



SIR THOMAS RICH'S
GLOUCESTER

Sixth Form 2020-21

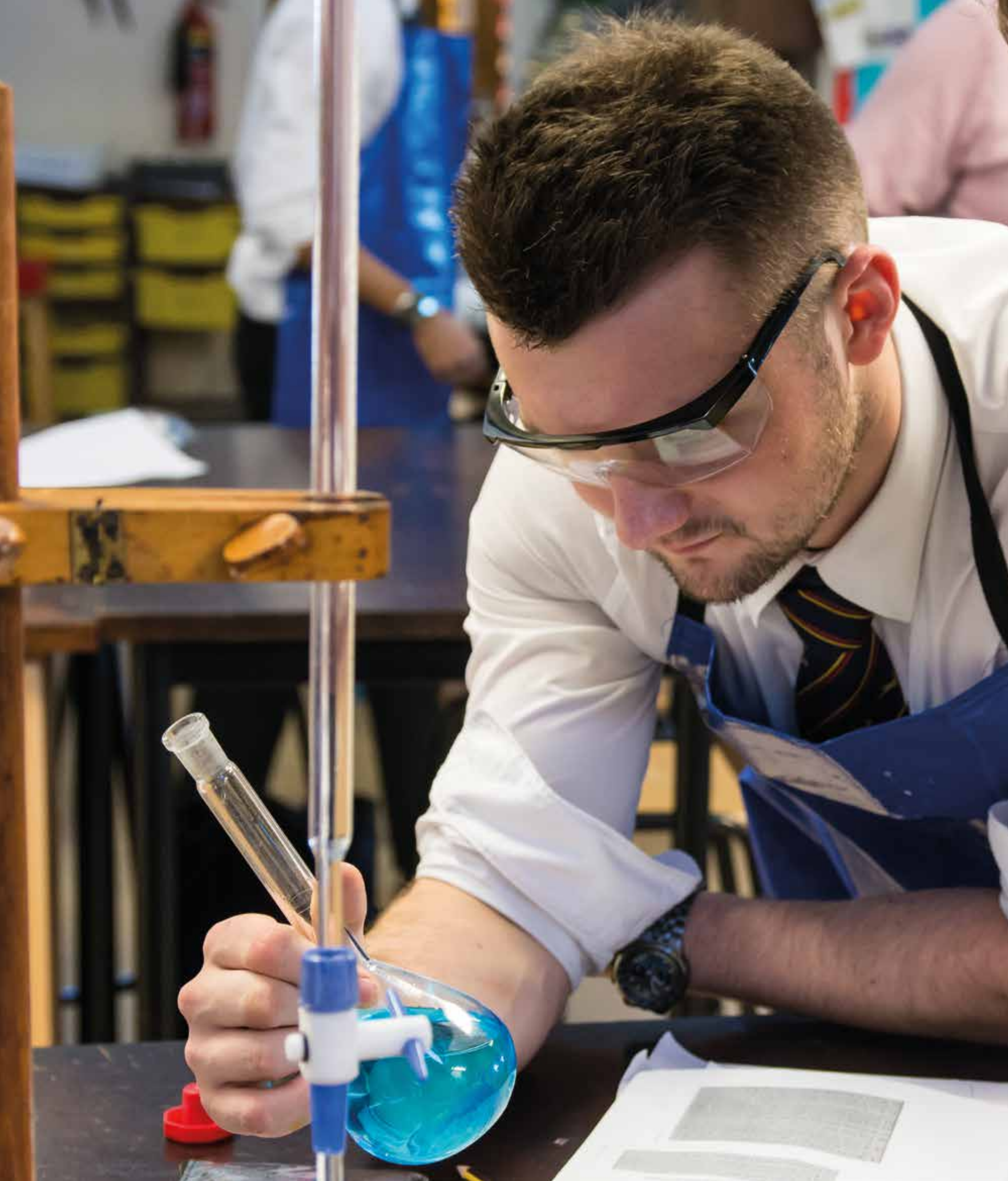


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Contents

About Sir Thomas Rich's		
The School's Ethos	5	History 19
Sixth Form Life	7	Mathematics 20
		Music 21
		Physical Education 22
		Physics 23
Course Information		Politics 24
Art	8	Product Design 25
Biology	9	Psychology 26
Business	10	Religious Studies 27
Chemistry	11	Theatre Studies 28
Computer Science	12	
Economics	13	Applying For Sixth Form
English Literature	14	Leaver Destinations 2019 30
French	15	A Level Results 2019 31
Geography	16	Entry Requirements 2020 32
Geology	17	A Level Options 33
German	18	The Application Process 33





The School's Ethos

One of the highest attaining schools in the country, Sir Thomas Rich's attracts high-ability students who work hard and aspire to achieve the best results they can.

Every Ofsted report has graded every aspect of Sir Thomas Rich's as Outstanding, from behaviour to extracurricular provision, from quality of teaching to academic attainment, and our examination results are typically at the highest grades. The School has a fine record of Oxbridge and higher education entry, and almost all our Sixth Formers go on to further specialist study.

We pride ourselves on knowing our students well and our 'small school ethos' – we recognise that attainment is nothing without a firm commitment to the health and well-being of our pupils, and we work hard to ensure that our students are treated as individuals and thrive in an atmosphere of respect, care and support.

Our Sixth Form currently numbers 376 students, of whom 131 are girls, and students typically study 3 or 4 subjects at A Level. We know that joining a new school in Year 12 and the prospect of more advanced study can be daunting for many, and we work closely with students and their parents to ensure that students settle quickly, enjoy their studies, make progress and become valued members of the Rich's community.





Sixth Form Life

While academic excellence is at the heart of everything we do at Rich's, our unrivalled sporting and extracurricular opportunities attract pupils from around the county and beyond. For example, our Rugby fixture list is one of the best on the circuit and we play some of the top schools in the UK. We are also the only Sixth Form in the local area to offer a regular girls' overseas Netball Tour – Malta in 2020.

There are a wide variety of activities and trips available to our students, from regular music and choral concerts and drama performances, to the overseas Rugby Tour, ski trips, language exchanges, visits to our link school PMM Girls' School in Uganda, Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions and many subject trips both throughout the UK and abroad.

Preparing our students for life after school is also core to our work, and we offer a varied programme of careers advice and higher education planning throughout students' time in the Sixth Form, including conferences, interview practice and a programme of visiting speakers from Russell Group and other top universities.

We welcome visits from Year 11 girls and boys currently studying at any school to view our modern Sixth Form facilities, find out more about the A Level courses and extracurricular opportunities on offer, and to speak with teachers and current Year 12 and 13 pupils about life at Sir Thomas Rich's.

If you would like to find out more about studying at Sir Thomas Rich's, see our website at www.strschool.co.uk/sixthform for further information and dates of upcoming open days and evenings, or email the School on info@strs.org.uk to arrange a visit.



Art



WHY STUDY ART?

Most pupils choose Art because they enjoy it. As a practical subject, Art is able to offer a contrast to most other A Level subjects and allows pupils the opportunity to explore ideas and create artwork in a personal manner. Many pupils choose Art because they enjoy the challenge and the opportunity to choose topics and techniques that build on their experiences at GCSE.

Art encourages self-discipline and organisation, whilst allowing pupils to interact with their peers, as well as members of staff. Art lessons are taught to both Year 12 and Year 13 pupils at the same time, so pupils benefit from the advice and support of others who have undergone similar experiences. Many pupils who choose Art discover it becomes their favourite subject.

TOPICS

We support our pupils through individual feedback so that they can develop self-discipline and a thirst for learning. We strongly believe that Art can transform our inherent ways of thinking and how we see the world.

Our teaching is focused on providing opportunities for learners based on their individual strengths and following a path that suits their skillset, interests and goals. By creating open-minded practitioners, with an ability to challenge techniques, concepts and materials, we hope to build confidence in the path of discovery. Enabling pupils to understand and appreciate a variety of art forms. We believe that these skills and qualities can help prepare our pupils to go into further and higher education and the world of work.

Each coursework unit lasts from September to January and is broken up into mini-projects, interspersed with Appraisal Weeks, where pupils discuss their progress in groups. Final outcomes are generally completed after Christmas.

EXAMINATION

Pupils take the AQA Art and Design (Unendorsed) A Level route. The course contains a coursework (60%) and an examination element (40%). The coursework lasts from September to January each year, with the examination starting in February (Year 13) and ending in May.

The examination is known as the 'Externally Set Task' and begins with a paper set by AQA containing a selection of starting points. Pupils will be given guidance and support throughout the examination period, beginning with a presentation outlining possible ways of interpreting each question.

CAREERS

Pupils who have studied Art at A Level have gone on to many varied career paths and have studied a wide range of subjects at university. This not only includes the traditional art-based degree areas such as Architecture, Teaching, Textile Design, Interior Design, Fine Art, Film-making and Photography, but also less expected career paths, such as Dentistry and Law.

Year 13 leavers in 2018 and 2019 went on to study Fine Art at Brighton University, Foundation Art at Stroud College, History of Art at Bristol University, Fine Art at Falmouth University, and Art and Design at Oxford.

READING LIST

Drawing Projects, An Exploration of The Language of Drawing (Mick Maslen and Jack Southern)
Raw + Material = Art (Tristan Manco)
Cornelia Parker (Iwona Blazwick, Forward by Yoko Ono)

Biology

WHY STUDY BIOLOGY?

