St Michael's Catholic College

Course Information

September 2026-2027

Fine Art **A level**

The A level Fine Art course at St. Michael's provides students with the opportunity to gain experience and understanding of a selection of art and design practices. You will be able to explore a variety of ways of seeing and thinking about what you are around and develop a coherent and personal visual language with which to express your ideas.

This course is aimed at creative minded pupils and encourages an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design. Students will develop practical skills in drawing, painting, sculpture and related activities, which will enable them to express their own ideas. Students will develop an understanding of past and contemporary art and design practice.

Course content
The A level comprises 2 components:

Component 1: Personal Investigation (60%) Part 1 – practical work:

- From personal starting points • Students submit:
  - ○ Supporting studies ○

Practical outcome(s) Part 2 – personal study:

- Students submit a piece of continuous prose of a minimum of 1000 words.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)

- Externally set, broad-based theme.
- Sustained focus period of 15-hours controlled assessment in which students create final response(s) to the theme.

Students submit:

- Preparatory studies
- Practical outcome(s)

How is the course examined?

- An internally assessed unit of coursework per year
- An externally set examination per year

Key Skills

Students will develop the following key skills:

- Develop intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive powers.
- Develop investigative, analytical, experimental, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the role and achievements of artists, crafts people and designers in the past and in contemporary society.
- Develop an understanding of the relationship between, and the connections across the disciplines of art, craft and design.

What will this course prepare me for?

This A-level gives students the potential to progress to university onto an art-related degree course, through a pre-degree Foundation Diploma in Art and Design. The course could also lead to a career in teaching, fashion, gallery & museum management, architecture, interior design, graphics, film and television design, jewellery design, theatre and set design and production, TV and film, art directing or as an artist or art technician.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 5 or above in Art GCSE, plus a grade 5 in Maths and English.

Biology A (OCR) A level

Biology aims to enhance your understanding and appreciation of living organisms' anatomy and physiology, how they function individually and how they interact with one another. It provides an opportunity to discuss and research issues in the news, with a focus on genetics and biotechnology. You will plan experiments, collect data, analyse experimental results and make conclusions. You will learn how scientific models are developed, the applications and implications of science, the benefits and risks that science brings and how society uses science to make decisions.

Course content

The A Level in Biology A specification content is divided into six teaching modules, and each module is further divided into key topics. There are 5 examined modules and a separate standalone qualification in practical work.

Year one in Biology A course comprises the first four modules and learners in year two study the content of modules 5 and 6. The internally assessed Practical Endorsement skills also form part of the full A level. The skills developed can also be examined in the written exam papers. Successful

completion of the practical skills element results in a Practical Endorsement on the A level certificate.
Module 1: Development of practical skills in biology
Practical Skills: Students must carry out a series of core practical skills and maintain a lab book. The skills developed can also be examined in the written exam papers. Successful completion of the practical skills element results in a Practical Endorsement on the A level certificate.
Module 2: Foundations in biology
Module 3: Exchange and transport
Module 4: Biodiversity, evolution and disease.
Module 5: Communication, homeostasis and energy.
Module 6: Genetics, evolution and ecosystems.

Career Value
Biology leads to a wide range of courses and careers, including an undergraduate degree in life sciences, medicine, environmental science, forensic science or an HND, or employment in areas of biological testing, biotechnology, independent research and the food industry.

In addition, several other courses either specifically require or find it desirable to have an A level in Biology. These include courses such as microbiology, medicine, veterinary medicine, biological sciences, environmental science, pharmacy and dentistry.

What are the entry requirements?
Students need to have achieved grade 7 or above. For single sciences, they need to have achieved a grade 7 in Biology and Chemistry, in addition to a grade 6 in both English Language and Maths.

Business A level

An AQA A Level Business includes questions that allow students to demonstrate their ability to draw together their knowledge, skills and understanding from across the full course of study and provide extended responses.

The pupils will develop their critical thinking and creative skills through making decisions as an entrepreneur in markets such as the destructive technologies to the strategic performance of a large corporation. Trips include the Bank of England and the Mini plant in Oxford. Business as a degree is in the top 10 with regards to earning potential, this is dependent on being in a good university. Pupils can apply for Business related degrees, including Business Management, Business and Languages, Accountancy and Finance and Marketing.

Course content
The course is taught holistically throughout the 5 terms giving the pupil a thorough understanding of the different types of businesses.

Year 1 study from the entrepreneur to the large multinational. All the functions of a business, marketing, human resource, operational and finance are studied on how they help make decisions.

Year 2 delves deeper into strategy, from analysing the business's position to where the strategic change needs to be and the management of that strategic change.

This examination assesses a range of skills through a total of 3 papers.

- Paper 1 contains Multiple Choice questions, Short Answer Questions, Essay Questions.
- Paper 2 Data Response Questions
- Paper 3 Compulsory Case Study with 6 Questions

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 5 in Maths and English.

Chemistry (AQA) A level

Chemistry is the study of materials and their behaviour. These materials are from an enormous range – metals, medicines, plastics, dyes, ceramics, fertilizers and fuel to name just a few. Chemists are involved in how and why materials behave the way they do and how we can create or modify materials to better suit our needs. This course introduces you to the fundamentals of Chemistry and is a necessary choice for those interested in careers in Medical, Veterinary and Chemical Sciences, but chemistry combines well with many other A Levels.

A Level Chemistry is suited to pupils who have an interest in and enjoy chemistry and are keen to find out about how things work in the real world. Pupils should enjoy applying their mind to solving problems and have a logical, organised approach to learning.

