



**British International School**  
of Ljubljana  
an Orbital Education School



# A LEVEL OPTIONS GUIDE 2020 - 2021

RESPECT · EMPATHY · EXCELLENCE · CHALLENGE

## Our Vision

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We aim to inspire **lifelong learners** and caring global citizens, in a **community** where everyone feels encouraged, supported and challenged.



## Our Mission

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We provide a **high quality British style international education** in English, balancing tradition and innovation.

Our passion is creating a **positive, safe and nurturing learning environment** in which everyone is valued as individuals, empowering them to be versatile, motivated and caring people.

We will endeavour to **create opportunities** to develop creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills through an **inclusive and personalised experience**.

## Our Values

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### RESPECT

We learn at school by showing respect to everyone in the community.

### EMPATHY

We develop empathy for those around us.

### EXCELLENCE

We strive for excellence in everything we do.

### CHALLENGE

We embrace a challenge as it enriches our learning.

# Welcome to Sixth Form - Years 12 and 13

For the final two years at school, and in preparation for university entry, our Sixth Form students in Years 12 and 13 prepare for AS and A Level examinations.

Overall, the curriculum in the Sixth Form ensures that all of our students have the opportunity to maximise their potential, leaving BSL as confident, articulate, successful young people, ready to make their mark on the world.

## What are AS and A Levels?

A Levels remain the gold standard for students who aspire to access universities around the world.

A Levels are taken over two years: the first year is called an AS, or Advanced Subsidiary, level. This is equal to half an A Level. The second year is called an Advanced level.

In parallel to the subjects studied, specific sessions are dedicated to building study skills, time management, as well as focusing on the process of applying for Higher Education, including career advice, course guidance, interview techniques and CV writing.

Students typically study four AS subjects in Year 12 and take three of those subjects through to A Level in Year 13.

## An overview of Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE)

At BSL, we work with **Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE)**, the world's largest provider of international education programmes and qualifications. CAIE examinations are sat by students at schools in over 160 countries around the world.

Five elements lie at the heart of a Cambridge education:



**Cambridge Assessment  
International Education**

**Cambridge International School**

### 1. INTERNATIONAL CURRICULUM

CAIE offer a wide range of subjects and give schools flexibility in how to offer them. They support schools in developing a curriculum that suits their context, culture and ethos, and that we can tailor to our students' particular needs.

### 3. ASSESSMENT

CAIE design their assessments to be fair, valid, reliable and practicable. They assess what they know to be of value: deep subject knowledge, conceptual understanding, and higher level thinking skills.

### 5. GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Cambridge schools belong to a worldwide education community - professional learning communities which connect teachers around the world so that they can share views, information and resources, and learn from one another.

### 2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

CAIE provide professional development for teachers, to help them improve their performance and practice throughout their careers, encouraging teaching practices that develop the ability of students to reflect on their learning.

### 4. INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

CAIE qualifications are widely recognised by universities and employers. You can be confident that your qualifications will be understood and valued throughout their education and career, across the globe.

# Discover your potential

## Choosing the right courses for you

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The subjects you study at AS/A Level can help shape your future, so your choices are very important.

At least five A\*-C grades (or equivalent) at IGCSE is normally the requirement for starting A Level courses. In addition, we need to be assured that your level of English is advanced enough to cope with the demands of the course.

You will have an individual Studies Interview with the Head of Sixth Form before the first week of Year 12

to review your preliminary subject choices in light of your IGCSE results.

At the end of Year 12, when your AS results are published in August, we will discuss with you which subjects you wish to continue in Year 13 at A Level.

This booklet is designed to give you further information on what to expect from the next two years and to encourage you to start thinking about your subject choices when you start Year 12.