Biology is rewarding, challenging, interesting and above all relevant. It is the study of life – your future. Your knowledge of Biology may be used to understand and perhaps help solve many of today's problems, such as illness, food production, conservation and the control of pollution. You will gain an awareness of contemporary issues such as organ transplantation, disease epidemics, genetic engineering and biotechnology. You will gain practical, manipulative and observational skills, and develop the ability to interpret and evaluate data.

TOPICS

Year 12 units include work on cell structure, biological molecules, exchange systems (eg breathing), plant and mammalian transport, cell division, DNA and protein synthesis, evolution, biodiversity, disease and the immune system. Year 13 units include work on homeostasis, nerves, hormones, excretion, photosynthesis, respiration, genetics, cellular control, biotechnology, plant and animal responses, ecosystems, populations and sustainability. Year 12 students visit the Natural History Museum in Oxford to study classification and evolution. Year 13 students are expected to attend a four-day residential course held at a Field Studies Council Centre in Pembrokeshire.

EXAMINATION

The examination board for the course is OCR Biology A Specification. The examination will consist of three written papers. The papers will include content from the Year 12 and Year 13 teaching units:

Paper 1. Biological Processes, 2h 15min (100 marks).
Paper 2. Biological Diversity, 2h 15min (100 marks).
Paper 3. Unified Biology (synoptic), 1h 30min (70 marks).

Practical-based questions will be included in all papers (15% weighting). There will be a minimum 10% mathematical skills weighting. Examinations will include a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

Practical Endorsement:

Practicals will be carried out throughout the course. Students must record a minimum of 12 of these (showing a range of skills). These will be assessed to achieve a 'Practical Endorsement: Pass' on their Biology A Level certificate.

CAREERS

Biology has direct relevance to many degrees and career paths, and is especially useful for those wishing to progress further in medical, environmental or biochemical careers. Previous students have gone on to careers in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, physiotherapy, nursing, radiography, ophthalmology, microbiology, forensics, pharmacy, teaching and horticulture. Students have also gone on to research in biochemistry, environmental issues and marine ecology. Biology is recognised as a challenging subject by universities and is a highly valued A Level qualification, whatever the discipline applied for. Biology will help you develop a diverse range of important skills – including research, practical, analytical and evaluative skills – which will aid your progression in your chosen career path. Every year many of our students are inspired to continue their Biology studies at university. Most recently at Bristol, Cardiff, Durham, Exeter and Reading. This year there were also five students who went on to study Medicine at London, Nottingham and Plymouth.

READING LIST

Head Start To A Level Biology (CGP Books)
A Short History Of Nearly Everything (Bill Bryson)
Life On Earth (David Attenborough)
The Selfish Gene (Richard Dawkins)
Wilding: The Return of Nature To A British Farm (Isabella Tree)
Bad Science (Ben Goldacre)
The New Scientist (magazine)
<https://biology-online.org>
<http://www.cellsalive.com>
<http://www.biologymad.com>

"Art at Rich's is the most unique and versatile subject that I have come across. It gives students the freedom to creatively express themselves, and the opportunity to develop their individuality and self confidence. The teachers give endless amounts of support, ideas and techniques to help every student find their own artistic voice. Art offers a wide range of paths for any type of further study, from photography and graphics to fashion and textiles."

George Roberts



"Biology at Rich's comprises a plethora of intriguing, engaging and fascinating topic areas varying from cell membranes to the human anatomy. Practical experiments are a highlight, and help to explain the fine detail of the specimen with hands on experience. Although the subject is challenging, the staff will stop at nothing to ensure that all students are comfortable with the content required."

Sam Cripps



Business



WHY STUDY BUSINESS?

Business is a dynamic subject as the business environment is constantly changing, and this is what makes it so exciting to study. On the academic side, Business involves analysing the internal workings of contemporary business organisations with the focus on areas such as marketing and production. The external environment within which businesses operate is also studied, along with the effects this can have upon decision-making within a business. We also refer to major topical issues that can generate change for business organisations, such as the decision to leave the EU, and the 2008 Credit Crunch and tentative recovery. Current case studies are often utilised in the classroom and students are encouraged to keep up-to-date with business in the news by reading broadsheets and watching TV programmes such as *The Apprentice* and *Dragon's Den*.

TOPICS

In studying Business at A Level, you will learn how businesses operate in terms of the following departmental areas: marketing, accounting and finance, human resource planning and operations management. The level of study is far more rigorous than at GCSE, for example work on human resources involves analysing numerous motivation theories, evaluating different leadership styles, understanding the trends in flexible work patterns and examining different hierarchical structures. In the second year there is a much greater focus on business objectives and strategy, including tactical decisions and operational decisions. The causes and effects of change are examined in much more depth, and there is a wider international dimension when studying such issues as fluctuations of exchange rates and trade barriers.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Eduqas and assessment is 100% examination. There are three examinations at the end of the second year. All three papers are 2 hours 15 minutes in length and are equally weighted in determining the final grade. Each component builds on the knowledge and understanding of the previous components.

Component 1. Business Opportunities and Functions, consists of compulsory short answer questions and compulsory data response questions based on basic business topics such as types of businesses and external factors influencing businesses.

Component 2. Business Analysis and Strategy, consists of compulsory data response questions focused on analytical and decision making models and business strategy.

Component 3. Business in a Changing World, consists of compulsory high-mark questions based on a case study and one essay question from a choice of three.

CAREERS

Many students go on to study Business, as well as related courses such as Marketing, Economics, Accounting, Law, Politics, Business Management, Psychology of Business, Business with a Language and Business with Sport Studies. Some students choose to enter the workforce after school in areas such as finance, retail, marketing and manufacturing, or choose to start their own business. Recent A Level students have gone on to study for Business degrees at the universities of Aston, Loughborough, Nottingham, Gloucestershire, Leicester, Swansea, Birmingham, Oxford Brookes and Plymouth. Students have also gone on to study Marketing; International Business and Management; International Business; Marketing, Advertising and Branding; International Business and Communications; Business Management; and International Management.

READING LIST

Priceless: The Hidden Psychology Of Value (W Poundstone)
In The Plex (Steven Levy)
Alibaba: The House That Jack Ma Built (Duncan Clark)
Triumph of the City (E L Glaeser)
Risk Savvy: How To Make Good Decisions (G Gigerenzer)
See www.strschool.co.uk/sixthform/prospectus for suggestions for further reading.

"I decided to study Business at Rich's as I am fascinated by the rise and growth of corporations. Despite the fact I did not study Business at GCSE, the teachers have supported me and I have been able to transfer my skills from other subjects to help understand the new concepts associated with Business. I aim to study Business further at university, having enjoyed the A Level course."

Cameron Smerdon



Chemistry



WHY STUDY CHEMISTRY?

Chemistry seeks to explain the behaviour of matter around us so we have a better understanding of how things work, enabling chemists to improve anything from anti-cancer drugs to industrial catalysts, new smart materials to biodegradable plastics. As a chemist, you might be involved in making new materials for faster computers and more complex mobile phones, or working in a dynamic business environment. From research in space to the depths of the oceans, Chemistry is the central science bringing together essential aspects of Biology and Physics. It is routinely required for Medicine or other related courses. It remains a very popular yet challenging subject as students seek to broaden their chemical understanding, preparing themselves for higher education as well as complementing other scientific study.

TOPICS

- Atoms, compounds, molecules and equations
- Amount of substance, acid-base and redox reactions
- Electrons, bonding and structure
- The Periodic Table and periodicity Group 2 and the halogens
- Reaction rates and equilibrium pH and buffers
- Enthalpy, entropy and free energy
- Redox and electrode potentials
- Transition elements
- Organic chemistry
- Polymers, organic synthesis
- Analytical techniques (IR and MS)
- Chromatography and spectroscopy (NMR)

The emphasis is on developing knowledge, competence and confidence in practical skills and problem solving. You will learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

EXAMINATION

Assessment is by examination by the OCR board Chemistry Course A. The inorganic and physical chemistry paper is The Periodic Table, Elements and

Physical Chemistry, and is 2 hours 15 minutes in length. The second paper is equal in length and is entitled Synthesis and Analytical Techniques covering the organic chemistry. The final Unified Paper draws together many aspects of chemistry and is 1 hour 30 minutes in duration.

Students are required to answer a range of different questions including multiple choice, short answer and some extended response questions. In addition to this, students are also expected to be familiar with a variety of practical experiments and techniques for the examination. There is a great emphasis on practical skills. Students perform practical group assessments (PAGs) and write them up in a practical book. Completion of these results in a practical endorsement. Students accumulate key skills but also have written evidence similar to a university science course. These skills are those expected of A Level chemists by employers and universities alike. Students also have the opportunity to enter the Chemistry Challenge examination. This is a problem solving examination set by the University of Cambridge at the end of Year 12. Success in this can result in a roentgenium, gold, silver or copper certificate. Some students also enter the Chemistry Olympiad in Year 13.

CAREERS

Students have recently gone on to study Chemistry at the universities of Bristol, Manchester and Durham, Chemical Engineering at Bath University and Materials and Science Engineering at Birmingham University.

