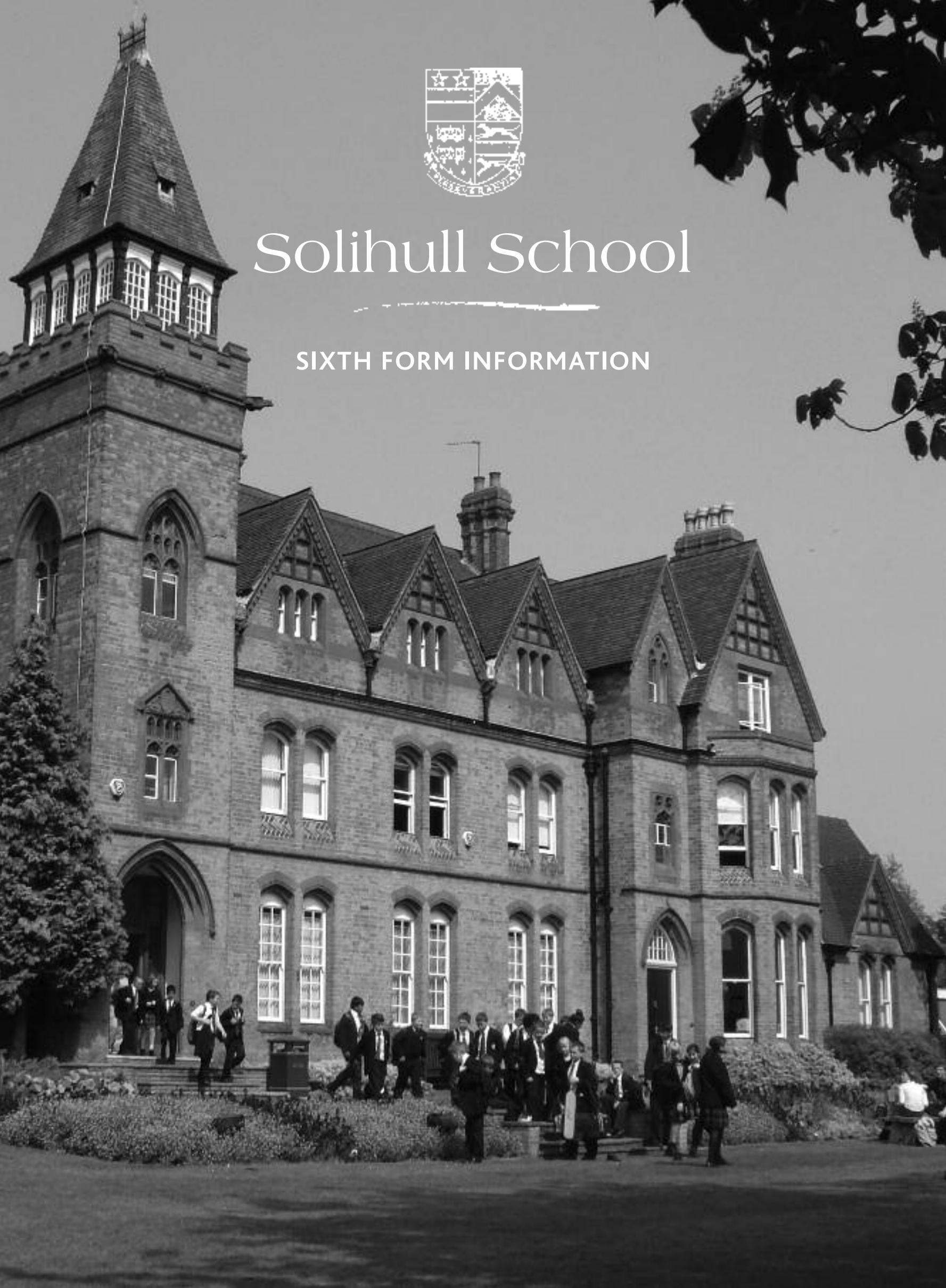




Solihull School

SIXTH FORM INFORMATION



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CURRICULUM	2
NON-ACADEMIC LIFE	3
ENTRY	4
SUBJECT CHOICES	5
ART AND DESIGN	6
BUSINESS STUDIES	7
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	8
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	9
DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES	10
ECONOMICS	11
ENGLISH LITERATURE	12
GEOGRAPHY	13
HISTORY	14
LATIN	15
MATHEMATICS/FURTHER MATHEMATICS	16
MODERN LANGUAGES	17
MUSIC	19
PHOTOGRAPHY	20
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	21
PSYCHOLOGY	22
RELIGIOUS STUDIES (PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS)	23
SCIENCES INTRODUCTION	24
BIOLOGY	25
CHEMISTRY	26
PHYSICS	27
ENRICHMENT	28
EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION	29
YOUNG APPLICANTS IN SCHOOLS SCHEME	30



Solihull School

SIXTH FORM SEPTEMBER 2011

There are currently almost 300 pupils in the Sixth Form at Solihull School. About 130 of those pupils have entered the Sixth Form from other schools after their GCSE examinations, and around 100 of these entrants are girls. The School offers a very wide range of subject choices for A Level and achieves outstanding academic results: in the last two years we have achieved 81% A or B grade passes at A Level and in the last five years 47 pupils have been offered places at Oxford and Cambridge. There is also a very strong record in winning places to read Medicine or Engineering. In 2009 75% of our leavers went to their first choice university.

Academic success is clearly very important for pupils. However, the School also provides a very rich experience through the Enrichment programme, through sport, drama and music and through a very wide range of extra-curricular activities.

In recent years the School has made substantial developments to its facilities. In 2002 the Bushell Hall was opened, the old Big School was transformed into the new Kent Library and the provision for Art and for the sixth form pupils was increased in the original School House. In 2003 the Alan Lee Pavilion was built and there is now a new teaching area, the George Hill building, providing 16 new classrooms for five departments. The new purpose-built David Turnbull Music School opened in September 2009.

Solihull School Sixth Form aims to challenge its students, not only through its academic life, but also through the many ways in which students at this level can contribute to the wider community. Students are encouraged to involve themselves in an array of extra-curricular interests and to lead the rest of the School by example. It is through such diversity and responsibility that our students explore their potential and discover their strengths.

THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

AS/A2

All members of the Lower Sixth will study four AS Levels. In the Upper Sixth it is normal for pupils to take forward three of these subjects to A2. However, it must be noted that the passage from AS to A2 is not automatic. A minimum grade D at AS is required to carry a subject on to A2. For the most able pupils there is the possibility of maintaining all four subjects to A2.