### Compulsory Subject (no examination)

- Physical Education (PE)

### Optional Subjects (with examinations)

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business
- Computer Science
- Chemistry
- Economics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Geography
- Global Perspectives
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Psychology
- Slovene

*Students are also able to submit a special request for optional subjects which are not yet listed above based on individual interest. Examples might include: Physical Education, French, German, Politics.*

***The school will look into offering these, but no guarantees can be made.***

Please note that whilst we endeavour to accommodate all individual subject preferences, you may find that once the final subject timetable is published, you are unable to select the exact combination of subjects you originally listed.

We do our best to ensure that the desires of the entire cohort are met, formulating a timetable that works for all students, making all subjects viable for the students who choose them.

### Need Advice?

If you are unsure of which subjects to choose, please speak to your subject teachers, form tutor, Head of Sixth Form and our Head of Secondary School.

Whatever your final decision, you will need to consider: what subjects you enjoy, what you are good at, career implications and which university courses you wish to access.

## Attendance

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At BISL, our expectation is that attendance will not fall below 95% in order for you to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to you.

For any requests regarding holidays during term time, parents should refer to the school's Attendance Policy on the school website.



### DID YOU KNOW?

An attendance level of 90% means you are missing **1 day of learning every two weeks...**

Requests for absence during term time should only be made *if absolutely necessary* and are not automatically authorised. Permission should be sought in writing from the Principal using the Leave of Absence Request form.

## Examinations

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The majority of our examinations are sat in May/ June. We provide a carefully controlled environment in which the students can concentrate on their examination and show the examiners what they know.

A personalised exam timetable is created for each candidate and a "master schedule" is posted in school.

Exams start and end at different times. This is because when students sit CAIE examinations, they must be under supervised conditions at 09:00 GMT (for morning exams) or 13:00 GMT (for afternoon exams). The differing lengths of the papers mean that

the start and end times have to vary. More than one examination may take place at a time, either in one room or in separate rooms, as appropriate.

We have no flexibility on exam dates and times; all students in Europe sit the same exams at the same time. If an exam is missed for any reason, the paper cannot be sat at an alternative time and the student may not gain certification in that subject as a result.

**We expect that you continue to observe the normal dress code/uniform during your examinations.**

## Study Leave

Most Sixth Form students have exams over a period of four to five weeks.

A modified school timetable will operate during this period to ensure that you use the time in school to continue to revise for your remaining papers.

## International Award

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Engaging our students beyond the curriculum, we also offer the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award for Young People (known as MEPI in Slovenia).



Further information is available from our MEPI coordinator, [Mr Simon Irving](#).

## Optional subjects

# Art & Design

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### Why choose Art & Design?

Engaging with Art is essential to the human experience as it challenges us with different points of view, compels us to empathize and gives us opportunities to reflect.

In a world full of trained professionals and highly educated workers, creativity is one of the top skills that sets someone apart from the pack. The ability to think imaginatively and bring fresh ideas are essential to innovation and progress. Art education allows students to think outside of the box and build on the ideas communicated by other artists and designers.

A Level Art & Design is intended to deepen students' understanding of art practice and extend the creative skills developed at GCSE. They will have the opportunity to work with a wide variety of media and will be encouraged to be adventurous in expressing personal

thoughts, observations and ideas. Observational drawing is fundamental to art practice and will form the keystone for each project. Students will work to set themes and be expected to explore, using a variety of materials, analyze and investigate the work of other artists, craft persons and designers to develop personal final outcomes.

When students are making a work of art, the process includes evaluation, interpretation and concept development. During this creative process, logic and problem solving skills are used to strategize how to reach an intended outcome. This ability to think critically and find unique solutions is key to the 21st century workplace. Jobs available to Artists include Interior Designer, Product Designer, Illustrator, Animator, Curator, Creative Director and many others.

### What you will need to study A Level Art & Design:

Minimum IGCSE grade 4 or C, or equivalent, in Art & Design.



## Optional subjects

### Biology



#### Why choose Biology?

Many of the important and often contentious issues which society must address relate to the biological sciences. Ethical issues include stem cell research, genetically modified organisms, animal experimentation and the Human Genome Project and the use of its findings. Environmental protection and health are topics that are

high on the political agenda. Studying biology will also help students understand many of the issues that face society today such as cancer, drug use, climate change and antibiotic resistance.

