



Date: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026

Responsibility: Deputy Head (Academic)

EPSOM

COLLEGE

Academic Curriculum Policy

Aims

Epsom College is a selective, co-educational boarding and day school, and aims to provide excellent academic opportunities for all age groups, both through the range of subjects offered in the curriculum and the variety of ideas and skills covered within these subjects. In line with the College value of ambition, we teach pupils to aspire for excellence and to endeavour to achieve their best in all they do, and believe that the learning and progress experienced by pupils in academic lessons is central to their overall wellbeing and sense of self.

The College continually reviews curriculum provision to ensure that what we offer is interesting relevant and enriching, and that it provides excellent preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of higher education and future life.

Overview

The Epsom College curriculum is designed not only to cover everything within the National Curriculum at each key stage, but to go beyond this, both in breadth and depth.

The emphasis is on breadth in the younger years (3rd Form to M4), enabling all pupils regardless of previous educational background to build up the foundational knowledge and experience they need in each of the subjects that they may later choose to continue for GCSE. As they progress through the College, pupils are guided carefully to make options choices that suit their strengths and aspirations, and the emphasis gradually changes from breadth to depth and subject mastery as they reach the Sixth Form.

Wellbeing in the Lower School and Personal and Social Development (PSD) in the Senior School is given weekly timetabled curriculum time in every year group to ensure all pupils experience a comprehensive and cohesive programme that promotes the importance of intellectual, spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development. This is overseen by the Head of PSD, working with the Assistant Head: Wellbeing and the Deputy Head: Academic, and covers a wide range of topics and skills including relationships and sex education, fundamental British values, digital safety, managing finances, careers, and independent study skills.

Progress in each subject is measured through each section of the College, and all pupils take nationally standardised baseline tests (MidYIS 7, MidYIS 9 and Alis) at the beginning of 3rd Form, M4 and L6 to enable this to happen.

For those with special educational needs (SEND) or for whom English is an additional language (EAL), support is provided in the form of teacher adaptation in lessons and, in many cases, one to one or group tutorials with staff from the Academic Support Department and/or EAL Department.

Lower School (3rd Form and L4)

All pupils have lessons in English, Maths, Science, Wellbeing, Art, Music, Drama, PE, Computer Science, DT, PE, Modern Foreign Languages, Latin, History, Geography, and Theology and Philosophy (formerly Religious Studies). There is significant emphasis and time given to literacy, numeracy and oracy within these subjects.

In the Third Form, modern foreign languages are taught in the Language Taster Carousel, with all pupils learning French, German and Spanish within the context of different cultural topics, such as food, art, festivals and sport. Pupils opt to continue with two of these languages in the Lower Fourth.

Science is mainly structured as topics in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, but also includes time for interdisciplinary investigations and projects. Computer Science includes an introductory course in AI.

The timetable is not only comprised of these traditional subjects, but also includes Trivium, which introduces and develops wider ideas and skills, such as debating and presenting, targeted advertising and fake news, formulating persuasive arguments, and discussion of social issues.

Subjects involving use of specialist equipment are taught in the Senior School department buildings where these facilities are available. All lessons are taught in mixed ability groups throughout the Lower School, with the exception of Maths, where pupils are loosely set by ability.

The Head of Lower School is responsible for the ethos of the Lower School, and ensures that the 3rd Form and L4 are years in which good attitudes and social and study habits are acquired.

Middle Fourth (M4)

The first year of the Senior School (M4) continues with a broad curriculum, enabling pupils joining at the 13+ entry point to experience a wide range of subjects and make informed choices about what to opt for at GCSE level. These choices are made in the Lent Term.

All pupils have lessons in English, Maths, History, Geography, Theology and Philosophy, Computer Science, DT, Music, Art, Drama, PE, and PSD. The sciences are taught as the separate subjects, Biology, Chemistry and Physics, each in a specialist lab with a specialist teacher, and pupils begin their GCSE courses in these.

