

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the entry requirements for The Spires College Sixth Form?

Your Study Programme will be personal to you and, so, it is difficult to specify general entry requirements. Whatever the courses you choose, the most important requirements are:

- ▲ an enthusiastic and positive approach to your studies
- ▲ a commitment to being part of The Spires College community and meeting the high expectations we have of our students
- ▲ full time attendance and punctuality

Each pathway has its own entry requirements and many of the course within each pathway have further, specific entry requirements. You will need to meet both the pathway and course specific entry requirements. It is important that you check the course details carefully. If you haven't got a Grade 4 in GCSE English or Maths when you join the Sixth Form, you will be required to continue your studies in these subjects and resit these qualifications.

How many courses should I choose?

Your Study Programme in the Sixth Form is about much more than just the courses you choose. Your Programme is personal to you and will be made up of examination courses, tutorial, the opportunity to develop important skills for learning and life and a variety of other activities. We aim to provide you with a Programme which meets your individual needs and will provide you with the qualifications, skills and experiences to enable you to progress to Higher Education, employment or further training, as well as developing your personal interests. The Sixth Form Team will advise you carefully about the right number and types of courses for you.

Can you guarantee that all the courses that I choose will be available?

The courses in this brochure are our 'offer'. Whilst we would love to run all of the courses, sometimes we are not able to. Decisions about whether to run courses will depend on the number of students who opt for them. If we are not able to run a particular course for any reason, we will let you know in good time and advise you on choosing a different course.

How do I apply to The Spires College Sixth Form?

Simply complete the application form in your Prospectus or visit our website to download an application form. Application forms should be posted or handed into the Sixth Form Centre. The deadline for receipt of applications is 6 January 2017. See the Application Timeline for more information.

Will I have to come for an interview?

We meet with all applicants. This isn't really an interview, it's an opportunity to discuss your Study Programme and make sure that your Study Programme is exactly right for you. It's really important that you attend this meeting. Parents and carers are welcome to come, too.

What will happen at my Applicant's Meeting? Do I need to bring anything with me?

If you're not already a student at The Spires College, you will need to bring a recent school report with you. Your letter will tell you exactly what you need to bring. Applicants' Meetings will be held throughout January and February. Your meeting will be with a member of the Sixth Form Team. Your meeting is an opportunity for you to ask any questions that you might have and for us to advise you about the right courses and activities for your personalised Study Programme. At the end of your meeting you will be given an 'offer' confirming your Study Programme and the grades you will need to get to be able to do those courses.

Where can I get advice about which courses to choose?

A number of factors might influence your choice of Study Programme:

- ▲ you might have enjoyed or been good at a subject at GCSE
- ▲ you need a particular subject for your chosen career path or university course

In addition to these factors, you should also bear the following in mind:

- ▲ some subjects are much harder at Level 3 than at GCSE
- ▲ research carefully which Level 3 subjects and qualifications you need for your future plans. Check with university admissions if you are unsure or visit the UCAS website
- ▲ do your homework about what particular subjects involve at Level 3. Speak to current students and attend Drop Ins and Taster Sessions so you can meet teachers and get honest and informed advice and guidance

Entry onto Level 3 courses is based on whether you have the right qualifications at GCSE to be able to cope with the demands of the subject at Level 3. Each course has a different entry requirement, so you need to check carefully. The decisions you make now will affect the university courses open to you and, in an increasingly competitive market for places, your choices really do matter.

Universities need to know that students are well prepared for the academic rigour required to study at degree level. Some universities will require you to have studied a particular subject at A Level and many prefer that students have included at least one 'facilitating' subject as part of their Study Programme. These are:

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| ▲ Mathematics | ▲ Physics | ▲ Geography |
| ▲ Further Mathematics | ▲ Biology | ▲ History |
| ▲ English | ▲ Chemistry | ▲ Modern Foreign Languages |

By choosing one or more of these subjects, you are keeping as many options open as possible.

We know that it can all seem a bit overwhelming but there is plenty of support available to help you to make the right choices. You can attend 'drop in' sessions and Taster Sessions. We will let you know when they are via your tutor. If you are not a student at The Spires College, or if you are and need advice when there are no 'drop ins', simply give us a call on 01803 408852 or email sixthform@thespirescollege.com. Someone will give you a call or arrange for you to come in for a chat.

What happens if I change my mind about what I want to study?

You just need to let the Sixth Form Team know what you would like to change to. If it is a major change, we may ask you to come in for another meeting.

What happens if I don't get my predicted grades?

The most important thing is that you are studying on the right courses at the right level. Our admissions process takes place the day after your GCSE results are available. Every student will have an admissions interview and, if you haven't got the grades that you need, we will work with you to look at the options available to you. This might mean changing course. The Sixth Form Team will also be available for advice on GCSE results day or you can contact our Helpline. Full details will be on the website.

I heard that there have been some changes to A Levels. What are they?

The Government has made changes to the structure of A Levels. From September 2017, all A Levels will be 'linear', with all the assessment at the end of the two year course. Although AS Levels still exist, these will be separate, stand-alone qualifications. At The Spires College we do not offer AS Levels in the Sixth Form. All of our A Levels are two-year, linear courses.

What does linear mean?

Linear means that all examinations are taken at the end of two years of study.

Are the new linear A Levels more difficult than the old AS/A2 Levels?

The challenge of knowledge and understanding in A Level subjects will be the same, although some students may find it more difficult to take all their exams at the end of the course. Our specialist teachers will help you prepare for this so there is no need to worry.