

Apprentice of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (AFA)

Last updated

29 September 2023

Last verified

29 September 2023

Coverage

Abingdon School, Abingdon, OX14 1DE

Badminton School, Bristol, BS9 3BA

Bristol Grammar School, BS8 1SR

Clevedon School, North Somerset, BS21 6AH

d'Overbroeck's School, Oxford, OX2 7PL

Kingswood School, Bath, BA1 5RG

Marlborough College, Marlborough, SN8 1PA

Marling School, Gloucestershire, GL5 4HE

Queen Anne's School, Caversham, RG4 6DX

Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, Bristol, BS8 1JX

Red Maids High School, Bristol, BS9 3AW

Ribston Hall, Gloucester, GL1 5LE

Purpose

The AFA programme is taught in schools and colleges to provide a focused and meaningful grounding for students in Creative Writing as they prepare for the next stage of their education, including undergraduate study at university. The programme is designed:

- to enable learners to read, study and write a range of texts, defined in the syllabus as different forms
- to enable learners to write regularly and often, exploring a range of forms and genres, and developing increasingly skilful technical control
- to enable learners to read widely and perceptively in a way that informs and shapes their own writing
- and to share their own writing, and their opinions of the writing of others, with their peers, learning to give and receive constructive criticism and developing their editorial skills.

The AFA programme is designed to equip students with the relevant knowledge and skills for progression to the study of Creative Writing at undergraduate level.

Education context

The AFA is a linear programme of study, and it will be graded A*-E to align with the linear GCE qualifications offered nationally. First teaching began in September 2017 and the first award of the AFA was in 2019.

The Head of Creative Writing at Bristol Grammar School, and the two Principal Examiners comprise the Writers' Examination Board, the body awarding the qualification.

The specification design and development is overseen by the Head of Creative Writing at Bristol Grammar School, and the course is reviewed annually by the Writers' Examination Board. You can find the specification, specimen examination materials, exemplar scripts, and other information about the programme here:

<https://writersexaminationboard.com/>

Students' AFA work for the Coursework Portfolio (WRITE-1) is internally marked and moderated by participating centres, and then moderated by the Principal Moderator for WRITE-1. Students' work for each of the two examined units (WRITE-2 and WRITE-3) is marked by another Principal Examiner. Both the Principal Moderator and the Principal Examiner have experience as examiners for the legacy AQA AS/A2 in Creative Writing.

The Writers' Examination Board will meet annually to finalise the award of the AFA, following reports from the Principal Moderator and the two Examiners.

Final results and grade boundaries are considered by the Writers' Examination Board. The role of the Board is:

- to oversee the assessment of students taking the AFA programme, in line with Bristol Grammar School's policy and procedures, and informed (but not presently overseen) by Ofqual's Conditions of Recognition
- to apply special consideration, where necessary, in line with guidance from JCQ
- to confirm grades, grade boundaries, and to determine grade awards to ensure robust development of the AFA specification.

Awarding providers

- Bristol Grammar School

Structure

The AFA is a single award, graded A*-E. The AFA is currently available in only one subject area: Creative Writing.

Any student at a participating centre may take the AFA in Creative Writing alongside their other qualifications.

The course is linear and is made up of 3 components:

- a coursework portfolio (WRITE-1) worth 60%
- a 2-hour examination (WRITE-2) worth 15%
- a 3-hour examination (WRITE-3) worth 25%.

Coursework is completed during the course of the programme of study, typically two years. The final examinations are taken during an examination season at the end of the programme of study.

Subject areas

Creative writing.

Levels

The full range of AFA grades (A*-E) is intended to mirror the equivalent range among GCE Level qualifications.

Grading

The AFA is graded A*, A, B, C, D, E. Attainment insufficient to lead to the award of a certificate is reported as Unclassified (U), with final oversight by the Writers' Examination Board.

Assessment

- The AFA uses two single tier examination papers covering all grades.
- The AFA is awarded using a mixture of internal and external assessment.
- 60% of the course will be delivered via an internally assessed and externally moderated Coursework Portfolio, with the final 40% being assessed through two examinations. This will be reviewed annually.

- The assessment arrangements mean that all students will complete their AFA in Creative Writing by May each year.

Procedures are in place to handle enquiries about results (EARs) and appeals against EAR outcomes.

