

St Bede's Catholic College
GCE AS & A2 Level Options 2017



Art

The Art Department has specifically chosen a course to suit the diverse needs of all students. The AS and A 'Level in Art and Design works well because of its structure and the way art and design is assessed, is very similar to GCSE, which is perfect for natural progression. Both courses will allow Students to explore and experiment with a range of media, develop ideas and delve deep into the work of others, to a much higher standard.

AS Art and Design begins as a general art course. There is a focus on practical exploration, allowing for Students to develop an extended project, exploring work in their own preferred, specialised area. This may be Painting, Printing, Textile art, 3D and/or mixed media. Following this, they will complete a practical examination.

A' level Art and Design – studied in the second year, is tailored to encourage the Students to work much more independently. They will produce a specialised portfolio of studies in a chosen area and produce a written essay to support the studies. As well as this they will complete a practical exam.

AS level assessment units:

Component 1: Coursework portfolio – 60% of the final grade

Component 2: Externally set assignment – 40% of the final grade

A question paper for AS will be provided with a selection of inspiring starting points from which to choose. Using one starting point, a body of research and investigation will take place followed by a supervised 10 hour exam resulting in a final outcome.

A 'Level assessment units:

Component 1: Personal investigation – 60% of the final grade

Component 2: Externally set assignment – 40% of the final grade

Biology

The OCR AS/A level Biology A specification will give you an exciting insight into the contemporary world of biology. The topics cover molecular biology, ecology, disease and plant biology. Practical skills are integrated throughout the course and you will be awarded a separate qualification for these skills. This combination of academic challenge and practical focus makes the prospect of studying A Level Biology highly appealing. You will learn about recent advances in genetics, medical sciences and about the impact of biological research and how it links to everyday life. You will study the biology of living organisms and the investigation of the science behind living things. The course is composed of a foundation module focusing on subjects such as cell theory and molecular biology, evolution, physiology and adaptation, gene theory, and homeostasis as well as more specialised topics.

What are the benefits?

- An interesting and challenging learning experience, linking key biological ideas and understanding how they relate to each other.
- The development of transferable skills including: investigative, problem solving, research, decision making, mathematical skills and analytical skills.
- Recognise the value and responsible use of biology in society;
- Sustain and develop enjoyment of, and interest in, biology.
- Opens up a range of possibilities for further study and careers associated with the subject, including medicine, veterinary science, physiotherapy, sports science, forensics, pharmaceuticals, genetics, ecology as well as research, science writing and teaching.

Chemistry

The Chemistry department at St Bede's offer AS/A2 OCR Chemistry B (Salters)

This AS/A level Chemistry specification has been tailored to follow on from either GCSE Chemistry or Additional Science and will develop a candidate's knowledge and understanding in a synoptic way, providing a pathway to further study, employment and general career development.

Studying the GCE in Chemistry should be a practical experience for students. The specifications contain practical activities embedded within each unit, to reflect the nature of chemistry, and students displaying competence in practical skills at the end of the A2 course will be awarded the separate 'Practical endorsement in Chemistry'.

This will increase students' enjoyment and understanding of chemistry together with providing them with the skills needed to study science at higher education.

The specifications are designed to thus motivate both teachers and students and to encourage more students to study chemistry at a higher level.

Students will study aspects of chemistry that are often in the media and affect their lives. They will need to have the necessary knowledge and understanding to explain many different aspects of contemporary chemistry.

AS Level Units:

- H033/1 – Fundamentals of Chemistry
- H033/2 – Chemistry in practice

A Level Units:

- H433/1 – Fundamentals of Chemistry
- H433/2 – Scientific Literacy in Chemistry
- H433/3 – Practical Skills in Chemistry

Computer Science

The IT and Computer Science Faculty offers the OCR AS Level Computer Science (reformed) course. The specification builds upon knowledge, understanding and skills developed at KS4 and is particularly suitable for students who have studied Computer Science/Computing at GCSE.

The AS Level will consist of:

Unit 1 – Computing Principles (Written exam, 50% of AS level)

- Components of a computer and their uses
- Software and software development
- Exchanging data
- Data types, structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues

Unit 2 – Algorithms and Problem Solving (Written exam, 50% of AS level)

- Understanding what is meant by computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms

Computer Science at AS and A Level gives students an excellent opportunity to progress onto careers and further study in the fields of computer science, mathematics, engineering and physical sciences.

Maths Studies

Maths Studies is a brand new course for those who want to keep up their valuable maths skills but who are not planning on taking AS or A-level mathematics. We will be using the AQA specifications and at the end of the two year course, you will come out with a level 3 qualification – similar to an AS. The qualification is assessed by final examination and some courses also offer the option of submitting a portfolio of coursework.

