



Hautlieu

A Level FAQs



Art

What is the structure of the course?

60% Coursework (practical + related study essay)
40% Exam (practical project set by the examining board)

How good do I have to be at drawing?

Drawing is a core skill that we value throughout the course. We will teach you how to draw in different ways along the way.

What are lessons like?

Mostly practical and led by the teacher. As your confidence develops and improves you will find that you have more freedom and independence in your learning.

How much homework is there?

You are expected to develop, review and refine your sketchbook from week to week and complete approximately 5 hours of work outside of the classroom.

Should I have studied Art at GCSE?

Not necessarily. Previous study is a good platform to work from but not an entry requirement. Ideas and a curious and creative approach is more valuable.

Biology

What topics are included?

- Development of practical skills in biology
- Cell structure
- Biological molecules
- Nucleotides and nucleic acids
- Enzymes
- Biological membranes
- Cell division, cell diversity and cellular organisation
- Exchange surfaces
- Transport in animals
- Transport in plants
- Communicable diseases, disease prevention and the immune system
- Biodiversity
- Classification and evolution
- Communication and homeostasis
- Excretion as an example of homeostatic control
- Neuronal communication
- Hormonal communication
- Plant and animal responses
- Photosynthesis
- Respiration
- Cellular control
- Patterns of inheritance
- Manipulating genomes
- Cloning and biotechnology Ecosystems
- Populations and sustainability

Emphasis throughout the course is on increasing knowledge, developing competence and confidence in practical skills and developing problem solving. You will learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how science contributes to the success of the economy and society.

How will you be assessed?

Total of six hours assessment split over three examination papers (2 x 2 hours 15 minutes and 1 x 1 hour 30 minutes) taken at the end of the two-year course.

A wide range of question types including; multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

Opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of both theory and practical skills through the examinations.

What are the benefits?

An interesting and challenging learning experience, linking key biological ideas and understanding how they relate to each other.

The development of transferable skills including; investigative, problem solving, research, decision making, mathematical skills and analytical skills.

Opens up a range of possibilities for further study and careers associated with the subject.

Where can A Level Biology take me?

A Level Biology is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare, such as medicine, veterinary or dentistry, as well as the biological sciences, such as biochemistry, molecular biology or forensic science. Biology can also complement sports science, psychology, sociology and many more.

A Level Biology can open up a range of career opportunities including: biological research, medical, environmental, forensics, sports and science communication. The transferable skills you will learn, such as problem solving, are also useful for many other areas, such as law.

What GCSE grades do I need to achieve to gain entry to the A level Biology course?

You need to gain a minimum grade 6 in GCSE Biology or a minimum grade 6 in GCSE Combined Science.

Business

Is there a lot of maths/numeracy in business?

YES - Business is an essay-based subject but there are 47 formulae you need to memorise. There are no formulae sheets provided in the exam.

How many exams in Year 13 and is there any coursework?

Business A Level is assessed via three exams at the end of Year 13. There is no coursework on this course. The exams all cover the entire course and are two hours each in duration.

Will I have to make lots of notes?

Yes, there is a lot of content on the course, spread over 10 units. We support with learning booklets and extensive materials on our class notebook.

How hard is it compared to GCSE?

A Level is a different level to GCSEs but as you mature as a scholar, you grow into it. You do not need GCSE or other Level 2 equivalent Business qualifications to study it at A Level. You must be aware that the exams are predominantly essays and short essay questions with a small number of multiple-choice questions and numeracy within the papers. We fully support students in developing the maturity of their writing, so they are able to demonstrate contextualised analysis and evaluative skills.

What support is available?

We utilise learning booklets during lessons to support note taking and activities. We also have a Class notebook with full resources, videos, exam techniques. Alongside this we have very experienced, approachable teachers, offer some booster sessions at lunchtime and after school.

How much work will it be?

In order to get the highest grades in Business A Level, you will need to utilise time outside of the classroom to develop your knowledge of both current affairs and real businesses. Homework is set regularly but in addition to this, to achieve the highest grades, students must check understanding, practice their exam techniques, practice calculations and memorise a lot of content and formulae to be able to apply it in their writing.

What careers is A Level Business good for?

Every organisation you will work for or set up, whether it is a multi-national company, a hospital, a charity or even a government organisation is a business. Business supports careers and education in a number of fields including but not limited to finance, accountancy, marketing, HR, law and technology. It is an excellent step towards a career pathway for the higher-level training contracts and professions within both the Jersey and International job market.

Chemistry

How much practical work is there?

