



READING SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM INFORMATION
FOR ENTRY TO YEAR 12 IN SEPTEMBER 2019

To register for the Sixth Form both internal and external students should visit the Reading School website: www.reading-school.co.uk.

Please click on admissions – application forms – sixth form application form

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INTRODUCTION



Reading School was founded in 1125 and whilst the world around us has changed spectacularly since then, throughout our history we have remained absolutely resolute in our commitment to the extension of 'sound learning' and to stretching the understanding and aspirations of all those in our community. Our aim is to provide a vibrant learning environment that will allow students to make the most of their talents, enabling them to excel in academic, sporting, cultural and artistic arenas. We believe that studying in the sixth form at Reading School should be a springboard to an outstanding university education, a fulfilling career and a life of learning.

Academic standards and expectations are very high at Reading School and we believe that the culture of aspiration and ambition found in our community helps every student to achieve their best. In every single one of our sixth form classes you will find that all of our students strive to achieve top grades, to contribute to the learning of their peers and to demonstrate leadership to junior students. We believe that every lesson should be inspirational and we are proud that we never settle for less.

Sixth form studies should be just the beginning of a lifetime of further stretching study, independent learning and leadership.

Our ethos at Reading School encourages students to stretch the boundaries of their understanding through independent study, discussion, team work, active research, inspirational lectures and advanced extra-curricular study groups. At the same time, in every department students enjoy the support of highly qualified and exceptionally gifted teachers. Our track record demonstrates the truly remarkable dedication of our sixth form team led by Mr Alun Lloyd and Miss Sarah Drummond (Heads of Year 12 and 13).

We expect teaching and learning in Reading School to go far beyond the level of the public examinations and to expose our students to questions more commonly experienced at University, an ambition demonstrated through our success in international academic competitions as well as outstanding numbers of students who move on to study the competitive courses in Russell Group Universities or Oxbridge.

Whilst our Academic excellence may be what first attracts students and their families to Reading School, we would argue that our emphasis on integrity and leadership are at least as important. Student leadership plays an integral role in our shared life together through the student council, sixth form student union and the prefect team. The student body is led by the School Captain and aided by his deputies all of whom are selected from within the Year 12 group in the summer term. Our desire to encourage integrity and character is embedded in our programme of weekly chapel services, PSHE, careers consultations, community service, work-placed learning and extra-curricular activities. We are convinced that it is the formation of character that ensures students leaving Reading School are equipped to use their gifts to positively shape the world around them.

The purpose of this information booklet is to help applicants to the Sixth Form, whether from Year 11 at Reading School or from other schools, in making decisions about their future. However, such a brief overview cannot give a complete picture and we would encourage prospective Sixth Formers to talk to teachers, tutors and current Sixth Form students as well as attending our Open Evening.

We are eager to welcome new students to the School, and have capacity for almost 180 students in Year 12 next year. Typically new students make up one third of our cohort and we very much appreciate the vibrancy and perspective that is added by external candidates.

Please do speak to the Heads of Year 12 or 13 or myself if you have any further questions.

Best wishes,



Rev'd Dr Chris Evans
Deputy Headmaster/Head of Sixth Form

CURRICULUM

This information booklet illustrates the subjects on offer for study in the Sixth Form and the pathways available to students. All of the subjects we offer are two year linear A Level courses. While our policy is to make every effort to accommodate all combinations of A Level subjects, places on some subject courses may be limited due to staffing constraints. In exceptional cases it may not be possible to run a subject if there are insufficient students applying for it.

Academic Pathways

The linear A-levels are very different from the modular AS system. It is imperative with linear A-levels that students start courses of study that they are committed to completing, and, as a consequence we encourage every student to think very carefully about their options and find out as much as possible about the subjects you might want to study.

The priority for every student in considering which pathway they adopt is to reflect on which route is most likely to achieve top grades. For example, attaining 3 A*s is likely to yield better university offers than 4 A grades.

We offer three academic pathways:

Three + A-Levels

Many students have a clear sense of what their intended pathway into Higher Education is and can clearly identify 3 A-Levels that suit their intended future studies. We believe that students from Reading School should expect to offer more than 3 A-levels to prospective employers or universities and therefore expect all students to undertake additional activities, perhaps studying an Extended Project, developing a portfolio of work related learning or opting for additional studies that do not lead to a full fourth A-Level. In 2018 49% of students at Reading School completed 3 A-levels.

Four A-Levels

For some students 4 A-Levels is a more appropriate option than three or five, because a fourth A-Level with a predicted top grade will be a distinguishing feature on a university application. Students who wish to apply for early entry courses at university (e.g. Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry or Oxbridge applications) might consider 4 A-Levels although achieving 3 A-Levels with grades A* is better than achieving 4 A grades.

Five A-levels

Students with over 80/100 raw marks in Additional Mathematics or A⁺ in GCSE Further Maths may study Maths and Further Maths in one option block, allowing them to study three further A-Levels. This is only a sensible option if each of the 5 A-Levels studied is on track for an A* grade. There is very limited value studying five A-Levels if at least three of them are not awarded top grades. Over the last five years on average just 3% of students have completed 5 A-Levels.

Individual students will be advised on which academic pathway to follow based on their performance in their GCSEs. Further details regarding sixth form pathways will be provided at the Open Evening.

DECISION MAKING

When making decisions about sixth form studies we encourage students to consider their own strengths, and interests, the combination of subjects they pursue, requirements for Higher Education courses and the breadth of skills they demonstrate.

What are your Strengths?

The standards at A Level are a significant jump up from GCSE, and so it is important to identify the subjects you are good at. What are your current strengths? Are you better at more practical subjects, or those that involve more theory? Are you good at subjects that are more essay based? Think about your strengths, and look carefully at the subject details.

What do you enjoy?

If you enjoy a subject now, then that is usually a good guide as to whether you will enjoy it at A Level, even though GCSE and A Level may be rather different. It is vital that you choose subjects you will enjoy or can at least live with. A word of warning: ignore the teacher factor – is it the subject you enjoy, or is it just that you get on well with your current teacher?

Do some subjects mix well?

We try very hard indeed to make sure that as many people as possible can have their first choice combinations – occasionally though we may have to ask you to revise your choice, either because we simply cannot timetable it, or because we feel that it is not a sensible combination.

Do I need particular subjects?

Some students already have clear career goals (although at this age many do not). Many careers and university courses do not need particular subject choices at this stage, but some do – look at the pages entitled ‘Looking beyond A Levels’. If you are in doubt about whether you need to choose a particular subject, do ask for advice.

Do I need a range of subjects?

For students studying more than three A-Levels it is often beneficial to study a course that shows breadth. This will never be a pre-requisite for a university course, but most university courses are based on offers for grades across three subjects, and a fourth can often therefore be chosen for personal interest and maintaining a skill which could be useful to a future employer (eg. a language or performing art). This is only the case for students who are already achieving top grades in the courses that are most relevant for their degree.

