

Are you thinking about going to a Russell Group University?

(University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, University of Birmingham, University of Bristol, Cardiff University, University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, Imperial College of London, Kings College London, University of Leeds, University of Liverpool, London School of Economics & Political Science, University of Manchester, Newcastle University, University of Nottingham, Queens University Belfast, University of Sheffield, University of Southampton, University College London, University of Warwick.)

Russell Group Website: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/our-universities/>

A Levels

If I want to apply for University, what do I need to think about when making my AS and A Level choices?

Your choice of options will be critical in determining the university courses open to you. Generally speaking, universities will expect you to be taking four AS-Levels, with 3 out of the 4 taken on to A2.

The guidance provided in relation to subject requirements will help you to make informed choices about your AS-Level and A2 subjects.

Vocational Options: Applied A-Levels, BTEC National and OCR National

I am thinking about taking an Applied A-Level (Double Award) or BTEC National Diploma: what are the issues when it comes to university application?

Let us imagine you are Year 11 and instead of considering a 4 AS-Level package you are looking at doing a 2 year course in a vocational field such as Business. You could do an Applied A-Level (Double Award) or a BTEC National or an OCR National. If you are going to be studying Business in sixth form or college you may be considering studying Business and Management at university.

Please note: Several University courses do not consider Vocational courses to be suitable.

Important points to consider:

- Some Universities consider Vocational Qualifications in certain circumstances but the circumstances do vary. It is therefore particularly important to check requirements with individual universities.
- Entrance requirements of individual universities will differ. However, as a genreak guide, applicants with these vocational qualifications wishing to study for a degree in Management at a competitive university may encounter the following entrance requirements: Applied A-Level (Double Award)-In many cases universities will accept this only when combined with other qualifications. You may be required to achieve AA in the Double Award, plus an extra A-Level.
- BTEC National Diploma – Some universities will accept this on its own, or combined with other qualifications. However you are likely to be required to achieve high grades, for example, 3 distinctions or 2 Distinctions and 1 merit.

This 5 point plan might help you make the right choice!

1. **Know what you want to study at University** – Check the course requirements by going to the university website or UCAS Course Search.
Remember: If you take a Advanced Diploma option check the Advanced Diploma course requirements available.
2. **If unsure keep your options open!**
Choose at least 2 fascilitating Subjects (Maths, English Literature, History, Geography, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Languages). These subjects are most likely required or preferred by universities for entry to degree courses so choosing them will give you more options for university entry.
3. **If wanting to apply to a competitive university GCSE Grades matter!**
Look at the UCAS Website and/or the relevant University Websites to see what course requirements they set.
4. **Have a balance**
Do your subjects reflect your ability, strengths and interests? Have you considered how your subject choices relate to university courses?
5. **Make sure you know WHY**
If you are selecting a subject that you have not studied before consider what interests you about the subject – Your thoughts should be justified.

Oxbridge

If Oxbridge is where you want to go please note that offers will be a minimum of A*AA (Oxford) or A*A*A-A*AA (Cambridge) and they are likely to require A* targets, so you should be studying subjects which you feel you are likely to achieve very highly in.

Oxford and Cambridge expect you to have a real passion for the subject you choose to study. Therefore reading material outside the curriculum, relevant work experience, attending lectures, visiting museums and exhibitions associated with the subject are essential.

Oxbridge Course Information :

- <http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/requirements/course.html>
- http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/courses/courses_and_entrance_requirements/

Examples of essential A-Levels required for specific degrees:

- Accountancy (also Banking/Finance/Insurance):
Essential Advanced Level Qualifications -
Usually none although 1 or 2 universities require Mathematics
Useful A Levels – Maths, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma) and Economics.

- Actuarial Science/Studies :
Essential A Level – Maths
Useful A Levels Further Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- Aeronautical Engineering:
Essential A Levels – Maths and Physics
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Design Technology
- Archaeology:
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Geography, History or Science subjects can be useful.
- Architecture:
Essential A Levels – Some courses say they want arts/Science mix. Some require Art.
Useful A Levels: Art, Maths, Design Technology and Physics. A portfolio may be asked for.
- Art & Design:
Essential A Levels – Art or Design Technology.
Useful A Levels – Design Technology, Art & Design. Most students will have done an Art Foundation after Year 13.
- Biochemistry:
Essential A Levels – Always Chemistry and some want Biology as well, while some say Chemistry plus one from Maths/Physics/Biology. Doing Chemistry, Biology and Maths or Physics will keep all Biochemistry courses open to you.
Useful A Levels – Biology, Maths, Further Maths, Physics.
- Biology:
Essential A Levels – Biology, Chemistry
Useful A Levels – Maths or Physics.
- Biomedical Sciences (Including Medical Science):
Essential A Levels – Normally 2 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Physics. Chemistry is essential for some courses.
Useful A Levels – Maths, Further Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics.
- Business Studies:
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- Chemical Engineering:
Essential A Levels – Chemistry, Maths and sometimes Physics.
Useful A Levels – Physics, Biology, Further Maths.
- Chemistry:

Essential A Levels – Chemistry and occasionally Maths. Most courses require Chemistry and would like Maths and 1 other Science (Biology or Physics).

