WELCOME TO
THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
OPEN EVENING – OCTOBER 2019
Purpose of the evening

❑ To find out more about the Sixth Form College, its specialist facilities, ethos and atmosphere.

❑ To meet and liaise with our teaching staff and students - have your questions answered.

❑ To find out more about the academic programmes and individual courses – to help you to make an informed choice.

❑ To find out more about the wider activities and opportunities

❑ To help you to decide if this is the right community to continue with your studies - happily and successfully.
The Sixth Form College

- A specialist Sixth Form College.
  - A ‘full’ and broad academic sixth form experience in a 16-18 specialist environment.
    - A wide choice of academic courses but also with pastoral support, personal development, preparation for H.E., future employability and citizenship plus choices from a very large range of Additional Studies and extra curricular activities.
  - Our students have timetabled academic classes on each of the 5 weekdays* – and the timetabled classes for each of the individual A level subjects studied will be spread through 4 of the 5 days of each week (a high regularity of subject teaching for each student).
    * An example of a ‘typical’ student timetable is on page 37 within the Prospectus.
  - All academic classes are taught on our North Hill campus. A very strong College community ethos.
The Sixth Form College

- Opened in 1987 - Over 30 years of very successful experience in delivering A levels and a sixth form education.

- The only specialist Sixth Form College in the area.

- Excellent accommodation and facilities – specifically designed for 16-18 year olds in sixth form study.
  
  Many enhancements and additions to accommodation and facilities have been achieved over the last 10 years.
The Sixth Form College

Just under 3,000 full time 16-18 year old students (virtually the same as in 2010).

Average academic class size:
- Approximately 17 in 2018/19.
- Average class sizes are relatively low compared to the national average sixth form class sizes in state sector schools / academies and colleges – and our average class sizes are virtually the same as 10 years ago.

The College continues to be far more able than most sixth form providers (in schools, academies and colleges) in the state sector in England to maintain a full time student sixth form experience – in a context of the Government instigation of very deep cuts in resource allocations to support 16-18 education in England from 2011.

The College offers many individual A level subjects which are not now provided in many local school sixth form environments e.g. German, Spanish, Music, Art History, Electronics, Product Design, Dance....
Characteristic qualities of the College

- Care and concern for each individual student.
- Strong pastoral support and personal development programme.
- High quality of academic teaching, teacher expertise in sixth form education.
- High levels of overall student achievement, including in value-added terms, enabling positive progression at age 18.
- A ‘traditional’ and ‘full’ academic sixth form experience – in a young adult environment.
- Breadth of opportunities – and great flexibility to meet the needs of each individual student.
- High expectations of students and a clear focus upon success.
- Lively and thriving community, positive ethos.
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Programmes of study

- Students choose their own individual combination of specific courses from one of 2 alternative academic programmes;

**A Level Programme (2 years)**

- The Government instigated a series of reforms to the national A level system between 2015 and 2017:
  
  A levels are, again, 2 year ‘linear’ courses (i.e. they are not ‘modular’ and AS levels are not generally taken). A level assessments and exams are at the end of the second year of study.

  The Government changes also meant that some A levels (e.g. ICT), were converted to A level ‘equivalent’ (Applied General Extended Certificate) qualifications.

- Students generally choose to study 3 (or for some 4) A level (or equivalent) courses from a choice of over 50 subject options.
A level programmes of study (continued)

- A good number of A level subjects at the College have excellent extension options to enhance potential future applications to specialist Higher Education courses and/or careers paths; e.g.
  - Strong A level Maths students – option of also studying AS and A level Further Maths, and/or options of other mathematical courses e.g. A level Physics, A level Computing, A level Chemistry - and also the option of preparing for STEP Maths.
  - A level English students – have a choice from 3 different A level courses - and also have the option of studying an Extended Project Qualification (English and Creative Writing options).
  - Strong visual arts students have a very wide range of creative course options - including A levels in Art, Photography, Art History, Textiles, Graphics (and also A level Sculpture in Year 2).
  - For those students interested in Medicine or related progression - option of our Medics programme and/or choosing a science or health based Extended Project Qualification (supporting A levels in Chemistry and Biology together with a 3rd, and possibly 4th, relevant A level subject).
A level programmes (cont.) – extension options include (cont.);

- For potential Engineering students – A levels in Maths and Physics can be combined with the following A level courses; Computing or Product Design or Graphics Electronics or Economics or Business and AS/A level Further Maths is also an option as a 4th A level course.