What are facilitating subjects?

The Russell Group guide (<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices>) to making decisions about post-16 education suggests that some subjects are sometimes referred to as ‘facilitating’ subjects. It is suggested that by choosing ‘facilitating’ subjects at advanced level, you will have a much wider range of options available to you at university. Subjects that can be viewed as ‘facilitating’ subjects are:

- Mathematics and Further Mathematics
- English Literature
- Physics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Geography
- History
- Classical or Modern Languages

Enrichment Subject

Study of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) provides an opportunity for an in-depth investigation on a topic of their choice. This is particularly useful for students who have a clear idea of a university course and wish to demonstrate advanced detailed knowledge and research skills.

Essay Writing

Many competitive courses will see a qualification in a subject such as English Literature or History A-Level as a distinct advantage. Essay writing subjects are held in high regard for the skills they nurture and the academic rigour they demonstrate.

MINIMUM SUBJECT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Art

GCSE grade 7 in Art.

Biology

GCSE grade 7 in Biology or grade 7 in both Science and Additional Science.

Chemistry

GCSE grade 7 in Chemistry or grade 7 in both Science and Additional Science. GCSE grade 7 in Maths is also required. If Chemistry is to be studied as one of four subjects a minimum of 60 points from best 8 GCSEs and a grade 8 in Chemistry and Maths are required.

Classical Civilisation

GCSE grade 6 in English Language and grade 7 in at least one of English Literature, History or Ancient History.

Computer Science

GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics. Computer Science GCSE is not a requirement, but if it has been studied then a grade 6 is required.

Economics

GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics. Economics GCSE is not a requirement, but if it has been studied then a grade 7 is required. If Economics is to be studied as one of four subjects a minimum of 60 points from best 8 GCSEs and a grade 8 in Maths is required.

English Literature

GCSE grade 6 in both English Language and English Literature.

EPQ

GCSE grade 6 in English Language and grade 7 in at least one of English Literature, History or Ancient History.

French

GCSE grade 7 in French.

Geography

GCSE grade 6 in English Language. Geography GCSE is not a requirement, but if it has been studied then a grade 6 is required.

German

GCSE grade 7 in German.

History

GCSE grade 6 in English Language. History GCSE is not a requirement, but if it has been studied then a minimum of a grade 6 is required.

Latin

GCSE grade 7 in Latin.

Mathematics

GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics.

Further Mathematics

For Mathematics and A Level Further Mathematics in option block A, a GCSE Grade 9 and a grade A in the FSMQ (Additional Maths - OCR 6993/01) is required.

For Mathematics and Further Mathematics in 2 option blocks a GCSE grade 9 is required. No additional qualification is needed. If Further Mathematics is under-subscribed pupils with a grade 8 will be considered. These pupils (with grade 8's) will be ranked by their raw score and any available places in Further Mathematics will be filled from working through the list from the highest score achieved down until all places have been allocated.

For Mathematics and Further Mathematics AS in option block A a grade 9 is required at GCSE and a grade B in the Additional Maths qualification (FSMQ – 6993/01) if it has been studied.

Music

GCSE grade 7 in Music and success at Grade VI level on your primary instrument (the study of a secondary instrument to at least Grade IV level is highly recommended). For candidates who have not studied GCSE, Music Grade VII on an instrument and Grade VI theory is acceptable. A Level music also requires that students make prominent and consistent contributions to the school's extra-curricular music activities.

Physics

GCSE grade 7 in Physics or 7 in both Science and Additional Science. GCSE grade 7 in Maths is also required. If Physics is to be studied as one of four subjects a minimum of 60 points from best 8 GCSEs and a grade 8 in Physics and Maths are required.

Spanish

GCSE grade 7 in Spanish.

Theatre Studies

GCSE grade 6 in either GCSE English Language or English Literature. Drama GCSE is not a requirement, but if it has been studied then a grade 7 is required. A genuine interest in Theatre is essential.

Subject Oversubscription

At the point of offers being made in February 2019, if a subject is oversubscribed and all sets are at full capacity, students with the lowest predicted grades may be asked to choose an alternative subject or take up their reserve choice. After offers have been made any requests to change subject into a department that is oversubscribed will be put on hold until GCSE results are published. At this point a combination of the best 8 GCSE point scores and the mark achieved in the relevant subject will be used to determine ranking.

Option Blocks

Option blocks are in place to optimise the number of students who are able to study their preferred combination of subjects. The option blocks are anticipated to be as follows but are subject to change:

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Reserve Choice
Extended Project – AS	Biology	Art	Biology	In case one of your subjects is oversubscribed or a combination becomes unavailable we ask all students to notify us of a reserve choice that they would be happy to study from Blocks A - D.
Geography	Chemistry	Chemistry	Economics	
Mathematics	Computer Science	Classical Civilisation	English Literature	
Maths & Further Maths	Economics	English Literature	Extended Project – AS	
Mathematics & Further Maths AS	Extended Project – AS	Extended Project – AS	French	
Theatre Studies	History	Geography	Further Maths	
	Latin	German	History	
	Mathematics	Music	Physics	
		Physics		
		Spanish		

Admission Arrangements

Applications for day and boarding places must be made directly to Reading School for both internal and external applicants. The window opens on Saturday 1st December 2018 with a closing date of Friday 25th January 2019. The online application form can be accessed on the school website from Saturday 1st December 2018.

Students who receive a conditional offer will be invited to a consultation meeting on Tuesday 12th March 2019 to discuss their subject options, career pathways and extra-curricular interests. The purpose of these appointments is to make transition into the Sixth Form as easy as possible.

All successful internal applicants will be expected to attend the Sixth Form Registration Day on Thursday 22nd August 2019 once they have received the GCSE results to confirm subject choices and to sign a Sixth Form Agreement.

External applicants in receipt of a conditional offer are expected to send a scanned/photo copy of their results to the admissions office by email no later than 11am on Thursday 22nd August 2019. They are then asked to attend the Sixth Form Registration Day on Friday 23rd August 2019 to confirm GCSE results, subject choices and to sign a Sixth Form Agreement. Further details will be sent out in the conditional offer.

All applicants in receipt of a conditional offer will be kept on a waiting list pending publication of their GCSE results at which point we will happily accommodate students who have met the entry requirements and for whom there is room.

Options Changes

Students frequently change their mind about their preferred choice of subjects. All offers are conditional and are linked to subject choices. There is no guarantee that requests to change options can be accommodated and requests that are received after Friday 25th January 2019 can only be finally processed on Wednesday 28th August 2019.

Entry requirements into the Sixth Form

For entry into the Sixth Form students must have achieved the equivalent of a total of at least 54 points (9=9, 8=8, 7=7, 6=6) from 8 GCSE subjects and at least a grade 5 at GCSE in Mathematics and English Language or a DfE recognised equivalency. Individual subject requirements must also be attained and are published in this booklet.