Maths Studies has been designed to maintain and develop real-life skills. What you study is not purely theoretical or abstract; it can be applied on a day-to-day basis in work, study or life and most courses will include a financial maths element. It will also help with other A level subjects – in particular with science, geography, business studies, psychology and economics.

The skills developed in the study of mathematics are increasingly important in the workplace and in higher education; studying Maths Studies will help you keep up these essential skills. On average, students who study maths after GCSE improve their career choices and increase their earning prospects.

Drama

The English and Drama faculty have chosen a specification that is designed to promote an excellent balance between practical theatre making and the theoretical understanding of drama and theatre. This stimulating and engaging course encourages learners to make connections between dramatic theory and their own practice.

A level in Drama and Theatre offers a practical and challenging course of study which encourages learners to:

- develop and apply an informed, analytical framework for making, performing, interpreting and understanding drama and theatre
- develop an understanding and appreciation of how the social, cultural and historical contexts of performance texts have influenced the development of drama and theatre
- experience a range of opportunities to create theatre, both published text-based and devised work
- participate as a theatre maker and as an audience member in live theatre.

At AS candidates consider how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and live theatre to create meaning and will demonstrate the ability to use the working methods of one theatre practitioner or theatre company:

- Unit One - Performance in Workshop (internally assessed non-examination assessment, 60% of qualification)
- Unit Two - Text in Context (written examination, 40% of qualification)

At A2 candidates will consider how performance texts are constructed to be performed, the theatrical processes and practices involved in interpreting and performing theatre and how performance texts are informed by their social, cultural and historical contexts, and are interpreted and performed for an audience:

- Unit One - Theatre Workshop (internally assessed non-examination assessment, 20% of the qualification)
- Unit Two - Text in Action (externally assessed by a visiting examiner, 40% of qualification)
- Unit Three - Text in Performance (written examination, 40% of qualification)

Economics

Economics is about **choices** and the impact of our choices on each other and the world around us. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals to the policies and systems created by governments and firms. The economic way of thinking can help us make better choices.

We aim to answer questions such as:

- Why do prices rise rapidly in some periods of time when they are more stable in other periods?
- Why does production and employment expand in some years and contract in others?

- What can the government do to promote rapid growth in incomes, low inflation and stable employment?

Lessons cover diverse topics such as wealth inequality, interest rates, politics, global markets, employment statistics, environmental issues, standards of living and lots more.

The course is made up of macroeconomic topics where you are expected to analyse and understand the “Big Picture”, looking at the national and international economy, and microeconomic topics where you look at how individual businesses and their markets work.

Students study the course provided by AQA.

English Language

The English Faculty at St Bede’s offer AQA AS/A-Level English Language.

This specification is designed to encourage candidates to:

- Develop methods of exploring and understanding spoken and written language in use.
- Recognising and analysing textual variations, their representations and meanings
- Understand the roles of purposes, audiences and contexts and the impact of these pressures upon language production and reception.
- Use linguistic methods to analyse and investigate a variety of extracts taken from everyday sources.

At A Level, this specification enables candidates to explore the fundamental structures and functions of writing, speech and conversation and how language functions in different social contexts and at different stages through childhood. Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities allowing students to explore a wide range of texts:

- Paper 1: Language the Individual and society.
- Paper 2: Language diversity and change.

The AS course is assessed with two written exams; these also focus on Language diversity as well as Language and the individual.

- Paper 1: Language and the Individual
- Paper 2: Language varieties

At A level a Language Investigation will be undertaken allowing students the opportunity for original writing. Further analysis and commentary will be expected of their own writing. A challenging yet rewarding course that encourages students to look at the English Language in new ways.

English Literature

The English Faculty at St Bede’s also offers AQA AS/A-Level English Literature A.

This specification is designed to:

- Deliver as much choice as possible for teachers and candidates.

- Develop interest in and enjoyment of English Literature, through reading widely and through experience of an extensive range of views about texts.
- Encourage candidates to develop as informed, independent readers and critics of literary texts.
- Develop personal responses to literary texts

This course takes a historicist approach to the study of literature and focuses on reading texts within a shared context. It works on the belief that no text exists in isolation but is a product of the time in which it was produced.

At AS, students will study the following units:

- Unit 1: Love Through the Ages: Shakespeare and Poetry.
- Unit 2: Love Through the Ages: Prose

For the A Level, which is a separate qualification, students will revisit and develop their work from AS, as well as reading new texts and learning to analyse them in a more critical way.

