

**Sixth Form Course
Information for
AS and A2 Courses**

Commencing September 2008



Loretto

Loretto AS and A2 Courses



GENERAL INFORMATION ON AS AND A-LEVEL EXAMINATIONS

Pupils are expected to have obtained at least 5 GCSEs at grade C or better, or the equivalent, to obtain entry to the School's AS and A level programs in the 6th Form.

The A-level course nationally is a two year course, with certificated examinations at the end of each year. Advanced Subsidiary examinations (**AS**) are sat at the end of the LVI, and **A2** examinations at the end of the UVI. Results from AS and A2 examinations are combined to produce a final A-level. Pupils can therefore elect to study a subject for one year and obtain an AS certificate, or for two years and obtain a full A-level. For the purposes of university entrance an AS certificate is worth half the value of a full A-level.

We advise pupils to take 4 AS level subjects in the LVI, although some pupils elect to take 5. Pupils usually drop a subject or subjects at the end of the LVI, taking 3 (or possibly 4) subjects through to A-level. There is also the option for pupils to take a new AS subject in the UVI alongside their A2 subjects.

The net result is the most pupils leave Loretto with one of the following combinations of qualifications:

- 3 A-levels and 1 AS**
- 4 A-levels**
- 2 A-levels and 2 AS**

Other permutations are possible.

*Please note that ICT and Music Technology currently leads to AS certification **only**. Pupils should **not** plan to take ICT or Music Technology in the expectation that it leads on to A2 and a full A-level in the subject.*



THE AS COURSES AT LORETTO SCHOOL

The courses are arranged in option blocks to enable timetabling. Pupil choose one subject only from an option block, with a maximum of 5 subjects chosen at AS level.

The AS-level column structure for 2008-2009 is.

AS-Level Options for 2008-2009					
	OPTION1	OPTION2	OPTION3	OPTION4	OPTION5
AS	BIOLOGY	ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	BIOLOGY	HISTORY	ENGLISH LITERATURE
	GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS	CHEMISTRY	PHYSICS	MATHEMATICS	MATHEMATICS
	GEOGRAPHY	GEOGRAPHY	BUSINESS STUDIES	BUSINESS STUDIES	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
	ART	MUSIC	THEATRE STUDIES	SPANISH	FRENCH
			ICT		MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

With the exception of AS ICT and AS Music Technology, all subjects offered at AS level can be studied at A2 in the second year of the 6th Form, leading to full A-level certification.



AS SUBJECTS

The following is a brief description of AS subjects at Loretto. Apart from AS ICT and AS Music Technology, all AS subjects can be continued for a second year at A2 level, leading to full A-level certification.

The basic requirement for entry to the LVI to undertake AS courses is a minimum of 5 GCSEs at grade C and above, or the SQA Standard Grade equivalent. It is essential that two of these subjects are Mathematics and English Language.

ART

The best foundation for success in AS Art is a good grade at GCSE, combined with good basic drawing skills. An understanding of the basic elements of art (colour, tone, form, etc) and some awareness of the place of art, craft and design in the world, its history and purpose, are also relevant.

Above all you should have an interest in creating and understanding art and the determination to develop that interest. **AS/A Level Art is not an easy option and you should be prepared to work hard at developing your abilities.**

The exam board is OCR.syllabus number 3801.

BIOLOGY

There are 3 examinable Units:

Unit F211 – **Cells, Exchange and Transport** – covers cells and organelles, cell division, breathing, animal and plant transport

Unit F212 – **Molecules, Biodiversity, Food and Health**– includes biological molecules, diet, food production, health and disease, biodiversity, classification, evolution and conservation

Unit F213 – **Practical Skills assessment**

Candidates are expected to have achieved at least a grade B at GCSE Biology or Dual Award Science, or the SQA Standard Grade equivalent.

The exam board is OCR syllabus number H021



BUSINESS STUDIES

There are 2 examinable Units:

- Unit 1:** Planning and Financing Business
Content: Starting a Business
Financial Planning
- Unit 2:** Managing a Business
Content: Finance
People in Business
Operations Management
Marketing and competition

AS Business Studies requires basic numeracy and analytic skills, as well as essay-writing skills commensurate with at least a grade C in GCSE English Language.

The exam board is AQA. syllabus number 5131.

CHEMISTRY

There are three examinable Units:

- Unit 1:** atomic structure, formulae, equations and moles, bonding, periodicity, introduction to organic chemistry
- Unit 2:** energetics, organic chemistry (alkanes, alkenes, halogenoalkanes, alcohols), kinetics I, chemical equilibrium I, industrial inorganic chemistry (Haber, Contact processes, aluminium). Groups II & VII
- Unit 3:** assessment of experimental skills I: an investigative skills assignment, ISA and a practical skills assessment PSA in organic, inorganic and physical activities

Candidates are expected to have achieved at least a grade B at GCSE Chemistry or Dual Award Science, or the SQA Standard Grade Equivalent..

The exam board is AQA 1421



DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

There are two units at AS level.

Unit 1 (60% of the AS marks) is examined by written paper. Candidates write about live theatre that they have seen during the course and about a set text.