- These procedures are aligned with those of JCQ, wherever practicable.
- Procedures are in place to provide access arrangements for students taking the AFA. These procedures are based on current JCQ access arrangements.
- Special consideration procedures are in place and these are based on current JCQ guidance.

A certificate is awarded to all students who successfully complete all the components of the AFA programme.

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

60% of the course is made up of an internally assessed and externally moderated Coursework Portfolio.

Two examinations make up the remaining 40%:

WRITE-2: Commissioned Writing = 15%

WRITE-3: Responsive Writing = 25%.

This will be reviewed annually.

Resit arrangements

No re-sits of units are permitted.

In exceptional circumstances, component results for the Coursework Portfolio can be carried forward from one examination series to another.

Programme size

The AFA programme is closely based on the AS/A2 course in Creative Writing designed by AQA, and is aligned in size to GCE Level qualifications in similar subjects, which is 360 guided learning hours over the two-year duration of the course. However, these figures are for guidance only, and the GLH available may vary according to local curricular practice among participating centres and the learners' prior experience of writing. In Creative Writing the amount of independent reading and writing undertaken by learners may well make a significant difference to levels of achievement. It may also enable the programme to run successfully even in centres where there are fewer than 360 guided learning hours available.

Key issues for UK HE admissions

Any student at a participating centre may take the AFA in Creative Writing alongside their other qualifications.

The awarding of Grades A*-E will be comparable to the awarding of those grades in similar GCE Level qualifications, including the AS/A2 in Creative Writing formerly awarded by AQA.

The AFA is designed to equip students with the ability

- to write regularly and often, exploring a range of forms and genres, and developing increasingly skilful technical control
- read widely and perceptively in a way that informs and shapes their own writing
- share their own writing, and their opinions of the writing of others, with their peers, learning to give and receive constructive criticism and developing their editorial skills.

It also encourages and develops generic academic skills such as:

- creativity
- critical thinking
- enquiry
- independent learning
- international cultural awareness
- communication

Timing of assessments and results

First examinations of the AFA took place in April and May 2019.

Results are published annually to the WEB website in the latter part of August.

Qualification dates notes

The AFA became available for first teaching from September 2017, and is current in 12 centres.

Certification information

Grade descriptions and total entries will be published by The Writers' Examination Board on their website at <https://writersexaminationboard.com/updates/>

Progression information

The awarding of Grades A*-E will be comparable to the awarding of those grades in similar GCE Level qualifications.

The AFA in Creative Writing has been constructed to facilitate progression in writing from the English curriculums provided at KS4 and towards undergraduate level Creative Writing programmes at university. It emphasises exploration, discipline, specialisation, creativity and craft. The progression to the requirements of undergraduate level programmes in Creative Writing and English is natural, with the Writers' Examination Board being in regular liaison with Higher Education centres specialising in Creative Writing, and national bodies concerned with English teaching, such as NATE and NAWE.

Further information

Please contact us for further details:

<https://writersexaminationboard.com/>

Bedales Assessed Courses (BAC)

Last updated

11 October 2017

Last verified

11 October 2017

Coverage

Year 10 and Year 11 students at Bedales School.

Purpose

BACs are courses offered in place of (I)GCSE examinations at Bedales School. Courses are internally assessed, but externally moderated and quality assured by acknowledged experts in the design and delivery of curricula in their subject area.

Education context

As part of the curriculum at Bedales, students' study five compulsory GCSE/IGCSE subjects: IGCSEs in English language, mathematics, and science (double or triple award), plus usually at least one GCSE in a modern language. Students then choose from a considerable range of BACs and other GCSEs or externally examined subjects. View the information on the structure of the year 9-11 curriculum: www.bedales.org.uk/bedales/approach-learning/years-9-11-academic-overview

The BACs are an established part of life at Bedales. Good preparation for A level and development of independent learning skills are common aims.

Awarding providers

- Bedales Schools

Structure

BACs are awarded by the school. Authority for the award rests with the Head, who delegates oversight to the Deputy Head Academic, and other teaching staff where appropriate.

BACs are five-term courses begun at the beginning of NC Y10, with teaching completed by Easter break in NC Y11, and results available at the same time as (I)GCSEs in August of NC Y11.

