

Keswick School



ADMISSIONS GUIDE

EXCELLENCE, ASPIRATION AND OPPORTUNITY

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THE SIXTH FORM AT KESWICK SCHOOL

Keswick School's Sixth Form offers courses that will take you on to the next stage of education post 16. Our Sixth Form students take A Level or equivalent Level 3 vocational courses, and most of our Year 13 leavers go to university, though increasing numbers are taking up degree level apprenticeships. Students join Keswick School Sixth Form from our own Year 11 and from other academies, schools and colleges.

Why should you choose the Sixth Form?

There are many ways of developing your education post-16. If you have the ability to further your education, then undoubtedly you should take the opportunity. More young adults are continuing at school or college and then going on to higher education or degree level apprentice training. Estimates suggest that an increasing number of jobs available in the future will require the thinking skills, adaptability and flexibility that can only be gained through higher education.

The ethos of Keswick School Sixth Form

To enter the Sixth Form, you must be able to fulfil the entry requirements for the particular courses you wish to take, and be prepared to commit yourself to the ethos of the school. Our expectations of you, and what you can expect from us, are clearly set out in our Home-School Agreement pack. At Keswick School you will continue to be part of or join an 11-18 all-ability school, and it is expected that you will be a role model for the younger pupils.

Our standard offer for advanced level study

All A Levels are linear: this means that assessment will take place at the end of the two years in final examinations. Although some A Levels, and equivalent level 3 vocational qualifications, may retain a coursework element, this will usually form only a minor part of the overall assessment and the major weighting will be on the final examinations. Many subjects rely entirely on final examinations.

Following the recent qualification reform, universities have made statements setting out their positions. After a review of these, and analysis of the demands of linear subject specifications, our usual offer for a student's programme of study in our Sixth Form will be:

3 advanced level courses¹ and an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification), or 3 advanced level courses and core maths.

All universities will make their conditional offers based on 3 A Levels or equivalent, and we see the EPQ as a way of giving our students an extra edge in their applications (see the section on EPQ). A very small number of students may take 4 advanced level courses: this will be allowed only after discussion with the Head of Sixth Form, and you will need to achieve grade 7 or higher at GCSE level in the 4 subjects to be studied. Universities have advised that undertaking 4 subjects does not necessarily offer any discernible advantage for students. Instead, they encourage students to undertake 'super-curricular' activities, such as work experience, the EPQ and shorter online courses, all of which help to enrich a student's experience of their advanced level study.

¹ In this prospectus, "advanced level courses" is used to refer both to A Levels and to two-year level 3 vocational courses.



SIXTH FORM COURSES

Advanced Level Courses

These subjects are two-year courses, being completed at the end of Year 13. Please also see the subject entry requirements grid.

Art, craft and design	Geography
Biology	German
Business	History
Chemistry	Mathematics
Computer science	Media studies
Design & technology: fashion and textiles	Physical education
Design & technology: product design	Physics
English language	Politics
English literature	Psychology
French	Religion, philosophy and ethics
Further mathematics	Sociology

Vocational Level 3 subjects

Digital media Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate
 RSL music practitioners Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary Diploma (performance or music technology)
 Performing arts Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate
 Vocational business Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate

Enrichment Level 3 (equivalent to Advanced Subsidiary Level)

AQA Level 3 mathematical studies (core maths): one-year course

Of course, not all combinations of subjects can be made available. The decision as to whether a course will run is dependent on the number of students who opt for it. Option columns will be issued following a first survey of choices which will take place shortly after the information evening in January.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

The EPQ is a qualification equivalent to half a full A Level. During Year 12, students are required to study a one period a week course in EPQ preparation. Students then submit a proposal for a project of their own which might well be informed by their subjects or be a complementary study. Guided self-study leads to a project and a presentation in a format agreed by the student and the supervisor. This qualification will be completed during Year 12.

Universities have been very favourable in their responses to this qualification, with many Russell Group institutions making lower offers to students who have an EPQ, and others recognising the EPQ as contributing to UCAS tariff points when making offers of places.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The entry requirement for advanced level study is:

- grade 4 and 5 across English and mathematics*
- At least three additional GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade 4 or above.

