Orion Coopers

SIXTH FORM COURSE GUIDE

WELCOME

Thank you for considering the Sixth Form at Orion Coopers.

The next two years are among the most important of your life. The choices you make now, and the habits you build, will shape the university courses, apprenticeships and careers open to you. At Orion Coopers, we want those doors to be wide open for every one of our students. That is why we have high expectations of everyone who joins us. We teach to the most able in every lesson, and we give each student the support they need to reach that standard. You will be stretched, challenged and encouraged to think deeply, debate confidently and work independently, so that you leave us not only with excellent grades but with the skills and confidence to thrive in whatever comes next.

Our sixth form is a community as well as a place to study. Our values of Trust, Kindness and Endeavour run through everything we do. Our students lead by example across the school, mentoring younger pupils, leading clubs and representing Orion Coopers in the wider community. You will also be known and cared for as an individual. Your tutor and the sixth form team will support you closely, with guidance on university and apprenticeship applications, and with your wellbeing at every step.

I believe education has the power to transform lives, regardless of background. Our sixth form exists to make that happen.

I warmly invite you to visit us, meet our staff and students, and see for yourself what makes our sixth form special. I look forward to welcoming you.

Ms Aitken
Principal

Here at Orion Coopers Sixth Form, we are focused on ensuring that all students achieve their chosen destination at the end of their studies, and are dedicated in ensuring that our students are enrolled onto the right courses and pathway to attain this. We offer a mix of traditional A-Levels and Level 3 equivalent qualifications, including BTEC Nationals.

We have a strong focus on destinations, a well-resourced CEIAG programme and students receive a significant amount of information about Higher Education, Apprenticeships and future career options, ensuring they are able to make well-informed decisions about their future.

We have high expectations of student conduct and behaviour. Students in the Sixth Form are role models and have opportunities to support other students in the lower school. Consequently, we expect the highest standards both in and out of the classroom for all our students.

Our extensive enrichment programme is designed to provide students with opportunities to learn and develop beyond the classroom. From a wide range of activities and societies to the Coopers Diploma, students have a wealth of opportunities to develop wider transferable skills such as problem solving, teamwork and resilience.

If you have any enquires about the Sixth Form, please feel free to contact me via e-mail on **jhamilton@orioncoopers.org.uk**.
Please read on to find out more about the subjects on offer.

Mr Hamilton
Assistant Headteacher & Head of Sixth Form

FOOTBALL ACADEMY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CRAY WANDERERS

From September 2027, Coopers School Sixth Form will be working in partnership with Cray Wanderers to provide aspirational footballers with the opportunity to pursue ambitions of working within football alongside a full-time education programme.

The advantage of this partnership is that it enables students to combine a full-time study programme, whilst developing their skills set as a footballer. Players will be registered to play for the Cray Wanderers academy, with matches taking place midweek. Training sessions will predominantly run three times a week.

This link provides a pathway into the semi-professional/professional game for the most capable. However, there is a strong emphasis of “Football for all”, with the Academy providing opportunity for all players to compete and potentially find employment within semi-professional/professional football.

Trials for the Football Academy take place in the Autumn term. If selected, then academic criteria will need to be met for entry into the Sixth Form at Orion Coopers. All students on the Football Academy programme need to meet the expectations as outlined in the Orion Coopers Student handbook. First and foremost, academic standards must be met, failure to do so could compromise your ability to stay within the Football Academy.

If you are interested in trialling for the Football Academy, then register your interest on the Sixth Form application form or alternatively speak directly with either Cray Wanderers on academy@cray-wanderers.com or the Head of Sixth Form on jhamilton@orioncoopers.org.uk.

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

Qualification type: V-Level (equivalent to 1 A-Level)

What will I learn studying this course?

Through the V-Level in Accounting and Finance, students will gain a strong understanding of how businesses and organisations use financial information to make decisions and plan for future success.

They will develop the skills to interpret and analyse financial data, evaluate business performance, and understand the ethical and legal responsibilities of those working in accounting and finance. The learning will be brought to life through real-world case studies, allowing students to investigate how financial information influences decision making and to learn valuable lessons from both business success stories and high-profile corporate failures.

