Physical Education is taught by three subject specialist staff across the senior boys' and senior girls' schools. Each staff member focuses on an aspect of the course which is their own speciality, covering each of the three papers and the non-examined assessment.

Students studying A Level Physical Education benefit from small class sizes with the use of our state of the art Ian Robinson Sports Centre, complete with its own teaching block.

It is recommended that a GCSE grade of at least a Level 7 in Biology is required in order to begin the A Level course. 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.



## What does Physical Education entail?

Theory lessons work towards preparing students for three separate exams. The newly reformed A Level specification puts an increased emphasis on the Anatomy and Physiology section.

This topic area is examined in a two-hour paper at the end of two years and is weighted at 30%. Students simultaneously study for two separate papers on the topics of Sports Psychology and Contemporary factors in sport. Each of these topics are examined in a one-hour paper and each are worth 20% of the final mark. The course is delivered through both theoretical and practical sessions, giving students the chance to directly observe and experience aspects of the content as they learn it.

The non-examined is worth 30%. Students must be able to perform in, or coach one sport, selected from the OCR specification list. This aspect of the course encourages our students to maintain their sporting commitments throughout their A Level study.

In the second year of the course students assess and critically evaluate a performance in their chosen activity (EAPI). They will then apply their theoretical understanding of the course to create a programme of improvements based on their selected weaknesses.

## Enrichment in Physical Education

The Department offers an engaging theoretical course where students' curiosity for this subject is developed alongside their continued practical involvement.

Students can begin to apply their theoretical understanding to their own performances in school teams and use their study of the A Level PE to support their own practical development.

Students are also provided with the opportunity to attend trips, including the annual Girls Go Gold conference. This trip allows students to attend practical seminars and lectures on prominent sporting topics.

Students also have plenty of opportunities to take part in the varied extracurricular programme within the school.

They are able to compete at a high level in a number of different sports and use their performance and experiences to improve their practical score.

Students have the chance to take part in county and regional tournaments which provide vital opportunities for high level competitive evidence.

**CONTACT: Miss L. Barker**  
Head of Girls Games  
l.baker@merchanttaylors.com

# Physics

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Physics?

Are you interested in understanding the technology that surrounds you – how it works and how to create ever more useful gadgets? Does safeguarding our energy supply while saving the planet strike 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.

The careers options are endless if you study Physics, and the skills you develop are sought after in all walks of life. 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.

The skills developed in studying Physics are relatable and desirable to all professions. By studying Physics you are taken on a journey from the subatomic to the outer reaches of our universe. It is fundamental to all that is around us and studying it makes you stand out from the crowd.

## What does Physics entail?

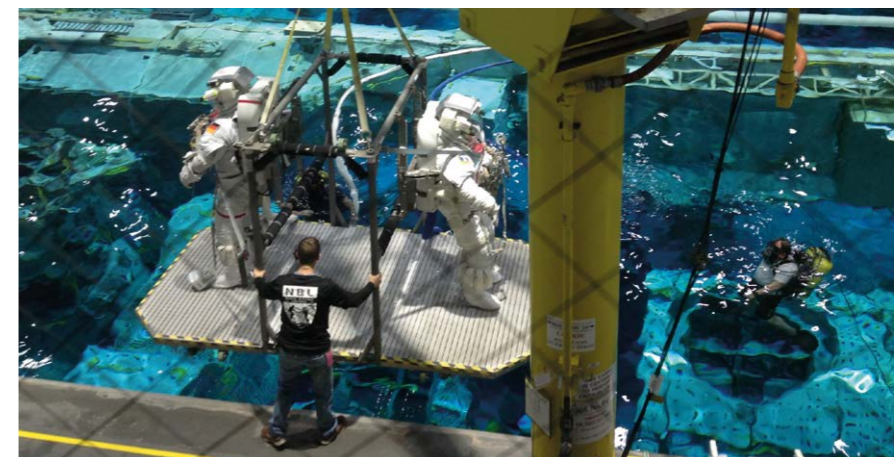
The topics covered at A Level Physics are already familiar from GCSE and you will develop your knowledge of forces, waves, radioactivity, electricity and magnetism.

You will look at these areas in more detail and find out how they are interconnected.

