



A-Level Guide

2026



**CHOOSE FROM 21
A-LEVELS & 7 AAQs**

**GO YOUR OWN WAY WITH
FLEXIBLE SUBJECT CHOICES**

**5 PATHWAYS TO GUIDE YOU
TO YOUR DESIRED FUTURE**

**ACADEMIC MENTORING
THROUGHOUT YOUR STUDY**

**CHOOSE TO ADD A FOURTH A-LEVEL,
EXTENDED PROJECT OR CORE
MATHS TO MAKE YOUR CV STAND OUT**



Welcome

At KC Sixth, we have a culture of high academic standards and performance, promoting commitment, independence and personal growth.

We strive to inspire and enable all A-Level learners to achieve their full potential.

A-Levels open doors to higher education, apprenticeships and employment. Our academic mentoring programme will support your progress and achievement throughout your time at college to maintain a focus on your long-term goal.

"I have developed my skills such as independence, self-study, time-management, and research. I have also had the opportunity to become a Student Governor, which has enhanced my skillset and CV."

Nicole Dix, A-Levels Student



A-Level study in a college environment

KC Sixth offers a wide range of subjects and specific pathways to university.

Our highly qualified and experienced teachers will guide you through your academic programme, offering three sessions per subject per week.

They provide interactive and inspiring lessons, as well as 'curiosity activities,' and regular assessment and feedback to enable you to achieve.

As part of being a KC Sixth A-Level learner, you will have regular contact time with our Academic Mentor and KC Sixth Curriculum Lead to support your progress and achievement; the aim of this is to help you succeed to the very best of your ability.

Our department also works closely with the Learning Services and Wellbeing Team.

A-Levels

A-Level students typically choose three subjects and those with very high entry qualifications may apply to study four.

An Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and/or Core Maths may be undertaken as part of your A-Level studies to help showcase your academic skills for university applications.

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Criminology*
- Economics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Environmental Science
- Further Maths
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Mathematics
- Music
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology

* This is a diploma, equivalent to one A-Level

AAQs

Alternative Academic Qualifications are level 3 qualifications equivalent to one A-Level. The list of AAQ's below can be studied alongside two other A-Level subjects.

This type of study programme enables learners to study two academic subjects, such as maths and biology, alongside a sector specific AAQ such as health and social care or engineering.

- Construction & the Built Environment
- Early Childhood Development
- Engineering
- Health & Social Care
- Human Biology
- IT: Data Analytics
- Medical Science

"Instead of picking the subjects you did well in at GCSE, pick ones you enjoy, those that interest you, or those that will help you get to a goal in the future. You will find you will enjoy learning about them more and will be more engaged in the subject."

Sasha Terry, A-Levels Alumni

Our pathways

For those that want to specialise.

STEM

Science, technology, engineering and maths are the tools that drive innovation and help improve the prospects of people and the planet. These are the skills employers require.



A-Levels in Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Further Maths, Environmental Science, Geography.

AAQs in Human Biology, Medical Science, Engineering, Construction & the Built Environment.

People and Society

Our pathway that promotes your understanding of how people think, interact and work together, enabling you to improve the lives of others.



A-Levels in Sociology, Psychology, Economics, English Language, Geography, Politics.

AAQs in Health & Social Care, Early Childhood Development.

Humanities

Search for a deeper understanding of what it is to be human. Develop an analytical and critical understanding which can be applied to life or study.



A-Levels in History, English Literature, Philosophy, English Language.



Business and Law

Look at the world as it is and then make a difference. Learn how the right mix of people and technology can get things done. Prepare yourself for the world to come.



A-Levels in Law, Business, Economics, Psychology, Politics.

AAQs in Engineering, Construction & the Built Environment, IT: Data Analytics.

Creative

Unleash your creativity by understanding and critiquing the work of others to create something unique.



A-Levels in Art & Design, Music, Philosophy, English Literature.

Go your own way

Choose a blend of subjects that suits your interests and future plans.

"I'm now studying for a BSc in Psychology at Bangor University. The college's approach to A-Levels made the transition to university much easier. I learned to be motivated, take initiative, and foster a passion for my studies. I am grateful to the amazing college tutors for their dedication and care, which allowed us to become independent young adults, responsible for our own learning. My future plans include gaining experience in the mental health sector and pursuing further studies, with the goal of building a career within the NHS."

Betsy George, A-Levels Alumni





Entry criteria

Our entry criteria is a grade 6 or above in the subject most relevant to that being applied for (except for Maths and Further Maths where the minimum GCSE grade required is 7).

You will also need at least 4 other subjects at grade 5 or above, including English and Maths. Please see our website for full details. Applicants with non-standard educational history should contact us for further details and advice.

“My advice would be to plan ahead and be open minded. You might have a vague thought on what you want for your future and as time goes on, this idea may change to be something completely different, or it might stay the same. The tutors and SEPO team (our careers advisors) will support you along the way.”

Max Cropper, A-Levels Student

"I really loved my time doing A-Levels at Kendal College and I have so many good memories to look back on! My tutors were always so supportive - they really brought out my passion for the subjects and gave me the confidence to keep at it. I am currently studying at Nottingham University and really enjoying it."