The range of subjects is set out below. We cannot guarantee every possible subject combination, but it is rare that a pupil's choice cannot be accommodated.

Art:	Fine Art	Geography
	Graphic Design	German
	Textiles	History
Biology		Latin
Business Studies		Mathematics & Further Mathematics
Chemistry		Music
Classical Civilisation		Photography
Design & Technology		Physical Education
Drama & Theatre Studies		Physics
Economics		Psychology
English Literature		Religious Studies (Philosophy & Ethics)
French		Spanish

External candidates will be asked to indicate their choices prior to the interviews. However, there is the opportunity to change those choices up until the GCSE results although very late changes cannot always be guaranteed. The School is willing to offer guidance about subject choice throughout the year, even before acceptance. Advice on choices may be obtained from the Director of Studies, Heads of Department and the Head of Careers, who are available throughout the year. We will also discuss subject choices as part of our interview process and Heads of Department and others are available at the Open Meeting for external candidates on Monday 31 January 2011.

Enrichment

In addition to lessons specifically directed at AS/A2 subjects, there is a programme of Enrichment with the purpose of widening students' experience. In the Lower Sixth there are three periods set aside for this, during which students choose from a broad range of subjects. These include Art, Community Service, Community Sports Leadership Award, Critical Thinking and the Engineering Education Scheme. In the Upper Sixth there are four periods, which provide the opportunity to do some very different activities, including cooking, dancing, film study and snowboarding.

NON-ACADEMIC LIFE

Participation in school life beyond academic work is central to being in the Sixth Form and we aim to ensure that there is something, or many things, for every student to enjoy.

Games

There is a compulsory games afternoon on Wednesdays with many different activities to cater for everyone. There is also a full range of fixtures against other schools both during the week and at weekends. The games available include cricket, rugby, hockey, athletics, netball, rounders, tennis, golf, cross-country running, swimming, water-sports, shooting, badminton and clay-pigeon shooting. The major sports often organise substantial overseas tours: in 2005 there was a rugby and hockey tour (for boys and girls) to South Africa. In 2006 there was a hockey tour for boys to Australia and girls to Germany and a rugby tour to South Africa. A cricket team visited Barbados in 2007 and 2009 and hockey and netball teams in 2008. A rugby tour to New Zealand and Fiji also took place in 2008.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Music

The School has a very strong tradition in music, with about a third of all pupils studying a musical instrument in school. There are over 20 different musical groups, ranging from the orchestra to the flute group. Each year there are two major concerts in the Bushell Hall, each of which involves over 100 musicians, and several smaller informal concerts, where musicians of different standards have the opportunity to play. There are also several choral groups, including a Chapel Choir and a Girls' Choir. The Chapel organ has just been refurbished. Considerable success is achieved at local music competitions.

Drama

The Bushell Hall, with a large stage and auditorium for 500, is the venue for theatrical events. Each year a major musical and play are staged, as well as smaller scale studio pieces.

Outdoor Pursuits

The **Combined Cadet Force**, which comprises an Army and an RAF Section, is open to pupils from the Fourth Form (Year 9), but many pupils, especially girls, join in the Sixth Form. There are about 60 Sixth Form pupils presently in the CCF of whom about 20 are girls. This activity takes place after school on a Monday and there are several camps in the course of the year. The **Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme** is also open to pupils in the Sixth Form and several complete their Silver and Gold Awards during their time here. This scheme fits in with the School's commitment to outdoor pursuits: in particular, there has been a major expedition overseas every other year, to Ecuador in 2001, Peru in 2003, Nepal in 2005 and Chile in 2007 and India in 2009. There is also the chance to be involved in **Community Service**.

Pastoral Care and Careers Advice.

Academic and pastoral guidance is largely provided through the Form Tutor who is responsible for a form of about 15 pupils for the two years of sixth form life. Students are attached to one of the five Houses through their tutor group. Time is set aside in the school day for a meeting between the Form Tutor and his/her form and the Form Tutor will be the immediate line of communication between the School and parents. The Form Tutor will also provide advice about university entrance in co-operation with the Careers Master and University Admissions Advisers. The Head of Sixth Form, Mrs Lisa Fair, has overall responsibility for the Sixth Form and there is also a Head of Lower Sixth and a Head of Upper Sixth with responsibility for each year group.

ENTRY

Age

Candidates should normally be sixteen years of age, but not yet seventeen on 1 September 2011.

Entry qualifications

Offers for admission to the Sixth Form will be made on the basis of an interview, a confidential report from the Head of the candidate's previous school, predicted and/or mock GCSE results and a brief personal profile provided by the candidate. **Such an offer will be conditional on achieving a minimum of six academic subjects in GCSE at grade B.** Of course, the vast majority of candidates will get much better GCSE results than this. In addition, all subjects demand at least a grade B at GCSE for the subject to be continued in the Sixth Form and other new subjects, eg Psychology and Economics, require a B grade at GCSE in certain subjects. The specific entry requirements for each subject can be found in the Sixth Form Subject Choices section of this booklet. **Passage to A2 requires at least a grade D in each of the 3 (or 4) subjects to be studied.**

Scholarships

The School is fortunate in being able to offer a great number of scholarships to pupils coming into the Sixth Form. These scholarships are open to candidates from both inside and outside the School. In March 2010 scholarships were awarded to 23 pupils.

The Academic Scholarships are awarded on the basis of two written papers. Candidates applying for a Science or Mathematics Scholarship must take either Mathematics and Mathematics II or Mathematics and Science. Candidates applying for other Academic Scholarships must take a subject paper plus the General Paper. The General Paper involves a choice of essay questions based on topical issues. The scholarship examinations will take place on **Wednesday 2 March 2011**. The tests for the Music Scholarship and the Design & Technology and Art Scholarship interviews and assessments will take place during March 2011. The closing date for scholarship applications is **Monday 7 February 2011**.

A predicted grade A at GCSE is the minimum requirement for applying for any of the scholarships. Scholarships are awarded in a particular subject and successful candidates will be expected to take that subject for A Level in both sixth form years. For further details and a Scholarship Application Form, please contact the Admissions Secretary.

EXTERNAL CANDIDATES ONLY

Interviews

In 2011, interviews will be held between 7 and 15 March. Provisional offers of admission will be made at the end of March.

Open Meeting

There will be a meeting for parents and registered sixth form candidates at 7.30 pm on Monday 31 January 2011 to meet Heads of Department.