In respect of the total marks available, 40% will be awarded through examinations, and 60% will be awarded through non-exam assessments.

Skills and Knowledge

Students will develop a range of valuable skills, including technical and numerical analysis, problem solving, and effective communication. They will learn how to interpret and evaluate financial information, assess business performance, and understand the role of budgeting, costs, and cash flow in the decisions made by organisations.

This new qualification will provide students with a clear set of marketable skills and will provide an excellent pathway into higher education or an apprenticeship.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Economics, Business, Sociology, Maths, History, and Government and Politics.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5

GCSE English – Grade 6

ART

Qualification type: A-Level

Course Content, Structure and Method of Assessment

This course is ideal for students who are passionate about exploring and developing their creative abilities through practical work, personal investigation, and critical analysis. It suits learners who prefer to demonstrate their skills and understanding through coursework and portfolio development rather than relying solely on final written exams.

Over two years, students will complete two major components:

Component 1: Personal Investigation – a practical portfolio supported by written work exploring a theme of the student's choice.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment – a practical response to a theme set by the exam board, culminating in a final piece produced under controlled conditions.

Students will explore a wide range of media, techniques, and processes, including drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media, photography, and digital art. The department is well-equipped with specialist facilities, including access to digital software, high-quality printing, and workspaces to support creative development.

What could this course lead to?

This course provides a strong foundation for progression into higher education and careers within the creative industries. The qualification carries full UCAS points, making it a valuable route to university-level study in a wide range of art and design disciplines.

Students who successfully complete this course often go on to study subjects such as Fine Art, Illustration, Graphic Design, Architecture, Interior Design, Fashion, Photography, and other creative fields at university or specialist art colleges. The course also supports progression into foundation diplomas in art and design, which are a common next step before degree-level study.

Throughout the two years, our creative teaching team offers individual guidance and support to help students explore future pathways, including university courses, creative apprenticeships, and careers in the arts.

Enrichment Opportunities

Students studying A Level Fine Art will have access to a range of enrichment activities designed to broaden their artistic experience and inspire their creative development. These may include:

- Gallery and museum visits (e.g. Tate Modern, Saatchi Gallery, V&A)
- Workshops with practicing artists and designers
- Life drawing sessions
- Opportunities to exhibit work locally and within school
- Participation in national competitions and art challenges
- Portfolio preparation support for university and foundation applications
- Collaborative projects with other creative departments

These experiences help students build confidence, expand their creative networks, and gain insight into the professional world of art and design.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Art – Grade 6
GCSE English – Grade 5

ART & DESIGN BTEC

Qualification type: BTEC Diploma (equivalent of two A-Levels)

Course Content, Structure and Method of Assessment

This course is suitable for students who want to learn and build skills in the design and manufacture sector and prefer being able to show their abilities through coursework and controlled assessment, rather than relying on their performance in a final exam. Students who have studied Design Technology or Resistant Materials at GCSE are best suited to the course, but Art GCSE also provides a suitable foundation. A grade 4 GCSE is required at entry.

It is very work related and develops the skills required for the design industry and also provides a foundation for further education (including university). This course is delivered by an experienced team who have a successful track record in KS4 & 5.

Students will study four units across two years. three units are mandatory and one is optional. Two units are assessed through controlled assessment and marked externally by the exam board.

Unit topics explore a range of themes such as visual recording, ideas and concepts in graphic design, computer aided design and manufacture. Students will use a range of different materials, techniques and processes to develop their designs. Students are encouraged to use the latest technology available to them as part of their course. The department is well equipped with laser cutters, 3D printers and replicators as well as suitable software for design tasks.

What could this course lead to?

BTEC courses provide much of the underpinning knowledge and understanding for the National Occupational Standards for the sector, where these are appropriate. They attract UCAS points that equate to similar-sized general qualifications within education institutions within the UK. On successful completion of a BTEC qualification, a learner can progress to employment and/or continue their study in the same, or related vocational area at University. Our teaching team will speak to students individually during the two years about possible future courses and careers they may wish to consider.

Students from our courses have gone on to study a range of courses at university including Graphic Design, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Automotive Design, Construction Management.

Students have also secured successful apprenticeships including one at a local Architect's practice.

