

Basic guidance for choosing Post-16 courses at Coombe Sixth Form.

Please note that staff at Coombe are always happy to advise on the issues relating to course choices. Often this advice takes place during a student's initial sixth form admission discussion, but can also happen during our Parents' Welcome Evening. Students are also welcome to talk to members of the sixth form team in school or can contact us by email or by 'phone. The summer enrolment process is also an important opportunity to get very focussed guidance because students are in possession of their GCSE results and can make definite choices.

Please remember that nothing that students have said or written down is 'binding' in terms of choices and that they can change their minds right up to the point of enrolment. We also operate a 'flexible induction period' at Coombe which lasts for the first month of the Autumn Term. During this time, students can change courses – under the guidance of the Head of Year 12 - if there are spaces available.

Where can I find specific course information ?

If you want to learn about a particular course, log onto the Coombe website at www.coombegirlsschool.org and open the sixth form section. Select 'Departments' to access specific detail on course content, the skills required to be successful and so on.

What are Coombe's course entry requirements for AS Levels ?

Generally, to study AS / A Level subjects you will need to achieve five GCSE passes at Grade C and above, including English, as a minimum. A very limited number of subjects require that you achieve B Grade passes at GCSE in order to study them. They are Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Mathematics and Mechanics.

There are other course entry requirements for some subjects – for example Business Studies requires a C Grade pass in GCSE Mathematics because of the maths content of the course. If you want to check if your courses have any specific requirements, you can find them in our Admissions' Policy on our website.

How many AS courses should I aim to do ?

Most students at Coombe are studying four AS levels – although quite a few are studying five. The minimum number of AS courses that you can do is three.

What is the difference between AS or Vocational Study ?

Generally, vocational courses are more directly linked to the world of work and employment than A Levels. They also have more coursework assessment as opposed to exams – something which suits many people. Coombe offers two types of vocational courses – Intermediate and Advanced courses. There is no basic entry level requirement for the intermediate level courses – although your basic literacy must be sound. These are one year courses and are the equivalent of four GCSE passes at Grade C.

Coombe's Advanced Level Vocational courses are the equivalent of two A Levels and they take two years to complete. These courses are suitable for students with a minimum of three passes at GCSE Grade C and above, ideally including English. These courses can often be combined with a further AS subject meaning that students following one of these courses can be studying the equivalent of three A Levels.

Tips on choosing courses.

- **Do you have a definite sense of direction for your future ?** Do you know that you want to work in fashion design or train as a lawyer or criminologist ? If you do – fantastic ! You can consider subjects that will lead towards your goal. Talk to us at Coombe for advice – or visit the UCAS website where you can find out all about university entrance criteria.
- **Get as much advice as you possibly can** and find out as much as you can about your potential subjects. The more that you can find out, the better chance you have of making an informed choice that is right for you.
- **Play to your strengths !** Most people find the change from studying at Key Stage 4 to Post-16 more challenging than they expected. Avoid subjects that you know are not really your best areas.
- **Avoid a collection of subjects that are all coursework 'heavy'.** A combination of AS Media Studies, Art and Design and Technology might be more work that you can cope with.

