

Physical Education

OCR Specification*



General information:

Physical Education at A Level challenges the student by combining the practical and theoretical aspects of study in order to better understand the wider aspects of human performance. It is a popular subject which develops a wide range of skills, including performance analysis, communication, research skills and either specific sports performance or coaching. Students will develop their confidence and aim to build a broader depth of interest in the specific modules of this wide-ranging course.

Course Content:

Physical Education at A Level combines four components – Physiological factors affecting performance, Psychological factors affecting performance, Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport and, finally Performance in physical education.

The Physiological section investigates the detail and application of both applied anatomy and exercise physiology along with the biomechanical elements of performance while the Psychological section separates the concepts of skill acquisition and sport specific psychology and offers the student the opportunity to consider their implications on performance.

The Socio-cultural issues section stands slightly apart and looks more deeply at wider considerations attached to sport within society and the contemporary issues which affect both sport and physical activity. This takes into consideration such concepts as ethics and deviance, impact of the media and the growth of technology within sport.

The final aspect of the course is combined between the individual performance or coaching in a chosen sport and the non-exam assessment of evaluation and analysis of performance for improvement, where the student will be required to critique a relatable performance in order to apply and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding from all aspects of the course content as detailed above.

How is the course taught and assessed?

Physical Education is taught through a variety of activities, including the classroom based theoretical modules comprising group discussion, study groups and projects, individual assignments and wider reading tasks. Students will also experience a variety of practical sessions in order to develop their ability to relate the written concepts to physical performance. Exam skills and essay-based tasks will also be expected during both individual and supervised study time. Assessment is by 3 x exam papers taken at the end of Year 13. The Physiological section is a two-hour paper worth 30% while the Psychological and Socio-cultural are one-hour papers each worth 20%. The combination of the Performance or Coaching and the Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement makes up the final 30% of the A Level.

Entry requirements:

In addition to general entry requirements for BWS, a grade 7 in a GCSE science subject, preferably Biology or Grade 7,7 in Combined Science together with a high level of participation in sport.

Results information:

In 2024 PE achieved 100% pass rate with 23% at grades A*-B

Top destinations for students:

Bath/Loughborough/Birmingham Sports Science, Physiotherapy, Sports Therapy, Osteopathy, Sports Psychology, Sport Business, Sport Technology, Sport Product design and many more.

Beyond the curriculum:

BWS offers a wide variety of opportunities to engage in sport and recreational activities. Competitive sport differs per term, with entry into national, regional and domestic competitions. Alongside this there are consistent, usually weekly blocks of non-competitive sports or sessions to get involved in.

Autumn/Winter

Competitive: Rugby, Rugby 7s, Football, Basketball, Netball, Lacrosse, Cross Country, Badminton, Tennis, Squash

Recreational: Yoga, Fitness suite,

Spring/Summer

Competitive: Athletics, Tennis, Badminton, Cricket, Squash

Recreational: Yoga, Fitness suite, Volleyball, Rounders, Ultimate Frisbee

BWS Adventure was launched in 2019, providing a fully supported outdoor programme including the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme amongst other opportunities.

* Please note that the specification may change prior to September 2025