Course content
There are 5 examined modules and a separate standalone qualification in practical work.
Practical Skills:
Students must carry out a series of core practical skills and maintain a lab book. The skills developed can also be examined in the written exam papers. Successful completion of the practical skills element results in a Practical Endorsement on the A level certificate.
Module 2: Foundations in chemistry – students cover key concepts required throughout the remaining modules.
Module 3: Periodic table and energy
Module 4: Core organic chemistry
Module 5: Physical chemistry and transition elements
Module 6: Organic chemistry and analysis

Key skills
Students will develop the following key skills:

- appreciate how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society
- develop and demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of How Science Works
- develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of chemistry and how they relate to each other

Career Value

Whilst many job opportunities specifically using chemistry require higher qualifications, most laboratory-based jobs benefit from a chemistry qualification, for instance dental assistant or veterinary assistant. Many employers' view success at A-level Chemistry as a clear indication of sound academic ability. Many science-based university courses have a significant proportion of Chemistry content and an A-level in Chemistry is excellent preparation for such further study. Such courses include medicinal chemistry, forensic science, toxicology and pharmacology.

In addition, several other courses either specifically require or find it desirable to have an A level in Chemistry. These include courses such as chemical engineering, medicine, veterinary medicine, biological sciences, environmental science, pharmacy and dentistry.

What are the entry requirements?

Chemistry requires good scientific and mathematical skills. Students need to have achieved a grade 7 or GCSE Chemistry. Pupils must also have achieved at least grade 6 in English and Maths.

Computer Science **A Level**

The Vision – why choose A Level Computer Science?

OCR A Level Computer Science is a practical subject where you can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It is an intensely creative subject that combines invention and excitement, that can look at the natural world through a digital prism. The course highly values computational thinking, helping you to develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand the power and limits of human and machine intelligence. These are the concepts that lie at the heart of the Computer Science qualification. They will be the best preparation for those of you who want to go on to study Computer Science at a higher level and will also provide a good grounding for other subject areas that require computational thinking and analytical skills.

Specific Benefits of A Level Computer Science

- The new qualifications will be focused on programming, will build on our GCSE Computing and emphasise the importance of computational thinking as a discipline.
- There will be an expanded maths focus, much of which will be embedded within the course.
- Computational thinking will be at the core of the new specifications.

- The A Level will consist of three components, two of which will be externally marked question papers making up 80% of the qualification. • The other 20% will be the coursework project, which will retain its current qualities but will be more focused, with a greater emphasis on coding and programming with a simple assessment model and marking criteria.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 6 or above in Maths.

ASSESSMENT

Component	Assessment	Weighting	Marks and duration
01 Computer systems	Externally marked question paper	40%	140 marks/2 hrs 30mins
02 Algorithms and programming	Externally marked question paper	40%	140 marks / 2 hrs 30mins
03 Programming project	Internally assessed Externally moderated	20%	70 marks

Component		
01 Computer systems	Mix of question types: including short-answer, longer-answer, and banded mark-scheme type questions.	**The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices** Components of a computer and their uses Software **and software development:** Types of software and the methodologies used to develop them Exchanging **data:** How data is exchanged between different systems **Data types, data structures and algorithms** How data is represented and stored in different structures and the use of different algorithms
		Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues Laws surrounding the use and ethical issues that can arise from the use of computers

02 Algorithms and Programming	Two sections: **A** – Traditional questions concerning computational thinking. Mix of question types: including short-answer, longer-answer, and levels of response mark scheme-type questions. **B** – Scenario/task contained in the paper, which could be an algorithm but will involve problem solving. Short answer, longer answer questions, and levels of response mark scheme type questions.	Sections A and B **Elements of computational thinking** What is meant by computational thinking **Problem solving and programming** How computers are used to solve problems and programs can be written to solve them **Algorithms** The use of algorithms to describe problems and standard algorithms
03 Programming project	Candidates and/or centres select their own user-driven problem of an appropriate size and complexity to solve. This will enable them to demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the Assessment Objectives.	Analysis of the problem Design of the solution Implementation of the solution Evaluation

Drama & Theatre Studies Level	**TBC**	**A**

Are you a group player, a critical thinker? Do you like performing? Do you like to read and explore plays from a variety of eras? Are you interested in how a director/actor/designer produces a show? Then this is the A Level for you.

<u>Course content/structure:</u>

Component 1: Theatre Workshop

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 20% of qualification

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design.

Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract from a text chosen from a list supplied by WJEC. The piece must be developed using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company. Learners must produce: • a realisation of the performance or design

• a creative log.

Component 2: Text in Action

Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner
40% of qualification
Learners will be assessed on either acting or design.
Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of two pieces of theatre based on a stimulus supplied by WJEC:

1. a devised piece using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company (a different practitioner or company to that chosen for Component 1)
2. an extract from a text in a different style chosen by the learner. Learners must realise their performance live for the visiting examiner. Learners choosing design must also give a 5–10-minute presentation of their design to the examiner. Learners produce a process and evaluation report within one week of completion of the practical work.

Component 3: Text in Performance

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes - 40% of qualification
Sections A and B - Two questions, based on two different texts, one written pre-1956 and one written post-1956.
Section C - A question based on a specified extract from: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Mark Haddon, adapted by Simon Stephens

Career Value

Students will go on to study a range of subjects as well as Drama at degree level including Psychology, Sociology, Law, Business, social sciences, Media and English Literature to name a few. Drama provides students skills that allows them to be confident, organised, independent, critical thinkers that are a credit to any workplace, therefore opening doors to a number of different career pathways.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 5 (or above) in English and/or Drama

Economics (Pearson) — A level

Why study Economics?

