

Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies

CURRICULUM POLICY STATEMENT

This document supplements the information available in our prospectus and guide for parents and students, and is available to parents upon request.

The post-16 (A-Level) curriculum.

Our **prospectus** explains that we offer a wide range of A-Level courses (over 30 in total). These may be studied over one or two-years. In line with our aims and values, CCSS gives students a free choice of subjects in any combination and, although availability cannot be guaranteed (particularly for students who do not register before May of the year preceding entry), CCSS will do everything it reasonably can to ensure that a student is able to take the subject combination they desire. Our staff are always pleased to advise on suitable subject combinations if prospective students have a particular career or university course in mind. Our **courses guide** details the specifications currently taught at CCSS and outlines the content of each programme.

Students normally choose four or three subjects in their L6th Year and may drop one subject in the U6th. Students on one-year programmes (covering both AS and A2 courses) can choose any number of subjects as appropriate to their university aspirations.

In addition to group lessons, all A-level students receive individual “one-to-ones” in every subject each week. These short review sessions (15 or 30 mins) are in effect private lessons and allow each student to receive individualised support for working within each subject.

Of course, our curriculum is not just about the courses we teach. In line with our values (please see the **statement of values** in the prospectus), CCSS regards the curriculum in the wider sense, consisting of all those activities planned by the college to promote the intellectual, moral, social, spiritual and physical development of the students, and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life at university and beyond.

Extra curricular activities and those features which contribute to the College’s ethos, such as the quality of relationships and commonly expressed values, are exemplified in the way in which the college sets about its tasks and the way in which it is organised and managed. While no extra-curricular activities are compulsory for students over the age of 16 following an A-Level course, all are strongly encouraged to take part in the sports and activities programme, which includes team and individual sports, trips and visits, and programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. More detail can be found on pages 14 to 17 of the College prospectus.

Again, in line with our values and with the focus on success at university and beyond, all students in their Lower Sixth Year with us take part in a personal, social, and health education programme (PSHE), known as the Lower Sixth Hour. We regard this as an important part of our curriculum, as it prepares students for the wider demands of a university education, helping them to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy and to achieve, to make a contribution to society and to achieve economic wellbeing. Students on one-year courses are not currently part of this programme, as it is assumed that all will have experience of such a programme in their previous schools. All students receive university and careers guidance as part of their weekly tutorials, our annual careers fair, and in the L6th Hour programmes.

Students for whom English is a second language will normally receive additional tuition and all students whose mother tongue is not English will be assessed by the EAL/ESL team upon entry. Our aim to deliver an individualised programme of support in English Language equal to or equivalent to the IELTS qualification at grade 6.5 or an IGCSE/GCSE English Language qualification at grade C or above, as these are regarded as minimum requirements for a UK university. Students for whom English is a second language but who already hold appropriate qualifications will not need to take an EAL/ESL course at CCSS, though they are very welcome to opt into a more-advanced programme of language support if they wish.

The Curriculum for GCSE students

We offer a range of GCSE subjects from which students can choose, according to their past experience and qualifications, as well as their future aspirations. Our GCSE students come to us from a wide variety of backgrounds, and so all have different curriculum needs.

Those who are 16 years or older may choose any number of subjects, although our Director of Studies for the GCSE programme will ensure breadth and appropriate challenge in a programme that must include English Language, Mathematics and one of the separate Sciences if a student has not gained a qualification in these areas to date (GCSE or equivalent at grade C or above).

The College does not follow the requirements of the National Curriculum in England and Wales, though GCSE students under the age of 16 must embark on a broad and balanced curriculum that gives students experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative development. For example, many students opt for the Business Information Technology Course that contributes to their technological education. For most, a programme of between 18 and 20 hours at a minimum is regarded as normal. Exceptions to this may include any student with specific learning support needs where exemption would be appropriate, or where aspects of the programme are better replaced by additional English Language support.

GCSE students may also combine GCSE courses with one Advanced Subsidiary (AS) course (the first year of A-Level) where this would provide appropriate challenge and is available.

All GCSE students must take part in the weekly sports and activities afternoon and the GCSE “Form Period”, which covers careers education and PSHE (normally on a Friday). Additional sporting and activity opportunities are published throughout the week.