



The Sixth Form
Alternative Prospectus

written by students
for students

2012

Foreword

Many thanks to our students who helped to create this Alternative Prospectus by completing the questionnaires which I have collated into this document. The idea for this came from discussion with students and staff about how we could help students to make those crucial decisions about A level choices early in their year 11 courses. We have a strong tradition of Student Voice at RHS and what better way to use this than to get our current students to advise future sixth formers?

Each year 13 student was given a questionnaire and asked to write about any **two** of their AS subjects and to give their opinion about RHS Sixth Form as well as giving useful tips for year 11 students about taking A levels. You will notice that some subjects have more information than others and this is broadly in line with the numbers of students opting for different subjects and the questionnaire responses. I have not included subjects offered at LSS. This will be amended in our next edition in 2012 when we will repeat and update the prospectus and will then have full information for prospective students.

For the question "Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?", I have reproduced student statements and included a mixture of the responses onto every page (not necessarily from students who studied the AS subject concerned). What I have included is genuine and is representative of the overwhelmingly positive and generous response that we had to this question.

I hope that students and their parents will find this Alternative Prospectus helpful when making those crucial decisions about the next step after GCSEs, what to do and where to go. Please contact us if you would like any further advice or information from staff or from students.

Mary Watts

Head of Sixth Form

ART

Why I chose it

Because I always enjoyed art and I was good at it.

Because I enjoyed art at GCSE and was quite interested in doing some thing with art as a career

It was my favourite subject at GCSE & I wanted a break from essay subjects.

Best bits

Enjoyable lessons
Help & encouragement with work
Learning and developing new skills
Painting BIG pieces
Getting stuck into my art for hours.
The freedom to produce your own art form.
Having your own ideas.
Much more lesson time than GCSE so you feel more involved.
The art trip to Paris!

Hardest bits

Pressure of work
Amount of work
Time consuming
Dissertation.
Doing it at home as well as at school.
The possibility of having your work moderated down.
A LOT of work to do and it has to have a lot more thought & meaning behind it than GCSE.
Thinking of new ideas.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

How much time you have to be prepared to put in, in order to do well.
That art does not have deadlines so you MUST continue with it every spare minute you have!
The importance of getting work done early.
You need a camera!
The course is a large jump from GCSE and at the start it can be quite a struggle
That there would be so much time pressure.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- When I first joined RHS sixth form I came from a mixed comprehensive school. Everything about the place seemed too small! At first I found it hard not knowing everyone in my year, not being known by the teachers and adjusting to the RHS way of doing things. As the year went on I got to know everyone better and settled in and really enjoyed being here. The senior management team were particularly helpful when it came to things like applying to university and I feel that not only am I happy to be here, RHS is happy to have me! The best thing about RHS is the sense of community and weird traditions like Cool to be Kind Week and the Sixth Form Entertainment.
- Yes but be prepared for hard work and less freedom than in a college.

BIOLOGY

Why I chose it

Because I enjoyed it at GCSE and find it interesting
It linked well to my other subjects & I've always found it interesting.
I thought it would be a good subject for my university choice.
Science is my favourite subject and I love learning about human biology.
I really like science at GCSE so wanted to continue with at least one and I chose Biology as it was my best result.

Best bits

The practicals
Going into detail is really interesting
Human biology
DNA practicals
Dissections
Experiments where you really learn something new

Hardest bits

The coursework is difficult. (ISAs!)
Applying the factual knowledge to be able to answer the questions in the necessary depth
The field trip to Ufton Fields but take a camera & chocolate and you'll have an awesome time!.
Exam questions are really hard to get your head around at first & require lots of applied knowledge

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

The way that coursework is completed – it's basically an exam you can't revise for
That it wasn't based on factual recall, more on application; it's harder than you think!
Much more work than I expected; I am constantly copying up and following up class work in my own time.
How valuable the extra reading around the subject is.
How hard the exam would be – it needs so much focus.
How different it is from GCSE
That is mainly focuses on plants and not a lot on how the human body works.
That it involves quite a bit of chemistry and it would be a lot easier if you take that at AS too.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes as the teaching is of a high quality and the atmosphere here is very friendly.
- It's a really friendly atmosphere in which to learn.
- Yes, I like the relaxed atmosphere and the teaching is excellent. I don't want to leave.
- I would strongly recommend RHS sixth form to anyone wanting to do A levels. The excellent teaching standards and community spirit of the school will get you where you want to be in the future.

