

SIXTH FORM – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A LEVEL COURSES

Do I need high GCSE results to get in to Oaklands Sixth Form?

All applicants should expect to achieve at least five GCSE's at grade 4-5 including English and Maths. For many courses a grade 5-6 is a better indication of suitability.

How many A Level options are there to choose from?

Art & Design	History
Biology	Law
Business	Mathematics
Chemistry	Media
Computer Science	Modern Foreign Languages
Drama	Music
Economics	Physical Education
English Language	Physics
English Literature	Politics
English Language & Literature	Product Design
Film Studies	Psychology
Geography	Religious Studies
Health & Social Care	Sociology

How many subjects and how many hours of study should I expect on an average day?

The recommended number of courses to take is determined by the grades you have achieved.

At Oaklands Sixth Form most students will study **three** two-year courses. Students with predicted grade 9-8 at GCSE will be allowed to choose to study four at Level 3.

Predicted GCSE Grades	Number of A Level (Level 3) courses to study
9-8	4
Mostly 9-7	3 or 4
Mostly 9-5	3
Mostly 7-4	3
Mostly 4-1	Level 1 or 2 may be more suitable for you, these courses are not offered at Oaklands Sixth Form and you would need to apply to a local FE college.

As a guide, the number of hours spent in class per week should be 4-5 hours, with the same amount of independent study applied.

Can I switch A Levels? If I decide to change subjects after starting Sixth Form, how much time do I have to do this?

You can change your A Levels as long as the subjects fit on the timetable, you have the required grades and as long as it is possible to catch up. You must speak to the teachers and to the A Level office to seek agreement. The final date to discuss changing is before October half term.

Do Oaklands offer an A Level for Philosophy?

Philosophy of Religion forms part of our Religious Studies, along with Ethics and New Testament.

Do we get to switch Teachers?

There are set teachers for each subject, so you can't switch.

What is the most fun A Level?

It is important to pick subjects that you enjoy, if you enjoy your subject then you will work hard and get a good grade.

Which subjects are the easiest and hardest?

Same as above. A Level subjects are all challenging but they are less so when you enjoy them and work hard.

Which subject would you recommend for a career as a Social Worker?

Health and Social Care, Sociology and/or Psychology are good subjects for a career in social work but not essential.

Can I do food Tech as an Enrichment programme?

This is not currently available

Do I need to take Chemistry for a career in Dentistry?

Yes

Is Psychology, Politics & Philosophy a good combination to study together?

These subjects can work well together. There are many combinations that work well, but it depends on your career ideas and your interests.

Are the subjects interesting?

Our Teachers always try to make the subject content interesting and engaging. Selecting a subject that you find interesting yourself, or you know will add value to your future will ensure that the time spent in lesson will be more enjoyable for all.

Would Psychology, Chemistry and Biology be too overwhelming to study together as A Level options?

All A Levels are challenging, you should be prepared for hard work. If you enjoy the subject this will make the work more enjoyable.

Would studying all three sciences be overwhelming?

All A Levels are challenging, you should be prepared for hard work. If you enjoy the subject this will make the work more enjoyable.

Which subjects would help most to further my film career?

If you are interested in filming and editing, then Media Studies and/or Film Studies would be good options. If you are interested in scriptwriting, English may be a good option. If you are interested in acting then Drama would be a good option. For any of these careers, English is a very good choice but not essential. For these careers, experience outside of your subjects is useful too, such as belonging to a drama group or filming and editing your own videos.

REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY FOR OAKLANDS SIXTH FORM

What are the grades I need to get into Oaklands Sixth Form?

All applicants should expect to achieve at least five GCSE's at grade 4. For many courses a grade 5-6 is a better indication of suitability.

THE SIXTH FORM

When is the right time to apply for Sixth Form?

The Sixth Form open evening is on 17 October 2024, this is a good opportunity to visit and to find out more about the subjects we offer. The application form will open afterwards. The deadline for applications is before Christmas 2024. This deadline is used to look at applications and subject choices. At this point we will look at best fit for the subjects and set the option blocks. We will still accept applications after this date if there are spaces on the courses.

How do the free periods work?