Economics helps you understand how individuals, businesses and governments make decisions about the allocation of scarce resources. You will explore current economic issues, including inflation, unemployment, economic growth, inequality, international trade and government policy.

You will develop the ability to analyse economic problems, interpret data, construct economic diagrams and evaluate different perspectives. Lessons connect economic theory to real-world examples, helping you understand how economic decisions affect businesses, consumers and society.

Economics provides an excellent foundation for university study and careers in economics, finance, business, accounting, data analysis, law and public policy.

Course content
The course is organised into four themes, building from introductory economic concepts to more complex analysis of businesses and the wider economy.

Year 1

- **Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure** – scarcity, supply and demand, elasticity, market failure and government intervention.
- **Theme 2: The UK economy – performance and policies** – economic growth, inflation, unemployment, aggregate demand and supply, and macroeconomic policy.

Year 2

- **Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market** – business growth, business objectives, costs, revenues, profits, market structures and labour markets.
- **Theme 4: A global perspective** – international trade, globalisation, poverty and inequality, emerging and developing economies, the financial sector and the role of the state in the macroeconomy.

Students revisit and develop their knowledge throughout the course, applying economic theory to real-world contexts and making connections between microeconomics and macroeconomics.

How is the course assessed?
The A Level is assessed through three externally examined papers at the end of Year 13. Each paper lasts two hours.

- **Paper 1: Markets and business behaviour** – 35% of the qualification. Assesses Themes 1 and 3.
- **Paper 2: The national and global economy** – 35% of the qualification. Assesses Themes 2 and 4.
- **Paper 3: Microeconomics and macroeconomics** – 30% of the qualification. Assesses content across all four themes through a synoptic examination.

Students will develop skills in economic analysis, quantitative methods, data interpretation, application to real-world contexts and evaluation of economic arguments.

Entry requirements
Students need to have achieved at least grade 6 in GCSE English and Maths, subject to the college's admissions policy.

Progression and careers

A Level Economics can support progression to degrees in Economics, Finance, Business, Accounting, Politics and related subjects. It also develops transferable skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, data analysis and evidence-based decision-making.

Geography **A level**

Subject Leader: **Mr James Craigmyle**

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Syllabus **A**

Assessment Information:

There are three exams and an Independent Investigation:

Paper 1 - Physical geography: 2:30 minutes, 40% of the A-Level **Paper 2 - Human geography:**

2:30 minutes, 40% of the A-Level

Independent investigation (NEA):

Students choose their own topic to investigate.

4000 words, 20% of the A-Level

Future Pathways:

Geography is a well-respected 'traditional' academic discipline that enables you to use a variety of skills (literacy, numeracy, practical fieldwork, research, report writing, data analysis, etc.).

Any University course, or career, linked to people and/or the environment would prefer geographical experience.

Examples include sustainability, meteorology, urban planning, surveying, resource management, tourism, forestry, overseas development, aid agencies, financial services, trading commodities and risk analysis.

The possibilities are almost endless.

Geography will also stand you in good stead for other traditional careers like law, journalism, and local / national government.

Course Overview:

The A-Level course will build on GCSE content but allows students more freedom to focus on the topics and current affairs that they are most interested in. Fieldwork is a compulsory part of the A-Level course.

To succeed in Geography, Students must be able to interlink all the topics. The exams are based on skills, rather than on content.

Students will participate in fieldwork in Y12 & Y13.

Year 1

- Area of study 1, Topic 1: Coastal Systems & Landscapes
- Area of study 1, Topic 2: Water & Carbon Cycles
- Area of study 2, Topic 1: Population & the Environment
- Area of study 2, Topic 2: Changing Places

Year 2

- Area of study 1, Topic 3: Natural Hazards
- Area of study 2, Topic 3: Global Systems &Governance
- You will also complete an independent Investigation (NEA).

Course Requirements:

- Maths at grade 5.
- English at grade 5.
- Geography at grade 6



Government & Politics — A level

In A level Politics we want to give you the skills to understand the biggest problems question the world is currently struggling with; How will we respond to climate change? Should the military receive more funding if it means cuts to healthcare? why do some people not vote in elections in the UK when in other countries people are still fighting for the vote? How can Donald Trump run for election as a President after the Capitol Hill riots?
If you have ever watched the news and been confused and interested, then we may be right for you. We arrange trips to Parliament, have visits from our Local MP, arrange opportunities to get involved in local issues and give you all the help you need to succeed in you're A-level.

Your course will be assessed by three Edexcel exams at the end of year 13:

1. UK Politics- 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade

How should we pick who is in charge? Should young people be given the vote? Topics: Democracy and participation, Political parties, Electoral systems, Media. Ideology, A chance to lean about the philosophy of politics, are humans naturally good? Should money be abolished? We examine some of the key thinkers and controversies around Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism.
2. UK Government- 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade
An examination of how the UK system operates, where power is and how it changes. Topics: The Constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and Executive, Relationships between the branches of government.
Ideology: Feminism, can we make an equal society?
3. USA - 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade
Is America the perfect Democracy? How does the USA deal with issues differently to the UK? Topics: US Constitution and federalism, US Congress, US Presidency, US Supreme Court and Civil rights.