Biology is a fascinating and varied subject, which is reflected in the high numbers of biology-based courses.

#### What you will need to study A Level Biology:

Minimum IGCSE grade 5, or equivalent, in biology.

# Optional subjects

## Business

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### Why choose Business?

The study of Cambridge International AS and A Level Business allows you to take the first step towards a career in private or public organisations or progress with confidence to a degree in business and management related subjects.

You will develop:

- the capacity to analyse characteristics and activities of business organisations and how they respond to the changing demands of their environments
- an understanding of how effective managers and leaders develop successful organisations in terms of customer focus and the products/services they offer
- the opportunity to reflect on how successful business organisations engage in financial and accounting practices to maximise value for stakeholders value
- development of knowledge that relates to strategic planning and decision-making to ensure business survival, change, and sustainable success
- a solid foundation for further study.

### What you will need to study A Level Business:

Minimum IGCSE grade 4 or C, or equivalent, in Mathematics and English.





## Optional subjects

# Computer Science

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### Why choose Computer Science?

The aim of the Cambridge International AS and A Level Computer Science syllabus is to encourage you to develop an understanding of the fundamental principles of computer science and how computer programs work in a range of contexts.

You will study topics including information representation, communication and Internet technologies, hardware, software development, and relational database modelling. As you progress, you will develop computational thinking

and use problem solving to develop computer-based solutions using algorithms and programming languages.

Studying Cambridge International AS and A Level Computer Science will help you develop a range of skills such as thinking creatively, analytically, logically and critically.

You will also be able to appreciate the ethical issues that arise with current and emerging computing technologies.

### What you will need to study A Level Computer Science:

Minimum IGCSE grade 4 or C, or equivalent, in Mathematics and English.

## Optional subjects

# Chemistry

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### Why choose Chemistry?

A level Chemistry enables you to increase your understanding of the technological world, take an informed interest in scientific matters, recognise the usefulness (and limitations) of scientific method, and apply this to other disciplines and in everyday life. You will develop relevant attitudes, such as a concern for accuracy and precision, objectivity, integrity, enquiry, initiative and inventiveness.

You will hopefully develop an interest in, and care for, the environment and start considering the limitations in scientific study by society, economy, technology, ethics, the community. Last, you will develop an understanding of the scientific skills essential for further study.

### What you will need to study A Level Chemistry:

Minimum IGCSE grade 5 or equivalent in Chemistry.



## Optional subjects

# Economics

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### Why choose Economics?

The study of Cambridge International AS & A Level Economics allows you to explore concepts and theories which can be applied to the way that modern economies work. You will develop the ability to explain, evaluate and analyse economic issues and arguments, and gain lifelong skills and a solid foundation for further study.

Through Economics you will:

- Be able to explain and analyse economic issues and arguments, evaluate economic information, and organise, present and communicate ideas and judgements clearly.
- Cover a range of basic economic ideas, including an introduction to the price system and government intervention, international trade and exchange rates, the measurement of employment and inflation, and the causes and consequences of inflation.
- Become familiar with the price system, the theory of the firm, market failure, macroeconomic theory and policy, and economic growth and development.

### What you will need to study A Level Economics:

Minimum IGCSE grade 4 or C, or equivalent, in Mathematics and English.

## Optional subjects

# English Language

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### Why choose English Language?

English Language at AS and A Level goes beyond the analytical approach of IGCSE English into something which is far more subtle and sophisticated. You will consider the wider potential of the written and spoken language: how it can shape social and political ideas; how it can impact on the psychology of an individual; how it can create new modes of thinking.

You will also have the opportunity to further develop a passion for creative writing. You will be encouraged to write in a range of styles and genres, and to strengthen the skills required to become a talented and sophisticated writer.