The modules studied for the A Level are:

- Unit 1: Love through the Ages
- Unit 2: Texts in Shared Contexts: Modern Times- literature from 1945 to the present day
- Independent Critical Study: Text across time

French

The MFL Faculty offer WJEC AS/A level French

Topics studied are as follows:

AS level

- Leisure and Lifestyles, including travel and tourism, sport, hobbies, entertainment, customs, traditions, healthy living – health and nutrition, diet and exercise; unhealthy living - drugs, aids, smoking, alcohol, etc
- The Individual and Society, including relationships and responsibilities, gender issues, youth culture (values, peer groups, fashions and trends etc.), education, vocational training and future careers.

Advanced level

- Environmental Issues, including technology, pollution, global warming, transport, energy, nuclear energy, renewable energies, conservation, recycling, sustainability.
- Social and Political Issues, including the role of the media, racism, immigration social exclusion and integration, terrorism, world of work (employment, commerce, globalisation, etc.)

Guided studies option: Candidates will study a book or film and a region.

Candidates are assessed at each level via a speaking test, and an examination paper which incorporates listening, reading and writing skills.

Geography

The Humanities Faculty offers the AQA Geography AS/A Level course.

Building naturally on GCSE knowledge, you will study Geographical issues and impacts at a local to global scale. You will study an inspiring balance of both Physical and Human topics, while developing invaluable and transferable fieldwork skills. The A level Geography course provides seamless progression to higher education and employment.

History

The Humanities Faculty offers the AQA History AS/A Level course.

Component 1 British History (Breadth Study) -The Tudors

This part of the **AS course** will be assessed in a 1 hour 30 minute examination and is worth 50% of the AS examination. The focus of this exam is the Tudors 1485-1547.

However, the **A Level** exam covers the whole Tudor period from 1485-1603 and will be assessed in a 2 hour 30 minute examination. (This is worth 40% of the A level).

Students will be expected to study and respond to the different interpretations of historians on the Tudor period.

Component 2 (Depth Study) -Democracy and Nazism 1918-1945

This part of the AS course will be assessed in a 1 hour 30 minute examination and is worth 50% of the AS examination. The focus of this exam is Democracy and Nazism: Germany 1918-1933.

However, the **A Level** exam covers the whole of the topic Democracy and Nazism 1918-1945 and will be assessed in a 2 hour 30 minute examination. (This is worth 40% of the A level).

Students will be expected to study and respond to primary sources or sources contemporary to the period.

Component 3: Historical Investigation

This consists of students studying an overview of the USA Civil Rights Movement and then focusing on a particular area for their independent research, before they write a 3,500 word essay.

This is worth 20% of the **A Level**.

Law

The AQA AS/ A Level Law course offered at St Bede's is aimed at students who are critical thinkers, like to analyse criminal cases, interested in problem solving and applying what they have learned about the law to real case scenarios. The course covers a range of fascinating law cases and encourages students to evaluate how the law was applied so that they can learn how to apply the law to new scenarios.

The AS course consists of two units:

- Component 1: The English legal system and criminal law.
 - Looking at topics like how Parliament makes laws, how judges decide on sentences, how civil and criminal courts work and the roles of barristers and solicitors. This also looks at how a person's actions and state of mind contribute to their criminal liability as well as how sentencing applies to different non-fatal offences.

- Component 2: The English legal system and tort law.
 - Looking at how people can resolve disputes outside of court, the role of the civil courts and legal aid. This also looks at how the law decides whether a person has a duty of care to others, whether they have breached (failed to carry out) their duty and how damages are awarded.

The A level course covers criminal law and tort law in further detail (such as looking at theft and robbery) and requires that you apply defences as well such as intoxication and self-defence. It also requires that you evaluate topics like justice and the law; law and society and whether the law should uphold morals.

There is an additional unit for A level as well:

- Component 3 – Human rights.
 - Looking at human rights in international law, the role of the Human Rights Act 1998 in the UK and how human rights are enforced.

The AS course is assessed by 100% examination (two papers) and the A level is also 100% examination (three papers).

Students do not need to have studied law at GCSE to take this course. However, they will need a good command of the English language (in order to understand legal terminology and write a coherent evaluation of legal topics) and the ability to analyse, debate and think critically.

Mathematics

We offer Edexcel AS and A level Maths. The single A Level consists of three compulsory units, all of which are equally weighted. These consist of two Pure units P1, P2 and 1 applied unit, SM (Statistics and Mechanics).

In Year 12, students study P1 and the first part of the applied unit. In Year 13, students study P2 and complete their applied unit. Pure Mathematics consists of Algebra, Trigonometry, Coordinate Geometry, and Calculus. Although some of the topics are an extension of the GCSE course, much of it is new.

