Why study Economics in the Sixth Form in September 2016?

There are at least 5 good reasons to study economics. First, without some knowledge of economics, it is impossible to understand the world in which we live in (and the global economic crisis since 2008). Every day, for example, the media report about economic issues such as unemployment, inflation (rising prices), economic growth, government spending and taxation, exchange rates, international trade and share / commodity price and exchange rate movements. Second, you will learn about how the economy works and how individuals and firms make decisions and what policies may be adopted by policymakers to help improve society, both nationally and internationally.

Third, economics is a rigorous and rewarding academic subject which is well respected by Universities and employers alike. Fourth, studying economics will help you to consider and discover when politicians are not telling the economic truth. Fifth, a qualification in economics is an excellent basis for a career in different areas. Other subjects fit in well with Economics, including Mathematics, Politics, Geography, History, and Science. It is recommended that those considering Economics as a possible Degree course should also study AS / A level Mathematics as well. For those considering Economics as a Joint Honours Degree, however, this requirement is not necessary.

Note: NO prior learning or knowledge of economics is required to take AS Level Economics. But for students who have taken GCSE Economics, a B grade at GCSE is the minimum requirement. A grade B in English, Maths and a relevant Humanities subject (History or Geography) is recommended.

What will I study?

OCR AS Level (Examined in May 2017)

Component 1: Microeconomics (50% of total AS marks)

Microeconomics concerns itself with the study of economics and decisions taken at the level of the individual firm, industry or consumer household. This Unit provides an introduction to the nature of economics and examines how the price mechanism allocates resources in markets. It looks at how markets work and analyses the nature of market failure, its causes and possible policy remedies. At the end of this unit, students should be able to apply supply and demand analysis to real-world situations; to understand why markets might not allocate resources efficiently and the methods of dealing with market failure, together with an evaluation of their effectiveness.

AS Level specification course overview

| H060 | | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|--|--|
| COURSE OVERVIEW | | | | |
| Component 1 | Microeconomics | | | |
| | Scarcity and choice | The basic economic problem | | |
| | | Opportunity cost | | |
| | | Specialisation of trade | | |
| | How competitive markets work | Allocation of resources | | |
| | | The objectives of economic agents | | |
| | | Supply and demand | | |
| | | Elasticity | | |
| | Market failure and government intervention | Market failure | | |
| | | Externalities | | |
| | | Alternative methods of government intervention | | |
| | | Government failure | | |

Assessment: 90 minutes exam (consisting of multiple choice questions, data response and essay)

Component 2: Microeconomics (50% of total AS marks)

Studying macroeconomics will help you understand how the economy functions on a both a domestic and global level. This Unit introduces the key measures of economic performance (growth, unemployment, inflation, balance of payments) and the main objectives and instruments of economic policy. Students will be able to use a basic AD/AS model to understand why demand and/or supply side policies may be seen as appropriate ways of dealing with problems facing national and international economies; predict the possible impact of such policies and evaluate their effectiveness.

Assessment: 90 minutes exam (consisting of multiple choice questions, data response and essay)

| Component 2 | Macroeconomics | | |
|-------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| | Economic policy objectives and indicators of macro-economic performance | Economic growth | |
| | | Unemployment | |
| | | Inflation | |
| | | Trends in macroeconomic indicators | |
| | Aggregate demand and aggregate supply | Circular flow of income | |
| | | Aggregate demand | |
| | | Aggregate supply | |
| | | Macroeconomic equilibrium | |
| | The application of policy instruments | Fiscal policy | |
| | | Monetary policy | |
| | | Supply-side policy | |
| | | Policy conflicts | |
| | The global context | International trade | |
| | | Balance of payments | |
| | | Exchange rates | |

OCR A Level Economics (examined in May 2018)

The A Level OCR Economics course has been designed to allow you to:

- Gain knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of economic theories and policies and the impact which these have on the economy and on economic agents
- Compare the likely effectiveness of economic policies in relation to the achievement of particular economic objectives
- Develop the ability to make both microeconomic and macroeconomic decisions in specific contexts
- Develop the necessary analytical, questioning and quantitative skills to progress in the subject and to think as an economist
- Confront issues, tackle the challenges these issues raise and engage in debate and discussion with fellow students.
- Appreciate the contribution of economics to the understanding of the wider economic and social environment

Develop your skills as independent learner, critical thinker and decision-maker

 all personal assets that can help you stand out as you progress to a degree course (in economics or a related subject) and / or the workplace

Assessment

There are **3 compulsory components**, focusing on microeconomics, macroeconomics and themes in economics. The themes in economics component offer you the opportunity to apply theories and concepts to up-to-date concepts.

Component 1: Microeconomics - A brief overview

Microeconomics concerns itself with the study of economics and decisions taken at the level of the individual firm, industry or consumer household. It is also concerned with how prices are determined in markets. The Component will also enable you to:

- Discuss and evaluate how well microeconomic theories explain our observations of economic agents in the real world
- Understand how imperfections and market failures can lead into a discussion of the merits and drawbacks of government intervention
- Consider the usefulness of theory in explaining observations taken from the real economic world

Component 2: Microeconomics - A brief overview

Studying macroeconomics will help you understand how the economy functions on a both a domestic and global level. The Component will help you to:

- Adopt a critical approach to the study of policy through the development of your understanding of the limitations and conflicts which macroeconomic policies cause
- Consider policy approaches in an historic and current context, in order to understand how macroeconomics has changed over time

Component 3: Themes in Economics – A brief overview

- This Component will draw on both microeconomic and macroeconomic components. You will be expected to apply these components to a specific unseen theme.
- The Component will also have a multiple choice section, covering the whole syllabus.

A Level Economics Exam Structure for June 2018

| Component | | Marks | Duration | Weighting | Assessmen Objectives (AOs) | |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------------------------------|--|
| Component 1 | Microeconomics | | 80 | | | |
| | Section A | Data response | 30 | 2 hrs | | nt ise |
| | Section B | Two essays, from a choice of four | 50 | | 33.33% | h Assessme) will compr |
| Component 2 | Macroeconomics | | 80 | | | eac AO4 |
| | Section A | Data response | 30 | 2 hrs | | ents, and |
| | Section B | Two essays, from a choice of four | 50 | | 33.33% | Across the three components, each Assessment Objective (AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4) will comprise |
| Component 3 | Themes in Economics | | 80 | | | thre (A01 |
| | Section A | Multiple choice | 30 | 2 hrs | | the |
| | Section B | Extended data response | 50 | | 33.33% | Across |

| Entry code | Title | Component code | Component title | Assessment type |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| H460 | Economics | 01 | Microeconomics | External Assessment |
| | | 02 | Macroeconomics | External Assessment |
| | | 03 | Themes in economics | External Assessment |

Understanding Economics will help you realise the following:

'The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed, the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.' (John Maynard Keynes, 1936).

To recap, the two year A level Economics course will consider economic policy approaches in an historic and current context, in order to understand how macroeconomics has changed over time.