The Museum of the History of Science has a unique collection of historic scientific instruments and apparatus covering areas such as astronomy, time-keeping, electricity, optics, medicine, chemistry, radio communication and mathematical instruments. Famous curiosities include Einstein’s blackboard, the Wizard Earl’s armillary sphere, and John Dee’s holy table.

The Museum also houses an unusual collection of early Islamic instruments and the largest collection in the world of astrolabes, an early astronomical calculating instrument of extraordinary beauty and ingenuity.

With its world-class collection and magical atmosphere, the Museum provides a fascinating environment in which to explore an understanding of science in a wider cultural context tracing links between past and present.

The Museum is centrally located in the heart of Oxford, and occupies an historic seventeenth-century building which was the original home of the Ashmolean Museum. It is one of the several museums and collections belonging to the University of Oxford and has links with the Faculty of History and science departments within the university.

For more information
www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/education

Museum of the History of Science
Broad Street,
Oxford
OX1 3AZ

SECONDARY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

AT THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

The Museum’s education programme offers a range of taught sessions across the curriculum and at every key stage. These sessions focus on learning through real objects and are delivered by experienced educators. They are adaptable for all abilities and special needs. They can readily be coordinated with sessions offered at the other university museums and collections, and at university departments such as those in the Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

BOOKINGS, SESSION TIMES AND NUMBERS

All sessions are free of charge but must be booked in advance.

Booking times are flexible and sessions can take place outside normal museum opening hours. Individual sessions cater for group sizes of 20-30 and usually last about an hour to an hour and a half. Larger numbers can be accommodated within coordinated cross-museum programmes.

The Museum is normally open to the public from 12 – 5pm Tuesday to Friday, 10am-5pm on Saturday, and 2-5pm on Sunday. Pre-booked parties may visit at other times by arrangement.

To make a booking, please contact the education officer:
Email: christopher.parkin@mhs.ox.ac.uk
Tel: 01865 277297

LUNCH

We have no regular lunch facilities at the Museum. In fine weather, lunch can be eaten in the University Parks which is a short walk away. No eating or drinking is allowed in the Museum. Please see website for advice about alternative venues.

PARKING AND COACHES

The Museum is unable to provide parking facilities for visiting school groups. Coaches are usually able to drop-off and pick-up in Broad Street or in nearby Parks Road. There is a coach park 20 minutes walk from the Museum on Oxpens Road. The car park in Worcester Street also has spaces for minibuses.

DONATIONS

In keeping with all the Oxford University Museums and Collections, schools’ sessions are free of charge. However, we welcome any donations (e.g. £50) towards the cost of materials and resources.

For more information visit
www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/education
Museum of the History of Science, Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3AZ.
Penicillin the Wonder Drug
Key Stage 4
This session looks at the early history of microscopy, exploring ideas about how science works. Students use an original edition of Robert Hooke’s fabulously illustrated Micrographia. Micrographs (1665) focus on the early Royal Society and ask students to investigate ideas about scientific observation.
Link with session at the University of Oxford.

Ancient Greek Mathematics
Key Stage 3
In this session students explore the mathematics of ancient Greece, concentrating on the geometry of Pythagoras. Students work on proofs and constructions, and learn about the development of mathematics in the ancient world.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Cross-Curricular Programmes across the University Collections
These sessions offer students from a whole range of subjects the opportunity to explore the University’s collections, learning from objects.
A balanced programme of practical activities, object handling sessions and self-guided trails is provided. Students visit 3 of the University Collections during the day.
The Collections participating in this programme are the Ashmolean Museum, the Museum of Natural History, The Botanic Garden, The Pitt Rivers Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art. All the museums and collections are within easy walking distance of each other.

RENAISSANCE BOOKS
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Symmetry in Islamic Design
Key Stage 3
In this session students study the varieties of pattern and their uses in Islamic culture, and use collage techniques to construct a design based on symmetry and geometric design.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Imagined Journeys
In this session students explore the extensive collection of astrolabes and navigational instruments in the Museum’s collection, and start to create their own imaginary travel journal using design patterns and instruments as a starting point.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Inventions
Key Stage 3
This is a day in which students discover the science behind landmark inventions in the history of science through a series of intensive sessions based on objects in the Museum’s collections. Students relate their discoveries to modern technology.

Astronomy Days
Adaptable for Key Stage 3 or 4
Link with the Physics Department
This is a day of rotating workshop sessions in which students discover the story of Galileo and the early telescope, explore astronomical instruments in the Museum’s collection, learn about observing the universe, and visit the Winton Reflecting Telescope at the university’s Physics department, or take part in the Citizen Science Project ‘Galaxy Zoo’.

Key Stage 3
In this hands-on workshop students discover the story of Galileo’s telescope and how he used his observations to challenge Aristotelian theories of the time. Students will also recreate a 17th-century astronomical experiment and learn about the relationship between theory and observation in early modern science.
Link with session at the University of Oxford.

Imagined Journeys
Key Stage 3
In this session students explore the extensive collection of astrolabes and navigational instruments in the Museum’s collection, and start to create their own imaginary travel journal using design patterns and instruments as a starting point.
Link with the Ashmolean.

The Secret Knowledge: The Art and Science of Perspective
Adaptable for Key Stages 3 or 4 and above.
In this session students discover the story of the invention of linear perspective during the Renaissance through optical demonstrations, and experiment with model cameras to make perspective drawings around the Sheldonian Theatre.

Science, maths and history
Key Stage 3
This programme includes linked back-to-back sessions at the Museum of the History of Science and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History aimed at Years 7, 8 and 9. Please see separate leaflet for more information.

Coordinated Science Programme
Key Stage 3
This programme is designed to support triple science courses. It includes coordinated sessions at the Museum of the History of Science and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. These allow students to explore objects and relate them to how science works and science in the modern world.

50602
Science, Maths, History and RE
Trade and Exploration
Key Stage 3
Geography, History, Science, Maths and Business

Science
Key Stage 4
This session explores the story of penicillin and its discovery by Alexander Fleming. Students have the opportunity to analyse the complex societal factors which influence scientific research and development.
Link with session at the University of Oxford.

Mathematics
Key Stage 3
Students explore the history of geometry, and the role of geometric techniques to construct a design based on symmetry and geometric design.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Science
Key Stage 4
This programme is designed to support triple science courses. It includes coordinated sessions at the Museum of the History of Science and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. These allow students to explore objects and relate them to how science works and science in the modern world.

Mathematics
Key Stage 4
Students explore the history of geometry, and the role of geometric techniques to construct a design based on symmetry and geometric design.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Science
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Mathematics
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Science
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Mathematics
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.

Mathematics
Key Stage 5
This is a discussion-led session with access to a range of early books and printed material from the Museum’s library. It explores the impact of printing in the 16th- and 17th-centuries drawing on examples from natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy and early encyclopedias.
Link with the Ashmolean.