Enrichment Opportunities

Students can work alongside teaching staff within the Technology Department as Subject Ambassadors helping and supporting the younger students develop their own love of the subject.

CAD/CAM: Working with our in house technician in their own time students can develop a thorough independent working knowledge of 3D printing software and machinery operations.

Specific entry requirements

Design Technology or Art Grade 4

BIOLOGY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

Module 1: Development of Practical Skills in Biology

Module 2: Foundations in Biology

Module 3: Exchange and Transport

Module 4: Biodiversity, Evolution and Disease

Module 5: Communication and Homeostasis

Module 6: Genetics, Evolution and Ecosystems
Skills & Knowledge

Biology embeds the transferable skills of curiosity, problem solving, critical analysis, maths, literacy and ICT skills that are needed for all degree choices, apprenticeships and employment. Practical work will be emphasised and you will be supported to complete the course with a practical endorsement alongside your A-Level qualification.

You will learn to answer questions by applying your knowledge to an unknown biological situation.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Students use Biology A-Level as a route into many career and higher education possibilities. These may include but are not limited to: Medicine, Veterinary Science, Veterinary Nursing, Optometry, Dentistry, Medicinal Research, Pathology, Forensic Science, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Conservation, Marine Biology, Horticulture, environmental scientist, genetic counselling and scientific journalism.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Chemistry and/or Physics, Maths and Psychology.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 6
GCSE English – Grade 6
GCSE Biology – Grade 7
Or GCSE Combined Science – Grade 7, 7

BUSINESS

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn?

Through the A-Level in Business, students will develop a holistic understanding of how organisations operate, make decisions, and respond to opportunities and challenges. The A-level course will give students insight into how businesses function across marketing, operations, finance, and human resources, and how business make strategic decisions. Students will be able to understand and explain the interdependencies between different business functions and activities and how they link together to deliver success.

Students will explore how businesses compete, how leaders make decisions under uncertain conditions, and how external influences (such as technology, geopolitics, and economic change) shape business behaviour. Learning will be brought to life with real-world case studies looking at both corporate success stories and failures.

A-level Business is assessed through external examinations taken at the end of the two-year course. Students will sit three exam papers, each drawing on different themes and requiring application across the full content of the course.

Skills and Knowledge

Students will develop a wide range of valuable skills including analytical thinking, forming and justifying positions based on a wide range of factors, problem solving, and effective communication.

A-level Business provides students with rounded knowledge and a clear set of marketable skills which provide an excellent route into higher education or an apprenticeship.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Economics, Accounting and Finance, Sociology, Maths, History, and Government and Politics.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5

GCSE English – Grade 6

ECONOMICS

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

A-Level Economics will change the way you view the world around you. The course is split into two sections, Microeconomics and Macro Economics.

In Microeconomics you will learn about markets and how markets operate. You will learn about the determinants of price and why some goods have a greater value than other. Market failure is introduced as a topic to explain why people engage in behaviour that seems irrational, for example, the under consumption of education or the over-consumption of alcohol.

As you move into Microeconomics in Year 13 you will study the "theory of the firm". You will learn about businesses and how they operate in the wider economy. Why they behave the way they do and the different types of market structure that lead to different levels of profitability.

Macroeconomics is the study of the "national economy". You will gain an understanding of terms such as monetary policy and fiscal policy. Government macro-objectives are the foundation of the course, with discussion built around how best to achieve low levels of inflation, high employment, and growth. In Year 13 you will build upon the concepts covered in Year 12 and focus on areas such as international development, financial markets, and government intervention.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Economics graduates earn on average 25% more than non-economics graduates. Therefore, the following careers are quite popular for economics graduates.

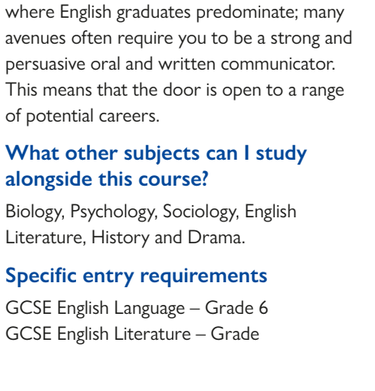
Investment banking, wealth management, management (public/private sector), research analyst, financial journalism, academia, accountant, actuarial scientist, statistician.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Mathematics, Business Studies, History, Government and Politics.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 6



CHEMISTRY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

Chemistry is taught as a content-led flexible approach where the specification is divided into topics, each covering different key concepts of chemistry. Learners will have opportunities to study chemistry in a range of different contexts, conveying the excitement of contemporary chemistry. Teaching of practical skills is integrated with the theoretical topics with an emphasis on an investigational and problem-solving approach to practical work. Assessment is both through three written papers and the Practical Endorsement.