READING LIST

Why Chemical Reactions Happen (Keeler & Wothers)
Chemguide <https://chemguide.co.uk>
Chemistry³ (Burrows, Holman et al)
Atkins' Molecules (Peter Atkins)
A Guidebook To Mechanism In Organic Chemistry (P Sykes)
Foundation In Organic Chemistry (Hornby and Peach)
Chemistry In The Market Place (Ben Selinger)
See www.strschool.co.uk/sixthform/prospectus for suggestions for further reading.

"I wanted to study Chemistry at Rich's due to its applications in the world today, how it evolves and is changing to meet our needs. Reactions can be planned and synthetic routes are exciting, starting with molecules which become more complex and are adapted. This constant need for something new fascinates me."

Ben Woodward



Computer Science



WHY STUDY COMPUTER SCIENCE?

Computer Science is a rapidly developing field that is involved in almost every facet of modern life. As a subject it combines aspects of disciplines such as Mathematics, Engineering, Psychology and Linguistics. In addition to forming a good foundation for further study, or a career in Computer Science itself, the course helps students to develop skills which are useful in many industries, analysing problems and designing solutions for them, as well as logical thinking and independent working.

TOPICS

- Fundamentals of programming
- Data structures
- Algorithms
- Theory of computation
- Data representation
- Computer systems
- Computer organisation and architecture
- Consequences of uses of computing
- Communications and networks
- Databases
- Big data
- Functional programming
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Programming task (NEA)

EXAMINATION

The examination board is AQA (7517 Computer Science).

Paper 1, worth 40% of total marks. A 2 hour 30 minute online examination that tests programming skills and knowledge. Students answer a series of short questions and adapt/extend programs provided by the examination board.

Paper 2, worth 40% of total marks. A 2 hour 30 minute written examination that tests knowledge and understanding across the subject. Students answer a series of short answer and extended answer questions.

Non Examined Assessment (NEA), worth 20% of total marks. Students complete a practical programming project which tests knowledge and skills through investigating and solving a practical problem.

CAREERS

Computer Science opens up a range of career opportunities, including:

- Systems analyst
- Software developer
- Network administrator
- Database designer
- Website developer
- Cyber security
- Industrial and research work in fields such as Artificial Intelligence and Robotics/Autonomous Devices

In 2018 and 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study Computer Science, Computer Games Design, Cyber and Computer Security, and Forensic Computing and Security at Bristol University, Gloucestershire University and UWE.

READING LIST

AQA Specification A Level Computer Science 7157 (www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/computer-science-and-it/as-and-a-level/computer-science-7516-7517)
Computational Fairy Tales (Jeremy Kubica)
Computer Science For Fun (www.cs4fn.org)
Bebras Challenge (<https://challenge.bebbras.uk>)

Plus any reading material related to Python, SQL, C# and Essential Programming skills.

Economics

WHY STUDY ECONOMICS?

Economics relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families to the structures created by governments and firms. The economic way of thinking can help us make better choices. Students following an Economics course will develop an enquiring, critical and thoughtful 'economist's mind'. They will develop an understanding of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect every day life. This course allows students to explore a range of economic issues and draw on data from local, national and international sources. In studying Economics, students will gain an understanding of issues such as: Will Brexit damage the UK economy? Can car usage be reduced through toll roads? Can the Government control big business power? Can the Government continue to scale back public spending? Can the Bank of England monitor and control the banking sector? Students develop their ability to analyse, apply and reason in different situations using appropriate techniques, language and vocabulary.

TOPICS

Central to Economics are the forces of demand and supply that lead to the price mechanism allocating scarce resources in markets – this is the focus of microeconomics. Real world case studies are drawn on to illustrate economic theory in practice. However, there are cases of markets failing and we study their causes and possible policy remedies. Policy remedies are evaluated for their effectiveness. Macroeconomics involves the study of the key measures of economic performance and the main objectives and instruments of economic policy. Students are introduced to the use of aggregate demand and aggregate supply curves to understand why demand and/or supply side policies may be seen as appropriate ways of managing an economy.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Edexcel. This course is 100% examination with three examinations at the end of the second year. The examinations cover: microeconomics,

macroeconomics and the final paper integrates both micro and macro. The examinations consist of:

- Multiple choice questions
- Data response questions that range from 2 marks up to 15 marks
- High-marked essay questions (with some choice)

CAREERS

You may wish to pursue a degree course in Economics or a specific area of the subject that you have enjoyed, such as Development Economics. Alternatively, you may wish to study a related subject such as Business Management, Marketing, Accounting, Law, Politics and Land Management.

Instead of higher education you may decide to join the workforce and many employers will welcome the fact that you have knowledge of Economics. Suitable careers may be found in banking, law, retail, management, accountancy and economic analysis.

Numerous former students have continued their studies in Economics at university. Recent students have read Economics at Oxford, Cambridge, York, Cardiff, Birmingham, Exeter and Bath. Students have also taken related courses, such as Land Economy at Cambridge, Philosophy, Politics and Economics at York and Accounting and Finance at Warwick.

READING LIST

Capitalism Without Capital: The Rise Of The Intangible Economy (Haskel and Westlake)
Choice Factory (Richard Shotton)
Doughnut Economics (Kate Raworth)
Poor Economics: Rethinking Ways To Fight Global Poverty (Banerjee and Duflo)
Positive Linking: Networks And Nudges (Paul Ormerod)
See www.strschool.co.uk/sixthform/prospectus for suggestions for further reading.

"I have found that Computer Science at A Level is an interesting and rewarding subject which engages you like no other. The entire experience is both educational and fun, and the journey to the final task was the most rewarding I had in School. I would recommend the Sixth Form at Rich's to anyone interested in studying Computer Science at a higher level."

Tom Falkiner



"Taking Economics at A Level has increased my understanding of the subject and I have found the lessons to be both engaging and inspiring, and the staff have been very supportive and approachable. I have found there are many opportunities to get involved in related extracurricular activities such as Young Enterprise."

Georgia Walton



English Literature



WHY STUDY ENGLISH LITERATURE?

You will study a wide range of texts chosen from writers as diverse as Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams, Geoffrey Chaucer and Thomas Hardy, and take part in stimulating lessons based around discussion and debate. The course offers ample opportunity to study contemporary literature and to make your own independent choices for coursework. We want to attract students who love reading and who recognise the importance of literature as an integral and exciting part of our culture. English Literature is a well respected subject amongst Russell Group universities, and the skills of debate, analysis and written communication you will acquire will be invaluable across a wide range of subjects at A Level, at undergraduate level and in the wider world of work.

TOPICS

English Literature A Level offers you plenty of variety; you will study a range of texts and topics across all three genres of prose, drama and poetry. Texts range from plays by Shakespeare to contemporary texts by writers such as Khaled Hosseini. The coursework element allows room for individual choice of texts and topics. The study of prose texts is genre-based, with Women and Society currently set for study.

EXAMINATION

We study the Edexcel Specification for A Level English Literature:

Component 1. You will study a play by Shakespeare (currently *Twelfth Night*) and one other drama text, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Assessment is by a 2 hour exam, where you will answer one question on each text. This is an open-book exam and it is worth 30% of the A Level marks.

Component 2. You will study two novels on a chosen theme, currently Women and Society, one of which must have been published before 1900. Assessment is by a 1 hour exam, where you will answer one comparative question. It is an open-book exam and is worth 20% of the

A Level marks. Texts currently being studied for this unit are Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

Component 3. You will answer one question comparing contemporary poetry you have studied with an unseen poem and then one question on your set poet or poems, currently Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, or Romantic Poetry. This is a 2 hour exam and is open book. It is worth 30% of the A Level marks.

Component 4. Coursework. You will write one comparative essay on two texts. Here you will be able to choose the texts you wish to study and write about, although they must be linked by theme or period. The word count is 2500-3000 words. This component is worth 20% of your A Level marks.

CAREERS

Students of English Literature often go on to top-ranking universities to study English and other related subjects. English Literature A Level is listed as a Facilitating Subject for a wide range of degree courses, including Law, at Russell Group universities. In 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study English at the universities of Swansea, Cardiff, Cambridge, Birmingham and London. After university, English degrees are a sound basis for a wide range of careers, for example in public relations, journalism, publishing, the media, law, marketing and management consultancy.

READING LIST

As You Like It (William Shakespeare)
The Kite Runner (Khaled Hosseini)
Cat On A Hot Tin Roof (Tennessee Williams)
Far From The Madding Crowd (Thomas Hardy)
Nights At The Circus (Angela Carter)
Waterland (Graham Swift)
The Remains Of The Day (Kazuo Ishiguro)
The Child In Time (Ian McEwan)
Jane Eyre (Charlotte Bronte)

"I chose to study English Literature at Rich's as I have always had a passion for literature, and it did not disappoint. English Literature students study a variety of texts, ranging from Chaucer's 14th century *Wife of Bath* to modern-day poetry, which enables students to gain invaluable skills in both analytical and imaginative thinking."

Isabel Jones



French



WHY STUDY FRENCH?

The official language of France, Switzerland and Belgium, French is the most widely spoken language in Europe. Its influence extends further afield, being one of the official languages of Canada and spoken in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Polynesia.

In an increasingly competitive world, learning French can provide international opportunities that are otherwise not available. Achieving competence in French can enhance your career prospects in a wide range of job sectors, including business, advertising, travel and tourism, government service and teaching.