### Course outline

At AS Level, you will study for two papers, which encompass the range of potentials of the written language. The first of these is the Reading paper. This paper requires you to be familiar with the conventions and concerns of a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. You may, for example, be asked to comment upon brochures, letters, voiceover scripts, advertisements etc. Similarly, the Writing paper asks you to write in a range of these given styles, as well as to develop a piece of original, creative writing.

At A Level, you will explore the critical research and theory surrounding the English Language. You will look at how the political and cultural development of English around the world has led to a development of multiple, global Englishes. You will consider how an individual's gender, class, or age impact upon his or her use of language. You will explore the theories behind how and why children develop language through different stages of their development.

At A Level, you will study for two more papers: Language Analysis and Language Topics. These papers ask you to consider the wider relevance and impact of language. The first, Language Analysis, asks you to look at how the English language has developed and evolved over time, as well as how children acquire and develop language. The second, Language Topics, asks you to consider the impact of English as a language around the world, as well to explore the connections between Language and the Self.



## Optional subjects

# English Literature

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### Why choose English Literature?

A Level literature provides a far-reaching introduction to some of the most significant literary texts, writers, and movements in the English language. Over the course of two years, you will explore poetry, prose, and drama texts. You will study a Shakespeare play, a pre-20th century novel, as well as 20th century poetry and drama.

The course will provide you with the scaffolding to develop sophisticated analysis of texts, to engage with them at a personal level, and to identify the techniques and concerns of the writers studied. Most importantly, by exploring a range of different texts, styles, and genres, the course will encourage you to develop and strengthen a love of literature and a deeper appreciation of its political, social, cultural, and psychological significance.

### Course outline

At AS Level, you will study for two papers. The first will be Drama and Poetry, and will require you to study one 20th Century play and a selection of poems. The second paper will be Prose and Unseen Literature. For the first part of this paper you will study one prose text which will be either a novel or a range of short stories. The second part of the paper will test your ability to respond to an unseen text. This will require careful reading skills and close attention to a writer's concerns and techniques.

At A Level, you will study the final two papers. The first of these will be Shakespeare and Drama. For this exam you will study two plays: one Shakespeare play and one 20th century play. The second paper will be Pre-and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose. This exam will require you to be familiar with one significant literary text from before 1900, and one from the 20th century.

# Optional subjects

## Geography

### Why choose Geography?

Cambridge A Level Geography is a highly valued and respected subject choice by universities and employers alike. As a “traditional” subject that focuses on transferable skills, A Level Geography is an excellent choice regardless of what you intend to study at university and can help support your application to a wide range of courses.

Geographers have a reputation for being open-minded and for thinking critically about the world around them. In our increasingly changing and challenging world, universities and employers are looking for geography students to develop the next solutions to some of the world’s major issues, from the global climate crisis to rapid population growth.

Geography is so broad that graduates can be found in many different fields including teaching and research, geology and prospection, law, politics and civil service, environmental management, aviation, planning and governance and many more.

Finally, geography covers a wide range of topics ensuring that you get the chance to learn about the world and our place in it from many places and perspectives.

### What you will need to study A Level Geography:

You will need to have studied IGCSE Geography or equivalent and obtained a minimum of a C grade in order to be best prepared for the A Level course.

However, exceptions can be made based on personal circumstances and a commitment to the course.



## Optional subjects

# Global Perspectives & Research

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### Why choose Global Perspectives & Research?

Global Perspectives and Research is a fantastic A Level option that can perfectly complement the learning that takes place in your other subject choices. This is because this course has a skills-based approach rather than focusing on specific content. Though you will learn about some of the key issues that concern our increasingly connected and digitised world, you will also develop a variety of skills centred on research, critical thinking, problem solving and communication by following an approach to analysing and evaluating arguments and perspectives called the Critical Path.

By investigating global issues through a variety of perspectives you will become more aware and knowledgeable of the world and become valuable to potential universities and employers. The skills that you develop will not only be useful for your other A Level subjects but they will also give you a head start on the skills that will be expected of you when you enter higher education and the workplace. Finally, the various different methods of assessment (exam, essay, group project and report) give you ownership over your learning and allow you to explore global issues that are important to you.

