



CATERHAM  
SCHOOL

# A Level Options 2022

For External Candidates



# Inspiring Education for Life

We aim to provide an inspirational all-round education which combines academic excellence with a wealth of co-curricular opportunities. Our academic track record places us among the top schools in the country. All our students go on to Higher Education and in 2019 over 90% went to a 'top tier' university of choice.

However, we do not believe that raw results alone show the true measure of a school. It is far more important that each individual achieves his or her very best. A truly excellent education is about much more than academic achievement alone: it is also about developing a passion for learning, capacity for independent thinking, moral values, self-confidence without arrogance, and a broad range of interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom. In short, it is developing the whole person, to ensure that each pupil leaves here ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

# The Sixth Form at Caterham

## *Introduction*

As a student in the Sixth Form you will play a central part in the life of Caterham School as a senior member of the School community and as a role model for the next generation.

The Sixth Form also represents the culmination of your school career as well as preparation for University. These two years are likely to be the most challenging and exciting that you have experienced. During this time we hope you will develop the maturity and focused ambition to succeed and perhaps even go beyond your own expectations. Our Sixth Form students involve themselves fully in a wide and stimulating range of activities, and we set high standards to enable you to develop the academic, creative, sporting and personal strengths needed for a rapidly changing world. We are continually developing the programme for our students, creating opportunities for challenge, growth, inclusion and fun.

### **Sixth Form Entry Criteria**

It is anticipated that the vast majority of pupils will pass through to our Sixth Form, though the School will apply a range of academic and behavioural criteria to ensure that pupils are able to thrive in our Sixth Form. Performance at GCSE, previous academic performance, and previous behaviour will inform this decision. Experience tells us that pupils who achieve around or below six 6s (or their equivalent) at GCSE find the pace of study in our Sixth Form extremely challenging with potential consequences for their wellbeing. **Consequently pupils need to achieve a minimum of 44 points from their best six GCSEs in order to qualify for the Sixth Form. In addition, individual A Level subjects have their own GCSE qualification requirements which pupils must also achieve.** The School will consult parents before the end of the Spring Term in the Fifth Year if there appears to be any reason why the pupil may be refused a place at the next stage of the School, although it is likely that these conversations will start at the beginning of the Fifth Year or earlier. Parents must in every case give a term's notice if it is not the pupil's and their intention to continue from Fifth to Sixth Form.

### **The Sixth Form Curriculum**

Students following a subject to A Level will have a two year course and will not sit AS exams at the end of the Lower Sixth. For those starting the Sixth Form in 2020 there will be a few exceptions where students will sit AS exams as it will be in their best interests to do so:

- Geography is following the International A Level course which is still modular.
- Fine Art, Fashion Textiles, Photography and Product Design – all students can submit their work for the AS exam if they do not wish to continue into the Upper Sixth.

### **How many?**

All students will start with four subjects. Students opting for Further Maths will start with five. Whilst the majority of students will end up completing three A Levels, it is our experience that students frequently change their minds about their relative enthusiasm for the subjects they are studying. It is important to start with four as this may well be the appropriate number of A Levels for a particular student or they may decide that their least favoured option in September becomes the subject they are most keen to study further.

By the end of the Autumn Term of the Lower Sixth, following assessments as well as discussions with subject teachers and a member of the Sixth Form pastoral team, some students may be advised not to continue with one of their four subjects. This will usually be because they are struggling to cope with four subjects or because one of their subjects does not suit them.

## Edge and IRP

Edge is a bespoke course created for Caterham's Sixth Form pupils. It asks pupils to spend time outside of their curriculum subjects to explore in detail 3 main areas: 'Learning to Learn', 'Big Ideas' and 'Practical Problem-Solving'. An online platform full of resources and information is supported by sessions which run throughout the year and will be a mixture of visiting speakers, debate, discussion and practical activities. The course has been designed to develop the crucial skills our pupils will need both during and beyond their time at school. Topics include ethics, logic, critical thinking, presentation skills and design thinking amongst many more. By the end of the year, pupils will have been allocated a team with whom they will work towards developing a solution to a real-life problem. They will then present their idea to a panel of judges, with the aim of reaching the final of the OCA Innovation and Collaboration Award which offers the winners on-going mentoring and support to develop their idea further.