Open Mornings and Visits

The School holds two Open Mornings in the course of the year, on Saturday 2 October 2010 and Saturday 15 January 2011. It is also possible for prospective pupils (and their parents) to be shown round the School and meet the Headmaster and/or Head of Sixth Form during the school day. Please contact Mrs Janice Edwards, the Admissions Secretary on 0121 705 4273 or e-mail enquiries@solsch.org.uk.

Applications

Scholarship Application Forms, Registration Forms and other details are available from and should be returned to the Admissions Secretary, Solihull School, Warwick Road, Solihull, B91 3DJ. Telephone: 0121 705 4273. They can also be downloaded from the School's website, www.solsch.org.uk

The closing date for applications is Monday 7 February 2011.



Solihull School

SIXTH FORM
SUBJECT CHOICES 2011 – 2013

ART AND DESIGN

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 units

(Students may choose to follow either the Fine Art or Textile Design or Three Dimensional Design route)

Unit 1*	Coursework Portfolio
Unit 2*	Controlled Assignment
Unit 3	Personal Investigation
Unit 4	Controlled Assignment

What is Art and Design?

- The AS is a broad based course, which allows you to explore a range of techniques and processes and experiment with them to develop your ideas.
- Drawing is central to the course and involves observation, analysis and recording. The emphasis is on the understanding and use of formal elements (eg line, tone, texture) and expressing them through a variety of media and techniques. Life drawing forms a regular aspect of this area of study. Your chosen area of study forms a major part of your coursework. Painting and Sculpture are options available to you and an induction programme in both areas will allow you to make an informed choice.
- In the A2 year, emphasis is given to personal project work, which shows both research and the development and realisation of your idea in the production of final works. You will also integrate a personal study relating to an artist/designer that relates to your practical work. Key words here are depth and achievement: depth being achieved through sustained personal involvement in selected visual processes, resulting in significant artistic attainment.

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum of grade B in Art GCSE, (pupils without GCSE who have a portfolio of work would also be considered). As you can see, much of the course relies upon you to carry out independent research and meet deadlines. Teaching methods are varied and range from teacher-led instruction, to workshop activities, seminars, tutorials and individual teaching.

BUSINESS STUDIES

The Course

The AS*/A2 AQA specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Planning and Financing a Business
Unit 2*	Managing a Business
Unit 3	Strategies for Success
Unit 4	The Business Environment and Managing Change

What is Business Studies?

- The syllabus involves the study of a range of business issues covering finance, marketing, people and production. The focus is on problem-solving and decision-making. The aim is to investigate a number of business themes such as innovation and change, social and environmental responsibilities and ethical considerations. Business problems are looked at from the point of view of various stakeholders, such as owners, workers, customers and suppliers.
- The kinds of thing you will study include: what legal form should a business take? How and why might a business raise finance? Should businesses be interested only in making profit? Will more advertising lead to high sales? How and why do businesses continually produce new products and services? What effect is globalisation having on UK businesses?

What skills do I need for Business Studies?

Basic skills required include a minimum B grade in English at GCSE, along with the ability to analyse and interpret data and to think logically. An interest in current issues is desirable.

Key outcomes from the course should be a critical understanding of organisations, the markets they operate within and their aims and objectives, as well as enhanced skills in decision-making and problem-solving gained through data analysis and evaluation of alternative strategies.

It is possible to take Business Studies alongside Economics at both AS and A2 level. However, for certain courses some universities prefer that only one of these subjects is studied.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Greek Tragedy in its Context
Unit 2*	Archaeology and the Classical World
Unit 3	Virgil and the world of the Hero
Unit 4	Art and Architecture in the Greek World

What is Classical Civilisation?

- The world of Classics is all around us: in our literature, our theatre, our art, our philosophy and still there to be seen at Hadrian's Wall, Bath and Lunt Fort outside Coventry (to name but a few sites in this country). Contrary to popular myth, Classics is thriving in schools and universities. Indeed, television and film are showing an increasing interest in topics such as gladiators, Pompeii, the Trojan War, Boudicca and Alexander the Great.
- The modules we study have been chosen to encompass as much of the Classical World as humanly possible with the excitement of looking at the up and coming science of archaeology (excavation methods, aerial photography, analysing and dating finds and so on) and its invaluable contribution to our growing understanding of the Romans and the Greeks. At AS an in-depth study is made of the Roman site of Wroxeter.
- The tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides are studied at AS, as plays within a genre and as social documents. Whenever possible, trips will be made to see performances of Greek Drama.
- In the A2 course we study the Art and Architecture of the Greek world, looking at temple architecture and decoration, Greek sculpture and vases to inform us of Greek life and society. Visits are arranged to the British Museum to view and handle ancient artefacts to help encourage individual response to these works.
- Further reading is done of literature, this time a study and appreciation of Virgil's Aeneid. This allows us to explore the literature of the Roman world and the ways in which it was used to create a mythology for the Emperor, and as a piece of propaganda.

What skills do I need for this course?

It is not necessary to have studied GCSE Classical Civilisation. A minimum grade B in English GCSE is certainly required, together with a desire to broaden and refine your understanding of the Classical World.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The Course

The AS*/A2 Edexcel specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Portfolio of Creative Skills (35%)
Unit 2*	Design & Technology in Practice (20%)
Unit 3	Designing for the Future (20%)
Unit 4	Commercial Design (30%)

Why Design and Technology?

- Design and Technology mixes creativity with technical knowledge in order to solve real-world problems. As an A level, it is increasingly sought after by universities in combination with science or arts subjects. The subject allows for a versatile environment of teaching, learning and assessment and caters for a wide variety of backgrounds and future directions.
- Design and Technology naturally suits the new intentions of A Level, namely an increased breadth of provision and the acquisition of key skills such as communication and problem solving. Many students of this subject go on to study related areas at university and eventually work in fields such as product design and engineering.
- We have a dedicated graphics room as part of our excellent facilities and offer teaching on electronics, systems and control, CAD/CAM and comprehensive manufacturing equipment for wood, metal and plastics. You will learn advanced theories of design, manufacture and technology as well as evaluating existing products, systems and ideas.
- Design and Technology challenges you to work independently both inside and outside school.

What type of projects do students do?

The range of products is considerable – a rolling road for go-karts, so that they might start via the wheels; a stage microphone; a child's cutlery holder; a telephone; a range of intriguing lamps, a cylinder head jig, a minidisk holder with a built-in lamp and a combined boat radio and beacon!

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum grade B in Design and Technology GCSE.

DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

The Course

The AS*/A2 Edexcel specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Exploration of Drama and Theatre Unit
Unit 2*	Theatre Text in Performance
Unit 3	Exploration of Dramatic Performance
Unit 4	Theatre Text in Context

What is Theatre Studies?