Career: Studying politics is not just about trying to become an MP. Learning about politics will help you find out what you think about the world. We want you to develop strong convictions, to know when to compromise or confront an issue. We will help you build up your confidence in researching and arguing. These are essential skills for anybody thinking of becoming a Lawyer. You could explore the seedy halls of power as a journalist. Take a stand against in justice as part of a Pressure Group or Political Party. Guide the hand of Government through the civil service. Changing the international climate at the United Nations.

What are the entry requirements? Politics is assessed entirely through timed essays so you will need at least 6 in History or Geography. If you haven't taken these GCSE's then you need an English grade at 6 or above.

History A level

No human being in the history of the world has been bombarded with more information than you and your generation. Most of this information is trying to make you think in certain ways and do certain things. Studying History at A Level gives you the tools with which face these challenges. It will allow you form your own considered opinions on the world and to understand your position in it.

Not only will this course make you a stronger person, but it will also make you more attractive to universities and employers. By doing well in A Level History, you will have demonstrated that you can build balanced arguments, sit lightly on your conclusions, empathise with different people from different backgrounds and time periods and that you are not afraid of independent reading and writing. It will show that you are curious about the world. Remember: The present is only the leading edge of the past and that today will tomorrow be yesterday. Welcome to the future!

This course is studied in 3 units split over 2 years (AQA Exam Board)

1. The British Empire 1857 - 1967 (1 Exam, 40%)

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:

- How did democracy and political organisations develop in Britain?
- How important were ideas and ideologies?
- How and with what effects did the economy develop?
- How and with what effects did society and social policy develop?
- How and why did Britain's relationship with Ireland change?
- How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?

2. The Cold War: c1945–1991 (1 Exam, 40%)

This option provides for the study of the evolving course of international relations during an era of tension between communist and capitalist powers, which threatened nuclear Armageddon. It explores concepts such as communism and anti-communism, aggression and détente and encourages students to reflect on the power of modern military technology, what hastens confrontation and what forces promote peace in the modern world.

3. Historical Investigation (Coursework, 20%)

France in Revolution: 1681-1789

The purpose of the Historical Investigation is to enable students to develop the skills, knowledge and historical understanding acquired through the study of the examined components of the specification. Through undertaking, the Historical Investigation students will develop an enhanced understanding of the nature and purpose of history as a discipline and how historians work. The Historical Investigation contributes towards meeting the aims and objectives of the A-level specification. It encourages students to:

- ask relevant and significant questions about the past and undertake research
- develop as independent learners and critical and reflective thinkers
- acquire an understanding of the nature of historical study
- organise and communicate their knowledge and understanding in a piece of sustained writing

What are the entry requirements?

History at grade 6 or above.

Maths — A level

Who is the course for?

This course is for students wishing to further their mathematical knowledge and those wishing to study maths or a related subject at Higher Education, e.g. engineering, computing, business, economics and psychology.

Course content

Students will study a combination of core and applied mathematics (statistics and mechanics). Each of these disciplines will be assessed at the end of the course in three written papers, each being two hours in length.

Core Mathematics (papers 1 and 2) – Core mathematics makes up 2/3 of the course. In core mathematics, you will deepen your knowledge of topics, which you met at GCSE such as algebra, trigonometry and graphical work. You will learn other important branches of mathematics such as calculus, functions, logarithms and series.

Mechanics and Statistics (paper 3) – Unlike in previous years, from 2017 mechanics and statistics will both be studies throughout year 12 and 13. At the end of year 13 you will sit a combined assessment in both disciplines.

Mechanics - In mechanics, you will learn how to describe mathematically the motion of objects and how they respond to forces acting on them, from cars to satellites. You will learn the technique of mathematical modelling; that is of turning a complicated physical problem into simpler one that can be analysed and solved using mathematical methods.

Statistics – This extends the work you did in the data handling part of your GCSE course. The course looks at mathematical modelling in statistics and probability. You will cover probability, discrete distributions, the normal distribution and correlation. In a change to previous A-level, courses your study of statistics will be based around a pre-release data set which you will get to know throughout the course.

Content overview (Papers 1 and 2)	Content overview (Paper 3)
● Proof ● Algebra and functions ● Coordinate geometry in the (x,y) plane ● Sequences and series ● Trigonometry ● Exponentials and logarithms ● Differentiation ● Integration ● Vectors ● Numerical methods	***Section A: Statistics*** ● Statistical sampling ● Data presentation and interpretation ● Probability ● Statistical distributions ● Statistical hypothesis testing ***Section B: Mechanics*** ●Quantities and units in mechanics ● Kinematics ● Forces and Newton's laws ● Moments

Assessment

Assessment is completely by examination and the end of year 13. All assessments allow the use of a scientific calculator and will be 2 hours in length.

Career Value

Mathematics is an excellent qualification to study if you want to pursue a career in business and management where financial transactions are required and is accepted by employers as evidence of numerate ability. Many professional qualifications including accountancy and actuarial work require A Level Maths. The A level provides entry to university to read Mathematics, Science, Technology, Economics, Computer Science or Business. The difficulty of this course means that success is also a good indicator of students' perseverance and academic prowess to employers and universities.

What are the entry requirements?
Enthusiastic Mathematicians with at least a grade 7 or above in GCSE Maths.

Further Maths — A level

A separate A Level in Mathematics including 2 further maths modules and 2 applied modules. This A Level covers a broader range of topics covering complex numbers, proof by induction, matrices and polar coordinates. The applied modules can be chosen from Decision, Mechanics or Statistics.

