



Why Bedales Sixth Form?

The sixth form at Bedales offers an unusually broad and stimulating environment in which to spend the A Level years and to prepare for life beyond school. Serious academic responsibility and opportunities for leadership combine to create a challenging and rewarding experience.

Our primary aim is to develop inquisitive thinkers with a love of learning who cherish independent thought. Our founder, JH Badley, believed that involving “head, hand and heart” was the key to growth and development. This is still the cornerstone around which our innovative education system is built. A high percentage of students’ learning occurs within the classroom – and not just in the head sense – but an immense range also takes place elsewhere. Students in the lower sixth (6.1) share much of the responsibility for running the boarding and day houses, taking a pastoral role with the younger students and working closely with the housemasters and mistresses. In the upper sixth (6.2), students join a separate coeducational boarding house, enjoying an environment ideally suited to their many academic and other commitments.

Our top 10 higher education destinations are a diverse mix of Oxbridge, red brick and art college. Bedales students therefore arrive at a similar place to those in more formal education settings. They have just taken a different route. This document provides details of the programme for our next sixth form entry – incorporating recent innovations like the accredited Extended Project and Music Pre-U. The curriculum will undoubtedly continue to develop further in the future.

The students who will gain most from our community are those who will give most and join us wholeheartedly in this unique educational experience. I encourage you to visit us (on one of our regular open mornings or an individual visit) to experience Bedales for yourself, and to quiz the students and staff about the Bedales difference.



Headmaster, Bedales Schools



Student Programmes

The school seeks to offer high standards and considerable flexibility in its academic programme, whilst retaining a wide range of opportunities for personal development and involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Each student’s programme will include:

Academic	This will include class lessons, private study, and tutorial support.
Sport	This will include a weekly formal Sport session in 6.1 and a range of options in sports and/or Outdoor Work in 6.1 and 6.2
Service to the community	All students will be expected to make a contribution to the life of the school and the local community.
Cultural and current affairs	These will be built into some of the compulsory aspects of the curriculum, including tutorial time, ‘6.1 Time’ and ‘6.2 Time’, assemblies and Jaw. Students will also be encouraged to take up some of the many opportunities which exist within the school’s Arts and Civics programmes.
Moral, ethical and spiritual issues	
Personal development	

The Programme in 6.1

The standard academic programme in 6.1 is four AS subjects. Programmes of three or five subjects may be considered where individual circumstances make this appropriate.

A typical week in 6.1 will include:

Academic lessons

28-32 periods (8 periods per AS subject).

Sport & Outdoor Work

Three sessions of Sport/Outdoor Work. (Certain other afternoon activities also count as Sport options.)

'6.1 Time'

One double period a week. A programme including current affairs, personal, social and health education, study skills, careers and UCAS.

Tutorial time

A group or individual meeting with the tutor.

Private study time

Several hours per week will be needed for each subject, to complete formal prep, develop project work and research the subject through associated reading.

Service

All students in 6.1 must fulfil a service requirement. This may involve:

- running an activity for the lower blocks;
- running a school society;
- taking on additional responsibility in the boarding houses;
- taking part in the school's community service programme;
- in some other way making a significant contribution to the school or wider community.

Extra-curricular activities

There is a wide range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities such as:

- membership of a representative sports team;
- membership of one of the school's performing musical ensembles;
- membership of a school society or committee;
- participation as director, actor or stage/lighting crew in a theatrical production;
- work in the wardrobe, or as theatre/concert usher;
- involvement in the school's Outdoor Work programme;
- taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.



The Programme in 6.2

It is expected that for most students the academic content of 6.2 will consist of three subjects at A2 Level. However, the system makes a range of choices possible and, in individual cases, some variation from this may occur.

A typical week in 6.2 will include:

Academic lessons

24 periods (normally 8 periods per A2 subject).

Sport & Outdoor Work

At least one afternoon per week of Sport or Outdoor Work.

'6.2 Time'

One double period. A programme of talks, discussions and activities ranging from spiritual and ethical issues to the practicalities of student life, and focusing on the needs of students in their last school year.

Extended curriculum

A range of special interest courses will be offered, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and some allowing students to explore specialist areas of interest outside the normal curriculum, or to develop skills needed in 'life after Bedales'.

Tutorial time

As in 6.1.

Private study time

6.2 students will need to devote a substantial amount of time each week to the completion of set prep, and should expect also to be running their own programme of related study and revision.

Extra-curricular

As in 6.1 activities.

The Structure of the A Level examination

Most A Level specifications (i.e. the syllabus) have a common structure:

- Two modules at AS Level, suitable for examination after one year of study and together giving an AS qualification.
- Two modules at A2 Level, suitable for examination after two years of study, and making, together with the AS modules, a full A Level qualification.

The AS modules may be taken at any time during the course; on the 'linear' route all modules are taken together at the end of the course.

Modules are offered by the examining boards in January and June, though not all modules are available on all occasions. Modules can be taken more than once; the best result contributes to the final grade.

In planning the Bedales curriculum we have worked to the following expectations:

- The normal programme will be four AS subjects in 6.1 and three A2 subjects in 6.2.
- June will be the only session for exams in 6.1 and the main session for 6.2.
- Modules in all subjects will be taken at the end of 6.1. They are designed for students at that stage, and universities are inevitably interested in the results.
- There will be some opportunity to retake modules in 6.2.
- We shall continue to encourage students to be involved in a wide range of other activities, and to participate fully in the cultural and social life of the school.

A Level Subjects

The subjects available at Bedales for AS and A Level study are arranged in groups which have been drawn up to allow a high degree of flexibility in providing for the needs of individual students. They also take into account the requirements of universities and colleges, and offer qualifications leading to a wide range of higher education courses.

The exact placing and availability of some subjects within the option groups varies a little from year to year, according to constraints imposed by student demand, timetabling and staffing, but a wide variety of subject combinations is always available. Up-to-date information is available on the school website.

Qualification for courses

Entrants to the sixth form, from Bedales and from other schools, are required to have a set of GCSE passes which qualifies them suitably for the Bedales sixth form curriculum. This will normally mean a minimum score of 50 GCSE points* on a nine-subject programme, which is equivalent to five B and four C grades. A pro rata score (averaging at least 5.5 points per GCSE subject) will be expected for larger or smaller programmes. Grade B is always expected for subjects to be continued to AS and A Level, and higher grades may be required for entry to certain subjects. Entrants from other schools are interviewed by the Heads of Departments of the subjects which they are considering and places are offered linked to a proposed course of study. Prospective students apply from a wide range of schools and educational backgrounds, and all applicants are considered on their individual merits.