CHEMISTRY

Why I chose it

It's such an interesting subject
Because I thought it went well with Biology
I enjoyed it at GCSE and want to do it at university.
I need it for my university course.
I did well at GCSE.

Best bits

Foundation and organic chemistry

The practicals are interesting

It is interesting to learn about how chemistry applies to every object in the world.
Interesting topics and practicals

Extra support sessions
Active learning & understanding

Hardest bits

Exams are hard as everything needs to be known inside out.

Coursework is hard and you can get behind.

Volume of information to learn for exams.

Lots to memorise

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

I wish I'd worked harder at AS but I didn't realise how difficult it would be to get a good grade.

It's much harder than GCSE

How differently schools teach and how little I knew in comparison to other students when I started the course.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- The atmosphere is great. Everyone is really friendly and supportive and the teachers know their stuff.
- It's a nice environment and the teachers are willing to help with any problems
- If a student is willing to work hard and remain in a school environment and/or wishes to get high grades. If looking for an easy time, then no.
- Good teaching, good learning environment, good community spirit within the school. Good at helping with application stuff.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Why I chose it

Because it complemented my other subjects and the course sounded really interesting. It covers subjects in the Classical World that are not covered in Latin or Greek.

It was something different & looked interesting and I'm really glad I chose it.

It was a new option at AS that I wanted to take up because I study Latin and want to do Classics at university.

Best bits

The variety of texts covered; the interesting course content.

The opportunity to work in a small group & have involved class discussions.

Reading the epics

New subject; really exciting and interesting.

Hardest bits

Keeping all the information separate and clear in your mind.

Reading the Greek plays

Never studied it before so going straight in at AS was quite hard at first.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

The amount of historical content that has to be learned whilst studying the texts.

How hard it would be! How much reading is involved in the course; as much as in English Literature!

Nothing but it would have been helpful to be told topics beforehand to do further reading in.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes! It's a great community here. There's always someone you can see if you're having problems and you'll enjoy yourself immensely.
- It offers opportunities and community spirit that are not found in many places.
- They should come if they are willing to put the work in but not if they would like more freedom which you probably get in college.
- Yes, enthusiastic teaching.
- Yes, because of the range of possible subjects.
- Yes but be very prepared to work and it can be a long day.

COMPUTING

Why I chose it

Computing is something I've enjoyed and been interested in and I am considering a career in it.

I liked ICT and wanted to continue with this subject in much greater depth.

Best bits

A lot of the syllabus can be really good fun – programming and dismantling a computer in particular!

Hardest bits

We only have 4 periods a week instead of 6 due to a small class which meant quite a bit more pressure.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

You will be expected to put in a lot of work in your own time, especially with the programming and A2 coursework.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes as the teaching is of a high quality and the atmosphere here is very friendly.
- Yes! There's a large range of different people although everyone is always friendly and welcoming. I have enjoyed all my A levels and the teachers are brilliant and generally very understanding.
- Yes. The pupils and staff are very supportive and create an enjoyable atmosphere.

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

Why I chose it

I knew I wanted to take it to university and love the subject.

Drama is a passion of mine and I thoroughly enjoy the practical and academic side of it. It was inevitable that I would be studying this at A level.

It's a good way to have fun and is an interest of mine.

Best bits

Practical work and the fun you have with whoever you work with.

Working in your group on performance.

The amount of creativity the course allows.

Hardest bits

Learning a new way to write essays and getting your points specific enough for top grades.

Learning the written exam technique.

The written exam- the technique is hard to learn

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

It takes much more dedication than GCSE Drama but it's worth it.

How hard the theory is.

The written exams are hard and I was unprepared for the amount of effort needed! It is not a doss subject.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes because if you've been to a different school the community here is a massive change from a comprehensive school and the atmosphere in and out of lessons is so productive and you can really get involved in the school.
- I definitely would! I came from a different school and was worried because I knew all my teachers and friends there – but it's just the same here. Everybody is so friendly and the staff are very supportive; they will always help you no matter how many times you ask. They also encourage you to participate in activities other than school work and there is so much on offer. The hardest thing is trying to stop yourself from doing too much.
- Yes. It is challenging and motivational.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Why I chose it

I want to do this at university; it's always been my favourite subject.
It sounded different and exciting and it was!
Because of the child language topic in the A2 topics.
I enjoyed English at GCSE level and wanted to continue it.