You will also learn how to apply maths to real-world problems and explore new areas such as quantum phenomena and special relativity. Most importantly however, you will develop skills that can be transferred to just about any other area of work, from medicine to business to law.

Even if you don't want to become a Physicist, learning to think like one will help you get to the root of any problem and draw connections that aren't always obvious to others.

These skills are obtained by being given abstract problems and completing required practical work throughout the course, collecting and analysing data.



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 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 and a minimum of level 7 at GCSE Mathematics.

## Enrichment within Physics

Learning does not just take place in the classroom and our strong extra-curricular programme focuses on engaging and

encouraging our students in all aspects of Physics, whether medical, engineering or astronomy based.

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 Physics Partners Group also means that girls who study Physics at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School may have the unique opportunity to collaborate with students from nearby schools. Such opportunities include acting as Physics Ambassadors and working with pupils from in which they host Physics Masterclasses and act as role models for younger students.

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 and invite former Physics university graduates back to share their experiences.

Almost 50% of our last cohort went on to Universities of their choice to study Physics or Engineering courses and we guided them every step of the way, ensuring their UCAS application was full of enriching activities.

**CONTACT: Mrs J Lynch**  
Teacher of Physics  
j.lynch@merchanttaylors.com



# Politics

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Politics?

Politics is a dynamic A level that will help you develop essential skills such as analysis, forming an argument and thinking independently.

The subject is in the news every day and there are always contemporary issues which have relevance to the course. The current era is particularly interesting, with Britain's departure from the EU, unpredictable party politics in the UK, and the various controversies associated with the Trump presidency.

A well respected A Level choice, Politics is useful for a range of degree courses. Many of our students have gone on to study Politics at university, often in combination with subjects such as Economics and History. However, it is also useful for those wishing to study other subjects such as Law and Sociology, and even courses in the sciences or Medicine as these students benefit from being able to develop structured and analytical work.

Politics A Level is also 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.

## What does Politics entail?

Students need to keep abreast of recent political developments such as the UK General Election, Britain leaving the EU and the Congressional Elections in the USA, as well as the impact of leading political personalities. This is what makes Politics an 'up to the minute' A Level.

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.

The course is examined as follows.

## Module 1: Government and Politics of the UK

The British Government section covers the British Constitution, the structure and role of Parliament i.e. the House of Commons and House of Lords, the work of MPs, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the judiciary and devolution i.e. the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Northern Irish Assembly.

The section on Politics looks at democracy, political participation, voting behaviour, election systems (including referenda), political parties, pressure groups and protest movements, and the EU.



## Module 2: Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics

The section on the US Government covers the Constitution, Congress (i.e. the Senate and the House of Representatives), the President and Cabinet.

The section on US politics covers the electoral process and direct democracy, voting behaviour, political parties (Democrats and Republicans), and pressure groups and protest movements.

There is also a section comparing British government and politics with the USA, e.g. the constitutions, Congress and Parliament, the president and prime minister, the judiciaries, political parties and pressure groups.

## Module 3: Political Ideas

This unit covers political ideologies such as conservatism, socialism and liberalism, along with nationalism and feminism.

## Enrichment within Politics

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. Overall, the subject develops a student's general knowledge, along with their debating skills.

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**  
Teacher of Politics  
[g.evans@merchanttaylor.com](mailto:g.evans@merchanttaylor.com)



# Psychology

Specification – AQA

## Why choose Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and human behaviour. Psychologists observe and conduct experiments to find out more about the way people act and interact. They try to understand what motivates, challenges or changes us and use this understanding to help us approach personal and social problems.

Psychology is a very popular A Level choice at Merchant Taylors' and is taught by two dedicated teachers who demand the very best from all students studying the course.

To be an effective Psychology student, it is expected that wider reading and study beyond the specification is undertaken.

The Department prides itself on consistent, excellent examination results and the number of previous pupils who have gone on to read this subject 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.

If you choose to study Psychology you'll be able to hone your analytical and organisational skills and learn about scientific research methods, including collecting and working with data.

Learning about human behaviour can also help to build your communication skills and improve your teamwork and leadership skills.

## What does Psychology entail?

A Level Psychology comprises three papers:

- Papers 1 and 2 are studied in the L6 year and Paper 3 in the U6 year.
- Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology. The topic areas studied are Memory, Psychopathology, Social Influence and Attachment.
- Paper 2: Psychology In Context. The topic areas studied are Approaches, Biopsychology and Research Methods and Statistics.
- Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology. The topic areas studied are Gender, Forensic Psychology, Schizophrenia and Issues and Debates in Psychology.