Emily Butcher, A-Levels Alumni





A-Level subjects

Art & Design

Future careers: Artist, Product Designer, Graphic Designer, Visual FX.

Express yourself and communicate to others via visual media. Every image you see on a wall, logo, sign or product, was created by someone with a visually creative background.

Biology

Future careers: Nursing, Conservation, Physiotherapy, Vet, Environmental Scientist.

The science of life. Learn how organisms survive and replicate including how cells communicate, and how genes influence the next generation.

Business

Future careers: Marketing, Entrepreneur, Leadership, Project Management.

Learn what makes business successful, from leadership and strategy to marketing and change management. Develop an understanding of how to get things done.

Chemistry

Future careers: Environmental Monitoring, Engineering, Conservation, Vet, Medicine.

Delve deeper into the nature of materials and understand the relationships between them. Further study in this subject opens up a fascinating and useful appreciation of the natural world.

Computer Science

Future careers: Software Design & Development, Data Analyst, Network Manager, Cyber Security.

Modern life is controlled and shaped by computer systems and the people that design them. From gaming to manufacturing, artificial intelligence to cryptocurrencies, understanding them starts here.

Criminology

Future careers: Probation Officer, Social Worker, Police.

Explore the criminology environment through developing knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system.

Economics

Future careers: Management, Marketing, Non-Government Organisations.

How and why do people make decisions and what affect does this have? From a global scale to an individual choice. Explore what shapes these choices and the impact that they have.

English Language

Future careers: Journalism, Communications, Copy Writing, Teaching.

English Language investigates how language changes according to situation, user and purpose, and how attitudes to such variation lie behind the power structures in our society.

English Literature

Future careers: Author, Journalism, Teaching.

Explore what it is to be human through the eyes of authors and characters in some of the English language's finest texts.

Environmental Science

Future careers: Environmental Scientist, Technologist, Carbon Advisor.

Climate change, deforestation, flooding, pollution, soil erosion and increasing populations. Understand these more to answer the question "how can we develop sustainable solutions to these problems?"

Further Maths

Future careers: Engineer, Software, Data Analysis, Scientist.

Deepen and broaden your understanding of maths. Specific study of argument and proof, modelling and problem solving takes you well beyond the A-Level specification. This subject can only be taken alongside Mathematics.

Geography

Future careers: Planning, Environmentalist, Flood & Resource Management.

Places, processes and people: cities, glaciers volcanoes, immigration – Geography covers it all. Studying the unprecedented changes the planet and it's population are undergoing make the subject hugely relevant.

History

Future careers: Law, Business Research, Management.

Learn from the past; look to the future. Learn to analyse the events that shaped our world and what lessons can be learnt from them.

Law

Future careers: Solicitor, Barrister, Policing, Business.

Laws develop and change in line with society and in many ways define it. Learn how Law is developed and how to interpret and apply it in a fascinating range of cases.

Mathematics

Future careers: Engineer, Software, Accounts, Data Analysis, Scientist.

Maths is the 'language of nature'; explore its beauty, power and usefulness. The logic and reasoning skills developed by studying Maths mean that the qualification is widely respected.

Music

Future careers: Musician, Producer, Sound Technician, Sound Engineer.

Explore how music has evolved across time and space, understand the influences and techniques behind musical genres and develop your own talents as a musician and composer.

Philosophy

Future careers: Leadership, Business, Medical Ethics, Law.

The study of thought itself. Gain a thorough grounding in the fundamental concepts of philosophy. Morals, minds and metaphysics mixed up to let you win any debate and express ideas clearly.

Physics

Future careers: Engineering, Manufacturing, Design, Research & Development.

The world in its purest form from the weird and wonderful world of Quantum physics to galactic superclusters. The technology of tomorrow starts with an understanding of how things work.

Politics

Future careers: Business, Politician, Civil Service, Social Work.

Lively, relevant and controversial. Informed by an understanding of political ideas, procedure and comparison with other countries. Learn to critically analyse others and express your own view.

Psychology

Future careers: Counselling, Education, Marketing, Social Work.

How the mind works and how it affects human behaviour. Why do people think, act and feel the way they do? Social influence, neurology, attachments to others and many more all start to form an answer.

Sociology

Future careers: Politician, Business, Education, Social Work.

How does society work and what influences us within it? Power, culture, identity and what is 'normal' are all explored and applied to topics like education, families and the media.



ASPIRE

ASPIRE is an innovative high achiever's programme designed to empower motivated students in their academic journeys and prepare them for admission to university. By focusing on skill enhancement, the ASPIRE programme offers tailored workshops in critical thinking, advanced writing, and effective study techniques, ensuring students not only excel in their work but also develop a strong foundation for higher learning.

Alongside this essential skill-building, the programme features enrichment opportunities such as mentorship from accomplished professionals and access to masterclasses that foster a vibrant learning community. Through a comprehensive approach to education, ASPIRE equips students with the tools and confidence they need to achieve high grades and flourish in competitive academic environments.