These form 2 of the 3 units studied at A Level. Mechanics is the study of forces and motion and this part of the course complements Physics well. The two main aspects of Mechanics are Dynamics (moving objects) and Statics (stationary objects). The statistics part of the course is an extension of the work covered at GCSE and is mainly concerned with the analysis of data, as well as the study of elementary probability theory.

A level Mathematics is taught mainly by exposition by the teacher, although students will be expected to contribute to class discussions of new topics. A significant part of the course will be in keeping up with the home learning tasks, normally set after each lesson. Much of the course involves problem-solving and students will need to demonstrate perseverance in order to succeed.

Mathematics at A level is a necessity if you wish to study any form of Engineering or Physical Science at degree level and is also desirable if you wish to study any other form of Science.

Further Mathematics

Exam board: EDEXCEL Further Mathematics.

The Further Mathematics course is designed for anyone considering reading Mathematics, Engineering, Physics or Computer Science at a top university, or pursuing a mathematics-based career. Students studying Further Mathematics A level do this in addition to the Single Maths A level course.

For Further Mathematics student complete additional 50% of Pure units and there is the opportunity to study Mechanics further (FMI) and also a type of maths know as Decision Maths.

Four exams are sat at the end of year 13 in Core maths (2 exams), Mechanics and Decision. Each exam is 90 minutes long. For Further Mathematics, an 8/9 GCSE Mathematics grade is recommended.

Decision Maths is the study of algorithms and optimisation, finding efficient solutions to problems. The work covered is applicable to many real word situations and is a useful part of the course for students studying Computer Science.

Core Mathematics, which is generally a broadening and extension of the Pure Mathematics from A-level Maths. The Core units, and further Mechanics unit (FMI) are generally harder than the Single Maths modules.

Music

The AQA AS/A level Music course encourages listening, creating musical ideas and performing skills, all of which can be developed in a wide range of musical styles.

'Influences on Music' is the listening and analysing unit, which builds on knowledge and understanding developed at KS4. Students study a wide range of musical genres from Classical to Popular music or musical theatre.

They are are taught composition skills using either Sibelius or Logic software to present their final compositions. Both solo and ensemble performances for the examination at AS

level. These may be on any instrument or voice and could include technology-based performances.

At A2 level Students continue to study music from the classical tradition together with jazz and jazz influenced music from 1910 to 1940 culminating in a listening exam, which builds on skills learnt throughout the two-year course. Composition skills are developed further leading to the final presentation of one piece. Students are required to submit one final performance lasting up to 15 minutes either for their solo instrument or as a technology based performance.

Much of the course is devoted to practical work and developing performing and creating skills. The department is well equipped with Apple Mac computers using both Sibelius and Logic software and a state of the art recording studio. There is also a wide range of extra-curricular performance opportunities throughout the college and excellent instrumental and vocal tuition through the peripatetic provision.

Physical Education

The Physical Education Faculty offers the Edexcel Physical Education AS/A Level course.

Students will have the chance to take on the roles of 'performer', 'leader' or 'official' at AS, before focussing on one of these roles at A2. In the context of their chosen role(s) they will:

- review their current participation in physical activity
- identify opportunities locally, nationally and internationally for them to advance their participation in physical activity
- create a development plan and a life plan for their future participation in physical activity

Students will also learn about sport, from the grass roots to the elite level, and the development of competitive sport. Healthy lifestyles, fitness and training, and preparation for sports performance are also covered extensively.

Physics

The Physics AS/A level specification has been developed for students who wish to continue with a study of Physics after GCSE.

Some students may wish to follow a Physics course for only one year as an AS GCE, in order to broaden their curriculum. Others will continue their course for a further year extending their course to Advanced GCE.

The course will prepare students to progress into further education, to follow courses in physics, engineering, one of the other sciences or related subjects, or to enter employment where a knowledge of physics would be useful.

The course will encourage students to:

- Develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for physics, including developing an interest in further study and careers in physics;

- Appreciate how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society;
- Develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of Physics and how they relate

Psychology

The AQA AS/A level syllabus provides an exciting approach to the study of Psychology providing both breadth and depth. Students have the opportunity to investigate a diverse range of topics to include; biopsychology (how the neuro-physiology of the brain affects behaviour), gender development, empirical research methods and statistics, social psychology (the way in which society and culture influences behaviour), cognitive psychology (the subject of remembering and forgetting), individual differences (the fascinating insights into differences in human makeup; autism, anxiety disorders and schizophrenia) and developmental psychology (the development of relationships and a sense of morality).