### What you will need to study A Level Global Perspectives & Research:

To make sure you are successful, we would recommend that you only consider taking Global Perspectives and Research at A level if you get a B in one of the following

IGCSE subjects, or equivalent:

Global Perspectives, History, Geography or English.

## Optional subjects

# History

### Why choose History?

It is only through a study of History that we can fully understand the world we live in today. The political, cultural and social upheavals that dominate our headlines are simply a product of the events that came before them. Studying History enables us to understand the trends that have shaped the society we live in and the potential trajectory of our future.

The search for the truth exposes the historian to a

plethora of opinions and interpretations, many of which need thorough interrogation to establish their legitimacy. Reaching judgements based on evidence is a crucial skill that every good historian is committed to develop. History is ultimately an endlessly fascinating subject with infinite possibilities and perspectives.

As Marcus Garvey remarked, 'a people without knowledge of their past history is like a tree without roots.'

### What you will need to study A Level History:

You will need to have studied IGCSE History or equivalent and obtained a minimum of a C grade in order to be best prepared for the A Level course.

However, exceptions can be made based on personal circumstances and a commitment to the course.





## Optional subjects

# Mathematics



### Why choose Mathematics?

Cambridge International AS & A Level Mathematics develops a set of transferable skills. These include the skill of working with mathematical information, as well as the ability to think logically and independently, consider accuracy, model situations mathematically, analyse results and reflect on findings. You can apply these skills across a wide range of subjects and the skills will equip you well for progression to higher education or directly into employment.

Through A Level Mathematics you will become:

- confident, using and sharing information and ideas, and using mathematical techniques to solve problems. These skills build confidence and support work in other subject areas as well as in mathematics.
- responsible, through learning and applying skills which prepare them for future academic studies, helping them to become numerate members of society.
- reflective, through making connections between different branches of mathematics and considering the outcomes of mathematical problems and modelling.
- innovative, through solving both familiar and unfamiliar problems in different ways, selecting from a range of mathematical and problem-solving techniques.
- engaged, by the beauty and structure of mathematics, its patterns and its many applications to real life situations.

### What you will need to study A level Mathematics:

Minimum grade B or above at IGCSE Mathematics or equivalent.

You will need to have a strong understanding of Algebra and the extensive topics of Statistics and Mechanics which make up the content of the A Level course.

### Course outline

The Cambridge International AS Level Mathematics qualification offers three different options:

- Pure Mathematics only (Paper 1 and Paper 2) or
- Pure Mathematics and Mechanics (Paper 1 and Paper 4) or
- Pure Mathematics and Probability & Statistics (Paper 1 and Paper 5).

The Cambridge International A Level Mathematics qualification offers two different options:

- Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Probability & Statistics (Papers 1, 3, 4 and 5) or
- Pure Mathematics and Probability & Statistics (Papers 1, 3, 5 and 6).

## Optional subjects

# Music

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### Why choose Music?

Music is constantly evolving, inspiring creativity and expression in a way that no other subject can. This AQA course has been designed as a relevant and contemporary qualification that offers you the chance to study a wide range of musical genres.

Every student has different learning styles and musical tastes, which is why this A-level values all music styles, skills and instruments.

### What you will need to study AS/A Level Music:

This AS/A Level course is a logical progression from IGCSE Music. Ideally, a grade B or above is needed for you to be best prepared for the course.

However, this is not strictly necessary providing you have musical experience separate from your academic studies, for example if you have taken a musical instrument up to

The course brings listening, performance and composition to life in new and engaging ways, and links to the world around us like never before.

The course allows you to develop particular strengths and interests, encourages lifelong learning and provides access to higher education and university degree courses in music and music-related subjects, as well as music-related and other careers.

grade 6 to 8, and thus have a good grounding in musical theory and are a strong performer in either instrumental or vocal music.