- Theatre Studies allows you to explore some of the ways in which a theatrical text is put together and what is required to bring it to life on stage. In Unit 1, the course requires that you offer a detailed study of two contrasting plays and the work of one theatre practitioner (e.g. we look at the ideas of Stanislavski and Brecht). The plays are explored through practical workshop activities which you are assessed on and you are required to submit written work (3,000 words) based on this practical work. You will also submit a 1,000 word evaluation of a live performance of a third play.
- Unit 2 offers you the chance to demonstrate skills in a performance environment. In Unit 2A, you will perform a 2 minute monologue or a 5 minute duologue or offer design ideas for a play – both actors and designers will write a rationale of their interpretation of the character(s)/concept. In Unit 2B, you will work collaboratively as a member of a performance company, as either actor or designer, and stage a full production of a play. Both parts of Unit 2 are externally examined.
- Theatre visits are a core element of the course and opportunities are made to see a wide range of performances, from local to national theatre. The Bushell Hall has a theatre seating 500 and a drama studio. Together, they offer an ideal environment in which to learn about the craft of theatre and to engage in practical workshop exploration of ideas and concepts.

What skills do I need for this subject?

You will need a minimum grade B in English GCSE. The nature of the course demands that you have strong independent learning skills. Unit 1, with its intensive coursework process, will mean that you must be prepared to deal with plays as the raw materials of performance and not in terms of literary analysis. Unit 2 offers creative group work skills and demands a high degree of commitment. It is a challenging and immensely rewarding course, allowing you to express your ideas and, in A2 you will have the opportunity to devise your own piece based upon your knowledge and understanding of playwrights and practitioners. A high degree of personal motivation and organisation is also required.

ECONOMICS

The Course

The AS*/A2 Edexcel specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Competitive Markets – How they work and why they fail
Unit 2*	Managing the Economy
Unit 3	Business Economics and Economic Efficiency
Unit 4	The Global Economy

Why Economics?

The syllabus requires you to acquire knowledge and understanding of basic economic models and to apply them to markets and the economy as a whole. The aim is to build up a critical appreciation of fundamental problems to improve your ability to logically assess policies and strategies.

Key outcomes should be to:

- Acquire a knowledge and understanding of economic problems
- Show an ability to apply critical understanding to new situations
- Show an ability to analyse economic problems and issues
- Show an ability to evaluate economic arguments, evidence and policies, and to make informed judgements.

The kinds of things you will study include: how do markets work? Would privatisation improve the provision of healthcare? What is the economic case for a city congestion charge on motorists? What factors determine the level of unemployment in an economy? Why does the value of the pound sterling fluctuate on the foreign market? What is globalisation and how does it affect the UK economy?

What skills do I need for Economics?

The topic areas are varied and a study of them involves a number of skills and techniques:

- Writing in a structured way in order to develop arguments and present evaluated solutions.
- Thinking logically and being able to discuss economic issues; this may require the use of data although the course does not require a high level of mathematical ability.

A minimum grade B in English is required at GCSE.

It is possible to take Economics alongside Business Studies at both AS and A2 level. However, for certain courses some universities prefer that only one of these subjects is studied.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Course

The AS*/A2 CCEA specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	The Study of Shakespeare and the Study of Drama written after 1900 Coursework:
Unit 2*	The Study of Poetry written after 1800 and the Study of Prose 1800 – 1945
Unit 3	The Study of Poetry 1300 – 1800 and Drama
Unit 4	The Study of Prose

Why English?

- Our aim is to develop independent thinkers who love debate and exploring literature, as well as helping you to write fluent and coherent answers to challenging questions.
- English literature explores ideas relating to ethics, identity, history and philosophy: this year's students have studied Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer, John Donne, Seamus Heaney, Liz Lochhead, Carol Ann Duffy, Robert Frost, Arthur Miller, Peter Shaffer and Tennessee Williams to name but a few.
- In their study, we consider not only the written word, but also socio-cultural influences, the context in which the texts were written and the biography of the writer.
- English is a discussion-based subject, encouraging you to express your own opinions and to learn the value of those expressed by others.

What can I do with a qualification in this subject?

It wasn't until the early twentieth century that English Literature (and Language) became a subject to study in its own right at university. Before this time, schools and universities felt that since it was the native tongue, it should come naturally to every student and therefore there was little value in its study. Now the mood is very different and the study of literature is recognised as not only furnishing the student with skills in communication, interpretation and debate, but also providing a springboard into a wide range of university and career choices, including Law, Journalism, Philosophy, Politics and Social Sciences. All jobs are to do with communication and relationships. Analysing detail and organising disparate ideas into a coherent argument are crucial skills in many areas of work. Understanding words and contexts is an invaluable skill, as is the ability to discuss and appreciate matters of an ethical nature.

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum grade B in English Literature at GCSE.

G E O G R A P H Y

The Course

The AS*/A2 AQA specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Physical and Human Geography
Unit 2*	Geographical Skills
Unit 3	Contemporary Geographical Skills
Unit 4	Geographical Issue Evaluation

All candidates study core physical and human geography, as well as optional topics selected by their teacher. **There is a residential field course** to the Lake District – students experience a variety of data collection, presentation and analysis techniques in support of the skills paper. **But, there is no coursework!** At A2, candidates continue to study a combination of human and physical geography. Candidates undertake an issue evaluation exercise to extend the content within the specialised context of issue evaluation.

Why study Geography?

- Geography encourages you to develop a wide range of graphic, numeric and written skills. Through your lessons, you will learn vital study skills of research, note-taking and presentation; on top of this is the use of ICT and the analysis of data. In exams you will be asked to respond to stimulus material, to define, describe and explain, as well as to apply your knowledge and understanding to a new situation.
- There is no coursework, but a residential Field Course is an important aspect of the specification. It is during this practical time that you will be able to gain experience of first hand data collection, data analysis and data presentation.

What can I do with a qualification in this subject?

Geography is an opening to a wide range of subjects – including Law, Medicine and Accountancy. By studying Geography you will be encouraged to think deeply and laterally. You will learn to analyse; discuss; evaluate and justify ideas, problems and issues to become a successful independent learner. You will acquire a large number of skills, such as data handling, essay writing, giving presentations and investigative skills.

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum grade B in Geography GCSE. Wide background reading, concise and precise note-taking, good essay writing technique and an interest in independent research are inherent skills for both years.

HISTORY

The Course

The AS/A2 Edexcel specification consists of 4 units covering topics such as the Reign of Henry VIII, the Unification of Italy, Elizabethan England and the Cold War

Why History?