For students studying IGCSEs and other exam boards for GCSE we ask you to contact NARIC direct at: <https://www.naric.org.uk/naric/> NARIC will convert grades for alternative qualifications into a GCSE equivalent. All NARIC statements will need to be emailed to the admissions department at Reading School.

Inclusion

To any student with special educational needs or a disability, who is applying for a place at the School, evidence should be included of the need or disability so the SENDCO can assess the applicant appropriately.

Specifications

The following guidance notes give details regarding the specifications and examination boards offered in each subject in our Sixth Form. It is a worthwhile exercise to check these specifications and ensure that the content of the courses you subscribe to match your expectations and interest. If there are not enough students to make a subject viable, very occasionally it has been impossible to run a course. We continue to strive for a rich and broad curriculum and are pleased to have such a varied range of subjects including some which benefit greatly from a small student to teacher ratio.

Art

(AQA A Level Art and Design: Fine Art)

The focus of Art at A Level is to extend and develop skills learnt at GCSE, whilst aiming to encourage students to take more creative risks and really grow as artists. The course will provide you with opportunities to explore ideas in a wide range of media and forms. There are many elements you will master as the course progresses, such as being confident in taking creative risks, learning from and resolving mistakes, creating personal responses to project starting points, and developing and refining your practical skills. Additionally, working independently, and being able to contextualise your own practice through studying and understanding the work of other practitioners is of vital importance.

To be successful this course will require you to be independent and commit to extended learning outside of the classroom; it is hard work from the start, however, the more you put in, the more you will enjoy yourself, and the more rewarding the course will be.

Unit 1: Personal Investigation

- September Year 12 – February Year 13
- Portfolio of practical work showing a range of media and approaches to making
- Coherent and logically structured extended written response of between 1000 and 3000 words of continuous prose.
- 60% of A-Level

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment

- February Year 13 – May Year 13
- Response to an externally set assignment
- Preparatory period + 15 hours supervised time
- 40% of A –Level

Biology

(OCR H420)

It is an exciting time to be a biologist. Biologists are working to solve the biggest challenges currently faced by people and the planet – fighting disease, protecting the environment and feeding our growing population. Some of the most innovative and exciting work in science occurs at the boundaries where biological knowledge is combined with techniques from chemistry, physics, engineering and maths. Biochemistry - Investigating the chemical processes of life, combining biology with chemistry to study organisms at the molecular and cellular level. Biomaths and Computational Biology - Using mathematical techniques to solve biological problems. Biotechnology - Combining biology with chemistry and engineering to create new biology based technologies. Biophysics - Using the laws of physics to better understand movement and structure and answer biological questions. Bioengineering - Combining biological knowledge with engineering and design to produce new and innovative products. Agri-science, regenerative medicine and synthetic biology are three of the UKs 'eight great technologies' with biology at their core.

Biology is the study of life. It is a subject of continual advance and change students are encouraged to keep up to date with these many new issues and to gain an appreciation of the dynamic nature of science. Biology not only encompasses aspects of the physical sciences and mathematics related to the living

world, but also provides an opportunity to consider the ethical issues arising from the rapid advances in the life sciences. Biology teachers place great importance on learning through practical work and Reading School biologists will experience a wide variety of innovative techniques such as genetic engineering, gel electrophoresis and microscale investigations. Students are encouraged to consider extension work, all year 12 biologists are entered for the Biology Intermediate Olympiad and suitable students will be selected to enter the British Biology Olympiad Competition in year 13 run by the Royal Society of Biology. We have had some students selected for the UK team and compete in the International Biology Olympiad competition.

The specification followed at A level is OCR Biology A (H420).

Module 1 – Development of practical skills

Module 2 – Foundations in biology

Module 3 – Exchange and transport

Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease

Module 5 – Communications, homeostasis and energy

Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems.

Students will sit three examination papers in biological processes (37%), biological diversity (37%) and unified biology (26%). The practical endorsement is reported separately.

Studying biology will provide you with valuable knowledge, skills and experience. You will gain skills that you can use no matter which career path you choose, both in and out of science. They are highly valued by employers and will look great on your CV. These skills can open the door to working in business and enterprise, marketing, law, hospitality, politics and policy, journalism, art, economics and much more. Many Reading School students go on to study biology-related courses at undergraduate level including medicine, biochemistry, biological science, neuroscience, biomedical science, zoology and veterinary science. In the last two years we have had over 50 successful applicants to top UK universities (including Oxford and Cambridge). Many medical schools request biology as an essential component of their entry requirements (for more details see www.medschools.ac.uk). However, it should be noted that many of the candidates who achieve the highest grade in A Level biology combine it with non-scientific subjects.

Chemistry (OCR H432)

As well as being a fascinating subject in its own right, Chemistry is the cornerstone of medicine, veterinary studies, textile and polymer science, molecular biology, food science, geology and a host of other subjects. The A Level course contains a good balance of practical work supporting the Practical Endorsement supported by a carefully structured theoretical framework. The course is designed to cover the needs of many students. In addition to the obvious chemical careers, potential physicists or engineers will find much that is stimulating and challenging. There are several topics of direct relevance to the would-be medics, indeed a top A Level grade in Chemistry is essential for acceptance into a Medical School. In fact anyone who finds Chemistry interesting, no matter what their future plans, should at least investigate the subject and examine the text books and course material.

The syllabus followed is OCR Chemistry A and is divided into 6 modules over two years. These include aspects of physical, inorganic and organic Chemistry. Tests usually occur every two to three weeks in order to assess a student's progress and, in the fifth term, all boys follow a comprehensive revision programme. It is the Department's policy to enrich its students' experience and expose them to some of the applications of chemistry in industry. Students are encouraged to attend lectures and industrial visits or work experience can be facilitated if the opportunities arise. We are also keen for students to participate in competitions, such as the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge or the highly challenging RSC Olympiad. Boys have achieved very highly in these competitions in the past and will always be encouraged to participate in activities that further their understanding of the subject.

Computer Science

(AQA 7517)

Computer science is a fascinating and constantly evolving futuristic subject that is incorporated into a multitude of industries. Extending a student's ability to design complex computational algorithms by abstracting from real life situations is a key learning objective on this course.

The computer science course provides the opportunity to meld both technical and creative skills, whilst cultivating a depth of knowledge of the standards and historical reasons as to how society arrived at the current level of computational ability. The syllabus provides the opportunity to develop a deep appreciation of the fundamentals of programming and data structures, moving on to understand the importance of adopting a systematic approach to problem solving. A review of the structure of computer systems, systems architecture and the features of communication and networking is the precursor to appreciating the consequences of the uses of computing. As well as considering a systematic approach to problem solving, big data and aspects of functional programming, students embark on a voyage of discovery, where they complete a programming coursework project to provide a computerised system to implement a solution to a real-world challenge.