Assessment
Assessment is completely by examination and at the end of year 13. Each module exam lasts for two hours.

Career Value
This is an excellent qualification to study if you want to pursue a career in business and management where financial transactions are required and is accepted by employers as evidence of numerate ability. Many professional qualifications including accountancy and actuarial work require A level Maths. The A level provides entry to university to read Mathematics, Science, Technology, Economics or Business.

What are the entry requirements?
Enthusiastic Mathematicians with a grade 8/9 in GCSE Maths.

Media Studies — A level

Who is the Course for?
In A Level Media Studies, we examine the ways in which media institutions and producers influence people and shape our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. The analysis of key media texts is an essential part of the course. You will be analysing the various components of these media texts in detail so the ability to communicate ideas, think critically and engage proactively will be essential to your success in this subject. To study this course, you must have strong literacy skills and demonstrate creative flair to produce your own media artefacts. Written tasks and assessments are regular features of this course, and you will be expected to undertake independent study and extra reading around a wide range of media-related topics.

Course Content

During the two-year course, you will learn more about the following areas of study through close analysis of carefully chosen media texts, a thorough application of theoretical perspectives and a major coursework project, which will constitute 30% of your final grade. The remaining 70% of the course will be assessed in two written papers.

1. Media Language - Through their forms, codes, conventions and techniques, students will learn how the media communicates meanings for audiences through media texts such as advertisements, television programmes and newspaper reports.
2. Media Representation - Students will discover how the media portrays events, issues, places, individuals and social groups through the processes of selection, construction and mediation of media texts.
3. Media Industries - This area of study will introduce students to the processes of production, distribution and circulation by media industries through media forms and platforms. Case studies of specific media institutions, practices and technologies will be fundamental to this area of study.
4. Media Audiences - Students will learn how media institutions and their texts target, reach and address audiences, how audiences interpret and respond to them and how members of audiences become producers themselves. The analysis of audience demographics and the diversity of social contexts will form the basis of this area of study.

Key Skills

Written and oral communication.
Creative skills in audio-visual media.
Analytical skills.
Academic presentation and essay writing.
Wider reading of media-related books, journals and academic articles. Self-motivation and independent learning.

Career Value

A Level Media Studies offers excellent preparation for any one of the many creative arts courses available in higher education. The subject complements other disciplines in the creative arts and humanities including Art & Design, English and Sociology. Although competition is tough, graduates of creative arts subjects like Media Studies have a very good rate of employment after university, many within the diverse and ever-expanding creative industries.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved at least a grade 5 in English Language and/or Media Studies.

Modern Foreign Languages: French or Spanish — A Level

Why should I study French or Spanish A Level?

Learning how to interact with speakers of other languages means you are less likely to be stuck in one mode of thinking. It can help you to see things from a range of perspectives - making you more

adaptable, creative, and insightful. The ability to operate cross-culturally is becoming just as much valued by employers as straight language skills.
Studying a language at A Level is very different from GCSE. You will have the opportunity to explore a truly fascinating subject that offers you a huge range of career possibilities at the end...and have a lot of fun along the way! What's more, a language is also now an essential requirement for lots of university courses. What would I study in French or Spanish A Level?
A Level language courses are designed to really immerse you in the culture of francophone or Spanish speaking countries, both global languages. The course covers a huge range of contemporary topics and helps you gain a broad range of knowledge, not just about the language you are learning but also about life in the countries where that language is spoken. You will investigate many aspects of life in France and French-speaking or Spain and Latin American countries and have the freedom to tailor your studies to suit your own area of interest, be it fashion, food or films. You will study contemporary social issues including crime, racism and immigration together with politics and popular music. You will find out about the fascinating history of a region, a country or a historically significant person, including contemporary ones. Of course, you cannot really get to know a language without experiencing it first-hand and a language A Level would include a range of trips and visits.
The following exams will be taken at the end of year 13:
Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing - 2hr 30 minutes- 50% of A Level.
Paper 2: Writing - 2 hours- 20% of A Level.
Paper 3: Speaking - 21-23 minutes (including 5 minutes' preparation time)- 30% of A Level.
Career Value
In today's increasingly global society, the ability to speak a foreign language is becoming more of an asset. The skills and qualifications that you gain from an A Level in languages are incredibly important tools to have under your belt. In fact, having a language A Level can increase your salary by up to 20% and give you a head start on other potential employees – by speaking another language, you are vital to any company who does international business, and there are a lot of them nowadays!

What are the entry requirements?
You will need at least a 6 in GCSE French/Spanish to be able to do the A Level. A Level will be taught for 5 lessons per week and based around the 4 key language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. You sit exams in all these areas but for the speaking exam you will have the chance to choose the topic which interests you the most.

Physics (OCR) A level

The A Level Physics course takes you into the heart of what is widely regarded as the most fundamental of all sciences. Studying physics can see you grasping the scope of massive galaxies or probing the tiniest component particles of atoms. Physics is the study of how everything works and the basic rules of the universe and is full of challenges and opportunities. A Level Physics can also lead to a wide range of career opportunities.

A level Physics is suited to pupils who have an interest in and enjoy physics and are keen to find out how the Physical world works. Pupils should enjoy applying their mind to solving problems and carrying out investigations. Pupils must have strong mathematical skills and find solving mathematical problems satisfying.

Course content

There are 5 examined modules and a separate standalone qualification in practical work.

