



MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
School

## 16+ Entrance



## **The Sixth Form at Merchant Taylors'**

Welcome to Merchant Taylors' School – it is our aim that every boy who passes through the Sixth Form has the opportunity to discover and develop his talents, in whichever direction they might take him, to their fullest potential. As boys move through the Sixth Form, they are treated as the leaders of the school community they should aspire to be, both in terms of the privileges and freedoms they enjoy and the added responsibilities with which they come.

Those starting out on this journey at the beginning of the Lower Sixth, will find both tangible and more subtle differences to their school experience thus far: studying fewer subjects to a much greater depth, having private study periods in one's timetable and being able to wear a suit rather than school uniform, are all examples of the former; developing greater independence of thought and recognising the increasing expectations others have of Sixth Form pupils, are indicative of the latter. It is the privilege of the Sixth Form to have their own modern and equipped Common Room and access to cutting edge facilities across the school campus.

Academically, the Sixth Form at Merchant Taylors' offers the opportunity to really stretch oneself: subject teachers will certainly have high expectations of their pupils, given the excellent GCSE results with which they will have come to the school, and this will be reflected in the quality of the work they will expect from their charges. Pupils should not shrink from this: after all, they will have made a firm decision both to come to Merchant Taylors' and to study the subjects they most enjoy, and they should therefore embrace the challenges they will face with enthusiasm and a genuine spirit of curiosity.

Beyond the classroom, the Sixth Form at Merchant Taylors' marks, we hope, an exciting phase in a boy's life: a whole range of extra-curricular opportunities open up, from our first-class sporting opportunities to Young Enterprise, Model United Nations, Charity Drive and Phab. Those who throw themselves into these aspects of school life are usually those who also find themselves towards the top end of the academic scale too – the busiest people are indeed very often the most successful.

Sixth Form pupils also play an important part in assisting with the smooth running of the school: all members of the Lower and Upper Sixth have a responsibility to set good examples to younger boys, whilst election to the JCR provides a more formal way of providing leadership to the school community.

Merchant Taylors' offers a huge amount both within and beyond the classroom to those in the Sixth Form. The more a pupil involves himself in the life of the school, the more satisfaction he will get from being part of this community. We want every pupil here to flourish.

If you have any further questions or queries please do not hesitate to get in touch with me ([charrison@mtsn.org.uk](mailto:charrison@mtsn.org.uk)); if you have questions about 16+ entry procedures please contact Mr McCann, the Admissions Officer ([gmccann@mtsn.org.uk](mailto:gmccann@mtsn.org.uk)) or Mr Taylor, the Registrar ([jtaylor@mtsn.org.uk](mailto:jtaylor@mtsn.org.uk)). I do hope we will be able to welcome you into our community.

Clare Harrison – Head of Upper School

# **16+ Entrance Examinations**

## **INTRODUCTION**

You will be required to choose four subjects from those listed below. These subjects will be the ones you wish to study in the Lower Sixth Form. Most students will eventually drop one of their subjects, though you can carry on with all four to A level in some circumstances. Please note that Further Maths is not a separate choice, it is part of the Maths course.

We cannot guarantee to schedule the four subjects you choose should you gain entrance to the School. This will depend on timetabling constraints. If we cannot offer you your first choice, we will contact you in the Spring term.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

Pupils wishing to pursue Art at A-level are required to have previously studied the subject at GCSE. Applicants will be provided with source material on the day to produce an observational drawing in a relaxed and informal environment. Art applicants are requested to bring their current GCSE Art work/portfolios at this time.

## **CLASSICS**

### **Latin**

The MTS 16+ Latin exam will comprise a 1-hour long paper testing linguistic knowledge. It will consist of unseen translation and comprehension questions. The passages will be based on the current OCR GCSE Language specification for J282/01.

### **Classical Greek**

The MTS 16+ Classical Greek exam will comprise a 1-hour long paper testing linguistic knowledge. It will consist of unseen translation and comprehension questions. The passages will be based on the current OCR GCSE Language specification for J292/01.

## **COMPUTING**

The Computing examination makes no assumptions about prior teaching in the subject, rather the one-hour exam aims to test a candidate's ability to solve logical problems requiring clear thinking and to apply existing understanding to new situations. There is no requirement to write a program, however the candidate will be asked to analyse a process and comment in a systematic and thoughtful way. Some arithmetical skill will be required by the exercises.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

The Design and Technology exam consists of 6 questions. It is set at GCSE level and tests a candidate's ability in the following areas:

- Writing a design specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Product analysis
- Modelling techniques
- The product life cycle

## **DRAMA AND THEATRE**

The study of Drama at GCSE is highly recommended for students wishing to take A Level Theatre Studies, although not compulsory. A wider interest in Drama is desirable; this may include, for example, performing in plays and/or going to the theatre.