Each BAC is structured in a different way, with a variety of forms of assessment, weightings, and objectives. Further information on BAC coverage is available on the [school website](#).

Individual subject BACs' content and assessment can also be found on the departmental pages of the [school website](#).

Subject areas

BACs are awarded in the following subjects:

- Ancient Civilisations

- Art
- Dance
- Design: Fashion
- Design: Product
- Digital Game Design
- Drama
- English Literature
- Geography
- Global Awareness
- History
- Music
- Outdoor Work
- Philosophy, Religion and Ethics
- Sport Science
- Theatre Studies

Levels

All BACs are intended to be comparable in challenge to the IGCSE qualification in that subject (or analogous subjects in the case of Global Awareness and Outdoor Work).

Grading

BACs are graded according to their own assessment criteria, but follow the grading convention of GCSE, grading from 1-9. The level of attainment indicated by these is intended to be as difficult to attain as the corresponding (I)GCSE grade. The flexibility, structure, and assessment of the course is intended to ensure students are prepared for the independence of mind and intellectual depth required for A Level and beyond.

All student work, formative and summative, is internally moderated by the academic departments that teach the courses. All student coursework and examinations are moderated and endorsed by external experts including, for example, former chief examiners, those working in university education departments and subject experts from, for example, the Geographical Association.

Assessment

Although timed assessments are a feature of many of our BACs, terminal assessment forms only one part of a rich diet of assessment at BAC. Across the subjects, students can expect to be assessed in ways as diverse as:

- Exam
- Controlled assessment
- Coursework essay
- Sketchbook/portfolio/ social media portfolio
- Artefact (artwork; garment; furniture; building; short story; collection of poetry; computer program; website; blog etc)
- Performance
- Viva voce/presentation
- Composition
- Collaborative project-based learning
- Independent research project

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

Dependent on the subject in question, all subjects incorporate a mixture of continuous, formative, and summative assessment.

Resit arrangements

No resits are available to students. In cases of student illness and absence during assessments, the school follows its special consideration procedures, which in line with JCQ guidelines involves calculating z-scores for missed work.

Programme size

Students receive 140 hours of teaching for each BAC subject.

Key issues for UK HE admissions

Students from Bedales will have taken BACs in some subjects instead of (I)GCSEs.

These are not accredited qualifications but are intended to be comparable in content, assessment, and grading to (I)GCSEs.

Timing of assessments and results

All BACs are completed by the end of the Easter term of NC Y11, and the results are published alongside (I)GCSE results in late August of each academic year.

Qualification dates notes

This qualification is current.

Certification information

Certificates issued by the school. Exact numbers are dependent on size of year cohort and exact number of BACs taken. 270 - 360 qualifications awarded annually in August.

Progression information

Students who have been awarded BACs are prepared to study any of the wide range of 16-18 courses available in the UK and around the world and have been enabled to go on to make competitive applications to a considerable range of providers of higher education.

Further information

All student work, formative and summative, is internally moderated on a regular basis by the academic departments that teach the courses. All student coursework and examinations are moderated and endorsed by external experts from, for example, the Education Department at Cambridge University for the course in Philosophy, religion and ethics, Winchester School of Art for the art course, or by a senior figure from the Geographical Association for geography.

Certificate in Classical Greek (ICCG)

Last updated

3 February 2022

Purpose

The certificate is designed to provide a qualification for students who have covered roughly half the linguistic content required for GCSE. It can be used as a 'stepping stone' for those who will later progress to the GCSE, or as an end goal in its own right for those who are not able or do not wish to study for the full GCSE. As such, it is hoped that the certificate will lead to an increase in numbers of learners who are able to achieve a substantive qualification in Classical Greek.

Education context

There are no specific requirements for prior learning with this specification. It builds upon the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at Key Stages 1 and 2 in a wide range of subjects, such as English, History, Literacy, MFL, logic skills learnt in Maths and Science. Many students may know a little Greek mythology from prior study at primary school or from their own personal reading, but this is not a prerequisite.

The course is designed to enable candidates to develop:

1. a basic level of competence in the Classical Greek language;
2. a sensitive and analytical approach to language in general;
3. an awareness of the influence of Classical Greek on the languages of today;
4. an appreciation for Classical Greek history and culture, as exemplified in stories about Greek myth and history.