Practical Skills: Students must carry out a series of core practical skills and maintain a lab book. The skills developed can also be examined in the written exam papers. Successful completion of the practical skills element results in a Practical Endorsement on the A level certificate.

Module 2: Foundations in physics – students cover key concepts required throughout the remaining modules.

Module 3: Forces and motion

Module 4: Electrons, waves, and photons

Module 5: Newtonian world and astrophysics

Module 6: Particles and medical physics

Key skills

Students will develop the following key skills:

- appreciate how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society;
- develop and demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of How Science Works;
- develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of physics and how they relate to each other, and to the other sciences.

Career Value

Studying Physics leads on to a wide range of courses and careers. A physics qualification is essential for many future careers in science and engineering. It can also help you make progress in other fields that value the demanding skills developed through physics. Many accountants, bankers and business managers have benefited from studying physics, as well as astronomers, radiographers, laser technologists, semiconductor technologists, meteorologists, scientific journalists, product marketing engineers and civil engineers.

What are the entry requirements?

Physics is a challenging subject and requires good scientific and mathematical skills.

Students need to have achieved at least a grade 7 or GCSE Physics. Pupils must also have achieved at least grade 6 in English and grade 7 or above in GCSE Maths.

*It would also be beneficial for students taking A level Physics to consider taking A Level Maths also.

Product Design or Textiles	**A level**

The college runs both Product Design and Fashion and Textiles with the OCR exam board. Both courses are designed to stretch and challenge creative students with an interest in Fashion and Textiles or Product Design.

Both courses follow the same structure but differ in the outcome's dependant on the material area of focus. The course focuses on:

Inspiring a future in design and technology – Drawing on authentic design practice and contemporary technologies students will be free to explore design possibilities that excite and engage them, giving a strong foundation for further study and developing thinking and design skills that will support them in any future direction.

A focus on iterative designing – Students will learn to deliver their thinking and design skills through iterative design processes that allow them to 'explore, create and evaluate' following practices and strategies used by the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries.

Projects that offer so much more – The non-examined assessments at A Level are not only open in approach, but they will also enable students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that give them confidence as individuals and a strong understanding of creativity and innovation that will equip them to design and manage the future. The project work undertaken will be a meaningful discussion piece for university and apprenticeship applications.

Assessment Breakdown for A Level

50% Iterative Design Project – 100 marks (non-exam assessment)

The 'Iterative Design Project' requires learners to undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project centred on the iterative processes of explore, create and evaluate. Learners identify a design opportunity or problem from a context of their own choice and create a portfolio of evidence in real time through the project to demonstrate their competence.

26.7% Principle of Textiles/ Product Design Exam – 80 Marks

This paper is set out through four sets of questions that predominantly cover technical principles within each endorsed title. Learners will be required to:

- analyse existing products
- demonstrate applied mathematical skills
- demonstrate their technical knowledge of materials, product functionality, manufacturing processes and techniques
- demonstrate their understanding of wider social, moral and environmental issues that impact on the design and manufacturing industries.

26.7% Problem solving in Textiles/ Product Design Exam – 80 Marks

This component has a series of longer answer questions that require learners to demonstrate their problem solving and critical evaluation skills. Learners will be required to:

- apply their knowledge, understanding and skills of designing and manufacturing prototypes and products
- demonstrate their higher thinking skills to solve problems and evaluate situations and suitability of design solutions.

What are the entry requirements?

5 or above in Art or a Technology subject at GCSE, plus at least a grade 5 in English and Maths.

Psychology — A level

Summary

Psychology is the study of human behaviour and builds on skills developed in both the sciences and humanities. The AQA specification is designed for students to engage with the fundamentals of the subject, including core theories and concepts whilst also developing skills such as critical analysis and research. Students will apply the theories they learn to various real- life contexts and will have the opportunity to conduct their own research.

Year 1 Outline

In year 1, students develop a broad knowledge and understanding of some core aspects of Psychology through a range of topics:

Approaches to Psychology, Research Methods, Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Clinical Psychology and Mental Health and Biopsychology.

Year 2 Outline

In year 2, the specification offers one compulsory module; Issues and Debates in Psychology plus three topic-based options, which bring together explanations from different psychological approaches. The chosen taught options are Relationships, Schizophrenia, and Aggression.

Key Skills

Students will use theories, models and ideas to explore, compare and evaluate psychological concepts and phenomena. Discussion is a central skill in challenging explanations of human behaviours and in considering issues with research methodology and findings.

At the end of year 2, students will sit 3 papers.

Paper 1: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment and Clinical Psychology and Mental Health.

Paper 2: Approaches, Biopsychology and Research Methods

Paper 3: Issues and Debates, Relationships, Schizophrenia and Aggression

What are the entry requirements?

One third of the A-Level marks will relate to mathematical skills and research methods therefore requiring students to have achieved a grade 6 or above in Maths at GCSE. A substantial number of marks will be obtained through extended response answers, therefore requiring students to have achieved a grade 6 or above in English at GCSE. As Psychology is a science, the specification includes some challenging scientific content, therefore requiring students to have achieved a grade 6 or above in Science at GCSE.

Religious Education **A Level**

Background

The Religious Studies A level course gives you the opportunity to study some of the fundamental questions which people have always asked about:

- Why are we here?
- How should we behave?
- What happens to us when we die?
- How do religious believers explain & explore their beliefs?