In Year 12 usually around 1 practical activity per week, in Year 13 a little sparser, but some organic practical work takes up to 4 lessons to complete. The practical component is designed to be passed, it's only those students who do not attend who do not get it.

How is practical work assessed?

We keep records of our practical work and assess things like drawing diagrams, results tables, choosing apparatus, method design and recording information precisely. In the exams 15% of marks are based around practical work or knowledge; this may be analysis or evaluation of results provided, or asking for expected colour changes or how we would test for the presence of a chemical.

Is it much harder than GCSE Chemistry?

Yes, there is a definite step up to Year 12 and another step up to Year 13. At both stages you need to be able to use and interpret terminology appropriately, remember facts effectively, make links to other areas of the course and to use higher order thinking skills such as application and evaluative skills.

Why do you need a grade 6 in Maths?

Chemistry is split into 3 parts: Physical, Inorganic and Organic Chemistry. The physical chemistry in particular uses lots of mathematical reasoning including both log to the base 10 and natural logs which are not encountered at GCSE. The inorganic and organic parts also have a fair bit of spatial reasoning, and you should know about chemical calculations around moles and ratios from GCSE Chemistry. This means we need to be competent at rearranging expressions such as $\text{mass} = \text{moles} \times \text{relative molecular mass}$, as well as handling very large and very small numbers using standard form.

How much extra study is needed?

Anyone can succeed at A Level Chemistry, but it does take a lot of hard work. We recommend 4-5 hours outside of lessons to include things like re-viewing lesson notes, adding to notes using the textbook, learning vocabulary, doing more practice calculations, completing any homework set, reading more about the chemicals we encounter in lessons and questions, and revising for tests by making flashcards, mindmaps and doing practice exam questions.

Computer Science

Do I need programming experience?

Programming is an important aspect of the course and would help greatly if you have done some programming before starting the A Level course. There are many online platforms which you can use to teach yourself programming. Do frequent practicing to develop your understanding.

What programming languages will I use upon the course?

Primarily we will use Python to solve problems in class. We will also learn some basic concepts JavaScript and SQL and low-level programming. During your programming project you are able to develop an application using the programming language of your choice.

Do I need any textbooks for the course?

We use a range of online resources to study the content of the course, so no books are required.

DEC!

Why has DEC! been developed and what kind of careers can it lead towards?

There is a skills gap in the construction industry and DEC! has been designed to encourage the talents young people need to enter careers in this field; jobs like architects, structural and civil engineers, quantity surveyors, land surveyors, environmental consultants, project managers and all the other many, many career paths that exist within the built environment.

What type of student is DEC! aimed at?

Students that have creativity and research skills with interests in the built environment around them and the importance of environmental issues will find lots to enjoy on the course.

What is the ratio between exam and project? Your final grade in DEC! would be granted based on a 50:50 split between a portfolio and an examination. The portfolio work runs from the start of Year 12 right until the Easter of Year 13. Large chunks of the work you do in your portfolio will be revision material for the examination.

Do I need to complete the exam and the portfolio?

You must pass the examination and pass each of the six units in the portfolio to pass the course.

What happens if I fail the exam?

Whilst you must pass the exam to pass the course, the way DEC! is set up is that you get the opportunity to sit the exam twice if you wish to. The first sitting is in the January of Year 13. If you fail or are not happy with your grade, you can choose to take the exam again in May, but only the best of the two exam grades will count. This means you have the opportunity to improve/ pass without the pressure of your exam mark going down.

Can I choose DT/Art alongside DEC!?

Yes, and former students have done extremely well in the past doing this. The main factor you must consider is the amount of ongoing assessed coursework you are opening yourself up to. DEC and DT can work well as you can design something for your building project in DT and Art alongside DEC! allows your creative flair to come to the fore.

Do I need Maths to succeed at DEC! Level 3?

Whilst there are some Maths elements in the DEC! specification for portfolio and examination, they are generally quite specific topics and the majority should be accessible to you having followed GCSE maths.

Do I need DEC! Level 2 to apply for the Level 3 qualification?

Many students have succeeded with good grades on the Level 3 course with no previous DEC! experience. That said, having completed the Level 2 does give an advantage in that you know a little more of what to expect from the course and you're likely to have experience in some of the software we will be using.

What does the portfolio include?

The portfolio consists of six units, each with three Learning Outcomes within them. The portfolio is an opportunity to learn about what is involved in designing and delivering a building project and using this knowledge to create your own building project design to fulfil a set brief. You will then go on to build a digital replica of your design within industry standard Building Information Modelling (BIM) software. In addition, you will present your work to your class and visiting industry professionals who will be able to give you relevant and personal feedback.