*This means that if you achieve a grade 4 in English you need to achieve a grade 5 in mathematics; if you achieve a grade 4 in mathematics you need to achieve a grade 5 in English. While you will be able to enter the Sixth Form with a grade 5 in either English, please be aware that many universities and degree level apprenticeships ask for grade 5 in English language only.

This is a baseline entry requirement and many subjects **require** higher grades if you wish to take their subject at advanced level: see the subject requirements table overleaf and subject descriptions.

Students who do not achieve the minimum entry requirements for Sixth Form study will not be able to join Keswick School Sixth Form. Students will not be able to start on courses if they have not met the specific entry requirements for individual subjects. There is no opportunity for GCSE re-sits.

For all applicants, clear evidence of **a good attitude to learning** is required: for Keswick School applicants, an ATL average of 3.5 minimum at the data capture from subjects closest in date to the student's Sixth Form Application Discussion; for external applicants, at least "**good**" in each attitudinal category in the reference from their current academy, school or college.

In 2024, the published admission number for Year 12 entry at Keswick School is 160 students. Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the oversubscription criteria can be found on the school website at www.keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS TABLE

Year 12 A level subject requirements: 2024 entry

The Sixth Form **minimum entry requirement** is grade 5 and 4 across English (literature or language) and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4. Please check the specific entry requirements for individual subjects, shown below. **Entry requirements are not subject to negotiation.**

For all applicants, clear evidence of strong attitude to learning is required: for Keswick School applicants an ATL average of 3.5 minimum; for external applicants at least "good" in each attitudinal category on the reference from their current school or college.

Subject	Specific requirement
Art, craft and design	Grade 5 or above in art, which must have been studied at GCSE.
Biology	Grade 6 or above in biology (separate science) or 6-6 or above in combined science: trilogy, plus grade 5 or above in both maths and English (language or literature).
Business	Grade 4 or above in business if studied at GCSE.
Chemistry	Grade 6 or above in chemistry (separate science) or 6-6 or above in combined science: trilogy, and grade 6 or above in maths.
Computer science	Grade 5 or above in GCSE computer science, or grade 5 or above in maths if GCSE computer science has not been studied.
Core maths	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
D & T: fashion and textiles	Grade 5 or above at GCSE in DT or art. If neither have been studied at GCSE, then a substantial portfolio that demonstrates skill in drawing and painting.
D & T: product design	Grade 5 or above in a DT GCSE subject, or grade 5 or above in maths if DT not studied at GCSE.
Digital media	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
English language	Grade 6 or above at GCSE in English language and grade 5 or above in English literature.
English literature	Grade 6 or above at GCSE in English literature and grade 5 or above in English language.
French	Grade 6 or above at GCSE in French.
Further mathematics	Grade 7 or above at GCSE in maths.
Geography	Grade 5 or above in geography at GCSE; if not studied at GCSE, grade 5 or above in English plus grade 5 or above in a science.
German	Grade 6 or above at GCSE in German.
History	Grade 5 or above in history if studied at GCSE, or grade 5 or above in English if history not studied at GCSE.
Mathematics	Grade 6 or above at GCSE in maths.
Media studies	Grade 5 or above at GCSE in English language.
Music practitioners RSL	Grade 4 or above in music if studied at GCSE.
Performing arts	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
Physical education	Grade 5 or above in PE if studied at GCSE, plus grade 5 in GCSE biology. If GCSE PE has not been studied then two grade 5 in science must have been achieved.
Physics	Grade 6 or above in physics (separate science) or 6-6 or above in combined science: trilogy, and grade 6 or above in maths.
Politics	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
Psychology	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
Religion, philosophy & ethics	Grade 5 or above in RPE if studied at GCSE, or grade 5 or above at GCSE in English if RPE not studied.
Sociology	General entry requirements: grade 5 and 4 across English and mathematics, plus three other GCSEs or equivalent at grade 4.
Vocational business	Grade 4 or above in business if studied at GCSE, or a level 2 pass for a vocational course.

WHICH A LEVEL SUBJECTS SHOULD I TAKE?