Each paper is a two-hour examination and worth 96 marks.

The style of the examination questions comprises of multiple choice, short-answer responses and extended writing.

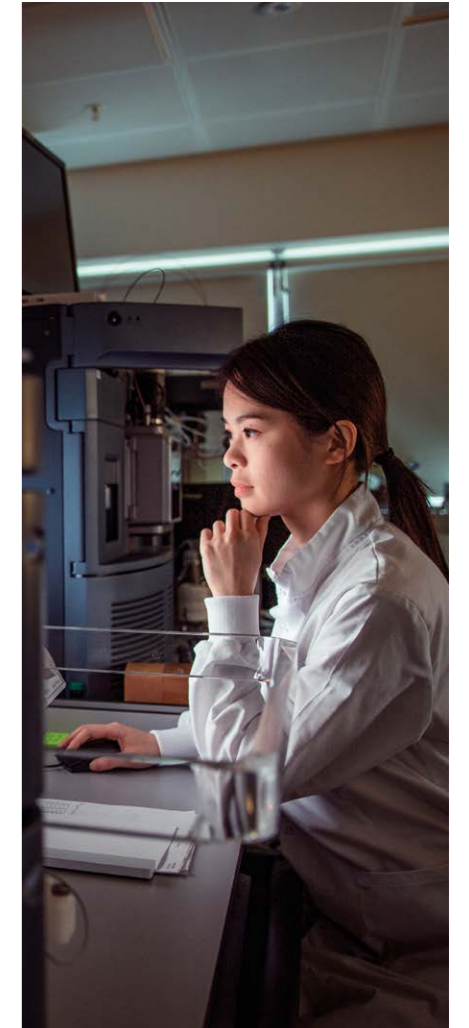
## Enrichment within Psychology

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. 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 opportunity to develop their analytical thinking skills.

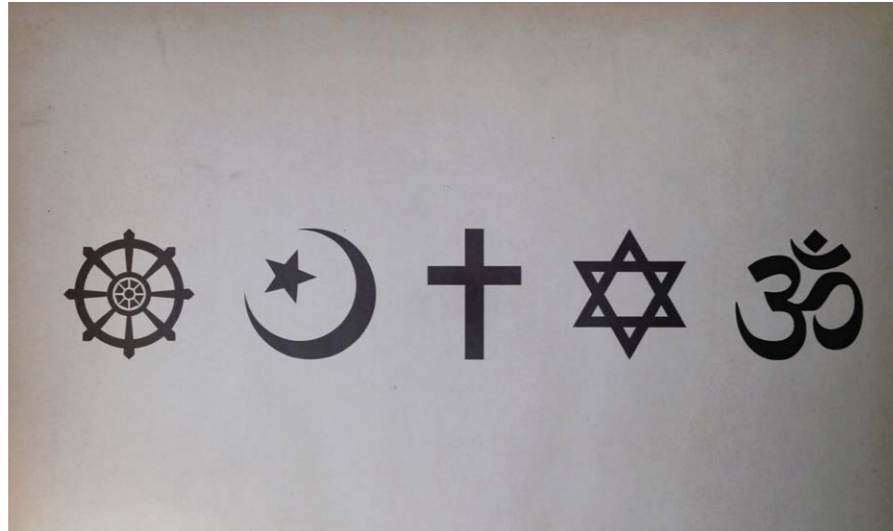
Pupils are provided with the opportunity to attend various trips, including the annual Criminology Conference. Eminent lecturers in the field of both Criminology and Forensic Psychology present key issues in the style of a University lecture and this has proved to be an enjoyable and engaging trip for previous pupils.



**CONTACT: Miss S Ladbrook**  
Head of Psychology  
s.ladbrook@merchanttaylor.com

# Religious Studies

Specification – OCR



## Why choose Religious Studies?

Are you interested in developing your ability to reason and 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 God exists?

If so, then Religious Studies may be the course for you.