Awarding providers

- ICCG

Structure

The contents of the examination are purely linguistic, although it is hoped, and indeed encouraged, that teachers will explore cultural and historical aspects of the Ancient Greek world as much as teaching time allows.

Levels

- Level 3

Grading

Students will be awarded a Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail, according to the overall mark achieved across the whole paper. There is no hurdle of achievement within the paper (i.e. weaker performance in one section can be compensated by better performance elsewhere).

It is proposed that grades will be awarded as follows:

Distinction c. 90% or more

Merit c. 70% or more

Pass c. 50% or more

Fail under c. 50%

Assessment

The examination will consist of one 90-minute paper, with 100 marks available.

Learners are assessed on ability to demonstrate knowledge of Classical Greek by: answering simple comprehension questions based on a passage of unseen text; translating short selections of simple unseen Classical Greek into English, demonstrating knowledge of vocabulary, accidence and syntax as detailed in the specification; answering questions involving Classical Greek grammar, e.g. morphology of noun and verb forms, the use of cases or parts of speech, and rules concerning specific items of vocabulary (90% of assessment).

And to demonstrate knowledge of Classical Greek by translating English words or short sentences into Classical Greek, using vocabulary, accidence and syntax (10% of assessment).

Resit arrangements

There is no Autumn re-sit opportunity each year, but students are welcome to enter for the qualification again in subsequent years. There is no limit on the number of times an individual student can enter for the qualification.

Programme size

Guided learning hours: 50.

Timing of assessments and results

The examination will be available once per year, in June. The examination must be sat during a specified week, with the exact timing at the discretion of the school or college; this is akin to the Olympiad model used in several other subjects. The examination sitting will usually occur in schools or colleges, according to the normal arrangements for public examinations as described by JCQ. Independent learners or adult learning groups should contact the Certificate Administrator to confirm the venue and invigilation arrangements for the examination.

Progression information

This certificate enables smooth progression to GCSE if students can or want to pursue this.

Further information

<https://intermediategreekcert.com/>

Goldsmiths Colfe's Interim Examination (GCiE)

Last updated

1 March 2023

Coverage

Colfe's School

Purpose

The purpose of the programme is to encourage students to complete further study beyond GCSE in a wider range of subjects than would otherwise be considered.

This not only fosters broader academic enrichment but encourages a more informed choice of which subjects to take through to A2 standard.

Education context

These programmes are offered by Colfe's School as a replacement to the AS qualification in Year 12.

Awarding providers

- Goldsmiths College, University of London

Structure

The programme requires students to study up to four subjects for a year beyond GCSE, to a standard equivalent to AS level. Students study their chosen subjects for two and half terms before completing an exam of between 1.5 and 3 hours in each subject. Only Art & Design does not have a formal exam, but instead a moderator appointed by Goldsmiths visits the school to inspect the quality of student work in order to provide a grade.

Subject areas

- Art and design
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Classical civilisation
- Computer science
- Design and technology
- Drama and theatre
- Economics
- English literature

- French
- Further mathematics
- Geography
- German
- History
- Latin
- Mathematics
- Media studies
- Music
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Spanish

Fine Art and Photography are both offered as options under art and design.

Levels

The GCiE is designed to be an approximate standard to an AS level.

Grading

Students are awarded grades of Distinction, Merit and Pass in each subject.

A Distinction equates to an A grade, a Merit a B grade and a Pass a C grade.

Assessment

All students sit exams for between 1.5 and 3 hours at the end of their courses. Exams are set by Colfe's staff and standardised by Goldsmiths appointed moderators (all of whom are subject specialists). The exams are held in public examination conditions and are inspected by Goldsmiths during the exam week. Completed scripts are marked by Colfe's teaching staff and checked by the Goldsmiths appointed moderators. Students are awarded a grade by Goldsmiths.

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

The GCiE written exam forms the entire assessment in most subjects. The main exception to this is Art & Design where a moderator, appointed by Goldsmiths, visits the school to inspect the quality of student work in order to provide a grade. In addition, in languages, the written

assessment is supplemented by marks from a speaking exam which is recorded and submitted to the Goldsmiths moderator.

Programme size

The GCiE courses are taught throughout the academic year with each subject having at least 4.5 hours per week.