Best bits

Language in social contexts. Friday afternoon snacks!

All of it.

Looking into how language develops & Language and gender.

The practical investigations

Hardest bits

Starting year 12 with classifying texts topic as it was heavy going and put me off.

Coursework can be pretty stressful.

The sheer amount of work for the long coursework.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

About the coursework

The amount of coursework and how much it is based on analysis

How useful it would be to do background reading and to start early.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes because it's a good school and you'll get good grades but you won't be as independent as if you went to college.
- Yes because it's a lot of fun.
- Yes but I'd tell them it's not a walk in the park and they'd have to be willing to work.
- It's a great environment, very friendly.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Why I chose it

I chose Lit over Lang because I enjoy reading the books and talking about them more than creative writing. Because I enjoyed it at GCSE & got a high grade
Because I like reading and am generally quite analytical so I thought I'd enjoy. I also thought it would complement French.
I enjoy reading English Literature & studying the works of others. I enjoy creative writing too.
I want to study it at university
I was inspired by my GCSE English teacher to take it at A level.

Best bits

Poetry – Carol Ann Duffy
The freedom to read and refer to anything you want in question 1 of the exam.
The class is really supportive of each other & we talk about what we've read, whether we like it or not and we make comparisons with other novels.
Reading new texts.
Class theatre trips.
Discussion and fine-tuning your essay writing

Hardest bits

The work load.
Figuring out what a question wants from you.
Lots of essays near exam time!
Coursework can be hard
Learning quotes from books/plays/poems.
Really close analysis of every sentence can get tedious

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

It is best to read as much as possible before and during the course
I'd have tried to balance this with other subjects which were less essay based because of the workload
That it would be more difficult than it was at GCSE
How challenging some of the books would be.
That the analysis could seem repetitive

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes, it's very supportive and they want and help you to do well and aim high.
- Yes. You get a huge amount of help from your teachers and you get rewarded for all the hard work you put in e.g. Time Out.
- Yes. It's good fun, you usually get a lot of help. It's interesting and challenging.
- Yes – I love RHS! It's a really safe, supportive environment and has a great sense of community. The teachers are very well informed.

FRENCH

Why I chose it

I thought continuing a language would be really useful because it is such an important skill and appeals to employers. I took it, intending to drop it after AS but I found the subject so interesting and rewarding that I've continued it for A level.

I love languages and I want to be fluent in another language at some point.

I enjoyed French more than Spanish at GCSE

I chose to do it at GCSE and did well and also wanted to keep it as an option for university.

I like languages (especially French) at GCSE and wanted to progress further.

I used to live in France so I have always had a fondness for the language.

Best bits

It's really satisfying to be able to communicate in another language

Learning more about the language and different tenses.

Constant support from the teacher

Really nice class.

Talking about topical issues in a completely different language is so rewarding because you improve so much. I think of all my subjects I've improved the most in French. I can read French articles and think, wow - I actually understand this!

Hardest bits

Grammar gets quite complex at times

Learning all the different grammar and remembering the spelling/sound of it for the writing & speaking exams.

Struggled at first to adjust to a different teaching method.

I find the listening really challenging but there is plenty of practice so you can improve. There's a lot more grammar to learn but there is a day where it just clicks!

Writing essays in exam conditions is daunting at first but so rewarding when you succeed.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

Learning languages is a big commitment and takes a lot of time and effort in order to be good at it; however, the end result is well worth the hard work.

I wish I'd known more about the topics studied because they really are fascinating – a lot more depth than at GCSE. As a top tip I'd say revise the grammar you learned at GCSE before you begin the course – this will give you a head start!

The depth of grammar and its details. I'd have tried harder from the very start if I'd realised how much work I needed to do to keep on top of the grammar.

That the course is really grammar based and you need to have good grasp of GCSE grammar before you start or you'll struggle.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes. There are plenty of options to take and I like the collaboration with Lawrence Sheriff School.
- Yes but be very prepared to work; it's a long day!
- Yes because people are really nice and helpful and you're pushed quite hard.
- UCAS is well-organised – lot of help with that.
- Much more fun than normal school; more freedom. Fun but still getting a good education.