Where the subject has not been studied at GCSE, entry to the course will be subject to interview for all students, including those from Bedales, and at least grade B in relevant GCSE subjects will be required.

* GCSE grades are scored from 8 for an A* to 1 for a G.



Subjects



Art

Examining Board: OCR

This innovative course integrates practical work and History of Art to a much greater extent than previously. Half the classroom time will be devoted to 'hands on' activities such as painting, print-making, sculpture and ceramics, the other half being devoted to Art History and 'Contextual Studies'. A Level Art offers something of value to a wide range of students, not only those who might choose a future career in the arts. It is hoped that the AS course will be of value to those who wish to add breadth to their 6.1 studies, as well as being an important foundation for those continuing to the second year A2 art course.

The Bedales course is designed with Art School Foundation and direct entry degree courses in mind, and prepares students for later specialisation in such areas as: Fine Art, Graphic Design, Printing, Photography, Ceramics, Illustration, Architecture, Fashion Design, Stage and Theatre Design etc.

6.1 (two modules of work)

At the end of the first year the students will be expected to present two modules of work for exhibition and examination.

One of these will be made up of a portfolio of art work containing a painting and a piece of sculpture or construction, for instance, with relevant back up work. This portfolio will also contain evidence of 'critical and contextual study', an analysis of an aspect of art history with evidence of gallery and museum visits. This work will be closely related to the practical work in the portfolio.

The second element is an exam piece or 'controlled assignment' undertaken in the final term. Candidates will be given a list of suggested 'titles' or 'themes' that they will be expected to translate into a piece of work in a media of their own choosing. Supporting work will also be expected for this element.

There will be an emphasis on the active keeping of sketch books for information-gathering and note-keeping, and all students will have the opportunity to attend life drawing



classes each week. Here they will be introduced to a wide range of techniques, such as charcoal and chalk, pen and wash, bleach and ink wash, wax resist and oil pastel, as well as oil painting and other techniques.

Each week a session will be devoted to a basic course in History of Art from 1874 to the present, Monet to Emin, although some reference to earlier periods will certainly be made. There will also be visits to galleries, museums, art colleges and other events. Workshops in a range of Art techniques will be organised, as well as visits by practising artists and craftspeople, and lectures on various topics.

6.2 (two modules of work)

Two modules of coursework will be required for assessment at A2 Level.

One will be a 'personal investigation', where students will explore an aspect of art that has 'personal significance' for them. This may well be a theme that has developed out of the coursework portfolio work in the AS year. This work will be presented in an exhibition at the end of the year.

The students will also make a 'fifteen-hour piece' in the final term, when they will be given a list of 'themes' or 'starting points' well in advance to which they will be expected to respond. They will then produce a piece of work in a media of their choice during a specified time period.

Life drawing classes continue at A2 Level and the development of sketch book work remains central. Tutorials will be held regularly with groups and on an individual basis. A member of staff works with each student individually to develop skills and to monitor progress.

The main objectives of the courses will be:

- to enable students to develop enough skills and confidence in their chosen media to communicate visually without inhibition;
- to help students develop their own ideas and to work from their own personal initiative;
- to help the students build up a portfolio of work should they wish to continue on to Art College or other specialised Art Courses.



Biology

Examining Board: Edexcel

The A Level Biology course is taught in four topics at AS Level and four topics at A2 Level. There is also a coursework component (an 'issue report' at AS and an individual investigation at A2) that makes up 20% of the marks at each level. The course is well supported by the SNAB (Salters-Nuffield A Level Biology) website that gives resources and interactive extension work that can be accessed by students in school or at home.

The course content is as follows:

AS Level

Topic 1: Lifestyle, health and risk

This topic begins with a consideration of the structure and functions of a number of molecules, including water, carbohydrates and triglycerides. The structure and function of the cardiovascular system is also included as an introduction to the ways in which diet and lifestyle factors may affect the heart and circulatory system. Ideas about correlation, causation and the concept of risks to health are covered.

Topic 2: Genes and health

This topic begins with a consideration of the structure and functions of the cell membrane and gas exchange surfaces. The structure and properties of proteins, enzyme and nucleic acids lead to the genetic code and protein synthesis. Principles of inheritance, gene therapy and genetic screening are included, giving opportunities for discussion of the social and ethical issues surrounding genetic screening for genetic conditions.

Topic 3: The voice of the genome

This topic begins with an overview of cell structure and considers how cell ultrastructure is related to function. Cell division and cell aggregation to form tissues and organs are also included. The topic then considers meiosis, the formation of gametes, fertilisation, stem cells, gene expression and cell differentiation. The role of the genotype and effect of the environment on phenotype is also stressed.

Topic 4: Biodiversity and natural resources

This topic begins with a comparison of the structure of a typical plant cell with that of an animal cell, and the structure and roles of cellulose and starch. The relationship between plant tissues, xylem and sclerenchyma, is also included. The topic continues with a consideration of the importance of plant products to humans, species diversity, and how diversity arises through natural selection and evolutionary change. The role of zoos in the conservation of endangered species is also described.

A2 Level

Topic 5: On the wild side

This topic builds an appreciation that photosynthesis is the primary process that underpins the majority of ecosystems, and provides students with an understanding of how ecosystems work. The topic continues by looking at whether climate change will lead to extinction of species or evolution by natural selection, and looks at the evidence for global warming and its effects on plants and animals. By the end of the topic students should appreciate how scientific understanding can make us aware of our responsibilities as stewards of the environment.

Topic 6: Infection, immunity and forensics

This topic starts by looking at how forensic pathologists use a wide variety of analytical techniques to determine the identity of a person or other animal, and to establish the time and cause of death of an organism, including humans. It then considers how bacteria and viruses use a variety of routes into their hosts and how hosts have evolved barriers and internal mechanisms to combat infections. These protections are not always successful and many people in the world still die from infectious diseases. This topic also investigates the evolutionary battles that take place between invading pathogens and their hosts.