Key issues for UK HE admissions

This is an attempt to replicate AS level standards, quality controlled by an external body to the school while not using the whole of the summer term to prepare for and then take exams. Given the increased subject content for the A levels, Colfe's felt it to be impractical to attempt to teach the whole course for many subjects if students effectively lost a term to complete AS exams in the summer term.

Timing of assessments and results

The assessments take place in school exam week (the week after the summer half-term) and results are confirmed (having been moderated) by the end of the school year.

Certification information

Each student will receive a certificate issued by Goldsmiths that confirms the standard reached in each subject.

School Certificate in Philosophy

Last updated

7 November 2019

Coverage

Introductory philosophical ideas and debates.

Purpose

- To provide a short introduction to central ideas in philosophy and a brief overview of some influential philosophers
- To explore some debated questions in philosophy
- To encourage students to engage in discussion and debate as a way of learning how to think philosophically
- To provide students with an opportunity to respond to the material they have learned with a personal philosophical project
- To provide students with an opportunity to present their work to their class in an appropriate format (a display of their research, a video, a podcast or an oral presentation)

Education context

This will be taught primarily to students aged 13 – 14. It is designed to complement their learning in other subject areas, such as Religious Studies, providing scope for them to learn foundational ideas in philosophy, discuss philosophical questions, and develop their skills as independent learners through engagement in research project work. As such, it also serves to lay foundations for later projects such as the EPQ.

Awarding providers

- New College of the Humanities in association with Cranleigh School

Structure

- Philosophical Foundations.
- Philosophical Debates
- Personal Philosophy Project

Subject areas

- Introductory epistemology
- Metaphysics
- Ethics

- Philosophy of mind and language
- Aesthetics and political philosophy

Levels

- Foundation / Intermediate GCSE

Grading

1-9

Assessment

- Assessment is by means of a student project.
- The project includes planning, research and development sections.
- The student may opt to give a presentation.

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

Elements are considered holistically in reaching a decision about grading bands.

Resit arrangements

Projects may be re-submitted in a future awarding cycle provided no more than limited guidance has been provided.

Programme size

20 Guided/notional learning hours

Key issues for UK HE admissions

The project is designed to promote widening participation by creating more equitable access to cultural capital such as is embodied in the tradition of philosophy.

The project is also designed to provide a context within which students can begin to develop their skills in independent project management and research, engagement in an academically rigorous process of argument and counter-argument, and make an appropriate presentation of their work.

Timing of assessments and results

March 2020 Deadline for entries.

May 2020 Online submission of projects.

June 2020 Moderation of projects.

July 2020 Awarding of grades.

August 2020 Publication of results.

Certification information

Security Marking: Public

Document Owner: Qualifications Service Delivery Partner

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Education Information Programmes (EIPS)

Via an examiner's report, available at the NCH website.

Progression information

The skills developed in this qualification will enable progression to a Higher Project or Extended Project Qualification. The topics explored will promote engagement with A Level Philosophy or aspects of A Level Religious Studies.

Further information

Please see <https://www.nchlondon.ac.uk/study/school-certificate/>

Sevenoaks School Certificate (SSC)

Last updated

31 October 2016

Last verified

31 October 2016

Coverage

Graded A* – F

Sevenoaks School, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HU

Purpose

- SSCs are taught in Sevenoaks School in Years 10 and 11 to provide a focused and meaningful grounding for students as they prepare for the sixth form.
- The focus is on independent learning and equipping students with the relevant knowledge and understanding for progression into the sixth form.
- The SSC courses are designed to develop critical thinking and to provide a challenge to students, whilst developing transferable knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- Through interdisciplinary, students are asked to apply practical, critical, and imaginative skills within and between subjects.

Whilst SSCs are stand-alone assessed programmes they also act as precursors to sixth form qualifications, in particular, the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma programme.

Education context

SSC programmes graded A* – F have been available since 2010. They are subject to regular review and revision.

The Academic Deputy Head and the Director of Curriculum of Sevenoaks School meet annually to finalise the award of the SSCs, following moderators' reports. The specification for each subject is designed by the relevant Head of Department at Sevenoaks School along standard lines, and informed by a shared and agreed set of values. Further information available at:

www.sevenoaksschool.org/academic/our-curriculum/ssc/

Specification design and development is overseen by the Director of Curriculum and the course is reviewed annually.

