



Rivers Academy
West London



**POST 16
Curriculum Booklet
2024-25**

Active Engagement | Highest Expectations



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Careers

The opportunities offered at Rivers Academy will equip you with the skills and knowledge to make informed choices about your destinations once you have finished your studies in post 16 education. Highlighted below are some of the opportunities available to you.

Choosing a University

- Oxbridge guest speakers and workshops
- University visits
- University residential and non-residential summer programs
- Guidance about Open Days

Choosing an apprenticeship

- Apprenticeship guest speakers
- Careers fairs
- Company visits
- Application guidance

General Careers advice

- Independent careers adviser available
- External speakers talking about a variety of topics
- CV support
- Interview practice

Other extra - curricular

- Aspirations Employability Diploma (AED)
- National competitions
- NASA Trip
- Work experience opportunities

Enrichment opportunities

There will also be opportunities for you to participate in activities which build skills, knowledge, experience and confidence outside of your academic studies. These opportunities will also help to enhance your UCAS application or CV.

Volunteering

- Support in lessons
- External volunteering at primary schools
- Reading with younger students
- Local community involvement
- Peer mentoring
- Supporting with extra-curricular activities

Student voice

- Student leadership team
- Post 16 council
- Prefects

Others

- Aspirations Employability Diploma (AED)
- International trips
- University cooking skills
- Fundraising events
- Charity sports matches
- Local trips

Art

We offer a specialist A-Level in Fine Art following the two year AQA course. Fine art offers opportunities to use your creativity to express yourself. Students will develop their understanding of creative processes, their ability to observe and to think, to solve problems and to communicate in a visual way. During the course students will be given the opportunity to experiment with a wide range of techniques such as drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media, photography, installation, ceramics and sculpture. We have excellent facilities to support this course including 2 specialist art rooms, a dark room, photo studio, Mac suite, roller printing press and post 16 work space.

Details of exam board and syllabus number – AQA Art and Design 7200: Fine Art

Entry requirements

Grade Merit or above in BTEC Art (GCSE grade 6) and Grade 5 in English

Year 12 Provisional Course Outline

In Year 12 students are taught to further develop their skills and explore their own artistic identity. Initially all students are guided through workshops which focus on key skills such as recording and developing ideas, researching, experimenting with materials and reviewing their work. As the students' progress they are given more freedom to select their own area of focus.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

This course requires students to develop the skills to:

- record experiences and observations, in a variety of ways using drawing or other appropriate visual forms; undertake research; and gather, select and organise visual and other appropriate information.
- explore relevant resources; analyse, discuss and evaluate images, objects and artefacts; and make and record independent judgements.
- use knowledge and understanding of the work of others to develop and extend thinking and inform our own work.
- generate and explore potential lines of enquiry using appropriate media and techniques
- apply knowledge and understanding in making images and artefacts; review and modify work; and plan and develop ideas in the light of their own and others' evaluations.
- organise, select and communicate ideas, solutions and responses, and present them in a range of visual, tactile and/or sensory forms.

Assessment

All components are assessed by your teachers and moderated by the exam board.

Component 1: Coursework Portfolio 60% (assessed Jan Year 13)

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% (assessed May Year 13)

The Future

An A Level in Fine Art can lead to a wide variety of degree subjects through UCAS or an Art and Design degree via a one-year full time pre-BA Foundation course in Art and Design. Studying a fine art related degree at university can give you all sorts of exciting career opportunities, including: Architect, Art therapist, Art valuer, Artist in residence, Illustrator, Multimedia artist, Mural artist, Museum/gallery curator, Painter, Printmaker, Sculptor, Teacher

Biology

The course is divided into biological topics, each containing different key concepts of Biology. Once the key features of a biological topic have been developed, applications are considered.

Exam board information: OCR (H420)

Entry requirements

Students must have grade 66 for Science GCSE (double award) and a grade 6 in Biology or the Biology paper. If you would like to study all three Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) at A level you are required to have achieved two grade 7s in the GCSE Sciences.

Year 12 Course Outline

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Biology
Module 2 – Foundations in Biology
Module 3 – Exchange and Transport

Year 13 Course Outline

Module 4 – Biodiversity, Evolution and Disease
Module 5 – Communication, Homeostasis and Energy
Module 6 – Genetics, Evolution and Ecosystem

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

- Class lectures
- Class discussion
- Class practical's
- Group work
- Presentations
- Fieldwork
- Individual investigations, study and research
- Visits

Assessment

Biological Processes (100 marks) - written paper - 37% of total A level
Biological Diversity (100 marks) - written paper - 37% of total A level
Unified Biology (70 marks) - written paper - 26% of total A level

Practical endorsement in Biology completed during lessons and recorded in a lab book.
Exams will be taken at the end of year 13.

The Future

Biology is a great choice of subject for people who want a career in health and clinical professions, such as medicine, nursing, biochemistry, dentistry or forensic science.

Business Studies

A-level Business Studies helps students: develop a critical understanding of organisations, the markets they serve and the process of adding value and to be aware that business behaviour can be studied from the perspectives of a range of stakeholders.

Exam board information: AQA (7132)

Entry requirements

Grade 5 in Maths and English.