GEOGRAPHY

Why I chose it

I really enjoyed it at GCSE and wanted to continue to learn more about the subject.
I enjoyed doing geography coursework at GCSE and that drew me to A level.
Originally I didn't want to take it but it was my best result on GCSE results day; in fact I love it and I would definitely choose it again.
I chose it because I got an A at GCSE and I enjoyed it and thought it would be easy, but I was wrong!

Best bits

Field trips to Dorset, Formby Sands etc.
Field trip! Rivers & Tourism really interesting.
Dorset field trip! The lessons are great.
It's a smaller class than at GCSE and everyone's really close.

Hardest bits

Timed essays in preparation for the exam.
Learning completely new topics e.g. glaciation!
Coasts & learning to write essays in 30 minutes
Coursework!
It was such a step up from GCSE and I'd never written a geography essay before.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

That we had to write extended answers & learn new geographical terms.
That the exams are nothing like GCSE exams and it becomes an essay subject.
That there's lots of physical geography and I should have focused on that more than I did during year 12.
It was harder than I expected especially after GCSE when I loads of help and at A level you have to be independent which is scary.
That you have to write essays

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes as they push you to get the grades you deserve.
- Everybody is really nice! The people I've met here are now my best friends. I found it really easy to fit in and all the teachers are really nice. If you don't want a "school" environment don't come,; it's very much like school as we have form groups- I personally like it.
- Very supportive and I enjoy all the subjects I chose. I wasn't from RHS before but I settled in well and easily made friends.

HISTORY

Why I chose it

I have always really enjoyed History and loved the GCSE course so I decided to take it at A level.
I enjoyed it at GCSE
I thought it would be interesting
I needed an essay based subject in combination with my other A levels but I don't think that's a good reason for choosing it!

Best bits

Year 13 coursework & year 12 Tudors work.
When Mr Stanley gets excited about things he's teaching us.
Finding all the similarities and differences in the way people lived in different time periods – it's so interesting.
You know what's expected of you, it's really clear.
Learning about Russia and the Vietnam topic.
The debates are just amazing good fun and you can really get involved and your teeth into it.

Hardest bits

Timed exam questions – you have to include a lot in such a short space of time.
There is quite a lot of factual knowledge to know – it seems daunting at first but it soon sinks in and becomes natural.
You carry on with the same topic for a whole year.
You need a lot of knowledge and good analysis skills.
The rate at which you have to learn new information
Keeping notes organised was tricky and so is sorting out your own time for coursework.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

More about how to structure essays in exams.
Analysis is really important in exams – don't fall into the trap of telling the story, however interesting it is!
How much work there would be.
How much more intense AS is than GCSE in ALL subjects, not just History!
How much I would enjoy it! It's a lot of work learning for factual tests and practice answers but it's worth it because the course is so interesting.
More about the areas we would study and what we'd do in lessons.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Don't be put off by the massive workload. Although there is a lot of work it's really rewarding to see how much you've improved. A levels aren't an easy ride and you have to be prepared to work hard.
- Good teaching, good learning environment, good community spirit within the school. Good at helping with university applications.
- Definitely. The sixth form here is like a big community. The teachers and staff are very supportive and teach brilliantly. The courses are good and it is lots of fun!
- Yes, enthusiastic teaching in all my subjects.

HOME ECONOMICS

Food, nutrition & health.

Why I chose it

It's relevant to what I want to do in the future and I really like the syllabus, nutrition etc.
I was really interested in nutrition and at the time I was choosing A levels I wanted to take this subject to degree level.
I wanted to extend my knowledge of the broad subject of food.
Loved doing Food at GCSE

Best bits

The people on my course.
The practical side of it; what we're learning is really relevant to life.
Weekly practicals where you can decide what you want to make.
Learning really interesting and useful information.
Nutrition at A2.

Hardest bits

Lots of theory to learn.
The format of the exam.
Coursework!
The revision – lots of it. It's not just "making an omelette" like some people think.
Remembering all of the information for the exam.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

The AS course is more about Demography etc. and I've found A2 much more interesting so I'm glad I carried on with it.

The A2 course is a lot more nutrition based than AS which focuses mainly on social issues.

That the AS course wasn't as "foody" as I'd expected and it actually includes a lot of Sociology.