- A level Geography and/or Biology and/or Chemistry students – have an option of also studying, A level Geology (Earth Science) and/or A level Environmental Science.

- A level Economics or Business and/or Accounting students – have an option of studying Financial Certificate (and in Year 2 A level Economics students can also choose to study A level Business in the form of an accelerated A level course).

- A level History students – have a choice from 3 alternative courses/time periods. Also the option of studying A level Classical Civilisation and/or Politics, and/or a choice of a specialist Extended Project Qualification (in History or Military History or Archaeology).

- Students with a talent for Modern Foreign Languages – choices from 4 different A level courses (French, German, Spanish and Italian), 2 GCSE subjects (Spanish or Italian) and a range introductory language courses (Latin, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Ancient Greek) and experiences including Languages Day.
Choosing A level subjects

❑ Many of you will not yet have a career aim in mind.

❑ You may not have a specialism and you might want to choose a diverse range of subjects, to keep your options open.

❑ At your interview, we will advise you on your package of subjects and ensure that it will give you plenty of progression opportunities.

❑ However diverse the academic subjects you choose, you will not encounter timetable clashes.
A level programmes – The option of Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

- All A level students can also choose to study for an individual, focussed EPQ;
  - An EPQ can easily be related to support career progression areas e.g. Medicine, Health, Architecture, Finance, Engineering, Teaching, Sport ...

  or

- Subject specific EPQ options include English, Creative Writing, History, Archaeology, Physics, MFL’s, Computing, Music Technology, Psychology, Law, Anthropology, World Development, Dance, Performing Arts/Drama, Textiles and Art.

  or

- There are ‘generic’ opportunities for completing an EPQ in any area of academic interest.

- EPQs are generally undertaken from April of Year 1 through to Autumn of Year 2.
- EPQs are half an A level and are viewed as excellent preparation for HE.
Programmes of study – Advanced Foundation

For those with more modest GCSE achievement backgrounds;

**Advanced Foundation Programme** (1 year) – includes opportunities to improve key GCSEs and add new GCSE or equivalent courses. Some students will also add a level 3 course. For many there is the ultimate aim of then progressing to A level or other ‘level 3’ options after year one study.
Programmes of study

- **Subject Information Sheets** – provide a good deal of detail about each individual A level, Applied General and GCSE subject/course.

All subject information sheets are within the Prospectus (pages 38-94) - or alternatively on an ongoing basis are available electronically from the College website via the ‘Courses’ link.
A level programme – more detail

A level programme Year 1 students choose a base of 3 A level courses (or equivalent) – and will then also choose 1 (possibly 2) other course(s). This could be:

- A 4th A level subject choice
or
- An alternative qualification based course or supplementary skills based or vocational course e.g.:
  - Core Maths (generally for students choosing any one of fourteen numerate A levels – but not choosing A level Maths or Statistics) or
  - Financial Certificate or
  - Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award or
  - Medics or
  - Pre-Teaching or
  - Coaching Sport and Physical Education or
  - Arts Mark Award (Level 3) or
  - a GCSE* or

*For strong linguists there is a choice of studying GCSE Spanish or GCSE Italian ‘from scratch’ in one academic year.

**EPQ’s will generally be started in the Spring period of Year 1 – and therefore does not need to be chosen until Spring 2021.
A level programme – more detail

▪ Or alternatively (and the likely choice for a good number of students);
  ▪ The 4th (or for some, a 5th) course choice will be an Additional Study – with a choice from approximately 70 options available.
    - More details later and full detail in the Additional Studies Handbook.

❑ All students follow the College Tutorial Programme in addition to their chosen Programme of Study/academic courses.
Additional Studies

- Available to all students. Options from approx. 70 regular Additional Studies courses including:
  - Many music, drama, dance and visual arts options and opportunities.
  - Very wide range of sports – at either competitive (with fixtures and events) or development or recreational levels – including a series of team squads.
  - Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.
  - Coaching Sport and Physical Education.
  - Medics Programme.
  - Pre-Teaching Programme.
  - Lawyers Programme.
  - Range of Journalism and Media related opportunities – including College Magazine, Storm Radio Station.
  - Financial Certificate.
  - A wide range of other interest or skills based courses e.g. Signing for the Deaf, Enterprise, Work Experience, Debating …