The AQA computer science course structure over two years is as follows:

- Paper 1 - On screen programming exam, with the questions based on a preliminary program studied prior to the exam. (40% of the A Level)
- Paper 2 – Written theory topics. (40 % of the A Level)
- NEA – Investigation of a practical problem, leading to the development of a solution. Both knowledge and skills acquired during the course will be required. (20 % of the A Level)

Success on this course will require the student to be independent and commit to extend their learning outside of the classroom. It is essential that the student has a home computer in order to fully engage with the material and concepts covered.

Prior programming or algorithmic experience is desirable, but not a prerequisite, as a practical approach is taken from the onset of the course.

Classical Civilisation

(OCR H443)

No prior knowledge of the Classical World is required in order to study this course.

The study of Classical Civilisation equally allows students to explore a **new** subject area or to extend their interest within this field. It is a very accessible course, as students explore the history and cultures of the Romans and Greeks, using English translations of the original source material. Students have succeeded in this subject regardless of previous experience and a good proportion continue with the subject beyond A Level.

The OCR course provides the opportunity to study:

- classical thought (Democracy of the Athenians)
- classical visual and material culture (Imperial Image – focusing on the first Roman emperor Augustus)
- classical literature (including Virgil's Aeneid and Homer's Odyssey, both epic tales of love, battles and blood)

On this course you will gain an in depth understanding of a wide range of themes and topics in the study of the classical world. You'll read and analyse a range of classical texts and gain an appreciation of a number of archaeological objects, ancient images and monuments.

You will be introduced to themes, methods and theories in the study of the literature and history of the ancient world as well as exploring works of art from ancient Greece and Rome, looking not only at the objects themselves, but also on the contexts within which they were produced and used. Myths and mythology is studied throughout the course, exploring the uses of mythological stories, characters and motifs since antiquity right up to the present day.

This course balances the academic study of classics and ancient history today with excellent preparation for the 21st-century workplace. You will leave knowing how to identify, select, organise and interpret information, write analytically and develop independent thinking.

Therefore it complements the arts subjects, particularly History and English Literature; whilst providing excellent breadth as a subject in its own right.

Economics

(OCR H460)

Economics is a lively and evolving social science that studies the choices individuals, businesses, governments and entire societies make. Economics helps you to look more deeply into the world around you, allowing you to develop a broader appreciation of how and why it functions as it does. It can also give you new perspectives on some of the most pressing and challenging problems facing the world today; the causes and consequences of the 2009 financial crash; the operation of the financial markets; growing income inequality; unemployment and underemployment; the economic implications of Brexit; action to reduce carbon emissions; interest rates; the issues surrounding government borrowing and debt; migration and the impact of an ageing population – to name but a few.

The two main components of the subject are: Microeconomics involves a study of the behaviour of consumers and businesses, analysing how markets work and may often fail. Closer examination of housing, energy, labour, financial, health and education markets help students explore the real-world application of microeconomic theories and concepts. We also look at the theory behind the operations of firms and business enterprises, and the rationale for government intervention. Macroeconomics is the study of the whole economy – topics such as inflation, unemployment, economic growth, the balance of payments, government policy and international trade are all key issues. Is the government meeting its major economic objectives? Could UK government policy be more effective? The A Level Economic course is a two year 'linear' course and is structured to develop both microeconomic and macroeconomic concepts and theories in a variety of contemporary contexts. The course is externally assessed by three examinations at the end of year 13, and quantitative skills are embedded within the assessment. Students studying Economics combine it with subjects across the curriculum and it complements mathematics, sciences, humanities and languages.

Many Reading School students go on to study Economics related courses at undergraduate level; in the last two years over 50 students have entered top UK universities (including Oxford and Cambridge) to study Economics, Economics and Management, PPE and Economics and Finance. Students who are considering taking Economics beyond A level are strongly encouraged to consider studying A Level Mathematics.

English Literature

(OCR H472)

Whether you are a committed literature lover, a budding writer, or even a maths/science purist, the English Department offers a course which will engage your intellect and serve your best interests. Carrying on studying English Literature to A Level makes you a much better university and employment candidate: it will sharpen your skills of analysis, make you better constructors of argument and discussion, and ensure you can sprinkle your influential ideas with magic fairy dust.

English Literature is regarded as a 'facilitating subject' by universities. This means that it is a discipline which opens up a wide range of courses to you for study at undergraduate level. Regardless of which

academic discipline you choose to follow at university, A Level English Literature will be seen as a helpful and worthwhile stepping stone.

A Level English Literature is a two-year linear qualification. It comprises three components, two of which will be examined at the end of Year 13: two 150 minute examinations (worth 40% of the overall qualification each) and a 3,000 word non-examined assessment folder (worth 20% of the overall qualification). Texts which are being studied by the current cohorts include 'Hamlet', 'The Great Gatsby' and 'Paradise Lost'.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

(AQA 7993)

If there's an area of study you really love – whether it's engineering, medicine, economics or anything else – an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) gives you the chance to develop your skills and knowledge by engaging in undergraduate style research.

You'll be required to complete a project based on a research topic of your choice. This can be related to your A levels or a subject outside of your current areas of study (e.g. law, medicine, psychology, philosophy, sociology – the possibilities are limitless!) Your project can be in the form of a 5,000 word essay or report; or an artefact, musical composition or dramatic project (backed up with a 2000 word research report).

You'll have a research skills lesson every week and regular meetings with your appointed supervisor; other than that it is up to you to manage your time. It is anticipated that you will complete your project by the end of year 12 and it will be submitted in November of year 13. Successful students on the EPQ are self-motivated, well-organised, and up for an academic challenge.

The EPQ is worth a maximum of 70 UCAS points, which is slightly more than an AS-level (60 points). At some universities (e.g. Southampton, Birmingham), applicants who take an EPQ and meet the offer criteria will be made an alternative offer which will be one grade lower, plus a grade A in the EPQ (alongside the standard offer). For all Universities, the EPQ offers an opportunity to become an expert in a particular area, an invaluable source of discussion in both your UCAS personal statement and potential university interviews.

Geography

(AQA 7037)

Geography is a popular A Level choice nationally, as well as in Reading School. Teaching is characterised by a lively approach, aimed at developing the geographer's natural curiosity and concern about major contemporary issues. It is Geography's ability to integrate the study of Earth's places, peoples, environments and societies that makes it so relevant to the understanding of the increasingly interconnected world in which we all live and work.

The Geography Department at Reading School is staffed with experienced, enthusiastic teachers who are passionate about the world and the role people can play within it. The AQA A Level course comprises of a Physical Geography paper (40%), a Human Geography paper (40%) and a controlled assessment (20%). The topics covered in each section are as follows: Physical Geography – Coastal systems and landscapes, Hazards and Carbon and water cycles. Human Geography – Changing places, Global systems and governance and Resources security. Controlled Assessment – a Geography fieldwork investigation following a curriculum fieldtrip which will be completed at the beginning of Year 13.

