



A Level Courses

Full-time/Day Courses 2020/2021



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Studying A Levels at Belfast Met



Welcome

Belfast Metropolitan College (Belfast Met) is the largest provider of full-time A Level programmes in the Northern Ireland Further Education sector, with over 530 full-time students enrolled during the 2019-20 academic year.

The college takes great pride in the fact our A Level curriculum is wide and varied, offering up to 16 subjects each year to cater for the specialist interests and abilities of students from a broad spectrum of academic and social backgrounds. The variety of our curriculum offer is matched by the quality of teaching at the college; last year almost 85% of students who sat exams achieved pass grades at A Level with 60% achieving grades A*-C.

Students who enrol are given a Minimum Expected Grade for each subject (based on their GCSE grades) and teaching & pastoral staff monitor this throughout the academic year in order to ensure that they perform to their best in the summer exams.



Leaving school and coming to a new college can be a daunting experience for many so, in addition to providing tuition of a high standard, we have a year group structure which ensures that each student feels valued and comfortable from the outset. Our First Year, Second Year and Fast Track Year Heads are experienced, senior staff members who coordinate the pastoral care provision for A Level students and who seek to ensure that the transition from school to college is as seamless as possible. We also allocate every student an Adviser of Studies (AOS) who provides educational and pastoral guidance on a weekly basis to help students make appropriate career/educational choices and arrange support when needed.

The AOS system is also the focal point of the wide range of extra-curricular events and activities organised by the School and the College as a whole, including charity fundraising events and visits by guest speakers.

Achieving success at A Level requires a high level of commitment to study. Our First and Second Year students must register with Year Heads each morning before going to class and are allocated a minimum of three supervised study hours per week in addition to lessons.

Failure to adhere to these requirements is likely to lead to poor exam performance so the college interacts extensively with parents/guardians when problems of this nature arise. We seek to foster a culture of positive engagement with parents/guardians so please feel free to contact us at any time should you have concerns regarding the progress of your son or daughter.

At Belfast Met we cater for students from a wide range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds who, provided they meet the entry criteria, can study on:

- the Two Year Programme (AS in Year 1, A2 in Year 2) or
- the Fast Track Programme (AS/A2 combined in one year)

In addition, we may be able to accommodate students who have achieved AS Grades but who wish to complete their A Levels at Belfast Met by enrolling on Year 2 of the Two Year Programme.

This prospectus provides essential information on the key features of the A Level Courses for all prospective students and their parents/guardians. Additional information can be found in the Belfast Met Full-time prospectus 2020-2021.

Please note that whilst these courses are primarily for full-time students, we can accommodate part-time students but part-time study incurs fees which must be paid by the student.

This booklet should address most relevant issues but if you have any queries regarding pre-entry guidance or enrolment please contact ace@belfastmet.ac.uk or tel: 028 9026 5071.

What students and parents say about A Levels at Belfast Met

“Right from the information night it became clear Belfast Met sixth form college was the place for Matthew to be. Expectations of pupils were clearly laid out, without the hard-edge he had experienced in school. It has been a joy to see him so contented and to flourish in such a positive, vibrant environment. The clear interest the tutors have in their pupils and their interaction is refreshing and is a much better “fit” for Matthew. His confidence has grown and we feel Belfast Met is an excellent springboard into the next stage of his education. The skills he has already learned will stand him in good stead throughout his academic life, to university and beyond.

From a parents’ perspective, the emphasis the college places on the code of conduct, attendance etc. is very reassuring - Matthew has the opportunity to grow into a confident young man, while we as parents, have the security of knowing it’s a safe, nurturing environment.”

Michelle McRoberts,
Mother of former student, Matthew

“In my two years studying at Belfast Met, I was given incredible support and education which allowed me to fulfil my potential. The teachers in college equipped me with invaluable skills in autonomous study and self discipline, as well as providing an incredible support network which helped me through difficult times. Had I studied anywhere else, I would not currently be studying at my dream university, feeling extremely proud of what I have achieved.”