Although not an entry requirement, this course is particularly suitable for students who have studied GCSE Business Studies as this specification builds on the concepts and skills they have already learned. You would be expected to have gained at least a grade 6 in either GCSE Business studies plus a grade 5 in GCSE English and Maths.

Year 12 Provisional Course Outline

Defining what is meant by business including its nature and purpose; the different forms of business, leadership styles and decision making.

Year 12 will also understand the functional areas and how to improve marketing, operational, financial and human resource performance.

Year 13 Provisional Course Outline

Will move onto analyse and evaluate strategies for success and how to select, pursue and manage the most appropriate strategy.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

It provides the opportunity to explore events in the business world as a means of reinforcing understanding of theories and concepts. It is intended to promote active rather than passive understanding and it focuses on the contemporary business world to reflect contemporary issues, e.g. entrepreneurship, customer service and emerging markets. The Year 13 units also have a similar modern feel and throughout the course students will make use of real-life case studies.

Assessment

All units of the course are assessed by written examinations taken in year 13. Paper 1 includes multiple choice and longer answers including assessment of essays. Paper 2 involves questions based on three case studies and Paper 3 is an analysis of a case study business and evaluates strategies for success.

The Future

The course will get you started in Business and give you the skills and knowledge to progress to either higher education or you could work for a corporation, or maybe a management consultancy. All businesses (and other organisations like charities and hospitals) need sound business skills behind them.

BTEC Business

The BTEC National Level 3 in Business has been developed to recognise learners' skills, knowledge and understanding of business functions, environments and operations.

Exam board information: BTEC Extended Certificate in Business (NQF) 601/7159/5

Entry requirements

A keen interest in the area. If you studied the subject in Year 11 you should achieve at least a Merit grade at Level 2. To progress onto the Diploma programme in Year 13 you will have to pass this course with a Merit or Distinction grade.

Year 12 Course Outline

Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate in Business (NQF)

To achieve the full award, you will need to successfully complete 4 units of work.

There are 4 compulsory units:

- Unit 1 Exploring Business
- Unit 2 Developing a Marketing Campaign
- Unit 3 Personal and Business Finance
- Unit 8 Recruitment and Selection Process

With Unit 2, the task is set and marked by the exam board and completed under supervised conditions. Learners will be provided with a case study two weeks before a supervised assessment period in order to carry out research. Unit 3 is assessed through an exam, and Unit 1 and 8 are assessed using coursework.

This course can be done as a 1 A level (in 1 option block) or 2 A level version (over 2 option blocks).

Year 13 Course Outline

You will progress onto the Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Business (NQF) that is the equivalent of one or two A levels.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

You will carry out a range of tasks that have been designed to recognise your achievements in a modern, practical way that is relevant to the workplace.

Assessment

All units are either centre-assessed or externally moderated by BTEC. There will be a timetabled exam for Unit 3; candidates may complete units at a time that suits the centre. The full award and units from this qualification are graded as Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*.

The Future

The course will get you started in Business and give you the skills and knowledge to progress to either higher education or you could work for a corporation, or maybe a management consultancy. All businesses (and other organisations like charities and hospitals) need sound business skills behind them.

Chemistry

The specification is divided into chemical topics, each containing different key concepts of Chemistry. Once the key features of a chemical topic have been developed, applications are considered.

Exam board information: OCR

Entry requirements

Students must have grade 6 for Science GCSE (double award) and a grade 6 in Chemistry or the Chemistry paper. If you would like to study all three Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) at A level you are required to have achieved two grade 7s in the GCSE Sciences.

Course Outline:

Content is split into six teaching modules taught in Years 12 and 13:

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in chemistry

Module 2 – Foundations in chemistry

Module 3 – Periodic table and energy

Module 4 – Core organic chemistry

Module 5 – Physical chemistry and transition elements

Module 6 – Organic chemistry and analysis

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

In lessons students will participate in discussions and give presentations on the content of each unit. Students will apply their knowledge and develop their problem-solving skills through exercises tackled both in lesson and at home. A structured programme of practicals runs alongside the theory lessons where students will develop the practical skills needed for Unit 4. Students will compile a file of practicals during this programme that will be used as their PAG for both years.

Assessment

Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (100 marks) – written paper – 37% of total A level

Synthesis and analytical techniques (100 marks) – written paper – 37% of total A level

Unified chemistry (70 marks) – written paper – 26% of total A level

Practical endorsement in chemistry done during lessons and recorded in a lab book.

Exam will be taken at the end of year 13.

The Future

Chemistry is a great choice of subject for people who want a career in health and clinical professions, such as medicine, nursing, biochemistry, dentistry or forensic science. It will also equip you for a career in industry, for example in the petrochemical or pharmaceutical industries. Chemistry at A level also is a desired subject for entry requirements to study Law at University.

Computer Science

Computing is an exciting course that gives you a strong understanding of how computers work and how to write your own programs. It focuses on problem-solving, mathematical reasoning; and engineering based thinking, it is a good foundation for understanding future challenges in this fast moving technological world. Computing is about designing new algorithms to solve new problems. This course covers the technical side of Computing including 'Programming' and 'Computer Architecture'.

Exam board information: OCR

Entry requirements

Grade 7 Maths, not required but if taken, grade 6 at GCSE

Year 12 Course Outline

Some topics that you will cover include: Computer Fundamentals, Programming Techniques and Logical Methods and much more.

