

## PHILOSOPHY Advanced Level

**Qualification** Level 3 Advanced GCE in Philosophy

**Exam Board** AQA

**Course Specific Entry Requirements** Grade 6 or above in GCSE English Language **or** GCSE English Literature

### Overview

Philosophy literally translates as 'The Love of Wisdom'. As 'wisdom' comes from an earnest and honest analysis of life and the human experience, Philosophy addresses major questions about what it means to be human, the meaning and purpose of existence, and how we can 'best' live this life. Through studying and analysing concepts of Philosophers from a range of contexts, you will seek to not only understand these complex ideas but, in turn, to develop your own perspectives and answers to life's biggest questions. You will have the opportunity to engage with big questions in a purely secular context.

You will be assessed through two examinations at the end of the course. Each exam consists of two sections. This is a very heavily essay based course and so strong essay skills writing are highly recommended.

### What will I learn?

#### ▲ Paper 1 **Epistemology and Moral Philosophy**

- ▲ **Epistemology:** you will explore the nature of 'knowledge' by addressing questions such as ▲ What 'is' knowledge? ▲ How do we 'know' anything? ▲ Is there such a thing as real 'truth'? ▲ To what extent can we trust our sense perception in order to give us knowledge of the world? ▲ How reliable is 'reason' as a source of knowledge?
- ▲ **Moral Philosophy:** you will explore questions about what it means for something to be 'right' or 'wrong'/'good' or 'bad'. You will explore questions such as ▲ What makes something 'right' or 'wrong'? ▲ Does the will of the majority override the will of the minority? ▲ Do the consequences of an action make the action justified or are some things just always wrong? ▲ What does it mean to be a 'good' human being? You will also explore applied ethical issues including ▲ stealing ▲ simulated killing (for example, within computer games, plays and films) ▲ eating animals ▲ telling lies

#### ▲ Paper 2 **Metaphysics of God and Metaphysics of Mind**

- ▲ **Metaphysics of God:** you will explore the concept of God by asking questions such as ▲ What 'is' god? ▲ What are the arguments for and against the existence of God? ▲ Does it make sense to talk about 'God'? ▲ If God does exist why is there so much suffering in the world?
- ▲ **Metaphysics of Mind:** you will explore the nature and purpose of 'the mind' and explore questions such as ▲ Is there a distinction between the mind and body or the mind and brain? ▲ Can machines be said to have minds? ▲ Are human beings any more than material objects? ▲ Is there anything beyond the physical?

### How will I learn?

Lessons are designed to encourage active participation and are similar in style to those you might find in university seminars. Discussion is essential to all lessons. You will be encouraged to think for yourself beyond the 'taught' content. Lessons will also encourage you to develop reading, writing and critical thinking skills.

### Where could it lead?

Philosophy is highly valued by universities and in the workplace because it shows deep, critical level of thought. It has been called 'the ultimate transferrable work skill' with its emphasis on reason and argumentation. A qualification in Philosophy can, therefore, be highly desirable in a vast range of professions. Many who study go onto careers in law, medicine, journalism, politics, economics, business, teaching, International Aid, media to name but a few.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION Advanced Level

**Qualification** Level 3 Advanced GCE in Physical Education

**Exam Board** AQA

**Course Specific Entry Requirements** Grade 5 or above in GCSE PE **and** Grades 5-5 or above in GCSE Combined Science **or** Grade 5 or above in GCSE Biology

### Overview

This practical and engaging course has been developed to allow learners to study Physical Education in an academic setting, enabling them to critically analyse and evaluate their physical performance and apply their experience of practical activity in developing their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

### What will I learn?

Theory makes up 70% of your overall mark and is examined in seven different areas, applied anatomy and physiology, skill acquisition, sport and society, exercise physiology, biomechanical movement, sport psychology and the role of technology in sport.