Module 1: Development of practical skills in chemistry

Module 2: Foundations in chemistry

Module 3: Periodic table and energy

Module 4: Core organic chemistry

Module 5: Physical chemistry and transition elements

Module 6: Organic chemistry and analysis

What careers does this course lead onto?

Chemistry is a well-respected qualification and can lead on to a variety of higher education choices and careers including, but not limited to:

- Healthcare: Medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary science, nursing, pharmacology, biochemistry
- Chemical Engineering: Process engineering, petrochemicals, environmental engineering, materials science
- Laboratory Research: Forensic science, pharmaceutical research, cosmetics, food science, biomedical science
- Education: Teaching, academic research, science communication
- Environment & Energy: Renewable energy, climate research, pollution control, environmental science
- Business and Industry: Regulatory affairs, patent law, chemical sales, technical writing, product development

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Mathematics, Biology and Psychology.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 6

GCSE Combined Science – Grade 7, 7

GCSE Separate Science – Grade 6

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

A-Level English Language will not only build on the all-important analytical skills learned at GCSE but will allow you to explore the fundamentals of linguistics.

Linguistics is the systematic study of human language. Superficially, there's huge variation among the world's languages, but mutually they offer insight into the human mind, and we will spend time exploring the identity of individuals, using their language as a tool for discussion.

The study of linguistics draws on methods and knowledge from a wide range of disciplines. For instance, the study of meaning draws on philosophy, the analysis of the speech signal uses methods from biology, and the study of language acquisition draws on psychology and sociology.

One lesson you might be poring over an Early Modern text for evidence of how the grammar of a language has changed, and the next, learning about how the larynx creates sound and facilitates a child's speech development.

We will also explore the impact that gender and socio-cultural and economic factors have on language, evaluating dialogue, literature and film, while endeavouring to apply and critique a range of theoretical concepts.

Finally, your coursework will allow you a platform to showcase your own writing prowess, as you write blogs, speeches, articles and even stories – before crafting a commentary that scrutinises every linguistic decision made.

What careers does this course lead onto?

English Language students might consider a career in any of the following areas: authorship, publishing, copywriting, editing, journalism, speech language therapy, linguistic analysis, marketing and public relations.

Nevertheless, there isn't a specific sector where English graduates predominate; many avenues often require you to be a strong and persuasive oral and written communicator. This means that the door is open to a range of potential careers.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Biology, Psychology, Sociology, English Literature, History and Drama.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE English Language – Grade 6
GCSE English Literature – Grade

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

English Literature consists of three externally examined papers and one non-examination assessment component. The qualification requires the study of eight literary texts plus unseen poetry.

In the 'Drama' unit, you will study one Shakespeare play and one other drama from either tragedy or comedy, as well as a collection of critical essays. This is a lively and engaging unit that will deepen your appreciation of Shakespeare as a master craftsman of the English Language and encourage you to draw comparisons between experience in the past and today's modern world.

In our 'Prose' unit, you can study both 19th and 20th/21st century texts written by authors from a range of cultures and ethnicities. You will be encouraged to 'see yourself' represented in the texts studied.

In the final 'Poetry' unit, you will study poetic form, meaning and language, a selection of post-2000 specified poetry and a specified range of poetry from either a literary period (either pre- or post-1900) or a named poet from within a literary period. The course also includes a coursework unit that offers the opportunity to explore and analyse texts of your own choosing.

What careers does this course lead onto?