There is also an opportunity to choose to study forensic psychology (investigating specifically eye witness testimony, facial recognition and recalling of criminal events).

An A Level in Psychology provides high levels of interest and stretch whilst simultaneously equipping pupils with insights into the human mind, the reasons why we are who we are/do what we do, and how to understand human behaviour and the world in which we are currently living.

Religious Studies

What is Religious Studies A level?

Religious Studies A Level is an essay based subject aimed at encouraging students to develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, a rigorous study of religion and relate it to the wider world. There are three papers; Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and New Testament Studies.

In **Philosophy of Religion** you will explore some of the main contemporary philosophical issues and questions about religion, such as the classical arguments for the existence of God and why there is evil and suffering in the world.

In **Religion and Ethics** you will study issues and practical problems such as equality, war and peace, and sexual ethics and applying these ethical theories to contemporary moral dilemmas. This is further sharpened by engagement with the views and stances of significant ethical thinkers who have contributed to these debates.

In **New Testament Studies** you will familiarise yourself with the Gospel texts and with the critical study of Christian beliefs about the status of the Bible and about Christian understanding of the meaning of the texts. This study will give you an understanding of how the early Christian communities understood Jesus and how Christians today interpret and apply the texts as a key source of authority.

Exam board: Edexcel

Topics studied within each section

Paper 1 – Philosophy of Religion:

- The classical arguments for the existence of God (Cosmological, Teleological and Ontological arguments).
- The nature of religious experience
- The problem of evil and suffering.
- Philosophical language – religious language and verification/falsification principle).
- Works of scholars including Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud.
- Influences of developments in religious belief

Paper 2 – Religion and Ethics:

- Environmental issues
- Equality
- Utilitarianism
- Situation Ethics
- Natural Moral Law
- War and Peace
- Sexual Ethics
- Meta-ethics and the relationship between religion and morality
- Kantian Deontology
- Aristotelian Virtue Ethics
- Medical ethics (abortion, euthanasia)

Paper 3 – New Testament Studies:

- Prophecy regarding the Messiah and the world of the first century
- The Prologue in St John's Gospel
- The 'I am' sayings in John
- Miracles and signs
- Interpreting the text
- The purpose and authorship of the Fourth Gospel
- Ways of interpreting scripture
- Texts and interpretations/Why did Jesus have to die? The crucifixion and resurrection
- Scientific and historical challenges – faith and history
- How should we live? The ethical teaching of Jesus of Nazareth

Assessment

For **A level** students they will be assessed in three different papers, each lasting 2 hours and each marked out of 80 (weighted at 33.3%). The assessment consists of three sections and students must answer all questions in Section A and B, and choose **one** question in Section C. The papers include short open, open response and extended writing questions.

AS level students will still be assessed in three different papers, however each paper will last 1 hour as less topics are covered.

All three papers will be sat at the end of the course.

Entry Requirements:

Five GCSE passes at grade B or above including GCSE English and Religious Studies at grade B or above.

Sociology

Sociology is the study of society, people and their behaviour. It is an evidence-based subject and we consider many examples of society in the past and today. Opinions and theories must be backed up with facts which are gained by methodically carrying out practical research to establish whether theories are correct.

Topics covered in AS level will be Families and Households, Education and Research Methods (linked to Education). In addition, topics at A level are Media, Crime and Deviance and Research Methods (linked to Crime and Deviance) and Sociological Theory.

Students will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of these topics and be able to interpret, apply, analyse and evaluate them.

It is essential to have a questioning, mature attitude to be able to deal with often, sensitive and difficult topics. Throughout the course, students will strengthen their independent learning skills to prepare them for the study skills required at university.

Assessment is based on short answer questions and essay answers all under exam conditions. We offer the AQA AS/A level Sociology.

Spanish

The MFL Faculty offer WJEC AS/A level Spanish

Topics studied are as follows:

AS level

- Leisure and Lifestyles, including travel and tourism, sport, hobbies, entertainment, customs, traditions, healthy living – health and nutrition, diet and exercise; unhealthy living - drugs, aids, smoking, alcohol, etc.
- The Individual and Society, including relationships and responsibilities, gender issues, youth culture (values, peer groups, fashions and trends etc.), education, vocational training and future careers.

Advanced level

- Environmental Issues, including technology, pollution, global warming, transport, energy, nuclear energy, renewable energies, conservation, recycling, sustainability.
- Social and Political Issues, including the role of the media, racism, immigration social exclusion and integration, terrorism, world of work (employment, commerce, globalization, etc.)

Guided studies option: Candidates will study a book or film and a region.

Candidates are assessed at each level via a speaking test and an examination paper which incorporates listening, reading and writing skills.

