



# Curriculum Policy

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# CONCORD COLLEGE

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### Introduction

With approximately 85% of the college's intake coming from outside the United Kingdom, the curriculum is tailored to reflect the needs and aspirations of overseas students, while at the same time providing opportunity for all to be challenged in new and exciting ways which they may not have encountered in their previous schools. UK students are offered a broad curriculum which offers them the added enrichment of studying with and learning from young people from a wide range of cultures, religions and nationalities.

The college is mindful of its duty to cater for the needs of all its students given their ages, aptitudes and needs, including those with special educational needs and physical disabilities. In doing this, the school will nurture the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

### Aims

The main aims of the curriculum are as follows:

- It should encourage students to pursue academic excellence and achieve their full potential in public examinations, with a view to progressing to the university of their choice when they leave the college.
- It should be well-planned, coherent and demanding, catering wherever possible for the needs of individual pupils, including the many students for whom English is not their first language.
- It should encourage students to take up opportunities to study independently (see 2.16 Independent and Active Learning).
- It should recognise diversity and encourage respect for the cultures and religions of others.
- It should be supported by regular contact with an academic tutor.
- It should be enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities.
- It should be carried out with due regard to the College's policy on Health and Safety.

### Years

The college currently operates a policy of admitting between 40 and 55 students in three classes in Form 3 who are joined by a further 40 students in Form 4, making a total of 85 -95, who then follow on to Form 5. The two sixth form years are typically about 170 - 210 in number.

#### Form 3 (Year 9)

The following subjects are taught with the number of 35-minute periods in brackets:

English (6)	Mathematics (5)
Science (7)	Geography (3)
History (3)	Spanish (2)
Art (3)_____	Comp./Econ/Leadership/Psychology (2)
French (3)	Drama (2)
Music (2)	Support English (8)
Religious Studies (1)	Personal, Social and Health Education (1)
Physical Education (2)	

The higher allocation to English and Mathematics is a reflection of their importance for university entry.

The sciences are taught in a combined programme of Biology and Physical Science (Chemistry and Physics) with a different teacher for each half

Games is compulsory on Wednesday afternoons.

Support English/English Speaking Board classes are timetabled against French and History for those students who require extra help with English.

There is one Options block where Psychology, Economics, German, Leadership and Computing are available as choices

#### Forms 4 and 5 (Years 10 & 11)

The following subjects are compulsory in Forms 4 (number of periods in brackets):

English (7)	Mathematics (5)
Biology (4)	Chemistry (4)
Physics (4)	Personal, Social and Health Education (1)
Physical Education (2)	

In addition, students should choose one subject from each of these four columns. The first three columns have 4 periods per week, while the fourth column has only three.

History	Economics	Music	Statistics
Geography	Geography	Computing	RS
Support English	Drama	Geography	Astronomy
Economics	History	Art	Music
Spanish	French	History	German
Art	Computing	French	
Computing		Psychology	
Drama			
Psychology			

English for higher level students includes preparation for both English and English Literature IGCSEs. Middle levels take English Language only. EAL students sit IGCSE as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language.

Students study separate sciences at GCSE because an unusually large proportion go on to take at least one science A level.

Students in the higher Mathematics sets sit the GCSE at the end of Form 4 and study Further Mathematics in Form 5.

Support English is offered to those students who require additional help with their English.

In addition, students may enter for GCSEs in their mother tongue language where these are available.

PSHE is covered in the Lower School by weekly sessions which take place during an extended tutor time on Wednesdays and are occasionally followed by external speakers and/or joint assemblies. The programme has a very strong emphasis on statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) but also dwells on other important areas including careers advice and on-line safety. For more information, see Policy on PSHE. One central issue in all PSHE sessions and Humanities and English courses (where discussion is more likely) is that speakers and teachers should be mindful of the need to prepare students for integration into the British way of life, including

- an awareness of equality legislation
- respect for the rights and freedoms of others.

The examination boards for GCSE subjects are as follows:

Art OCR  
Astronomy Pearson GCSE  
Biology AQA

Computer Science IGCSE CIE  
 Chemistry AQA  
 Economics IGCSE CIE  
 English Language Pearson IGCSE  
 English Literature Pearson IGCSE  
 English as a Second language IGCSE CIE  
 French Pearson IGCSE  
 Further Mathematics AQA  
 Geography IGCSE CIE  
 German Pearson IGCSE  
 History IGCSE CIE  
 Mathematics Pearson IGCSE  
 Music Pearson BTEC  
 Physics IGCSE CIE  
 Psychology AQA  
 Religious Studies AQA  
 Spanish Pearson IGCSE  
 Statistics Pearson GCSE

### 6.1 and 6.2 (Years 12 & 13)

Students have the opportunity to take four A level subjects, with the option to study for one further AS level which is taken as a two-year course. A level subjects are studied for 8 periods a week and separate AS levels for 4 periods. Students choose from one of three menus as set out below. Students are allowed to drop one of the four subjects after consultations with their parents, their tutor and the Vice Principal Academic.