Assessment

A Level Computer Science is assessed through two written exams (each worth 40%) and a Programming Project (worth 20%). There is one resit opportunity for this subject.

The Future

A Level, Level 3 Cambridge Technical in IT or Digital Media, university, employment, Level 4 higher apprenticeships

Economics

The aims of the course are to encourage students to:

- Develop an understanding of economic concepts and theories through a critical consideration of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life.
- Apply economic concepts and theories in a range of contexts and to appreciate their value and limitations in explaining real-world phenomena.
- Analyse, explain and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the market economy and the role the government within it participate effectively in society as citizens, producers and consumers.

Exam board information: AQA

Entry requirements

Grade 5 in Maths and English

Year 12 Course Outline

Students will study both micro and macroeconomics and as such will be required to acquire knowledge and understanding of a selection of microeconomic models and to apply these to current problems and issues. Students should also have a good knowledge of developments in the UK economy and government policies over the past fifteen years.

Year 13 Course Outline

Year 12 will be further developed with students demonstrating a realistic understanding of the decisions made by firms and how their behaviour can be affected by the structure and characteristics of the industry in which they operate. Other key models relate to the operation of labour markets, wage determination and causes of inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth. In the case of the macro elements of the course they will need to be aware of developments in the world economy, including the European Union, and how these have affected the UK. Furthermore, they should be prepared to propose, analyse and evaluate possible solutions to macroeconomic problems.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

A Level Economics requires a reasonable level of numeracy but it is not mathematical. The main skill that you will need is the ability to learn to use economic data, to interpret graphs and tables, identify trends using your economic toolkit. You should not be afraid of numbers, be keen on solving problems and have an interest in contemporary affairs. You should be someone who likes to conduct your own research and be willing to work individually and in groups.

Assessment

The A-Level courses in Year 13 is assessed by three written examinations based on multiple choice, data response and essay style questions.

The Future

Economics is a very highly regarded subject that can lead to a wide range of careers in Business, Finance, Accountancy and the Social Sciences. Economics provides opportunities for careers in the private or public sector, in the UK or abroad. Economists will be found working in every sector of the economy.

English GCSE

The examination tests students' proficiency in reading, understanding, writing and speaking the English Language. Students need to be fast and efficient readers in order to tackle successfully the comprehension questions in the examination. There is no literature component.

Exam board information: Edexcel

Entry requirements

Any student who has not previously obtained a grade 4 in GCSE English Language will automatically be entered to take this examination

Course Outline

Edexcel English GCSE allows learners to develop the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both speech and writing. They learn how to employ a wide-ranging vocabulary, use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, and develop a personal style and an awareness of the audience being addressed.

Assessment

Two examinations

The Future

A GCSE pass at grade 4 or above is required for a considerable number of A Level and OCR National or BTEC Diploma courses. For any students ultimately considering higher education, a grade 4 in English is a requirement for admission to any degree course in any subject.

English Literature

This qualification gives you the opportunity to study literature across the genres of prose, poetry and drama, and to read around concepts of literature and literary analysis.

Exam board information: OCR H472

Entry requirements

Grade 6 in English Language and Literature

Year 12 Provisional Course Outline

Students complete a comparative study focusing on American Fiction. They will study the novel for their close analysis coursework and a collection of 21st Century poetry and a well-known 20th Century play, which will form the basis for their comparative coursework.

Year 13 Provisional Course Outline

Students consolidate their learning and the skills developed in Year 12 whilst studying pre-twentieth century poetry, drama and prose. This includes the study of Shakespeare, Chaucer and Webster. Completion of coursework folder comprising two analytical essays. Folder length 3000 words.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

- Discussion
- Research
- Theatre visits
- Educational seminars
- Coursework assignments
- Exemplar materials
- Group/individual presentations

Assessment

2 examinations at the end of Year 13 – 80% of final grade

1 coursework portfolio comprising of two analytical essays – 20% of final grade

Exam texts

The Great Gatsby – F Scott Fitzgerald, The Grapes of Wrath – John Steinbeck

The Duchess of Malfi – John Webster, The Merchants Tale – Geoffrey Chaucer

Hamlet - William Shakespeare

Coursework Texts

A Clockwork Orange – Anthony Burgess, The Crucible – Arthur Miller, Search Party – George the Poet

The Future

If you are considering going on to Higher Education, the English Literature qualification provides a wide range of opportunities for degree courses in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The English Literature qualification is also welcomed for many different careers because it emphasises creativity, disciplined thought and communication, plus an ability to synthesise and contextualise ideas. The ability to create and sustain written arguments would be greatly beneficial in most degree subjects.

BTEC Engineering

Our engineering courses are interdisciplinary and project-based with practical work in our well-equipped engineering workshop. We possess first class engineering equipment including CNC turning centres and routers, 3D printers, pillar drills, and casting and vacuum moulding units.

Exam board information: Pearson BTEC Level 3 in Engineering

Entry requirements

A keen interest in the area. If you studied the subject in Year 11 at SSWL you should achieve at least a Merit grade at Level 2.

Course Outline

Students will study Engineering Principles, Engineering Mathematics, Computer-Aided Design and Manufacture (CAD/CAM), Electronic PCB Design and Manufacture, Engineering Thermodynamics, Fluid Mechanics, Additive Manufacturing, and Projects Engineering. Our program is aimed at problem formulation and practical problem solving.