The second part of the course is the non-examined assessment and this makes up the other 30% of the course. This section allows you to explore one sport in detail as a performer or coach, chosen from a wide variety of sporting activities. Learners will also analyse and evaluate performance in that chosen activity as part of their NEA.

Throughout the two year course you will:

- ▲ develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance
- ▲ understand how physiological and psychological states affect performance
- ▲ understand the key socio-cultural factors that influence people's involvement in physical activity and sport
- ▲ understand the role of technology in physical activity and sport
- ▲ refine your ability to perform effectively in physical activity and sport by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas
- ▲ develop your ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance
- ▲ understand the contribution which physical activity makes to health and fitness
- ▲ improve as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with curious and enquiring minds

### How will I learn?

The bulk of the course is studied in the classroom. There will be some practical activity but you will be expected to be taking part, regularly, in sport. When we do have practical lessons you will be expected to take an active role even if it is not your chosen sport.

### Where could it lead?

This course will prepare you for the further study of PE or Sports Science courses at university, as well as other related subjects such as Psychology, Sociology and Biology. You will also develop the transferable skills that are in demand from employers in all sectors of industry. The career opportunities that this course can lead to include PE teaching, sports science, sports psychology, sports coaching, physiotherapy and personal training.

## PHYSICS Advanced Level

**Qualification** Level 3 Advanced GCE in Physics

**Exam Board** AQA

**Course Specific Entry Requirements** Grades 6-6 or above in GCSE Combined Science **or** Grade 6 or above in GCSE Physics **and** Grade 6 or above in in GCSE Chemistry or GCSE Biology. You must also achieve Grade 6 or above in GCSE Mathematics

### Overview

A Level Physics is a challenging and rewarding course that gives you the opportunity to explore the phenomena of the universe and to look at theories that explain what is observed. This subject combines practical skills with theoretical ideas to develop descriptions of the physical universe. You will explore how our understanding of Universe has changed over time, from being able to predict the motion of planets and stars, to understanding the quantum behaviour of the atom and light, leading to advances in modern computing. If you are interested in the limits of space, the beginning of time and everything in between this is the subject for you. Physics is more than a subject – it trains your brain to think beyond boundaries.

### What will I learn?

▲ **Paper 1** Particles and quantum phenomena ▲ Waves ▲ Mechanics and materials ▲ Electricity

▲ **Paper 2** Thermal physics ▲ Fields and their consequences ▲ Nuclear physics

▲ **Paper 3** Practical skills ▲ Astrophysics

The whole of the A Level Physics course is examined at the end of the full course. There are three theory papers and a practical skills assessment. Your grade is determined by how well you do on the theory papers. Your result in the practical is noted as an endorsement alongside your A Level grade.

### Practical Skills Endorsement

As with all three sciences at A Level, you will be given the opportunity to use relevant apparatus and techniques in order to develop and demonstrate specific practical skills. There are twelve experiments over the two years of the course, with each experiment focussing on different skills. To receive the practical skills endorsement you must demonstrate competence in all of the skills. These will also be assessed in Paper 3.

### How will I learn?

A Level Physics is a mixture of highly conceptual thinking and very practical applications. You need to be able to think about abstract ideas such as fields and also be able to apply those ideas. This will mean that learning will take many different forms involving interactive and responsive teaching. There will also be many opportunities to develop your mathematical skills because mathematics is the language of Physics.

### Where could it lead?

Physics is a highly respected A Level and demonstrates to an employer that you have analytical and mathematical skills that you can apply to real life situations. There are many possible career paths that it could create for you, including engineering, medicine, forensic science, astronomy, cosmology, electronics, power generation, finance and many more.

If you want to find out more, why not try

- ▲ *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson
- ▲ *Why don't penguins' feet freeze?* by New Scientist
- ▲ *The Quantum Universe: Everything that can happen does happen* by Brian Cox and Jeff Forshaw.