"I have chosen to do ASPIRE, and other extra-curricular activities outside of college, to further my knowledge and skills. ASPIRE has given me the opportunity to do work experience and helps students take a break from the usual rhythm of their studies. ASPIRE has enabled me to explore other subjects and to become more open-minded to others' ideas."

Wiktoria Chrusciel, A-Levels Student

AAQ subjects

Construction & the Built Environment

Focusing on the principles of construction, technology, and design, this course integrates core mathematics, science, and material skills, enabling you to apply your knowledge in a real-world context.

Early Childhood Development

Reflecting the evolving nature of working in early years, this course covers ages from birth to eight years old. Key topics include child protection, welfare, safeguarding, and various forms of child abuse.

Engineering

Explore engineering materials, processes, and emerging technologies. Gain an understanding of mechanical and electrical/electronic principles, and hone your skills in design, project management and problem-solving.

Health & Social Care

Navigate the ever-changing landscape of health and social care. Some topics may be sensitive or challenging to engage with, such as child protection and welfare, safeguarding, and different forms of abuse.

Human Biology

Research the fundamentals of human biology, create and deliver impactful presentations for patients and healthcare professionals, and plan and conduct laboratory investigations using biomedical techniques.

IT: Data Analytics

Key topics include understanding data, managing data, legal considerations, and exploring job roles, skills, and attributes relevant to data analytics.

Medical Science

Medical Science focuses on preventing and treating illnesses. It explores topics like health, physiology, disease, pharmacology, clinical testing, and medical research.

It's your future, your college, and we look forward to working with you to create it.

- ✓ **Based in Kendal town centre, at the Westmorland Campus**
- ✓ **An adult learning environment**
- ✓ **A personal academic mentor**
- ✓ **A timetable designed for A-Level study**
- ✓ **UCAS application support**
- ✓ **Support in finding an apprenticeship or job**
- ✓ **Online resources for all subjects and Clickview subscription**
- ✓ **Office 365 account**
- ✓ **No uniform**

Life at KC Sixth

A typical day

At college your timetable is designed specifically for A-Level study. You will have 3 lessons per A-Level per week, typically for 1 ½ hours, enabling you to explore topics in-depth and make the step up from GCSE confidently. Depending on the subjects, you may have time between lessons, giving you the opportunity to keep up-to-date with out of class study.

Academic mentoring and progress reviews

Your academic mentor will work with you regularly to support your study. They are your guide through successful A-Level study. You will also meet the college's KC Sixth Curriculum Lead to have an honest appraisal of your progress which will help you improve and reach your goals.



Our culture

No bells, first name terms with all staff, independent study, shared public areas with staff and other students, and zero tolerance of bullying and other behaviour that interrupts study.

Pastoral support

There may be things that affect your ability to study whilst you are at college. Your academic mentor will be the first person you can talk to, but from there we can direct you to more specialist services as required. We will offer to support you so that you can stay focused on your study.

Student support

There are opportunities for study support during the timetabled sessions.

Target grades

All A-Level students will be set target grades that are based on their GCSE results. These target grades will be reviewed as part of the academic review process, and subject advice and guidance will be provided to support your progress and achievement.

Assessment

We believe students need to know exactly where they stand regarding their academic progress. We have assessment points throughout the year that will give you and the team around you a clear picture, and allow you and them to plan the next steps.

Frequently asked questions

How is college different from school?

Our students tell us the biggest difference is the atmosphere. College is an adult environment, so students say it feels more relaxed. You will mix with people with all sorts of interests and goals, from a wide range of places.

Can I study four A-Levels?

Yes. If you have high entry grades, you aspire to a top university place and enjoy studying.

Will I get support with UCAS and job applications?

Yes. Your teachers, Academic Mentor and Student Services Team will help you with this. As we deliver both degrees and apprenticeships we are well placed to help you find a degree-level apprenticeship.

What is the benefit of combining A-Levels with an AAQ?

AAQs are endorsed by employers and enable insight into industry sectors and future careers, supporting progression to apprenticeships and higher education. You will gain practical skills and contextual knowledge, and have the opportunity to further utilise our state-of-the-art facilities and workshops.



How do I know I will settle in at college?

Nearly all our students who start in September are new to the college and are keen to meet new people. Your teachers will ensure that you get to know each other during your first days at college.

Are A-Levels my only option if I might want to go to university?

No. A-Levels are a good route to university, but they aren't the only option. Most other level 3 programmes at the college have the same UCAS points as 3 A-Levels.

Should I add an EPQ and or Core Maths to my A-Levels?

It's up to you. EPQ shows a university or employer that you have good independent study skills and continuing maths is well advised if you want to do a subject at university that requires maths skills, it's also a useful life skill.

Should I stick with subjects I've studied at school?

Statistics say there is no advantage in only choosing A-Level subjects that you've studied at school, so choose what interests you most and fits with your future plans.

What combinations of subjects should I choose?

It's important that you choose 3 subjects that you will enjoy studying. Our pathways give you some suggestions to help guide you, if you are ready to specialise.

Can you support my Oxbridge application?

Yes. We have successful experience in supporting students with applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities.

kendal.ac.uk/a-levels
hello@kendal.ac.uk
01539 814700