- Firstly, it is interesting! If you do not have at least some curiosity about the past and why things happened the way they did then you probably won't be reading this sheet!
- The intention of this course is to provide a contrast to the predominantly modern history which makes up most GCSEs. It is a mixture of British and European, traditional and modern history, and should provide a varied and stimulating course which offers the opportunity for trips to Berlin and Italy.
- The skills necessary for AS are very similar to GCSE. The content is greater but you have more time to study it. However, unlike GCSE you will actually have to read books for yourself!
- Lessons involve discussing your research, making presentations to the rest of the class, and arguing your point in debates. Smaller classes mean there is much more opportunity for class discussion at AS level – in fact the subject is largely discussion based.
- Ultimately you will have to demonstrate your understanding by writing essays, answering source based questions and producing one piece of coursework in each year of the course.

What can I do with a qualification in this subject?

The study of History develops – to use a piece of jargon – 'transferable skills'. This means that someone with A Level History can read a piece of information, analyse it, pick out the important points, assess whether it is biased or not, put together a written report and argue their case using the available evidence.

These skills are highly prized in any number of professions, most notably law, but also business, journalism, the media, the civil service, advertising and many others. History is considered to be an academically rigorous subject and is respected by university admissions tutors and employers alike. Studying History does not mean you have to be a history teacher – this option is clearly open only to the crème de la crème!

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum B grade in GCSE History.

L A T I N

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 units

Unit 1*	Latin Language
Unit 2*	Latin Verse and Prose Latin
Unit 3	Latin Verse
Unit 4	Latin Prose

Why Latin?

- After the hard work of GCSE, which is designed to lead to linguistic competence, Latin at AS/A2 allows you to read and appreciate a diversity of Latin literature.
- The texts will range from history to epic to love poetry and those texts will present a picture of how the Romans saw their empire, their gods and even their women.
- The exams will demand the capacity to translate or comprehend an unseen text and to translate, analyse and write essays about a set text. Ovid's *Amores* and Cicero's *Against Verres* are studied during the AS Level.
- The linguistic challenge of Latin is considerable, but that challenge is a substantial help to the learning of other languages. In addition, the study of ancient texts leads you into a world different from our own, but a world which has had massive influence upon our literature, our architecture and art, and our values.

What can I study with Latin?

Latin may be chosen for A Level in combination with many other subjects as it complements and contributes to our understanding of all subjects, especially Modern Foreign Languages, History, English and Maths. If taken further at university, Latin may be studied for a degree in its own right or in combination with, for example, English or French. Many universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, also teach Ancient Greek from scratch so that candidates who have studied Latin can take their Classics courses. The logical and linguistic demands of Latin also prove a very good preparation for those studying Law.

What do I need for this course?

The course is demanding and you will need to have gained at least a B grade at GCSE.

MATHEMATICS / FURTHER MATHEMATICS

The Courses

The AS/A2 OCR/MEI specification in Mathematics leads to a single subject award, whereas Further Mathematics encompasses both Mathematics and Further Mathematics A Level. Further Maths AS is available in the Upper Sixth.

Mathematics AS (Lower Sixth)

Unit 1 Core Mathematics 1

Unit 2 Core Mathematics 2

Unit 3 Statistics 1

Mathematics A2 (Upper Sixth)

Unit 4 Core Mathematics 3

Unit 5 Core Mathematics 4

Unit 6 Statistics 2 or Mechanics 1

Further Mathematics (Lower Sixth)

Core Mathematics 1 – 4

Mechanics 1 and 2

Statistics 1

Further Mathematics (Upper Sixth)

Further Pure 1 and 2

Mechanics 3

Differential Equations

Statistics 2 and 3

For those studying Further Mathematics we cover more than the full A level Mathematics course in the Lower Sixth year by studying seven units. We aim to tackle another six units in the Upper Sixth.

How Do I Choose Which Course Is Right For Me?

Mathematics

- A good grade at GCSE, along with a studious nature and a strong desire to learn, are what you need to do well. The course involves the study of the techniques of Mathematics, including algebra, geometry, trigonometry and calculus, which are in turn applied to different practical situations.

Further Mathematics

- This is for students who have a real flair for the subject. We recommend the subject to those who are strong in the fields of Mathematics, Engineering or Physics.
- To succeed at this course, you need to be well-organised and hard-working, as well as talented! It is a demanding programme even for the most able student, but it is a rewarding challenge for those who can cope with it. We do allocate extra time for the course by giving it as an option within the VI Form Enrichment programme.
- Without the study of Further Mathematics, some university mathematics, science and engineering courses (particularly at Oxbridge) are well-nigh inaccessible.

What do I need for this course?

- Mathematics: A minimum grade B in Mathematics GCSE is required.
- Further Mathematics: An A* grade in Mathematics GCSE is required.

MODERN LANGUAGES

The Course

We offer **French, Spanish and German** at AS and A2. Not only do the courses improve and extend knowledge of the target language: students examine the contemporary culture of the country, as well as its literature and compare it to our own here in the UK. Whether you choose French, German or Spanish, the AS*/A2 AQA specification follows the same pattern across the units. There are **two** units and, with these units, **four** main topic areas for both AS and A2.

AS

Unit 1* **Listening, Reading and Writing**

This is a mixed skill paper. Topics covered are: Media, Popular Culture, Healthy Living, Family and Relationships. Candidates will answer a range of questions based on approximately five minutes of heard material and on a selection of written stimulus texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the AS topics.

Unit 2* **Speaking**

Candidates will discuss a target-language stimulus card based on one of the AS topics and take part in a conversation covering three further AS topics.

A2

Unit 3 **Listening, Reading and Writing**

This mixed skills paper is based on four main topics. You will be encouraged to keep up to date with the news and other current events. Candidates will answer a range of questions based on approximately six minutes of heard material and on a selection of written texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the four A2 cultural topic areas.

- Environment: pollution, energy and protecting the planet
- The multi-cultural society: immigration, integration and racism
- Contemporary social issues: wealth and poverty, law and order and the impact of scientific and technological progress
- Cultural topic: the study of a target language-speaking region/community or period of 20th century history from a target language-speaking country/community or the study of a novelist/dramatist/poet from a target language-speaking country/community or the study of a director/architect/ musician/painter from a target language-speaking country/community.

Unit 4 **Speaking**

Candidates will present a point of view based on a target language stimulus card from one of the A2 topic areas and take part in a conversation covering three further A2 topics.

What do I need for this course?

A minimum grade B at GCSE is required in the relevant language.

