

GCE A-LEVEL INFORMATION SHEET (2021 – 2022)

Thank you for your interest in the International Stream (UK GCE Advanced Levels).

All students in the International Stream in Forms 5 and 6 study Chinese as a **core** subject plus **three** of the following GCE A-level elective subjects:

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Drama & Theatre
- English Language & Literature
- French
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Religious Studies

Since GCE A-level courses are designed to build on knowledge and skills acquired at IGCSE, students must choose subjects that they have already studied during Forms 3 and 4.

Please select the three elective subjects you wish to study in Form 5, in order of **preference** (i.e. first, second and third choices) on the online application form. Also select a reserve choice, i.e. another subject that you would be prepared to study in the event of a timetable clash.

Subjects need to be blocked against each other for timetabling purposes and, while the school will try to minimize any timetable clashes, it is inevitable that some combinations of subjects will not be possible. In view of this please also choose one additional subject that you would be prepared to take in the event of a timetable clash. (If your preferred combination of subjects is not possible a member of staff will discuss this with you in person.)

Please note that a minimum of 10 students is usually required to make a course viable.

Compulsory Subjects

The Education Bureau mandates that all students study Chinese and it is therefore a compulsory part of the curriculum in the International Stream. The following courses will be offered:

- **GCE A-level Chinese** – This course is designed for students who have a strong background in Chinese and have already achieved grade B or better in IGCSE Chinese First Language or IGCSE Chinese Second Language.
- **GCE AS-level Chinese** – This course is designed for students who have a good background in Chinese and have achieved grade B or better in IGCSE Chinese (Mandarin) Foreign Language.
- **IGCSE Chinese (Mandarin) Foreign Language** – This course is designed for students with little or no Chinese language learning background.

The level of Chinese studied will depend on students' language learning background. The school will make a careful assessment before determining the most appropriate course.

In addition to Chinese and the GCE A-level elective subjects, all students enrolled in the International Stream in Forms 5 and 6 are also required to study the following non-public examination subjects:

- **Philosophy & Religious Studies (PRS)**
- **Physical Education (General PE)**
- **Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE)**
- **Independent Living**

Form 5 GCE A-Level Entrance Requirements

The entrance requirements are as follows:

- **At least five IGCSE passes at grade B or better.** (Grade B or better is expected in each subject to be studied at GCE A-level.)
- Students wishing to study GCE A-levels in Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics **must** have taken an IGCSE in the subject at the **Extended Level**. It is highly recommended that students wishing to study GCE A-level Physics also study GCE A-level Mathematics.
- Students wishing to study GCE A-level English Language & Literature **must** have taken IGCSE First Language English at the **Extended Level**. Grade B or better in IGCSE English Literature is also preferred.
- For students who do not have any public examinations results, acceptance will be based on her/his academic record. A mock exam mark of at least 60% *and* an average level of attainment of at least 60% is expected in each subject to be studied at GCE AS-level.

Applying for GCE A-Levels in the International Stream

Please complete the **for Form 5 GCE A-Level (2021 – 2022)** and hand write one application letter for each GCE A-level subject. The template for the application letters can be downloaded from the school website. Combine all three application letters into a **single pdf document** and email it to Ms. Cherry Chen at cherry.chen@yhkcc.edu.hk.

Students and parents may be invited to attend an interview. Students may also be asked to take some benchmark tests to assess their suitability to study a particular subject at GCE A-level.

If you are offered a place, a non-refundable deposit of \$2,500 is required **within one week** of the date on the offering letter. Please note that all offers are conditional and depend on IGCSE results which will be released in mid-August 2021. (If you take up your place, the deposit will be put towards payment of the first month's school fee which is \$5,900. The balance of \$3,400 is due one week before the start of the new academic year in August, 2021.)

Payment should be made online to the school's bank account. (Please note that parents are responsible for any administrative fee charged by the bank.)

Bank Name: HSBC
Bank Code: 004
Account Number: 491-433793-002
Account Name: YMCA OF HONG KONG CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
Description: Application for Form 5 GCE

Please email a copy of the pay-in slip to Ms. Tracy Chan at tracy.chan@yhkcc.edu.hk so that our Accounts Department can verify that the payment has been made.

Self Study

Every year, the school receives requests from students to self-study. While it is commendable that students are very keen to challenge themselves and obtain additional qualifications, it should be noted that self-studying at this level is exceptionally difficult. GCE A-level courses are very demanding and academically challenging, even when receiving instruction from a subject specialist for six lessons a week. This course of action is therefore not advised.

Since **three** good GCE A-level grades are sufficient for entrance to the vast majority of universities worldwide, there really is no need to study anything else. It must be noted that a substantial amount of extra time is needed to self-study another subject which can have an adverse effect on performance in the subjects which are part of the regular taught curriculum. The loss of overall study time resulting from self-studying another subject must therefore be taken into consideration.

Requests to self-study any additional GCE A-level subject should be submitted in writing to Mr. Andrew Higgins, Deputy Principal, stating the reasons why it is needed. Approval may be granted if, after consulting with subject teachers, it is determined to be beneficial. If approved, the academic performance of students who are self-studying will be closely monitored to ensure that they are able to cope with the additional demands that this places on them. If there are signs that a student is struggling, this decision may need to be re-evaluated.