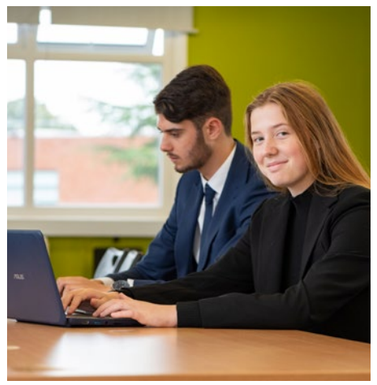
As a highly regarded academic subject, A-Level English Literature opens several career and higher education avenues; students who have studied English Literature have gone on to pursue university courses and careers in English, journalism, creative writing, publishing, law, politics, and education.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

English Language, Drama, History and Politics

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English Literature – Grade 6
GCSE English Language – Grade 6



GEOGRAPHY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

"The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together."
Former US President Barack Obama

AQA A-Level Geography has 3 components. Paper 1 Physical, Paper 2 human and the NEA.

- *In Paper 1 Physical you will learn:*

Section A: Water and carbon cycles
Section B: Coastal systems and landscapes
Section C: Hazards

- *In Paper 2 Human you will learn:*

Section A: Global systems and global governance
Section B: Changing places
Section C: Contemporary urban environments

- *The NEA (20%)*

You will complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by you relating to any part of the specification content.

Why study A-Level Geography?

Geography will allow you to develop a wide range of literacy, numeracy, problem solving and GIS skills which can lead to careers in environmental organisations such as National Parks and the Environment Agency, travel, transportation and insurance industries, international charities and organisations using GIS, such as the Army, the meteorological office, government agencies, teaching and retail businesses. Due to cross curricular links with literacy and numeracy, many universities appreciate the skills developed at A-Level and is seen as a highly regarded academic qualification. Geography is also one of the Russell Group's university choice of subjects.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Urban Planner, Cartographer, GIS Specialist, Climatologist, Researcher, Transport Planner, Environmental Management, Teacher/Lecturer, Emergency management, Demographer, Estate Manager, Town Planner, Research Analyst, Oil exploration, Surveyor, Agricultural Adviser, Geospatial Engineering, Coastal management/ planning, Building Surveyor, Geographical Information Systems Officer Conservation Manager, Community Development, Environmental Health Officer.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 6

HISTORY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

We begin by studying a depth unit, a depth unit is a unit that focuses on a condensed period in detail, for example Russia 1894–1924. We then move onto a breadth unit. In the breadth study we focus on an extended period whilst incorporating historical themes. There is also a coursework element to this course and in the past students have studied Germany 1871–1990.

You will develop skills of critical analysis and the ability to identify, deconstruct and challenge a range of historical interpretations. You will also develop detailed knowledge and understanding of modern and early modern European history. You will learn how to write with clarity, how to present a logical argument and how to reach a reasoned and sustained judgement.

What careers does this course lead onto?

History prepares students well for careers in academia, journalism, consultancy, and research. However, the skills of critical analysis that are developed in History are transferable across many professions and are highly demanded by universities.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Some students choose to combine History with Philosophy, Government and Politics or English.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 6

MATHS

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

Introduction to Advanced Mathematics. This unit builds and develops the skills you have learnt at GCSE to prepare for advanced work. The unit teaches algebra, co-ordinate geometry, polynomials, curve sketching, the concepts of mathematical proof and mathematical modelling. You will also study further algebra including logarithms, trigonometry and calculus. The language of functions is used and the connection between functions and graphs is studied. Statistics looks at statistical modelling and sampling, followed by clear presentation of single variable data and the use of measures of central tendency and dispersion. Probability theory is studied, and hypothesis testing is introduced using the binomial distribution. Mechanics is an introduction to mathematical modelling, kinematics, statics and dynamics. Vectors are used to describe forces and motion in two and three dimensions.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Employers from all different sectors are also firmly behind A-Level Maths qualification. Many roles in today's workplace require high levels of budget management and problem-solving skills; A-Level Maths will be a useful tool in equipping you with these skills.