With stunning and varied scenery, fine food and a rich culture, France and the French language have much to offer. In addition to timetabled periods of French, students have a weekly conversation class with the French Language Assistant, which helps them to increase fluency and confidence in speaking.

Students are expected to be actively involved in the lessons, contributing to group discussions, making short presentations, listening and responding to authentic French.

We expect students to display an enthusiasm for French language and culture, as well as the determination to develop their language skills to the full. Taking the opportunity to visit France is one way of doing so and students will be offered the chance to undertake a week's work experience in the country.

EXAMINATION

Students are prepared for the AQA A Level qualification. Students take the following examinations at the end of Year 13:

Paper 1. Listening, Reading and Writing (50% of A Level).
Paper 2. Writing, Literature and Cinema (20% of A Level).
Paper 3. Speaking (30% of A Level).

"Since starting at Rich's I've loved every minute of French. For me, what makes the course enjoyable is the focus on relevant topics such as technology and modern families, instead of just repeating grammar all the time. We also have one session a week with a French Language Assistant, which is a great way of developing our vocabulary and confidence when speaking."

Alex Uzupris



Geography



WHY STUDY GEOGRAPHY?

Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world's current problems boil down to geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them. Global warming, sustainable energy production, natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis, the spread of disease, the reasons for migration and the future of our oceans are just some of the great challenges facing the next generation of geographers. Geography acts as a bridge between the Sciences and the Humanities and therefore can be combined appropriately with a wide range of other studies, from the Sciences and Mathematics to Languages, History and Economics.

TOPICS

The A Level Specification we have selected for Sir Thomas Rich's students provides a good balance of Physical and Human Geography. In Physical Geography we study themes such as glaciation, tectonics and hydrology. This study will include several days' fieldwork, some of which will take place in Snowdonia, and students will be encouraged to come up with ideas for their own independent investigations. Human Geography includes traditional topics such as development and settlement but with a contemporary theme, for example place rebranding and global governance.

EXAMINATION

We study the EDUQAS (WJEC) Geography course.

Component 1. Written examination (30%), Changing Landscapes – Glaciation, with a focus on Snowdonia. Includes residential fieldwork. Changing Places – Rural and Urban Settlement Issues, including rebranding, globalisation and economic change.

Component 2. Written examination (30%), Global Systems – Water and Carbon Cycles. This includes traditional study of hydrology.

Global Governance: Change and Challenges. This includes global migration issues and the challenge of governing the world's oceans.

Component 3. Written examination (20%), Tectonic Hazards – Earthquakes and Volcanoes. Contemporary Themes – Energy challenges and dilemmas. Development in an African context.

Component 4. Independent Investigation (20%). This project will be supported through local and residential fieldwork investigations.

CAREERS

Choosing Geography at A Level can open the doors to a university degree, either specifically in Geography or by combining Geography with other A Levels to gain a place on a degree programme in another subject. An A Level in Geography is recognised for its academic 'robustness' and, most importantly, it also helps young people into the world of work. We know this is true because so many employers prize the knowledge and skills that studying Geography can provide, be it knowing how the world works, planning research and report writing, working in a team, using new technologies or communication skills. You will find geographers working in a wide range of jobs, from planning to working in conservation and the environment, travel and tourism, or in international charities or retail. Many others find that it is of use in the worlds of business, finance and accountancy. Year 13 leavers in 2018 and 2019 went on to study Geography or related degrees at the universities of Cambridge, Cardiff, Exeter, Birmingham, Lancaster and London.

READING LIST

Prisoners of Geography (Tim Marshall)
Bottom Billion (Paul Collier)
Worth Dying For (Tim Marshall)
Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About The World – And Why Things Are Better Than You Think (Hans Rosling)



WHY STUDY GEOLOGY?

Geology has long been successfully established at Sir Thomas Rich's. It is fundamentally to do with understanding the workings of, and unravelling the history of, the Earth by looking at the tiny shreds of evidence left behind in Geology's main resource – the rocks. This is real detective work, and you will develop skills to be able to do this. Geology appeals to both scientists and non-scientists; it is classed as a science subject for entry to higher education, but it is an applied science, using concepts and skills from Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, and Archaeology. Many students take Geology with science subjects, which can be very helpful, but it is not essential.

TOPICS

The Specification is structured in three sections:

Fundamentals of geology:

- Elements, minerals and rocks
- Surface and internal processes of the rock cycle
- Time and change – how rocks and geological events are dated. Climate and environmental change, Earth structure and global tectonics

Interpreting the geological record:

- Rock forming processes
- Rock deformation – folds, faults and unconformities
- Past life and past climates
- Earth materials and natural resources

There are five themes which integrate and develop the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in the core aspects. These are:

- Geohazards: volcanoes, earthquakes and landslides, and human-induced hazards
 - Geological map applications
 - Quaternary geology*
 - Geological evolution of Britain*
 - Geology of the lithosphere*
- Study one of the options indicated with an asterisk*.

Geology

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Eduqas (WJEC). Assessment of this linear A Level course is by three components, taken at the end of Year 13:

Component 1. (35% of total marks): Geological Investigations (2 hours 15 minutes).

Component 2. (30% of total marks): Geological Principles and Processes (1 hour 45 minutes).

Component 3. (35% of total marks): Geological Applications (2 hours).

Fieldwork is an essential and very enjoyable part of the study of Geology, which is a field science based on the investigation of rocks, minerals and fossils in situ. The A Level Specification requires that all students must have been provided with the opportunity to undertake fieldwork on at least four occasions, in order to complete the mandatory fieldwork skills and techniques. During the course there will be the opportunity to attend local day trips, weekend trips to areas such as Devon, Cornwall, Wales, and longer 7-10 day trips to Scotland, Ireland, France and Spain.

CAREERS

A number of our A Level Geology students have gone on to study Geology, Geophysics, Applied Geology and related subjects at university. Many of them are now working in the field, for example for the British Antarctic Survey, prospecting for iron ore in Australia, in oil exploration (IHS Energy), in geotechnical engineering (Gloucester Geotechnical), and Geological Conservation (Hereford Geology Trust). Two of our 2019 leavers went on to study Geology at Exeter University.

READING LIST

Geology for A Level and AS (Stephen Davies et al)
Geology, A Complete Introduction (David Rothery)
Geology: A Very Short Introduction (Jan Zalasiewicz)
Fossils at a Glance (Claire Milsom, Sue Rigby)

"Studying Geography has allowed me to broaden my knowledge on a diverse range of topics that are all relevant in the world today. The teachers are very approachable and the Geography Department will always help you and provide guidance in any way they can."
Eve Davies 13B



"The opportunity to study Geology at A Level was a key reason for choosing Sir Thomas Rich's Sixth Form. The practical lessons and invaluable field trips that take place here really brought the subject to life and have inspired me to continue studying Geology at university."
Olivia Frankland



German



WHY STUDY GERMAN?

German in the Sixth Form is an exciting course of study in a vibrant and active Department. German is the second most popular language to learn in the EU and ranks among the top 10 most frequently spoken languages in the world. Germany has the largest economy in the European Union and is home to numerous international corporations.

Learning German enhances employment opportunities in government, business, law, medicine and health care, teaching, technology, the military, communications, the social services and marketing. Learning about German culture will broaden your horizons in areas such as science, literature, philosophy, theology, history, music, film and art.

In addition to timetabled periods of German, students have a weekly conversation class with the German Language Assistant, which helps them to increase fluency and confidence in speaking. Students are expected to be actively involved in the lessons, contributing to group discussions, making short presentations, listening and responding to authentic German.

We expect students to display an enthusiasm for German language and culture, as well as the determination to develop their language skills to the full. Taking the opportunity to visit Germany is one such way of doing so. Year 12 students are invited to take part in the exchange visit to our partner school in Göttingen.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Eduqas. Students take the following examinations at the end of Year 13:

- Paper 1. Listening, Reading and Writing (40% of A Level).
- Paper 2. Writing (30% of A Level).
- Paper 3. Speaking (30% of A Level).

CAREERS

The German economy is Europe's largest and healthiest, with ever more companies opening branches in different European countries, meaning that learning German can be an intelligent professional strategy and provide a boost to your career.

Sixty-eight percent of Japanese students study German, recognising the business advantage it will bring them. German is also an important asset in many other disciplines and can therefore be combined with any other subject at A Level, such as Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Linguistics, Religious Studies and Art.

It is an important language in the fields of publishing and research and a good reading knowledge of German will help you to access important research published in German books and professional journals. Leavers in 2019 went on to study German and Japanese at Cardiff University, and English Literature and German at Cardiff University.

READING LIST

Gut! Exercises based on Year 12 topics, free 4pm-9am, (<http://gut.languageskills.co.uk/advanced/year12.html>)
Goethe Institute, A Level materials of various levels of difficulty (www.goethe.de)
www.zeit.de
www.welt.de
www.fr-online.de
www.faz.net
www.focus.de

History



WHY STUDY HISTORY?

History deals with the recorded past – everything we know about the things people have done and how they lived their lives. It is a study of the reasons for social, economic, cultural and political change and of the effects of these changes. By studying History we develop our knowledge and understanding of our past. We may then assess where we are in the present and perhaps imagine future possibilities. History enriches our lives and allows us to develop our transferable skills. At A Level these skills include the ability to think critically, to evaluate contemporary and more recent sources, to build powerful arguments and communicate them effectively and to work collaboratively as part of a team or as an independent researcher.