MODERN LANGUAGES (2)

Why study a modern language?

The benefits of studying a language are wide-ranging: from learning to communicate in fresh ways to having a window onto the culture of another country, from learning to express your views and listen to the views of others through the language that you are learning to studying its culture through a variety of modern media.

By learning to manipulate a language to generate your own ideas and responses, you will broaden your own horizons and appreciate the variety that other languages offer. Delivering presentations and being able to summarise your reading skills that go well beyond the classroom.

German is an important language for communication in Europe, in particular for business as Germany continues to be Europe's largest exporter. The ability to read German publications is also a huge advantage for scientists: 40% of scientists in the USA recommend their students to learn German. Germany is the third largest publisher of books in the world: its literature is diverse and challenging and competence in the language will open up the cultural world of Goethe, Nietzsche, Kafka, Mozart, Freud, Einstein and Beethoven. Within the department there is a biennial study visit to Berlin, strong links with our partner school in Hofheim, the possibility to undertake work experience in Frankfurt and also the opportunity to visit the German Christmas Markets.

French is a language of literature, rich in philosophy and culture. It is spoken widely throughout the world (North America, Africa and Asia) and opens up huge possibilities in business and finance. The language has strong influences upon our own and thus we are able to trace English and French cultural heritage. We have an active Modern Languages Society run by teachers and by students. On top of all this, the Sixth Form has a study trip to Belgium during the October half-term, to debate current issues with other European students, an exchange visit to Bordeaux in November and a work experience visit to France after AS exams.

Spanish is widely spoken throughout the world. The course offers the opportunity to study cultural differences between Spain and the UK. Recent social and cultural revolutions and evolution within Spain mean that it is a constantly changing and challenging country to study. Spanish is spoken widely in South America, and the Spanish speaking countries are exciting and culturally diverse. There are many opportunities on offer at Solihull School: among other things, we have had 'tapas' and Spanish film nights to enhance the course and broaden students' appreciation of the country and its culture. Pupils have the opportunity to host a student from Chile in May and also to go to Chile to work in our partner school in Concepción for six weeks in the summer holiday, after AS exams. We also offer a trip to Spain, usually to the Málaga area.

MUSIC

The Course

The AS*/A2 AQA specification consists of 6 units

Unit 1*	Influences on Music
Unit 2*	Composing
Unit 3*	Performing
Unit 4	Music in Context
Unit 5	Composing
Unit 6	Performing

What is Music at AS/A2 Level?

- In 'Influences on Music' (Unit 1) the course covers two distinct areas of study: analysing a set work and writing an essay on it (currently Mozart's 'Jupiter' Symphony) and secondly writing an essay on one area of study (currently Music Theatre 1940-1980). You will also be required to answer aural questions based on a CD of unseen musical extracts.
- Unit 2 demands that you respond to one composing brief from a choice of three. You will be given 20 hours maximum supervised time for this module.
- Unit 3 requires you to give two performances of live music, lasting 5-8 minutes each.
- Unit 4 requires you to study a twentieth century score (currently Mahler's Fourth Symphony) and to answer an essay question on its analysis. There is also a further essay question on an additional set topic. You will also be required to answer aural questions based on a CD of musical extracts.
- Unit 5 demands that you respond to one composing brief from a choice of three. Again you will be given 20 hours maximum supervised time for this module.
- Unit 6 requires you to give an additional performance of two or more contrasting pieces of 10-15 minutes.

Why study Music?

The course encourages the skills of analysis and criticism, encouraging you to develop your critical thinking through music composition. Clearly you will also develop your practical skills, as well as enhancing listening and aural abilities. Essay writing is an important facet of the course and there are opportunities for you to develop your powers of musical criticism through the study of set works and topics. The course is essential for music degrees, and is useful for performing arts/media studies courses and offers a balanced practical and theoretical course, which complements any other AS/A2 choice.

What do I need for this course?

You will need a minimum grade B in Music GCSE

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 units
(Students may choose to follow either the Digital Photography or Graphic Design route)

Unit 1*	Coursework Portfolio
Unit 2*	Controlled Assignment
Unit 3	Personal Investigation
Unit 4	Controlled Assignment

What does the Photography course involve?

- The AS requires you to explore a range of techniques and processes and experiment with them to develop your ideas. There is one main research project involving different skills and concepts and you will submit this, together with your support journal, for the final assessment.
- The AS Photography course falls into two main areas: your chosen area of study and the critical studies section. In the first area, you will explore and experiment with photographic and digital techniques, developing skills in both wet photography and digital imaging. Through the critical studies programme you will make a critical response to works of photography.
- The culmination of the AS course is the final exhibition, which will reflect first hand research and a detailed critical response to an aspect of the visual arts. Key words for this AS course are breadth and research: breadth being achieved by your engaging in the creative process of exploring a range of ideas, skills and materials to develop your own visual exploration. The department uses the latest in computer technology, having upgraded to a specialist IT system using Apple Macs and PCs.
- At A2 you can choose between either Photography or Multimedia; having made this choice, you will focus on the development of a personal project again showing research, development and realisation of your own ideas.
- You will also need to integrate a personal study relating to a photographer in relation to your own work. Key words here are depth and achievement: depth being achieved through sustained personal involvement in selected visual processes, resulting in significant photographic attainment.

What do I need for this course?

You do not need GCSE Art and Design for this course. Much of the course relies upon you to carry out independent research from photographic sources and meet deadlines. Teaching methods are varied and range from teacher-led instruction to workshop activities, seminars, tutorials and individual teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 units

- Unit 1*** **The Application of Physiological and Psychological Knowledge to Improve Performance and Contemporary Studies in Physical Education.**
- Unit 2*** **Acquiring, Developing and Evaluating Practical Skills in Physical Education.**
A wide range of sporting activities, available both in and out of school, may be performed in this area.
- Unit 3** **Physical Education: Historical, Comparative, Biochemical and Sport Psychology options.**
Exercise and Sport Physiology and the integration of knowledge of principles and concepts across different areas of Physical Education.
- Unit 4** **The Improvement of Effective Performance and the Critical Evaluation of Practical Activities.**

What is the course about?

- The first myth that needs to be debunked is that this course is wholly practical: it isn't! Whilst there are elements of the course which operate through a practical medium, there is a large classroom element too.
- Exploring contemporary sociological issues in modern sport, such as racism, commercialism, gender and politics, examining the effects of exercise and the relationship between training and performance. Analysing the learning of skills and how this affects practical performance, contrasting sport through different cultures: these are some of the key areas of study.
- For the practical element, you will have the opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills in selected areas and improve performance. For this, two different sports must be offered and at least one of these needs to be to a high standard.