The online part of the Edge course begins with a module on Research and Thinking Skills which gives our pupils a fantastic grounding to begin developing their innovation projects and an opportunity to develop an Independent Research Project (IRP), which will allow them to conduct a piece of academic research.

The IRP will typically complement one or more of the pupils' chosen subjects. The final deadline for this will be the end of September of the Upper Sixth at which point the best six will be shortlisted for the IRP presentation evening, one of the standout events of the Sixth Form calendar and an opportunity to win a significant prize. As well as developing a range of skills, the IRP will benefit students by enabling them to impress universities on their UCAS personal statements and in university interviews.

## Subject Choice

Whilst we will endeavour to accommodate your combination of subjects, some combinations cannot be met due to timetabling constraints. **Subjects where demand is very small may be withdrawn.** In these cases the students affected will be advised and asked to re-opt.

Initially you have a free choice of any four subjects. If Further Mathematics is one of the subjects chosen, it is generally expected that you will choose five subjects. Once initial choices for subjects have been made after GCSE Mocks in January, subjects are placed into option blocks. You may continue to amend your choices until the start of the academic year in September, however from March there is no longer a free choice; changes will be possible as long as there is space in the requested subject and the new combination fits into the option blocks. Requests for subject changes should go through Mr Mansell ( [john.mansell@caterhamschool.co.uk](mailto:john.mansell@caterhamschool.co.uk) )

## **Study in the Sixth Form**

As a major part of a responsible attitude towards your work, you will be making a deliberate commitment to two further years of academic study with the objective of maximizing opportunities for your next steps. This commitment brings greater freedom but also greater responsibilities. We will help you to organise your work and your free time to achieve a sound balance between the demands of A Levels, co-curricular activities and your social life.

To complete your A Levels successfully with good grades, you will need to invest a significant amount of time studying independently to increase your depth of understanding. All A Level courses include some untaught time, which is spent in private study and in library sessions. In the Lower Sixth this should average sixteen hours per week. In the Upper Sixth this should be nearer eighteen hours per week. This time may be spent on specific tasks that have been set for particular deadlines and on additional reading, note taking or problem solving, using class notes, texts or reference books. You may also need to complete holiday work or review significant topics from the previous term.

You will have the opportunity to meet staff outside timetabled lessons to take learning beyond the confines of the curriculum. This occurs in a variety of formats, for example the long established Moncrieff Jones Society that involves a fortnightly, student-led session on a topical scientific issue. Most academic departments have similar groups that meet regularly. The Library organises subject-specific book groups and has an extensive range of online and physical resources which are available to you. You will have timetabled periods in the library for subject enrichment.

The open nature of the student/teacher relationships are a feature of Sixth Form life, allowing you to take responsibility for your own learning and performance, within a supportive structure of academic and pastoral staff. The transition to this type of more independent learning is so important for success at A Level and beyond, and with different students developing at different rates, we feel it is essential that we are able to support you in making this transition. Effort and Attainment grades given every half term are analysed to determine whether you have 'license' to organise yourself during study periods, making use of the facilities within the Pye Centre. During the Lower Sixth Year we expect 90% of our students to have gained their license by demonstrating an effective approach to independent study.

## **Making the Transition**

Your satisfaction with your choice of A Levels and your motivation towards the target of University are key elements in ensuring success in examinations. You will be allocated to a Tutor who will monitor your academic work and involvement in co-curricular activities, in consultation with the Sixth Form team.

Your Form Tutor will see you daily to provide guidance in the day-to-day triumphs and setbacks throughout the two years. The tutor group will provide you with support, separated from the busy nature of the working day. Your Tutor will encourage you to take part in activities during form time, with the vast majority of students participating in the Study Buddy programme, supporting younger students with their studies. The tutor will also help you reflect on your progress and help you in setting objectives for the next half term.