TOPICS

At A Level students study three components. Two of these are examined, and the Non Examined Assessment component is an independent study component. This component is internally marked and externally moderated. Our topics are as follows:

Component 1. A breadth study entitled The Tudors: England 1485-1603. We focus on the role of individuals, monarchical power, government and relationships with foreign powers. We also study key social, economic and religious developments of the period.

Component 2. A depth study entitled The American Dream: Reality and Illusion, 1945-1980. We focus on the USA's rise to superpower status post World War II, and challenges to this status from 1963. Each presidency from Truman to Reagan is explored in terms of foreign and domestic policy.

Component 3. A Non Examined Assessment. This is a demanding undergraduate-style research essay. You will independently study the Changing Role and Status of Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. You then create your own essay question and design a suitable research pathway which allows you to investigate reasons for change over a 100 year period.

EXAMINATION

We follow the AQA Specification. Component 1. A written examination lasting 2 hours and 30 minutes. It comprises 40% of the A Level. Students answer a compulsory question on interpretations of the past and write two essays from a choice of three.

Component 2. A written examination lasting 2 hours and 30 minutes. It comprises 40% of the A Level. Students answer a compulsory question on primary sources and write two essays from a choice of three.

Component 3. A coursework essay of 3500 words which comprises 20% of the A Level.

CAREERS

A Level History provides you with contextual knowledge, an appreciation of the culture and attitudes of societies other than our own and important research skills. It also enables you to develop a wide range of other transferable skills, which both universities and employers look favourably upon. The study of History may not seem to offer a direct path to your chosen career but it will definitely assist you on the career ladder. The study of History at A Level is helpful if you are applying for subjects such as Law, Journalism and Economics. If you do choose to study History at university then careers in a huge number of fields will be open to you, including the legal profession, library, information and archivist careers, politics, publishing, journalism, media, business, public sector administration and the charity and voluntary sectors. In 2018 and 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study History or a related degree at the universities of Bath, Birmingham, Liverpool, Warwick, Gloucestershire and Nottingham.

READING LIST

Grand Expectations, The United States 1945-74 (James T Patterson)
Homeward Bound (Revised Edition): American Families In The Cold War Era (Elaine Tyler May)
England Under The Tudors (G R Elton)
Tudor: The Family Story (Leanda De Lisle)

"Through my studies I have developed a love for the German language and a much deeper understanding of German culture as a whole. There are lots of opportunities to speak German and to visit the country, and the School's MFL Department is really well equipped, with access to Language Assistants who can really help develop your language skills. I would recommend German at Rich's to anyone thinking of studying the subject at A Level."

Bilal Ahmed



"I love that A Level History at Sir Thomas Rich's has enabled me to delve deeper into different historical periods and think more critically about them. It is a great subject for developing skills such as research and evaluating sources, which will be invaluable at university, and the topics we cover are really varied and interesting."

Sophie Howes



Mathematics



WHY STUDY MATHEMATICS?

A Level Mathematics builds on and extends the concepts learned at GCSE. It develops essential skills such as application of logic, reasoning and problem solving. It is for these reasons that Mathematics is so highly regarded in higher education and the workplace.

Further Mathematics is a more challenging qualification and should only be considered by students who relish the challenge of Mathematics and are effective independent learners. It enhances applicants' profiles, especially for those students wishing to take a mathematical degree course. It can make the first year of a Mathematics degree more accessible due to the topics covered.

TOPICS

Pure Mathematics extends your knowledge and understanding of algebra and trigonometry whilst introducing some new topics such as calculus, exponentials and logarithms.

Mechanics describes mathematically the motion of objects and how they respond to different forces. Statistics will show you how to analyse data and draw conclusions from doing so. New analytical techniques and work on probability will be covered.

Further Pure Mathematics extends and deepens your knowledge and understanding. It includes topics such as complex numbers, hyperbolic functions, polar coordinates and matrices.

Decision covers algorithms, solving problems through linear programming and working with networks to find solutions to practical problems.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Edexcel; Mathematics 9MA0 and Further Mathematics 9FM0. Both courses are 100% examination based.

Mathematics:

A Level – Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics.

Further Mathematics:

A Level – Further Pure Mathematics alongside Further Mechanics and Decision Mathematics. This is named 'Route H' in the Specification. Further Mathematics students must also be taking the single Mathematics A Level.

For Mathematics and Further Mathematics, the A Level qualification is the full two-year course and extends each of the topics taught in Year 12 to reflect this.

CAREERS

Mathematics students leave for university well equipped to study many courses, including Engineering, Computing, Economics, Physical Sciences, Medicine, Statistics and Accountancy.

Such students are warmly welcomed into a vast range of career fields including those of finance, engineering, aerospace, automotive technology, biomechanics, sports science, cybernetics and software programming. For more ideas, visit www.mathscareers.org.uk.

In 2018 and 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study Mathematics at the universities of Oxford, Swansea, Southampton, Nottingham, Cardiff, York, Warwick, Liverpool, Leeds and Plymouth.

READING LIST

Fermat's Last Theorem (Simon Singh)
The Mathematical Experience (P J Davis & R Hersh)
The Penguin Dictionary Of Curious And Interesting Numbers (David Wells)
Mathematics: A Very Short Introduction (Timothy Gowers)
www.maths.cam.ac.uk/documents/reading-list.pdf



Music

WHY STUDY MUSIC?

Music is a unique form of communication and forms part of an individual's identity. It brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. Research indicates that the study of Music helps to develop critical thinking and self-discipline.

In studying Music, students will develop their performing skills by playing a range of styles of music as a soloist and/or as an ensemble member. They will also be given a wide range of opportunities to develop their composition skills. Students will further develop their musical understanding by studying set works to identify important musical features and social and historical contexts. They also learn to identify harmonic and tonal features and how to harmonise melodies.

TOPICS

Performance – students produce an eight-minute assessed performance of a balanced programme of music.

Composing – students produce two compositions: one free or free choice brief and one brief assessing technique.

Appraising – is the examined unit, through the study of works from Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Music for Film, Popular Music and Jazz, Fusions and New Directions. At A Level, each area of study contains three set works.

EXAMINATION

Edexcel A Level Music:

Unit 1. Performing Music (30% of total).
Unit 2. Composition and Technical Study (30% of total).
Unit 3. Appraising (40% of total).

CAREERS

The A Level Music course is excellent preparation for higher education courses in music, but is equally valuable for non-specialists as a second, third or fourth area of study.

Music is such a broad field – there is the music industry and music itself. There are many career choices. It is not just about being a performer, there are careers in production and studio engineering, composing and arranging, legal business and management, record labels, music media (TV, radio and print), education and music therapy. As such, studying A Level Music offers considerable scope for future study and access to a wide range of potential careers.

In 2018 and 2019 leavers went on to study Popular Music, Songwriting and Audio, Music Technology and Popular Music and Worship at Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds College of Music, UWE and the Nexus Institute of Creative Art. Plus former A Level Music students also took up posts as Musician In Residence at Pate's Grammar School and a Gloucester Cathedral Choral Scholarship.

READING LIST

Understanding Popular Music (David Ventura, Rhinegold)
Film Music In Focus (David Ventura, Rhinegold)
Romanticism In Focus (Lucien Jenkins, Rhinegold)
Modernism In Focus (Lucien Jenkins, Rhinegold)

"A Level Mathematics is a step up from GCSE; the course has been interesting and challenging. The Department is supportive and approachable, helping students with their independent study. The analytical thinking and problem solving skills I have developed have taught me the process of breaking large problems down into smaller parts. I have particularly enjoyed the Mechanics elements of the course and have decided to pursue this area further by study engineering at university."

Emma Quekett



"Studying A Level music at Sir Thomas Rich's has given me lots of opportunities to perform and develop the skills I need to pursue songwriting in higher education. Aside from that I have genuinely enjoyed being a part of the Music Department at Rich's and contributing to School performances and events."

Ben Burwell



Physical Education



WHY STUDY PHYSICAL EDUCATION?

In order to maximise attainment and enjoyment from the subject it is advised that you have a keen interest in sports as well as physiology and psychology. Studying Physical Education encourages teamwork, communication and leadership – all of which are desirable qualities to a future employer. Although we encourage enjoyment from the subject, the overall goal is for you to leave with an excellent qualification in Physical Education. Then, if you wish, this can lead to a career linked to sport.

Due to an increase in funding in sports, through improving results and corporate company involvement, along with the desire to reduce national obesity, employment opportunities in this area are sure to increase with time. If the sports science route is not for you then you may wish to explore sports coaching, sports development or analysis.

However, if not, A Level Physical Education can be an excellent ancillary subject to aid applications to a number of degrees, such as Physiotherapy, Medicine or Optometry.

Whatever avenue you choose, you will be given the opportunity to develop your skills here. Our staff have over 30 years of combined teaching experience and our excellent facilities of six rugby pitches; a sports centre; seven tennis courts; three netball courts (one covered); gymnasium; fitness suite; and swimming pool allow us to cover all these activities on the School site.

TOPICS

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Skill acquisition
- Sport and society
- Exercise physiology
- Biomechanical movement
- Sport psychology
- Sport and society and the role of technology in physical activity and sport

EXAMINATION

We study the AQA Specification at A Level.