Why study Physical Education?

If you have a keen interest in sport and recreation and want to learn about the theoretical as well as the practical aspects, have an enquiring mind and are interested in sport throughout the world, then this is the right course for you. You may want to move on to a related career or higher education course, or improve your own sporting performance.

What do I need for this course?

A minimum grade B in Biology, or in both Core and Additional Science, at GCSE is required. In addition, two different sports must be offered, one of which must be performed to a high (County or First team) standard.

PSYCHOLOGY

The Course

The AS*/A2 AQA Specification A consists of 4 units, all of which are examinable

Unit 1*	Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Research Methods
Unit 2*	Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences
Unit 3	Topics in Psychology; Gender, Relationships and Aggression
Unit 4	Psychopathology (Depression), Anomalistic Psychology and Research Methods

Why study Psychology?

- Psychology is a demanding academic subject that will rapidly improve your ability to analyse and utilise research data in effective arguments.
- The content is highly relevant to you and your understanding of society.
- It is fascinating and fun, in between the hard bits.
- Many careers utilise Psychology, from supermarket planning to Forensic Psychology.
- It provides academic input into many other studies, such as History and English.
- It enables you to understand your own motives and behaviour, thus reducing anxiety by providing essential knowledge.
- It is multidisciplinary.
- The mapping of the human genome gives extra fuel to many of the debates concerning human behaviour. Psychology is a particularly vibrant subject at this time in our history.
- Psychology has been reclassified as a natural science by the examination authorities, underlining its academic credentials.

What skills do I need for this subject?

You will need a minimum of grade B in English, Maths and a Science, and you will need to remember that Psychology is a science and although there is a lot of discussion there is also a lot of scientific analysis. You should not approach Psychology as a means of solving personal problems. It will certainly help with understanding but it is not 'therapy' (although that will be studied). You will need determination. Starting a subject from new at Sixth Form level means a lot of new and unusual concepts to digest before further understanding can grow. We expect a lot from our students and require them to share our high standards and enthusiasm. A sense of humour is useful!

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS)

The Course

The AS*/A2 OCR Religious Studies (Philosophy and Ethics) course is made up of 4 units

- Unit 1*** **Philosophy of Religion 1**
A study of the various arguments made for or against the existence of God. This study includes philosophical, psychological and scientific arguments.
- Unit 2*** **Ethics 1**
A study of four ethical theories in depth – Utilitarianism, Situation Ethics, Virtue Ethics and the Divine Command theory. This study includes an examination of these theories applied to medical ethics and to the topic of war and peace.
- Unit 3** **Philosophy of Religion 2**
A study of religious language, the validity of miracles and issues relating to life after death.
- Unit 4** **Ethics 2**
A study of moral issues includes the conscience, free will and determinism. It also includes the application of moral theories to sexual, environmental and business ethics.

Why study Religious Studies?

RS (Philosophy and Ethics) is the fastest growing A Level in the UK. It is of particular relevance to aspiring students of Philosophy, Sociology, PPE or Theology. Medical ethics is useful for those intending to study Medicine. Indeed what business, the law, civil service and medicine want are people, who think logically, are able to dissect arguments and to express their views with clarity. This subject, by its very nature, does all these things.

What do I need for this course?

RS GCSE is not required. Students who have not taken RS should have at least a B grade in a similar subject to RS, e.g. History or English. An interest in ideas and a willingness to open your mind to the views of others is a necessity for any student in this subject.

SCIENCES

Why study Science?

The majority of pupils who study a science course do so because it is in some way relevant to a career. Each course, however, provides an education in its own right and these courses may be used as a springboard into higher education, in disciplines not normally available at school level, and not necessarily related to the subjects studied at school, eg Law, PPE and Sociology.

Medicine

Chemistry, one other science, and one other subject is the general requirement at A Level. Most universities are starting to ask for Biology as the second science. Pupils should, therefore, include both Chemistry and Biology in their choices at AS Level, to give them the full range of courses available. Some universities state that they would like candidates to offer breadth of subjects at AS level.

Veterinary Medicine

The majority of the six universities that offer this course require Chemistry plus two other sciences. Three of the six require Biology as one of the other sciences.

Engineering

Although Engineering has many branches, Maths plus Physics provide a good base for a wide range of courses. Chemical Engineering requires Chemistry. Engineering courses at Oxford and Cambridge require a good understanding of Maths.

BIOLOGY

The Course

The new AS*/A2 OCR specification consists of 4 externally assessed units and 2 practical skills assessments.

Unit 1*	Cells, exchange and transport
Unit 2*	Molecules, biodiversity, food production and health studies
Unit 3*	Practical skills
Unit 4	Communication, homeostasis and energy
Unit 5	Control, genomes and environment
Unit 6	Practical skills

The practical skills, in both AS and A2, will cover 3 aspects of experimental work: qualitative tasks, quantitative tasks and analytical and evaluative tasks. These tasks will be completed under supervision, assessed internally and then subject to external moderation.

Why study Biology?

- The A Level scheme builds on the foundation of the GCSE Additional Science/Biology course. This is a rapidly changing subject where many topical issues are covered. These range from stem cells, genetic engineering and cloning, to developments in treating the diseases that affect the world.
- Ecology will be studied during a Field Trip to Pembrokeshire in the final week of the Easter holiday during your Lower Sixth year. This is an academically demanding but socially enjoyable week that covers the material from both the AS and A2 specifications.
- Modern developments of biological principles such as the Human Genome Project will take society into a new era.

What do I need for this course?

You will need either a grade B in Biology as a separate science, or grade B in both Core and Additional Science. A minimum of a grade B in Chemistry would also be an advantage.

CHEMISTRY

The Course

The new AS*/A2 AQA specification consists of 6 units

Unit 1*	Foundation Chemistry
Unit 2*	Chemistry in Action
Unit 3*	Investigative and Practical Skills in AS Chemistry
Unit 4	Kinetics, Equilibria and Organic Chemistry
Unit 5	Energetics, Redox and Inorganic Chemistry
Unit 6	Investigative and Practical Skills in A2 Chemistry

Why study Chemistry?

There are two main reasons to study Chemistry:

- The subject involves abstract thinking and the application of ideas to new situations.
- Chemistry supports other subjects, in particular Biology, and it is a requirement for students wanting to study Veterinary Science, Dentistry or Medicine.

As well as being an academic subject, Chemistry involves a good deal of practical work, preparing candidates for the coursework elements. It also involves problem-solving and a general awareness of the properties of matter.