Candidates will be required to complete the following tasks:

- Practical: a performance of a 3-5 minute monologue performed on the day, followed by an interview
- Written: a review of a piece of live or digital theatre recently seen. If the candidate has not seen a piece of theatre, they may wish to write about a film. Candidates will have 30 minutes to complete this task.

## **ECONOMICS AND POLITICS**

### **Economics**

There is a one-hour aptitude test for Economics which does not require any previous knowledge of the subject. The first half of the test is comprised of a selection of multiple choice questions, where economic concepts are clearly defined within the questions. This will test factors such as:

- The ability to apply basic mathematical processes such as calculation percentage changes, identifying trends in graphs and analysing tables of data.
- The ability to think logically about a process of cause and effect. For instance, the candidate might be expected to identify that an increase in income tax rates is likely to reduce consumer incomes and therefore consumer demand, causing UK firms to produce less.

Candidates are advised to spend no longer than 30 minutes on the multiple choice component.

The second half of the test will be a short essay question, from a choice of three, which will be an open question inviting candidates to discuss an issue. This is intended to show the ability to construct an argument and to think critically and balance the answer through counter argument. An example of a past question is:

“What might be the costs and benefits of constructing a new terminal at Heathrow Airport?”

The paper is intended to test thinking and reasoning skills that are required to succeed at Economics A level, rather than specific economic knowledge.

## **Politics**

There is a one-hour Politics paper, which does not require any prior knowledge of political concepts and which tests aptitude for the subject.

This is a comprehension – based paper in which candidates are provided with a brief extract containing political concepts (where terminology is clearly explained) and are asked a series of questions based upon that passage. This is intended to test the ability to draw the correct inferences from the information provided and the ability to construct a well written argument. There will be one open-ended question, which is related to the passage, which will require candidates to think about an issue for themselves and construct a balanced argument to express their own opinion.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE**

### **English Literature**

The one-hour examination consists of one compulsory question. Candidates will be asked to write on an unseen prose passage of GCSE standard. The question contains bullet points to help focus the answer in the direction required by the examiner. Candidates are being tested on their close reading skills and their ability to refer to the language and imagery of prose in detail and with insight.

### **English Language**

The one-hour examination consists of one compulsory question. Candidates will be asked to read a stimulus prose passage (such as a letter or diary entry) and to rewrite it in a different form (such as a newspaper or webpage) and to write a short analytical commentary on the language choices and changes involved in the process. The question contains bullet points to help focus the answer in the direction required by the examiner. Candidates are being tested on their reading skills and their ability to explore the meaning of language in detail and with insight. Answers will be marked to an equivalent GCSE standard.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

You will be required to sit a 60-minute paper with questions on 5 themes: Rivers & Coasts, Earthquakes & Volcanoes, Economic Activity, Environment Issues and Weather & Climate. You will choose THREE out of the five themes and answer three questions on each, worth a total of 45 marks. Together with your ability to interpret questions and provide good knowledge we are also looking for a fluent use of geographical terminology and an excellent awareness of relevant and contemporary case studies.

## **HISTORY**

The paper will consist of a source comprehension question worth 20 marks and an essay worth 40 marks. The source question will require candidates to offer thoughtful interpretations of its content without knowing anything about its context. The essay question will be of a general nature and will not be specific to any time period, enabling candidates to draw on their existing knowledge. They will be assessed on their ability to select and deploy knowledge, to develop an insightful discussion with analysis and to produce a well-structured, fluent piece of writing. The paper is a test of skills, not substantive historical knowledge. It is designed so that candidates should find it equally challenging, regardless of what period(s) they have studied or what exam board they are taking.

## **MATHS & FURTHER MATHS**

Candidates will be tested on the standard GCSE syllabus, though the emphasis will be on algebraic topics as it is these that give a better idea of suitability for A-level Mathematics. Credit will be given for good, well explained solutions as well as for correct answers.

All questions should be attempted in Section A.

If the candidates have studied any Calculus (Differentiation, Integration) they should also attempt the questions in Section B. This will ensure that you can be put in an appropriate set if a place is offered. If such topics have not been studied it will not affect the chance of being offered a place. Calculators may be used throughout the paper.

Further Maths is not a separate A level choice at Merchant Taylors', it is taught as part of a two-year Maths course. If you are enrolled to Further Maths you will still have to choose three other subjects in the Lower Sixth.