Topic 7: Run for your life

This topic begins with a study of muscle structure and function, and the ways in which energy is provided by means of aerobic and anaerobic respiration. The responses of the heart and respiratory system to exercise are included, with the concept of homeostasis and its importance in both the regulation of body temperature and at the molecular level with a reference to gene switching. The topic ends by considering the effects of both too much and too little exercise on the body, how medical technology is used in relation to sports, and the ethical positions with respect to the use of performance-enhancing substances by athletes.

Topic 8: Grey matter

This topic begins by considering how plants detect and respond to changes in their environment. This is followed by details of the structure and function of the mammalian nervous system, including imaging techniques to investigate the brain. This is developed into an enquiry into how imbalances in brain chemicals may result in conditions such as Parkinson's disease and its treatment with drugs. The topic requires students to discuss the ethics of the Human Genome Project and to consider the risks and benefits associated with the use of genetically modified organisms.

This is an essential course for those wishing to study medicine or veterinary medicine but it also leads on to a wide range of Biology related degree courses. It is also a fascinating 'fourth option' for those non-specialists who are interested in scientific developments and want to broaden their A Level studies.

Chemistry

Examining Board: Edexcel

A study of Chemistry will help students understand intimately the most beautiful objects the universe has to offer, but it will stimulate as many questions as answers.

During the course Bedalians will extend their knowledge of the fundamental chemical concepts and study contemporary issues such as climate change, green chemistry, pharmaceuticals and chemistry research. The study will be primarily chemical but will also touch on ethical and socio-political questions.

Understanding of the key ideas which hold the subject together comes through practical laboratory work, class lectures and discussions, with lots of practice of chemistry problems. Each set is taught by two members of staff.

The AS exam consists of units 1-3. Units 4-6, studied in 6.2, complete the full A Level course.

- Unit 1** The core principles of Chemistry
- Unit 2** Application of core principles of Chemistry
- Unit 3** Chemical laboratory skills
- Unit 4** Rates, equilibria, and further organic Chemistry
- Unit 5** Transition metals and organic nitrogen Chemistry
- Unit 6** Chemical laboratory skills

To embark on the course, it is necessary to have achieved at least a BB at dual award IGCE. It is recommended that AS Mathematics is part of their 6.1 programme as students tend to struggle in the A2 course without it. Chemistry coupled with Physics and/or Biology helps the study of all the subjects involved, and is hugely beneficial and strongly advised for anyone contemplating taking a Chemistry-related degree. Chemistry is an essential A Level for Biological sciences, Dentistry, Medicine and Veterinary sciences.



Classics

Examining Board: OCR

The Greek and Roman civilisations are the foundation of Western culture. To them we owe drama, ethics, democracy, artistic naturalism, mathematical proof, and natural sciences, expressed in great literature and art.

In common with other A Levels, classical subjects will comprise two modules at AS and two at A2. All modules will be assessed by examination: there is no coursework. The department organises a Junior and Senior Classics trip on a rolling two year cycle, as well as other ad hoc visits to Rome during long weekends; we also make trips to play performances, lectures, exhibitions and museums with all sixth form classicists during the course of the year.

Latin (OCR)

The A Level course is based on the study of Roman authors in the original Latin. At both AS and A2, students read two set texts – one prose and one verse. Questions requiring short essay-style answers are based on passages extracted from the texts and test linguistic understanding and literary appreciation as well as knowledge of the cultural and historical background. Students also develop skills using the Latin language through simple composition exercises at AS and Prose Composition at A2. In the second year of the course, students read a more general selection of Latin literature to consolidate grammar, broaden vocabulary and prepare for the unseen translation and comprehension papers. Latin combines a rigorous approach to linguistic study with literary criticism, culture and history. It complements the study of other European languages, English and the humanities and is recognised by universities and employers as an intellectually demanding subject. Students should have attained at least grade B in GCSE Latin.

Classical Greek (OCR)

Ancient Greek is a sophisticated, expressive and beautiful language. It is currently timetabled as a GCSE subject but Sixth Form students have the opportunity to take up the language if their private study periods coincide with the Greek GCSE classes. Recent Sixth Form students have taken GCSE, AS and A2 after two or three years' study with excellent results. This option has been pursued with great success by students of Latin who have gone on to read Classics at university. The AS and A2 syllabuses are identical to Latin in structure. Enthusiastic linguists are encouraged to take up Greek in the Sixth Form and to pursue it to whatever level they wish.

Classical Civilisation (OCR)

Classical Civilisation allows students to experience the legacy of Greece and Rome without the need to learn Latin and Greek. It can be studied on its own but it complements other subjects involving the study of literature, history and art. For both AS and A2 one literary and one historical/archaeological module will be studied, chosen to provide an equal balance between text-based and more artefact-based studies. In the forthcoming year, the AS modules will be Greek Historians and Greek Tragedy in its Context, while the A2 modules will be Roman Britain: Life on the Outpost of the Empire and Virgil and the World of the Hero. A Level Classics offers a good foundation for Classical Studies and Ancient History at university, as several recent students have found. It is an intellectually demanding subject, comparable with English and History in the amount of reading and written work required. Students will ideally have attained at least B in GCSE (or equivalent) English Literature, History or BAC Ancient Civilisations.

Computing

Examining Board: OCR

Computing A Level combines practical approaches to problem-solving using computers with an academic look at how computers work and how they are used. It may be taken in conjunction with any other group of subjects since the prime requirement is for a logical mind and an interest in this technology rather than any particular body of knowledge.

Ideally students will have studied GCSE Computing in Blocks 4 and 5, as this will have given them a good grounding in basic programming and Computing theory. If a student wishes to take this subject with limited practical skills in Programming and Microsoft Access, summer work will be set to ensure they are not disadvantaged once the course commences. We do not expect potential students to have any programming experience and teach this unit from scratch but clearly students who have done the GCSE in Computing will find this significantly easier.

A knowledge of Computing is a very valuable foundation for modern life in general as well as a starting point for careers and university courses in Computing and Information Technology. A qualification in Computing combines well with many subjects, including those that benefit from a logical and systematic approach. It also complements subjects that contain analytical, scientific and technological aspects.

In the first year of the course we study the following areas for the AS Level examination.

Module 1: Computing fundamentals

This is the foundation module that covers core topics such as: hardware; software; data structures; data transmission and networking; systems development lifecycle; characteristics of information systems; and social, legal and ethical implications of computer use.