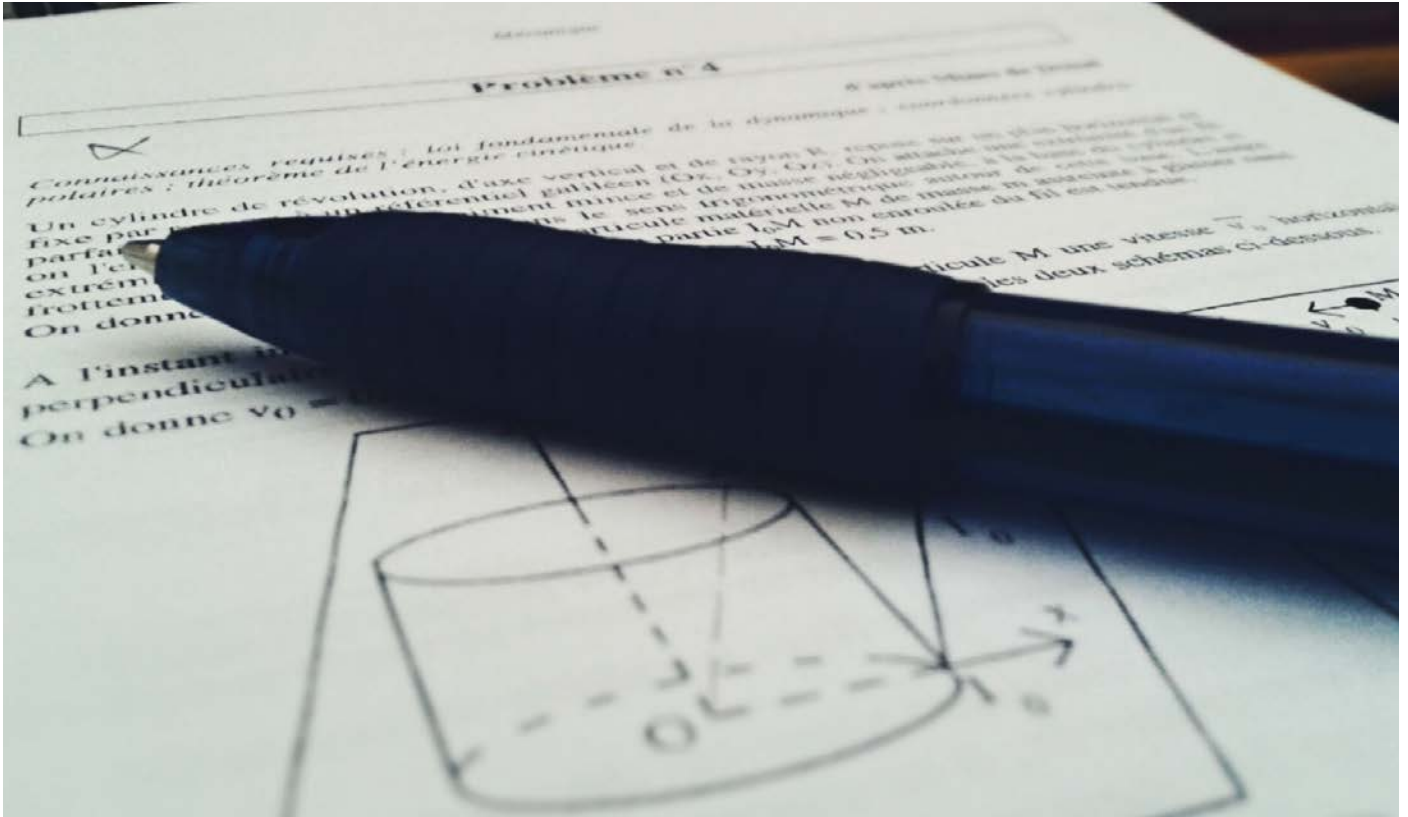
A genuine interest and passion not just for listening to music but also to understand the technicalities, theory and creation of music is essential.



## Optional subjects

# Physics

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### Why choose Physics?

