

# Sixth Form Guide

Educating girls from the  
age of sixteen to eighteen



**NORTHWOOD**  
COLLEGE

Welcome



**Our Sixth Form offers the perfect environment for A Level study.**

# Being a Sixth Form student at Northwood College is a very exciting and important time. It represents a very different stage in your educational career as you begin the transformation from school girl to Higher Education student.



*The Sixth Form is very different to the rest of the school. It is where students learn to be confident enough to take risks, to be tolerant enough to listen to new ideas and to maintain a healthy balance between senior study, extra-curricular activities and service to the community.*

Academically, students find that working at Advanced Level offers increasing rewards and stimulation. You will be expected to take much more responsibility for organising your own work, for example: planning schedules to ensure that all deadlines are met, learning how to judge the depth of background reading necessary to complete a well informed and well argued essay and developing communication skills so that you can take a full part in class discussions.

With an exceptional track record of academic success and a strong caring and supportive community, I believe that Northwood College's Sixth Form offers the perfect environment for A Level study and will help provide a passport to the best universities in Britain and abroad.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jacquelyn Cornhill". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Head Mistress

## Subject Choice & Entry Requirements



We offer a wide choice of AS and A2 subjects which are listed at the back of this booklet.



Girls usually take four subjects at AS level in Year 12 (five for the most able) and continue with three (or four) of those to A2 level in Year 13.

In addition to the AS and A2 subjects, all Sixth Formers participate in a programme of Complementary Studies, which is designed to broaden and enrich your studies and to develop a range of skills.

These courses currently include Creative Cooking, Communication, Stagecraft, Photography, Music Technology amongst others, as well as various forms of Community Service. In addition, you will have the opportunity to enhance and extend your ICT skills.



## Entry Requirements

For entry into the Sixth Form, you should gain A\*, A, B or C grades in the majority of your GCSE subjects. It is also desirable to have an A\* or A grade in the subjects you wish to study at AS or A Level.





**Your tutor will play a very important part in your life in the Sixth Form.**

# On entering the Sixth Form, our main aim is for you to achieve the highest A Level grades possible, thus enabling you to secure the university course of your choice.

Academic standards are high and we have a committed and talented teaching staff. Teaching groups are small. We see this as essential for effective teaching and learning. It provides an opportunity for discussion and small group work, as well as ensuring a high degree of individual attention from teachers.

The tutor groups in the Sixth Form are also small so that there is plenty of opportunity for you to have individual discussions with your tutor. Your tutor will play a very important part in your life in the Sixth Form; they will liaise with your subject teachers, monitor your progress and will guide you through the Higher Education applications process.

Sixth Formers have full access to all the College's facilities, as well as their own dedicated teaching rooms, study areas equipped with computers and individual study rooms. Year 12 have their own Common Room with an adjacent café and a Fitness Suite is available for use by all Sixth Formers.

## Responsibilities & Privileges



## In the Sixth Form, freedom and responsibility go hand in hand.



*As a member of the Sixth Form you can wear your own clothes.*

High standards of commitment are expected as are punctuality, courtesy and respect for others. Sixth Formers have more privileges than younger students and are expected to play an influential role in their Houses. During their final year, students have the opportunity to put themselves forward for specific positions of responsibility such as Head Girl, Deputy Head Girl, Senior Prefect, House Captain or Vice House Captain.

Every student is also encouraged to take on some form of Community Service whilst in the Sixth Form.

There is no uniform in the Sixth Form, so you can wear your own clothes. Dress is informal but you will be expected to dress appropriately for the working day and to take a pride in your appearance. On formal occasions students are expected to dress smartly.



We are well aware that decisions about future Higher Education courses and careers are of the utmost importance at this stage in your life.



We have a wide-ranging and comprehensive programme of careers advice. All students have unrestricted access to the Careers Library. Careers and Higher Education advice, including detailed assistance with UCAS applications, is provided by the Head

of Careers and tutors. Our advice and support continues throughout the university applications cycle, as universities make their offers to you and you make your decisions about which offers to keep.

Although academic study is obviously the main priority, we have long recognised the importance of the curriculum beyond the classroom.



To this end, you will find Sixth Form life packed with opportunities to develop your interests and skills. There are many opportunities to become involved in Music, Drama and Sporting activities and there is a vast number of clubs, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, plus various cultural and religious societies. All girls are encouraged to engage in some form of regular physical exercise, although school sport is not compulsory for Sixth Formers.