Cambridge and other leading universities see Geography as a challenging academic discipline. It is also listed in the Russell Group 'Informed Choices' guide as a facilitating subject, preferred by admissions tutors for its contribution to preparation for university study. Geography is accepted by universities as an entrance qualification for both Science and Arts courses, as well as for vocational courses such as Law, Medicine and Veterinary Science. The skills and knowledge developed through studying Geography are useful in careers such as law, financial services, computing, management consultancy and development officers.

History

(AQA 7042)

History is an exciting, interesting and constantly stimulating subject. History is a highly regarded subject for courses at degree level, including medicine, as well for a wide variety of professions. It is the most popular degree amongst MPs, popular with lawyers and, at A Level, it is a fantastic complement to scientific courses as it trains students to take in information from a range of sources. Within our experienced and innovative department there is also a determination to make the course as relevant and enjoyable as possible.

Students will study two taught modules for A Level History. Firstly, they will study the Cold War, 1945-1991. Many students will have touched upon the relevant global themes of the 20th century in their GCSEs and we build upon this by investigating the Cold War in fascinating depth. The students have to fully immerse themselves in the political drama, the apocalyptic tension and ideological suspicion as this depth study gets to the heart of one of the most interesting human dramas the world has seen; one which continues to affect us today. Secondly, they will study the Tudors, 1485 – 1603. England's most famous family have continued to ignite imaginations across the world for a reason: they carried out one of history's most exciting soap operas and they continue to matter to this day. Henry VII's successful invasion, Henry VIII's Break with Rome and subsequent creation of the Church of England, Mary's burning of heretics and Elizabeth's defeat of the Armada are just the headlines, behind which lie dark plots, dastardly rebellions and delicious intrigues. Both these modules are taught by teachers who love the content and know the exam board's demands, and studied by students who became deeply passionate about the subject.

As part of the course, students will also complete an independent investigation into an historical issue. The three they can choose from are: the Crusades, the American Civil War or the French Revolution. This extended piece of writing will involve bringing together a vast array of evidence that students' have located themselves and reaching substantiated conclusions.

Latin

(OCR H443)

The study of Latin helps to develop logical thinking, as well as enhancing analytical and evaluative abilities.

As such, many students that opt for Latin do so to complement the Maths/Further Maths and Physics subjects that require many of the same skills.

At the same time the study of literature augments other subjects, most particularly English Literature and History; the study of this language obviously provides the basis for other Romantic Languages. During the course students will have the privilege to study some of the greatest Classical works, as well as exploring the nuances of translating them. Latin is an extremely well regarded A Level subject, however the most important reason for taking Latin is that the student really enjoys the course! On account of its versatility the study of Latin can lead directly to a whole plethora of careers, including the civil service, law, computer programming, journalism or accountancy; and indirectly to becoming a mathematician, scientist, medic or engineer.

The OCR course roughly equates to 50% language and 50% literature. Students will study both poetry and prose.

Mathematics and Further Mathematics

A Level Mathematics (H240)

AS Level Further Mathematics (H235) and A Level Further Mathematics (H245)

Examination Board – OCR

Mathematics is an extremely popular choice at AS and A Level providing, as it does, an intellectually stimulating and analytically rigorous course that develops a systematic, yet intuitive, method of tackling problems that is highly regarded by both Higher Education and employers.

Often described as ‘The Queen of the Sciences’, Mathematics provides the backbone to numerous disciplines. The majority of students who opt for Mathematics choose it as a ‘service’ subject to enable them to pursue a course in a science-related subject or the social sciences such as Economics, Actuarial Science and Accountancy. However, a significant number do go on to read Mathematics at university.

There are three courses offered in the Sixth Form to AS or A Level: A Level Maths, A Level Maths plus AS Level Further Maths, A Level Maths plus A Level Further Maths (in either one or two option blocks).

The courses followed in the Sixth Form lead to the OCR qualifications. They are all examined by linear examinations at the end of the two years.

A Level:

To embark on an A Level Maths course it is essential to have a complete grasp of GCSE work, in particular an ability to manipulate algebra. Experience shows that candidates who achieve less than a Grade 7 at GCSE struggle to succeed at A Level. For this reason a Grade 7 at GCSE is a requirement.

A Level Further Maths and AS Level Further Maths:

This course can be studied in a single block, or as a double block option. Very able mathematicians have the option of pursuing this course from a single block. These boys should have been in top set for Year 11 and will achieve a Grade 9 for GCSE and a Grade A for Additional Maths (FSMQ – 6993/01). They should also be recommended by their Y11 teacher for this course. Boys joining Reading School for A Level study will need to have gained a Grade 9 at GCSE and a Grade A in Additional Maths (FSMQ – 6993/01) in order to study Further Maths in a single option block. Any such student must also contact Dr Matthews as soon as possible in order to discuss this, together with any additional preparatory work that needs to be done before embarking on the course.

Further Maths is also offered in two blocks for boys who will benefit from a more measured pace. Such students will need to have achieved a Grade 9 at GCSE. No additional qualification is needed. If Further Mathematics A Level is under-subscribed pupils with a grade 8 will be considered. These pupils (with grade 8's) will be ranked by their raw score and any available places in Further Mathematics will be filled from working through the list from the highest score achieved down until all places have been allocated.

Provided there is a suitable demand for such a course boys may opt to study A level Mathematics and AS Further Maths in one option block (Block A). There is no AS Further Maths in two blocks. The entry requirement is a grade 9 at GCSE and a grade B in the Additional Maths qualification if it has been studied.

There are additional opportunities offered to sixth form mathematicians. The Senior Maths Challenge, compulsory for all Further Maths students and optional for others, gives boys the chance to progress to the Mathematical Olympiads and demonstrate their prowess. A team challenge is fun if selected and various other master classes may also be on offer during the two year course. Students wishing to study Mathematics at Cambridge University will be required to sit ‘STEP’. The AEA is another examination beyond A Level and is required by some Universities. Help and tuition is available within the department for these higher levels.

Modern Foreign Languages – French, German and Spanish

French (AQA 7652)

German (AQA 7662)

Spanish (AQA 7692)

‘A different language is a different vision of life’ Federico Fellini, Italian film director.

Why Study Languages?

Learning a language is a challenging and rewarding experience. You will have the opportunity to interact with people from many backgrounds whilst developing your verbal, written and presentation skills. Being able to engage directly with native speakers, whether on holiday or whilst working for a multi-national company, will enable you to see things from their perspective and gain insight into their culture and society. It is our intention to offer students the opportunity to spend time in the target language country in the form of a study visit or a work experience placement. The skills involved in learning a language lend themselves to the world of work, enabling you to demonstrate your presentation skills, adaptability, open-mindedness and creativity.

