



# **THE TIFFIN GIRLS' SCHOOL**

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE SIXTH FORM**

**for entry in September 2020**

[www.tiffingirls.org](http://www.tiffingirls.org)

## **1. Life in the Sixth Form at Tiffin Girls' School**

In our Sixth Form we continue the school's aims of high academic achievement and helping every student to develop to their full potential. Our students are taught by subject specialists, and the vast majority achieve grades A\*, A and B at A level. We have an excellent record of entry into a wide range of the most competitive courses and universities for higher education.

The school takes individual advice and guidance for Sixth Form options very seriously. Sixth Form applicants need to consider their options wisely to ensure that they are choosing a set of subjects that will engage them and that will play to their strengths. The school will take into consideration an applicant's overall profile, including their GCSE results, before agreeing to them studying any particular set of subjects. We aim to help our students decide wisely, both about their participation in Sixth Form life and for their future careers and education.

Our new Sixth Form centre opened in September 2012. The centre includes silent study areas, group study areas, computer workstations, social spaces and a kitchen/eating area. Sixth Form students do not have to wear a uniform, though students must adhere to our Sixth Form dress code.

In the Sixth Form, students are divided into tutor groups of approximately 20 students. Pastoral care is provided by a team of tutors in each year group and the Sixth Form team:

Mr D Hares – Assistant Headteacher; Director of Sixth Form

Ms K Kilpatrick – Assistant Headteacher; Deputy Director of Sixth Form (with specific pastoral responsibility)

Mr N Graff – UCAS and Higher Education coordinator

The Sixth Form is an integral part of our school community, but it also has an identity of its own. Each year, a team of Year 12 prefects is appointed, who help the staff to organise and run the school, and other Sixth Formers take on roles supporting our academic departments or as mentors to younger students. More senior posts are available for Year 13 students, including Head Girls, Deputy Head Girls, House Officers and Technical Support Officers. Sixth Form students run a range of clubs in the school, and they also play a prominent part in the school orchestras, choirs, productions and sports teams. They have the opportunity of joining in a wide variety of activities including debating, Model United Nations, the Young Enterprise scheme, Feminist Society and the Amnesty International group. Sixth Form students run several subject-based societies, and each year there are new societies set up by Sixth Formers.

## **2. Academic Information**

All of the A Level subjects we offer are taught in their recently reformed version. All A Levels are two-year linear courses, and the final grade achieved is determined by exams taken at the end of the two-year course in Year 13. All of our departments have considered and selected their specification to give the appropriate degree of challenge for our highly intelligent and motivated students.

At The Tiffin Girls' School, all students who enter Year 12 in September 2020 will choose four subjects to study in Year 12. In the Summer Term of Year 12, they will sit internal end of year exams in all four of these subjects. Once the results of these exams are known, students will select one of these subjects to drop before continuing to study the other three subjects to full A Level in Year 13. This curriculum offer of four subjects in Year 12 and three subjects in Year 13 enables all students to maintain a broad and intellectually stimulating curriculum, while also maintaining as much flexibility as possible before specialising in Year 13.

The internal end of year exams in Year 12 will be a rigorous and formally-conducted series of exams, which will require serious and detailed preparation on the part of students. These exams will act as an interim assessment of their progress at the midway stage of their A Levels, and will also be used to guide students'

university applications to be made in Year 13; in particular they will be used as the starting point on which to base students' predicted grades for their UCAS applications.

### 3. The Sixth Form curriculum

The curriculum at Tiffin Girls' School consists of 25 one hour lessons. All students study four subjects in Year 12. Each course is taught in 4 one hour periods per week, with the exception of Route 2 Maths which requires 7 periods per week.

#### 3.1 Year 12 curriculum

A Pastoral programme, a Higher Education programme, and opportunities for PE are also provided. Business-related opportunities exist through our flourishing Young Enterprise programme, for which the school won the UK championships in 2013. Students are also encouraged to do voluntary work. The school runs the Duke of Edinburgh Award, with very large numbers of participants at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. Representatives from businesses, universities and other organisations frequently come in to school to give presentations about their careers and courses.

#### 3.2 Year 13 curriculum

At the start of Year 13 students drop one of their four main subjects in order to concentrate on three subjects in Year 13. These courses are taught in 4 one hour periods per week.

It is only possible for a student to study four subjects in Year 13 if they are completing both A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics in Year 13 alongside two other subjects. Universities place no requirement on students to complete more than 3 A level courses, and it is better to achieve highly in 3 subjects than to over-extend to 4.

#### 3.3 The subjects on offer for Year 12 starting in September 2020

Details of all these courses can be found in the online Sixth Form Prospectus.

Art	English Literature	Music
Biology	French	Physics
Chemistry	Geography	Psychology
Computer Science	History	Religious Studies
Drama and Theatre	Latin	Spanish
DT (Product Design)	Mathematics	
Economics	(Further Mathematics – not studied until Year 13)	

#### Please note:

- These are the courses on offer at the time of going to press. Whether or not a particular course runs is a decision taken at a later stage and will depend on a number of factors, including the number of students opting for it and the availability of appropriate staffing. It may not be until the summer term that they are finalised.
- We aim to make as many different possible subject combinations available as we can, to reflect our students' diverse range of talents and interests. Please note that, as a state school, there are constraints on our resources, and so we cannot guarantee to make every possible permutation of subjects available.
- Although we would hope that any subject available in Year 12 will also be available in Year 13 so that students are able to complete the A Level, we must reserve the right to withdraw courses if the numbers choosing to continue with the subject into Year 13 fall below economically viable limits.

