



WeST Sixth Forms
Supra Curriculum

Summer
Conference
2024



We are delighted to welcome you to the WeST Sixth Forms Supra Curriculum Summer Conference. The Supra Curriculum is an academic enrichment programme collaboratively designed across all WeST Sixth Forms.

We aim to give you, our wonderful students,

- additional opportunities to develop critical thinking;
- broader insights to help understand of the complexities of the world;
- greater confidence to challenge ideas and perspectives you are presented with;
- the 'edge' when competing against others for future study, training and jobs.

9:45-10:00am	Arrival	
10:00am – 10:15am	Welcome and setting the scene from Emma Osborn, Supra Curriculum Lead Health & Safety from Plymouth University	
10:25am – 11:15am	Seminar session 1	
Option 1	Imogen Martin	Is UCAS failing University applicants?
Option 2	Rob Ramage	Why go to space?
Option 3	Shabnam Holliday	Iran's Woman, Life, Freedom protests and how they relate to global politics
Option 4	Anne Paess	Economics and Us
Option 5	Chris Pac Soo	What is a criminologist?
11:20am – 12:10pm	Seminar session 2	
Option 1	Rebecca Harris	Marine Spatial Planning: a tool for reconciling competing demands between recreational users and conservationists
Option 2	Emma Osborn	Visions of the Future: Dystopian fiction in Literature and Film
Option 3	Nicola Lilley	Economics and the Real World
Option 4	Gustav Kuhn	The science of illusion and reality
Option 5	Elaine Murphy	Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of Rum: Debunking pirate myths and realities
12:10pm – 12:45pm	Lunch break with optional campus tours. <i>Student services also available in the lunch area</i>	
12:45am – 1:35pm	Seminar session 3	
Option 1	Tom Turner	From a United Ireland to an Agreed Ireland: The political history of Northern Ireland
Option 2	Laura Finnie & Mel Severi	Social Policy; can we really fully address misogyny in the UK?
Option 3	Ben Thomas	Finance - how it works and what impact it has on us
Option 4	Imogen Napper	'Plastic Detectives - Investigating plastic pollution from the ocean to the earth's orbit'
Option 5	Kairn Stone	Cognitive Science: How we learn
1:45—2:10	Keynote from Plymouth University - What are the benefits to a University Education	
2:15	Close	

Seminar Session Overview

Option 1:

Imogen Martin

Msc Economics

Option 2:

Rob Ramage

Lead Educator for the South
West: National Space Agency

M.A (Ed)
BSc (Hons)
BA (Hons)

Option 3:

Dr Shabnam Holliday

PhD Discourses and counter-
discourses of Iranian national
identity during Khatami's presi-
dency, University of Exeter

MA in Middle East Politics, Uni-
versity of Exeter

BA Arabic and Islamic Studies,
University of Exeter

Session 1

Is UCAS failing University applicants?

The UK is one of the only economies in Europe where students apply to, and are accepted by, universities based on predicted grades. This system of predicted grades is set by schools and teachers. In this lecture we investigate, using data from a collective of Sixth Forms across 6 years, whether using A Level mock exams are an accurate tool in predicting actual achieved grades and if this accuracy is consistent across students from different backgrounds.

Why go to space?

Space offers a vast range of new opportunities, global broadband connecting otherwise unreachable areas, climate monitoring to 3D-printing organs in space reducing transplant waiting times and the risk of rejection.

We're studying Earth right now through current and future spacecraft helping answer critical challenges facing our planet: climate change, sea level rise, freshwater resources and extreme weather events.

The Moon is a 4.5 billion year old time capsule, and with NASA's and ESA's Artemis campaign we are exploring the Moon for scientific discovery, technology advancement, and to learn how to live and work on another world as we prepare for human missions to Mars.

Iran's Woman, Life, Freedom protests and how they relate to global politics

This talk looks at the protests in Iran that were sparked by the killing in custody of the Kurdish-Iranian woman, Jina Mahsa Amini. She had been arrested for what the Islamic Republic of Iran (government) considers 'improper hejab'. The talk will explore why Gen Z took to the streets and used social media. It will also explore how this relates to global politics and global issues.

Economics and Us:

What makes us happy? What drives us? How we think? And other questions economists ponder.

This interactive session will provide an introduction to Economics as a discipline. We will look at some topics from economics of happiness and behavioural economics: (i) how we define and measure happiness, (ii) what motivates us, (iii) how we make decisions. We will also briefly look at economics as a career: (i) what are the different subdisciplines of economics, (ii) how to choose an economics course, (iii) what are some of the jobs economists do. (Attendees are encouraged to bring along a smartphone for interactive activities.)

What is a criminologist?:

Criminologists feature a many TV programmes and films. But what exactly do criminologists do? This talk discusses how the work of criminologists is much more varied and unusual than we might initially imagine.



Option 4:

Dr Anne Paess

PhD Economics, Swansea University

MSc Economics, University of Manchester

BA Economic and Social Studies, University of Manchester

Option 5:

Dr Chris Pac Soo

PhD Criminology, Cardiff University

MSc Social Science Research Methods, Cardiff University

MA Criminology, University of Essex

BA Criminology, University of Wales – Bangor

Session 2

Option 1: **Rebecca Harris**

Marine Spatial Planning: a tool for reconciling competing demands between recreational users and conservationists :

This research focuses on marine planning policy in the South West of England. This lecture examines UK, EU and International marine and environmental policy. To establish if the currently marine planning framework is effective in meeting the demands of recreational users and conservationists. This study began with field work to ascertain thoughts and opinions from enforcement organisations, recreational users and environmental organisations.