What does the course involve?

To succeed you need to develop your knowledge of grammar and extend your range of vocabulary. Following the AQA course you will study social issues and trends such as modern and traditional values, cyberspace, equal rights, artistic culture (like modern da idols or cultural heritage, or cultural landscape).

You will develop your reading and listening skills so that you can access information and ideas on a range of topics. You will be able to develop your oral fluency and conversational skills. You will be encouraged to develop the ability to communicate your ideas in written tasks in a clear and logical manner. The course encourages you to reflect on important issues and gives you the opportunity to talk about topics which are of interest to you and which you have researched.

Music

(OCR H543)

Music in the Sixth Form currently follows the OCR specification. The course is divided into the disciplines of performance, composition and listening, but there is naturally a considerable increase in the rigour of these areas when compared with GCSE.

Through the range of genres, styles and eras contained in the Areas of Study they will explore musical context, musical language and performance and composition skills. OCR’s A Level in Music has options and pathways designed to appeal to, and cater for, a wide range of interests, instruments and personal creative strengths.

Candidates can choose to major in either performance or composition. Performance is assessed by external examiner by video recording and is either 6 minutes minimum or 10 minutes minimum depending on the major chosen. Candidates produce two compositions, one of which is set by the board, and those majoring in composition produce three technical exercises.

The remainder of the qualification is by listening exam based on the Areas of Study for the course as follows:

AoS1: The Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven

AoS2: Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band

AoS3: Developments in Instrumental Jazz 1910 to the present day

AoS4: Religious Music of the Baroque period

Students seeking to take music at A Level should be of at least Grade VI standard on their first instrument, and have achieved a level 7 at GCSE level. If the exam has not been taken, students are asked to provide a letter of recommendation from their teacher. In addition, good fluency on the keyboard and ABRSM Grade V theory are strongly advised. It is expected that all students who opt for A Level music will make prominent and consistent contributions to the school's extensive extra-curricular programme.

Physics

(AQA 7408D)

Physics is perhaps the most fundamental of all the sciences, seeking to explain the science of stellar evolution, the nature of the fundamental particles that form the "fabric" of the Universe and everything in between! Physics is a challenging and interesting subject which will help you to understand the world and universe around you! A Level Physics is a vitally important qualification for many careers.

Some students go on to study physics at university. This may lead to a career in research and development, either in a university or in industry. High temperature semiconductors, a better understanding of sub atomic particles and more efficient ways of storing energy for cars are just three areas of research being pursued at the moment.

Perhaps the majority of those who study A Level Physics do so in order to apply their physics knowledge in another subject area at university. Examples of this are the many branches of engineering, electronics and meteorology. For these careers, A Level Physics is essential. Other students will use their knowledge, practical and analytical skills as a pathway to follow a career in veterinary science, medicine, dentistry or biochemistry. Physics students are also very well positioned to take up law and accountancy and finance positions because physics is highly regarded by universities as a test of problem-solving ability and logical thought.

At Reading School we follow the AQA A-Level syllabus (7408). The core content consists of the following topics: Measurements and their errors, Particles and radiation, Waves, Mechanics and materials, Electricity, Further mechanics and thermal physics, Fields and their consequences, Nuclear physics and Turning Points.

A level Physics is a two year 'linear' course which is examined externally at the end of year 13. A very broad practical approach is built in to the syllabus which allows students to develop their scientific analytical skills to a very high level. The course has a high level of mathematical content which students will learn how to use in theoretical and practical situations.

Theatre Studies

(AQA Drama and Theatre 7262)

The course consists of a balance between practical and written work. One of the most exciting aspects of the AQA A Level course is that you are given several opportunities to work on a production as performer, director or designer. This work is accompanied by a working notebook and a reflective report but by and large, they are performance led components which in total are worth 60% of your final grade. In one component you devise your own piece of theatre and for the other component you work on the presentation of three extracts from different plays. The choice of material is very wide and governed by you.

The written paper includes the study of two set texts from a performance perspective and analysis of live theatre seen. The emphasis at A Level is very much on theatre as a performance art and everything is explored from a practical perspective. The plays are taught not as literary texts but as productions to be brought alive which makes the subject vibrant and interesting. You will be asked to form opinions and to analyse every aspect of the work, a useful and difficult skill to master. Visits to the theatre are vital and the focus is on seeing professional work. We will experience a wide variety of style and genre throughout our studies. It is important to remember that there is a significant amount of written work and self-directed study, so a real enthusiasm and genuine interest in the subject is important.

Looking Beyond A Levels

Before embarking on A Level study many students should have a sense of the pathway ahead of them regarding future study or employment. It is much easier to achieve top grades at A Level with a clear sense of how your current studies may benefit you in the future. Listed below are a number of degree courses (though it is by no means exhaustive), together with the A Level subjects commonly required or expected. It must be emphasised though, that rarely do all higher education establishments have the same requirements, and very rarely is there no flexibility at all. On the other hand you must recognise that if you have an unconventional combination of subjects for a particular course you may put yourself at a disadvantage with respect to others in the university selection process. You may wish to consult Careers staff to check details. Please email careers@reading-school.co.uk to book an appointment.

A further consideration may be your proposed career direction beyond university and you may wish to consult a range of publications many of which are available in the LRC. Some degree courses such as those in Science and Medicine may lead to specific occupations while others, more especially in Arts subjects, are less 'vocational'. However, you should be wary of letting this aspect totally determine your A Level subject choice and remember that the quality of both A Level passes and a degree are widely regarded as a measure of mental calibre in the professions, commerce and industry. The majority of graduates rarely employ their degree information but do employ their cumulative skills. In other words, whilst you may wish to keep an eye on the future there is much to be said for choosing subjects in which you are interested and you are likely to be successful.

Agriculture, Forestry, Horticulture:

Chemistry usually with Biology and/or Physics/Maths.

Anatomy, Pharmacology, Physiology:

Chemistry, usually with Biology and/or Physics/Maths.

Archaeology:

History, Classics, Geography, English or a Science may be preferred. Two sciences needed for Archaeological Science courses but also many courses with no specified subjects.

Architecture, Building, Estate Management, Surveying:

Maths and/or Physics required or preferred for some courses. Art sometimes a requirement and many architecture schools prefer it. Portfolio of art work often requested.

Art:

Variation between courses and institutions: Portfolio needed in many cases.

Biochemistry:

Chemistry required and Biology usually preferred: one or two Maths/Science subjects required.

Business and Management Studies, Commerce, Accountancy:

Maths is either essential or desirable. There is a wide variety of courses under this heading: some have a scientific bias, others show a preference for Economics, Business Studies, Geography, English or a Foreign Language.

Chemistry, Metallurgy, Chemical Engineering:

Chemistry, Physics and Maths is by and large the best combination for this group, plus Further Maths for some courses.

