

## Changes to A Level courses (2015 to 2017)

As you may well be aware, due to government level change, all A-Level courses have either recently been or are currently being reviewed. Universities have been involved in this educational change and it is likely that the resulting changes will make courses more academically robust. The main changes to A-Level courses began in September 2015 and the key change is in the form of the separation of AS and A-Level. Up until September 2015, all subjects were assessed in the first year as an AS Level and then the points accrued from the AS Level went directly towards the second year or A2 Level. Thus, the marks/points for the AS Level of any subject represented 50% of the final mark/grade for the full A2 Level.

However changes came about in 2015 that 'de-coupled' or separated the AS and the full A-Level and courses can now start to be assessed in a linear way where there is potentially no AS level examination or component; a student can take a subject as a full A-Level and not sit AS exams within their first year. However, all A-Level qualifications can still technically be assessed separately, at the end of each phase, but they have been 'de-coupled' which means that:

- If the AS is examined at the end of Year 12, and the student decides they want to carry on to the full A-Level, they will have to be re-examined on the AS part of the course at the same time as the A-Level at the end of the course. This means that the mark they achieve in the original AS exam the previous year will not count towards the full A Level as it has done previously, however it will still count as a standalone qualification.
- ***This is one of the many reasons we have taken the decision to offer full, two year linear courses, starting in September 2017 for your year of entry.***

For information:

For subjects that started as linear courses in September 2015 (with first AS exams in 2016 and first A-Level in 2017) this has already affected:

English language, English Literature, English Language and Literature (combined), Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, Art and Design, Business Studies, Computer Science, Economics, History and Sociology.

For subjects that started in September 2016 (with first AS exams in 2017 and first A-Level in 2018) this will affect:

Modern and Ancient Languages, Maths, Further Maths, Geography, Religious Studies, Design and Technology, Drama, Dance, Music and Physical Education.

Maths and Further Maths will be changing from the start of September 2017.

If you have any questions about this information or require further explanation then please do not hesitate to contact us in the Sixth Form Office.