Students' SSC work is internally marked and moderated, then externally moderated by an independent moderator, who is typically a senior teacher from another school or organisation in the relevant discipline.

Final results and grade boundaries are considered by the Sevenoaks School Certificate exam board. The role of the Board is:

- to oversee the assessment of students taking the course, in line with School policy and procedures
- to apply special consideration, where necessary
- to confirm grades, grade boundaries and to determine grade awards
- ensure robust development of the SSC specifications

Awarding providers

- Sevenoaks School

Structure

SSCs graded A* – F are single awards. SSCs are available in eight subject areas.

All students at Sevenoaks School (approximately 152 annually) take SSC English literature at the end of Year 11, and many choose to take SSCs in other subjects.

Most SSC subjects are unitised and contain a maximum of four units in a single award.

Subject areas

Subject criteria are published for the eight subject areas below:

- Art
- Art history
- Drama
- English literature
- Music
- Music history
- Technology robotics
- Technology visual communications

Levels

The full range of SSC grades A* – F is intended to mirror the equivalent range of GCSE qualifications, although they are very different in structure and ambition.

Grading

All SSCs are graded A*, A, B, C, D, E and F. Attainment insufficient to lead to the award of a certificate is reported as unclassified U, with final oversight by the Sevenoaks School Certificate exam board.

Assessment

- SSCs only use single tier question papers covering grades A* – F.
- All SSCs are assessed using a mixture of internal and external assessment.
- Controlled assessment will be between 15% – 70% of the total assessment, depending on the subject.
- SSCs require, across controlled and external assessments, a variety of question types and tasks, including extended writing and coursework.
- The assessment arrangements ensure that each candidate completes external assessments in June each year.

Procedures are in place to handle enquiries about results (EARs) and appeals against EAR outcomes.

- These procedures are aligned with those of JCQ, wherever practicable.
- Procedures are in place to provide access arrangements for students taking SSCs. These procedures are based on current JCQ access arrangements.
- Special consideration procedures are in place and these are based on current JCQ guidance.
- Certificates are awarded to all students who successfully complete all the components of the SSC courses.

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

Unitised specifications allow a weighting of at least 15% to each assessment unit.

Resit arrangements

No resits of units are permitted. Unit results can be carried forward from one examination series to another, in exceptional circumstances.

Programme size

The actual amount of time allocated to an SSC varies between subjects. Courses are aligned in size to GCSE courses in similar subjects and the notional GLH are between 200 – 300 depending on the course.

Key issues for UK HE admissions

All Sevenoaks School students take between 1 – 3 SSCs. The SSC English literature is compulsory for all Sevenoaks School students.

Grades in the range of A*– B are regarded as appropriate benchmarks for progression into the sixth form at Sevenoaks School. SSCs are designed to equip students with generic academic skills such as:

- Creativity
- Critical thinking

- Enquiry
- Independent learning
- International awareness
- Problem solving
- Team work

Timing of assessments and results

Results are available in the latter part of August.

Qualification dates notes

Examinations in all SSC subjects are current

Certification information

Grade descriptions by subject and total entries by subject are published by Sevenoaks School at www.sevenoaksschool.org

Progression information

Sufficient attainment at SSC and GCSE/ IGCSE is generally required for progression to the IB diploma course.

St Edward's School Certificate (SESC)

Last updated

25 March 2022

Coverage

Year 10 and 11 pupils at St Edward's School, Oxford.

Purpose

SESCs are taught in place of (I)GCSE courses at St Edward's School. They provide a broader skill set than GCSEs, using a wider range of assessment types. The courses are knowledge-rich, whilst explicitly teaching self-management, metacognition, communication and research skills. Each course includes a major self-directed project. The level of challenge of the courses goes beyond Level 2, facilitating independent study at Sixth Form level and beyond.

Education context

St Edward's School is a coeducational independent boarding school offering a twin-track Sixth Form of A Levels and the International Baccalaureate. All A Level pupils additionally take an EPQ.

All Year 10 and 11 pupils at St Edwards take (I)GCSEs in English, World Literature, Mathematics, Double or Triple Award Science, a Modern Foreign Language and one further GCSE. In addition, they choose either two SESC and one more GCSE, or three SESC.