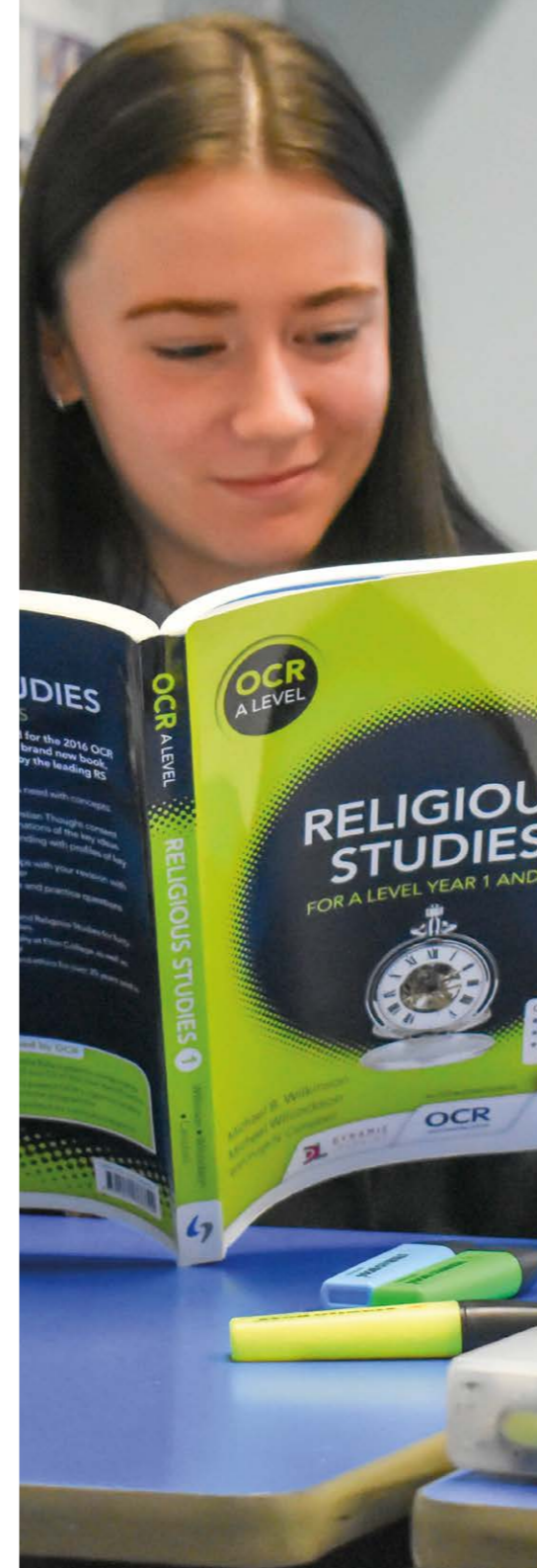
Religious Studies allows you to have the opportunity to discuss your ideas about some of the most challenging and exciting issues of our time, such as whether there is a satisfactory explanation for existence of evil and whether there is the possibility of life after death.

Religious Studies offers breadth and depth in its study of religion from a variety of perspectives, including the interpretation of religious texts, the sociology and psychology of religion and the impact of religious thinkers. It will also teach you how to write extended answers on a

religious, philosophical or ethical issue and to present a balanced argument, reaching a personal conclusion.

The specification is an intellectually demanding and academic course and compliments both Science and Arts based Advanced 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 upon the knowledge, understanding and skills already gained in the GCSE Religious Studies course.



## What does Religious Studies entail?

A Level Religious Studies comprises of three papers which are studied in both the L6 Year and U6 Year. Each examination paper is two hours and requires pupils to answer three essay questions from a choice of four. Each essay question is marked out of 40.

**Paper 1:** Philosophy of Religion - topics include arguments about the existence or non-existence of God, the nature and impact of religious experience and the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil.

**Paper 2:** Religion and ethics - topics include normative ethical theories, the application of ethical theory to euthanasia and business ethics and the influence of ethical and religious thought on sexual ethics.

**Paper 3:** Developments in Religious thought - topics include beliefs about death and the after-life, Christian moral principles and action, gender and society and the challenge of secularism.

## Enrichment within Religious Studies

The department has an extensive library of books and articles for wider reading. A range of extension activities are offered to help students develop their analytical skills.

There is also the opportunity to attend various philosophical and ethical conferences relating to the specification.