Option 2: **Emma Osborn**

BA English Literature and
Drama/Film, Bristol University

Visions of the Future: Dystopian fiction in Literature and Film :

Writers and film makers throughout history have imagined versions of the future. Their visions both reflect and inform the societies they lived in and ultimately the world we live in today. Arguably one of the most important literary genres, dystopian and utopian fiction shapes our thoughts and how we think about the world. This lecture will introduce some key concepts and take you on a whistle stop tour through the history of dystopian fiction from 18th century to modern Sci-Fi and Solarpunk.

Option 3: **Nicola Lilley**

Economics and the Real World:

Have you ever listened to the news and thought you would like to fully understand how the economy works? Have you ever wondered why big business makes the decisions it does to merge and form even bigger companies? There is no mystery in the decisions made by the government, or by the suits in the city. It is all simply Economics. Listen in to find out how in two years you can learn to appreciate how money makes the world go round and speak confidently about political and economic affairs of the day.

The science of illusion and reality

We live in a world in which the boundaries between illusions and reality have become more blurred than ever. How do we distinguish between illusions and reality? Advances in psychology and neuroscience have revealed that our conscious experience is a compelling illusion that we typically mistake for reality. In this talk we will use the art of magic to explore the nature of this illusory reality. Magicians are true masters of deception and they have mastered the art of creating illusory experiences that are indistinguishable from reality. In the MAGIC-lab we study the psychological mechanisms that underpin such illusions, and this research has provided new insights into the ease by which our minds can be deceived. We will examine how magicians use misdirection to manipulate what you see and explore why our minds are so easily deceived. We will also look at different mind control techniques and examine why we are prone to this form of manipulation. We will question the notion of reality and explore the implications that this has on the decisions that you make.

Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of Rum: Debunking pirate myths and realities :

In this talk Dr Elaine Murphy will examine some of the most common myths and stereotypes associated with historical pirates. She will explore where our ideas about pirates in the past come from and what the realities of pirate life were. This talk will examine well known pirates such as Edward Teach (Blackbeard), John Rackam, Bartholomew Roberts, Anne Bonny and Mary Read as well as many lesser known pirates especially those from the south west and Plymouth.



Option 4:

Dr Gustav Kuhn

Postdoctoral Research Associate,
Durham University

DPhil in Psychology, Sussex University

BSc in Psychology, Sussex University

Option 5:

Dr Elaine Murphy

PhD Trinity College Dublin

M. Litt University College Dublin

BA History and Archaeology,
University College Dublin

Seminar Session Overview

Session 3

Option 1:

Tom Turner

MA History, Plymouth University

BA History, Plymouth University

“From a United Ireland to an Agreed Ireland”: The political history of Northern Ireland:

Ireland has had a complicated history with Great Britain. The political situation in Ireland has been consistently changing and in 1922, the state of Northern Ireland was formed. The political history of Northern Ireland is one of complex ideologies, religion and overall, the right to exist as a nation and people. This lecture will take you through the foundations of Northern Irish politics and the troubles of trying to define what Northern Ireland is as a state.

From the partition of 1922 to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 and beyond to the present stalemate in Stormont, I aim to give you a brief overview of why and how historians and politicians moved away from the fight for a United Ireland to the consolidation of an Agreed one.

Option 2:

Laura Finnie

Mel Severi

Social Policy; can we really fully address misogyny in the UK?:

Option 3:

Ben Thorne

BA Accounting and Finance,
University of Plymouth

FCA (ICAEW)

DChA (Diploma in Charity
Accounting)

Finance - how it works and what impact it has on us

'Plastic Detectives - Investigating plastic pollution from the ocean to the earth's orbit'

Dr. Imogen Napper is a Marine Scientist and National Geographic Explorer. Growing up in a seaside town in the UK, she began noticing the growing amount of plastic contamination on beaches where she lived. Imogen was driven by curiosity to understand why this was happening and was eager to be part of the solution. Now, being described as a 'Plastic Detective', her research investigates the different sources of plastic pollution in the environment and her talk will focus on her research journey.

Cognitive Science: How we learn:

Understanding how we learn and the mental processes that we go through when we are learning are key to helping us become successful lifelong learners. This brain is a powerful tool and understanding how it is wired and the role of memory and how it works is essential to all learning. This session will focus on how learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge and understanding and how we need to hard wire our brain for learning. As we are bombarded daily with multiple distractions, how can we create a perfect environment so that our brain does not become overloaded with technology?

Feeling really tired after a spell on tik tok? Does your energy feel zapped?

Do you find yourself reaching for your phone to start scrolling without realising it?

Do you reach for your phone to fill every available gap?

If we understand how our brain operates, how we learn, the impact of technology on our brain we can begin to make informed decisions to be successful lifelong learners.



Option 4:

Dr Imogen Napper

PhD Marine Science, Sources of Plastic into the Marine Environment

MSc Biotechnology, University of Lincoln

BSc Biomedical Science, University of Lincoln

Option 5:

Kairn Stone



Option choices must be made by Thursday, 23rd May at 11am by completing the Microsoft Form. Use the link or scan the QR code below to make your choices:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Eeab6d6U88>



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