Caitlin Hooke,
Former Two Year student who is now studying Divinity at QUB

“The staff at Belfast Met assisted in getting me where I am by fostering my independence, by offering guidance when I most needed it and by personally investing in my possibilities and potential. The A Level course facilitated independent study that suited my own academic needs. I hope to continue my education at university but the preparation supplied by my experiences in the college has ensured my ability to function self-sufficiently in a work-intense environment.”

Conor McCann,
Former A Level student
studying English at Cambridge University

“

Watching your child move into adulthood with confidence is the most rewarding experience. The support and motivation provided by Belfast Met has encouraged our daughter to believe in herself, challenge herself and aim high.”

Justine Armstrong,
Mother of former Second Year student, Victoria

“

Thanks so much for this year. It’s been the best year of education I’ve had and I’ve enjoyed your class very much. Thanks for helping me get to uni!”

Devan Payne,
Former Fast Track Digital Technology
A Level student

“

I would highly recommend Belfast Met to anyone thinking of studying A Levels. The atmosphere was friendly and relaxed, and I really felt as though my tutors took an interest in my progress; the classes were well-structured, and allowed for intensive study. Overall, it was an environment that allowed me to thrive academically and achieve my potential.”

Scott Morrison,
Former Fast Track student who achieved A grades in both History, and Government and Politics.



Courses, subjects and entry criteria

If you want to study daytime A Levels full-time at Belfast Met there are three main pathways, each of which has its own set of entry criteria.

Level	Pathway of study
AS Level (First Year)	Full-time students take 3 subjects 5 hours teaching per subject each week
A2 Level (Second Year)	Full-time students take 3 subjects 5 hours teaching per subject each week
Fast Track A Level (1 year)	Full-time students take 2 subjects 8 hours teaching per subject each

Each course offers a broad range of subjects but please note that we cannot guarantee everyone's preferred combination of subjects.

The full lists of subjects available and entry criteria are on the following pages.

Subjects and Entry Criteria

GCSE Points Tariff

GCSE Points Tariff for A Levels		
Grade	Grade (9-1)	Belfast Met Points Tariff
A*	9 or 8	6
A	7	5
B	6	4
C/C*	5 or 4	3
D	3	2
E	2	1

Below and on the following pages are listed the subjects and entry criteria for each course.

AS Level

(First Year – Application Code P00246-AA.
Please note that list of subjects may be amended)

(First year A Levels - application code P00246-AA)

- 16 or over on 1st July 2020
- At least 20 points at GCSE which includes 5 passes at grade C or above
- The subject-specific requirements below:

Subject	GCSE minimum Grade C or as stated below for subjects indicated
Biology	Double Award Science minimum Grade BB or Grade C GCSE Biology plus English and Maths. Please note that all students taking Biology MUST take another AS Science subject.
Business Studies	Maths & English
Chemistry	Double Award Science minimum Grade BB or Grade C in GCSE Chemistry plus English and Maths. Please note that all students taking Chemistry MUST take another AS Science subject
Digital Technology	Digital Technology or ICT or Computing plus Maths
Economics	Maths & English
English Literature	English minimum Grade B
Film Studies	English minimum Grade B
Geography	English, Maths and Geography with a minimum Grade B in at least one of these subjects
Government & Politics	English & Maths
History	English minimum Grade B plus History
Maths	Maths minimum Grade B (Higher Tier). Students who have not already passed GCSE Further Maths must take it in addition to their A Level subjects.
Media Studies	English & Maths
Physics	Maths minimum Grade B plus Double Award Science minimum Grade BB or Grade B in GCSE Physics plus English
Religious Studies	English & Religion
Sociology	English & Maths

A2 Level

(Second Year A Level – application code P00247-AA) The subjects offered at A2 mirror those offered for AS.

- 17 or over on 1st July 2020
- Must have passes (grades A-E) at AS Level in chosen subjects awarded by the same Awarding Organisation.
(We may be able to accept students with passes in Economics and Sociology sat through Awarding Organisations other than AQA).