Assessment

They are taught in 2 hour lesson blocks each week and the number of lesson blocks the student attends will be dependent on the level being taken.. A level 3 pass in a specified number of units in the course is equivalent to an E Grade in the national A Level grading system. Merit & Distinction passes are equivalent to C and A grades respectively in the same A Level system. Students can take an equivalent of 1, 2 and 3 A level subjects. Final grades range from D* to Pass. Students entering this course are expected to have passed their GCSE Mathematics and English Language in the grade ranges of 9 to 4. Assessment is by Board led examinations and assignments together with centre set assignments that meet the Pearson Examination Board standards and verification.

The Future

The course will get you started in a range of engineering opportunities such as aircraft, BMS graphics and production. It will also give you the skills and knowledge to progress further in higher education.

Geography

The A-level Geography course gives you a strong foundation for understanding the two main themes of the subject: **human** geography and **physical** geography. Human geography deals with how people and the environment interact and the way we both exist. Physical geography on the other hand, is all about the natural and scientific aspects of our world, with an emphasis on how we can manage them.

Exam board information: AQA

Entry requirements

Grade 6 in Geography

Human Units of Study

- **Changing Places** (Core)
- **Global Systems and Global Governance** (Core)
- **Contemporary Urban Environments** (Option selected)

Physical Units of Study

- **Hazards** (Core)
- **Water and Carbon Cycles** (Core)
- **Coastal Systems and Landscapes** (Option selected)

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

In Year 12 candidates are required to become proficient in a range of research and investigative skills through geographical fieldwork. These fieldwork activities take place towards the end of Year 12. Candidates in Year 13 extend their research/investigative work and continue to develop essay writing skills in particular. Both years will provide an opportunity to acquire new skills such as debating and interrogating data across a variety of data presentation formats.

Assessment

Exams in Geography are completed at the end of Year 13.

Year 13 - 40% Human, 40% Physical

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) (20%) - Students will also have the opportunity to complete an NEA (coursework). This is an individual research project which is linked to an area of study within the specification content.

The Future

If you specialise in Geography at higher education (or use your Geography A Level as a stepping stone), you could find yourself working across various industries. These include banking, geo-engineering, education, law, consultancy and research. Geography is about the interaction between people and our planet. It is this interaction, coupled with the extended writing and data analysis opportunities which employers, colleges and universities are actively looking for. Geography A level will ensure you have a firm foundation for whatever you choose to do following your A levels.

History

The course offers students the opportunity to study history in length and breadth as well as in depth, to develop expertise in various skills (general as well as historical) and to acquire and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the periods studied.

The topics that we study across the two-year period provide students with a sound historical understanding on key international events that have shaped the world we live in today. They also provide a strong foundation to a wide variety of Humanities/Social Science degrees should they choose to continue further study at university.

Exam board information: AQA (7042)

Entry requirements

Grade 6 in History and a grade 5 in English Language

Year 12 Course Outline

British History in the Early Modern Period and the Twentieth Century.

Component 1 - Breadth Study: The Tudors, 1485 – 1603

Component 3 - Independent Study

Year 13 Provisional Course Outline

Component 2 – Depth Study: The American Dream: Reality and Illusion 1945 - 1980

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

Lessons will consist of a variety of learning styles (e.g. seminars, group work, debates)

Students will also have the opportunities for independent history research for the coursework option

(component 2) to allow students to direct their own learning and to prepare them for University courses.

Assessment

Year 12

- No external assessments
- Component 3 is coursework and will be completed from Easter until July

Year 13

- Component 1 and 2 will both be assessed in June. Both papers are essay based exams and last 2 hours.

The Future

An A Level in History gives you knowledge and skills which will prepare you for higher education, and which are also useful in any career. History is a very well-respected A-level because it develops strong critical thinking skills through forcing you to adopt a critical approach towards sources of information.

Students who specialise in History can go on to a wide range of careers such as the legal profession, the civil service, teaching, local government, politics, and in pressure groups and charities. History skills are especially useful in research based occupations such as journalism, the police and the law.

BTEC IT

The BTEC Nationals in IT qualification has been developed to recognise candidates' skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT functions, environments and operations. They have been designed to accredit candidates' achievements in a modern and practical way that is relevant to the IT workplace.

Exam board information: Pearson

Entry requirements

A keen interest in the area is essential. If you studied the subject in Year 11 you should achieve at least a Merit Grade at Level 2.

BTEC National Certificate in IT

To achieve the full award, you will need to successfully complete the studies of 8 units of work equivalent to 1 A level.

There are 8 units:

- Information Technology Systems (external exam)
- Creating Systems to Manage Information (external exam)
- Cyber security (external exam)
- Using Social Media in Business (external exam)
- Programming (coursework)
- IT Project Management (coursework)
- The Internet of Things(coursework)
- Mobile Apps Development (coursework)

Year 13 Diploma Course Outline

You will progress onto the BTEC National in IT Diploma, which is the equivalent of two A levels. You will study a further 6 units of work.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

You will carry out a range of tasks that have been designed to recognise your achievements in a modern, practical way that is relevant to the workplace. This will provide you with an introduction to different aspects of the IT industry.

