The CCHS A Level Curriculum

Introduction:

As part of CCHS's progressive approach to grammar school education we continually review our curriculum offer to ensure our provision is ambitious, broad and balanced while meeting the needs of our highly able students. As part of this practice, we have reviewed our current Sixth Form provision alongside that of comparable schools through the 2022 GSHA Curriculum Survey.

Background:

Currently, CCHS offers the following study paths:

- CCHS students select 4, or 5 A Levels from a broad range of subjects.
- EPQ is offered as an additional qualification alongside the A Level courses.
- Further Mathematics A Level can be selected as either the 4th or 5th subject.

At a national level, comparable schools are starting to offer a different approach:

- Source: The 2022 GSHA Curriculum Survey[1]
- **74% of survey responders stated 3 A Levels as their standard offer in Year 12**
- **95% of survey responders stated 3 A Levels as their standard offer in Year 13**

The 2022 GSHA Curriculum Survey:

- 3 A Level offer Year 12 - 74% of responders
- 4 A Level offer Year 12 - 26% of responders

The majority of students start Year 12 with three A Levels, 95% of schools stated that students only continue with three into Year 13.

This is a significant change from the 2016 GSHA Curriculum Survey when the percentages were reversed: 70% of responders started with four A Levels and 29% with three.

CCHS Context:

- Since 2017 approximately 66% of our cohort start with 4 A Levels, then move to 3 A Levels for Year 13. The majority of students drop a subject at the end of Year 12.
- Studying a subject for the duration of Year 12 equates to over 150* teaching hours.

[1] *The 2022 GSHA Curriculum Survey: – 81 schools participated including 10 SSGS Schools: Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, CCHS, Kind Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls, Lancaster Girls' Grammar, Newport Girls' High School, Newstead Wood School, Queen Mary's high School, Stratford Girls', Tiffin School, Woodford County High School.*

Cohort	Student Totals - July (YOL)	Students moving from 4AL to 3AL	%
2017-19	125	86	69%
2018-20	115	79	69%
2019-21	106	73	69%
2020-22	148	85	57%
2021-23	149	102	68%

**Based on 37 weeks and 8 hours per subject*

University Applications:

Offers for courses, including Oxbridge are based on 3 A Levels. On occasion, adding an additional A Level could benefit an application but only if it does not negatively impact the overall average grade[2].

Feedback from Year 12 Admissions:

"Despite leaving the Chelmsford County High School open evening and subject taster sessions with positive feelings and the belief it would be a great environment to study in, I did not pursue my application as I had to study 4 A Levels.....I would prefer to focus my studies on 3 subjects and a research project that I enjoy, as opposed to taking 4 with the intention of dropping the 4th once I got the chance."

Proposal: Twin Pathways

Four A Levels Plus

- Students select 4 A Levels from a broad range of subjects (including Further Maths).
- Further Maths or EPQ would be available as a 5th option choice.
- Students participate in Community Service and PE lessons (unless 5 A Levels are chosen).

Three A Levels Plus

- Students select 3 A Levels from a broad range of subjects (excluding Further Maths).
- Students take part in the EPQ and Community Service.
- Students participate in timetabled PE lessons.

[2] *"Courses for 2024 Entry", undergraduatestudy.cam.ac.uk, "Admission requirements for 2024 entry", ox.ac.uk, "Oxbridge Applications A Level Guide" oxbridgeapplications.com September, 2023.*