Unit 2 (40% of the AS marks) is practical: students work in a group to produce a performance of an extract from a published play. Assessment includes preparatory and development work and supporting notes.

The exam board is AQA syllabus number 1241.

ENGLISH

Two 'AS' courses are offered: (i) English Literature and (ii) English Language and Literature.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

From September 2008 the 'AS' GCE is made up of **two** units, one of which is externally assessed and one which is internally assessed, and form 50% of the corresponding four-unit Advanced GCE.

The Literature 'AS' course requires the close study of five texts, with an additional literary-critical text to support the prose reading within the first unit.

Unit 1, Poetry & Prose 1800-1945, requires the study of selected poems of *one* poet and of a set prose text. This is externally assessed in a written exam' and represents 60% of the marks for 'AS'.

Unit 2, Literature post-1900, requires the study of three post-1900 texts of the pupil's choice, albeit guided, with at least one text first published or performed after 1990. This is internally assessed coursework (of two essays) representing 40% of the marks for 'AS'.

Candidates are most likely to enjoy the course and cope well with the work if they have at least a B in GCSE English and in GCSE English Literature and enjoy reading demanding literature.

The exam board is OCR specification number H071



ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

The 'AS' specification has 2 units, the first assessed in a written examination and the second an internally-assessed coursework unit, as applies to the 'AS' Literature course above.

Unit 1: Introduction to Language and Literature Study. This unit is an introduction to the study of language and literature using a short Anthology of literary and non literary texts. The chosen texts will offer candidates the opportunity to consider the development of language and style over time.

Unit 2: Themes in Language and Literature. This coursework unit gives candidates the opportunity to study major prose genres, including fiction and literary non-fiction. The aim of this unit is to develop candidates' reading and writing skills through the study of one set of paired texts from a prescribed list, for example Robert Stevenson's 'Travels with a Donkey' and Bill Bryson's 'The Lost Continent' or Lewis Carroll's 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and J. K. Rowling's 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone'. Assessment is by means of a two-part assignment, prepared and written by candidates under the supervision of their teachers. The second part will focus on a candidates' ability to write creatively and demonstrate skills in a way which also provides evidence of their understanding of the texts as a whole.

Candidates are most likely to enjoy the course and cope well with the work if they have at least a B in GCSE English and in GCSE English Literature and enjoy responding creatively to texts.

The exam board is AQA specification number 2725

GEOGRAPHY

There are 2 examinable Units:

Unit 1: **Managing Physical Environments:** covers the topics of hydrology, coastal environments, cold environments and hot arid and semi arid environments and as such are science based, where **at least a pass in science subjects at GCSE is required.**

Unit 2 : **Managing Change in Human Environments** consists of material centred on the management of urban and rural change, the energy issue and the growth of tourism. **A pass at GCSE Geography is required before this topic can be undertaken.**

There is no formal coursework requirement for AS Geography however, candidates are required to develop fieldwork skills in the context of Human and Physical geography and therefore there will be a charge of £100 for transport and equipment to aid these trips.

The exam board is OCR and the syllabus number H083

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

There are 2 examinable Units:

1. People and Politics:

- Democracy and Political Participation:
 - Nature of democracy
 - Democracy in the UK
 - Enhancing democracy
- Party Policies and Ideas:
 - Traditions and policies of parties
 - Ideas and factions within parties
 - Comparing party policies and ideas
- Elections:
 - Elections and democracy
 - Elections in the UK
 - Debating electoral systems
- Pressure Groups:
 - Nature of pressure groups
 - Pressure group power
 - Pressure groups and democracy

2. Governing the UK:

- The Constitution:
 - Nature of the constitution
 - Sovereignty and the constitution
 - Reforming the constitution
- Parliament:
 - Legislatures and executives
 - Role of Parliament
 - Reforming Parliament
- The Prime Minister and Cabinet:
 - The role of the PM and cabinet
 - Powers of the PM
 - PM leadership
- Judges and Civil Liberties:
 - Role of the judiciary
 - Power and influence of the judges
 - Civil liberties and individual rights

The exam board is EdExcel.



HISTORY

There are 2 examinable Units:

1. **Document Studies 1774-1945**

• **Italian Unification 1815-70**

- How far did the experiences of 1815 to 1847 create support for Italian unity?
- Why did the revolutions of 1848-49 fail to unify Italy?
- How important to the unification of Italy were the contributions of the Italian states (especially Piedmont and its aims) and of individuals (Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini and Victor Emmanuel)
- How important in the process of unification were foreign help and foreign circumstances?

2. **British History 1780-1964**

• **From Pitt to Peel 1783-1846**

- Why did Pitt the Younger dominate politics 1783-93 and how successfully did he face the challenge of the French Revolution?
- How and why was Lord Liverpool able to survive the radical challenges of 1812-30?
- How Liberal were the Tory Governments of 1822-30?
- How effective was Peel as a party political leader to 1841?
- How successful was Peel's Ministry of 1841-46?