Our tutorial programme and Gifted and Talented scheme add to this enrichment with regular guest speakers who provide further insight into the wider world. In addition, we offer a wide variety of study visits and cultural events, ranging from one-day art and theatre appreciation trips to many types of residential trips.





*The John Lyon School.*

At Northwood College, we are committed to the education of girls and believe that this is best achieved in a single-sex environment.



However, we also recognise that there is much to be gained by pupils at girls' and boys' schools being involved in joint social, cultural and intellectual activities that go beyond the curriculum.

We have links with a number of local boys' schools including Harrow, Merchant Taylors'

and The John Lyon School.

Sixth Formers from each school regularly meet to take part in joint conferences, careers events, as well as social activities such as the Leavers' Ball.



**We have links with a number of local boys' schools.**



**Our Old Girls' Association exists to help keep students in touch with each other.**

DEER MENTOR

When girls leave Northwood College, they do so with confidence gained from their achievements, a sense of responsibility towards others and the skills to equip them to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.



They are confident, articulate and generous young women of whom we are proud and with whom it is a privilege to work. We try to never lose touch with our students and our Old Girls' Association exists to help keep them in touch with each other, as well as helping us to follow their progress and share in their future successes.

Former students have gone on to read a diverse range of subjects including Architecture, Business Management, Dentistry, Finance, Law, Medicine, Drama, Computer Science and Fashion Design at many leading universities.





**Being a Sixth Form student at Northwood College is a very exciting and important time for our girls.**

The following provides a brief description of our AS and A2 courses. Further details of individual courses can be found in our **Sixth Form Opportunities booklet\***.

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### Art (Fine Art)

The Fine Art course offers the opportunity to develop personal expression, the power of observation and analytical abilities. It is an exciting course, using a variety of different skills and techniques from traditional drawing, painting and printmaking, right up to the

use of the latest media, using digital photography and software to manipulate images. For both AS and A2 level, extra-curricular activities include Life Drawing classes and a Photography workshop for Complementary Studies. There is also a strong emphasis on work

produced outside lesson time, including background reading, research and development of visual ideas. Students are encouraged to visit London galleries and museums as part of their independent study.

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## Biology

Biology provides a wide breadth of knowledge which touches on many varied aspects of a range of topics. These range from the internal workings of organisms in physiology and the interdependence of living things in ecology, to social issues including human influence on the environment and the ethical

considerations of genetics. The study of Biology therefore encourages an appreciation of these issues and their implications as well as providing an insight into the living world. The practical work serves to illustrate and to promote an investigatory approach to the subject.

A Level Biology is a popular subject and is an excellent preparation for many careers including Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Optometry and Physiotherapy. It also leads on to many other useful degrees such as Biological Sciences, Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences.

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## Business Studies

If you look around your home you can hardly fail to notice the influence which business has on your life. The goods you possess, whether for immediate consumption, such as food, or to give you satisfaction over a longer period of time, such as television, will have been produced by a business. If you watch independent television you will not be able to escape advertisements making you aware of the goods and services which

businesses provide. If your family purchases a national daily newspaper it will include advertisements for goods and services and also employment vacancies. One of the aims of this course is to develop your knowledge and understanding of business and its environment. This applies to local, national and international levels of business.

The knowledge and skills you will gain from the course will be welcomed by any university or future employer. Countless careers are opened up to you including Finance, Marketing, Law and not least Entrepreneurship. We may even see you in our own Dragons' Den one day!

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### Chemistry

Chemistry is at the heart of technological change and progress. Everyday materials such as plastics, paints and dyes are the result of chemical research. Artificial fibres, new drugs and the microchips that run computers could not have been developed without the skill and knowledge of chemists. Three main areas are studied: Physical Chemistry, the explanation of chemical behaviour; Organic Chemistry, the chemistry of carbon compounds,

helping towards an understanding of the chemistry of living systems; and Inorganic Chemistry, the study of the elements of the periodic table and their compounds.

The A Level Chemistry syllabus is designed to be a complete study in itself or to lead to further studies. It is essential as a precursor to university courses in Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Chemical Engineering, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary

Science, Pharmacy, Pharmacology, Biological Sciences, Geology and Metallurgy. Chemistry graduates are in high demand both in careers directly related to Chemistry and in other areas which require high level analysis and evaluation of data, for example in Law, Accountancy and Business Studies.

### Classical Civilisation

Those who have studied and enjoyed Classical Civilisation at GCSE will continue to gain satisfaction from this course, but students who have not studied the subject before and are interested in ancient civilisations will be at no disadvantage if they wish to follow the course. A number of students who began at Sixth Form level have gone on to do a course of Classical Studies at university.