All pupils also continue with at least one modern foreign language, French, German or Spanish, but have the option to either continue with a second modern foreign language or with Latin; or to take German for beginners or study Classical Civilisation. An advanced Latin course is run in co-curricular time to allow those with a particular interest in languages to continue with Latin alongside two modern foreign languages.

Teaching groups continue to be mixed ability, with the exception of Maths.

Pupils with English as an additional language who would benefit from further support are taught in specialist groups during MFL lessons with a view to integrating as many pupils as possible into mainstream English by the beginning of U4.

The GCSE years (U4 and 5th Form)

Most pupils study ten I/GCSE subjects and participate in a programme of English, Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, a modern foreign language or classical subject (currently French, German, Spanish, Mandarin, Latin or Classical Civilisation), PSD, and three other subjects chosen from History, Geography, French, Spanish, Latin, Theology and Philosophy, DT, Computer Science, Art, Photography, Drama, PE and Music.

Maths and the sciences are set according to progress in M4, and pupils take either the three separate science GCSEs or the Double Award Science course, based on aptitude demonstrated and preference. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

The Sixth Form

Most students in the Sixth Form study three A Level subjects, but options to take a fourth subject (of which Further Maths is the most popular) or BTEC courses in place of A Levels are also available. Excepting those with a four A Level programme, students are encouraged to supplement and broaden their academic study with a Core Curriculum course in the L6.

PSD lessons also continue for all students throughout the Sixth Form.

A Levels are offered in Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, DT, Drama & Theatre, Economics, English Literature, French, Geography, German, History, Latin, Maths, Further Maths, Music, Photography, PE, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies and Spanish. BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Business (equivalent to two A Levels) and BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Sport (equivalent to one A Level) are also offered.

The Core Curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for pupils to develop wider skills and experience, or to stretch themselves in exploring specific interests beyond the scope of the A Level and BTEC courses. Options available include the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), advanced language courses such as DELE and DELF, Young Enterprise, Level 3 Core Maths, the ESB Level 3 Certificate in Speech, and the AP English Language and Composition Qualification.

International students also work towards the IELTS qualification in specialist groups in L6.

Careers

The College has an excellent record in enabling pupils to access competitive university courses and degree apprenticeships. Careers guidance is incorporated into pupil programmes in an age appropriate way for every year group, and additional lectures, seminars, workshops and individual advice are readily available for Senior School pupils as they begin to think more seriously about their post-Epsom options. One to one and small group preparation is provided for those aspiring to apply to Oxbridge or for Medicine and medicine-related courses, as well as for those sitting admissions tests, such as BMAT, LNAT, or SATs for US universities.

Curriculum Time by Subject

The diagram shows number of 50 minute lessons allocated to each subject in each year group.

	3rd Form	L4	M4	U4 & 5th Form	L6	U6
1	English	English	English	English	Option 1	Option 1
2						
3						
4						
5	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Option 2	Option 2
6						
7						
8	Science	Science	Biology	Biology	Option 2	Option 2
9			Chemistry			
10	Wellbeing	Language Option 1	Physics	Chemistry	Option 3	Option 3
11	Language Taster Carousel	Language Option 2	Language Options 1 and 2 (spread across a 2-week timetable)			
12	Latin	Latin		Physics		
13	History	History		Chemistry		
14	Geography	Geography	History	Language/Classical Subject	Option 1	PSD
15	Theology and Philosophy	Theology and Philosophy	Geography			
16	PE	PE	Theology and Philosophy	Option 2	Core Curriculum option/4th A Level	Independent Study periods/4th A Level
17	Art	Art	PE			
18	Drama	Drama	Art	Option 3	Independent Study periods/4th A Level	Independent Study periods/4th A Level
19	Music	Music	Music			
20	Computer Science	Computer Science	Computer Science	PSD	Games	Games
21	DT	DT	DT			
22	Trivium	Trivium	Music	Games	Games	Games
23	Games	Games	Computer Science			
24			DT			
25			PSD			
26			Games			
27			Games	Games	Games	Games
28						
29						
30						
31						
32						
33						
34						