What is the difference between DEC! and Design Technology?

Whilst they are similar, there are some key differences. DEC! is completely focused on construction and the built environment, whereas DT is about designing and creating products. You should be aware that there is no specific practical work on the DEC! course, although you do complete some technical 3D modelling of your design on a computer using the BIM software.

Why is DEC! a 'Level 3' and not an A Level?

The DEC! Level 3 Diploma qualification is at an identical standard and therefore offers the same UCAS points as a traditional A Level, having passed the same rigorous accreditation processes.

What could I do next after DEC!?

There are a huge variety of next steps options for you after DEC! both on and off island. As DEC! is construction related and gives you lots of very specific and relevant skills to the industry, we have had former students start in construction related full-time work as well as undertaking the day-release HNC/degrees in Construction Management or Civil Engineering offered at University College Jersey alongside their jobs in construction. Former DEC! Level 3 students have also gone onto university off island to pursue full time Higher Education courses towards careers in the built environment.

Do you recommend DEC!?

Absolutely! In addition to seeing your teacher, you will get to meet a variety of industry professionals from across the construction sector who will discuss the learning, your project and your work. This gives you up-to-the-minute insight into the industry and make contacts with many of Jersey's key players in the built environment. It is a fantastic course that has gained respect from companies across the Jersey and UK building industry due to the calibre of work and skills of the students who have completed it.

Design Technology

What is the ratio between exam and project?

The final grade you will get is based on 50% examination taken in the summer of Y13 and the project completed from July in Y12 to the end of February in Y13 (approximately).

Can you do DEC/Art and DT?.

Yes, the main consideration is the amount of coursework you are opening yourself up to. DEC! and DT can work well as you can design something for your building project in DT.

What is the difference between DEC! and DT?.

They are similar and different. The key issue is DEC! is completely focused on construction. DT is focused on products from building to everyday objects to packaging and as such is easier to align with a future career path. If you think you want to be a primary school teacher, you could do a project for a nursery school. If you want to be a dentist you could do a project related to dentistry. The coursework in DT is completed primarily in Y13 whilst in DEC! courses work is completed in Y12 and Y13.

What is covered in Y12 in DT?

Y12 in DT is about skill building and covering the core theory work so you will have a mix of lessons covering basic theory, sketching, CAD and creativity. This is done through a number of small projects with a focus. In addition, there will be the first 8 (of 12) units of theory to cover, again linked to the project work. Units 9 – 12 are covered in Y13.

Do you recommend DT?

Yes, whole heartedly. You do not have to be planning on becoming a designer the course is an excellent add on to other subjects and to use it to show a personal interest in a particular area by biasing project work, but if you have an interest in design then obviously it is important!

Do I need a GCSE in Design Technology?

No, but it does help, you will be one step ahead if you have completed some creative work such as art/textiles/media. If you have not done a GCSE course, you will be given a GCSE revision guide to work through in the first term to help fill in basic understanding.

Drama & Theatre

Do I need to have done Drama GCSE to do Drama & Theatre A Level?

No. Although some of the Drama vocabulary and key concepts in Drama GCSE apply to the A Level, there is a HUGE jump from GCSE to A Level anyway, so really the GCSE does not give you much of an advantage. So long as you are interested in how ideas are communicated through the medium of Drama and Theatre, all of the key vocab and skills that you will need are covered within the course.

Is Drama & Theatre A Level really only relevant to people who might want to work as an actor?

No. This is NOT a vocational acting course. If you want to be an actor, you probably need to go to Drama School after A levels. This is a very useful stepping stone to becoming an actor, but it is absolutely not designed just for those careers. The skills you will develop in Drama & Theatre relate extremely well to a huge range of careers, both within and beyond the Arts industry.

Do you have to act a lot in the A level Course?

Students tend to prefer to be assessed on Acting Skills for their coursework, but there are other skills you can be assessed on. You will have to do Scripted and Devised work, but you could be assessed as a designer (e.g. Set, Sound, Lighting...) for those parts of the course. You **do** have to be comfortable acting in class as we will explore the set texts and coursework pieces through practical workshops, so whilst you don't have to get marked on your acting, you will be expected to make a contribution as an actor during your lessons.

Will I have to do a lot of work outside of lessons?

Yes. There are coursework units where you will have to create a piece of theatre in a small group. You will be expected to make yourself available for additional rehearsal sessions, learn your lines (if you're an actor) and be thoroughly reliable.