- Childhood Studies:
Essential – None
Useful A Levels – CACHE, Psychology, Sociology, AGCE/National Diploma Health & Social Care.
- Computing:
Essential A Levels – Some courses, Maths
Useful A Levels – Maths, Further Maths, Computing, Physics, Philosophy, ICT.
- Dentistry:
Essential A Levels – Chemistry and Biology for most, but some require Maths or Physics as well.
Useful – Maths, Physics, Further Maths.
- English:
Essential A Levels – English Literature or combined English Language & Literature (some course accept English Language)
Useful A Levels – History, Religious Studies, a foreign language.
- Environmental Studies:
Essential A Levels – Many course will ask for 2 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths. Physics and Geography.
Useful A Levels – Another facilitating subject, particularly a science.
- European Studies:
Essential A Levels – A modern foreign language.
Useful A Levels – Another modern foreign language, English Literature, History, Politics.
- French:
Essential A Level – French
Useful A Levels – Another foreign language, English Literature, history, Politics.
- Geography:
Essential A Levels – Most degrees require Geography.
Useful A Levels – Some Geography BSc (science) degrees prefer 1 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics.
- Geology/Earth Sciences:
Essential A Levels – Usually 2 from Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology
Useful A Levels – Geography, Geology
- History
Essential A Levels – Most degrees require History

Useful A Levels – Economics, English Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Theology/Religious Studies, a modern or classical language.

- **History of Art:**
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Art, English Literature, History, Theology/religious Studies, French, German, Spanish, Italian.
- **Law:**
Essential A Levels – Usually none. Although a few universities require English.
Useful A Levels – History; other facilitating subjects (one essay/report writing subject).
- **Management Studies:**
Essential A Levels – Sometimes Maths
Useful A Levels – Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- **Materials Science (Including Biomedical Materials Science):**
Essential A Levels – Normally 2 from Chemistry, Maths, Physics, Biology (also Design Technology at some universities).
Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Design Technology, Further Maths.
- **Maths:**
Essential A Levels – Maths and sometimes Further Maths
Useful A Levels – Further Maths & Physics
- **Mechanical Engineering:**
Essential A Levels – Maths, Physics. There may be a preference for Maths with a strong mechanics component.
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Design Technology
- **Media Studies (including Communication Studies):**
Essential A Levels – A few ask for English or Media Studies
Useful A Levels – English, Media Studies, Sociology, Psychology
- **Medicine:**
Essential A Levels – If you do Chemistry, Biology and 1 from Maths or Physics you will keep the medical schools open to you. If you do Chemistry and Biology you will keep open the vast majority. If you do Chemistry and one from Maths and Physics you will limit your range of choices much more.
Useful A Levels – Further Maths or a contrasting (non-science) subject.
- **Music:**
Essential A Levels – For most traditional courses, Music and Grade VII/VIII.
Useful A Levels – Some universities have a preference for at least 1 essay based subject.
- **Nursing and Midwifery:**

Essential A Levels – Usually Biology or another Science.

Useful A Levels – Biology, CACHE, Sociology, Psychology, Chemistry.

- Occupational Therapy:
Essential A Levels – Some courses ask for Biology
Useful A Levels – Psychology, Physical Education, Sociology or another Science.
- Optometry (Ophthalmic Optics):
Essential A Levels – 2 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics (some courses prefer Biology as one of the choices).
Useful A Level – Further Maths
- Orthoptics:
Essential A Levels – Biology
Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Maths, Physics
- Pharmacy:
Essential A Levels – 2 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics (some course prefer Biology as one of the choices).
Useful A Levels – Further Maths
- Philosophy:
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Maths, Classical Civilisations, Philosophy and Religious Studies/Theology.
- Physics:
Essential A Levels – Maths, Physics.
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Chemistry
- Physiotherapy:
Essential A Levels – Most course will consider you with just Biology, however some also require a second science from Chemistry, Maths or Physics.
Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Maths, Physics, Psychology.
- Politics:
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Politics, History, Philosophy, Law, Sociology
- Psychology:
Essential A Levels – A few courses ask for one from Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics.
Useful A Levels – Biology, Maths, Psychology, Sociology
- Religious Studies/Theology:
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Religious Studies/Theology, Philosophy, English Literature, History.

- **Sociology:**
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – Sociology, Psychology, Geography
- **Spanish:**
Essential A Levels – Spanish (some degrees also consider French, German or Italian)
Useful A Levels – Another Modern Foreign language, English Literature, History, Politics.
- **Speech Therapy:**
Essential A Levels – Some degrees want a Science (Biology, Chemistry or Physics). Some specify Biology, but some degrees will consider candidates with none of these.
Useful A Levels - A Modern Foreign language, English Language (and Literature), Psychology.
- **Sports Science/Physical Education:**
Essential A Levels – Many courses want to see 1 from Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Maths (some courses will treat Physical Education as a science equivalent).
Useful Levels – Physical Education, Psychology
- **Surveying:**
Essential A Levels – None
Useful A Levels – For some types of surveying i.e. Building Surveying, Maths and Physics could be helpful. For Estate Management (General Practice Surveying) most A Level combinations will be considered.
- **Teacher Training (Primary and/or Secondary):**
Essential A Levels – Art, Biology, CACHE, Chemistry, Design Technology, Drama (Theatre Studies), *English*, French, *Geography*, German, *History*, ICT, Italian, *Maths*, Music, *Physics*, *Physical Education*, *Religious Studies (Theology)*, Spanish.
(Subjects best for Primary in italics).
Useful A Levels – Another of the subjects above.
- **Veterinary Science:**
Essential A Levels – You should do Chemistry and Biology and 1 from Maths/Physics so that you have all universities open to you.
Useful A Level – Further Maths

Please note: The majority of the information seen above has been taken from the May 2011 Russell Group report, ‘Informed Choices’.

If you have any questions regarding Russell Group Option choices please email
Mr S Metson Email: s.metson@charterschool.org.uk