## **Sixth Form Forum**

As part of the 'all round' experience and education, forum sessions are organised throughout the year outside the academic curriculum. The themes are varied, including health and social issues amongst others. The programme is reviewed regularly taking into account discussion and feedback from students.

## **Sport and Games**

Wednesday afternoon is Senior games afternoon for all Sixth Formers and a full programme of physical activity options are available for all pupils to enjoy. For those that enjoy competitive team sport, there are a range of options that involve a high degree of commitment to both training and matches. Team sports available are rugby, hockey (girls and boys), cricket, lacrosse, netball, football and basketball. Within each team sport, there is also the option to enjoy it more socially on a Wednesday afternoon, for its own sake, not to prepare for matches against other schools.

There are also a range of new activities for pupils to try such as girls' football, girls' rugby, croquet and pilates. For those that like the outdoors, cross country running in the woods is popular, while racquet sport enthusiasts are catered for with tennis and badminton. Dance and Sailing are also now popular options.

Pupils that are selected to play in a School team will be expected to participate in both practice sessions during the week and in weekend matches, unless prevented by injury or illness.

A wide programme of sporting activities is available throughout the week and is listed in the co-curricular calendar, which is updated at the beginning of each term.

## **Exam access arrangements for A-Levels**

Access arrangements are 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils who have a disability, long term medical condition or special educational need that significantly affects their performance in exams. Access arrangements have to be applied for and approved in advance of the exams by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications). The school is required to have evidence of the pupil's needs over time, ongoing support and evidence that they have used the access arrangements both in the classroom, and in tests and exams. Ultimately, the school decides whether an application for access arrangements should be made considering the evidence. We are not allowed to accept independently arranged assessments, so parents should seek advice from the Learning Support Department if they are considering any type of educational or psychological assessment.

A psychologist's, psychiatrist's or other medical specialist's recommendations cannot be used to award access arrangements. In line with JCQ rules, this has to be decided by the SENDCo, based on detailed and long-term evidence of need for those arrangements from the pupil's teachers.

Word processing in examinations is an arrangement which needs approval by the Learning Support Department, based on the criteria set out by the JCQ.

# SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

Individual subject qualifications are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Minimum Requirement for A Level</b>
Art: Fashion Textiles	7 in an Art, Design (e.g., 3D or DT) or Media GCSE
Art: Fine Art	7 in Art
Art: Photography	7 in an Art, Design (e.g., 3D or DT) or Media GCSE
Biological Sciences	7 in Biology Paper and 7 in Mathematics
Business	7 in Business Studies (if taken) as well as a minimum of 6s in English Language or Literature and in Maths (7s if Business Studies not taken at GCSE)
Chemistry	7 in Chemistry Paper and 7 in Mathematics
Computer Science	7 in Computer Science and must study Maths A Level
Drama and Theatre	7 in Drama and a minimum of 6 in English Language or Literature
Economics	7 in Mathematics and 7 in English Language or Literature
English Literature	7 in English Literature and in English Language
French	7 in French
Geography	7 in Geography and a minimum of 6 in English Language or Literature
German	7 in German
History	7 in History and a minimum of 6 in English Language or Literature
Latin & Greek	7 in relevant Language
Mathematics	7 in Mathematics*
Further Mathematics	8 in Mathematics*
Music	7 in Music and Grade 5 instrument
Philosophy, Ethics & Theology	7 in Religious Studies (if taken) and a minimum of 6 in English Language or Literature (7 if RS not taken at GCSE)
Physical Education	7 in PE*
Physics	7 in Physics Paper and 7 in Mathematics
Politics	7 in a Humanity and a minimum of 6 in English Language or Literature
Design & Technology: Product Design	7 in 3D or DT
Psychology	7 in either Biology or Mathematics, a minimum of 6 in the other and also in English Language or Literature
Spanish	7 in Spanish

\* Further information is in the Academic Departments section on the school website.



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