

# BROMSGROVE

## ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAMME (BALP)

2024



## INTRODUCTION

Bromsgrove's Accelerated Learning Programme (BALP) is a one year course that takes place in the Fifth Form (Year 11) at Bromsgrove School. Bromsgrove's ALP course is an excellent foundation year for students to have the full boarding experience without committing to a longer course.

This is a popular course at Bromsgrove, and places tend to fill quickly. The cohort is made up of up to 25 pupils aged 15+ who study together as a distinct group within the Fifth Form year.

Its primary aim is to prepare students for study in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or GCE A levels.

The course is built around a core of the following subjects:

- First Language English
- Mathematics
- Science Triple Award - IGCSE (Physics, Chemistry & Biology)

Students then have a choice to study either

- History or
- Economics

All core courses lead to a separate qualification and are examined at GCSE or IGCSE level (and in the case of Economics, AS level).

The one year course also offers opportunities for students to sit exams for qualifications, where such exams exist, in their own language.

BALP students are fully integrated into all aspects of School life - they join one of our single sex boarding Houses, where they make friends with pupils from across the School.

BALP students participate in sport and ex-curricular activities as part of both their House and their Year group and are valued members of the Bromsgrove School community.



## ACADEMIC RIGOUR

The rigorous one year course aims to prepare students for study in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or GCE A levels. Many of our ALP students choose to continue their Sixth Form studies at Bromsgrove, others return to their home countries or may go to another UK boarding School.

The BALP course develops students' ability to learn independently and by enquiry, in order that they are fully prepared for Sixth Form and undergraduate study; lessons very much focus on developing skills in practical work, critical thinking, group work and communication.

The year concludes with a post examination 'super learning' programme that focuses on extra-curricular opportunities linked to the core subject areas of Maths, English and the Sciences, as well as History, Politics and wider cultural activities. Pupils will also focus on the development of academic research skills which is excellent preparation for their further studies.

## SCHOOL LIFE

BALP students are fully integrated into the School's House system and everyday School life. This includes a broad extra-curricular programme which spans sport, community service and the arts.

All BALP students enjoy being part of their House and School community and they forge strong links with their boarding houses and the staff who work in them. They attend Fifth Form year group lectures and receive the same level of Careers support and advice that the rest of the year group benefit from.

The love of House and School developed within the BALP programme is obvious from the number of pupils who choose to continue their Sixth Form studies at Bromsgrove.

## THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

The BALP course seeks to educate the whole person. Through a balanced academic curriculum, contemporary teaching, an extensive extra-curricular programme and full integration into one of Britain's leading Independent Schools, we hope to foster personal development and growth, as well as build a high level of skills and knowledge base for future study.

## THE CORE SUBJECTS

### ENGLISH

First language English teaches students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in speech and writing. Students learn to understand and respond appropriately to what they hear, read and experience. They are encouraged to enjoy and appreciate a variety of languages, which in turn complements other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application. The course is assessed through reading and writing examinations.

### MATHEMATICS

Mathematics aims to build students' confidence and skills in areas such as calculus, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and statistics. The course aims to accommodate both those who intend to study Mathematics in the Sixth Form and those who require generic Mathematics skills to complement other curriculum areas. The course is assessed through a written examination.

### SCIENCE - Biology, Chemistry & Physics

The Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses seek to bring together practical and theoretical skills. Students are encouraged to design and pursue their own ideas in class and develop their own ability to effectively question and understand their local environment. Each Science (Physics, Biology and Chemistry) is studied as a separate subject, taught by specialist teachers in the School's new state of the art laboratories. The course is worth three separate IGCSEs and is assessed through a number of written examinations.

## OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Pupils chose one of either History or Economics.

### HISTORY

The History course involves a detailed study of the establishment of Norman control under William the Conqueror, life under the Normans and the role of religion. A broad sweep of British political history is also from the Magna Carta and the development of the conflict between church and state, through to various challenges to the state during the Tudors and Stuarts, including the impact of the Civil War. Nineteenth century reform movements such as Chartism and the growth of unions are considered before the rise of the suffragette movement, ending with a study of the race relations and political protests of post war Britain.

Twentieth century American social history spans the roaring 1920s and the Great Depression to the civil rights struggles in the middle of the century. The superpower rivalry of the Cold War is studied from the emergence of the 'iron curtain' through to the Cuban missile crisis and the changes that take place until 1979. There are two examination papers on pre-twentieth century British political history and modern America, with no accompanying controlled assessment or coursework.

### ECONOMICS (AS Level)

The Economics course encourages students to develop an understanding of key economic theories and concepts that will enable them to critically evaluate issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life. Students will be encouraged to develop a critical approach to methods of enquiry and to draw on data from local, national and international sources. The course is assessed through a written examination.

### Optional language maintenance classes:

Pupils who are required to maintain another learned language whilst they are with us in the UK will be given the opportunity to do so. We offer weekly Spanish, French and Latin maintenance classes outside of the main timetable for these pupils. It is a non-examined activity and is not a compulsory part of the BALP course.



## POST EXAMINATION PROGRAMME

Following terminal examinations in the summer term, the Accelerated Learning Programme recommences focusing on both cultural and academic studies in preparation for Sixth Form study. Depending on the time available, this will include super-curricular opportunities to go on educational visits to support further studies, or intensive 'super learning days' within departments such as Science, Mathematics and English, until the School breaks up for summer.

Pupils will have the opportunity to develop important research skills through the production of a 'mini-EPQ' (Extended Project) which will promote the importance of quality research, referencing and presentation skills; lifelong skills that will serve them well regardless of their chosen direction in the Sixth Form.

Courses seek to bring together practical and theoretical skills. Students are encouraged to design and pursue their own ideas in class and develop their own ability to effectively question and understand their local environment. Each Science (Physics, Biology and Chemistry) is studied as a separate subject, taught by specialist teachers in the School's new state of the art laboratories. The course is worth three separate IGCSEs and is assessed through a number of written examinations.

## LIFE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

### SCHOOL LIFE

All BALP students take part in the full programme of extra-curricular and extension activities offered by Bromsgrove.

### THE HOUSES

Bromsgrove has four single sex boarding Houses in Senior School, and a further two co-educational Houses which are for Sixth Form only.

All boarding Houses are run by resident Houseparents together with resident Assistant Houseparents, Housemothers and a team of tutors. All pupils have a tutor within the House who acts as their advocate and advisor.

### GUARDIAN ANGELS

We have our own team of Guardian Angels who run the boarding houses during the School holidays. These rest and relaxation breaks have been of massive value over the past year when the pandemic has severely limited the ability of pupils to return home. The care of our students is always the first priority at Bromsgrove.

### SPORT, PERFORMING ARTS AND ACTIVITIES

BALP students take full advantage of Bromsgrove's extensive activities and sports programme which encourages initiative, discipline, qualities of leadership, self-motivation and an ability to work with and for others. Activities on offer include: Art, Debating, Street Dancing, Sailing, Riding, Photography, Kayaking, Taekwondo, Italian, Guitar Workshops, Film Club, Chess and Aerobics.

Bromsgrove has a reputation for strength in many sports and participation in a wide variety of team sports such as Soccer, Hockey, Netball and Athletics is encouraged and welcomed.

### TRIPS & WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

Bromsgrove staff organise weekend activities for the boarders, there are no exeat weekends so the School is always busy. Weekend trips include cinema, bowling, paint-balling, shopping trips, trips to theme parks and just about anything else the pupils fancy doing.