Awarding providers

- St Edward's School Certificate Board

Structure

SESC courses are organised into two blocks: Pathways and Perspectives. The courses are structured identically, except that Perspectives courses finish three weeks earlier and then teach a common thinking skills module entitled "Thinking for Yourself" which does not form part of the assessment. Courses begin at the start of Year 10 and finish at the end of the Spring Term in Year 11; results are issued at the same time as (I)GCSEs in August at the end of Year 11. Each course is structured into between 4 and 6 Units. Within each unit, pupils produce work which contributes to Unit Portfolios, which are taken together at the end to create a Course Portfolio. Assessment is holistic and continuous, so there is no mathematical weighting to units for assessment purposes. The assessment tasks for each unit are mapped against the four Assessment Objectives, so that each Unit Portfolio contains at least two pieces of evidence for each of the four AOs and there is an overall balance of evidence for all AOs in the Course Portfolio.

Subject areas

The following courses are offered:

- Applied Science Pathway
- Art Pathway

- Design and Entrepreneurship Pathway
- Drama Pathway
- Jewellery and Entrepreneurship Pathway
- Music and Music Technology Pathway
- Sports Science Pathway
- Ancient World Perspective
- Big Ideas Perspective
- Classical Languages Perspective
- Global Societies and Environments Perspective
- Historical Inquiry Perspective

Levels

SESC courses are designed to be delivered in Years 10 and 11, meeting the descriptor for a Level 2 qualification, but incorporating some aspects of Level 3 in order to facilitate independent study at Sixth Form level and beyond; specifically the statements “Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work” and “Review how effective methods and actions have been.”

Grading

SESC courses are graded from 9 to 1 or U, with grades designed to be equivalent to the corresponding GCSE grade by use of the Ofqual Grade Descriptors for 9-1 GCSEs (2016).

Assessment

SESC courses are built on a model of continuous assessment, with holistic grading of the portfolios against a single assessment grid. A wide variety of assessment types is encouraged, including presentations, videos, performances, individual and group projects, in addition to more traditional forms of assessment. Formal summative examinations are not used.

There are four Assessment Objectives:

- AO1: Knowledge and Skills
- AO2: Development of Ideas
- AO3: Communication
- AO4: Self-Management.

The Course Portfolio for every pupil will typically contain between 20-30 pieces of work with a balance of evidence across the portfolio for each AO; within each AO the pupil is graded from 10 to 1, giving a total score out of 40. After standardisation and moderation and comparison against the Ofqual grade descriptors, grade boundaries are set for each subject by the St Edward’s School Certificate Board.

Special Consideration procedures are in place, following current JCQ guidance.

Procedures are in place to handle enquiries about results (EARs) and appeals against EAR outcomes; these align closely with the JCQ appeal process used for Teacher Assessed Grades in Summer 2021 with a two-stage process; the St Edward’s School Certificate Board is the highest body to which an appeal can be raised.

Contribution of assessment components to overall grade

The four AOs are equally weighted across the Course Portfolio. Assessment of individual tasks and of Portfolios is continuous and holistic.

Resit arrangements

No resits are permitted. In cases of pupil illness or absence for a part of the course this is handled through the Special Consideration procedure.

Programme size

Pupils receive approximately 160 hours of teaching for each SESC subject.

Key issues for UK HE admissions

All St Edward's School pupils take between 2-3 SESCOs. For the purposes of progression into the Sixth Form at St Edward's School, SESCOs are considered to be equivalent to (I)GCSEs. SESCOs are intended to prepare pupils for Sixth Form study and beyond at least as well as their GCSE counterparts, with particular focus on seven key skills:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity
- Self-Management
- Thinking
- Reflection
- Research

Timing of assessments and results

All SESCO courses are completed by the end of the Spring Term in Year 11. Results are published simultaneously with (I)GCSE results in late August.

Qualification dates notes

The qualification is current. The first results will be published in August 2022.

Certification information

Certificates are issued by the St Edward's School Certificate Board.

Progression information

SESCOs are considered to be equivalent to (I)GCSEs for the purposes of progression to Sixth Form study at St Edward's School. In addition, due to the cross-disciplinary nature of many of the courses, many departments will accept pupils onto A Level and IB courses who may not have taken the corresponding subject in Years 10 and 11 but who have strong results in their SESCOs.