Paper 1. Factors Affecting Participation in Physical Activity and Sport. Written exam: 2 hours, 105 marks, 35% of A Level.

Paper 2. Factors Affecting Optimal Performance in Physical Activity and Sport. Written exam: 2 hours, 105 marks, 35% of A Level.

Non Examined Assessment. Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport.

Students assessed as a performer or coach in the full-sided version of one activity. Plus written/verbal analysis of performance.

Internal assessment, external moderation, 90 marks, 30% of A Level.

CAREERS

There are many careers linked to studying Physical Education. Recent Physical Education students have gone on to study Biochemistry at Oxford, Physiotherapy at UWE, Sport and Exercise Science at Exeter University, Strength and Conditioning at Hartpury, Sports Science at Birmingham, Physiotherapy at Nottingham University and Sports Rehabilitation at Leeds University.

READING LIST

Physiology Of Sport And Exercise (W Larry Kenney, Jack Wilmore, David Costill)
Foundations Of Sport And Exercise Psychology (Robert Weinberg, Daniel Gould)
The Sports Gene: Inside The Science Of Extraordinary Athletic Performance (David Epstein)
Sport, Culture And Society (Grant Jarvie)

Physics

WHY STUDY PHYSICS?

Physicists concern themselves with trying to understand how the physical world works. They do this by following conceptual and mathematical models and refining them in the light of experimental testing. Physics has come a long way in the last century and new ideas are constantly emerging. Students will experience an awareness of the context and historical setting in which physicists develop their ideas.

You will be encouraged to develop an analytical mind and an ability to communicate ideas with others. You will need to be able to think logically and have an open mind; some topics are bewildering!

Physics is a popular subject at Sir Thomas Rich's with a history of producing excellent examination results. At present we have 100 students studying Physics in the Sixth Form. In order to succeed at A Level you will need to have both literacy and numeracy skills to a fairly high level. The Department recommends taking Mathematics A Level alongside Physics.

TOPICS

Over the two-year course the following units are studied:

- 1 Measurements and their errors
- 2 Particles and radiation
- 3 Waves
- 4 Mechanics and materials
- 5 Electricity
- 6.1 Further mechanics
- 6.2 Thermal physics
- 7 Fields and their consequences
- 8 Nuclear physics
- 12 Turning points in physics

EXAMINATION

We study the AQA Physics Specification A. This Physics course is a traditional A Level course and we believe is the best preparation for future studies for our pupils.

End of Course Assessment is in Year 13:

Paper 1, 2 hours. Units 1 to 5 and 6.1.
Paper 2, 2 hours. Units 6.2, 7 and 8.
Paper 3, 2 hours. Practical skills, data analysis and unit 12.

During the two-year course, there are a wide range of practical tasks that must be carried out. You may be asked questions on one of more of these practicals in Paper 3.

CAREERS

Employers always value Physics qualifications. Success at A Level is an indication that you can not only solve problems, but are also able to explain your reasoning in a logical manner. A Level Physics caters for students expecting to make a career in the physical sciences or engineering, for which Physics is essential preparation. It is also a key subject for students whose career aims are in medicine, chemical sciences or geography, for whom Physics is either compulsory or a highly recommended subject at A Level.

In recent years Sir Thomas Rich's A Level Physics students have gone on to careers as physics researchers, solicitors, actuaries, accountants, teachers, engineers or are studying for a PhD.

Each year four or five pupils are inspired to pursue Physics at university. Most recently at Cambridge University, Exeter University, Birmingham University, York University, Bristol University, Southampton University and Cardiff University.

READING LIST

Six Easy Pieces: Fundamentals Of Physics Explained (Richard Feynman)
The First Three Minutes (Stephen Weinberg)
Just Six Numbers (Martin Rees)

"The course offers a huge breadth of study meaning Physical Education links to a variety of other A Level subjects, giving students every opportunity to study lots of subjects at university. The skills required for A Level PE also ensure students are ready for the rigours of a degree. Although the content is challenging, it is thoroughly enjoyable. The teachers are supportive and knowledgeable, and provide one-to-one assistance if required. I thoroughly recommend studying PE at Rich's."
Jess Bedwell



"I would recommend Physics at Sir Thomas Rich's to anyone considering taking the subject at A Level. I find that the Physics teachers here design and deliver interactive lessons and are highly supportive. They always drive my learning with excellent content, which is very enjoyable."
Tom Breare



Politics



WHY STUDY POLITICS?

Political decisions shape our lives now and in the future. For that reason alone students should be aware of how their system of government operates and be able, as informed citizens, to participate in the democratic process and make a difference when they have left school. A Level Politics is ideal preparation for those very important privileges that we as citizens of the UK enjoy. The study of Politics is also an exciting intellectual challenge, with an emphasis on debate, discussion and argument. Politics exists because people disagree, studying Politics looks at how, why and when people disagree. The ability to analyse information in order to make valid judgments is a fundamentally important skill in the study of Politics.

TOPICS

The Department follows the Edexcel Specification 9PL0. The topics are as follows:

Component 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas.
This section focuses on democracy, participation and the political parties. It allows students to understand the individual in the political process and their relationship with the state and their fellow citizens. Students will examine how electoral systems in the UK operate, how individuals and groups are influenced in their voting behaviour and political actions, the role of the media in contemporary politics, and the three traditional political ideas of conservatism, liberalism and socialism.

Component 2: UK Government and Political Ideas.
The component introduces students to the set of rules governing politics in the UK, the UK Constitution, which is different in nature from most of the rest of the world. It further introduces students to the specific roles and powers of the major branches of the Government, the legislative, executive, and judiciary. It explores the relationships and balance of power between them and considers where sovereignty now lies within this system.

Component 3: Government and Politics of the USA.
This component explores six major content areas:

The Constitution and Federalism, the roles of Congress, the Presidency and the Supreme Court. You will also study democracy and participation, and civil rights in the USA.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Edexcel (Specification 9PL0). You will sit three A Level papers in total, writing a combination of medium length and long essay questions. Each exam lasts 2 hours and all papers are of equal weighting.

CAREERS

The A Level Government and Politics course is an ideal complement to History, Philosophy and Ethics, Sociology, Economics or Psychology. It gives an excellent foundation to those who wish to pursue Politics, Law, Economics, Philosophy or History to degree level and Government and Politics students go on to become solicitors, journalists, writers, managers, accountants, teachers, publishers, civil servants, leaders and politicians.

Employers respect and value the skills developed in studying Government and Politics and universities see it as a demanding course that both prepares students for further study and for life outside education.

In 2018 and 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study Politics and related degrees at the universities of Exeter, Southampton, Liverpool, Loughborough, Birmingham, Lancaster, Cardiff, Strathclyde, Bristol, Nottingham, Warwick, Plymouth and Durham.

READING LIST

The Social Contract (John-Jacques Rousseau)
After Blair: David Cameron And The Conservative Tradition, (Kieron O'Hara)
Tony Blair: Prime Minister (John Rentoul)
WTF? (Robert Peston)

Picture: the annual Washington DC and New York Politics field trip

"Politics is a compelling subject which has allowed me to widen my understanding of the changing political situations, both in the UK and the USA. The lessons are engaging and often lead to stimulating and interesting class debates. The trip to Westminster gives students the opportunity to see politics in action, which underpins what is taught within the course. Studying the subject has enabled me to develop my critical thinking, communication and analytical skills."

Neena Patel



Product Design

WHY STUDY PRODUCT DESIGN?

The study of Product Design is intended to provide students with the opportunity to develop their own creativity, capability and entrepreneurial skills; apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to a range of technological activities; and to develop analytical, critical and collaborative skills.

TOPICS

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers. They will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning in to practice by producing products of their choice.

Students will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.

It builds on previous knowledge and skills developed in GCSE courses such as Resistant Materials, Graphics, Product Design or Engineering, taking them to the next level, and introducing more complex CAD/CAM process, workshop techniques and design methods.

Unit 1. Non Examined Assessment. A coursework project where students design and make a working prototype of a product for a chosen client. The product is of the students' choice and will use a wide range of skills developed over the course. The students are expected to work as 'real' designers would work to solve a design problem.

Unit 2. Exam Assessment. This takes the form of two examinations, focusing on material applications, manufacturing knowledge, design theory and moral/social issues.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is AQA.

Unit 1. Portfolio of skills, 50%.

Unit 2. Two x 2 hour examinations, 50%.

CAREERS

This is an ideal course for those students intending to pursue a career in areas such as engineering, graphic design, product design, production engineering, interior design, materials science, architecture, micro electronics and control systems.

Many A Level Product Design students go on to study university courses in Product Design, many different areas of Engineering, Interior Design, Graphic Design, and apprenticeships in several areas of Engineering.

This A Level provides the foundations for these courses or careers, whether that be in design skills or materials and manufacturing knowledge.

In 2018 and 2019 Year 13 leavers went on to study Industrial Design at Liverpool University, Interior Architecture and Design at Nottingham University and Automotive and Transport Design at Coventry University.

READING LIST

AQA Design And Technology Product Design (Granger, Potts, Morrison, Sumpner)
Sketching: Drawing Techniques For Product Designers (Eissen, Steur)
The Design Of Everyday Things (D A Norman)

"The technical and creative skills I have developed studying the Product Design A Level course at Sir Thomas Rich's have allowed me to reflect on products in everyday life, which I have found has really helped me with my chosen career path of engineering."