**CONTACT: Mr B Wilson**  
Head of Religious Studies  
b.wilson@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.

## Lower Sixth

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.

During the Spring and Summer terms Lower Sixth students 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. This will look at undertaking recommended work or voluntary experience and research, in addition to attending relevant courses or other events which 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.

**CONTACT: Mrs V Copley**  
UCAS Coordinator  
v.copley@merchanttaylor.com

Those girls who wish to consider 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.

## Upper Sixth

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.

## International Universities

For those who choose to study at international universities the same level of assistance is provided during 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.



# Oxbridge



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 Aintree Racecourse. 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 students are encouraged to visit either an Oxford or Cambridge University Open Day, to allow students to get a feel for the institutions themselves.

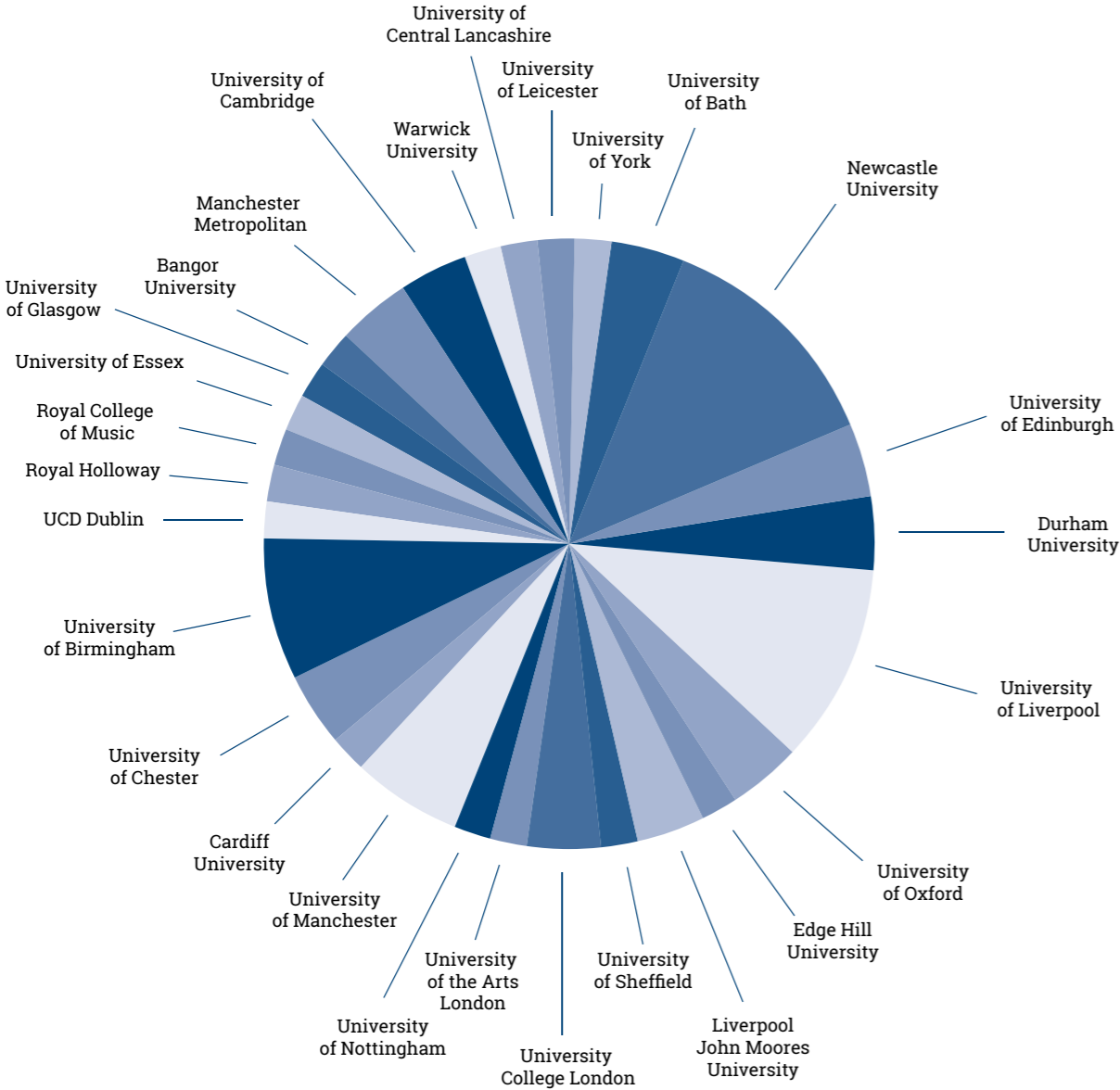
Once a student has made the decision to apply at the start of the Upper Sixth, then support becomes more individually tailored and subject mentors guide students in extending their subject knowledge, preparing for entrance tests and interviews.