Are you assessed in groups?

Yes and no! You will work in a group to create a piece of theatre from scratch. You are marked individually but your contribution to that group process and final piece will have an impact on the overall effectiveness of the work and therefore on the grades. If people are not committed and reliable, sadly, yes, it might affect other people's marks in that group. This is why the skills you need for Drama are so transferrable – teamwork, endeavour, resilience and commitment are really important in Drama and in life!

Economics

How is Economics different to Business as an A Level subject?

Business is how a business operates breaking it down into Finance, Marketing, Operations, HR and IT and looks at the external impacts on a business whereas Economics takes a broader picture looking at individual markets like the housing market and what is influencing this sector and how we can show this with use of diagrams as well as looking at what a government is trying to achieve in terms of Inflation, Employment, Economic Growth, Trade, The Environment and Equal opportunities.

Do I need to be good at Maths?

There is a certain amount of Maths involved and we ask for a minimum of grade 5 at GCSE however the maths used is fairly basic involving things like percentage changes and looking at data.

Is Economics really difficult?

Economics requires application and effort and research outside of the classroom. However, you are given plenty of time to complete work and assistance and as long as you put the effort in you will find it a highly rewarding subject enabling you to understand how the world works.

What exams are there for Economics?

There are 3 exam papers each lasting 2 hours.

Paper 1 is on Micro Economics: Looking at how Markets behave, with questions being a mix of 2, 4, 9 and 25 marks based on a case study. Section B of this paper you have a choice of 2 Essays and have to answer a 15 mark and 25 mark question which asks you to analyse and evaluate a question regarding the markets and how they operate.

Paper 2 is on the Macro Economy and is about the National and International Economy and what Governments do. There are given extracts which in the 2, 4, 9 and 25 mark questions you need to refer to and use the data. In section B of this paper, you have a choice of 2 essays on a given topic and have to answer a 15 and 25 mark question.

Paper 3 has 30 multiple choice questions covering the whole course, Part B of the paper you are given a booklet with information and data and make use of this in answering a 10 mark, 15 mark and 25 mark question, for example in the 2022 paper the questions were based on a case study for the aircraft manufacturing industry comparing Boeing to Airbus

What benefit is there for me in studying Economics?

You will gain a real understanding of the dynamic forces which drive society forward and what makes people and governments make the decisions they do – it will help you understand better how society works and with this knowledge you will be better prepared to make sense of the world and be able to apply this in the work place or in your studies at University no matter what career or course you decide to choose.

English Literature:

Do we have to read Books?

Yes. We read 2 plays and a novel for paper 1, we read poetry and 2 novels for paper 2. For your coursework you will read Betjeman's poetry and a novel. Critical reading takes the form of reading critical essays.

Do we have to learn quotations?

Yes. Quotations are learnt for paper 1, each of the texts. Paper 2 is an open book exam, so a clean copy of each text is provided in the exam, removing the requirement for paper 2, to learn quotes.

Do we have to use terminology?

Yes. Referring to quotations, the terminology links to what is signified/shown by the quote – what the author is exploring, usually because of the context of the text. The terminology is not just a one-word label anymore, it's seeing what the terminology shows.

Do we have to complete coursework?

Yes. It is worth 20% of your final grade.

Can I select my own book for prose coursework?

Yes, as long as it is not on the banned list of texts that the exam board provides us with.

English Language:

Are there many texts to read?

Yes. We look at a variety of many different non-literary genres in order to further our understanding of the subject of Language.

Do we have to complete coursework?

Yes. It is worth 20% of your final grade. Section A is a language investigation, which you determine. Section B is an original piece of writing for a specific purpose, as well as a commentary about the language choice between your stimulus writing and your original writing.

Can I select my own texts to read?

Yes, as long as it is in order to study representations and meaning in language or looks at language change and language diversity which is primary focuses of the A Level Language course.

Is there any focus on Literature for this subject?

No. There is a focus on non-literary/non-fiction texts for this course including newspaper articles, speeches, new age modes of communication (texts, forums, blogs) and spoken speech.

Do we need to learn the frameworks/terminology?

Yes. The terminology counts for 10 marks in each answer across both exam papers and the coursework.

Do the questions change in Paper 1?

No. The questions for Paper 1 stay the same however, the data sets change for every examination series.

How are the texts selected for Paper 1?

The texts in Paper 1 are always selected by theme but are different in terms of when they were written and the text types that are used.

English Language and Literature:

Is it a lot of reading?