Examples of careers where these skills would be used are, actuarial science, finance, wealth management, management consultancy and academia.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Economics, Business Studies, Psychology.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 7

MEDIA

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

Media Studies is the study of all aspects of media that surround us in our daily lives. During the course we look at TV dramas, magazines, newspapers, films, music videos, digipak designs and adverts, in order to analyse and learn the conventions of these texts. In previous years, students have studied films such as 'Star Trek Into Darkness', 'Gravity' and '12 Years a Slave' in AS and then films such as 'Adulthood', 'Fish Tank' and 'The Selfish Giant' in A2. Students learn to use industry standard software such as Adobe, Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro and After Effects, which puts them ahead of the rest heading into university Media courses.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Having A-Level Media Studies can open up a world of possibilities. Media Studies and the ability to interpret the media all around us is a skill that is going to be required more and more. At present the ability to be media literate is a skill that most employers look for, but as Media continues to grow and become more of a necessity this will become something all employers insist upon employees having. Careers in media include film making, music video production, television production, magazine editing and journalism, to name a few.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

English Literature, English Language, Sociology, Psychology and Art & Design

Specific entry requirements

GCSE English – Grade 5
GCSE Maths – Grade 5

PHYSICS

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

In the first year you will deepen your knowledge and understanding of mechanics and materials, electricity, waves, and thermal physics. You will meet new concepts in quantum phenomena.

The second year covers a wide range of topics including:

- The mechanics of circular motion and oscillations
- Gravitational, electric and magnetic fields
- Radioactivity and nuclear energy
- Medical imaging and astrophysics

Practical skills are developed within the content covered through key experimental investigations and are assessed through the Practical Endorsement and in the end of course exam papers.

What careers does this course lead onto?

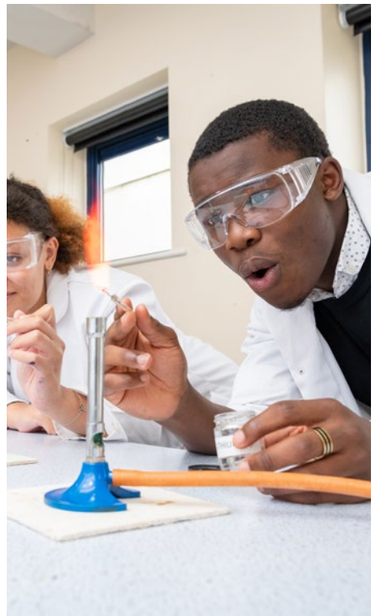
Physics is a key part of any engineering course, as well as branches of Physics and Theoretical Physics. It is also of value in any subject that involves mathematical modelling, such as finance and computer simulations. Physics students go on to study a wide range of subjects at degree level.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Maths, Chemistry, Biology and Economics

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Physics – Grade 6
GCSE Maths – Grade 7
GCSE English – Grade 5
GCSE Combined Science – Grade 7, 7



PHOTOGRAPHY

Qualification type: A-Level

Course Content, Structure and Method of Assessment

This course is ideal for students who are passionate about exploring and developing their creative abilities through lens-based and digital media. It suits learners who prefer to express their ideas through practical work, personal investigation, and portfolio development rather than relying solely on final written exams.

Over two years, students will complete two major components:

Component 1: Personal Investigation – a practical portfolio supported by written work exploring a photographic theme of the student's choice.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment – a practical response to a theme set by the exam board, culminating in a final photographic piece produced under controlled conditions.

Students will explore a wide range of photographic techniques and processes, including digital photography, traditional darkroom methods, image editing, studio lighting, mixed media, and experimental approaches. The department is equipped with DSLR cameras, studio equipment, editing software like Adobe Photoshop, and printing facilities to support creative development.

What could this course lead to?

A Level Art and Design (Photography) provides a strong foundation for progression into higher education and careers within the creative industries. The qualification carries full UCAS points, making it a valuable route to university-level study in a wide range of photography and visual arts disciplines.

Students who successfully complete this course often go on to study subjects such as Photography, Photojournalism, Visual Communication, Film Production, Media Studies, Fashion Photography, and Fine Art at university or specialist art colleges. The course also supports progression into foundation diplomas in art and design, which are a common next step before degree-level study.

Throughout the two years, our creative teaching team offers individual guidance and support to help students explore future pathways, including university courses, creative apprenticeships, and careers in photography and media.