Students have the opportunity to study a variety of topics, for example: Epic Poetry and Society, Greek Tragedy in its context, Comic Drama in the ancient world, Ancient Cities, Art and Architecture and Archaeology.



## Drama & Theatre Studies

The course demands practical, creative and communication skills in almost equal measure. Students will extend their ability to create drama and theatre, either in a performing or production role. The course will involve taking part in productions, as well as studying plays and playwrights. Key features of the course include:

- Practical workshops: College-based and conducted by outside providers
- Student-led seminars
- Devised and scripted performance
- Student-directed drama
- Theoretical exploration of theatre history, politics and culture

- Study of set texts
- Theatre visits

Although it is obviously advantageous to have studied GCSE Drama, it is not essential and many girls have studied A Level successfully without it, especially those involved in productions in or out of school.

## Economics

It is difficult to provide a clear definition of Economics which everyone can understand, but essentially it is a social science studying how societies decide what goods and services to produce, in what quantity, by what means and ultimately “who gets what”. It is safe to say that Economics is like nothing else you have ever studied!

It is important that you have an interest in economic affairs and a desire to explore how the study of Economics contributes to an understanding of the modern world. Also, any student of Economics must be numerate and literate. You do not have to be a mathematical genius but mathematics and graphical analysis are important tools of the trade, so you must be a competent

mathematician. The ability to think clearly and logically is fundamental. If you like developing and analysing ideas then you would probably find Economics a stimulating subject to study. Economics is not a subject for the faint-hearted since the ideas are complex and much will be demanded of you.

### English Language & Literature

This course offers an exciting and unique experience to study how we, as individuals living in today's society, create our own, individual 'voice'. In other words, how we give spoken voice to facts, ideas, feelings and opinions.

The course also encourages the study of the 'voice' through some of the most significant texts in the English language.

There are two main areas of study:

- How and why we speak the way we do; how the context, topic and audience impact on how we choose our language.
- How and why narrative voices are created in great literature.

A range of forms is covered: prose, drama, poetry and non-fiction. Areas of the Gothic and the Supernatural are explored, from

Bram Stoker to Stephen King, Edgar Allen Poe to transcripts from television's, 'Most Haunted'.



### English Literature

- Do you enjoy reading?
- Have you an open mind? Are you prepared to 'have a go' at books which until now you have never considered reading?
- Do you like the idea of a course which concentrates upon different interpretations of literature?
- Are you interested in developing your critical skills, becoming adept at constructing an argument and

using language with flair and accuracy?

- Do you enjoy comparing different texts on a similar theme?

If the answer is YES to TWO or more of these questions, then English Literature AS and A2 Level will suit you. This course gives you a chance to enjoy literature of all kinds, develop informed, independent opinions and

discuss both your own and other people's interpretations of texts. You will become familiar with the writing, ideas and cultures from a wide range of historical periods. Study groups are small, enabling you to make friends and discuss ideas in a relaxed atmosphere.

## Food, Nutrition & Health (Home Economics)

It is not necessary to have taken the course at GCSE level. Students most suited to the course should have an interest in current affairs in the areas of social, health and consumer issues. There will be ample opportunities for practical work at both AS and A2.

Topics studied include: Society and Health, Food Safety and Hygiene, Food Preparation and Nutrition.

The course provides valuable skills and knowledge for a wide range of university courses, from health-related

disciplines to creative subjects. In addition, it provides an excellent grounding for making informed choices throughout life.

## Geography

By studying Geography you will have a unique opportunity to make sense of your environment as well as gain vital ICT, communication and research skills. Geography helps you to develop an interest in physical and human environments and make sense of the complex interactions and dynamics that exist within and between them.

Throughout the course you will study contemporary issues using a variety of resources from current sources. The one year AS Level follows human geography balanced with physical geography. The full A Level continues with studies in economic and development geography, ecosystems and tectonics. Fieldwork will enable

you to gain an in-depth and applied understanding for the examinations and boost your team working and communication skills. Many geographers have gone on to pursue successful careers in Accountancy, Banking, Law, Marketing, Planning and Scientific Research.



### Government & Politics

Lost faith in government, politics and politicians? Think they're boring and irrelevant? Well, this course may make you think again. It is full of issues which affect how *you* are governed. These issues include the influence of the mass media, the impact of public opinion, the role of the courts. Electoral reform, civil

liberties and the means to challenge breaches of them, and the question of secrecy in British government are also considered, as is the impact of the European Community.