From the OCR specification:

The content has been designed to provide a coherent and thought-provoking programme of study for both teachers and learners, whilst also acting as a rigorous course of study which prepares learners for progression to Higher Education. This qualification is designed to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of religious beliefs and teachings, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Learners will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments and responses to religious, philosophical and ethical ideas. OCR's A Level Religious Studies course aims to engage learners thoroughly and develop an interest in Religious Studies which extends beyond the classroom and can be applied to the world around them.

Religious Studies involves some major academic disciplines such as Theology, Religious Ethics and Philosophy of Religion. Consequently, you will study some of the following themes:

Theology (Developments in Christian thought) –

- Religious beliefs, values and teachings, their interconnections and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world.
- Sources of religious wisdom and authority.
- Practices which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought.
- Key themes related to the relationship between religion and society in the context of one religion.

Moral Philosophy –

- Normative ethical theories
- The application of ethical theories
- Contemporary issues of importance ethical language and thought
- Debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience
- Sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs.

Philosophy of Religion –

- Ancient philosophical influences

- The nature of the soul, mind and body
- Arguments about the existence or non-existence of God
- The nature and impact of religious experience
- The challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil • Ideas about the nature of God
- Issues in religious language.

Colleges and universities place great value on this Religious Studies course because it helps develop thinking and analytical skills, the ability to develop and structure an argument, textual analysis and it fosters independent thinking.
This course complements a variety of other A level courses. In the past students who have studied a wide range of subjects, including English, History, Sociology, Geography, Drama, Languages, Psychology and Maths have made use of transferable skills. This course also supports those who study the sciences, particularly those who wish to follow a career in Medicine.

Assessment Objectives & Assessment Methods:
In common with all the new A level qualifications the full A level qualification is the result of a two-year course. It is assessed by 'terminal' exams in the summer of Year 13. Exams will be a set of **three 2hr exams**.
A01 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:

- religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching
- influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies.
- cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice approaches to the study of religion and belief.

Weighting 40%

A02 Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Weighting 60%

Exam Board
A-LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES OCR - H573

What are the entry requirements?
Students need to have achieved a grade 6 or above in R.E. and English.

Sociology A Level

Sociology is the science of society. As sociologists we ask questions about how people live together and engage within different social institutions. We examine society through the eyes of Feminists, Marxists, Functionalists and a range of competing philosophy's because we want you to develop your own ideas as you attempt to understand and answer some of the biggest questions in or society.

Your course will be assessed by three exams at the end of year 13:

1. Exam 1 - Education and Theory 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade

How does our education system work and what is the goal of it? Are we trying to create young confident citizens to lead a future society or are we trying to create productive workers capable of thriving in a competitive jobs market? We will also look at debates around racism and sexism in education.

2. Culture and Identity 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade

Do you feel British? does the State feel you are British? Where do these ideas come from and why do they have power? What else makes individuals feel part of society- their Gender, Class, Race, Religion, Sexuality? How do these identities interact?

3. Crime and Deviance - 2-hour exam that equals 33% of grade

Who defines Crime and what is Criminal behaviour? An examination of theories connected to criminology examining the defining of crime, the policing of different groups and how crime is punished and whether it is successful in changing people's behaviour.

What are the entry requirements? Sociology is assessed entirely through timed essays so you will need at least 5 in History or Geography. If you haven't taken these GCSE's then you need an English grade at 5 or above.

T Levels: what they are

T Levels are new 2-year courses which are taken after GCSEs and are broadly equivalent in size to 3 A Levels. They have been developed in collaboration with employers and education providers so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for entry into skilled employment, an apprenticeship or related technical study through further or higher education.

T Levels offer students practical and knowledge-based learning at a school and on-the-job experience through an industry placement. Every T Level includes an industry placement with an employer focused on developing the practical and technical skills required for the occupation, in this case Management & Administration. These will last a minimum of 315 hours (approximately 45 days).

Entry to higher education and UCAS tariff points

T Levels provide several progression options for students, including:

- skilled employment
- an apprenticeship
- higher education

To help T Level students' progress into higher education, UCAS tariff points are allocated to T Levels. These are broadly in line with the points currently awarded for CTEC courses. However, UCAS points are allocated to the overall T Level grade, and so students must achieve at least an overall pass grade to receive UCAS points.

Course Structure

At St. Michael's we plan to offer the City & Guild T Level in Management & Administration. The structure of the course includes: a Core element; an Industry Placement and an Employer Set Project; and an Occupational Specialism.

Core – assessed via 2 x 2.5-hour exams

- 660 Total Learner Hours focusing on:
  - 1. Contexts that organisations operate and manage in. ○ 2. Key people and stakeholders that support business operations. ○ 3. Quality and compliance standards that affect business operations. ○ 4. Financial contexts that organisations operate within. ○ 5. Key policies and procedures that support organisations. ○ 6. Concepts of project and change management.
  - 7. Business behaviours that influence how organisations operate.

Industry Placement – also part of the Core element

- 315 hours
- Assessed via an Employer Set Project. This takes place over 25 hours is a pre-set project that seeks to test both Core knowledge and practical application of these from the industry placement.

Occupational Specialism – assessed via externally set, marked and moderated tasks

- Business Improvement - 595 Total Learner Hours focusing on:
  - Knowledge of how to acquire, protect and analyse data when seeking opportunities for business improvements
  - Knowledge of how to monitor and report on the implementation of business improvement activities
  - Skills in identifying and using suitable sources to collect, collate and protect data ○ Skills in using basic statistical techniques to analyse and correct different types of data
  - Skills in facilitating and communicating with different stakeholders engaging in the business improvement process.
  - Skills in preparing and presenting comprehensive plans and proposals for change management and business improvements.

