

AS/A2 Level GENERAL STUDIES



Course Guide

Level 3 Two-year course

2010/11

You will automatically be registered on the General Studies course providing you are qualified to follow an AS/A Level programme.

Subject introduction

General Studies will give you the opportunity to investigate a wide variety of contemporary issues, which both complement and contrast with Advanced Level programmes. It covers issues relevant to the modern world – tensions in society, terrorism, religious and class differences, global warming, the power of advertising, art and architecture, controversy in science, and many others. It cuts across the arts-science divide and helps in building up knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live.

Year 1 study outline

The AS in General Studies consists of two units concerning areas of study related to a variety of themes. The themes span science and technology, politics, arts and media, business and industry, and beliefs and values.

Unit 1: Conflict

In this unit students look at a variety of issues-related conflicts in society. Can the arts change our minds, or our behaviour? Should we always do what science and technology make possible? What is the power of advertising?

Unit 2: Space

In this unit students look at a variety of issues related to the space humans inhabit. What is causing climate change and how serious a threat is it to life on earth? What is the value of space exploration? Is village life under threat?

Year 2 study outline

The full A Level is made up of the AS units plus two more units which are studied at a higher level and continue the themes of science and technology, politics, arts and media, business and industry, and beliefs and values.

SEE WHAT'S NEXT

Unit 3: Power

In this unit students look at a variety of issues related to both physical and political power. Do we need to continue to develop nuclear energy? What groups have power in our society? How do big companies wield market power?

Unit 4: Change

In this unit students look at a variety of issues concerning change in contemporary society. Is education keeping up with social and political change? Is modern art 'real art'? What should the heritage industry preserve from the past?

Methods of study

You will use a variety of study methods on this course. These will include personal research, contributions to class discussions, resource analysis and role-play. You will have to attend a weekly seminar where stimulus material, including videos, will be used to help class discussion. You will be encouraged to build up a file of course materials.

Special features

The General Studies course is designed for all students on AS/A Level programmes. The course is intended to broaden your curriculum at SEEVIC College. The course will allow students to develop their ability to present arguments.

Subject combinations and careers

As mentioned above, the course is taken by all students following an AS/A Level programme. It very much complements other AS/A Level courses. Many universities now accept General Studies, both as a main A Level and as a 'fall back' to make up UCAS points.

For students not going onto university, an awareness of current issues is useful when attending interviews for employment. Evidence shows that total A Level points is one measure used by firms in selecting new employees.

Methods of assessment

AS – 2 written exams, 1 hour 30 minutes each. Unit 1 consists of answering three structured questions. Unit 2 consists of answering three questions based on data, images and a piece of text.

A2 – 2 written exams. 2 hours each. Unit 3 consists of answering two questions based on four texts of different kinds. Unit 4 requires students to answer 2 essay questions based on text, data and prose passages.