Enrichment Opportunities

Students studying A Level Photography will have access to a range of enrichment activities designed to broaden their creative experience and inspire their development. These may include:

Visits to photography exhibitions and galleries (e.g. The Photographers' Gallery, Tate Modern)

Workshops with professional photographers and visual artists

- Opportunities to exhibit work locally and within school
- Participation in national photography competitions and challenges
- Portfolio preparation support for university and foundation applications
- Collaborative projects with other creative departments
- Location shoots and studio-based projects

These experiences help students build confidence, expand their creative networks, and gain insight into the professional world of photography and visual media.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Art – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 5

POLITICS

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

The course begins with a focus on UK politics. We will explore topics such as the powers and limitations of Parliament, the role of the media in the outcome of elections, and the protection of rights in the UK. Later in the course attention shifts to the US, where we will compare and contrast aspects of US and UK politics. For example, who is more powerful, the Prime Minister or the President? There will also be an opportunity to explore some of the political ideologies which have influenced much of US and UK politics; such as Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism.

A-Level Politics will develop critical thinking and analytical skills. It will also build expertise in the skills of researching, essay writing, and debating.

This course will build a knowledge of US and UK political institutions and processes. It will also develop an understanding of four political ideologies.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Although many students go on to study politics at university, the skills developed on this course will equip you for a wide range of subject areas; for example, international relations, law, economics, history and philosophy. Studying politics can also lead to a diverse array of careers. These include the law, political work, social and political research, journalism, HR and marketing

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Economics, History, English Literature and Sociology

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 6

PSYCHOLOGY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

There are three Units for A-Level Psychology:

Unit 1: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Psychopathology (Abnormality)

Unit 2: Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology, Research methods

Unit 3: Issues and debates in Psychology plus 3 other topics: From the option modules available, we choose; Relationships, Schizophrenia, Forensic Psychology

You will develop excellent critical analysis skills and the ability to deconstruct arguments and comment pertinently on ideas. You will develop a critical way of thinking about psychological studies and research looking at the reliability and validity of its methodology. Essay writing skills will also be developed in constructing an argument for a particular theory.

What careers does this course lead onto?

A-Level Psychology is accepted by universities as an excellent foundation for a wide range of degree courses. It is also an asset in Health and Welfare, Law, Teaching, Marketing, Human Resources, General Management, the Police and Media. Many jobs in the field of Psychology require studying to degree level and specialising in a particular field. These jobs cover a number of areas and can be very rewarding. Examples include: Clinical Psychology, Counselling, Educational Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Occupational Psychology, Sport & Exercise Psychology and many more.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Sociology, Media Studies, Biology and English.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 6
GCSE English – Grade 6

SOCIOLOGY

Qualification type: A-Level

What will I learn studying this course?

The course is split into 3 key sections: Education Theory and Methods (Paper 1), Family Households and the Media (Paper 2) and Crime and Deviance (Paper 3). The issue of social inequality is a focus for many sociological theories, for example in Unit 1 Education we consider the factors that cause the achievement gap between the social groups in terms of gender, ethnicity and social class.

In Year 2 our understanding of crime is developed by applying theories such as Functionalism, Marxism and Feminism to understanding why crime happens. We will examine the criminal justice system, particularly policing practices and unfair discrimination of the poor in society.

What careers does this course lead onto?

Due to the very nature of Sociology that focuses on society and impact of society on human behaviour, most occupations and higher education courses would benefit from a Sociology A-Level qualification. More specifically, many Sociology graduates move to occupations in advertising, marketing, journalism, politics and law as well as data analysis and teaching.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

Psychology, English Language, English Literature, Government and Politics, and Economics.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Maths – Grade 5
GCSE English – Grade 6

SPORT

Qualification type: BTEC extended cerificate (equivalent to one, two or three A-Levels)

What will I learn studying this course?

Over the two-year programme, you will develop a comprehensive understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the human body and how it responds to exercise. You will explore the major body systems and how they work together to support physical activity and performance. In addition, you will gain insight into the structure and operation of the sports industry, including practical experience in applying for and interviewing for roles within the sector. The course also focuses on analysing and evaluating an individual's fitness levels by taking on the role of a sports tester. Finally, you will learn how to assess lifestyle factors and their impact on overall health and wellbeing.

Year 1

Unit 1: Anatomy and physiology exam

Unit 2: Fitness training for health and wellbeing

Unit 5: Fitness testing and programming

Year 2

Unit 3: Sport as a business

What careers does this course lead to?