Subject/career choice beyond Sixth Form	Essential	Recommended/desirable	Core Maths/EPQ?
Accounting and finance	Usually none, but Business and/or Maths will cover the vast majority of universities. One or two ask for maths.	Check GCSE requirements for maths at all universities. Newcastle asks for a grade 6; Birmingham a grade 7.	If maths not studied at A Level, we advise Core Maths.
Architecture	Really depends on the universities. For example, Manchester recommends a mix of sciences and arts subjects. Other universities ask for Maths.	Check GCSE requirements for maths at all universities, if maths not studied at A Level. Some ask for at least a grade 6. Some universities ask for a minimum of 6 grade 7 GCSEs and above.	Depends on whether Maths A Level taken. Would recommend Core Maths if not. EPQ is excellent evidence of project management and should be linked to architecture.
Business studies/management	No subjects are essential.	Business Studies, Maths.	Either – though Core Maths would be useful if Business/Maths not taken. Core Maths can also help with finance section of Business A Level.
Engineering	Maths.	Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Design Technology – the combination depends on type of engineering.	EPQ, as every engineering student should be taking A Level maths. For degree apprenticeships at GEN2, they simply advise 'STEM' subjects – so we advise students contact GEN2 to ask what they will accept.
Environmental science/geology	If a student takes Geography plus one other science subject, they will be covered for all of environmental science/ geology courses. If they only want to take Geography, this will enable them to take most Geography degrees, but not geology/environmental science	N/A	Depends on interests of student and whether A Level Maths is being taken. EPQ offers opportunity to explore interests.
Forensic science	Becoming increasingly popular, but Chemistry and one other of Maths/Biology will get them on to the accredited forensic science degrees as well as chemistry/biochemistry. <i>If set on forensic science degree, check it has accreditation from the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences.</i>	Psychology.	Depends on whether Maths A Level is chosen. If student feels they could cope without Core Maths, then we recommend EPQ.
Health Sciences eg: Midwifery Nursing Paramedic Practice	Most midwifery and nursing courses ask for one of: Biology, Psychology, Sociology. Very few ask for Biology as essential.	They should research carefully, but if Biology is going to be challenging, we recommend Psychology or Sociology instead.	EPQ more likely to be asked about in a nursing/paramedic interview than for medicine.
Law	None.	English Literature/Language History Politics	Most of our law applicants have undertaken an EPQ and have done so in a law-related

		Possibly Sociology. (An applicant got in a few years ago with Maths, Biology and Chemistry.)	topic. This has demonstrated their wider reading.
Medicine	Chemistry and Biology, even though some medical schools state they don't need to study Biology if they have maths/another science. Choosing these two will keep their options open for <u>every medical school</u> apart from Cambridge, which also requires Maths. Choosing Chemistry and another science subject which isn't Biology is much more limiting.	Our standard advice is Biology, Chemistry, and choose a third subject you are most likely to get an A* in. Recent successful applicants have had Geography, Psychology, PE and RPE as their third subject. Regular and sustained volunteering in the community is a <u>must</u> . Care homes and community groups are a very good way of showing this.	This decision is up to the student. Core Maths may help with the mathematical content of Chemistry, as well as some parts of the BMAT, if Maths not studied at A Level. However many students have not taken Maths or Core Maths and have successfully got into medical schools. A few medical schools, like Sheffield and Lancaster, offer a lower tariff for students studying EPQ.
Neuroscience	Biology and Chemistry will cover most universities. Biology most important. Maths recommended but only at some universities.	Check GCSE Maths requirements – many universities require a grade 6, so this is especially important if students are not taking A Level maths.	If A Level maths is not taken, then Core Maths is recommended as useful.
Physiotherapy	The odd university requires one 'pure' science subject – so Biology would cover this. However, PE usually accepted in place of Biology (Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester Met). Some places accept Psychology too (UCLAN)	Volunteering/work shadowing, as well as online courses.	Many universities lower their offer for an EPQ.
Project Management	None essential	Maths and business studies may be helpful.	An EPQ is a very good example of project management in action.
Psychology	Universities ask for at least one science subject: Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics, Psychology.	Some universities (Newcastle, KCL, Lancaster, Manchester) require a grade 6 in Maths. Others require a grade 5 (Durham).	If a student is unlikely to get a grade 6 in Maths, then we recommend Core Maths and recommend they research whether universities would accept in lieu of grade 6. Otherwise leave it to the student.
Speech and Language Therapy	Some universities specify a science such as Biology. Others do not.	English Language or a modern foreign language.	EPQ could be a useful way of researching/evidencing interest in speech therapy.
Veterinary Medicine	Biology and Chemistry as a combination will cover them for every veterinary medicine school.	Sometimes Maths, but depends on institution. Advice usually the same as for medicine. Successful veterinary medics in recent years have chosen either Maths, Biology and Chemistry, or Biology, Chemistry and Psychology.	Over to the student. EPQ useful to write about in personal statement, but work experience much more valuable. Vet schools don't tend to reduce offers for EPQ students like some medical ones do.
Zoology	Biology and at least one other science will cover them for all degrees. However some universities accept just Biology, and some universities will accept Geography as a 'science'.		



