

A LEVEL REFORMS - Three or Four A Levels - What's right for you?

Before the year 2000, students generally studied three A Levels over two years. In Sept 2000, the AS qualification was introduced and since then students have typically completed four AS courses in their first year at college, reducing to three A2 courses in their second year. However, recent government A Level reforms have changed what Schools and Colleges are offering. Some colleges are now only offering three A Level subjects and are not offering the AS qualification at all.

Students' interests are at the heart of everything we do at Newman, so as part of our 'student centered' approach, we are giving our students the option of studying either three or four subjects AND offering the AS qualification in the vast majority of subjects.

Deciding whether to study three or four subjects is a very important decision. Some of the factors to consider are summarised below, which may help when making this all-important decision:

ADVANTAGES OF THREE AS SUBJECTS	ADVANTAGES OF FOUR AS SUBJECTS
<p>The new A Level specifications are generally more difficult in content, so focusing your time and efforts on three subjects instead of four may improve your final grades.</p> <p>Most university offers are based on three A Level grades (e.g. AAB)</p> <p>Your timetable will include extra support sessions so that you will have more time to complete work outside of lesson time. These sessions will be led by your teachers.</p> <p>If you are quite sure you know which three subjects you want to study at A Level, you may feel a fourth is unnecessary.</p>	<p>When you receive your four AS grades, you can then make an informed choice about which three A Levels you want to continue with in your second year.</p> <p>Some Universities base offers on a total UCAS points score (e.g. 280 pts). Your fourth subject grade at AS can help to contribute to this total score.</p> <p>It is more likely you will study a subject that you did not study at GCSE, just for interest.</p> <p>By doing three, you are restricted to the same three subjects in your second year.</p>

It is worth noting that students will, in addition to studying three or four AS Levels, have the option of studying the following courses:

1. AS Level Extended Project Qualification, which is very highly regarded by Universities
2. AS Level Core Maths

All these courses are very well respected by Universities, and have the same UCAS points' value as any other AS or A Level. At enrolment in August (when you have received your GCSE results), you will make the final decision on how many you will choose and which subjects to study.