At the end of this course you will have a much better idea of what is happening in the UK and more

importantly WHY! You may not be a future Prime Minister but you will find this course useful for a variety of fields, from Accountancy to Law, History to Business, and, of course Politics.

### Graphic Design

Graphic Design is about creating visual meaning through Art by communicating solutions to image-based problems within a set of constraints. Students will need to demonstrate a range of skills. They will work to a brief and produce designs suitable for commercial application such as: Advertising, Packaging, Logos/Corporate Identity, Information Graphics, Magazine Design and Television/Film Graphics.

The course offers the opportunity to develop personal expression, the power of observation and analytical abilities. It is an exciting course, using a vast area of skills ranging from traditional skills including drawing, painting, print making to computer graphics using digital cameras and Photoshop Elements software to achieve image manipulation.



## History

So, why should you study History at A or AS Level? Well, we could tell you that History at this level is a really good choice for those wishing to study Law, Business, Journalism or Management. In fact, this is true, but we would much rather you chose the subject because you really enjoy it, are inquisitive and are interested in finding out more. If you want to

discover more about the events and themes that have shaped the world in which you live, then History might well be the subject for you! The study of History at this level develops powers of analysis in addition to written and oral communication.

At AS Level we study American History and Indian History. For the

USA this includes the Struggle for Civil Rights 1945-1968 as well as the Korean and Vietnam Wars. For India the focus is on the move towards independence from 1900-1947. A2 modules cover many of the key events of the twentieth century. There is one unit on the Cold War 1944-1989 and a coursework unit investigating China from 1900-2000.

## ICT

A Level ICT has changed rapidly since 2009 and is now much more focused on new technologies, such as video, podcasting, website creation and much more. Over the course you will become proficient with designing and authoring industry standard multimedia presentations, games and other resources. You will look at modern solutions for the storage of an ever-expanding library

of knowledge, files and objects, and you will look at how new and old technologies are applied in a myriad of situations.

Of course, there is much theory to back this up: it is critical that students of ICT enjoy problem solving as they will have to analyse different and novel situations, discerning key user needs and then bending their ICT

knowledge to this situation. Some scenarios include the data handling and processing requirements of large multinational banks while others are more boutique design companies.

ICT is a pervasive subject – there are few fields of life to which it does not apply – so whether you are interested in becoming a doctor or an artist, there's something here for you.

### Latin

The aim of the course is to enable students to read, understand and appreciate Latin in more depth than at GCSE. Students read some of the greatest writers of Classical Latin, for example Cicero, Livy, Virgil and Ovid. In the reading of literature, students are encouraged to develop an awareness of and creative response to literary style and an understanding

and feel of the period in which the works were written. There is an opportunity to enjoy some of the great works of ancient literature in their original tongue, and the challenge of puzzling your way through the labyrinth of a complex unseen passage, perhaps emerging triumphant!

Those who enjoyed GCSE and have good linguistic skills, will find this course satisfying, and good mind-training for all kinds of careers, complementing many other subjects, whether literary, historical or logical.

### Mathematics

Whilst studying Mathematics you will be expected to:

- Use Mathematical skills and knowledge to solve problems.
- Solve quite complicated problems by using Mathematical arguments and logic. You will also have to understand and demonstrate what is meant by proof in Mathematics.
- Simplify real life situations so that you can use Mathematics to show what is happening and what might

happen in different circumstances.

- Use the Mathematics you learn to solve problems that are given to you in a real-life context.
- Use calculator technology and other resources effectively and appropriately and understand when not to use such technology and its limitations.

A Level Mathematics is a much sought after qualification for entry to a wide variety of full time courses

in Higher Education such as Economics, Medicine, Architecture, Engineering and Accountancy. There are also many areas of employment that see Mathematics A Level as an important qualification and it is often a requirement for the vocational qualifications related to these areas.

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## Further Mathematics

Further Mathematics provides an opportunity for the most able students to gain an additional A2 (or AS) qualification in Mathematics,

which may be an advantage when applying for certain courses (notably Engineering). This is a very demanding course, which will be

taught at a rapid pace, so should only be taken by the most able mathematicians.

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## Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish)

Modern Languages are important as a means of communication in such fields as Business, Science, Politics, Economics and Education.

As well as providing students with a deeper insight into the language and culture of another country, a modern foreign language combines well with all other subjects and will equip you

linguistically for employment in an international environment. Classes are conducted almost entirely in the foreign language and students will be given opportunities to take part in a wide variety of activities, including role-plays, debates, discussions and presentations. Foreign language students are encouraged to visit the target language country at least once

during their time of study and take an active interest in its current affairs.