Skills in monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation process of business improvements

Entry requirements will be comparable to A Level.

This course is subject to change.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in Business 3 A Levels

Cambridge Technical is an alternative to traditional A Level courses, taking a more engaging, practical approach to learning and assessment. The Cambridge Technical is more flexible for students, and this course suits a wide range of learning styles as there is more focus on the coursework, so students are not under pressure to perform in a one-off test. Instead, the assessment and learning throughout the course gives students a much better indication of their progress, and therefore a greater chance of success. For students to obtain a Cambridge Technical extended Diploma, students must complete all 15 Units over 2 years. Pupils can apply for the Career Ready programme which offers paid work experience which they complete in the first year in July.

This qualification is suitable for learners

- Hoping to study Business related courses at university
- Looking to enter a degree-based apprenticeship, such as Bloomberg and UBS

Qualification structure

Learners must achieve a total of 15 units. 9 units are coursework and 6 units are examinations. Examinations are taken in January and May. The opportunity to resit is once and the best grade is taken.

Grading The units are graded Pass, Merit and Distinction. The qualification is graded PPP, PPM, PMM, MMM, MMD, MDD, DDD, DDD*, DD*D*, D*D*D*.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 4 or above in Maths and English.

Please note this course is subject to change.

OCR Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Business 1 A Level

Learners will complete 5 Units over 2 Years. This is suitable for pupils who wish to gain points as they complete examinations and assignments.

2 Examinations are taken in January and May. The opportunity to resit is once and the best grade is taken. 3 assignments are completed over 2 years.

The grade will be a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 4 or above in Maths and English.

This course is subject to change.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in Sport and Physical Activity 3 A Levels

The course combines a mixture of classroom theory, coaching and practical performance.

The Extended Diploma is a Tech Level qualification (meaning it will prepare you for employment) and takes 1080 guided learning hours to deliver. This means it is equivalent in **size to three A levels** and will form your complete two-year study programme. You will **take 17 units**, made up of mandatory and optional units. Everybody will study the mandatory units:

- Body Systems and the Effects of Physical Activity
- Sports Coaching and Activity Leadership
- Performance Analysis in Sport and Exercise
- Nutrition and Diet for Sport and Exercise
- Sports injuries and Rehabilitation
- The Business of Sport
- Improving fitness for sport and physical activity
- Organisation of Sports Events
- Working in Active leisure facilities
- Sports Organisation and Development
- Working Safely in sport, exercise, health and leisure
- Physical Activity for Specific Groups
- Practical Skills in Sport and Physical activities

You will then be able to choose an additional four optional units from the following:

- Group Exercise to Music
- Biomechanics and Movement Analysis
- Health and Fitness Testing for sport and exercise • Sport and exercise Psychology
- Sport and exercise Sociology.

This qualification is suitable for learners

- Hoping to study Science and other Sport related courses at university
- Looking to enter work and employment in a related field

Qualification structure

Learners must achieve a total of 17 units. 13 units are coursework and 4 units are examinations. Examinations are taken in January and May. The opportunity to resit is once and the best grade is taken.

Grading The units are graded Pass, Merit and Distinction. The qualification is graded PPP, PPM, PMM, MMM, MMD, MDD, DDD, DDD*, DD*D*, D*D*D*.

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grade 4 or above in Maths and English.

This course is subject to change.

OCR Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Sport and Physical Activity 1 A Level

Learners will complete 5 Units over 2 Years. This is suitable for pupils who wish to gain points as they complete examinations and assignments.

2 Examinations are taken in January and May. The opportunity to resit is once and the best grade is taken. 3 assignments are completed over 2 years.

The grade will be a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*

What are the entry requirements?
Students need to have achieved grade 4 or above in Maths and English.

This course is subject to change.

OCR Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Digital Media A Level

The aim of the course is to allow students to gain an understanding of how different businesses and organisations in the media sector work. When it comes to progression or employment, students will learn about the variety of opportunities available to them, and the roles and responsibilities of media businesses and organisations within the sector. This will make sure your students develop clear ideas about where they might like to take their career and what progression routes they'd like to follow.

Students will study 3 core units including

Unit 1 - Media Products and Audiences – Examined Unit

The aim of this unit is for students to develop their understanding of how different media institutions operate to create products that will appeal to specific target audiences. Students will learn about how audiences are categorised, researched and targeted by media producers. They will also learn about how media institutions distribute and advertise their products to audiences.

Unit 2 – Preproduction and Planning – Examined Unit

This is a mandatory unit that forms the foundation of the course. By completing this unit, your students will understand the pre-production process the creative media industry follows when creating a product. This includes time scaling and resource planning and legislation and constraints on planning

Unit 3 – Create a Media Product – Centre Assessed Unit

The aim of this unit is for students to develop knowledge and understanding of the production processes of producing a media product from one of the following:

• Print-based product • Audio-visual product

• Audio product.

Student will also study at least two other media units to be confirmed by the centre e.g. social media and Globalisation, Journalism and the News Industry.

Progress

Cambridge Technical makes very strong use of ICT and provides a strong base for progression to university, apprenticeships or work and are recognised for UCAS tariff points*. Students can progress to careers in Games Design, Website Development and Social Media Development

What are the entry requirements?

Students need to have achieved grades 4 or above in Maths and English.

This course is subject to change.