

A Level Requirements for Degrees

Some popular degrees are often open to the student with a wide range of A-levels: accountancy, anthropology, archaeology, business studies, history of art, law, management studies, media studies, philosophy, politics, psychology, religious studies, sociology, surveying and teacher training.

The information below offers general guidance and is taken from **Admissions to Higher Education: Advisers' Directory** published by the Sutton Trust and Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. You should always check university prospectuses and websites to be completely sure. Please also see the guidance that we offer in the Sixth Form Prospectus.

Accountancy (also banking/ finance/ Insurance)

Essential A-levels: None

Useful A-levels: possibly maths and economics

Note: high grades are normally more important than subject for a student who wants to gain an accountancy training contract

Actuarial science/studies

Essential A-levels: maths

Useful A-levels: further maths, economics

Aeronautical engineering

Essential A-levels: maths, physics

Useful A-levels: DT, further maths

American Studies

Essential A-levels: requirements vary but English and history are often asked for

Useful A-levels: politics

Anthropology

Essential A-levels: none

Useful A-levels: a small number of courses like a science AS level such as biology and sometimes sociology

Archaeology

Essential A-levels: None

Useful A-levels: archaeology, history, chemistry

Architectural technology

Essential A-levels: None (a small number want maths, DT or ICT)

Useful A-levels: maths, physics, DT, ICT

Architecture

Essential A-levels: for a small number of degree courses maths and/or physics and art (some say an arts/science mix)

Useful A-levels: art, DT, maths, physics

Note: a portfolio of drawings and ideas is essential

Art and design

Essential A-levels: art or design including AGCE (to give a student the portfolio to get on to an art foundation course, though

sometimes AGCE art and design applicants go straight on to a degree)

Note: most entrants on to art and design degrees will have done a one-year art foundation course after their A-levels

Biochemistry

Essential A-levels: always chemistry, and some degrees say the student must have 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 the student

Biology

Essential A-levels: biology, chemistry

Useful A-levels: maths or physics

Building (building services

engineering, building surveying, construction management)

Essential A-levels: for quite a few courses in this field maths and/or physics

Business studies

Essential A-levels: None

Useful A-levels: possibly maths and economics also business studies AGCE or A-level can confirm your interest

Note: many business studies courses can be very pedantic about applicants having GCSE maths and English language at a required grade

Chemical Engineering

Essential A-levels: chemistry and maths and sometimes physics as well

Chemistry

Essential A-levels: chemistry and usually maths or physics. Some courses like chemistry, maths and physics, while some like chemistry, maths and biology

Childhood studies and education

(Not teacher training)

Essential A-levels: none

Useful A-levels: sociology, psychology, health and social care AGCE

Classical Studies

Essential A-levels: for classics courses Latin or classical Greek, while classical studies and classical civilisations consider most subjects
Useful A-levels: modern foreign language, English literature, history

Computing

Essential A-levels: for some courses maths and for a very small number of courses further maths is preferred
Useful A-levels: maths, physics, philosophy, ICT

Dentistry

Essential A-levels: chemistry and biology would be acceptable for most courses, but a few still like chemistry, biology and maths or physics

Dietetics

Essential A-levels: chemistry, biology

Drama

Essential A-levels: some courses require English literature and for a few courses English and theatre studies
Useful A-levels: English literature, English literature and language, theatre studies

Economics

Essential A-levels: some courses require maths
Useful A-levels: maths, economics
Education (see teacher training)

Electrical/electronic engineering

Essential A-levels: maths, physics
Useful A-levels: further maths, ICT

Engineering (general)

Essential A-levels: maths, physics
Useful A-levels: further maths, ICT, DT

English

Essential A-levels: English literature or English literature and language
Useful A-levels: history, religious studies, modern foreign language
Note: some very selective courses can sometimes have an issue with English literature and language A-level

Environmental science/studies

Essential A-levels: many courses will ask for two from biology, chemistry, maths, physics and geography

European studies

Essential A-levels: a modern foreign language

French

Essential A-levels: French
Useful A-levels: another modern foreign language, English literature, history