Fast Track A Level

(One Year course – application code P00245-AA)

- 18 or over on 1st July 2020
- Must have a pass grade (A*-E) in at least one A Level subject – please note we do not accept Applied A Levels
- At least 25 points at GCSE including 5 passes at grade C

The subject-specific requirements below:

Subject	GCSE minimum Grade C or as stated below
Biology	Double Award Science minimum Grade BB or Grade C GCSE Biology
Business Studies	Maths & English
Chemistry	Double Award Science with minimum Grade BB or Grade C in GCSE Chemistry
Digital Technology	Digital Technology or ICT or Computing plus Maths
Economics	Maths & English
English Literature	English minimum Grade B
Geography	English, Maths and Geography with a minimum Grade B in at least one of these subjects
Government & Politics	English & Maths
History	English minimum Grade B plus History
Maths	Maths minimum Grade B (Higher Tier). Students without pass grades in GCSE Further Maths or AS Maths must take GCSE Further Maths in addition to their A Level subjects
Physics	Maths minimum Grade B plus Double Award Science minimum Grade BB or Grade B in GCSE Physics
Religious Studies	English & Religion
Sociology	English & Maths

Please note: This list is subject to change dependent on demand for subjects. Applicants hoping to take A Level Science subjects on the Fast Track course should have prior experience of having studied at least one Science subject at A Level.

Course and Exam Fees

Most full-time students on the two-year programmes pay no fees but two factors determine whether a student is liable for charges:

- The student's age on joining the course
- Whether the student is part-time or full-time

The grid below shows the charges for 2020-21 – concessionary fees in brackets. Please note that these fees are per academic year and may be subject to change at time of enrolment.

Two Year A Level

	One Subject	Two Subjects	Three Subjects
Under 18 years of age on 1 July 2020	£490 (£285) course fee + £50 exam fee = £540 (£335)	£980 (£570) course fee + £100 exam fee = £1,080 (£670)	No fee – Full-time student
Over 18 and under 19 years of age on 1 July 2020	£490 (£285) course fee + £50 exam fee = £540 (£335)	£980 (£570) course fee + £100 exam fee = £1,080 (£670)	No course fee - £150 exam fee
19 Years of age or over on 1 July 2020	£490 (£285) course fee + £50 exam fee = £540 (£335)	£980 (£570) course fee + £100 exam fee = £1,080 (£670)	£1,470 course fee + £150 exam fee = £1,620

One Year A Level

One Year A Level	One Subject	Two Subjects	Three Subjects
Aged between 18 and 19 on 1 July 2020	£490 (£285) AS course fee + £490 (£285) A2 course fee = £980 (£570) + £100 exam fee = £1,080 (£670)	No course fee - £200 exam fee	£490 AS course fee + £490 A2 course fee = £980 + £300 exam fee = £1,280
19 Years of age or over on 1 July 2020	£490 (£285) AS course fee + £490 (£285) A2 course fee = £980 (£570) + £100 exam fee = £1,080 (£670)	£980 course fee per subject = £1960 + £200 exam fee = £2,160	£980 course fee per subject = £2,940 + £300 exam fee = £3,240

Mixing and Matching

Mixing & Matching	2 A2 Subjects + 1 Fast Track Subject	2 Fast Track Subjects + 1 A2 Subject
Over 18 and under 19 years of age on 1 July 2020	No course fee - £200 exam fee	£490 + £250 exam fee = £740
19 years of age or over on 1 July 2020	£490 + £490 + £980 + £200 (exam fee) = £2,160	£980 + £980 + £490 + £250 (exam fee) = £2,700

Our Subjects and Specifications - 2 Year A Level

Please pay particular attention to the information below, especially if you are intending to join Year 2 of the Two-Year course or the Fast Track provision. This is because it is at the discretion of Awarding Organisations (AO) whether to permit you to mix and match an AS qualification sat under one board with an A2 in the same subject under a different board. It is your responsibility to contact the relevant AO to request confirmation in writing that such a combination is permitted.

