



BROMSGROVE SCHOOL

ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAMME (BALP)

2017/18

INTRODUCTION

The Bromsgrove Accelerated Learning Programme (BALP) is a one year course that takes place in the Fifth Form at Bromsgrove School. Its primary aim is to prepare students for study in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or GCE A levels. The course is built around a core of the following subjects:

- First Language English
- Mathematics
- Double Award Science (Physics, Chemistry and Biology)
- History or Economics (choose one)

All core courses lead to a separate qualification and are examined at GCSE or IGCSE level (and in the case of Economics, AS level).

Students selecting **HISTORY** from the core subjects choose **one** option from the following subjects:

- Economics (non-examined)
- Art Textiles
- Latin
- Classical Civilisation
- Physical Education

Students selecting **ECONOMICS** from the core subjects choose **one** from the following subjects:

- French
- Art
- Economics (non-examined)

In some circumstances there may be opportunities to gain qualifications in the other option subjects. The BALP course also offers opportunities for students to sit exams for qualifications, where such exams exist, in their own language.

The BALP course develops students' ability to learn independently and by enquiry, in order that they are fully prepared for Sixth Form and undergraduate study; lessons very much focus on developing skills in practical work, critical thinking, group work and communication. BALP students are fully integrated into the School's House system and everyday School life. This includes a broad extra-curricular programme which spans sport, community service and the arts. The year concludes with a post examination course that focuses on Sixth Form material within Mathematics, Science, English, History and Economics, as well as elements of Philosophy.

The BALP course seeks to educate the whole person. Through a balanced academic curriculum, contemporary teaching, an extensive extra-curricular programme and full integration into one of Britain's leading Independent Schools, we hope to foster personal development and growth, as well as build a high level of skills and knowledge base for future study.

THE CORE

English

First language English teaches students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in speech and writing. Students learn to understand and respond appropriately to what they hear, read and experience. They are encouraged to enjoy and appreciate a variety of languages, which in turn complements other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application. The course is assessed through reading and writing examinations.

Mathematics

Mathematics aims to build students' confidence and skills in areas such as calculus, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and statistics. The course aims to accommodate both those who intend to study Mathematics in the Sixth Form and those who require generic Mathematics skills to complement other curriculum areas. The course is assessed through a written examination.

Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

The Science course seeks to bring together practical and theoretical skills. Students are encouraged to design and pursue their own ideas in class and develop their own ability to effectively question and understand their local environment. Each Science (Physics, Biology and Chemistry) is studied as a separate subject, taught by specialist teachers in the School's new state of the art laboratories. The course is worth two IGCSEs and is awarded accordingly with two grades. It is assessed through a written examination.

History

The History course focuses on 20th century History. Students learn about International Relations from 1943 to 1991. This will involve focusing on Cold War tensions as the US and the Soviet Union's Grand Alliance quickly collapsed at the peace conferences following 1945. The course will then look at the intensification of the tension through the arms race, Soviet expansionism and the division of Europe. The three flashpoints of Berlin, Cuba and Czechoslovakia will also be explored in depth, as will the move towards détente in the 1960s and 1970s. The course will draw to a close with a study of the Second Cold War period in which the US were able to force the eventual climb down and demise of communism. The course is assessed through coursework and a written examination

OR

Economics (AS Level)

The Economics course encourages students to develop an understanding of key economic theories and concepts that will enable them to critically evaluate issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life. Students will be encouraged to develop a critical approach to methods of enquiry and to draw on data from local, national and international sources. The course is assessed through a written examination.

OPTIONS

BALP students must pick one option. Some options lead to qualifications whereas others do not.

EXAMINED OPTIONS

The following options conclude with a terminal exam and a formal qualification.

French (GCSE)

The French course aims to give students a high level of written and oral fluency. These skills are developed through active participation within well equipped facilities such as the computerised language laboratory. The course caters for students with varying degrees of exposure to French. The course is assessed through reading, writing, listening and oral examinations.

NON-EXAMINED OPTIONS

The following options are not examined. Under some circumstances, however, it may be that examinations leading to formal qualifications can be arranged.

Art

The Art course allows students to work in a wide range of materials and disciplines. Students are directed through teacher-led projects so that all will experience an element of painting, drawing, printmaking and 3D disciplines. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their work and are expected to draw on the importance of their own cultural experiences.

Physical Education

The Physical Education course covers the anatomy, training, and safety aspects within sport. Practical lessons will take place in the sports hall and on the outdoor courts and pitches; theory lessons are classroom based. Students can pursue a broad range of activities including badminton, basketball, hockey, football, rugby, netball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, athletics, cricket, and softball; they will develop a personal exercise programme, carried out over the course of six weeks, to improve fitness levels in a chosen activity.

Latin

The Latin course enables students to develop their competence in Latin while exploring Roman culture through literature. Through the study of Latin, students also develop skills in analysis and critical thinking. The texts translated and studied are from authors such as Ovid, Catullus, Horace, Virgil, Tacitus, Caesar and Cicero.

Classical Civilisation

The Classical Civilisation course enables students to gain a knowledge and understanding of the classical world. They actively engage in enquiry in order to develop as independent learners, and as critical and effective thinkers. The course offers a varied look at the cultures of the ancient world through the study of Rome, Pompeii and the Olympic Games; this develops students' awareness of History, Literature and the Ancient World.

History (for the Economists)

This History course develops students' ability to describe and explain historical change and cause. The first half of the course covers America from 1919 to 1980: the 'booming' 1920s; the cultural developments such as the gangsters, prohibition and the role of women; and the crash of 1929. The second half of the course covers America emerging from the Second World War into a climate of communist suspicion. The course concludes with the development of the civil rights movements from the peaceful methods of Martin Luther King to the more militant techniques of Malcolm X.

Economics (for the Historians)

The lessons focus on Micro-Economics. The course encourages students to develop understanding of key economic theories and concepts that will enable them to critically evaluate issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life. Students will develop methods of enquiring and drawing on data from markets considering issues of inefficiency and policies affecting the environment, healthcare and education.

SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

BALP students take full advantage of Bromsgrove's extensive activities and sports programme which encourages initiative, discipline, qualities of leadership, self-motivation and an ability to work with and for others. Activities on offer include: Art, Debating, Street Dancing, Sailing, Riding, Photography, Kayaking, Taekwando, Italian, Guitar Workshops, Film Club, Chess and Aerobics. Participation in a wide variety of team sports such as Soccer, Hockey, Netball and Athletics is encouraged and welcomed.

POST EXAMINATION PROGRAMME

Following terminal examinations in the summer term, the Accelerated Learning Programme recommences focussing on IGCSE advanced material and skills in preparation for Sixth Form study. This will include lessons in Mathematics, Science, English, History and Economics which continue until the School breaks up for summer. These extra lessons provide an opportunity to bridge the gap between (I)GCSE studies and IB/A-level. Mathematics will particularly focus on foundation material not already covered by (I)GCSE whilst other subjects will focus on skill based material such as research and presentation; elements of Philosophy will also be covered.