THE NEXT STEP

If you want any more information about the courses described in this prospectus, please contact the teachers named in the subject pages, usually the Head of Department. If you have any questions about the Sixth Form in general then contact the Head of Sixth Form, Miss French, or the Head of Year, Dr Foody (Head of Year 12 2024-25). You are also encouraged to consider talking to Sixth Formers themselves.

All Year 11 students and their parents are strongly encouraged to view the Sixth Form Pages, available on the following links <https://www.keswick.cumbria.sch.uk/sixth-form/sixth-form-overview> and <https://keswicksixthform.weebly.com/>

2024 Information Evening: Thursday, 18th January

The day after the Information Evening, Keswick School Year 11 students will be surveyed: they will be asked to choose their three subjects and their order of preference. From this information we shall compose option columns which we then publish on the Application Form for 2024 entry.

Then we will ask you to apply formally to the Sixth Form, filling in the Application Form for 2024 entry and telling us which subjects you intend to study from the columns provided. We will also ask you to set out why you want to study in the Sixth Form at Keswick School in the form of a personal statement.

Instructions on how to apply will become available from the [Keswick School Weebly website and on the main website](#) no later than Friday, 3rd February.

You should submit your application as soon as you are ready, but you must submit it by **Friday, 9th February 2024**.

We will invite applicants and their parent/guardian(s) to discuss the process and implications of joining the Sixth Form. Offers of places will be made in May, no later than the week before the half term break.

We cannot guarantee that all combinations of subjects will be available. Also remember that a subject in this prospectus will only run if enough students choose it. You must make sure that you have completed the application form accurately.

The Sixth Form Induction Day will run on **Tuesday, 2nd July 2024**. It is mostly subject-based and your A Level teachers will set you tasks, which we call 'bridging units', to complete prior to the start of Year 12. These bridging units are intended to smooth the transition between GCSE and advanced level study.

At the time of writing, the GCSE results are due on **Thursday, 22nd August 2024**. When your results are known you may want to discuss the implications with the school.

We will expect you at school at 8.45am on the first day of term when you can enrol on your courses, and your Form Heads and teachers will be available to help you with any decisions you have to make.



IMPORTANT DATES IN 2024

Thursday 18th January 2024	Sixth Form Information Evening
No later than Friday 2nd February 2024	Application forms including option columns published.
Friday 9th February 2024	Deadline for applications to the Sixth Form.
Early March – early May 2024	Sixth Form Application Discussions (SFADs) take place between staff and Year 11 students applying to Sixth Form, together with parents.
No later than the last week of May 2024	Offers of Sixth Form places sent out.
Tuesday, 2nd July 2024	Induction Day, 8.45am - 3.30pm.
Thursday 22nd August 2024	GCSE Results Day.
Wednesday 4th September 2024	8.45am - 3.15pm: start of new term for Year 12.
Thursday 5th September 2024	Timetabled lessons begin.



IN CONCLUSION

We hope to offer as many of the courses described as possible, but this will depend upon the take up of individual courses. The Headteacher therefore reserves the right to review the courses offered if it is necessary due to financial or staffing restrictions.

We do hope that this prospectus has been useful. If you have any comments or further questions please telephone or email the school.

Sophie French
Head of Sixth Form

Contacts

Miss Sophie French: Head of Sixth Form/Assistant Headteacher
sophiefrench@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

Dr Tony Foody: Head of Year 12 2024-25
tonyfoody@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

Mr Mark Stanton: Head of Year 13 2024-25
markstanton@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

Ms Katie Mawdsley: Sixth Form Learning Supervisor (external applicants)
katiemawdsley@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk

Mrs Carol McIntosh: Sixth Form Learning Supervisor (internal applicants)
carolmcintosh@keswick.cumbria.sch.uk