It was harder than I expected but I'm glad I chose it and I'd choose it again. It's not just "housewifery" as some people think it is. It's totally relevant to now and it explores a wide range of food-related topics as well as Economics.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Don't be put off by the massive workload. Although there is a lot of work it's really rewarding to see how much you've improved. A levels aren't an easy ride and you have to be prepared to work hard.
- Good teaching, good learning environment, good community spirit within the school. Good at helping with university applications.
- Definitely. The sixth form here is like a big community. The teachers and staff are very supportive and teach brilliantly. The courses are good and it is lots of fun!
- Yes, it's really good – new experience, fun and teachers helpful.

LATIN

Why I chose it

Loved it too much to drop it.

I want to study Classics at university.

Because I enjoy learning languages in general and I wanted to continue after my Latin GCSE

I really enjoyed it at GCSE and wanted to continue with it – it's amazing!

Best bits

Always good fun. Stories to translate are always interesting, e.g. murder!

Reading original Roman words.

Good teaching & more independent learning.

Small groups – lots of fun.

Reading the stories/mythology & translating set texts.

Plenty of revision opportunities

Being able to study more literature and learning more about the historical context of the texts.

Hardest bits

Learning grammar.

Lots and lots to learn & grammar work is mainly done/consolidated outside lessons.

Learning all the grammar and vocab for the exam.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

No coursework component.

How much text there is to learn.

The emphasis on grammar/technical things like scansion.

A lot of work is down to you and not set; you have to take responsibility to prepare.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Our school is awesome. The teachers are fantastic, the canteen amazing and the school Anthem is simply brilliant.
- It's a first rate institution with plenty of support, particularly when applying to uni. Relaxed environment.
- It offers opportunities and community spirit that are not found in many places.
- Yes! It's a great community here. There's always someone you can see if you're having problems and you'll enjoy yourself immensely.

MATHS & FURTHER MATHS

Why I chose it

I've been really interested in Maths for years and have found it really enjoyable.
I enjoyed it at GCSE and thought it was a good subject to do as it can lead to many careers.
I felt I was good at Maths and liked the fact you can do a module in January.
I thought it would look good to do Maths; I was naive.
I needed it for A level Physics.

Best bits

The "wow" feeling you get when you finally solve a really complicated question or come across something completely new.
You are always furthering your knowledge whereas in other subjects you start entirely different topics, the basic maths you learned in junior school is always with you.
Understanding the work.
All of it!
The teachers are really lovely and helpful.
The challenge.

Hardest bits

Having a lot of exams to deal with, especially in January when other subjects are continuing to complete their syllabus.
The bits where I'd never done anything like it before.
Statistics.
It can be very complex and you have a lot to learn in a short space of time.
Exam papers.
Extremely hard at some points and lots of exams and resits for me.
Remembering formulae but all the practice helps.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

You really do need to work in your own time – it's no use thinking "Oh I'll do it later"; you'll just get behind and will stop enjoying it.
That it was quite a challenge and that I'd have to do both statistics and mechanics.
It's a huge step from GCSE.
If you miss a lesson it's difficult to catch up.
How difficult I would find it to manage my workload with Maths and three sciences.
No matter how strange something may appear at first, the excellent teachers and amount of practice will get you through.
That the only way to revise is to practise papers.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes the atmosphere is great and I can't imagine doing my A levels anywhere else. The teachers are always really supportive.
- Yes. It's a nice environment and the teachers are willing to help with any problems.
- Although I love all the students I am friends with here and some of the teachers are excellent, I feel that RHS sixth formers have a lot less freedom than students studying in a college environment and there is an ethos within the school that high achievement is more important than high improvement, which I dislike. However, I have enjoyed my time here despite this. I think RHS is not the right place for everyone and you should think carefully before deciding to come here.

MUSIC

Why I chose it

Because music is my life and I love it.

Music is my favourite subject and it's a nice change after Maths and Science.

It's brilliant to be able to concentrate on just a few subjects and having time to spend on Music is awesome.

Best bits

Practical work – composition.

Composition and performing.

Small group, really supportive.

Hardest bits

Analysis of pieces.

Listening papers

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

That it is a BIG step up from GCSE.

Don't leave your work until later because you'll end up missing out on fun things while you're trying to catch up.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes – the education is great, the teachers genuinely seem to care and the other students are lovely.
- I would because I have enjoyed my time here. However, for someone like me, it's easy to feel a bit inferior if you're in a class with people who seem to find it really easy and I have, over time, become slightly bored with my surroundings after seven years in the same place so sometimes I do think I should have gone to a different school.
- Yes. Lovely environment, lots of support by teachers and good teaching.
- Yes if you want to attain your highest possible academic achievement. Also, it's a great environment, very friendly.

PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Religious Studies

Why I chose it

Because I was interested and good at RS at GCSE level and wanted to continue to learn different principles and perspectives.

RS was fun at GCSE and I wanted to find out more about philosophers and creation theories.

Best bits

Debates and discussions.

Fake interviews.

Applying ethics to everyday situations.

Hardest bits

Relating philosophical principles to real life.

Getting your head around the work.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

That it is nothing like RS GCSE and there is a lot of essay writing.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes! I thought it would be really hard to fit in but it wasn't. Everyone is very friendly and you have a lot of fun.
- If you're coming from a mixed school it's a big change. I don't like RHS as much as my other school but I would still have come here for the results. I find some of the priorities of the school a bit strange but you do get used to it.
- Yes I feel we're really encouraged to do our best and I enjoy all lessons. We're supported in whatever we choose to do and know all of our options.

Physical Education

Why I chose it

Because I enjoyed GCSE PE and got a good grade; also I love sport.
Because I'm passionate about sport and this A level covers a range of other subjects within it.
I'd like to become a PE teacher and am applying to do sports science at university.
The theory is more in-depth and you cover loads of topics like psychology, anatomy & physiology.
I have a great interest in human anatomy and sport.

Best bits

Your outside sport can count towards your A level.
When we're learning the new work & discussing & evaluating it.
When we make revision posters and work in groups to form revision mind maps.
The course structure.
The atmosphere in lessons which is great.
Practical lessons, such as going to the gym at Ken Marriott.

Hardest bits

Not as much practical work as I'd like.
The application of knowledge to exam questions and trying not to get muddled up with different areas of topic.
The coursework (but you get it done and out of the way early on!)
Some of the anatomy & physiology was difficult but interesting.
There is a lot of content to the course so it's a lot of work but we had a lot of help.
Contemporary topics

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

People should know it is not a doss subject.
That in A2 there is no time for practical lessons.
There is so much work involved, like speaking exams as well as practicals and theory.
How much better it is than GCSE PE because you have two practicals of your own choice,
That the speaking exam is not scary!
That you have to do so much work.

My advice to year 11 students intending to study A levels anywhere!

Really think about your choices, you need to enjoy the subjects you take in order to do well in them. Time management is really important; don't leave work until the last minute or you'll end up staying up until the early hours of the morning doing it!
Carry lots of lined paper & make sure you have lots of dividers in your folder.
Do your homework. Get some sleep!
Do work in your free periods.
Always accept extra revision sessions as this really does help you to improve your grade.
Don't bother plastic walleting your work; it makes your folder twice as heavy.
Keep a hole punch in your bag and always carry highlighters.
Give yourself time to relax and do what you want from time to time.
Ask questions if you don't get it because at the end of the year it'll be more confusing if you've left it.
Try to enjoy it!

PHYSICS

Why I chose it

It complements the other science A levels I'm taking and I needed either Physics or Maths for my chosen university course.

I want to be a physicist and learn all about the universe we live in. Even at AS you can learn about really mysterious topics like wave-particle duality.

I really liked it at GCSE and wanted to understand things in more depth.

Best bits

Teachers make it really enjoyable.
Lots of practicals which help the theory make sense.
Using jelly to learn about resonance!
Knowing what the photoelectric effect is.
Physics jokes!
Lots of support e.g. with coursework.
Learning about science which is often in the news and understanding it.
Coursework.

Hardest bits

Quite a bit of Mechanics and basic Maths in the course which, if not taking Maths at A level, may require more work and practice.

Lots of Maths.

Experiments that don't always work.

Some very difficult concepts to grasp e.g. electricity was hard.
Transition from GCSE to AS.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

The course is a large jump from GCSE and at the start it could be quite a struggle so don't get too disheartened early on.

Only choose it if you love it! I didn't realise how hard it was going to be!

How many practicals you do.

How to deal with feeling confused when you first meet a new and difficult concept.
It does get easier as you go on; I found it really hard at first!

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes! There is a large range of different people although everyone is always friendly and welcoming. I have enjoyed all my A levels and the teachers are brilliant and generally very understanding.
- Yes, it's great! Sixth form is somewhere to be between school and university. You have independent study as well as lessons and a good mixture of the two.
- If you are prepared to work very hard, then yes.
- I would strongly recommend RHS sixth form to anyone wanting to do A levels. The excellent teaching standards and community spirit of the school will get you where you want to be in the future.