Module 2: Programming techniques and logical methods

This is aimed at developing problem-solving skills in using programming languages. It comprises: designing solutions to problems; the constructs of procedural programming languages; writing programs; and testing and running solutions.

The A2 modules are rather more specialised. Work on them will be started in 6.1, and continued through the second year of the course.

Module 3: Advanced Computing theory

This module builds on the first and includes: processor architectures; operating systems; program translators; data representation; data structures and manipulation; programming paradigms and databases.

Module 4: Project

In this coursework module students identify a third-party user willing to be involved, for whom they produce a solution to a real-world problem. This requires students to establish and analyse a situation, and to design, test and implement a solution using the programming language studied in the AS year. This project is completed over the course of the first two terms with work being supervised by the department and carried out in both class and private study time. A final report, including documentation and evaluation, is presented for assessment and is worth 40% of the A2 grade (and therefore 20% of the overall A Level grade).



Dance

Examining Board: AQA

The Dance course presents an exciting way to study Dance as an art form and is suitable for those who have an interest in developing their knowledge and understanding of Dance and the skills needed to create and perform. Dance is also particularly valuable for students considering the theatre as a career.

The course has three main areas of focus:

- enable students to experience performance and choreography;
- extend their appreciation of dance and to develop critical thinking skills in relation to Dance as an art form;
- allow teachers to choose the genres and styles for study, looking at a diverse range of dance works and choreographers.

At AS Level, students focus on the development and performance of their own choreography and performing skills within a duo/trio. Candidates will receive training on technique and the health and safety of the dancer. They will begin to develop critical skills for the analysis of choreography and performance within their own work and in professional repertoire.

Writing Paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (60 marks)

Weighting: 40% of total AS marks

The written unit comprises two sections, A and B. Both structured and essay style questions will be set on the dancer as a performer, the process and craft of choreography and the significance of dances.

Practical Coursework: 90 marks

Weighting: 60% of total AS marks

Candidates answer two practical questions, one on solo choreography and performance and one other on performance in a duo/trio. These are marked by the teacher and moderated by AQA.

At A2 Level students focus on: investigating one area of study from ballet, modern dance or jazz dance; critical analysis; and appreciation of one set work from a choice of three; group choreography from investigation and research of ideas through to outcome; and solo performance skills in relation to a specific practitioner within a specific area of dance study prescribed for Unit 3.

Written Paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (80 marks)

Weighting: 25% of total A Level marks

Candidates answer questions in two sections, one on a chosen area of study within ballet, modern dance or jazz dance and one other on the set work studied.

Practical examination: 75 marks

Weighting: 25% of total A Level marks

Candidates choreograph a group dance, of two to three minutes' duration, in which they do not perform. Questions will be set and pre-released by AQA, from which the candidate selects one.

Candidates present a solo performance, of two to three minutes' duration, which demonstrates understanding of a performance style linked to a specific practitioner from the areas of study prescribed in Unit 3. The dance performed may be choreographed by the candidate, teacher or both.

The practical examination is set by AQA and marked by a visiting examiner.

Students of dance take part in performances during the year and regular workshops are organised with visiting professional companies. Live performances are also an integral part of the course and regular theatre visits take place to watch performances both in our own theatre and further afield.

Design

Examining Board: WJEC

Courses available:

Design and Technology (Product Design)

Design and Technology (Systems and Control)

Product Design covers a wide variety of mediums. The department has a long established history of students working in both Fashion and Resistant Materials within their practical work. Students are also able to work in the fields of architecture, graphical products, packaging and conceptual modelling. The theory element of the course is common to all Product Design students with every student sitting the same examination, irrespective of their chosen material specialisation. Systems and Control students cover much of the same theory work in addition to some electronics and mechanics specific material. Systems students will embark on practical projects that include elements of electronics, mechanisms or pneumatics.

The Product Design syllabus will be suitable for those students who have successfully taken the BAC Design course or a GCSE in Design & Technology (Product Design, Resistant Materials, Textiles or Systems and Control) at another school and wish to further their experience and knowledge in this subject area. To access the Systems and Control syllabus, students will have needed to have successfully passed a GCSE specialising in that area or carried out their extended task in their BAC in a systems based project. The courses aim to bring into play a wide range of disciplines from art to engineering and have a significant theory content to complement the elements of making and problem-solving. Use of computers for designing, presentation and manufacture is another element that will characterise these courses and we will again be stressing our high standards in these areas of work. We try to use a broad base for all our project and topic work so that every student can access the course and feel interested and motivated, no matter what his or her background. Students who successfully tackle this course need to be prepared to devote considerable amounts of their non-contact and free time to the subject in addition to the timetabled lessons, especially in the make phase of the coursework.

A Level Design can be combined with a wide variety of other academic subjects. It is advantageous, with subjects such as Maths and Physics, for careers in engineering and architecture. When combined with Art, it gives the candidate an excellent background for entry into a foundation course at art college or for further study of a wide range of design disciplines. In recent years our fashion orientated students have gained direct access to fashion degree courses circumventing the need to attend a foundation course. Design students who take two or more other academic A Levels but no Art and then decide that they wish to go to art college are advised to provide a strong portfolio of life drawings for the interview.

The AS course is divided into two modules:

- A 'Design and Make' task where the student designs, makes and evaluates a product or system. Students will start the project by analysing an existing product and using their findings as the starting point for their design work.
- An Examination Paper which tests the student's knowledge of aspects of designing and innovation including product analysis, materials, components and industrial practice.

The A2 year involves a substantial practical project and an examination paper.

- A 'Design and Make' task requires students to demonstrate the integration of designing and making skills. A Level students are expected to take increased responsibility for the identification of appropriate work and management of their project and show enhanced levels of innovation in their designing.
- The Examination Paper assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the whole of the subject content.

Students applying for the Bedales Design course from other schools are asked to bring portfolio evidence of their previous design-related work and photographic evidence of their practical projects when they visit the school for interview.



Economics

Examining Board: OCR

'Economics is the study of the way in which scarce resources are allocated between competing ends.'

The course looks at the way in which individuals, firms and governments make decisions as to the allocation of resources they control. As well as aspects of economic theory at both a micro and macro level, the AS/A2 specifications will involve the study of inflation, unemployment, international trade and the economics of development. A great degree of emphasis is placed upon the study of markets and their role in the domestic and international economy.