What do I need for this course?

You will need either a grade B in Chemistry as a separate science, or grade B in both Core and Additional Science. A grade B in Maths would be an advantage.

PHYSICS

The Course

The AS*/A2 AQA specification consists of 4 externally assessed units and 2 internally assessed practical units

Unit 1*	Particles, Quantum Phenomena and Electricity
Unit 2*	Mechanics, Materials and Waves
Unit 3*	Investigative and Practical Skills in AS Physics
Unit 4	Fields and Further Mechanics
Unit 5	Nuclear Physics, Thermal Physics and the Optional Topic of Turning Points in Physics
Unit 6	Investigative and Practical Skills in A2 Physics

Why study Physics?

- Why is the sky blue but sunsets red? What holds part of the atom together? How can we design a bungee jump to be as exciting as possible? How can we see inside the human body in order to diagnose disease? Physics provides the answers.
- A qualification in Physics is useful preparation for careers in engineering, architecture, medical sciences and dozens of other jobs. Physics develops logical and analytical thinking, both of which are highly valued by employers. Recent reports on university options have confirmed that, apart from the vocational subjects of Law and Medicine, the physical sciences and engineering provide the best career prospects in financial terms.
- You will study how the world behaves and how the laws of nature operate; Develop an understanding of the link between theory and experiment; Come to appreciate how Physics has developed and is used in present day society.
- Practical work is an integral part of the course. In addition to practical activities, which support and reinforce the theoretical content in the specification, students' practical skills will be developed. Internal assessment will be of a similar kind to the ISA tests met at GCSE.

What do I need to study this subject?

You will need either a grade B in Physics as a separate science, or grade B in both Core and Additional Science. A grade B in Maths is required.

ENRICHMENT

The Course

In an educational world increasingly dominated by public examinations, Enrichment for the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth, which is not specifically constrained by examination syllabi, is an important part of our provision. Enrichment embodies the philosophy that there must be more to post GCSE education than specialist study of a small number of subjects.

We believe that this varied programme, along with our extensive out of school sports, drama, music and activities, contributes towards the balanced education needed to send our students out better prepared to meet the challenges of the outside world.

Enrichment for the Lower Sixth

During the 3 periods per week allocated the major activities are:

- **Terriers:** pupils help as instructors in looking after year 7 pupils
- **Community Service:** helping care for the elderly or at local Junior Schools
- **Critical Thinking:** students obtain an extra AS during the year taking external examination papers in June.
- **Debating:** offers the chance to learn the skills needed to take part in the **European Youth Parliament** competition.
- **Mandarin:** A mixed language and culture course.
- **Drama:** offers a mixture of an acting master class and a competitive improvisation session.
- **Community Sports Leader Award:** offers the chance to learn sports coaching skills and earn a Level 2 award.
- **Asset Languages Italian:** offers a new approach, fitting language study to a range of different abilities.
- **GCSE Spanish:** the chance to broaden knowledge, which may suit those with an interest in language studies who want to add an extra language to their portfolio
- **Engineering Education Scheme:** aimed at giving some practical project experience in an industrial setting to prospective university engineering applicants.
- **Fine Art GCSE:** a chance for those who may have had to give up the subject earlier in their education to explore their artistic ability.

Enrichment for the Upper Sixth

Those in the Upper Sixth who do not choose to take 4 full A Levels have one afternoon of Enrichment each week to do things away from their normal academic courses. For some this is used to prepare for the Extended Project Qualification in an area of personal interest which is increasingly marketable to universities. For others it offers the chance to relax through tuition in skiing, climbing, golf, horse-riding, self-defence, dancing or basic cookery for university. They can also work towards a higher level sports coaching award whilst actively coaching younger year groups. Our students involve themselves as Community Service volunteers both off-site at local schools and visiting the elderly and on-site through the Amnesty International group.

THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

The Course

The OCR specification is a free-standing qualification which can be taken alongside A Levels in the Upper Sixth.

The Assessment Objectives

AO1: managing a project (20%)

AO2: using resources (20%)

AO3: developing and realising the project (40%)

AO4: reviewing the project (20%)

Why take the EPQ?

The focus of the EPQ at Solihull School is not on formal accreditation leading to UCAS points but rather on the conception, design and completion of a project which reflects a real personal interest on the student's part.

During the initial training sessions which must be attended at the start of the autumn term, attention is paid to skills like using a library effectively and the internet judiciously, dissertation writing and constructing accurate references and bibliographies.

However, the heart of the EPQ is the work you do in your own time (in the summer holiday after the Lower Sixth and the autumn term of the Upper Sixth). Before the summer holiday you will need to find a mentor who can check the progress of your project. There is no marking of work, as such, until the completed project is submitted towards the end of the autumn term, but your mentor will hold brief, regular meetings with you in order to inspect and validate a detailed log (on official record sheets) of your progress. Part of the EPQ (AO4) involves giving an illustrated talk to a small audience of your peers and teachers.

You will be encouraged to think as imaginatively as possible before finalising the nature of your project. Simply writing an essay is not necessarily a good idea; creating a project which reflects your involvement in an activity or process definitely is. This could be anything: starting a small business enterprise, directing a play, creative writing, a portfolio of artwork or photographs... The EPQ is open-ended and success in it comes to those who approach their task methodically and independently.

The EPQ is best thought of as an exercise in project management and it must be remembered that how a project is completed is just as important as its content.

What will I demonstrate by completing the EPQ?

By completing an Extended Project you will indicate your ability to work without close supervision – an attribute that is increasingly valued by universities. You will also produce something to be proud of.

YOUNG APPLICATIONS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES SCHEME

In addition to his or her A Level programme of study the Solihull sixth former may choose to join The Open University's Young Applicants in Schools and Colleges Scheme (or YASS for short). This scheme enables students in Years 12 and 13 to study a wide range of undergraduate modules at first-year level alongside their AS and A levels. YASS modules are offered in arts, business studies, computing and IT, education, engineering and technology, environment, financial management, health and social care, languages, law, mathematics, science, social sciences and sport and fitness.

The modules are distant learning courses and all assignments are completed and submitted on line. As there are a choice of start dates for some modules you can decide when in the academic year is the best time for you to start. Some modules can be completed in 10 weeks or 9 months and you will need to commit between 4-16 hours of extra study. The length of a module relates to the number of points it is awarded. Modules consist of 10, 15, 30 or 60 higher education (CATS) points. It is worth noting that the points you achieve with YASS are not to be confused with UCAS points. However, what you do achieve will show any university you apply to in the future that you have experience of Higher Education.