

## **Brampton College Curriculum Policy**

### **Aims**

The College curriculum aims to provide a very high level of care, guidance and support for each student to enable them to achieve their individual academic aims and to be successful against strong competition for the next stage of their education, training or direct employment. The key elements of the curriculum, which includes a flexible timetable and course structure, small classes, individual tutorials, testing and individual review meetings with personal tutors, are designed to respond to each student's personal educational interests and needs.

We do this in an atmosphere which is warm and informal, but also one in which students are expected to work hard and to develop an adult sense of honesty, independence, responsibility and consideration for others, in preparation for university and working life.

In addition to subject specific and academic aims, the curriculum aims to ensure:

- students can develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- students can distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the college is situated and to society more widely;
- students are enabled to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- students recognise that the College is a community where we work together, support each other and share and celebrate their successes;
- students are encouraged to maintain a balance between academic work and an enriching extracurricular life;
- students are prepared for the opportunities and challenges of adulthood;
- Students develop self-understanding, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline and resilience;
- Students understand how to improve their own learning and performance, and are prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Brampton College celebrates its multicultural heritage by recognising important milestones in the year to increase further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

Events in the College encourage respect for other people, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. A respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England. This is encouraged in the GCSE PHSE lessons, college assemblies, the student council and personal tutor sessions as well as through lessons.

Where political issues are brought to the attention of students, they are offered a balanced

presentation of opposing views which happens during their attendance at College, during extracurricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the college and those taking place elsewhere. The College will monitor its activities to prevent the promotion of partisan political views.

All students are very carefully assessed by the Senior Leadership Team and relevant Heads of Department prior to enrolment to determine the most suitable programme for them, regarding the student's academic aims and current level of attainment.

An up-to-date list of the subjects offered at the College is available on the website and from the College Office upon request.

Curriculum notes (aimed at prospective parents and students) and detailed schemes of work setting out the curriculum plan and approach adopted in each subject are available.

The College offers considerable flexibility in choosing courses according to individual circumstances, and students can take a mixture of courses if this is the most appropriate programme for them (including a mixture of 1<sup>st</sup> year A level and GCSE courses).

Most students at Brampton College study A level subjects and there is also a small GCSE department.

## Curriculum offer - AS and A level

The courses offered at AS and A levels include:

**A two-year A level course** – this is the standard A level programme and students often start on four subjects. Of the students studying four subjects, most will drop to three subjects at an appropriate point during the first year after careful consideration of their aptitudes and aspirations.

After taking advice from a senior member of staff, students may 'drop' one subject during the first year of A level sometimes as early as October half term. Some students will continue with four until the end of the first year and a small number of students who perform well and appear able to cope with the programme will continue four A levels. This system allows us to challenge our more able students further.

The College offers the AS qualification in CIE subjects (English, Computer Science and History) or, occasionally, when a student would like to receive a qualification in their fourth subject. In the second year of the A level, most students will continue to study three of their subjects to A level but there is great flexibility in students' programmes and it may be in some students' best interests to continue with all four subjects.

Sometimes where students' interests or educational plans change during the first year, or where an especial strength emerges a student may pick up a new subject in their second year to cater for this.

Students who opt to take further maths or who are identified as being strong in maths might be invited to take maths A level at the end of their first year of A level study and then take further maths A level at the end of their second year. This only occurs when there is strong evidence that the

student will achieve an A\*.

The time allocation for first year A level courses is 4 hours 40 mins per subject per week in the first year which increases to 5 hours 20 mins per subject per week in the second year. We also have a tutorial system allowing students the opportunity to of small group or one-to-one tuition with their subject teachers for at least one hour per week.

**A one-year course to study the second year of the A level** – this course is for students who have completed the first A level year (Year 12) elsewhere and come to the College to continue their studies and complete their A levels. In general, they join the existing second year A level classes, and additional help is provided to address any differences in the subject curriculum between the previous school and Brampton. Alternatively, students may decide they wish to pursue a different career path for which a particular subject is required (or no longer required) and an intensive programme is put in place to allow for this.

The time allocation for this course is 5 hours 20 minutes per subject per week and additional tutorials as required.

**A one-year A level course** – this course is either for students wishing to retake A level subjects over a year, or for those wishing to take up a new subject and study the whole A level in one year on an intensive course.

The time allocation for this course is 6 hours 40 minutes per subject per week.

### **Curriculum offer – GCSE**

*See also the GCSE curriculum policy*

The College has a small but thriving GCSE department managed by the Head of GCSE. A small group of students each year follow a programme consisting only of GCSE subjects. Students generally take up to seven subjects and the timetable allows for a flexible combination of choices thereby ensuring each student is treated as an individual. The course is intensive and is covered in just one year with 4 hours allocated to each subject per week apart from Maths which has 5 hours 20 minutes per week. The intake of students includes those transferring to the College for the final year of their GCSE studies, international students wishing to complete their GCSEs in one year and integrate into the English education system, as well as those students retaking GCSEs.

The GCSE curriculum provides:-

full time supervised education for students of compulsory school age;

- a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
- learning in the following areas: spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) as well as linguistic mathematical, technological, human and social, physical and creative through care in the construction of each student's programme.

A level students may be offered the opportunity to retake GCSEs in some subjects or add a new GCSE subject to their portfolio if required to ensure that they are appropriately qualified to progress to the next stage of their education.