The Additional Studies Booklet for 2019/20, provides the full listing of the courses offered this academic year - and is posted on the College website (via the Documents section). The 2020/21 Additional Studies programme offering will be very similar. (20/21 Booklet to be distributed in June during the Induction Course).
Extra-curricular programme

As well as the range of regular Additional Studies opportunities, Extra Curricular (‘one-off’ or ‘irregular’ or ‘for a while’) options available to all students include:

- Clubs e.g. Chess, Running Club, Board Games, Conservation Group …
- Societies e.g. Friends not Foes group, Debating, Amnesty International, Colchester Citizenship Alliance.
- Productions.
- Field trips and visits.
- Expeditions – and the preparations for these.
- Vocational supplements / experiences – including for Medics, Pre-Teaching, Lawyers, Storm Record Label, Storm Radio …
- Sports – ‘Squads’ and fixtures/competitions – but also recreational sports (for fun and fitness). Sports Committee activities and events, coaching and leadership opportunities, a range of one off or more occasional sports activation activities e.g. Boxing, Clubbercise, Zumba, Cheerleading, Yoga, Indoor Cricket …
- Health education, monitoring and activities.
- Charity activities.
- Citizenship and community activities.

continued…
Extra-curricular programme

- Performing arts – including productions, events, trips and visits, workshops, Storm Record label.
- Visual and creative arts – including exhibitions, Arts and Culture Festival, trips, workshops, visiting artists.
- Media – including Storm Radio, work experience, magazine, visits and workshops.
- Law – Lawyers group, bar mock trial competition, work experience.
- Student involvement and leadership experiences – including College Council Executive Committee and the six committees, College Ambassador Programme, volunteering, active citizenship, a series of peer mentoring programmes, Library Champions.
- Charitable activities – including Russ Shop and Russ Foundation collections, Pink Day, Red Nose Day, World Mental Health Day, Christmas hampers, activities (including toilet-twinning), events (including talent shows, fashion show), Charity Committee.
The Tutorial Programme

❑ All students receive pastoral support from their Personal Tutor, seen daily in registration.

❑ Further personal development and educational enrichment activities are delivered through the Tutorial Programme, a weekly, timetable session which includes:
  ▪ Target-setting, reviewing and action planning.
  ▪ How to be a successful college student.
  ▪ College and British Values.
  ▪ Personal development, health, welfare and safeguarding.
  ▪ Work related learning and employability.
  ▪ Careers and preparation for progression.
  ▪ Social action (charity, community, volunteering and citizenship) elements.
A level programme – entry criteria

❑ 4 A levels (For students who are very able and academically motivated and well organised).

A very strong GCSE profile with most GCSE grades in the 9 to 7 range.
Students who choose to study 4 A level courses in the Autumn of Year 1 will be expected to complete all 4 courses to A level in Year 2 (with the exception of those choosing Further Maths).

All students choosing AS level Further Maths in Year 1 will also study other 3 A levels alongside this (one of which will be A level Maths). There is then the option of continuing study of Further Maths to A level in Year 2. (Decision made in the Summer at the end of the first year). Grade 8 or 9 in GCSE Maths required.

❑ 3 A levels (or equivalent):

A minimum of seven GCSE grades in the 9 to 4 range – ideally including three at grade 5 or above including at least one from GCSE English Language and Maths.
A level programme - entry criteria (continued)

❑ Each individual A level subject will have important specific entry criteria.

▪ Students wishing to study most of the A level courses in the social sciences and/or humanities area, will need to achieve at least one, and sometimes two, GCSE grade 5 or above in predominantly written based GCSE subjects (from GCSE English Language or English Literature or History or Sociology or Religious Studies). A number of these subjects will require a specific minimum grade in one of the GCSE English courses.

▪ A good number of A level subjects have a minimum grade requirement in GCSE Maths.
Advanced Foundation Programme

For students with GCSE grades in the range between four or five GCSE grades at 4 to a minimum background of two GCSE grade 4’s and four GCSE grade 3’s with a grade 4 or above achieved in at least one course from Maths, and English course, a Science course.

The important detail regarding the specific course entry criteria for each course is within in the Prospectus (curriculum section - pages 38 to 94). This information also on the website ‘Courses’ section.
Expectations of students

- Very high standards:
  - Motivation and commitment to study.
  - Co-operation.
  - Maturity.