Computer Science, Computer Studies:

Maths, or Double Maths, with some preference for Physics, Computer Science would now be expected given recent curriculum reforms at A Level.

Drama:

English, theatre Studies or Drama, a Language and History are relevant for some courses.

Economics:

Economics is desirable and Maths required for most universities. (For Oxbridge and several of the most selective universities an A* at A Level Maths is required and A Level Further Maths is desirable.)

Education:

One A Level usually required in the main subject of choice, plus two other subjects. A broad range is acceptable.

Engineering:

Maths and Physics at A Level, with Chemistry or Computer Science frequently desirable. Chemistry at A Level for Chemical Engineering. Further Maths is desirable for some courses.

English:

English with two other arts subjects. Modern Language is required for joint courses with languages.

Environmental Sciences/Studies:

Biology and Geography along with a range of other Sciences. Maths may be required in some courses.

Geography:

Geography, with almost any other two subjects, though Maths or a Science required for BSc Courses.

Geology:

Chemistry, Maths and Physics are most commonly preferred. With two Sciences, an Arts subject will often be considered for a third A Level.

History:

History, with two other Arts subjects. A Science subject or a Modern Language may be considered for a third A Level.

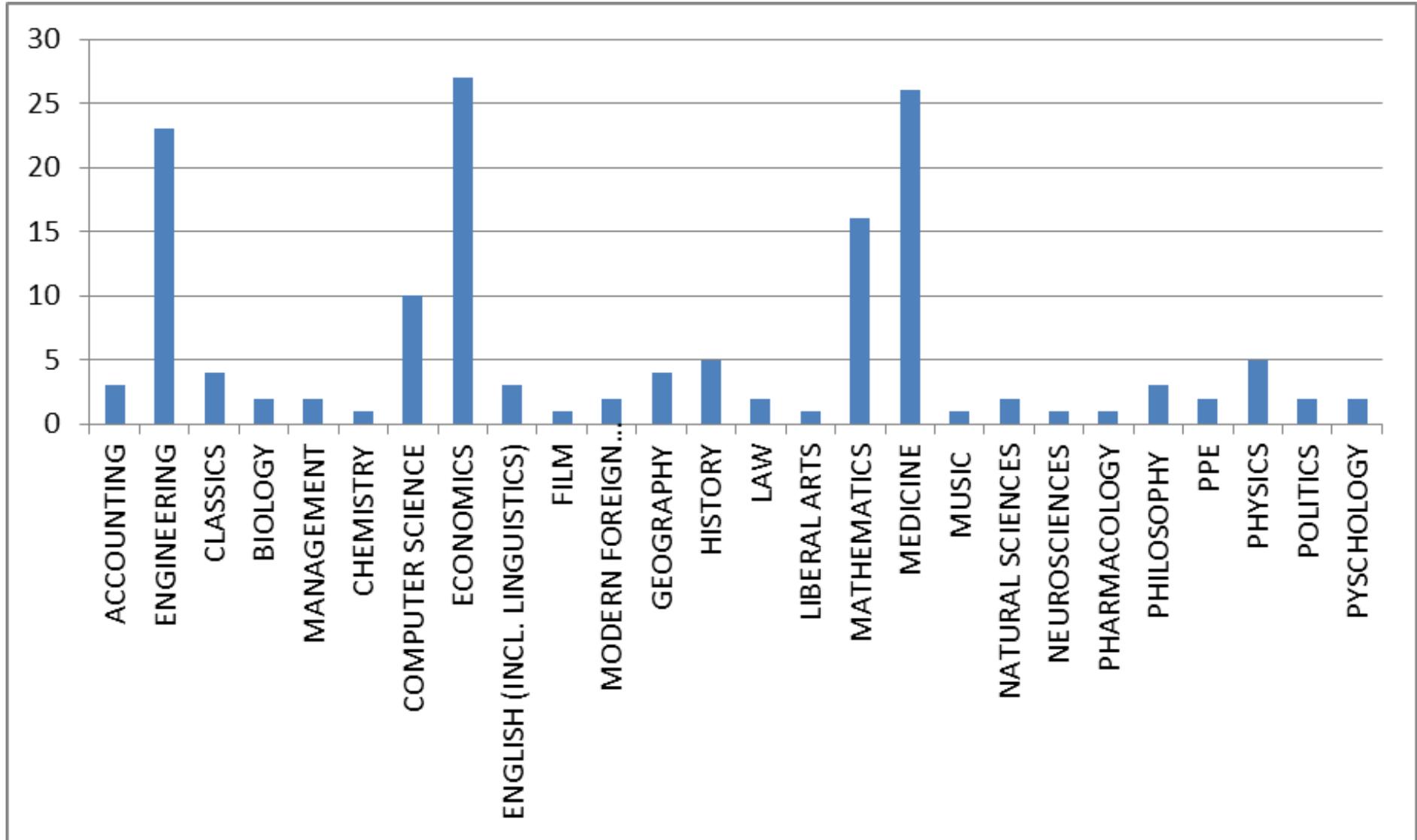
Law:

A very high standard is required in three subjects, at least one of which should involve writing essays.