Graduates with a language usually find employment easily after graduating and are often regarded as a valuable asset, as they possess the skills of communication, mental flexibility and teamwork.

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### Music

AS and A2 (AQA) Music build upon and extend the performing, listening/analysis and composing skills developed at GCSE. Students who have passed Grade 5 theory as well as an instrumental/singing Grade 5 (or above), are also well placed to start the AS course. AS/A2 Music are designed to provide not only academic rigour, creativity and originality, but also individual

opportunity, extensive compositional choice, a range of set works to suit individual interests and a choice of set work areas. The AS is weighted towards performance, in any and all styles including electronic/computer based production. A Level Music will provide the ideal basis for entry to Music degree courses as well as joint degrees. Sixth Form Music students are key performers in our orchestras,

choirs and concerts, in which they are given the opportunity to develop their performance and presentation skills.

### Physical Education

AS/A2 level Physical Education is the study of human movement, performance and behaviour in relation to Sport and PE. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach encouraging the development of a range of methods. The course aims to provide greater knowledge, insight and understanding of human performance. Activities include: swimming, athletics, netball, hockey, rounders, skiing, trampolining and dance. There are alternative activities available to students if they

participate in them on a regular basis outside school hours.

The course will be particularly beneficial for students intending to pursue a course in Physiotherapy, especially if they combine Physical Education with Biology at A Level. Other career paths may include Physical Education Teaching, Sports Science, Sports & Exercise Science, Health Promotion, Sports Nutrition, Sports Marketing and Coaching.



## Physics

Physics is the subject that deals with everything from tiny sub-atomic particles to the infinitely large universe. Along the way we find out how everything moves, stays still, stands up or falls down! We study the science behind music and optometry, electricity and the forces that hold everything together.

AS Physics is a demanding and challenging subject. You will learn skills in analysis, verbal, written and mathematical expression, manual dexterity and conceptualisation. However, if you ‘get’ the concepts it can be ridiculously easy! No other subject gives such a breadth of intellectual skills and this is why employers value Physics qualifications

so highly. AS Physics is necessary for all university courses in Electrical, Civil, Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering as well as Physics, Geophysics and Geology and some Architecture courses. Medical schools look very favourably upon AS Physics. It is also a firm springboard for a wide variety of careers from Accountancy to Zoology.

## Psychology

Many students have little knowledge of what the study of Psychology actually involves. They often imagine it will enable them to know what others are thinking or ‘read’ other people minds. This is definitely not the case! In fact, Psychology has close links with Science subjects and uses empirical research to make inferences and draw conclusions about the reasons behind aspects of human behaviour. This research is ongoing – what we know about human behaviour

is constantly being evaluated and challenged so there are no simple answers or facts in Psychology.

There are various career paths you could follow with an AS/A Level in Psychology. You can follow through to a university degree in Psychology, Media, Law and even Medicine. The course allows you to develop critical thinking skills, which are important for a number of careers. As you have to carry out scientific pieces of research, the skills gained here are advantageous for any Science course.



### Religious Studies

Both the AS and A Level involve studying Philosophy rather than learning about religions. You will study two branches of Philosophy: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics. It is actually quite difficult to define Philosophy but basically it involves looking at the ultimate questions in life such as why are we here? Does God exist? How should we behave in moral situations? Philosophers

have devised theories to answer these questions and you will have to decide whether you think they are good theories or not.

Religious Studies is an academic AS/A Level which is well regarded by universities. It can lead to university degrees in Philosophy, Religious Studies or Theology. It can also lead to many different careers as it allows you to develop skills such as

critical thinking and communication skills which are important in many degrees such as Law. The course involves looking at ethical issues and arguments, which is a real advantage for students taking the BMAT examination for entrance on to medical and other related courses.

### Textiles

Studying Textiles Technology will give you the opportunity to develop your capacity to design and make products and to appreciate the complex relations between design, materials, manufacture and marketing. You will develop a wide range of skills including working with others, thinking creatively and making quality products. Over the course you will:

- Develop an understanding of contemporary design and technology practices.

- Apply knowledge, understanding and skills of production processes to produce high-quality products.
- Study the influences of the processes and products of design from a contemporary and historical perspective.
- Recognise the values inherent in design and making activities and develop critical evaluation skills in technical, aesthetic, ethical, economic, environmental, sustainable, social, cultural and entrepreneurial contexts.

Textiles Design could take you into a number of exciting career paths, such as a fashion designer or an interior designer, fashion merchandising and buying, advertising or marketing. Fabric Technologists are also in great demand.



# Discover **Learn** Succeed

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