Assessment

All internal units are marked by the ICT department and externally assessed by the OCR examination board. There are 3 timetabled exams for this qualification; candidates' complete units within strict deadlines. The full award and units from this qualification are graded as Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction *.

The Future

The course will give you the skills and knowledge to progress to higher education. This course will also be particularly suitable for those who wish to study in preparation for (or alongside) employment in job roles where they will be expected to use a range of IT software, liaise with customers and carry out IT operational roles.

Law

A robust legal system is the foundation of a fair society. If you feel strongly about concepts like justice and equality, then this GCE course could be very rewarding for you. You might see yourself as a barrister, a solicitor, legal executive or legal secretary. Alternatively, you might want to choose Law because it is a fascinating course that will help you develop transferable skills such as analysis and problem solving.

Exam board information: AQA

Entry requirements

Grade 6 in English Language

Course Outline

Paper 1: The nature of law and the English Legal System.

Criminal Law

Paper 2: The nature of law and the English Legal System.

The Law of Tort.

Paper 3: The nature of law and the English Legal System.

The Law of Contract.

Each paper will focus on a different area of the English Legal System as well as the specific area of law detailed above.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

As you progress through the course you'll learn about: law making and the legal system, civil and criminal liability and central concepts of law. Lessons will consist of a variety of learning styles including seminars, group work, debates, simulations and role plays.

During the course there will be a range of opportunities for legal visits to places such as the Courts.

Students have told us that some of the most engaging topics include learning about the elements required for each different criminal offence, especially offences against the person.

Assessment

The A Level is assessed by completing three 2 hour written papers.

The Future

A GCE in Law will enhance your chances of being accepted into university, either to take a Law degree, a Social Science or Business degree, or any other course of study. Law can lead to many careers including those in the legal field, such as a solicitor or barrister. It is useful in many areas such as Business, Banking and local Government.

Mathematics GCSE

You will be covering all the topics you came across at Key Stage 3 such as data, number, shape, algebra, geometry and problem solving.

Exam board information: Edexcel

Entry requirements

The course offers both a foundation & higher route to GCSE Maths for students who narrowly missed achieving a Grade 4 in Year 11. Any student who has not previously obtained a 4 grade in GCSE Mathematics will be required to take this examination.

Course Outline

Students follow the National Curriculum Key Stage 4 course, covering the four Attainment Targets: Using and Applying Mathematics, Number and Algebra, Shape, Space & Measures and Data Handling. In this course, there are two tiers of entry, Higher and Foundation. All Students have access to achieve at least a Grade 5 for their GCSE Maths. This course gives students the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of Maths and enables them to apply this to problem solving.

Assessment

Three examinations: each 1.5 hours long covering a range of topics.

The Future

A GCSE pass at grade 5 or above is required for a considerable number of AS and OCR National or BTEC Diploma courses. For any students ultimately considering higher education, many universities and colleges of higher education require GCSE Maths minimum grade 7 for their degree courses including teacher training.

Mathematics & Further Mathematics

You will cover pure and applied modules. In pure mathematics you will learn to solve complex problems using logical approaches whereas applied modules will put mathematics into real-life contexts. Obviously strong mathematics ability is required, as well as the ability to think logically, but it is just as important to be inquisitive! Asking 'why' will get you a lot further than asking 'how'.

Exam board information: Edexcel

Entry requirements

You will need a Grade 7 in order to be able to cope with the requirements of A Level Mathematics. A student with a GCSE grade 6 may be considered if they pass an algebra test to assess their suitability for the course. Further Mathematics requires a Grade 8.

Course Outline

The A Level course consists of Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics. Pure Mathematics extends the algebra and trigonometry learnt for GCSE and combines these in the context of graphical and applied problems. It also introduces the key tool of calculus - the mathematics of changes. The Applied course deals with Statistics and Mechanics. Statistics involves problems in probability, distributions and hypothesis testing whilst Mechanics covers problems of motion (kinematics) with Newton's laws of motion together with Forces and applications of Vectors.

Further Mathematics extends the A Level course and introduces options to study Further Pure, Further Mechanics or Further Statistics.

Assessment

Three examinations: two in Pure and one in Applied.

The Future

Research shows that anyone taking A Level Mathematics will earn an average of 11% more than those not taking the subject. So, for those taking the subject, the future is bright!

More importantly, perhaps, this subject is prerequisite for a wide range of courses in higher education:

Accountancy

Physics

Engineering (Mechanical, Electronic, Nuclear, Civic, Marine, Materials, Aeronautical, Chemical, Biological)

Computer Science

Business

Economics

Mathematics

Statistics

Chemistry

A Level Mathematics is also useful for a number of other subjects, like Medicine, but not a prerequisite

Photography

Photography is one of the most important and influential means of modern communication. The AS/A2 level course will develop creative, intellectual and practical skills so that students are able to use a camera to express their ideas effectively. We offer a specialist A-Level in Photography following the two year AQA course. During the course students will be given the opportunity to experiment with a wide range of techniques and genres. We have excellent facilities to support this course including a dark room, photo studio, Mac suite, professional printers and cameras, and a post 16 work space.

Details of exam board and syllabus number: AQA Art and Design 7200: Photography

Entry requirements

Grade 6 in Photography or any other creative subject and Grade 5 in English.