YES. In Paper 1 you must read an anthology of texts surrounding the city of Paris and how it is represented. You will also read a novel in *The Handmaid's Tale* and finally an anthology of Poetry by Heaney. For Paper 2 you will read the novel *The Kite Runner* and the play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Finally, for coursework you choose a literary and non-literary text which will likely involve reading a novel or play etc.

Is it more like literature or language?

The answer is it combines elements of both. There is a study of characterisation and analysis of literary texts as well as a deeper appreciation of specific language terms and how they impact our understanding of the language. This means in some ways there are twice the terms to learn as you learn literary and language terms.

What is the coursework?

The coursework is worth 20% and it is a comparison of a literary and non-literary text. This is chosen by the students so long as both texts are academic and not on the banned list. They will be comparing how language terms, such as metaphor, are compared and utilised across both texts. Literary texts usually include genres such as plays, novels and collections of poetry where non-literary could include interviews, speeches or articles.

Is there any creative writing in the subject?

Yes, the subject offers a re-creative task in Paper 2 for *The Kite Runner*. This requires students to re-imagine an extract of the novel from a different character's perspective and offers students the chance to showcase creative ideas and writing.

How long are the exams?

Paper 1 is long as it is 3 hours straight. Paper 2 is shorter at 2.5 hours. Coursework is done in class and at home over the final half-term of Year 12.

Film Studies

Is Film Studies A level well-regarded by universities?

If you are looking to undertake an Arts-related undergraduate degree or study Fine Art at Art College or even Performing Arts at Drama School, then Film Studies offers you the chance to acquire production skills. Alongside this, you are encouraged to develop excellent levels of insight into aspects of culture and history which provide vital context for study at HE level. Additionally, skills in Film Analysis and research skills developed during the course are also invaluable as the basis for undertaking a degree in English, History or even Sociology.

What's the difference between A level Film Studies and A level Media Studies?

Simply put, they are two very different subjects. While Film focusses only on Film Texts (you study about 20 during the two-year course), Media has a much broader scope looking at a range of different platforms such as Radio and Newspapers.

Film Studies takes films and gets you to analyse them in the way that you would an English set text by getting you to analyse them in depth. In this way, the subject has more in common with English Literature than it does with Media where only the Film Industry is studied.

What subjects does A Level Film Studies go with?

Film goes with any A level subjects but particularly English Language or Literature, Art, Drama and Theatre and History.

What prior study or practical experience do I need to take Film Studies?

None, just a good level of enthusiasm for film as an art form - we don't watch Marvel films! You need an open mind and to be prepared to watch films which challenge you as they may be black and white, old, experimental, from another culture or even all of these! No prior technical skills in Film production are required, but again, a willingness to learn is important. Good written skills (or a willingness to develop them) are also vitally important, as there is a strong emphasis on written analysis during the two, two and half hour exams at the end of the course.

French

Is it difficult?

Try this: Quels sont les différences entre le système éducatif en France et en Angleterre? Do you think you could answer this after studying the topic thoroughly?

How good do I have to be?

If you understand most of what you have covered at GCSE at higher level so far, and you have enjoyed it, you will probably cope well at A level. You need to be interested in the cultural and social side of the language too. You need to achieve a grade 6 at French GCSE.

What are lessons like?

You will be taught in a variety of ways and your lessons will cover all aspects of language work: topic work, grammar, listening practice and speaking practice with the French assistant. Lessons will involve group work, individual tasks, essay writing and research projects. The topics mostly involve social and cultural issues within French speaking countries.

How much homework is there?

You will need to study for a further 5 hours a week to ensure you get the very best grade you can. Homework will vary between learning vocabulary, writing summaries, translating short texts or preparing speaking tasks and research about the topics.

Geography

What course is taught?

Edexcel

What will I study?

Tectonics, coasts, regeneration, globalisation, water and carbon cycles, superpowers, health human rights and intervention

Will there be trips?

Yes, there are 4 on-island fieldtrips required for entry for the exam.

What skills do I need?

Essay writing skills, statistical and mathematical skills, and understanding of the physical and social sciences.

History

How much transition is there from GCSE to A Level History?

A Level History is harder as the content is greater and more complex however, we build in lots of assessment opportunities to help you build the required skills to be successful.

Should I have a genuine interest in History?

Absolutely! Your enthusiasm will help greatly with your studies and additional research will provide you with better arguments and knowledge to use in your exam responses.

How can I be successful at A Level History?

Be organized, attend all lessons and be willing to learn – it is really that simple!

Is my Pre-A Level task important?