Geography

Essential A-levels: most degrees require geography
Useful A-levels: some BSc degrees prefer one from biology, chemistry, maths or physics

Geology/earth sciences

Essential A-levels: usually two from maths, physics, chemistry and biology
Useful A-levels: geography, geology

German

Essential A-levels: German
Useful A-levels: another modern foreign language, English literature, history

History

Essential A-levels: most degrees require history
Useful A-levels: economics, English literature, philosophy, politics, sociology, theology/religious studies

History of art

Essential A-levels: none
Useful A-levels: art, English literature, history, theology/religious studies, French, German, Spanish, Italian

Italian

Essential A-levels: Italian or another language such as French, German or Spanish

Law

Essential A-levels: none
Useful A-levels: critical thinking (this will help with the law national admissions test)
Note: there really are no essential A-levels for law. Some courses will treat

law A-level neutrally; others prefer you to have not taken the subject. Maybe one choice should involve essay or report writing. It is beneficial to choose subjects that offer the student the best chance of getting high grades.

Management studies

Essential A-levels: none (LSE want maths)
Useful A-levels: possibly maths and economics

Materials science (including biomedical materials science)

Essential A-levels: normally two from chemistry, maths, physics and biology

Mathematics

Essential A-levels: maths and sometimes further maths
Useful A-levels: physics

Mechanical engineering

Essential A-levels: maths, physics
Useful A-levels: DT, further maths, ICT

Media studies (including communication studies)

Essential A-levels: a few courses ask for English or media studies
Useful A-levels: English, media studies, sociology, psychology
Note: a large proportion of people who work in the media industries have degrees in a wide range of other subjects

Medicine

Essential A-levels: if a student chooses chemistry, biology and one from maths or physics they will keep all the medical schools open to them. If they do chemistry and biology they will keep open the vast majority. If they choose chemistry and one from biology, maths and physics they will limit their range of choices much more
Useful A-levels: critical thinking (will help with Section 3 of the bio-medical admissions test). Students do not *have* to do maths

Music

Essential A-levels: for most traditional courses, music and grade VII/VIII

Nursing and midwifery

Essential A-levels: some courses ask for biology or another science

Occupational Therapy

Essential A-levels: some courses ask for biology, some will also consider psychology, physical education, sociology or another science

Optometry (ophthalmic optics)

Essential A-levels: two from biology, chemistry, maths or physics (some courses prefer biology as one of the choices)

Pharmacy

Essential A-levels: chemistry and two from biology, maths and physics keep the vast majority of courses open to students. Some courses prefer chemistry, biology and maths. Doing chemistry and biology keeps most courses open

Philosophy

Essential A-levels: none
Useful A-levels: maths, classical civilisations, philosophy, religious education/theology

Physics

Essential A-levels: maths, physics
Useful A-levels: further maths, chemistry

Physiotherapy

Essential A-levels: most courses will consider a student with just biology, however some ask for a second science from chemistry, maths or physics

Politics

Essential A-levels: none
Useful A-levels: politics, sociology, economics, history, philosophy, law

Psychology

Essential A-levels: a few courses ask for one from biology, chemistry, maths or 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 and media studies

Spanish

Essential A-levels: Spanish (some degrees will also consider French, German or Italian)

Speech Therapy

Essential A-levels: some degrees want a science such as biology, chemistry or physics. Some specify biology, but some degrees will consider candidates with none of these

Useful A-levels: a modern foreign language (i.e. French, German, Spanish, Italian), English language (and literature), psychology

Sports science/physical education

Essential A-levels: quite a few courses want to see one from biology, chemistry, maths or physics
Useful A-levels: business studies, physical education, psychology

Surveying

Essential A-levels: none
Useful A-levels: for some types of surveying, such as 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: at least one from art, biology, chemistry, design and technology, drama (theatre studies) English, French, geography, German, history, ICT, Italian, maths, music, physics, physical education, religious studies (theology), Spanish
Note: some primary teaching courses have become more flexible about health and social care AGCE. Also students must check if the universities have GCSE requirements

Veterinary Science

Essential A-levels: students should do chemistry and biology and one from maths and physics so that they can apply to all available courses