Year 12 Course Outline

In Year 12 students are taught to further develop their skills and explore their own interests as a photographer. Initially all students are guided through workshops which focus on key skills such as recording and developing ideas, researching, experimenting with materials and reviewing their work. As the students' progress they are given more freedom to select their own focus.

Year 13 Course Outline

The Year 13 programme is a natural progression from Year 12 allowing the students the chance to further develop and enhance individual learning and potential through skills gained in Year 12. By the second year of the A-Level course students should be working in partnership with their teachers to develop their own choice of final project work.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

Candidates are required to work in **one or more** area(s) of Photography, such as those listed below. They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas.

- portraiture
- landscape photography (working from the urban, rural and/or coastal environment)
- still life photography (working from objects or from the natural world)
- documentary photography, photojournalism
- fashion photography
- experimental imagery
- multimedia
- photographic installation
- moving image (video, film, animation).

Assessment

All components are assessed by your teachers and moderated by the exam board.

Component 1: Coursework Portfolio 60% (assessed Jan Year 13)

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% (assessed May Year 13)

The Future

An A-Level in Photography can lead to a wide variety of degree subjects through UCAS or an Art and Design degree via a one-year full time pre-BA Foundation course. Studying a Photography related degree at university can give you all sorts of exciting career opportunities, including: Animation, Commercial photography, Creative and editorial photography, Digital media, Fashion photography, Film and television, Film and visual culture, Forensic photography, Graphics with photography, Medical photography or Visual communication

Physics

The Physics course has been designed to engage and inspire students beginning with a study of the laws, theories and models of physics and finishes with an exploration of their practical applications.

Exam board information: AQA (7408)

Entry requirements

Students must have grade 6-6 for Science GCSE (double award) or a grade 6 in Separate physics. Students must also have a grade 6 in Mathematics. If you would like to study all three Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) at A level you are required to have achieved two grade 7s in the GCSE Sciences.

Year 12 Course Outline

Module 1 – Particles and radiation

Module 2 – Waves

Module 3 – Mechanics

Module 4 – Electricity

Throughout both years students build up skills in data handling and particle work.

Year 13 Course Outline

Module 5 – Further mechanics and thermal physics

Module 6 – Fields and their consequences

Module 7 – Nuclear physics

Module 8 – Astrophysics (option A)

Throughout both years students build up skills in data handling and particle work.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

Your teachers will encourage you to study in a variety of ways in their theory and practical lessons.

Practical sessions will develop your skills in handling apparatus.

Assessment

Paper 1 (85 marks) - written paper - 34% of total A level (Year 1 + periodic motion)

Paper 2 (85 marks) - written paper - 34% of total A level (Year 2 + assumed year 1 knowledge)

Paper 3 (80 marks) - written paper - 22% of total A level (Practical skills + Astrophysics)

Practical endorsement in Physics completed during lessons and recorded in a lab book

Exams will be taken at the end of year 13.

The Future

Physics leads on to a wide range of courses and careers. You could use Physics to support other qualifications or move on to further studies or employment, including a degree course such as Physics, the Sciences, Medicine, Engineering (including Chemical Engineering) and related programmes. Employment in the area of, for example, Radiography or Biotechnology.

Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind through behaviour and experience. Psychologists study what people do by using a scientific methodology to test their theories of human behaviour. Psychologists also seek to understand what it is like for the individual, as well as trying to make sense of people's behaviour in order to help them. Psychology is made up of many approaches, including Behavioural, Cognitive, Biological, Evolutionary, Humanistic and the Psychodynamic approach.

Exam board information: AQA

Entry requirements

Grade 5 in English Language, grade 6 in Science or grade 5 in Maths.

Year 12 Provisional Course Outline

Social Influence; Attachment; Psychopathology; Memory; Approaches in Psychology & Research Methods.

Year 13 Provisional Course Outline

Topics in Psychology - Schizophrenia; Forensic Psychology; Relationships (as well as a thorough revision of all the topics studied during Year 12)

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

Lessons will be varied, consisting of lectures, the use of worksheets, internet based resources, group discussions, paired activities, past exam questions, and participation in experiments. You will be encouraged to undertake your own research and become an independent learner.

Assessment

Terminal exams at the end of Year 13

The Future

This course gives you an insight into the workings of the human mind - to guide you into knowing what makes people 'tick.' It should help you to get the best out of yourselves and others at school, home and at work. Psychology can help your career either directly or indirectly. Of course, if you wish to become a Psychologist, Psychotherapist or Mental health worker, this A Level is of direct value.

Politics

The Politics course has been designed to encourage an interest in and enthusiasm for the study of Politics and will enable students to develop an insight into political beliefs central to an understanding of the modern world.

Exam board information: Edexcel

Entry requirements

Grade 5 in English Language

Year 12 Course Outline

The Year 12 course provides an introduction to the subject through a detailed examination of UK politics. Students learn about a wide variety of topics to deepen their understanding of the political system including what are political parties; democracy in the UK; what are pressure groups; elections and voting; the British constitution; the role of Parliament; what is the judiciary; and the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Year 13 Course Outline

The Year 13 course allows more specialisation requiring more search analysis and evaluation and offers a choice of challenging topics. Students will learn about the background to global politics from the end of the Second World War; the nature of sovereignty, what is globalisation and its impact; what is power in the modern world; the role of the United Nations and NATO; the European Union and regionalism and the environment as a global issue.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

Lessons will consist of a variety of learning styles (e.g. seminars, group work, debates, and presentations) as well as debates, weekly news quiz and lots of discussion. We have access to an online learning platform and access to a support network with other schools.