This course is about looking at our physical environment in more detail, from a more mathematical point of view. You will acquire adequate knowledge to enable you to pursue further studies in any physical science field and engineering. You will cover topics such as waves, mechanics, electricity, particle physics and radiation, quantum physics, thermal physics and nuclear physics.

This subject goes well with mathematics, as well as computer programming.

There is an inexhaustible list of careers associated with the study of physics, which ranges from engineers, medical scientists, physicists and geophysicists to logistics, financial analysts, computer game programmers and software engineers - to name but a few.

### What you will need to study A Level Physics:

At least 5 IGCSEs at grades 9-4 (or A\*-C) or equivalent, including English, with Mathematics at Grade 6 (or B).

## Optional subjects

# Psychology

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### Why choose Psychology?

A Level Psychology offers an engaging and effective introduction to Psychology. You will learn the fundamentals of the subject and develop skills valued by Higher Education and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research.

You will learn about:

- approaches and methods related to the core areas of Psychology – cognitive, social, biological, developmental, individual differences and research methods.

- explanations from different approaches, along with psychological issues and debates.

You will be able to choose from a range of attractive topic options which have been arranged to allow teachers to teach to their strengths and ensures that you experience an interesting, diverse and coherent course of study, regardless of which topics you choose.

### What you will need to study A Level Psychology:

To study Psychology, you must have an ability to understand, analyse and evaluate psychological theories.

You must hold sufficient Mathematical abilities to complete the mainly statistical content of the course, therefore a grade C or above at IGCSE Mathematics or equivalent would be beneficial.

You must also be able to construct a coherent answer in the form of a few sentences to a complete essays, therefore a grade C or above at IGCSE English or equivalent would also be beneficial.



## Optional subjects

# Slovene

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### Why choose Slovene as a foreign language?

The Slovene language belongs to the group of South Slavic languages and is spoken by approximately 2.5 million people. Slovene is sometimes characterised as the most diverse Slavic language in terms of dialects, with around 50 dialects subdivided into seven groups across the country. The most distinctive characteristic of Slovene is the dual grammatical form, which makes it even more interesting.

There are many reasons for learning a foreign language, as it opens up a world of opportunities.

- Business skills with added foreign language skills make an employee more valuable in the marketplace.
- Speaking a different language increases creativity.
- Skills like problem solving and dealing with abstract concepts are increased when you study a foreign language.
- Foreign language skills enhance your opportunities in various fields including government, business, medicine, law, technology, military, industry, marketing, etc.
- You may be at a distinct advantage in the global marketplace if you are multi- or bilingual.

### What you will need to study Slovene as a foreign language:

If you have not studied Slovene before you can still attend this course.

Depending on your prior knowledge, the teacher will support you and the class to progress.

### Why choose Slovene as a native speaker?

Studying literature in Slovene opens up a world of inspiration and creativity, while also developing skills that are essential for today's global environment.

It is a chance for you to discover how literature makes sense of the world through stories, poems, novels and plays. It is also a chance to sharpen your own ability to write, read, analyse and persuade.

### What you will need to study Slovene as a native speaker:

You can continue studying Slovene as a native speaker if you have already been studying it at BISL and obtained a

minimum grade C, or if you are joining us from a Slovene school.



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## A Level Subject Preference Form

SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE HEAD OF SECONDARY  
BY THE END OF BLOCK 4

Student's Full Name:

List **FIVE** of the following currently offered A Level subjects in the order of preference using the table below:

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business
- Computer Science
- Chemistry
- Economics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Geography
- Global Perspectives
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Psychology

*Students will study 4 subjects but must list a 5<sup>th</sup> preference as a reserve.*

Compulsory Subject	PE (non-examination)
Preference 1	
Preference 2	
Preference 3	
Preference 4	
Preference 5	

Any other A Level subjects not listed above to submit for special request: *(these subjects are not guaranteed)*

Do you wish to continue studying Slovene if given the option: YES NO

Any additional comments:

Parent Signature: **X**

Date:



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