Good websites for Physicists include [www.iop.org](http://www.iop.org) and [www.physicsworld.com](http://www.physicsworld.com)

## PSYCHOLOGY Advanced Level

**Qualification** Level 3 Advanced GCE in Psychology

**Exam Board** AQA

**Course Specific Entry Requirements** Grade 6 or above in GCSE Psychology (if studied) **or** Grade 6 or above in GCSE English Language. You must also achieve Grade 5 or above in GCSE Mathematics **and** Grades 5-5 or above in GCSE Combined Science **or** Grade 5 in GCSE Biology

### Overview

Advanced Level Psychology involves you learning to develop an analytical and critical approach to the study of the human mind and behaviour, leading to a sound understanding of the multiple applications of Psychology in the wider society. You will consider biological make-up, learned experiences, cognitive (thought) processes and past experiences. You will learn to analyse theories by evaluating the studies that support them, and you will be taught the skills required to draw out the strengths, weaknesses and the psychological issues and debates with each. You will also learn how to examine and analyse the methodologies which underpin psychological theories; for example, questionnaires, laboratory experiments and case studies. The course is 100% examination based, with three examination papers to be taken at the end of the course.

### What will I learn?

You will be assessed via three written examinations of two hours each, all taken at the end of the course. Each paper will include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions and extended writing. Learning is focussed around three main assessment objectives which are emphasised and embedded throughout the taught duration of the course.

- ▲ **Paper 1 Introductory topics in Psychology:** you will study social influence, memory, attachment and psychopathology.
- ▲ **Paper 2 Psychology in Context:** you will study the approaches in psychology, biopsychology and research methods.
- ▲ **Paper 3 Issues and Options in Psychology:** you will study issues and debates in Psychology plus three additional topics: relationships ▲ schizophrenia ▲ aggression

### How will I learn?

Through learning about human behaviour, you will develop strong communication, leadership and team-working skills. Lessons are designed to promote higher-level and analytical thinking through a variety of learning methods, including data collection, debates, presentations and essay writing. To be most successful, you will be expected to read around the topics covered in lessons, looking at additional research examples to broaden your evaluative viewpoint on psychological research and applications in society. In addition to your taught lessons, you will be expected to undertake a significant amount of independent study.

### Where could it lead?

Advanced Level Psychology offers the opportunity for students to develop approaches to critical thinking and analysis of human behaviour through use of discussions, evaluative writing, research, applied statistics and data analysis. It is, therefore, considered an asset to all areas of Higher Education, including business, education, research, social work, medicine and healthcare. Furthermore, students who wish to become psychologists could work in a range of roles such as teaching, counselling and therapy, sport, human resources and the prison service.

## SPANISH Advanced Level

**Qualification** Level 3 Advanced GCE in Spanish

**Exam Board** AQA

**Course Specific Entry Requirements** Grade 6 or above in GCSE Spanish

### Overview

A Level Spanish builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE level or equivalent. The course constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture and society.

### What will I learn?

- ▲ Social issues and trends
- ▲ Political and artistic culture
- ▲ Grammar
- ▲ Literary texts and films
- ▲ Individual research project

### How will I learn?

A range of teaching styles will be employed to enhance students' linguistic skills, alongside individual study, which is particularly important for the societal and cultural elements of the course. The course promotes and develops students' capacity for critical thinking on the basis of their knowledge and understanding of the language, culture and society of the country or countries where the language is spoken.

Students will be encouraged to develop control of the language system to convey meaning, using spoken and written skills, including an extended range of vocabulary, for both practical and intellectual purposes as increasingly confident, accurate and independent users of the language.

### Where could it lead?

An A Level in Spanish is a prized possession both in the world of business and academia.

Students often follow career paths, both in the home country and abroad, in fields as diverse as education, journalism, translation and interpreting, marketing and business.

Students with an A Level in Spanish demonstrate the necessary critical thinking skills and independence of thought to thrive at university and careers in the above fields often follow study at a higher level.