During the course there will be opportunities to go on trips such as to Parliament and the Supreme Court.

Assessment

The Year 12 and Year 13 courses are both assessed by 2 examinations.

The Future

Many students who have taken the A Level in Government and Politics go on to study Politics or International Relations at University, as well as law and media and can pursue careers in local government, the Civil Service, journalism or other media, national politics and the law as well as teaching in both schools and higher education. Politics equips students with a firm grasp of global events and an understanding of how the modern world works. It also enables them to question and use their critical thinking, skills increasingly valued by employers.

Science BTEC

Students in Year 12 are now able to study Level 3 BTEC National Extended Certificate in Applied Science, an alternative vocational A-level equivalent. It is designed for students who are interested in learning about the sector alongside other fields of study, with a view of progressing to a wide range of higher education courses.

It includes topics on all 3 areas of Science: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It is vocational – it links directly to the jobs that Scientists do e.g. in hospitals, labs. It is coursework, practical based and includes an end of year externally assessed unit. It is recognized by Universities and students can earn UCAS points.

Exam board information: Edexcel

Entry requirements

Students need to achieve at least a grade 5 in GCSE Science and a grade 4 in GCSE Maths

Year 12 Course Outline

Students will cover three compulsory modules:

- Principles and Applications of Science I
- Practical and scientific procedures and techniques
- Science Investigative skills

Year 13 Course Outline

Students will complete optional modules based on all three areas of Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

The teaching will be through a combination of individual and group tasks. Students will be required to complete practical, lab based work as well as research projects. To be successful on this course students should be able to work independently and enjoy practical activities.

Assessment

This course is assessed through a portfolio of assignments.

The Future

Students will gain a variety of transferable skills throughout the course. These skills are recognised by employers and universities as being of great value. Students are able to go directly into employment within the science industry or can go on to study science based courses at university.

Sociology

Sociology is the 'study of society' and it is a very popular A Level course across the country. The term 'society' refers to the world around you, your community, your country, and all the different people and groups that exist, with their different cultures, beliefs, values, languages, religions etc. It gives students the chance to study and understand why things are the way they are, and why people behave in certain ways.

Exam board information: AQA

Entry requirements

Grade 5 in English Language

Year 12 Course Outline

The Year 12 course provides an introduction to the subject through an examination of the most prominent areas of society that impacts everyone's lives. The course covers the following:

- The Education system – what is it for? How does it change and socialise people? Does it give everyone a fair start?
- The Family – how is it changing? What are gender roles and how are they assigned and shared within the family? What is the dark side of the family?
- Sociological Theory and Methods – how do we know what we think we know about society? What is fact and what are myths?

Year 13 Course Outline

The Year 13 course focusses on two more topic areas that are central to society:

- Media - Who owns the media? How does the media affect people's views-does it report them or create them?
- Crime and deviance – is the criminal justice system fair on all groups? Why are men more likely to commit crime and go to prison? Why are some groups over represented in prison and in crime statistics?
- Sociological theories – Marxism, Functionalism, Labelling theories, Realism and others

Type and nature of work required and skills involved

The course requires students to complete extended writing, essay tasks and independent research. Students need to be able to express their ideas and communicate well in writing.

Assessment

The Year 12 and Year 13 courses are assessed by 3 examinations taken at the end of year 13. There are a range of assessments including stimulus based questions, short answers and essay questions. There is no coursework unit.

The Future

Many students who have taken A Level Sociology go on to study Sociology, Social Work or a related course at university. The subject content you learn is directly relevant to a number of careers in the civil service, education and the health sector. The analytical skills that you will develop are also highly sought after in business and other careers.

Entrance Requirements

General entrance requirements

Course Level	Requirements
4 A Levels	Must have a grade 8 average in GCSEs.
3 A Levels	Seven 9 - 5 grades in full course GCSE subjects. No vocational subjects allowed
3 A Level / Vocational Level 3 Combination	Combination of five 9 - 4 grades at GCSE or merit or above in Vocational subjects.
Vocational Level 3 subjects	Five 9-4 grades at GCSE or equivalent, with at least a Merit or grade 4 in a relevant Vocational qualification or GCSE.

Maths English Specific requirements

Resit English GCSE	Students who have not achieved a grade 4 or above in either English Language or Literature will be required to re-sit English Language GCSE.
Resit Maths GCSE	Students who have not achieved a grade 4 or above will need to re-sit their Maths GCSE.

BTEC Specific Requirements

If a subject is studied at Level 2, a Merit is required.