Subject	AO	Website	College Contact
Biology	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	edwardadams@belfastmet.ac.uk
Business Studies	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	bheartly@belfastmet.ac.uk
Chemistry	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	ggreenfield@belfastmet.ac.uk
Digital Technology	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	jcromie@belfastmet.ac.uk
Economics	AQA	http://www.aqa.org.uk/qualifications	eshaw@belfastmet.ac.uk
English Literature	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	kmarsden@belfastmet.ac.uk
Film Studies	WJEC	http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/	rarmstrong@belfastmet.ac.uk
Geography	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	hsemple@belfastmet.ac.uk
Gov & Politics	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	pmcvicker@belfastmet.ac.uk
History	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	lveronica@belfastmet.ac.uk
Maths	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	awoods@belfastmet.ac.uk
Media Studies	WJEC	http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/	kpower@belfastmet.ac.uk
Physics	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	ggreenfield@belfastmet.ac.uk
Religious Studies	CCEA	http://ccea.org.uk/qualifications/gce	slee@belfastmet.ac.uk
Sociology	AQA	http://www.aqa.org.uk/qualifications	jconnolly@belfastmet.ac.uk

Please note that students enrolled on Daytime (AS) subjects at Belfast Met in 20-21 may progress automatically to A2 but only if they have passed a minimum of two subjects (Grade E or higher) and only in the subjects they have passed. Students who progress in two subjects must take a third option to retain full-time status. This option will be determined by the course team.

Fast Track A Level (One Year Intensive)

Contact email the same as the table opposite.

Subject	AO
Biology	CCEA
Business Studies	CCEA
Chemistry	CCEA
Digital Technology	CCEA
Economics	AQA
English Literature	CCEA
Geography	CCEA
Government & Politics	CCEA
History	CCEA
Maths	CCEA
Physics	CCEA
Religious Studies	CCEA
Sociology	AQA



Making your Subject Choices



Choosing correct AS/A Level subjects can be a huge challenge for most students, especially if you are not sure what you want to do at university or later in the world of work. However, making the correct subject choices at this stage may impact on any future decisions. Therefore it is important to take time to research the various subject choices available to you in order to ensure your decision is as informed as possible.

There will be the opportunity to speak with course tutors at the enrolment stage who will advise you further. In the meantime, should you have any subject specific queries, please contact the relevant tutor under college contact table (Pg 12).

The reason subject choices are made often come down to the fact that:

- you need it to pursue a particular career
- it is a subject you enjoy and are good at
- it is a subject you have not studied before but think it will suit you

To help you, as a start point, consider the following:

Making the jump from GCSEs to A Levels

Be prepared for a big jump in the level of content and difficulty when you move from GCSE to AS/A level. Subjects that you might have studied at GCSE will have a new breadth and depth of unfamiliar content at A Level. It is important that you research what you will be studying in that subject at this level.

The key to successful A Level grades is often related to an interest in the subject. Research carefully the content of various A Levels, if you are very interested, you will remain very motivated throughout the year.

Motivation = good attendance = good results.

Work to your Strengths

If you are strong numerically, consider selecting subjects that have an element of numerical assessment. Also, should you enjoy writing essays, select subjects that have a written assessment. Please refer to the subject spectrum in this booklet for further guidance in this area.

Coursework &/or Exams?