All GCSE students participate in a structured PHSE course. There are also relevant outings to art galleries, museums, fieldwork and lectures. Students also take part in a variety of coached, offsite, sporting activities in a timetabled weekly session. A more detailed GCSE curriculum policy is available upon request.

## **Additional curriculum information**

The curriculum at all levels provides

- the opportunity to acquire skills in literacy, numeracy, listening and speaking, together with elements of personal, social, health and economic education. These aspects are highlighted in departmental schemes of work. The exact balance between these elements at A level will depend on the students' subject choice and is therefore supplemented by activities in personal tutor time, by assemblies and visiting speakers;
- actively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs through the teaching of subjects, the extracurricular programme and teachers' pastoral interactions with students;
- lessons in written and spoken English where a student's first language is not English and if the student has not reached a certain level of proficiency, usually by the provision of specialist teaching leading to the IELTS examination.

The curriculum is closely linked to the pastoral care system through the medium of the personal tutor who has a dual role as each student's primary curriculum manager and pastoral lead. The fortnightly records assessment system is a key tool in monitoring the progression and effective curriculum implementation, both for individual students and groups within the college.

The Head of Year (HOY) system highlights students for whom interventions are required at key points throughout the year. The HOY monitors students who are falling behind and raises them with relevant members of staff including HODs and VPs.

## **Careers**

### **See also separate careers policy**

All students are provided with appropriate and structured careers guidance:

- 1:1 student interview
- UCAS mentoring by personal tutor and referee
- Whole group workshops on career and university choices
- Visiting speakers
- Meetings for parents
- Elements of the GCSE PSHE programme

## **Learning Needs**

In addition to the hours allocated to the regular lessons, individual tutorials are provided in most subjects. These may be directed at individuals or groups of students to address a particular need or be of a surgery style.

The College prides itself on making the curriculum accessible to all, including students with an EHCP, and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are accessible.

The College provides appropriate classes in English as a Foreign Language as required to students whose first language is not English based on their current level of proficiency. We also offer the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) to students in the first year of their A level.

## **Extracurricular activities**

Extracurricular activities play an important role within the College and are a way of improving the social, moral, physical and artistic development of students, particularly in view of their initial integration into the College, and of conveying the importance of the balance between work and other aspects of life. The policy is to offer a range of activities which cater for different tastes, ages and genders.

The College has an extracurricular coordinate who organises weekly enrichment activities for AS students. Students choose from a selection of activities to take part in fortnightly which vary each year depending on staff availability but have included table tennis, boxing, EPQ, LAMDA and super curricular. In the week in between the activities, speakers are brought in to expose students to a wide variety of topics including study skills, sexual relationships, toxic masculinity, the holocaust and mental health.

The college also has a Young Enterprise programme as well as a student magazine for students to get involved in. In addition, students can participate in green projects, coaching and charity events. Students can complete Duke of Edinburgh awards through the College.

Trips also allow students to extend their knowledge outside the classroom. Recent trips have included – ski trip to Italy, art and photography trip to New York, geography field trips, theatre, bowling, universities, lectures and Thorpe Park.

We run the UK Maths Challenge as an annual event as well as Science Olympiads. The College has an active Student Council and students are encouraged to get involved in raising money for the local community.

Student achievement in extracurricular activity is celebrated through Personal Tutor sessions, assemblies, articles and photographs on the College website, in the newsletter, and in the annual Art Exhibition Evening in June, to which parents are invited.

Appropriate Health & Safety procedures are followed for all activities taking place on or off the College premises.

## Personal Tutor sessions

Each student is assigned to a Personal Tutor group which meets weekly 11.50 am – 12.30 pm on a Wednesday. The Personal Tutor (PT) will normally be one of the student's teachers. The role of the PT is to be the main point of contact with the College for the student and to monitor their progress by discussing their regular test and homework results, attendance, academic target setting, and study skills support as well as their overall wellbeing. The PT will also help with personal statements for university applications and will encourage students to pursue extra-curricular activities, further reading and voluntary work.

### Personal tutor sessions

One of the most important elements of the personal tutoring sessions, is for students to review, with their tutor, their academic performance on a fortnightly basis through the 'fortnightly record' system. Tutors set goals with their tutees and monitor their implementation over time. They also oversee the 'Evaluation Days' in January at which students review their strengths and weaknesses and set goals for success in the lead-up to their final or end of year exams.

## Special Programmes

The college runs three specific specialist programmes for its more able A level students:

- EPQ – completed by some students as part of our AS enrichment programme
- Medical School Programme – runs through a weekly forum for students considering careers in medicine or dentistry
- Oxbridge Programme – runs through a weekly forum for students considering these competitive degree programmes

Support is provided for these programmes both 'in-house' and through external agencies.

## Effective implementation and monitoring of the College's curriculum

All parts of the curriculum are reviewed regularly to ensure:

- The most suitable specifications are taught to meet the needs of our students;
- Students know how to stay safe and understand how to be physically and mentally healthy.

Each Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that the prescribed content, knowledge, skills and understanding of each subject specification is delivered in good time for the relevant examination series. They review the work of teachers in their department through regular departmental meetings and the effective implementation of the curriculum also forms part of performance review discussions.

Heads of Department also annually review the effectiveness curriculum in their area and if necessary, propose changes. These reviews, formative, summative and anecdotal data together with feedback from students and parents are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. This evidence may affect the whole College curriculum where emerging issues are identified, for example reviewing the hours allocated to each subject, whether to enter students for AS examinations or the

offer of particular subjects. This information can also lead to developing a whole college initiative to address a particular theme, such as literacy or student wellbeing.