



Spalding High School

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Headmistress Mrs M Anderson B.Ed

Sixth Form Live Event 2021 – FAQ

Application Process

Now that we're probably not going back any time soon do we have to email our applications?

Please download the form from [here](#) and email to Hazel.French@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk by 24th February.

Do we have personal interviews or anything like that before joining?

No, we just need your application form for now. You will then send us a copy of your GCSE results on results day and if you have met the entry requirements, your place will be secured.

How flexible are you on entry requirements?

Ultimately our main concern is that all students are on courses that are right for them. If on results day you have not met the entry requirements, we will discuss your application further with you to see what we might be able to do to help or what we could offer. Each case is dealt with on an individual basis.

Do we need to include our predicted grades in our application?

Yes please. It is useful for us in planning for next year.

Should we apply for multiple colleges/6th forms - and make our minds up once we receive results?

That is entirely up to you. If you are unsure about what to do in September or are worried about meeting our entry requirements it is a good idea to have an informed back up plan.

Subject Choice

If I start my A Level subject but quickly realise it's not what I thought and wish to change - is that possible? How far into the year, can we switch subjects if we change our mind?

It is best to use all of the resources to help you make the right choice from the outset. Please [click](#) here to look in the Sixth Form prospectus for more details about each subject and click [here](#) to access the Subject Information videos. The videos also contain contact information for each Head of Department, please get in touch with them if you have any questions. On GCSE results day you will confirm your subject choices for us. However, there is also some flexibility to change subject in the first few weeks but it may not be possible if that subject is already full or your new subject combinations does not fit into the option blocks.

What are the grade boundaries to take certain subjects?

Our general entry requirements are a grade 4 in Mathematics and either English Language or English Literature and four further GCSEs grade 9-4. Each subject then has its own subject specific entry requirements, please see information in the school prospectus for more details. For A Level subjects not studied at GCSE, students will need a grade 5 in English Language or Literature.

What are the requirements for doing four A levels?

Studying four A Levels is difficult as it leaves very little time during the school day for the necessary independent work or enrichment activities. All universities make offers based on three A Levels only. Applications from students wishing to study four A Levels will be reviewed when GCSE results are published. Each application will be considered and discussed with students and parents on an individual basis.

If I want to do a particular subject but I don't think I will be able to reach the grade I need is there anything I can do to increase my grade?

Just keep working hard! Continue to engage with your remote learning and contact individual teachers when there is something that you don't understand. The best way to revise is by completing lots of practice questions.

Is there such thing as an 'odd' combination of A Level choices?

Not at all. As well as learning the subject, you will also be developing useful skills for your future studies and careers. Different subjects will develop different skills. However, if you have a particular career or university course in mind, it is useful to look at the UCAS website to see if specific subjects are needed. Click [here](#) to explore different subjects and the requirements for Higher Education study. The Informed Choices website is very helpful when choosing subjects useful for degree courses, click [here](#) to open it.

I need to narrow my subjects from four to three. What is your advice on how to do that?

You could look at the Sixth Form Prospectus and click on the link to the exam board syllabus for each subject so that you get a full picture of all of the topics covered and how they are assessed. Speak to our subject teachers and get in touch with the Head of Department for that subject. If you are still unsure email the Sixth Form Team, 6thformenquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk, and we will do our best to put you in touch with students who are studying those subjects to see if they can help.

Which subjects are not as highly regarded by universities?

All A Levels are level three qualifications and therefore are equal in their level of difficulty and are equally valued by Higher Education establishments. Having said that, some universities do have preferences for particular courses and you should check the UCAS website for guidance if you have a particular career path or HE course in mind. To study Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science Biology and Chemistry are usually required.

Enrichment

Why should I come to Spalding High School and not any other schools?