Yes, it is given that this task will give you the contextual knowledge needed to understand the course you will embark on.

Is studying History important?

I believe History is one of the single most important subjects to study. It will help you build many needed skills for the wider world and will teach you the art of debate, which in turn will give you the confidence to make reasoned judgements about the world we live in.

ICT

What type of software do we use?

We use a range of applications from Microsoft Office and Adobe creative cloud. All the applications can be downloaded and used on your own personal computer as part of our schools' licences, so you don't need to purchase any software.

What type of computer do I need to use at home?

Any device (laptop or PC) which runs a Windows operating system will be beneficial as Microsoft Access (database application) runs upon this type of system (not an Apple device)

Maths

Level 3 Math Studies (1350)

Does this count as one of my A Level choices?

No, it is an optional extra qualification on top of your 3 A Level subjects and uses 4 extra lessons a week.

Why should I choose an extra subject?

This course suits those students who would like to continue Maths but not do A Level because they have not got the required grade or just want a one year option above GCSE.

Does this course give you UCAS points?

It has the same UCAS tariff points as AS.

As this is a one-year course can I start in Year 13 instead of Year 12

This course is primarily designed to be studied in Year 12.

Which A Level subjects does it go well with?

As it is a contextual Maths qualification (all skills are used in relation to real life problems), it covers data analysis, financial Maths and estimation problems, it therefore suits students studying Psychology, Business, PE, Geography and Science, to name a few.

A level Maths (9MA)

I have heard Maths is one of the hardest A levels to complete. Is this true?

Yes. A level Maths requires you to have a solid understanding of a number of topics at GCSE in particular algebra.

Why is A level Maths considered one of the hardest A levels?

Allied to needing very good prior knowledge you will encounter new topics most lessons and will have to build upon these as you develop and grow your Maths knowledge.

What do you need to do to achieve top grades in A level Maths?

The simple answer is work hard and ask questions. Don't be satisfied with a reasonable understanding of a topic.

Will I struggle if I have a grade 6 at iGCSE or GCSE?

Students with grade 6 do find A level challenging, this is because they may not have mastered top end algebraic skill.

Do you need to be good at Physics to be successful with the mechanics component in A level Maths?

Not necessarily as you will be taught the concepts behind the mathematics. However, students do find that both subjects complement each other.

A level Further Maths (H245)

Do I need to study A level Maths as well as A level Further Maths.

Yes, it is a requirement to studying A level Further Maths.

Do I need to take A level Further Maths to study Maths at University?

No. Not all 6th form providers run Further Maths courses. The universities are aware. However, if you are considering Maths at University, you should look to take the A level Further Maths option.

How many hours of Maths would I be studying in class.

10 hours. 5 hours of A level Maths and 5 hours of A level Further Maths.

Do I have to study statistics?

Statistics is part of the A level Maths programme but not on the A level Further Maths we run at Hautlieu. You will do additional mechanics and plenty of pure mathematics.

Media Studies

Is Media Studies A level well-regarded by universities?

If you are looking to undertake an Arts or Cultural Studies-related undergraduate degree or study a vocational degree in Media Production or Journalism, then Media Studies offers you the chance to acquire a good mix of production skills and analytical skills. Alongside this, you are encouraged to develop excellent levels of critical insight into aspects of culture and history which provide vital context for study at HE level. Additionally, the research skills and theoretical understanding developed during the course are also invaluable as the basis for undertaking a degree in Sociology, English (linguistics), Business or History.

What's the difference between A level Film Studies and A level Media Studies?

Simply put, they are two very different subjects. Media has a much broader scope looking at Media texts across a range of 9 different platforms such as Radio, Newspapers and Online. Film Studies focusses only on studying Film Texts and although Film is a Media platform in Media Studies, only the Film Industry is studied.

What subjects does A Level Media Studies go with?

Media goes with any A level subjects but particularly English Language, Business, Psychology, Photography and History.

What prior study or practical experience do I need to take Media Studies?

None, just a good level of enthusiasm for learning about how the Media operates in contemporary society. Media A level is ultimately concerned with studying and evaluating how powerful institutions have influence over the everyday lives of citizens. You need an open mind and to be prepared to engage in media debates around issues like the effects of video games on audiences or the influence of the press on elections. In addition, no prior technical skills in Media production for the NEA (coursework) are required, but again, a willingness to learn is important. Good written English skills (or a willingness to develop them) are also vitally important, as there is a strong emphasis on written analysis during the two, two-hour exams at the end of the course.