We prefer to think of 'free periods' as independent study periods. This time can be used for independent or group study outside of the classroom. It is advised that students stay on-site to study. There is a quiet study area and students are able to use empty classrooms.

How long are the Sixth Form lessons?

Usually one-hour.

How is a typical Sixth Form day structured?

Registration:	09:00-09:15
Lesson 1:	09:20-10:20
Lesson 2:	10:20-11:20
Break:	11:20-11:45
Lesson 3:	11:45-12:45
Lesson 4:	12:45-13:45
Lunch:	13:45-14:25
Lesson 5:	14:25-15:30

Do you have to go to Registration (Tutor) if your first lesson is during the afternoon?

Registration is compulsory on Monday and Thursday even if your first lesson is in the afternoon. You should use your free periods to complete independent study. Assembly is every other week on a Tuesday, this is compulsory too. You will also have a tutor period fortnightly and this is compulsory too.

Are there any spaces at school where I can study?

We have a number of areas around the Sixth Form building in which you can study during free periods.

How many Registration/Tutor Group are there in Sixth Form?

There are x6 in Year 12 and x5 in Year 13

Are there any extra-curricular activities available in Sixth Form?

We have Enrichment on a Wednesday afternoon, there are a range of activities from book club to sporting activities. We also have guest speakers and the HE+ programme.

Are many resources needed (e.g. books, stationery) and are they expensive?

You will need your own notepads/folders and pens. For some subjects you need to buy textbooks and for others they are online.

Can I use my mobile phone during breaks?

Yes, albeit the signal in our Sixth Form block can be troublesome for some networks.

Do I have to go to Mass?

Whilst you do not have to be a practising Catholic to enrol in Oaklands Sixth Form College you do have to know that we are a Catholic Sixth Form and accordingly have a sympathy for the ethos and values that we strive to provide in our values-based educational approach. We would expect for you to attend Mass.

How often is Enrichment, and what does it involve?

On Wednesday afternoon students in Year 12 take part in enrichment activities, which include: work experience, school displays team, performing arts, sports, subject ambassadors for Oaklands departments, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), leadership opportunities across the school. Support and supervision can be provided for these activities.

Is there a microwave in Sixth Form?

Unfortunately, not, but hot food is available at lunchtime in our Canteen. There is a kettle and vending machines in the common room.

Can I make class notes on a laptop?

Yes, if this is your usual way of working.

Can I chew gum?

Not during lessons, please.

How many days per week do we come in?

The timetable is split over 5 days so you will have lessons each day, however you will have free periods and may have an afternoon or morning free.

Do you have to pay for Sixth Form college?

No

How often do we have Tutor time?

Registration is twice per week, tutor period (1 hour) is once a fortnight, these are compulsory.

Are you allowed personal technology for learning in class?

If this is your normal way of working.

Will there be help for me if I am feeling very stressed or finding things difficult?

Support is provided from your tutor, or another member of staff who you feel comfortable talking to. Kelly Chinorwadza is the Pastoral Lead and is available in the Sixth Form office. We also have a counsellor who is available on a Wednesday morning, these appointments need to be booked through Kelly.

How many students from schools other than Oaklands join Sixth Form?

This varies each year but around 50 students from other schools in South East Hampshire.

Do you have provision for students with additional needs?

We have an excellent team who provide high quality expertise to our Sixth Form students who may have additional or complex need. Early interview after initial application allows for a full identification of what is needed and what can be provided. One to one support for EHCP students is of course available.

Can students buy food on site?

Yes, we have a canteen with hot and cold food options. We also cater for all dietary preferences including vegetarian, vegan, gluten free and lactose intolerant. Some students bring their own food in or leave site to buy their own food or eat at home if they live locally. We also have vending machines in the Sixth Form Common Room.

EXAMS

How many exams are there usually?

There are usually 2-3 exams per subject. Some subjects also have a Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) piece of coursework.

Is there one-to-one exam support available to students?

Academic support is looked at case-by-case. Usually this is in small groups rather than 1-2-1.

Do all A Level exams commence in Year 13?

Our A Level courses all run for two years with no external exams half way through. You will attend mock exams through the time with us, however the official exams will take place at the end of the course in Year 13. Apart from Health and Social Care which has exams in Year 12.