Anna Mielcarek



Psychology



WHY STUDY PSYCHOLOGY?

Psychology is the science of mind and behaviour. Psychologists study many aspects of behaviour, such as aggression and the development of social relationships, in order to understand what causes them. Different psychologists subscribe to different perspectives and explain behaviour in terms of these perspectives. For example, biological psychologists would argue that aggression is caused by an excess of testosterone or damage to critical areas in the brain, whereas social learning theorists would argue aggression is behaviour imitated from role models. By studying Psychology you will learn about how behaviour is accounted for by different theories, based on an understanding of psychological research (some of which you will conduct yourself). It will enable you to have a greater understanding of your own behaviour and that of others around you, helping you to appreciate diversity in society.

TOPICS

The A Level consists of three main components: Research Methods, Psychological Themes Through Core Studies and Applied Psychology.

Research Methods provides students with the opportunity to understand what's involved in a range of different research methods and techniques, and it creates awareness of associated strengths and weaknesses. Psychological Themes Through Core Studies covers 10 pairs of studies (classic and contemporary) in a range of areas, including social, cognitive and biological psychology. Students will also learn about specific perspectives, such as behaviourism and the psychodynamic perspective. Applied Psychology covers a compulsory section on issues in mental health and two further applied areas in criminal and environmental psychology.

EXAMINATION

We follow the OCR Specification for A Level Psychology, which has an examination for each component at the end of the A Level.

Component 1. Research Methods (2 hours). This asks questions based on your knowledge of methodology and includes multiple-choice questions, data analysis and interpretation and research design from novel sources (30%).

Component 2. Psychological Themes Through Core Studies (2 hours). This requires you to show your knowledge of the core studies, perspectives, debates and practical applications relating to a novel source (35%).

Component 3. Applied Psychology (2 hours). This requires you to answer questions on issues in mental health and select questions on criminal and environmental psychology to answer. Answers are mostly essay-based (35%).

CAREERS

Typical offers for Psychology degrees are in the range of AAB at A Level and can lead to a range of careers, such as clinical psychology, organisational psychology, educational psychology, counselling psychology, sport psychology, forensic psychology, academic researcher and teaching. Year 13 leavers in 2019 went on to study related degrees at the universities of Swansea, Aston, Plymouth, London, York, Liverpool, Warwick, Birmingham and Nottingham.

READING LIST

The Lucifer Effect (Philip Zimbardo)
The Social Animal (Elliot Aronson, Joshua Aronson)
Opening Skinner's Box (Lauren Slater)
Rationality (Stuart Sutherland)
Welcome To Your Brain (Sandra Aamodt, Sam Wang)
Breakdown (Stuart Sutherland)
The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat (Oliver Sacks)
I'm Eve (Chris Sizemore)
Predictably Irrational (Dan Ariely)
Psychology And Crime (Putwain and Sammons)
See www.strschool.co.uk/sixthform/prospectus for suggestions for further reading.

Religious Studies

WHY STUDY RELIGIOUS STUDIES?

Religious Studies allows students to explore questions posed by philosophers throughout history, from Plato to Richard Dawkins, concerning the purpose and meaning of existence and the reasons why we have an ethical system. Studying this subject will enable students to develop a range of skills including those of analysis and evaluation. It will encourage objective reasoning through examination of a variety of perspectives in order to reach a justified and informed conclusion.

The subject is taught through a number of interactive methods but a strong emphasis is placed on the ability to debate issues and support arguments. One of the highlights of the year is the annual Sixth Form Conference, where students are able to hear key scholars debating topical issues and to meet Senior Examiners in the subject.

TOPICS

- Greek philosophy as the basis for all subsequent thought
- Arguments for the existence of God
- Challenges posed by the problem of evil and scientific progress
- Religious beliefs, values and teachings
- Ethical approaches to medicine and business, including those of Utilitarianism, Natural Law and Kant
- The meaning of religious language
- The role of religion in society

EXAMINATION

Students are prepared for OCR Religious Studies, the components of which are:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- A Study of Developments in Christian Thought

Each component is assessed by a 2 hour exam comprising written essay questions.

CAREERS

The qualification is viewed as an excellent foundation for a wide variety of academic courses, as well as for the working world. Our students have gone on to study in a diverse range of disciplines including Medicine, Politics and Law, as well as specialising in subjects more directly related to the subject such as Philosophy or Theology.

The skills developed in examining issues from a variety of perspectives are ideally suited to a range of professions which require independent thought and the presentation of a justified argument. Previous students have gone on to study the subject at both Oxford and Cambridge, as well as at other prestigious institutions.

In 2018 a student achieved an A* in the subject and went on to read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Exeter, and others went on to read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Liverpool, and Philosophy, Religion and Ethics at Birmingham.

In 2019 students all achieved A level grades between A* and B. One student gained an A* in the subject and he has gone on to study Politics, Philosophy and Law at Warwick. Others have gone on to use the skills acquired in the subject to study for degrees in Law, Sociology and Psychology.

READING LIST

The Pig That Wants To Be Eaten (Julian Baggini)
Think: A Compelling Intro To Philosophy (Simon Blackburn)
Ethics: A Very Short Introduction (Simon Blackburn)
The Thinker's Guide To God (Peter Vardy, Julie Arliss)
The Thinker's Guide To Evil (Peter Vardy, Julie Arliss)
Christian Theology (Alister McGrath)
The Puzzle Of God (Peter Vardy)
The Puzzle Of Ethics (Peter Vardy)

"I enjoy studying Psychology at A Level and am particularly passionate about the developmental area. This unit has afforded me the opportunity to apply concepts such as positive reinforcement to practical settings, and to explore the different external influences that can contribute to child and adolescent behaviour. I hope to go on to study Psychology in Education at university."

Maddy Reedman



"Religious Studies is the most eye-opening and adaptive A Level subject I study and it has developed my understanding of society and culture as a whole. I was drawn to RS because of my enjoyment of discussion, however, since studying it my skills in logical reasoning and analysis have developed greatly; something I will be able to apply in my chosen degree of Law."

Sophie Ellis



Theatre Studies



WHY STUDY THEATRE STUDIES?

Drama and Theatre Studies has an important role to play in the personal development of our students. The skills and qualities developed by students in Theatre Studies, such as teamwork, creativity, leadership and risk-taking, are assets in all subjects and aspects of life. Theatre Studies stimulates the imagination and allows students to explore issues and experiences in a safe, supportive environment.

The nature of this course provides opportunities for pupils to develop key skills of communication, negotiation, compromise and self-assertion. Pupils develop confidence when speaking and their vocabulary is extended when they adopt roles and characters. Pupils also acquire a critical and subject-specific vocabulary through reflecting on and appraising their own work and the work of others.

This particular course is designed to promote a balance between practical theatre making and the theoretical understanding of drama and theatre. Learners are encouraged to make connections between dramatic theory and their own practice. In addition to their own theatre making, learners also develop understanding of the role of the director and participate in live theatre as an audience member.

TOPICS

Practitioner studies. A selection of work from: Brecht, Stanislavski, Frantic Assembly, Littlewood, Artaud, Grotowski. Text: One text written pre-1956 and one text written post-1956, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, by Mark Haddon. Theatre visits and devising.

EXAMINATION

The examination board is Eduqas.

Component 1. Theatre Workshop. Non Examined Assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated, 20% of A Level qualification.

Component 2. Text in Action. Non Examined Assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner, 40% of A Level qualification.

Component 3. Text in Performance. Learners explore two complete performance texts from different historical periods and one extract from a third contrasting text, 40% of A Level qualification.

CAREERS

Employers specifically look for the skills that are developed in Drama and Theatre Studies. They want people who can think for themselves, who can work in a team, who can listen to others, who can research material effectively, who know how to negotiate, and who know how to create an outcome. It does not matter what product you are producing, these skills are consistently required. In life you need invention and innovation – these skills come from people having a creative talent. A piece of research was conducted to see which subjects Russell Group universities prefer. In all of the universities investigated, Theatre Studies was high on the list for the success rates on a range of courses from Law to Medicine. Students need to be able to build confidence and speak with conviction in professional practice, and these transferable skills can be developed through Theatre Studies. Studying Theatre Studies at A Level also helps develop key employability skills such as negotiation, leadership, collaboration and creativity. Year 13 leavers in 2018 and 2019 went on to study English and Drama at the University of London, Musical Theatre and Dance at Essex University, Drama and English at Birmingham University, and Film and Television Production at Plymouth University.