The college continues to encourage students to sit AS levels at the end of 6.1. This policy is under constant review given the changing landscape of sharply declining numbers taking these examinations. The reasons for continuing with AS levels are;

- Some key target universities, including Cambridge and LSE have said they prefer students to have sat AS levels because they are strong predictors.
- Many students arrive from countries which have no equivalent of GCSE, so it is very helpful for them to have AS levels as evidence of their academic ability when applying for university.
- Heads of Department value the practice afforded by sitting AS levels
- AS level grades allow university predictions to be given with greater accuracy and fairness.

With approximately 65% of our intake entering the college at sixth form level, the A level choices in particular reflect the priorities of our student body. Mathematics, for example,

### **MENU A**

A Levels				AS Levels			
Maths	F. Maths OR Spanish OR Geography	Economics	History OR Physics OR French	English Lang & Lit		EFL	Art OR Music OR EPQ

### **MENU B**

Maths	F. Maths	Chemistry	Physics			EFL	Art OR Music OR OR EPQ
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## MENU C

Maths	Biology	Chemistry	Physics OR Economics OR Geography	English Lang & Lit		EFL	Art OR Music OR EPQ
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is offered as a core constituent of every subject combination because in every given year very few students do not study the subject to at least A level. Further Mathematics combined with Chemistry/Economics and/or Physics is another increasingly popular choice, to the extent that most cohorts require at least seven full 'Double Maths' sets. Menu A attempts to offer Humanities students a wider range of choices in recognition of the fact that they are preparing for more diverse career choices.

Another very popular combination is Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry, with the option to do Physics or Economics, because so many students come to the college with a view to studying Medicine at university. Students are encouraged to study a further AS levels/EPQ with a view to providing as much breadth in their profiles as possible.

With so many overseas students, English is particularly prominent with many 6.1 students taking the subject for at least one year. They study for the Cambridge Advanced, an exam which qualifies students for university, so long as they get an A or B grade. Students who do not achieve this sit the IELTS exam (UCLES) during their second year.

PSHE is covered in the Upper School by weekly sessions alternating between 6.1 and 6.2 students. These take place during an extended tutor time on Wednesdays and are occasionally followed by external speakers each Monday in the Theatre. The programme in 6.2 has an emphasis on preparing for university and making wise choices when living independently. For more information, see Policy on PSHE. One central issue in all PSHE sessions and Humanities and English courses (where discussion is more likely) is that speakers and teachers should be mindful of the need to prepare students for integration into the British way of life, including

- an awareness of equality legislation
- respect for the rights and freedoms of others.
- The importance of Relationships and Sex education (RSE)

The Extended Project Qualification is not an option as such. Students are invited to apply to do a project and to make a proposal for the subject of their investigation. The opinion of subject teachers is sought to ascertain whether the applicants have the necessary skills and commitment to undertake a project in addition to their other work.

The following examination boards are used for A and AS level subjects:

Art OCR  
 Biology AQA  
 Chemistry OCR  
 Economics CIE  
 English Lang & Lit AQA  
 Extended Project Pearson  
 French AQA  
 Further Mathematics Pearson  
 Geography CIE  
 German AQA  
 History CIE  
 Mathematics Pearson  
 Music EPQ Pearson  
 Physics AQA  
 Spanish AQA

Students may do additional subjects in evening classes if they choose. These include Chinese (Pearson) and Russian (AQA).

## **Assessment**

Student progress across the college is monitored very regularly, primarily by way of tests which take place on Saturday mornings. All students from Years 9 to 13 have weekly tests on Saturday mornings. A-level students have two or three 40-minute tests (according to subject combination), while Forms 3, 4 and 5 students have up to four 30-minute tests (depending on subject choices). Thus, students can expect to have a test in each A-level subject once every two weeks and in every GCSE subject once every three weeks. In addition to this, some subject teachers set aside a lesson for a test in weeks when a Saturday morning slot is not timetabled. For more details, see 2.3 Policy on Assessment

### *Extra-Curricular*

The academic curriculum is supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities which make full use of the college's excellent facilities (See Enrichment Policy). Extra-curricular activities are seen as a central part of the college's provision and not an optional extra. Sport is particularly well-provided for and there is a keenly contested house sports programme which includes football, basketball, table tennis, badminton, cross country running, swimming and athletics. In addition, students are offered a wide range of academic discussion groups and cultural pursuits. They can also choose to go on trips to various locations in the UK, to mainland Europe and beyond. For a full description of the extra-curricular programme, see Enrichment Programme.

## **Curriculum Review**

There is a running programme of curriculum review at all levels, which takes place after due consultation between senior management and heads of department.