



## **BNDS A-Level Departments**

### **English department**

BNDS's A-Level English department serves to equip students with skills fundamentally necessary for university study. This is primarily achieved through the required iGCSE First Language English course taken in grades 10-11, which employs a variety of fiction and nonfiction text types to develop reading ability and the art of the written response; concurrent to development of these skills are development of student facility in listening, speaking, and thinking skills, as students collaborate in pursuit of richer and more nuanced understanding of the topics under study. In grade 12, students are required to continue with English-language study, and are able to choose between three different AS-level courses based upon personal interest and suitability for their impending university major.

### **Humanities department**

The humanities department consists of psychology, art and design, business and economics. In grade 10, students can choose to take an introductory pre-A level course in these subjects (up to two) for two periods per week. Then, students take these courses up to AS and A2 level. In grade 11 any student that is struggling will undergo an active intervention which will allow them to receive peer tutoring from someone in their class. In recent years, economics has become more and more popular and our teachers have continuously helped the students reach great heights.

### **Science department**

The A Level Science department at BNDS currently offers with the possibility of studying three subjects; these being Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All three of these subjects follow the Cambridge Assessment International Examination (CAIE) A Level courses which allow students to gain an AS qualification and then a final full A Level at the end of Grade 12.

The organisation of the AS and A2 (final year of the A Level qualification) course vary slightly between the three subjects. In Chemistry and Physics the AS courses are covered in Grade 10 and 11.

Biology has a slightly different arrangement with Grade 10 students studying a pre-A Level course (based on the CAIE IGCSE Biology course) and then having the option to take the CAIE AS course in Grade 11. However, in all three subjects the students will sit exams at the end of Grade 11 that will lead to them being able to gain a CAIE AS qualification.

In Grade 12 the students can then continue their study of these subjects in order to sit exams at the end of the academic year that can allow them to gain a final full A Level qualification.

## **Mathematics department**

BNDS A-Level Programme produces outstanding Mathematicians. In Grade 10, students are introduced to an international style curriculum, based upon the IGCSE Additional Mathematics, that runs alongside their Chinese Mathematics studies. This course covers much of the content of Grade 11 and Grade 12 A-Level Mathematics but is presented in a way that is accessible but challenging to all learners. The advanced nature of this course compared to other Mathematics courses targeted at students of this age also has the added benefit of accelerating the learning of students who are successful enough to take on Further Mathematics in Grade 11 and 12.

In Grade 11, students therefore have the option of studying just Pure Mathematics 1 and Statistics 1, or also studying Further Pure Mathematics 1 and Further Statistics if they are eligible for Further Mathematics. These qualifications are completed in Grade 12 when students undertake Pure Mathematics 3 and Mechanics, with the addition of Further Pure Mathematics 2 and Further Mechanics for Further Mathematics students.

All the courses that we study have an emphasis on application and communication, and not just knowledge and understanding. Students are expected to recognize the appropriate mathematical procedures of given situations, apply combinations of mathematical skills and techniques in solving problems, and communicate their understanding in a clear and logical way. To help facilitate this, teachers of the A-Level Mathematics department employ a range of teaching techniques to provide students with a diverse array of problems, practice and activities that encourage independent progress alongside collaboration.

Although we are an outstanding department with exceptional students, we are still able to cater for the range of abilities by monitoring and supporting all students to make progress, regardless of their starting knowledge and skills. There are also various enrichment opportunities such as the UKMT Senior Mathematical Challenge, the STEP support programme, and the opportunity for some students to become 'Maths Leaders' to further influence their peers learning of mathematics within the A-Level Programme and beyond.

Included in the maths department is computer science. Students can choose an introductory course on computer science in grade 10, modelled on iGCSE computer science. Then, students can continue this course and study AS and A2 computer science in grades 11 and 12 respectively.

# **Student Support Programs**

## **Academic Excellence Programs**

### **Grade 10 - Grade 11**

3 Academic enrichment courses are provided for the top 10%-20% students of A-Level program students starting at the end of Grade 10: Critical Thinking, Critical Writing, and Mathematical Problem Solving.

The courses are designed to build and hone the skills that students need to make competitive applications to Oxbridge/top American colleges. Critical Thinking and Critical Writing develop skills essential to language intensive university courses (Law, Psychology, Eng. lit. etc). Mathematical Problem Solving aids students in building a mathematical toolkit and mathematical intuition that will be hugely beneficial for students applying for Science courses (Computer Science, Engineering, Physics etc).

### **Grade 11- Grade 12**

In the second term of Grade 11 students who have continued to show academic potential are provided with subject specific workshops or supra-curricular classes aimed at preparing them to meet the exceptions of Oxbridge applications. The purpose of these is:

- To deepen subject knowledge by exploring around the present curricula.
- To develop critical thinking skills in the context of group discussion.
- To be encourage students to be curious and proactive.
- To cultivate sophisticated and nuanced (English) communication skills.

## **Social and Emotional Learning curriculum**

In 2021 we have begun incorporating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into the curriculum of our students. These students are highly challenged academically and many will go on to the top universities and now in BNDS they will be directly taught several self-awareness skills and self-management skills that will help them adapt and thrive to any different situation. This was developed in order to serve our grade 10 students and increase their resilience.

Students are being directly taught many different aspects associated with SEL including methods of relaxation, strength identification and training how to think positively. All of these methods are based upon scientific research, primarily in the field of positive psychology and although the SEL curriculum is in its infancy we are looking forward to expanding it in the future years to support and strengthen our students for life.

## **A-Level House system**

To fulfill the BNDS Mission Statement, the A-level Programme has designed a house system focused on community, culture of belonging, and building character.

### Community

Within the house system, students develop closer relationships with students from other grades, which facilitates the help and support (both academically and emotionally) underclassmen need while providing leadership opportunities for upperclassmen. It promotes closer relationships between students and teachers, allowing for better communication and understanding. In addition, it provides opportunities to create, collaborate, and develop intellectually and socially.

### Culture of belonging

Students become an important part of something bigger than themselves, they become part of a unique family made up of peers. Their achievements and contributions to the house, programme, and school are recognized and celebrated throughout the year. In times of need, a student's house is there for support and guidance.

### Building Character

*Character* is defined by Merriam-Websters dictionary, as the complex of mental and ethical traits marking and often individualizing a person, group, or nation.

Within the house system students learn the importance of...

- maintaining high standards of study, behavior, and ethics.
- acting altruistically (without reward for the greater good) rather than out of special interests (for personal gain).
- diligence, perseverance, and courage (all of which can only be measured when you are facing something difficult).