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

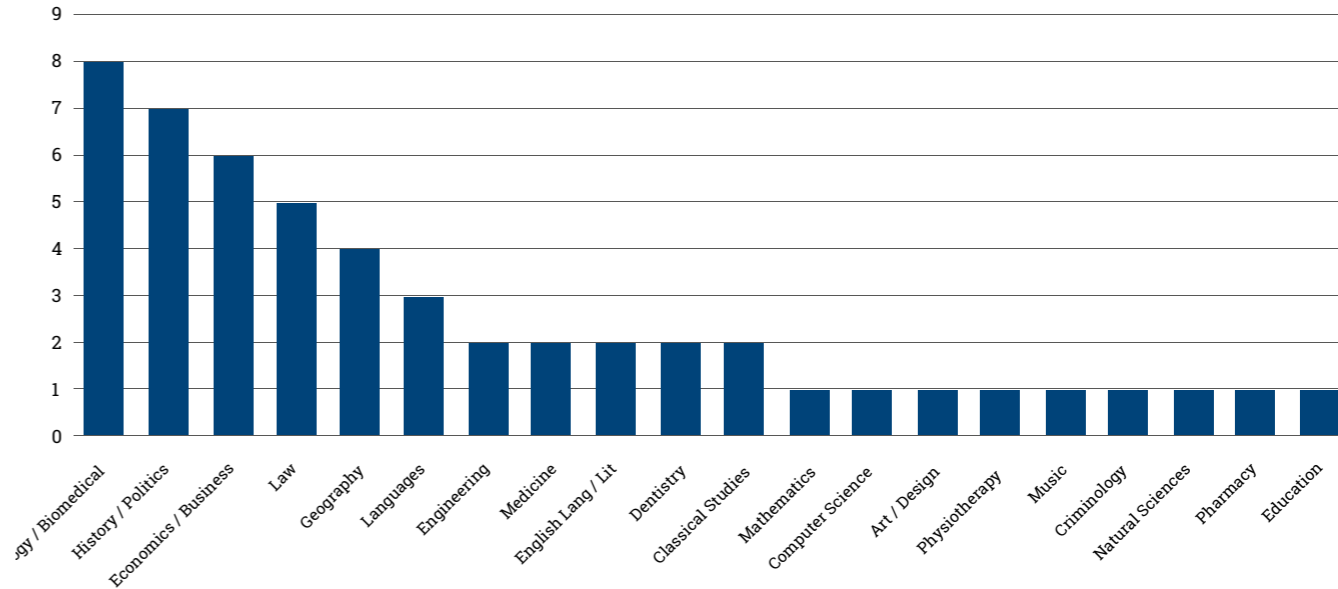
subject in an academic setting, both exploring and defending their ideas: valuable experience when it comes to the rigorous interview process.

**CONTACT: Mr J. Whitton**  
Director of Enrichment  
& Co-curricular  
j.whitton@merchanttaylor.com

# Leavers' Destinations 2019



# Course Destination Choice 2019



# 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 the national statistics (Ofqual).

| Grade  | MTGS<br>(3 Year Average) | National<br>(3 Year Average) |
|--------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| A*     | 9.1%                     | 8.1%                         |
| A* - A | 39.3%                    | 26.2%                        |
| A* - B | 70.1%                    | 53.0%                        |
| A* - C | 86.1%                    | 77.7%                        |
| A* - D | 96.1%                    | 92.3%                        |
| A* - E | 99.5%                    | 98.2%                        |





# Merchant Taylors' School

Ambition | Character | Excellence

Liverpool Road, Crosby,  
Liverpool L23 0QP.

Call: 0151 949 9366

[www.merchanttaylors.com](http://www.merchanttaylors.com)

 @MerchantsCrosby

 /merchanttaylorscrosby

 @MerchantsCrosby