Economics is a highly academic subject which requires the mastery of a range of skills. As well as numerical and written skills, the course requires a student to read widely, think clearly and communicate at different levels. These skills will be transferable to a wide range of courses in higher education. No previous contact with the subject is assumed.

Economics AS is assessed in two modular exams. The A2 requires two further modules in order to complete the course.

English Literature

Examining Board: WJEC

The AS course consists of two modules: an examination worth 60% and a folder of coursework worth 40%. The examination is on a pair of modern poets (e.g. Plath and Hughes, Larkin and Dannie Abse) and a single modern play (e.g. Arcadia, Dancing at Lughnasa).

The coursework combines an essay on two novels with a piece of original creative writing accompanied by a commentary on its composition.

At A2 there is the same structure of single exam and coursework with the same division of marks. For the exam three texts are studied: a pair of plays (e.g. Hamlet and The Revenger's Tragedy, King Lear and Oedipus Rex) and a poetry text (e.g. Donne, Milton, Blake). Coursework requires a 3,000 word essay on three texts which must include prose and poetry and be drawn from more than one period. There will be much opportunity for independent research and study in this module.

Extended Project

Examining Board: OCR; grades and UCAS points equivalent to AS.

A number of 6.1 students have the opportunity to undertake a self-directed project on a topic of their choosing under the guidance of a member of staff acting as their mentor or supervisor. Over the course of the first two terms, the student must produce a dissertation, report, artefact, performance or design. Additionally, they make a presentation at the end of the Spring Term and submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating the skills they have gained.

Rather than being outcome-based, the assessment is process-oriented, making this a qualification in project management rather than in a specific project area. The transferable skills gained are valued by university admissions tutors and experience of this course adds a useful dimension for applications to higher education. Assessment is made according to the following criteria:

1. Management and planning
2. Use of resources
3. Development and realisation
4. Review and reflection (includes the assessed presentation)

While the end product must be work of at least A Level standard, the assessment criteria make it clear that the primary focus is on the continuous process of managing the project itself. Students may undertake projects as part of small groups, but they must have well defined and separate roles within each group.

Each Extended Project student is expected to see their supervisor at least once per week. Regular classes with the rest of the cohort allow development of important transferable skills including project management techniques, presentation skills and strategies for effective research.

The project is submitted at the end of the Spring term and is assessed internally in the same way as traditional coursework. It is then submitted to the examination board for moderation and allocation of final grades.



Geography

Examining Board: OCR

By keeping one foot in science and the other in the arts, Geography is able to provide an eclectic experience for the student interested in both how our human and physical environments operate and what can be done to manage them effectively. Links with most other subjects at A Level are possible and commonly very fruitful, perhaps especially so with Biology, Economics, Physics and History.

The new OCR specification continues the exploratory nature and modernist approach of the Geography previously undertaken at Bedales. There is an emphasis on a broad range of geographical issues such as urban management and coastal erosion involving numerous field work experiences. There will also be significant use of ICT in both researching and presenting information. Emphasis will be on preparation for either reading Geography at university or at least for it being useful as an ancillary subject. There will be a wide range of learning strategies from virtual field trips to seminar discussion. Various skills are practised throughout the course from the use of computer spreadsheet analysis to measuring features explored in our foreign field trip. Learning is developed by traditional classroom methods as well as through team work – the latter especially on the compulsory residential field course in 6.2.

The AS course is designed to cover a wide range of key geographical topics; river and coastal environments; arid and semi-arid environments; urban geography; rural geography; and tourism. This involves first hand field work experience and the analysis of numerous examples and case studies from around the globe.

A2 candidates receive an intensive field work experience and conduct follow-up work that prepares them for the new geographical skills paper. The rigours of experimental design, data collection and analysis are especially beneficial. The two main taught modules are earth hazards and inequalities. A third module for independent study is chosen from: climatic hazards, globalisation, threatened ecosystems, population and resources.

An enquiring mind, an ability to read and synthesise material from various sources and an ability to write clearly and concisely are required to do well in Geography. A successful A Level course can support many university applications in both sciences and arts. It also provides students with a wide-ranging and sympathetic view of world issues and problems, and equips them with a life-long ability and desire to observe and interpret their environment to their general benefit and enjoyment.

History

Examining Board: OCR

History at AS/A2 Level will examine political, social, religious and cultural developments in England and Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As the majority of students taking GCSE History will have focused on the twentieth century, the AS/A2 course is designed to broaden their experience of studying the past. However, the skills taught at GCSE level will be relevant to both the document and analytical questions presented at AS. Students who want to take History in the sixth form should have an enquiring mind and an interest in the past, and enjoy argument.

The new A Level course comprises an AS course (first year of sixth form) which will be split into two modules, both assessed externally with a one and a half hour examination each. One module will be document-based and is to be a study of The English Civil Wars and The Interregnum, 1637-1660 focussing on the execution of Charles I and the reign of Oliver Cromwell. The other will be a period study of European History, either Spain under Philip II (late sixteenth/early seventeenth century) or France under Napoleon (1795-1815). The A2 (second year sixth form) course will also consist of two modules, only one of which will be examined externally. That will be a 'theme' paper covering Russian History between 1855 and 1964 and focussing on The Russian Revolutions of 1917. There will be an opportunity to visit Russia during the course. The other module might be defined as coursework and will consist of two essays, each of 2,000 words and assessed by the department. One will be a study of historians' differing interpretations of Elizabeth I and the other will be an investigation of an area chosen by the candidate which could be local, national or international history.

History is successfully studied alongside a wide variety of other subjects, such as English, Geography, Classics and Modern Languages. Many students choose it alongside Mathematics and the Sciences. History is an established route into a wide variety of careers, such as the media, law, and business management, as well as avenues formally based on History. It is also a subject which carries its own innate interest.

Government and Politics

Examining Board: AQA (tbc)

Politics involves studying the science of government and the practice of conducting political affairs. Since political structures and processes have a profound effect on people's lives, they are well worth studying. We will study British Politics in the first (AS) year and American Politics in the second (A2) year.

AS Level

There are two modules studied in the first year. The first entitled 'People, Politics and Participation' looks at Political Parties in the UK, Electoral Systems, Voting Behaviour and Pressure Groups and Protest Movements. The second, entitled 'Governing Modern Britain,' looks at The British Constitution, Parliament and The Prime Minister and Cabinet. It also briefly examines Local Government and The European Union.