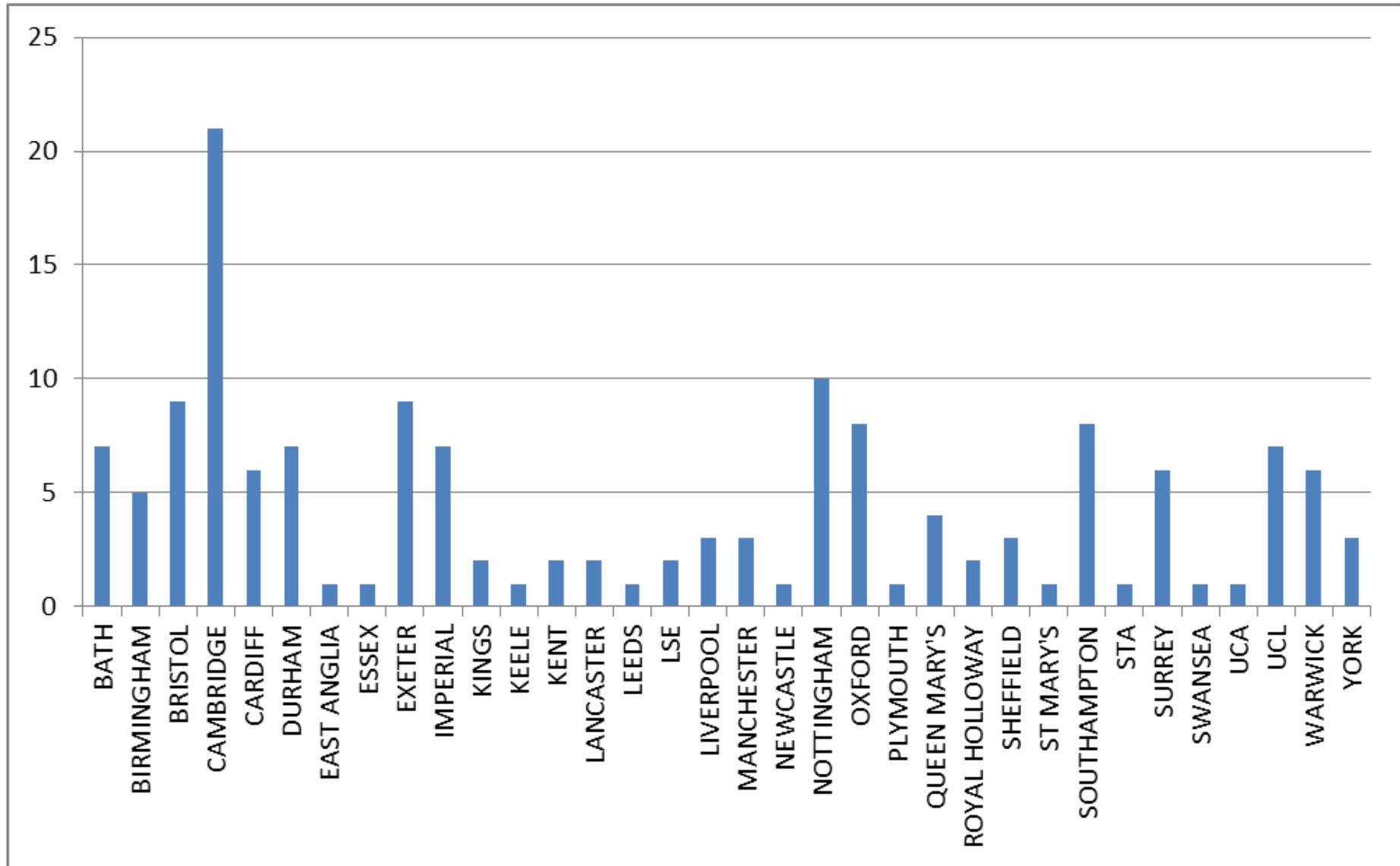
Mathematics, Statistics:

Maths with Further Maths highly desirable or essential for some courses, with some preference for Physics.

Year 13 Leavers 2018 - Subjects studied at University



Year 13 Leavers 2018 - University Destinations



The Sixth Form Agreement

What the School agrees to:

Sixth Form students at Reading School can expect the school to support them through many opportunities to learn and grow

- to offer a first-class education, which will challenge you to achieve your very best academically, as well as giving you the opportunity to explore existing and newly discovered talents through varied extra-curricular opportunities;
- to let you grow as an individual in a happy and caring environment where you will be supported in all that you do;
- to inform you about your progress in the Sixth Form and about the opportunities available at 18-plus;
- to make the School's expectations clear and consistent for all, with due regard for preparing Sixth Formers for adult life.

What you agree to

- The school can expect you to enter the Sixth Form as young adults within the school community and understand the importance of acting as role models;
- To enjoy the opportunities and privileges, you are expected to set an example to the rest of the school in your studies and in all other aspects of life in the School community;
- To challenge yourself in all that you do, and aim to leave the school with life changing qualifications and a breadth of different skills and experiences, ready to make a positive difference to the world.
- To bring the correct equipment to lessons
- To spend adequate time on your work as advised by your teachers
- To complete homework and coursework on time
- Attend all external examinations punctually. (If you do not attend an examination without good reason you will pay the examination fee.) All resits must be paid for in advance.
- Respect the academic expertise of subject staff and recognise that predicted grades made in Year 13 are not subject to negotiation.

We expect that you are responsible for your own learning and adopt the following attitudes:

Positivity

- be a positive influence on others around you
- be confident in what you can do
- be enthusiastic learners

Proactivity & Independence

- ask questions when you don't understand
- learn from your mistakes
- take time to review feedback and work out how to improve next time
- bring your own ideas and information to lessons
- be eager to participate in class discussions and activities
- be inquisitive and have an open mind

Ambition

- present work well and take pride in it
- complete all work to the best of your ability and on time
- be eager to try new ways of learning and go outside of your comfort zone
- be prepared to tackle difficult problems and activities

Consideration

- help and encourage others to learn when they are stuck or confused
- look after the learning environment
- have good manners
- listen carefully to the teacher and fellow students when they are talking
- show respect and tolerance to other students and staff

Engagement

- be present in school from 8.20 a.m. – 3.25 p.m. (unless you have no lessons or School activities after 12:50.)
- attend all morning tutor periods, House Assembly and Chapel
- inform your form tutor and your subject teachers and make arrangements to complete any work missed, if you know in advance that you will be absent
- attend games lessons on Wednesday afternoons
- take advantage of extra-curricular activities which take place outside school hours and support and represent the school when asked to do so e.g.at Open Days
- commit to performing community work on a regular basis throughout Year 12.

Integrity

- understand the importance of acting as role models to students in the school
- conform fully to the School’s expectations about personal conduct and appearance (*Please read the School Dress Code fully*)
- treat the School with respect and accept responsibility for maintaining the Sixth Form Common Room
- never leave School premises without authorisation from your tutor and/or Head of Year/Head of Sixth Form You may leave the site after 12:50pm if you do not have any lessons after this time; if you are staying in school you are expected to sign in in the LRC for the afternoon.
- holidays should not be taken in term time
- driving lessons should not be arranged during school time unless it is during a study period in the afternoon

Disciplinary Procedure

If you fail to observe the expectations, the following sanctions will apply:

1. Your tutor will discuss the problem with you and remind you of our expectations. This meeting will have the status of an oral warning and a record will be kept of it.
2. If you do not heed this warning, the matter will be referred to your Head of Year. She will see you about the matter and after the discussion a letter will be sent to both you and your parents. This will constitute a written warning.
3. Should you fail to act upon this warning, the matter will be referred to the Head of Sixth Form and, in consultation with the Headmaster, you may be required to leave the Sixth Form

Progression into Year 13, Subject Drops and Subject Changes

We hope that all students will undertake two years of study at Reading School and will complete their A-Levels successfully. However mandatory careers conversations will be held with students who are not achieving a minimum of three grade C’s or equivalent in the end of Year 12 exams. Students who are achieving significantly below their own ability at the end of Year 12 will be encouraged to carefully consider their careers pathway and option choices.

We encourage students to commence their Sixth Form studies with an academic programme that suits them. Students may be allowed to drop a subject in the first weeks of term, in January of Year 12, or at the end of the summer term. Drops at other times of the year are discouraged, and students are reminded that beginning a subject which they later drop disadvantages themselves, the School and others.

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, no A-Level subject changes will be permitted beyond the first half term of Year 12.

Pupil Signature:

Pupil Name:

Date: 27th August 2019



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