READING LIST

Love And Information (Caryl Churchill)
As You Like It (William Shakespeare)
Waiting For Godot (Samuel Beckett)
Two (Jim Cartwright)



"I really love Theatre Studies at Sir Thomas Rich's as the teachers are fantastic. The A Level gives every student the chance to explore and become a new person in almost every lesson. I would recommend Theatre Studies at Rich's for building self-confidence, regardless of whether you go on to study the subject further at university level or not."
Xanthe Dobbs



2019 Leaver Destinations



- Aston University
- Bath University
- Birmingham City University
- Birmingham University
- Brighton University
- Bristol University
- Cambridge University
- Cardiff University
- DeMontfort University
- Durham University
- Exeter Football Club
- Exeter University
- GE Aviation/UWE Bristol
- Gloucestershire University
- Goldsmiths University of London
- Hazelwoods Accountants
- King's College London
- Lancaster University
- Leeds University
- Leicester University
- Liverpool University
- London School of Economics
- Loughborough University
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Manchester University
- Nexus Institute of Creative Art
- Nottingham Trent University
- Nottingham University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Oxford University
- Plymouth University
- Portsmouth University
- Queen Mary University of London
- Reading University
- Royal Navy
- Severn Trent Water
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Sheffield University
- Solent University Southampton
- Southampton University
- S. London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
- Stirling University
- St James's Place Wealth Management
- Strathclyde University
- Surrey University
- Swansea University
- University College London
- University of the West of England
- Warwick University
- Worcester University
- York University

2019 A Level Results

	A*	A	B	C	D
Art	0	3	10	3	0
Biology	4	13	20	13	7
Business	3	7	10	1	0
Chemistry	1	16	18	17	10
Economics	10	19	12	5	0
English Literature	4	4	7	1	0
French	0	1	1	2	0
Geography	7	9	16	2	0
Geology	0	3	3	2	0
German	0	1	3	0	1
History	2	11	21	10	0
Maths	9	30	19	15	14
Maths (Further)	2	7	7	1	3
Music	1	0	0	1	2
PE	0	4	7	4	0
Physics	4	10	15	6	9
Politics	3	9	12	4	0
Product Design	5	2	6	2	0
Psychology	3	18	12	6	1
Religious Studies	1	4	6	0	0
Theatre Studies	1	0	0	2	0
EPQ	9	11	2	0	0

Leavers' University Courses

- Accounting
Accounting & Finance
Aeronautical Engineering
Ancient History & Archaeology
Applied Geology
Architecture
Biological Sciences
Biomedical Sciences
Business & Economics
Business & Management
Business & Marketing
Management
Business Management
Chemical Engineering
Chemistry
Childhood Studies
Chinese Studies
Civil Engineering
Criminology
Cyber & Computer Security
Cyber Security
Dental Hygiene
Diagnostic Radiography
Drama & English
Early Childhood Studies
Economics
Economics & Finance
- Economics & Management
Economic Studies & Global
Sustainable Development
Electrical & Electronic Engineering
Electronic Engineering & Space
Science Technology
Engineering
Engineering & Physical Sciences
Engineering (Degree
Apprenticeship)
English
English & Drama
English & Film
English Literature
English Literature & German
Environmental Science
Exercise & Sport Sciences
Finance, Accounting &
Management
Financial Mathematics
Fine Art: Critical Practice
French & Spanish
Geography
German & Japanese
Graphic Design
History
History & Politics
- History & Philosophy
Industrial Design
Integrated Engineering
Interior Architecture & Design
International Law
International Business
International Business &
Communications
International Business &
Management
International Management
International Relations
International Relations & Politics
International Relations &
Languages
Investment & Finance in
Property Law
Management
Marine Biology
Marketing
Marketing, Advertising & Branding
Materials, Science & Engineering
Mathematical Sciences
Mathematics
Mathematics & Economics
Mathematics & Finance
Mechanical Engineering
- Medical Physiology & Therapeutics
Medicine
Natural Sciences
Nursing
Philosophy
Philosophy & Politics
Philosophy, Politics & Economics
Physiotherapy
Physics
Politics & International Relations
Politics, Philosophy & Economics
Politics, Philosophy & Law
Popular Music & Worship
Psychology
Psychology & Criminology
Psychology & Sociology
Psychology in Education
Radiotherapy & Oncology
Robotics
Sociology
Sociology & Social Policy
Sport & Exercise Sciences
Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences
Veterinary Science
Veterinary Medicine & Science

Entry Requirements

A Level Options / Applying

ENTRANCE TO SIR THOMAS RICH’S SIXTH FORM

We admit students for the Sixth Form where academic demands are significantly higher than for GCSE. It is our experience that students who do not meet the criteria below will find the courses difficult and they are likely to struggle to make satisfactory progress. In order to be eligible for entry to Sir Thomas Rich’s Sixth Form students should have the following qualifications:

- A minimum points score of 50 across a student’s best eight GCSEs results**
 The point’s value for each of the eight grades is derived from the numerical results of the GCSE. For example 9=9, 8=8, 7=7, etc. (A short course GCSE in Religious Studies, taken in Year 10, at grade 7 or above would count as a full GCSE. Other short course GCSEs do not count towards the full GCSE requirements.)
- Mathematics and English Language GCSE each at grade 5 or above**

Pupils who were in receipt of Pupil Premium (Ever 6) in Year 11 who have failed to meet the general Sixth Form entry criteria will have their applications considered by an Admissions Panel. This Panel will be made up of at least three members of senior staff. If they have met the minimum entry requirements for their chosen subjects (listed below) and the Panel are satisfied that they will cope with the academic demands of our Sixth Form, a place will be offered. For applicants who have met the above criteria, there are minimum entry requirements specified for each course:

Subject	Minimum entry requirement (grades refer to GCSE)
Art	6 in Art
Biology	7 in Biology or 7, 7 in Double Award Science
Business Studies	6 in Business Studies (if studied) or 6 in English Language
Chemistry	7 in Chemistry or 7, 7 in Double Award Science
Computer Science	7 in Mathematics or 7 in GCSE Computer Science
Economics	6 in Economics (if studied) or 6 in Mathematics (7 in Economics or Mathematics preferred*)
English	6 in English Language and 6 in English Literature
Geography	6 in Geography
Geology	6 in Geography or Chemistry or 7, 7 in Double Award Science
History	6 in History
Mathematics	7 in Mathematics (8 in Mathematics or strong recommendation from Year 11 teacher preferred*)
Further Maths	9 in Mathematics GCSE or C in Additional Maths FSMQ or A in Further Mathematics Level 2 Certificate
Modern Languages	7 in a Modern Foreign Language (French or German)
Music	6 in Music and Grade 5 in an instrument
PE	6 in PE (if studied) or 6 in Biology or 7, 7 in Double Award Science plus a high level of practical ability in a sport
Physics	7 in Physics or 7, 7 in Double Award Science, and 7 in Maths
Politics	6 in English Language
Product Design	6 in Design Technology (7 in DT or strong recommendation from Year 11 teacher preferred*)
Psychology	6 in Mathematics and one of: 6 in English Language; 6 in Biology or 7, 7 in Double Award Science
Religious Studies	6 in English Language
Theatre Studies	6 in Drama or 6 in English Literature

* Based on experience, we believe students who have the indicated ‘preferred’ GCSE grade cope better with this subject at A Level.

Block A	Block B
Biology	Art
Chemistry	Biology
Design	Business
English Literature	Chemistry
French	Economics
Further Maths	Further Maths
Geography	Physics
Geology	Politics
Physics	Psychology
PE	Religious Studies
Politics	Theatre Studies

Applications should be made using the online form, available at www.strschool.co.uk.

Please choose three or four subjects to study with a maximum of one subject in each block.

You should **not** select both Economics and Business Studies. When you have chosen your options please list them in order of preference in your online application.

You should include the option block you have chosen from (using the drop down menu on the online form). Unless your options clash (see below) each option block should appear at most once in your main choices.

If you are choosing to study only three A Levels, please ignore the 4th Choice field. You may, if you wish, also provide up to two reserve subject choices that you would be willing to study if we cannot offer your main option choices (eg due to low numbers in a particular subject making an option unviable).

Changes to the blocks
 There is a possibility that some changes to the block structure may be made including additional sets for some subjects if demand warrants it. Likewise sets may be removed if demand is so low as to make a set unviable – in the latter case you will be contacted if this affects you.

Clashes – option choices which do not fit the blocks:
 If your option choices do not fit the block structure, please complete the online form with your preferred options. If a subject cannot be added without repeating an option block, please select X-Clash in the block drop-down and include a subject you would take as an alternative in the Reserve Choice fields (these alternatives must enable your choices to fit the block structure). There is a small possibility

Block C	Block D
Art	Business
Chemistry	Computing
Geography	Economics
German	English Literature
History	History
Mathematics	Mathematics
Music	Physics
Psychology	Psychology

that additional sets will be added which may facilitate your original option choices, but this is by no means guaranteed.

Further Maths
 If you select Further Maths (from Block A or Block B), you must also select Mathematics (from Block C or Block D).

School preference
 Please include an honest indication of your top three choices of schools or colleges at which you would like to study for your A Levels. Please note **this information will not affect the likelihood of you being offered a place in any way**, but it is very useful to us in assessing the number of pupils we are likely to be accommodating in each subject and therefore the number of sets we are going to need to schedule.

Sir Thomas Rich’s should be included in this list if it is one of your top three choices.

How to apply:
 The **deadline for completing your applications is 23 February 2020**. Any modifications to your application after this date must be finalised by 24 May 2020 and modifications to option choices are subject to approval. You should apply using the School’s online application process which can be found via the link on the School’s website homepage.

Please note: the email address used to sign up for this service should be that of the *applicant* – ie the prospective Sixth Form student.

If you are unable to submit your application online please contact Mrs S Whittard (Sixth Form Admissions) by email on sw@strs.org.uk or telephone the School on 01452 338400 for further guidance.





SIR THOMAS RICH'S

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