A2 Level

There are two modules. The first, entitled 'The Politics of the USA', echoes the AS module People/Politics only looking at America instead of the UK. The second, entitled 'The Government of The USA', again reflects the shape of the second AS module but looks at America.

There are two assessed modules at AS, each involving a one and a half hour exam and each source-based and two modules at A2, each with a one and a half hour exam. There is no coursework and no internal assessment. The course will initially be developed under the aegis of the History Department. Politics A level fits particularly well with History but also subjects such as Economics and Psychology, Religious Education and Philosophy. It can be taken as a one year AS Level contrasting with other A Levels (e.g. for a student studying three sciences) as well as the full two year course. It is expected that students will be taken on a visit to The House of Commons and Lords as part of the course and they will of course be encouraged to take an interest in contemporary political debate/current affairs. It would be surprising if they did not read a newspaper.



Mathematics

Examining Board: OCR

Mathematics may be taken in combination with almost any subject and is welcomed by universities. It is particularly useful in support of Physics, Chemistry and Biology but also with Economics, Computing and Geography. Students should not feel discouraged in choosing Mathematics as part of a broader programme, however. Indeed, it is often paired very well with Music or Classics.

Mathematics is a challenging A Level subject and is far more demanding than the GCSE or IGCSE equivalents. It should only be taken by students with a significant interest in the subject and a grade A or A* is normally expected at GCSE/IGCSE.

The Advanced Level course in Mathematics consists of a core of Pure Mathematics with Mechanics and Statistics. All students are required to study these three areas. The examination is based on six modules, four core modules in Pure Mathematics and two in Statistics and Mechanics. Three will be taken at the end of 6.1 and the remaining three at the end of 6.2. We recommend that AS Mathematics - complete by the end of 6.1 - should be considered by scientists who are not following the full Mathematics course.

Further Mathematics

Very able students may choose Further Mathematics as an A Level in addition to Mathematics. Particularly careful thought needs to be given to this choice if a student is aiming to study Mathematics or a related subject (e.g. Physics or Engineering) at a top university. While A Level Further Mathematics is not yet an entry requirement for most courses, several universities consider it desirable.

AS Mathematics and AS Further Mathematics are completed in the summer of 6.1. The full A Levels in Mathematics and Further Mathematics are achieved in the summer of 6.2. The Further Mathematics syllabus is an extension of the A Level syllabus in all three areas of study and an additional six modules are required for an A Level in Further Mathematics. An AS in Further Mathematics may be gained by taking three modules in addition to the six required for A Level Mathematics, but students will need to be in the accelerated set from the beginning of 6.1 to achieve this.

The pace of the Further Mathematics course is extremely fast and an A* at IGCSE is an expected requirement. In particular, top set students who have obtained an A* grade in the early entry IGCSE examination are encouraged to follow Mathematics in this accelerated set.

Modern Languages

“75% of the world’s population speaks no English at all”

Students taking French, German or Spanish at AS Level are expected to have a grade ‘A’ in the chosen language of study at GCSE (or at least to be at an equivalent standard). The school can arrange for students to study other languages such as Japanese, Chinese, Russian and Italian via private tuition.

French and German are assessed using the AQA examination board, comprising two units at AS and A2: listening, reading and writing, and a prepared oral topic. There are four general topic areas at AS: Media, Popular Culture, Healthy Living and Lifestyle and Family and Relationships. At A2, students will study three topics: the Environment, Multicultural Society and Contemporary Social Issues. In addition they will study two cultural topics e.g. the work of an author or dramatist from a target language-speaking country or a period of history or a region from a target language-speaking country.

Spanish is assessed using the OCR specification, comprising two units at AS (Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing 1) and a further two units at A2 (Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing 2).

If you are looking for a future using communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving, team-work, organisational skills and independence, as well as excellent job prospects, then a modern language is for you. Whatever you are thinking of studying at university, combining it with a language is well worth considering. Indeed, taking a degree which involves languages will undoubtedly open up a greater array of career opportunities in sectors as diverse as the media, tourism, and computing. The myth that languages can only lead to employment as translator, interpreter or teacher is no longer valid.

In French, Spanish and German we examine contemporary cultural, social and political contexts of the countries through a variety of stimuli such as literary texts, newspaper and magazine articles, and films. We also enrich this academic experience with visits to relevant theatre productions, cinema screenings, conferences and study days.

Music (Cambridge Pre-U)

Examining Board: CIE

In order to challenge and instruct our musicians at the level they require, we have replaced A Level with Cambridge Pre-U. It is a six term course, with no halfway exams at the end of 6.1. The increased level of difficulty with Pre-U has been recognised by UCAS and a higher tariff allocated for the top grades.

There are four areas of assessment:

Listening, Analysis and Historical Study (30%)

Written papers, externally set and marked.

Solo, Ensemble and/or Improvisation (22.5%)

Marked by a visiting examiner.

Composing (22.5%)

Externally marked.

Dissertation or Advanced Recital or

Free Composition (25%)

Internally marked and externally moderated.





Religious Studies: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

Examining Board: OCR

This stimulating course explores the fundamental questions addressed by philosophers and religious traditions about the nature and origins of human existence, questions of morality, destiny and God. Through discussion and careful analysis of the most influential secular and religious viewpoints in history, students will not only develop their powers of self-expression through debating issues of ultimate significance, but also develop the capacity for coherent and well balanced argument. These transferable skills are highly prized by universities and invaluable in almost any career. The way the subject matter is addressed encourages clear, analytical thinking and teaches students to identify flaws in arguments and express themselves in an articulate, reasoned manner. Students often find themselves having impassioned debates outside the classroom as they follow in the footsteps of some of the great thinkers.

Those more inclined to the Arts will naturally enjoy the discursive, seminar-style lessons and the chance to discuss the 'big' questions in an open-minded way, though scientists may choose this course in order to give a feeling of balance to their sixth form choices. Prospective medics would

be well-advised to study some ethics, future lawyers will benefit from learning to structure, analyse and evaluate arguments, and indeed anyone who enjoys thinking or expressing their opinion will benefit from this accessible course.

Students sit two papers in each year.