We are a mixed Sixth Form in an Ofsted Outstanding school. Please read our most recent Ofsted report [here](#). All of our students talk very favourably about the support that they receive throughout the Sixth Form. Whether it be support from our careers leader in deciding your next steps after Sixth Form, pastoral support from tutors or the wider Sixth Form Team when faced with personal difficulty, academic support from subject staff or peer support from students in the vertical tutoring system, this is the key element that always shines through. We are a very friendly and inclusive school, our students enjoy attending and do very well. Of course, we have an excellent enrichment programme and proven history of fantastic results too, please see questions below for more details.

What is the enrichment programme? What activities are there to do in Sixth Form

Our PD (personal development) programme, careers lessons, MOOCs and the option to do Core Maths in Year 12 form our formal enrichment programme. The MOOCs (massive open online courses) are an opportunity to study just about anything! Students can choose extra studies related to their subjects or career aspirations or something completely different. Click [here](#) to explore the subjects available. We offer such a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, there really is something for everyone. Our Sixth Form students are excellent role models for our younger students and play a huge part in the wider school life. The peer mentoring scheme, prefect positions of responsibility and the school council are excellent examples of how you could get involved. See the Sixth Form Prospectus for a full list of activities.

How do the enrichment activities help when applying to uni?

Studying and your grades are just a small part of your application to Higher Education establishments. When you apply you will have to write a personal statement which demonstrates your passion and real interest in your chosen subject. Carefully chosen enrichment activities will ensure that you have lots to write about and prove you are more than just a set of good grades.

What is Level 3 Core Maths - if I have my GCSE do I need to take it

Core Maths in Year 12 is entirely optional and done in addition to your three A Levels. It is a one-year programme of study and you sit an exam and get a qualification at the end of Year 12. Please see the subject information videos from more information of what the course entails to decide whether it is right for you.

Do all students have the opportunity to go on the Sixth Form expedition, or do they have to be studying geography?

In previous years, we have run a month-long expedition. We absolutely hope to bring that back when travel becomes safe and possible again. The expedition is open to all Sixth Form students. We have also worked with the Rotary club in the past and students have been awarded exchange placements and summer camps across the world – watch out for the return of those too!

Do you participate in Gold D of E in Sixth Form

Yes, in normal circumstances our Sixth Form students have the opportunity to take part in the Gold Duke of Edinburgh scheme

How would you apply for a position of responsibility in the Sixth Form?

The application process opens in March of Year 12 and the nature of the process depends on the position applied for. You can expect to have to write a formal letter of application and there may be an interview or an observed group task. This year our prefect applicants did a video interview.

The school day and curriculum

In our non-contact time in sixth form if it is safe to do so, are we allowed to leave school as long as we are back for our lessons?

Sixth Form students are permitted to leave the school site at breaktime and lunchtime but are expected to be in school for the rest of the school day. Studying for A Levels is full time! There are a few exceptions to this; we do allow students to book medical appointments or driving lessons in non-contact time. For students who are up to date with work we also offer the opportunity to study at home for 4 periods per week; however students must still attend all morning and afternoon registrations.

If teaching time is 9 hours per fortnight per subject how much extra time should I be spending a week on each subject? On average, how much homework is there?

Of course this will be variable according to how assessments are organised and some weeks might be busier than others. You can expect to have to do about 6 hours of independent study per subject per week, staff may set one or two pieces of homework per week and the rest of the time is for your own independent study. A student studying three A Levels will have 27 periods per fortnight of subject lessons and 5 or 6 other lessons for things like Careers or PD leaving about 20 hours per fortnight in school for independent work. You can see from these calculations that it is very important to make good use of your non-contact time in school.

With A Levels do you have a revision guide that has all the answers and all you need to know or are we expected to know the course based on our own research?

You are taught by expert teachers, just as you are at GCSE. They are responsible for your learning and progression and ensure that you cover the whole of the syllabus. Many subjects issue a textbook but will also recommend others that you could buy for yourself. There is a wide range of revision guides and practice work books available, just as there are at GCSE and your teachers will be able to guide you as to which are useful.

General Life in the Sixth Form

How many days a week will I be in school?