## **MODERN LANGUAGES: FRENCH, GERMAN & SPANISH**

The 16+ examination lasts one hour. It is based on topics that appear in all current GCSE/IGCSE specifications and comprises a reading, writing and grammar sections. The writing section involves a guided essay, like those at GCSE/IGCSE. Candidates for languages might expect a short conversation in their chosen language at interview. This would again be based on current GCSE/IGCSE specifications.

## **MUSIC**

All aspiring A Level Music candidates are required to have passed the ABRSM Grade 5 Theory examination. The 16+ entrance examination for Music comprises two sections – performing, and a written paper. Applicants will be asked to perform a piece of their own choice on their first study instrument, as well as a contrasting piece on their second instrument(s) or voice, where possible. An accompanist will be provided, or they may bring their own. Candidates will also be asked to sight-read during the practical part of the assessment. Additionally, a one-hour written paper will test candidates' knowledge and understanding of music theory with questions similar to the ABRSM Grade 5 exam, listening skills with extracts of music for comment in a style similar to GCSE, and musical general knowledge. All candidates will be expected to demonstrate a lively interest in music in a variety of styles, and be prepared to be willing participants in the wider musical life of the school.

## **PSYCHOLOGY**

As Psychology is a subject which boys take at A level with no prior knowledge, the test will be purely of aptitude and will look at your ability to analyse information from, and criticize appropriately, a psychology experiment. It will also look at your ability to decipher and comment on a relatively large amount of both qualitative and quantitative information. It is not an examination that can be prepared for.

## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY**

The Religious Studies and Philosophy department currently offers two A Level options; students may choose from Religious Studies or Philosophy options at Merchant Taylors'. The entrance exam for students interested in either of these options is the same.

The paper is an hour long and requires candidates to answer two essay questions. These questions are designed to test a candidate's ability to critically assess questions of philosophy and ethics, rather than their prior knowledge. However, background knowledge in the fields of religion, theology and philosophy is advantageous. As such, candidates may refer to any religion(s) and/or philosophy they may have studied. They will be asked to give reasons to support their own views and to analyse responses from alternative perspectives, reaching a justified conclusion.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Biology**

Questions will assess data analysis and evaluation, basic Maths and critical thinking skills and recall of key biological terms and comprehension of essential GCSE concepts. This broadly corresponds to the IGCSE syllabus. All KS3 topics should be known.

Topics that may be assessed:

- Digestion: to include function of major food groups, structure, adaptations and function of the major digestive organs and roles of digestive enzymes.
- Respiration: aerobic and anaerobic processes in animals, plants & yeast.
- Photosynthesis: adaptations of the mesophytic leaf, rate-limitation.
- Inheritance: monohybrid crosses.
- Gas exchange (humans and plants): structure, adaptation and function.
- Coordination and Response: hormonal (ADH, Adrenaline, Insulin, Oestrogen, etc) and nervous control.
- Natural Selection and Evolution.
- Reproduction in Humans and Flowering Plants.

### **Chemistry**

Questions will include simple data analysis including drawing graphs, they will be of a structured form though could require some extended writing. All KS3 topics should be known. Topics that may be assessed:

- Atomic Structure, States of Matter and Structure and Bonding
- Formulae, Equations, Relative Atomic Masses, Moles and Calculations
- Rates of Reaction
- The Periodic Table, including Group 1, Group 7 and the Transition Metals. History of the Periodic Table will not be set
- Acids, Bases and Salts. This will include neutralisation reactions and salt preparation methods
- Organic Chemistry, restricted to Alkanes and Alkenes, including Polymerisation
- Energetics

## **Physics**

Questions will include recalling definitions and formulae and the application of the principles of physics to solve problems. Basic mathematics such as rearranging equations will be required. Knowledge and application of experimental skills may be included in these written answers and some extended writing may be required. The topics listed below broadly correspond to the Edexcel IGCSE Physics syllabus, which you may be referred to for greater detail. All KS3 topics should be known.

Topics that may be assessed:

- Forces and motion
- Electricity
- Waves
- Energy resources and energy transfer
- Solids, liquids and gases
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Radioactivity and particles
- Astrophysics

## **SPORT SCIENCE**

With no pre-requisites required, A-Level Sport Science suits pupils who have a real passion for all aspects of sport accompanied by a good level of practical performance in one sporting area. Aspects of the course include: Anatomy and Physiology, Skill Acquisition, Sport Psychology and Sport and Society. GCSE PE is encouraged but by no means essential for applicants. Pupils wanting to take A-Level Sport Science will need to provide evidence of their sporting achievements prior to their arrival at school in order to show they possess a high level of competence in at least one sport in any of the three roles: performance based, as an official or coach.