POLITICS

Why I chose it

Because the course looked very interesting and did want to learn more about politics anyway. It was also because I wanted to try something new.

Politics really appealed to me because I always want to know *why* things happen and Politics shows me why.

The course seemed really interesting and It was something new and different.

To learn about the UK government system.

Best bits

Learning about the variety of political systems.

US politics at A2

The teachers make the lessons interesting and teach the subject incredibly well.

Appearing very clever to everyone because you can understand current affairs!

Politics is a subject which you can be truly passionate about, which is great.

Love looking at how the British Parliament works.

Lessons are genuinely interesting.

Hardest bits

The large amount of information that has to be remembered.

Remembering dates and names for the famous factual tests.

Developing specific exam technique.

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

Probably just how much information was required to be learned because there is a lot!

That it would turn out to be my favourite subject and I'd love it! I'm taking it at uni because of the varied content.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Definitely. The sixth form is like a big community; the teachers and staff are very supportive and teach brilliantly, the courses are good and it is lots of fun!
- Yes, because everyone is so friendly and there is a very strong sense of community. The teachers are always very willing to help sort out any problems or confusion.
- Yes. Very supportive and I enjoy all the subjects I've chosen. I wasn't from RHS before but I settled in well and easily made friends.
- Yes because if you've been to a different school the community here is a massive change; the atmosphere in and out of lessons is so productive and you can really get involved in the school.

PSYCHOLOGY

Why I chose it

Because I love people! To see the power of the human brain and what affects our behaviour.
I hadn't taken a science and therefore thought it would be a good idea to take psychology. It also sounded interesting.
It was a new subject.
It's relevant to the university course I want to take.
I was interested in the whole subject of psychology but the fact that the course covered child psychology was of particular interest.

Best bits

Debates and practicals.
Looking at the different approaches to the subjects and the class debates.
I like the way the course is structured.
Interesting topics.
Learning about the experiments.
Criminological and clinical Psychology
The nature nurture debate in psychology

Hardest bits

It's a new subject so took me a while to pick up.
The statistics in it.
Getting the figures right in the studies.
Learning all the psychological terminology.
Learning about Freud.
Tests
The biological bits

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

How many facts and figures were involved.
That there's a lot of biology in it.
Although I enjoy learning about the experiments, there are a lot so it's hard when it comes to revision to remember them all.
That it's really useful for real life!
How to write essays.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- Yes! It's the best sixth form ever. I really love it. Thank you friends and teachers.
- Yes, it's a friendly environment and it eases the gap between GCSE and A levels.
- Definitely. Close knit community and also teachers are so supportive – even outside lessons they have time for you. Everyone becomes one family. They really want you to achieve your potential. You can get involved with activities and clubs or set up your own if you want to.
- I came here from a different school and have had an amazing two years. The UCAS support and general support here is excellent and the atmosphere is welcoming and warm.

SOCIOLOGY

Why I chose it

Honestly? I chose Sociology because I was told it would fit in well with my other subjects and because it was the best option in the subject option block – it really could not have worked out better!

I initially chose it as something new and interesting with a view to dropping it after AS level. I really didn't have a clue what I was letting myself in for. Luckily it worked really well and I love it and am taking it to A2.

Because I had an interest in current affairs and social sciences.

It went well with my other subjects.

Best bits

It's so relevant to understanding the family and education; it allows you to expand the knowledge you already have, expand on it and apply it.

Varied topics that are relevant to real life.

The way the subject is taught.

Class discussion

Looking at something from different perspectives.

The lessons are fun.

Hardest bits

The first few weeks. It gets easier after this.

Essay writing

Remembering names and sociological terms, but, thankfully many of the main sociologists have unusual names so they are fairly easy to remember!.

You have to do lots of revision

The approaches.

Exam questions

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

I wish I'd had a better understanding of politics and economics as a basis.

I thought it would be an easy option but it really isn't, it's hard!

How interesting it is but also how much essay writing there is!

I wish I'd known how much I would enjoy sociology so I wouldn't have been worried about starting it

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- I would recommend RHS because of the friendly and hardworking atmosphere and the determination of everyone to succeed.
- Yes! There's more freedom and fun but you're still getting a good education.
- Yes because you feel motivated by the teachers and you want to do well and achieve your goals.
- If a student is willing to work hard and remain in a school environment and/or wishes to get high grades, then yes. If she wants an easy time then, no.

