



# *ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT*

Gordon's  
Sixth Form

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## Academic Enrichment

Academic Enrichment at Gordon's School is an extensive programme of additional activities and opportunities designed to provide students with access to academically stimulating and challenging experiences. We encourage Gordon's students to develop an approach to study which gives them the will and capacity to continue learning throughout their lives.

We believe that our students deserve the very best opportunities in order to excel in their lives and to reach their full potential. We aim to deliver these opportunities and to direct our students along academically enriching pathway, encouraging them to move from being simply 'good' towards truly great!

This pathway is founded upon academic progression within the school and this, of course, forms the basis of future success. To achieve this, students need to develop and exhibit the following attributes and qualities both within and outside the classroom:

- Having a growth mind set
- Having the drive to move beyond the curriculum
- Fostering intellectual curiosity and independent study
- Having the confidence to immerse themselves in, and engage with, an academic community
- Creating lifelong learners who continually look forward

Our rationale is that the combination of disciplined hard work, adherence to these attributes and the provision of academic opportunities for students will be the catalyst for their success. Therefore, we aim to offer a vibrant range of enrichment activities, including many co-curricular trips and competitions, in order to facilitate a student's journey towards academic excellence.

## The Scholars Programme

The Scholars Programme is designed to signpost a student's journey towards becoming academically 'great'. One of our great aims is to instil a love of learning in all our students. As such, we have designed the Academic Scholars programme to extend and enrich learning both within and beyond the classroom. Our Academic Scholars are challenged and nurtured at all stages of their school career with the Programme being tailored to suit each year group. This involves active participation in school events, academic Period Seven sessions and both national and internal competitions. In addition, students on the Scholars Programme will undertake a range of activities to enhance their academic accomplishment. These include wider reading including University-level resources, attending both in-person and online lectures, completing Masterclasses and academic courses online, or hosting discussion groups with others. Students are expected to keep a record of their activities and progress on OneNote, which may also include completing Stretch and Challenge activities within the classroom.

Groups will have bi-weekly meetings with Miss Weeks, Head of Scholarship and Academic Pursuits, who closely monitors their progress. These sessions also offer an opportunity to learn critical thinking skills and encourage debate amongst Scholars.

Students who demonstrate the necessary commitment, academic ability and intellectual curiosity may receive offers to join the Programme or may seek to join through their own initiative.

## Competitions

Gordon's aims to offer students access to academic competitions throughout the year and across all subject departments. These competitions will provide an opportunity for success to all students, regardless of their key interests or specific talents. There are a wide variety of competition styles from literary and creative competitions to debating and those with a STEM focus.



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## Wider Reading

Reading is at the heart of academic excellence and, at Gordon's School, we aim to provide students with a wide and varied array of reading material to encompass all areas of interest. Each subject department provides reading lists targeted at 6th Form students, some of which includes an exam focus and some which offers topics beyond the curriculum which may be of interest to students studying their subject.

These reading lists are available on the School website within the Academic Enrichment section.

## Co-Curricular

Academic pursuits within the Co-Curricular programme are numerous at Gordon's and details of the specific activities available each term can be found in the Co-Curricular publications.

As part of the Academic Enrichment provision, students are strongly encouraged to participate in academic enrichment activities with the aim of making the identified school team – much like within sport. We currently have teams in:

- Model United Nations
- Debating
- Public Speaking
- Mock Trials

As well as these team activities, there are also other offerings such as Coding, MedVed Soc, First Aid, Arabic, Young Enterprise and many more. Our students also have the opportunity to join or create their own society. We currently have students running the Quarterly Gazette, Gordon's very own magazine, the Culture Society, Military History Society, Law Society, Fashion Society and more.

Although not compulsory, involvement in these teams and clubs provides additional opportunities to excel beyond the curriculum, engage with a broader academic community and compete against the finest minds in this country and globally. Students are encouraged to be brave and take measured risks, to be resourceful with a meticulous attention to detail and to be resolute in the face of adversity.

## Lecture Programme

Gordon's runs a wide and varied lecture programme throughout the school year. Our main lectures are known as Insight Talks, but we also run a number of academic subject-focused lectures throughout the year.

### Insight talks

An opportunity to meet and listen to experienced professionals.

In 2011 Gordon's School introduced an Insight Programme. The programme gives students, parents and staff the opportunity to meet and listen to experienced professionals and to have the opportunity to ask them challenging and engaging questions.

We have also, more recently, introduced Virtual Insight Talks which cover a range of interesting subjects and careers from a host of fascinating people and can be listened to as a Zoom Webinar or as a pre-recording. Webinars can be booked through the School Box Office or are available as recordings after the event.

### Dine and Discuss

Dine & Discuss Evenings are held once each term and will provide each Year 12 student with the opportunity to listen to a talk from a visiting speaker on a subject matter of current affairs or wider interest than students' curriculum.

Each talk will then be followed by a dinner during which we hope that interesting discussions will develop between guests seated at long tables; students will be exposed to speaking with adults previously unknown to them, as well as gaining experience on to how to conduct themselves during such an Event.

## Some of our recent talks include:

### George Nash MBE

Double Olympian, three times World Champion and a veteran of four Oxford v Cambridge Boat Races, George Nash MBE talks about his life as a rower and career as an engineer.

### Anthony Seldon

Anthony Seldon who explored “200 Years of British Prime Ministers”. Sir Anthony Seldon is former Master of Wellington College and Vice Chancellor of Buckingham University, author or editor of more than 45 books on contemporary history, politics and education. He was the co-founder and first director of the Centre for Contemporary British History, is the co-founder of Action for Happiness, is a governor of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

### Steve Tibble

Historian Steve Tibble spoke on ‘Coping with Crisis: Lessons to be Learned from the Past’. Dr Tibble, a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge and London Universities, is author of ‘The Crusader Armies’ and ‘Monarchy and Lordships in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem 1099-1291’. He is currently writing books for Yale and Cambridge Universities and is an honorary research associate at Royal Holloway.



## So, why should you engage with the Academic Enrichment at Gordon's School?

### Here's what some of our students have to say:

Getting involved with MUN has given me so many opportunities and fun events to attend – we go all over the country and even went to Athens!

**James, Y13**

“Getting involved with the MASSOLIT essay competition this year allowed me to build my research skills and explore a non-syllabus topic that really interested me, which is greatly helpful for my university applications this year.”

**Zoe, Y13**

“The Debating P7 has proved to be a highly valuable experience. We entered many competitions and debated a range of controversial topics which always brought about some interesting and entertaining arguments. This has also been extremely helpful when needing to write my personal statement”

**Sam, Y13**

**We would love to have even more students engaging with our Academic Enrichment at Gordon's and hope you will get involved if you join Gordon's School, and possibly even set up some new societies yourself!**





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