1. Philosophy of Religion (AS)

- The philosophies of Plato and Aristotle and the influence of Judeo-Christian thinking on the philosophy of religion.
- The traditional arguments for the existence of God from such figures as Kant, Descartes, Anselm, Aquinas and Paley. Can the existence of God be proved by rational argument or by experience? Does the apparent design in the universe point to a divine mind?
- The challenges posed to religious belief from Hume, Russell, Darwin, Dawkins and Freud, amongst others. Does the extent of suffering disprove the idea of a loving being? Is religion a psychological illness or a benefit? Can religion sit comfortably alongside a scientific view of the world?

2. Ethics (AS)

- How do people decide what sort of actions are 'good' or 'bad'? How do we know what is right and wrong? Are there absolute moral standards or is 'goodness' a relative concept?
- Does the end justify the means, as Utilitarianism claims, or is 'good' to be associated with certain duties, as Kant argues? Is there such a thing as a 'Natural Law', as Aquinas holds? What does Situation Ethics claim about the nature of morality? What is the nature of Christian Ethics?
- How do these ideas relate to issues such as abortion, euthanasia, war and peace, the right to life, genetic engineering and embryo research?

3. Philosophy of Religion (A2)

- **The mind/body problem:** is there such a thing as a 'soul'? If so, what is it, and how does it interact with the body? We examine this age old question through the eyes of believers and sceptics alike: Plato, Descartes, John Hick and Richard Dawkins amongst others.
- **Life after death:** are there any reasons, evidence or arguments that could lead us to believe in an after-life? We examine the concepts of resurrection, re-incarnation, Heaven and Hell, and other concepts of existence beyond this life.
- **Religious experience:** are religious experiences credible? Do they justify religious belief, or might they have other explanations? Students study William James' Varieties of Religious Experience. What should a critically minded person make of the Bible or other religious scriptures? How far does David Hume destroy the idea of miracles?

- **Language:** what is the nature of language and can it make meaningful claims about the questions of religion? We examine various understandings of the way that language works, including the views of A.J.Ayer, Wittgenstein, Aquinas and Maimonides.
- **The nature of God:** what does it mean to call God omniscient, omnipotent and omnibenevolent, and are these concepts sustainable? We investigate the views of Boethius in his Consolations of Philosophy, the most widely read book of the Middle Ages after the Bible.

4. Ethics (A2)

- **Free will and determinism:** are we really as free as we think we are? Aren't we almost entirely shaped by our genes and environment? We look at an age old conundrum through the eyes of Hume, Kant, Leibniz, Sartre and others.
- **The conscience:** what is the nature of our sense of moral responsibility? Is it God-given, objective or a social construct based on childhood guilt? We analyse the views of Freud, St Paul, Aquinas, Fromm and Piaget amongst others.
- **Virtue Ethics:** how does Aristotle and his modern followers understand the nature of a virtuous character? Does this distinctive approach to ethics work better than other models?
- **Meta-ethics:** what is the nature of ethical language? Students study the logical positivist approach of A.J.Ayer, the intuitionist approach of G.E.Moore and others.
- **Sexual ethics, environmental ethics and business ethics:** students consider how the differing ethical approaches studied elsewhere in the course relate to these contemporary problems.

The ability to write fluently is essential. The key qualities needed are an open, enquiring mind and an appetite for discussion.

Physics

Examining Board: AQA Specification A

This course provides continuity with the IGCSE syllabus and forms a firm foundation for further study in the Physical Sciences, Engineering or a wide range of other disciplines. The AQA board offers a traditional course with an emphasis on establishing the underlying principles before applying them in various contexts. It has an option unit of Astrophysics, Medical Physics, Applied Physics or Turning Points in Physics; the last of which introduces concepts of ‘modern’ physics such as nuclear physics, electron microscopy, wave-particle duality and special relativity and is usually the option of choice.

We aim to include as much practical work as possible and these skills are assessed as they develop throughout the course and are examined in an Investigative Skills Assessment (ISA) weighted at 20% of the overall AS or A2. The course content develops concepts from IGCSE but also introduces many new areas of Physics. The AS examination comprises two written papers and the ISA practical component. A2 is examined in a similar way.

The course aims to stimulate refined analytical, practical and problem-solving skills while developing a sophisticated level of understanding of physical mechanisms. This requires good communication skill, organisation and competent mathematical skills.

AS themes include Particle Physics which probes the fundamental properties of matter, electromagnetic radiation and quantum phenomena. Each student researches, writes a paper and delivers a section of this to their peers in a lecture evening in the second term. The foundations of Physics are developed through the other key topics of Mechanics, Materials, Electricity and Waves.

The A2 themes develop areas including Oscillations, Waves and Further Mechanics and introduce the concept of Field Theory covering Gravitational and Electrical and

Magnetic fields. Thermal Physics studies the effect of heat and temperature on the properties of materials, notably gases. Nuclear Physics looks at the characteristics of the atomic nucleus, the properties of stable and unstable nuclei, practical applications of radioactivity and has an emphasis on the generation of nuclear energy by fission and fusion.

A pass in Physics at A Level, in conjunction with other subjects (which may be arts-based) will secure admission to many university departments, including those not normally associated with the sciences, e.g. law, accountancy, business studies. Traditionally, of course, it provides excellent openings into the fields of science, engineering and medicine.

We endeavour to broaden the horizons of our students by arranging visits to places of particular scientific interest. Students will visit the particle accelerator at CERN in Geneva, at the cutting edge of particle physics and also the JET fusion reactor in Oxford or the Rutherford-Appleton laboratories. We endeavour to attend a variety of lectures at local university departments and invite distinguished physicists and engineers to the school to lecture and meet the students.

Although the mathematical demands have reduced over recent years, students taking the two-year course are still strongly advised to take Mathematics at least to AS Level. Many students naturally combine Physics with a full A Level Mathematics course however those students not taking Mathematics are encouraged to attend a short Maths for Physics course in the first term specifically targeted to the requirements of the Physics course.

Psychology

Examining Board: AQA Specification A

Psychology is the scientific study of human and animal behaviour; through its study it is hoped that students will acquire an understanding of what makes them behave in a certain way and how to interpret and explain other people’s behaviour. Students will look to answer questions such as; ‘How can we improve our memory?’ ‘What effect do nurseries have on our children?’ ‘How does stress lead to illness?’ ‘Would I make a good eye witness?’ ‘Why do we follow the crowd?’ ‘How successful are treatments for mental disorders?’.