Additional entrance requirements

Subject	English grade	Maths Grade	Relevant subject requirements/information
Biology	-	-	Students must have two grade 6's for Science GCSE (double award) and a grade 6 in Biology or the Biology paper
Art Photography	5		Grade 6 at GCSE
Business Studies - A Level	5	5	Not required but if taken, grade 6 at GCSE. Extended writing subject
Chemistry	-	6	Students must have two grade 6's for Science GCSE (double award) and a grade 6 in Chemistry or the Chemistry paper.
Computer Science	-	7	Not required but if taken, grade 6 at GCSE
Economics	5	5	Extended writing subject.
English	6	-	Students will need a combination of at least grade 5 and 6 in English Language and English Literature.
BTEC Engineering	-	-	Not required but if taken, grade L2 Merit at GCSE
Geography	-	-	Grade 6 at GCSE. Extended writing subject
History	5	-	Grade 6 in GCSE History. Extended writing subject
IT BTEC	-	-	Not required but if taken, grade L2 Merit at GCSE
Law	6	-	Extended writing subject
Maths	-	6-7	A student who achieves a GCSE grade 6 will have to pass an algebra test to assess their suitability for the course.
Maths - Further	-	8	Must also be doing Maths A Level
Physics	-	6	Students must have two grade 6's for Science GCSE (double award) and grade 6 in Physics or the Physics paper.
Psychology	5	5	Grade 6 in Science or grade 5 in Maths, Extended writing subject
Politics	5		Extended writing subject
BTEC Science	-	-	Grade 5 for double award Science
Sociology	5	5	Extended writing subject

Post 16 Dress Code

Post 16 students are important representatives of the Academy and role models for younger students. As such their appearance must be outstanding and they are asked to observe the dress code outlined below. This applies on Academy premises, when travelling to and from the Academy, attending trips, taking examinations or representing Rivers Academy in any way.

The principles of the code are that students should dress smartly and with formality appropriate for the business/educational workplace. Students should be mindful that at all times and in all places their appearance and conduct contribute to the community's perception of Rivers Academy.

1. Boys are to wear two piece suits with a shirt and tie. The top button must be done up and ties worn at all times. Ties must be appropriate for attendance at the Academy and shirts must be tucked in. Suits must be black, navy or grey.
2. Girls must wear a formal suit consisting of a tailored jacket and either matching tailored trousers or a formal matching tailored skirt. They may wear a tailored dress with a jacket, but clothes must not be of a tight, stretchy, lycra material. Trousers, skirts and dresses should be 100% polyester and skirts/dresses must be knee length. Suits must be black, navy or grey.
3. Girls should wear plain tops of a modest length and necklines should be appropriate for the workplace. Shoulders must be covered at all times.
4. All students should wear blazers at all times when travelling around the Academy.
5. All students should wear plain, practical, sturdy shoes with a low heel. Backless shoes, trainers and sandals are not appropriate. Boots should be business appropriate. Trousers must not be tucked into boots.
6. Students may wear discreet jewellery only. Boys may wear a single, plain sleeper stud ear-ring. Visible body jewellery, apart from earrings, is not permitted.
7. No student should have a visible tattoo. Parents are advised to ensure that their children know the implications of this rule.
8. Hair should be neat and well-cared for. Where hair is of shoulder length or longer it should be tied back in laboratories, workshops and during P.E. for safety reasons. Hair should have the appearance of being natural. Students are not to wear extreme hairstyles (e.g. lines shaved into hair, number 1 shave, extreme colours, lengths, Mohican styles etc.).
9. Boys may only wear beards/facial hair for reasons of religious observance, and a written request for permission to do so must first be made by parents to the Post 16 Leadership Team.

Further information

For more information, how to apply, or to speak to a member of the Post 16 team. Contact Rivers Academy on:

Tel: 020 8890 0245

Or visit <https://www.rivers-aspirations.org/>

Subject Teacher Contacts

If you would like specific information regarding course content, please do not hesitate to contact the subject leaders below:

Subject	Subject Leader	Contact
Arts	Ms C Beadle	cbeadle@rivers-aspirations.org
English	Mr S Rehill	srehill@rivers-aspirations.org
Maths	Mr S Abdulahi	sabdulahi@rivers-aspirations.org
Science Biology Chemistry Physics - (RAWL and SSWL)	Ms Y Maynier SSWL	ymanier@rivers-aspirations.org Physics info@spacestudiowestlondon.org ymanier@rivers-aspirations.org
Geography	Ms A Sparkes	asparkes@rivers-aspirations.org
History	Ms A Sparkes	asparkes@rivers-aspirations.org
Law	Mr W Berryman	wberryman@rivers-aspirations.org
Politics	Mr T Wormald	twormald@rivers-aspirations.org
Sociology	Mr T Wormald	twormald@rivers-aspirations.org
Business Economics	Ms A Aggrey	aaggrey@rivers-aspirations.org
Information Technology	Ms P Ravi	pravi@rivers-aspirations.org
BTEC Science	SSWL	info@spacestudiowestlondon.org
Psychology	Mr T Wormald	twormald@rivers-aspirations.org
BTEC Engineering	SSWL	info@spacestudiowestlondon.org
Computer Science	SSWL	info@spacestudiowestlondon.org

P16 Key Contacts

If you would like specific information regarding course content, please do not hesitate to contact the subject leaders below:

Name	Role	Contact
Ms E Hughes	Director of Post 16	ehughes@rivers-aspirations.org
Mr S Boreham	Coordinator of Post 16	sboreham@rivers-aspirations.org
Mrs A Leonard	Post 16 study Lead	aleonard@rivers-aspirations.org