- A young adult environment:
  - Making the most of each student’s potential.
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How does one judge the success of a post-16 institution?

- Criteria should include:
  - Levels of academic achievement/examination results including overall ‘value-added’ achievements.
  - Retention levels.
  - Wider achievements.
  - Student destinations.
  - The quality of relationships.
  - Levels of student satisfaction and contentment.
How does one judge the success of a post-16 institution?

- Parent and community perceptions.
- Former student perceptions.
- Links with the community.
- Development of skills and preparations for higher education, employment and adult life.
- External inspections and other assessments.
- Demand for places.
Academic achievement

- Students at the College achieve an excellent overall package of sixth form results (at A level or IB) well above the national average for school sixth forms and colleges. This represents high ‘value added’ when compared to GCSE results.

- A very high percentage of students at the College achieve 3 A level passes (the standard requirement for university entrance) - above the national average for school sixth forms and colleges.

- High value-added packages of results are achieved by a range of categories of students – female, male, academically ‘top-end’, students from a range of ethnic backgrounds …

- Average university entrance (UCAS) for the top 100 achievers is equivalent to A*A*A at A level.
External assessment

- The College has consistently had very strong external assessments:
  - OFSTED inspections
  - IB five Year Review

- The College was one of the first Sixth Form Colleges to be awarded Beacon status.

- The College was only the second Sixth Form College to be awarded a Queen’s Award for Higher and Further Education.
College admissions

First Priority:

- STUDENTS ATTENDING YEAR 11 IN THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS:
  - St. Benedict’s College
  - Colchester High School
  - Honywood
  - Manningtree*
  - The Gilberd*
  - Thomas, Lord Audley*
  - Philip Morant*
  - St. Helena*
  - Colchester Academy*
  - Stanway*
  - St. Mary’s

and

* Students who live in the catchment area of the asterisked (*) schools regardless of which school they have attended up to 16 years of age.
First Priority also for:

- Students attending Year 11 in any Secondary School located in the Borough of Colchester (such as Colchester County High School, CRGS, Thurstable).

and

- Students who have a permanent parental residence which is closer to the Colchester Borough boundary than the nearest other Sixth Form provider of A level.
College admissions

First Priority also for:

- Students who attend Year 11 in the following schools located outside the Colchester Borough boundary where there are good links within schools and/or where there have been traditions of high numbers of year 11 students choosing to study at the College:

- Alec Hunter
- Colne Community College
- East Bergholt High
- Hadleigh High
- Harwich & Dovercourt High
- Hedingham
- Holbrook Academy
- The Maltings Academy
- Notley High
- The Plume, Maldon
- Ramsey
- Stoke College
- Stour Valley Community School
- Tabor High
- Thomas Gainsborough
For those who are not in the ‘First Priority’ categories, for September 2020 entry, we would expect to be able to offer places to around 80% of those applicants who apply by the 31 January 2020 deadline.

Priority is given where there are:

- Strong ‘course reasons’ i.e. courses which cannot be studied more locally and where the College has places remaining.
- Where ‘course reasons’ are equal, offers of places would then be based upon distance from the College.
College admissions

- A very limited number of A level courses may not be available as a choice to applicants who are not in the first ‘Category of Admissions’ for September 2020 entry.

  Exactly which A level courses that this will apply to will not be clear until March 2020.

- Applicants from further afield are urged to carefully consider the issues of cost, availability and timetabling of transport before applying.

- It is essential that all applications for September 2020 entry are received, online, by 31 January 2020.

- Decisions and ‘Offers’ will be made and communicated by mid-March 2020.

- Substantive information regarding admissions matters, as well as more general information, can be obtained from the website: www.colchsic.ac.uk
Using Open Evenings effectively

Advice is available for both specific and general queries:

- On the Concourse (1st floor - main building):
  - Travel
  - Financial Support
  - Admissions
  - Curriculum – General advice including Extended Project Qualification
  - General Guidance
  - Careers and Higher Education Guidance
  - Learning Support
Using the Open Evenings effectively

- Prospectus collection – from the Concourse or Midsite Reception.

- Applications – the on-line facility is available on the College website and opens at 7am on Friday (25 October). Alternatively, paper Application Forms can be requested from the College Admissions Office.

- Main Refectory (Ground Floor Main Building) will open from 6.00pm to 8.30pm. Russ Shop (2nd floor main building) 6.00pm to 8pm.
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