At AS Level, the course introduces key areas and approaches in Psychology, including cognitive, developmental, biological and social psychology, as well as the study of individual differences and research methods

At AS Level there are two units:

Unit 1

Human memory; Early years development: Attachments; and Research Methods

Unit 2

Stress; Social influence; and Psychopathology

At A2 Level there are two units:

Unit 3

Three essays from a choice of the following topics: Biological Rhythms and Sleep; Relationships; Aggression; Gender or Eating Behaviour.

Unit 4

One essay question from a choice of the following: Abnormal Psychology (Depression or OCD/phobia); Media Psychology; Addictive Behaviour; Research Methods; Schizophrenia; Media.

Psychology is recognized as a science A Level; albeit one that is probably quite different from anything students have studied before. Psychologists follow scientific methods in their research and there is now a large emphasis on the scientific application of psychology; known as ‘How science works’, which underpins the A Level course. A good working knowledge of the body’s physiology and competent maths skills will be of great use to students. A pass in both GCSE Science and Maths at grade B is therefore advised.

Students also need to be good at describing and evaluating psychological research, creating written arguments and expressing themselves through debate. A pass in GCSE English at grade B is therefore also advised.

Psychology is an ideal subject for many careers, from the pure sciences right through to the arts; in fact any walk of life that involves working with and understanding people! The course provides a particularly useful background for careers in medicine & health care, nursing, personnel work, marketing related careers, advertising and teaching.

Theatre Studies

Examining Board: Edexcel

This is a new and exciting course for those who wish to explore theatre from a practical perspective, whilst at the same time analysing academically the whole process of acting and play production. As a result, the work done during the course, week-in week-out, puts an emphasis on the practical, active exploration of texts and theories whilst never minimising the academic rigour required to understand them. Potential candidates should note that at AS there is no end of course written examination (see below for details.) We also visit the theatre regularly and recommend that you attend The National Student Drama Festival for a week at Easter with us.

It is an advantage, although not necessary, to have studied GCSE Drama, the Bedales Theatre BAC, or to have other significant experience of theatre. What is essential is to have a love of theatre.

Course structure:

At AS

Unit 1

The exploration of two modern texts through practical workshops. You are assessed practically in class as well as producing 1500 words of coursework on each text. In addition you will write a 1000 word evaluation of a live theatre performance. Coursework is marked by a teacher and moderated by the board.

Unit 2 Part i

The performance of a group production (3-9 students), directed by your teacher and examined on the night by a visiting examiner.

Unit 2 Part ii

The performance of a monologue (2 mins) or duologue (5 mins) of your choice, accompanied by 500 words of notes and examined on the night by a visiting examiner.

At A2

Unit 3

The preparation and performance of a piece of devised theatre (groups of 3-9) directed and delivered by the group. Accompanied by 3500 words of notes. Marked by the teacher and moderated by the board.

Unit 4

Traditional written exam (2.5 hours); study of a set text (likely to be Woyzeck) and also the performance history (not the text per se) of a Shakespeare play, comparing it to a contemporary production of the same text you have seen.



Sport

The sixth form sporting curriculum is a package in two halves: PE and Games. PE is one double period within the timetable and is compulsory for all 6.1. The lessons are co-educational and taught by the specialist staff. The emphasis is on the individual working at his or her own level, learning through and developing the physical. The PE curriculum includes a choice from swimming, life-saving, multi-gym, badminton, basketball, dance, volley ball and aerobics.

The Games programme is designed to benefit the more skilled student and to develop the school teams, whilst still allowing the less able the opportunity to enjoy their sporting interests. The boys concentrate on football, hockey, cricket and tennis whilst the girls play hockey, netball, stoolball and tennis.

All 6.1 students participate twice a week and the 6.2s once, although in practice the keen sports folk practise twice and play one school match per week. Many 'professionals' are brought into the school to help coach these teams. Alongside the major games programme, students can opt from a long list of other sports such as aerobics, badminton, swimming, squash, riding, canoeing and climbing. We do our utmost to allow students to follow their own sporting interests at whatever level. Furthermore, a student who does not wish to participate in the games programme can opt to participate in the Outdoor Work programme or help in the school's theatre or wardrobe.

Thus the Sports department aims not only to develop the individual and to attain excellence in some team sports but also to find a place for all students no matter what their sporting skill and interests. Our extensive campus, astro-turf, multigym, sports hall, swimming pool, tennis courts, squash court, gym and dance centre, along with specialist teaching staff, allow us great flexibility.

Outdoor work

The importance of Outdoor Work in education was a cornerstone of the Bedales ethos at its foundation in 1893. Alongside a challenging academic, artistic and sporting curriculum, today's Outdoor Work programme enables Bedales to offer a fully balanced education. Outdoor work is at its best when undertaken voluntarily. Working together on a tangible project, such as barn-building or pond-clearing, creates a wonderful sense of community, and provides a satisfying sense of achievement on its completion. The 'whole school effort' involves the entire school in a two-day project to achieve something which will benefit the Bedales community. Recent projects have included constructing a Roman path; Cecily's garden; improving Black Barn yard and renovating our lake (itself the product of a whole school effort).

Students have the opportunity to learn spinning and weaving; blacksmithing; printing; basket-weaving; country-cooking; hedge-laying; coppicing; hedging and ditching. Many students have tried their hand at willow-weaving, mosaic, sculpture and natural dye techniques. Architectural elements such as the wooden gates, a stonework bridge, flint walls and a flights of brick-built steps, are projects which have been developed by individuals or small groups. The Poultry House was designed and built by sixth form students.

Students and staff rise early (and voluntarily) on baking-day, to light the fires of our wood-burning bread oven, and to prepare the dough. Working in shifts, they produce about 150 loaves, all of which are sold on the same day. Black barn, once almost derelict, has been restored using original timbers and traditional flint-walling. It is now used for lambing and housing Spartan, our Percheron horse. Jacobs sheep are popular with our students, particularly at lambing and shearing time. Some of our students go on to study veterinary science.

The benefits accruing to those who participate in a broad range of activities outside the classroom education are immeasurable. Outdoor work provides stimulating and creative activities, opportunities for quiet reflection, and helps to provide the optimum environment for the education of the whole person: the education of 'head, heart and hand'.



Bedales sixth form Geography visit to Iceland. Photo by sixth form student George Wilson.

Bedales

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