SPANISH

Why I chose it

I loved it at GCSE and wanted to study it in greater depth

I love learning languages and want to study languages at university

Best bits

Understanding and applying grammar.

Remembering the vocab and being able to use it!

The history and culture topics

Hardest bits

The further grammar points can be extremely tricky e.g. subjunctive

What I wish I'd known before I chose this subject

You will be expected to put in a lot of work in your own time.

You've got to have your GCSE grammar secure and you build on it really quickly. It would have been easier if I'd revised all my grammar in the summer just before I started the course in September.

Would you advise other students to come to RHS sixth form?

- If they had the right attitude and this school suited them, yes!
- Yes if you're willing to work, grades are what you're looking for and you don't mind staying in a school environment then you will be happy here.
- Yes. It's very supportive and they want and help you to do well and aim high.
- Yes – I love RHS! It's a really safe, supportive environment and has a great sense of community. The teachers are very well informed.

***Advice from our year 13 students to year 11 students
intending to study A levels anywhere!***

Don't be scared by how difficult it seems at the start, it gets easier!

A levels are a large jump from GCSE but is well worth studying as they are extremely useful. They can also be fun!

Check the details of your chosen university course if you already know what you want to do. If it doesn't specify subjects then choose the subjects you like the most.

Don't be afraid of taking subjects you have never studied before.

Try doing work as soon as you get it; it can soon pile up otherwise.

Don't treat year 12 as an easy ride. Even if you found GCSEs easy, it's not a good idea to sit around at AS! Not doing resits in year 13 is a godsend.

Be open to all people because you don't know who will turn out to be a good friend by the end of year 12.

Practise every exam question you can find. Use material from the textbooks as the revision guides for AS are not that good.

Choose what you enjoy and not what you're good at or what you're expected to do.

Use your free periods!

Make subject notes as lessons occur. Don't leave it until the last minute; it really doesn't work!

Re-sits are not as great as they seem!

Be prepared to work. Listen from the start of term. Always keep up to date with work. It's all obvious but true.

Read what the course involves before you sign up to it.

Make sure you're willing to revisit your notes.

Don't think you won't have to work hard because you will.

Think really carefully about where you want these subjects to take you (careers).

Don't be put off by the massive workload. Although there is a lot of work, it is really rewarding to see how much you have improved. A levels are not an easy ride and you have to be prepared to work hard.

Watch out! You have to rely on yourself a lot more than when you're doing your GCSEs.

Get a homework diary and be very, very organised. Also sleep a lot.

Be prepared for the jump between AS and A level.

ALL the subjects are a lot more intense than they were at GCSE.

Don't stress too much. It doesn't help.

You need to have the motivation to get the work done and to keep on top of it!

Remember, even though you can retake AS levels, do your best first time. Retakes are added stress and work.

Year 12 is pretty easy in comparison to year 13 so do as much work as you can in year 12.

Try to take a fairly broad range of subjects in case you change your mind about your future, don't limit yourself too early.

Take what you enjoy because if you don't enjoy it now it will only get harder.

Time management is key. I knew A levels would be demanding, however it requires so much more than you think! Don't feel afraid to ask for advice no matter what.

Keep going! I nearly gave up but I asked for help from my head of year and she helped me organise my life better – I am so glad I didn't give up.

Don't leave all your work until the night before. It simply is not successful.

Carry on with it even though it might be difficult/not what you expected. It will serve you well!

Make sure you take subjects you really enjoy and you may surprise yourself by enjoying yourself! You really do need to be prepared to put in the work though.

It's hard work, you just need to be dedicated.

You have to actually put the work in but don't do so much work that you have no fun!

Keep up with work, it's quite a big step up from GCSE.

Get motivated during stressful times – don't give up.

Pick subjects you enjoy and not what your friends are doing.

You actually have to work to get good grades. The easy times are over.

A levels are a step up from GCSE and require you to do work outside of lessons. Most people hit a tough period where everything seems to be happening at once, but once you get through it, things definitely seem easier. Keep going!

Do it!! There are so many subjects to choose from that you're bound to find some that you love. No matter where you end up, it's the work you put in that counts.

GOOD LUCK & BEST WISHES FOR YOUR FUTURE!!!