This course lends itself well to-sports retail, armed services, sports journalism, sports broadcasting, health promotion, sports coaching, physiotherapy and sports administration.

What other subjects can I study alongside this course?

This course works well with Biology, Chemistry, Sociology and Psychology

Specific entry requirements

GCSE PE 5+ or BTEC Merit

TEXTILES

Qualification type: A-Level

Course Content, Structure and Method of Assessment

This course is ideal for students who are passionate about exploring and developing their creative abilities through textile-based art and design. It suits learners who prefer to express their ideas through practical work, personal investigation, and portfolio development rather than relying solely on final written exams.

Over two years, students will complete two major components:

Component 1: Personal Investigation – a practical portfolio supported by written work exploring a textile-based theme of the student's choice.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment – a practical response to a theme set by the exam board, culminating in a final textile piece produced under controlled conditions.

Students will explore a wide range of textile techniques and processes, including fabric manipulation, embroidery, printmaking, dyeing, weaving, mixed media, and digital textile design. The department is well-equipped with specialist facilities such as sewing machines, print tables, dyeing equipment, and design software to support creative development.

What could this course lead to?

A Level Art and Design (Textiles) provides a strong foundation for progression into higher education and careers within the creative and fashion industries. The qualification carries full UCAS points, making it a valuable route to university-level study in a wide range of textile and design disciplines.

Students who successfully complete this course often go on to study subjects such as Textile Design, Fashion Design, Costume Design, Surface Pattern Design, Interior Textiles, and Sustainable Fashion at university or specialist art colleges. The course also supports progression into foundation diplomas in art and design, which are a common next step before degree-level study.

Throughout the two years, our creative teaching team offers individual guidance and support to help students explore future pathways, including university courses, creative apprenticeships, and careers in the textile and fashion sectors.

Enrichment Opportunities

Students studying A Level Textiles will have access to a range of enrichment activities designed to broaden their creative experience and inspire their development. These may include:

- Visits to fashion and textile exhibitions (e.g. V&A, Fashion and Textile Museum)
- Workshops with textile artists and designers
- Opportunities to exhibit work locally and within school
- Participation in national competitions and fashion challenges
- Portfolio preparation support for university and foundation applications
- Collaborative projects with other creative departments
- Sustainability and upcycling projects

These experiences help students build confidence, expand their creative networks, and gain insight into the professional world of textile and fashion design.

Specific entry requirements

GCSE Textiles – Grade 5

ENRICHMENT

Enrichment is crucial to developing the whole individual. At Orion Coopers we are committed to ensuring that our sixth form students have access to a variety of opportunities outside of the classroom. Our aim is to help them improve their transferable skills whilst having fun and enjoying their time in the sixth form.

Encounters with the world work also form a significant part of our enrichment programme. All Year 12 students have access to work experience in the summer term. A significant amount of work also goes on in both Year 12 and 13 to educate young people about apprenticeships, and the different types of careers that are available via the apprenticeship route. Outside speakers come in throughout the year to discuss the emerging apprenticeship market, in addition to the information we provide about Higher Education.

Year 12 Enrichment:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
WRL	WRL	WRL	WRL	Public Speaking	Public Speaking
Cooking	Cooking	Cooking	Cooking	**Option:** Rounders Softball Ultimate Frisby	**Option:** Rounders Softball Ultimate Frisby
Option: Basket ball Football Table Tennis	**Option:** Basket ball Football Table Tennis	Volunteering	Volunteering	Volunteering	Volunteering
Public Speaking – M6	Public Speaking	**Option:** Basketball Football Table Tennis	**Option:** Basketball Football Table Tennis	**Option:** Rounders Softball Ultimate Frisby	**Option:** Rounders Softball Ultimate Frisby

Activity
Cooking
Work related learning (WRL)
Volunteering
Public Speaking
Table Tennis/Ultimate Frisby
Basketball/Softball
Coopers Diploma
Football/Rounders

We intend to expand upon our enrichment further by offering the following additions to the current post-sixteen enrichment menu

- Competitive post-sixteen teams in Football, Netball and Rugby
- Drama enrichment that results in an end of term production
- Individual music tuition for students wishing to learn an instrument

Orion Coopers

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