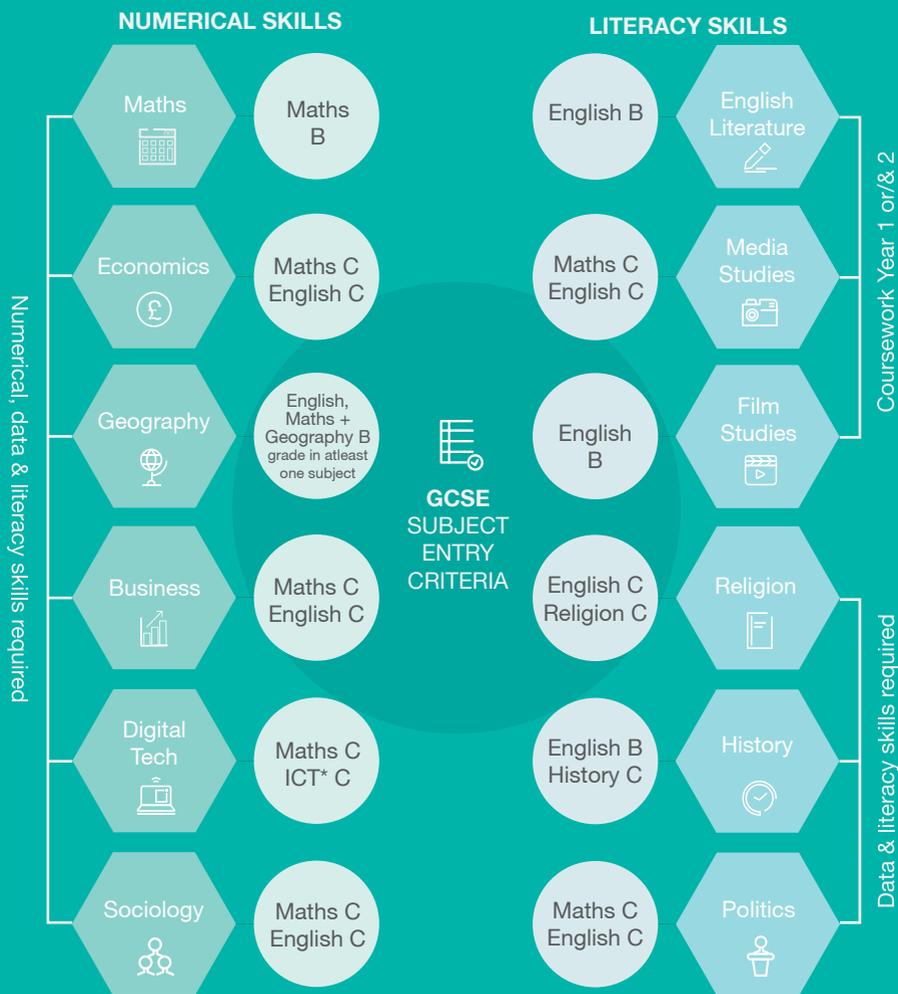
All A Levels are externally assessed with examinations at the end of the year. Changes in the curriculum mean coursework modules now contribute less to the overall award/grade than in previous years. Some subjects do carry controlled assessments including practicals and coursework, therefore if you think this is a particular strength of yours, consider these subjects.

Facilitating Subjects

Consider keeping your future options open by selecting a smart mix of subjects as this will open up more potential university courses. It is always advisable to view Undergraduate Prospectuses and identify key A Level and GCSE requirements for specific progression routes/career fields.

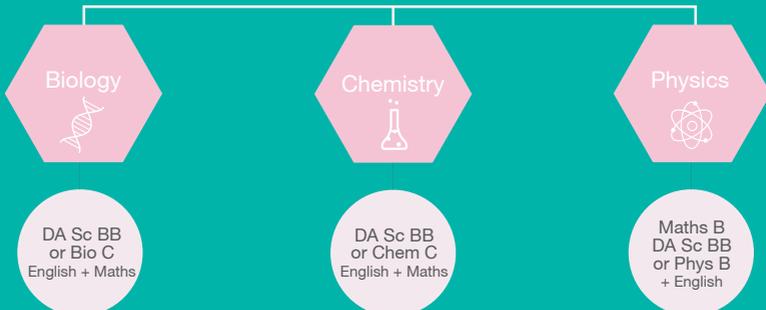
Subject Spectrum

AS (Year 1) Non Science A levels



Science A levels

All students must enrol on a minimum of two AS Science subjects



Pastoral Care (Adviser of Studies)

The College seeks to foster academic excellence while meeting the needs of individual pupils within a well-structured, fully supportive pastoral care system designed to promote the overall development and welfare of each student and to ensure that students are protected from harm. Pastoral care permeates all aspects of College life and contributes to the creation of a supportive atmosphere in the College for students.