The exam board is OCR syllabus number 3835



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

ICT is only offered to AS level and cannot be followed to A2. There are two teaching Units:

1. **Information, Systems and Applications:** Looking at how information is represented and processed through a computer system using standard application software with a particular emphasis on presenting information to end users and on the concepts of complex spreadsheet modelling and relational database systems including normalisation.
2. **Structured ICT Tasks:** Replacing the traditional coursework element with the construction of design, test and implementation procedures in a controlled examination environment.

A previous qualification in ICT at GCSE or SQA Standard Grade is not required.

The examination board used is OCR syllabus number H117.

MATHEMATICS

There are three AS modules sat in the Lower 6th: **Core Maths 1**, **Core Maths 2** and **Mechanics 1**.

The **Core Maths** papers will cover calculus, including differentiation, integration and their applications; sequences and series; numerical methods; coordinate geometry; logarithmic and exponential functions.

The **Mechanics** module entails kinematics and statics of a particle; moments and dynamics of a particle moving in a straight line.

Anyone taking AS Maths should have a pass at grade A* or A.

Anyone wishing to go on to take Further Maths in the Upper 6th **must choose maths in column 4** as the top set will also sit **Core Maths 3** (an A2 module) in the summer term of the L6th. The A2 course will then be completed in January of the Upper 6th allowing the opportunity for **AS Further Maths** in the final 2 terms.

The exam board is EdExcel. syllabus number 8371.



MODERN LANGUAGES

The languages offered are French and Spanish, each consisting of two units :

Unit 1 Spoken expression and response in French / Spanish (an 8-10 minute assessment in which candidates will engage in a conversation with the examiner on a chosen topic area and related sub-topics). Worth 30% of AS.

Unit 2 Understanding and Written Response in French / Spanish (a 2 hr 30 minute paper involving some Listening, Reading, and Writing. Students are required to understand and convey their understanding of French / Spanish texts and recordings, and produce a piece of continuous writing (200-220 words) based on a short stimulus). Worth 70% of AS.

Language trips and exchanges are organised each year, and AS students are strongly encouraged to take part in these.

Pupils must have exhibited good linguistic skills at GCSE or equivalent before undertaking either AS French or Spanish.

The exam board is EdExcel. syllabus numbers 8190 (French) and 8590 (Spanish).

MUSIC

This is a balanced course requiring at least an A in GCSE or Standard Grade. Areas covered include practical performance, composition, written work (history and analysis) and aural.

Candidates can either opt to specialise in one instrument – of at least Grade 6 standard at the beginning of the course, rising to Grade 8 by the end – or two instruments to less high level.

The practical element of the course can be worth up to 40% if desired.

Candidates have lessons in techniques of composition, following on from GCSE work. There is a paper on History and Musical analysis, with works ranging from 1550 to 1970, and an aural paper in which the skills of critical listening are assessed.

Some pupils have taken a particular interest in Recording Studio techniques – opportunities for this can be built into the course if desired.

The exam board is EdExcel syllabus number 8501.



Music Technology

There is one Unit divided into two parts, (a) and (b). Part (a) is coursework, part (b) is an exam.

Part a Practical work

- i) **Students choose *sequencing or recording* (40%)**
- ii) **Arranging.** Two *arrangements* as pieces of coursework (30%). Both should be 32-64 bars long.

Part b Written work (30%)

Two hour exam paper taken in June. Students have their own CD of musical extracts and a question/answer book. Questions will focus on **i)** Developments in music technology and **ii)** Pop music and jazz

The exam board is EdExcel syllabus number 8502.

PHYSICS

There are three teaching Units:

Unit 1: **Electricity, Particles and Quantum Physics.**

Unit 2: **Mechanics, Materials and Waves**

Unit 3: **Practical Skills**

There is a written paper for Units 1 and 2 and, in addition, a practical exam.

Candidates are most likely to succeed at AS Physics if they have obtained a grade A at GCSE Physics.

Due to the numerical content of the subject, AS Physics candidates are strongly recommended to take AS Mathematics.

The exam board is AQA syllabus number (t.b.c.)



AS PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The course consists of two units:

Unit G451: An Introduction to Physical Education (Externally examined)

Section A: Applied Anatomy and Physiology:

The Skeletal System; Movement Production and Control; Motion and Movement; Structure of the Lungs.

Section B: Acquiring and Performing Movement Skills in PE and Sport.

Defining, Developing and Classifying Skills; Information Processing during the Performance of Skills; Motor Control of Skills; Learning Skills.

Section C Socio-Cultural Studies relating to participation in physical activity

Physical activity, Sport and Culture, Contemporary issues

Unit G452 Acquiring, developing and evaluating practical skills in Physical Education (externally set, internally assessed, externally moderated)

Performance

Evaluating and planning for the improvement of performance

Together these units form 50% of corresponding A2.

Pupils considering this course should have at least a C pass in Biology or Chemistry.

The exam board is OCR syllabus number H154

A-LEVEL SUBJECTS

Apart from ICT and Music Technology, all AS subjects can be continued for a second year for certification at GCE A-level.

In addition, we offer A-level Further Mathematics in the UVI. This course is only suitable for gifted mathematicians who have scored, or are expected to score, a high grade A in AS Mathematics and A-level Mathematics.