## 4. Advice on A Level options

### 4.1 Choosing your subjects

Your choice of A Level subjects can have an impact on the courses available to you at university. If you have already decided on a course that you would like to study at university, take a look at the course requirements in order to check that they will facilitate an application. If you have not yet decided then try to take a range of subjects that keeps your choices as wide as possible.

### 4.2 The combination of subjects

A high proportion of our students expect to gain a place at some of the best universities in the country. The Russell Group is a group of universities which fall into this category (there are of course other excellent universities outside this group). However the advice they provide is pertinent to all excellent universities. The Russell Group have recently launched an updated advice website, "Informed Choices", which any prospective university student and their parents will find useful, whether or not they know which course they intend to study at university.

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Our full offering of subjects has been carefully considered to support our students in applying to a wide range of university courses.

When selecting which four subjects to study in Year 12, students should consider the following questions:

- Which are the subjects they enjoy the most?
- Which are their strongest subjects?
- What are the long-term implications of their chosen combination of subjects?

The first two of these questions relate to the fact that A Levels are very challenging courses, representing a significant step up from GCSE. Students can find this increase in difficulty particularly hard to negotiate if they choose subjects that do not properly interest them, or in which they are likely to struggle. The third question relates to the need for students to make wise decisions regarding their future university and career options. They must research this carefully, using reputable sources; the UCAS website and specific universities' departmental websites are usually excellent starting points.

## 5. University applications

The vast majority of our students proceed to higher education after two years in the Sixth Form. In 2019, 30 Tiffin girls took up places at Oxford and Cambridge, 79% gained a place at a Russell Group university, and 73% gained a place at their first choice university.

Students entering the Sixth Form in September 2020 will generally start university in 2022. Their UCAS university application forms will be completed in September/October 2021, i.e. at the beginning of Year 13. A student's performance in their summer 2021 examinations is extremely important, as their predicted grades will be based on them.

Universities will use a wide range of information in their selection of candidates, including:

- GCSE grades
- End of Year 12 exam grades
- A Level predicted grades
- Students' personal statements
- The school's reference, written by subject teachers, form tutors and Head of Sixth Form

- For some universities and courses there are also pre-selection tests, such as the UKCAT and BMAT tests for Medical, Dental and Veterinary applicants, the LNAT test for Law applicants, and a wide range of tests for courses at Oxford and Cambridge universities.
- For some universities and courses there are also interviews included in the selection process, including all courses at Oxford and Cambridge.

We have a rigorous guidance programme in place for all our Sixth Formers with regard to their UCAS and/or other higher education applications and their future career pathways. This starts immediately in Year 12, as all students have a weekly timetabled period allocated to 'Higher Education focus'. This is followed through the year by parent information evenings to explain the process, and ideas given to help students formulate their plans. We receive invitations from a number of top universities to send selected students on study days and masterclasses through the course of Year 12, and students can also enter a variety of university essay competitions to develop their understanding of their chosen subjects.

Discussion then continues between the students, their teachers and form tutors so that many of them are starting to make decisions before the summer holidays. With additional help sessions, most will have drafted their personal statement by the end of Year 12 so that when they return in September of Year 13 they are ready to complete their UCAS application. Mock interviews are also arranged so that candidates are well prepared. The final step from school to university is a very important one, and students will get help and advice at each stage along the way to ensure they choose the right course and university for them.

## **6. Further information for students applying from other institutions**

We welcome applications from students studying in other institutions in Year 11. 34 external candidates joined our Sixth Form in September 2019.

The deadline for applications to be received is 11.59pm on Friday 8 November 2019. Applications are submitted via an online form, which will be accessible from the end of school on Wednesday 9 October via a link on the Sixth Form Admissions page of our school website. Full instructions, including details of supporting documents required, will be part of the online form.

Predicted GCSE grades (or the equivalent for overseas applicants) will also be requested from an applicant's current school. Therefore, conditional offers of a place will be determined by the assessment of predicted academic grades, based on the professional judgement of The Tiffin Girls' School staff.

External candidates will be made offers conditional on their achieving certain required grades.

### **Please note:**

- To gain entry to the Sixth Form an applicant must achieve the overall predicted subjects and grades specified on their offer letter, as well as achieving the overall grades their existing school predicted. Having gained entry on that basis an applicant may then change their choice of subject if there is space in the new subject and their GCSE examination results fulfil the entry requirement for that subject.
- If a student does not achieve their predicted GCSE grades, the school may still be in a position to make an offer, however this will be entirely at the school's discretion.
- Our full Admissions Policy for entry to the Sixth Form in the Academic Year 2020-2021 can be found on our website at the following link, which all prospective external applicants should read:

[www.tiffingirls.org/Our-School/Admissions/Sixth-Form](http://www.tiffingirls.org/Our-School/Admissions/Sixth-Form)

Please see the school website for A Level exam results and Higher Education destination information:

<http://www.tiffingirls.org/Our-School/Sixth-Form.aspx>