The aims of the Adviser of Studies system are:

- to support the student through the process of completing the UCAS application.
- to provide appropriate tutorial support where students are encouraged to be active, self-directed learners, setting their own aims and goals and encourage students to participate as fully as possible in the learning experiences.
- to advise students of their rights and responsibilities and to provide appropriate referral to other support systems where necessary within the college such as Student Well-Being, Careers Advice & Guidance Service, Inclusive Learning and Safeguarding Officers.
- to contribute to the personal growth and development of each student, helping them to relate positively and with respect for others both within and outside the College.
- to provide support and guidance to the students' progression through the College.

In undertaking these aims each individual student will be assigned and placed under the care of an AOS who seeks to build up a detailed knowledge of the needs, emotional development, progress and academic attainment of each pupil in the group. The AOS is at the heart of the pastoral care system and liaises closely with Year Heads, subject teachers and parents. Students will meet on a weekly basis as timetabled with their AOS.

The role of the AOS is to:

- offer guidance on general academic issues and, where appropriate, personal issues
- encourage the student's personal development and help him or her make their own decisions
- review the student's progress and achievement at least 3 times a year

The weekly tutorial period is also an ideal time and forum for students to be made aware of and encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities such as charity events, local conferences and trips. Guest speakers are also invited to speak with students on a range of different issues.

Extra-Curricular Activities



The School of A Levels in Belfast Met organises a range of extra-curricular activities throughout the academic year geared towards providing students with a broad-based educational experience. This includes events involving guest speakers who deliver informative and engaging talks on everything from environmental issues to managing finances at university. We want all students to feel their interests are catered for and Adviser of Studies are active in seeking out and responding to new ideas from students for extra-curricular activities.

Students' Union

In addition to activities promoted within the School, Belfast Met has an active and innovative Students' Union. Every student enrolled at Belfast Met is a member of the Students' Union. We put you, the learner, at the centre of everything that we do and hence, we want to hear your views and encourage you to get involved in Student Union activities. The Students' Union is run by students for students. It represents YOU while protecting and enhancing the quality of student life at Belfast Met. It can promote your concerns and ideas for change to the College authorities and external agencies and organisations.

As a member of the Students' Union, you will be able to:

- avail of all Students' Union support services
- obtain an NUS-USI card which will enable you to obtain discounts galore
- attend social activities run by the Students' Union
- receive all free student offers and giveaways throughout the year

How can you become involved in the Students' Union?

There are a number of ways that you, as a student, can become involved:

Run for election as Students' Union President, Student Governor or site representative become your class representative. This is an important line of communication between students and the College.

The Class Rep will feed back the group's views to a Student Council which meets once per month participate in Students' Union activities, events and campaigns. These are publicised throughout the year join or start a club or society write for our Student Newspaper Impress – there are three editions per year.

Sporting Clubs and Societies

Our Students' Union has a number of established sports teams who have seen a significant amount of success over the last few years. If you are interested in getting involved make sure that you sign up at our annual Freshers' Fair which will be held during September. Getting involved in sport is a great way to meet other students, stay fit and represent the College.

Students' Union Activity Fund

We have a number of funds which can be accessed to help cover the costs of running non-curricular activities across the College. All students are entitled to apply for these funds to help cover the costs of an event. In previous years, we have supported a variety of activities ranging from the annual fashion show and theatre visits to team building and volunteering events.

For more information:

If you would like to find out more about the Students' Union and its activities we would be delighted to hear from you. Please get in touch at any time after enrolment. studentsunion@belfastmet.ac.uk or Tel: 028 9026 5099



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