Music

Do you need to have taken an exam in Performance e.g. ABRSM Grades or Rock school Grade examinations to do A Level Music?

No, you do not need to have taken any performance examination. However, at audition during induction days, I will listen to all students wishing to apply to do A Level Music play a piece of their choice and be able to hear what standard of music is being played and to what skill. I would expect students to be playing pieces to at least Grade 5 standard on their instrument or voice when starting the A Level, with a view to being at least Grade 6 standard by the end of Year 12 and Grade 7 by the end of Year 13. The examination board requires that students are a minimum of Grade 7 standard to perform their final performance coursework of the A level.

Can I do A Level Music if I did BTEC Music at my previous school?

The BTEC syllabus doesn't provide the foundation skills of listening and appraising which are part of the GCSE and A level syllabi. If you took BTEC Music, you can however do Grade 5 Theory (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music) which will be a helpful substitute to the BTEC qualification.

Can I perform as a vocalist, instrumentalist or both?

You can perform as any of these. You are free to decide, as long as it shows your best skills.

What is the audition process to get onto the A Level Music programme?

You will be invited to an audition during induction days. You will be asked to prepare a piece of music as either an instrumentalist or vocalist (or both if you wish!) to a standard equivalent to at least Grade 5. If you do not know your grade, do not worry because I will be able to decide and tell you. You will then perform your piece to me, and I will give you feedback on your performance. You will then complete some theory tasks on standard areas of knowledge such as keys and chords.

Music Technology

I want to study Music Technology but I'm also good at my instrument. Can I keep instrumental lessons going?

Yes, you should always maintain your instrument lessons as they are very important to your creative aspirations and musical development.

I'm not sure whether to study Music Technology or Music?

The Music Technology department works very closely with the Music department. It's quite easy for you to undertake both A levels should you wish and there are a lot of shared events and activities throughout the school year.

Do I need to be able to read conventional musical notation for the Music Technology courses at the Hautlieu?

Short answer is "yes". We won't be asking you to sightread piano concertos, but you need to be able to follow a musical score and talk in a common language with fellow musicians. For the A level, you will need to be able to read basic notation. We ask all applicants to be at the very least a Grade 2 in music theory. Many of our students have ability on at least one musical instrument.

What about after the course?

Our course attracts hard working students, and we work with them to study hard. This makes them ready for university and to work in the creative sector. Our students have gone on to a wide range of destinations including audio dubbing, game audio, live sound, mix engineering, mastering, equipment design, theatre sound, broadcast audio, music production, media composition, media production, radio production, sound design, as well as recording studios.

Actually, I've always wondered, what actually *is* Music Technology?

The study of music technology is usually concerned with the creative use of technology for recording, manipulation, mixing and reproduction of music. It covers a lot of different but inter-related areas, from experimental live electronics, through programming to recording and production across musical genres. At Hautlieu we cover all areas of musical technologies to give students a broad base from which to build.

Philosophy

How is it assessed?

By two 3 hour written exams at the end of the course.

Do I need to have done any Philosophy before starting the course?

No, but you do need to have good reading/writing/literacy skills because this enables you to access the ideas and succeed in the exams.

Is Philosophy difficult?

Yes and no! You can think about anything philosophically, at whatever level you are comfortable with. However, for A Level we do think about philosophical questions like "Is the way the world appears to me, the same as it really is?". A lot of very clever people have been thinking about this for a very long time and are still not sure. To do the course you need to get to know their ideas and then decide on your own view. This can be hard.

Is Philosophy useful?

It is useful for asking questions about the world and our thinking. For example a philosopher would want to know what you mean by 'useful', then they might want to know how you know that your definition of 'useful' is the right one. So yes, it is very 'useful' for thinking about everything and anything.

What subjects does Philosophy go well with?

It goes very well with all humanities subjects, especially if they involve a lot of reading and writing. But also, very well with some STEM subjects. Physics is mostly about things that were once philosophy questions, and many great philosophers have also been great mathematicians.

Photography

What is the structure of the course?

60% Coursework (practical + Personal Study essay)

40% Exam (practical project set by the examining board)

Do I need my own camera?

We have 20 x loan cameras here. We teach you how to use the cameras too!

What are lessons like?

Mostly practical and led by the teacher. There are aspects of theory and knowledge too. As your confidence develops and improves you will find that you have more freedom and independence.

How much homework is there?

You are expected to develop, review and refine your photography blog from week to week.

Should I have studied Photography at GCSE?

Not necessarily. Previous study is a good platform to work from but not an entry requirement. Ideas and a curious and creative approach is more valuable.