We are a full-time education establishment and you will have lessons every day. You are expected in school in time for registration at 8.55am and the end of the school day is 3.40pm. On Fridays, Sixth Form students are able to leave at 2.50pm.

Is PE compulsory?

Yes. You will have a double PE lesson each fortnight. Exercise is really good for both your physical and mental health and most students find it a lot of fun. There are lots of options for you to choose from and in normal times students have used the time to go swimming at the pool in Spalding or book a squash court locally.

Would you say the majority of students in Sixth Form are female?

Yes, about three quarters of our Sixth Form students are female but we are an inclusive community where everyone is welcome!

What are class sizes like?

It does depend on the subject and the number of students opting for each subject. It ranges from five or six students to about twenty-two students in one class. It varies year on year too.

What are your rules regarding uniform and hair colour?

All of our Sixth Form students dress smartly as they are role models for our younger pupils who have to adhere to a uniform policy. Please click [here](#) to see our Sixth Form dress code document.

How many students are there in the Sixth Form?

It varies year on year but 120 in each year on average.

After A Level

What kind of support is there regarding universities or going on from Year 13?

There is a huge amount of support available to help you in making those important decisions. We have an experienced and dedicated careers team in Mrs Bushell and Mrs O'Brien who help and support all of our students in applications for university, apprenticeships or employment. They also provide support with work experience, interview skills, personal statement writing and tips for attending open days to name but a few. Students at Spalding High School really do receive outstanding support and advice in this area. Please click [here](#) for more information.

Do you get a lot of students into Oxbridge?

Every year a number of our students make successful applications to Oxford or Cambridge university. It does vary year on year but in 2020 three students went on to study at Cambridge and one at Oxford. Five students were also accepted on to a course for Medicine last year. Students are supported incredibly well in making an application to courses or establishments that are extremely competitive. Click [here](#) for more information about the support on offer.

Are we expected to be aiming for Oxbridge/Russell groups?

Not at all. All students are supported independently to achieve their own aspirations and students chose to apply to a huge variety of HE establishments across the country and sometimes abroad. Our main aim is to ensure that students apply for courses, employment or apprenticeships in establishments where they will thrive, achieve their best and be happy. Every year about 80% of our students go on to university.

What careers do students mostly go on to study?

There really isn't a typical High School student when it comes to the next steps after A Level. We are incredibly proud of the diversity of courses and career paths that our students go on to choose.

What are the schools A Level results like?

We are incredibly proud of our school's proven history of academic success and our consistent 99% or above pass rate. Our students work hard, supported by expert teachers and do well. Our main concern is that every student achieves their best. Please click [here](#) for a breakdown of our results by department and across all subjects.

I am very anxious when talking to people; what if I mess up my interviews?

Everybody get anxious when faced with an interview, that is completely normal. Through your careers lesson you are offered lots of advice and top tips for being successful at interview. Mock interviews can be arranged which also help you prepare.

COVID worries and differences in the process this year.

If another wave of COVID happens, what will happen about us starting our A Levels in September?

Over the past year we have put lots of systems in place to be able to remotely support the education and wellbeing of all of our students. We, like you, are hopeful that things will have returned to a degree of normality by then, but we are well prepared for every eventuality.

Has the GCSE results day changed?

GCSE results day is currently scheduled for Friday 27th August. The recent Ofqual plans do indicate that this now may be brought forward to July, but we are awaiting clarification.

General revision and advice

Is there anything we can do to make our grades higher at this point? How can we get the best teacher assessed grade possible?

Just keep working! Ask teachers for feedback and advice on how to improve. Use revision guides, practice questions and online revision tools to help. Keep engaging in your remote learning and when you don't get a mark you are happy with, do a take two to improve. Don't give up!

How often should we revise every subject?

Revision should be an ongoing process, not just something that happens at the end when you have a test or exam coming up. Little and often is always the best policy and the more you revisit something, the more likely you are to remember it. When you are learning a new topic, think back to related topics you have already covered.