Physics

Do I need physics for medicine?

No, but will it benefit your application. Yes, as we run an optional medical imagery module that you can sit as part of your exam.

What A levels support my study?

Maths is around 60% of the course so studying this alongside Further Maths will indefinitely improve your outcome. However, we recommend that you study alongside Chemistry and or an arts. This gives you the broadest opportunity to go on to study a wide range of degree based subjects.

Is there any coursework?

There are 12 short practicals that you have to complete with skills associated. These form a pass fail and are submitted as part of your grade.

How is the exam structured?

The exam is split into three papers year 1, year 2 and finally a combined practical skills + option topic. You get to choose between astrophysics, medical, or engineering.

Physical Education

How much practical do you complete in lessons at A Level?

Nearly all A level Physical Education lessons are theory, unless we are covering a theory topic that can be delivered practically, for example, methods of training or PNF Stretching.

What is the weighting of the practical grade towards the final A Level grade in Physical Education and which practical areas can I compete in?

15% of the final grade and this is in a fully competitive situation.

The list of the sports/activities that students can compete in are shown on the AQA A Level Physical Education Specification; www.aqa.org.uk

Do I have to be competing in a sport in my own time?

Yes, it is a requirement for all students to be competing in a sport outside of school. This must be in a fully competitive context (in a league, in a dance competition, in a tournament etc).

What are the differences between GCSE and A level and is it a big step up?

All GCSE specifications are different and cover different amounts of theory and practical.

The AQA GCSE course has a similar structure to the A level, covering all 3 areas of theory on the course (Sport Physiology, Psychology and Sociology).

Some of the other GCSE courses do not cover some of the Physiological topics for example, Levers and Planes and Axes.

The main difference between GCSE and A level is the larger weighting of the theoretical examinations on the final grade. At A level the weighting is 70% theory examinations.

The A level course covers a larger range of topics, and the depth of understanding is much greater. This is particularly evident in the Physiology. These are topics such as; the Cardiac system, the respiratory system and movement analysis.

Psychology

Do I need to write essays?

You need to be able to construct arguments and write long answer questions (15 marks). You will need to use specific details from studies, use subject specific language effectively and construct well balanced arguments. Some long questions will ask you to evaluate or to apply your knowledge to the real world - so understanding topical issues and having a broad awareness of society is important.

Do I need to do any Maths?

Mathematical skills are important as 10% of the course is linked to Mathematical skills. In order to analyse psychological investigations manipulations of numbers, calculations, statistical analysis and graphical representations are required.

Do I need a good memory?

There are a lot of specific details that you need to remember in order to develop your answers. This requires being really familiar with the material, and that takes practice, to learn it to the level required to be successful at A level. You also need to remember the different exam techniques that are required for each type of question and there are quite a few different styles across the 3 papers each of which contains 3 sections with different styles of question.

Is it about self-help?

No, it is not a self-help course. Nor do we learn hypnosis. We do not analyse and solve an individual's psychological problems.

Will it change the way I look at the world?

Yes, it will. Because you learn about why people behave the way they do and some of the many reasons why this may be the case. Your understanding of people's behaviour being determined by genes, the people they are with, the language they choose to use, or the way they interpret something means that you see the world in a different way with a richer understanding of humanity.

Spanish

Is it difficult?

Try this: ¿Cuáles son las ventajas y las desventajas de la inmigración en España? Do you think you could answer this after studying the topic thoroughly?

How good do I have to be?

If you understand most of what you have covered at GCSE so far, feel confident with aspects of Spanish grammar and you have enjoyed it, you will probably cope well. You need to achieve a grade 6 at GCSE Spanish.

Is it the right course for me?

If you enjoy learning language (vocabulary and grammar), you will enjoy going into more depth with this at A Level and developing all four skills. You will also enjoy this course if you like reading and learning about a country's history, culture, and social issues. Studying A Level Spanish is a bit like studying sociology...in Spanish!

What are lessons like?

You will be taught in a variety of ways and your lessons will cover all aspects of language work: topic work, grammar, listening practice and speaking practice with the Spanish assistant. Lessons will involve group work, individual tasks and short projects.

How much homework is there?

You will need to study for a further 5 hours a week to ensure you get the very best mark you can. Homework will include a range of activities such as learning vocabulary, writing summaries, reading tasks, speaking preparation, as well as ongoing independent study.

In Year 13, you will also be required to read chapters of the novel in preparation for literature classes and spend time researching and preparing for your Individual Research Project.