



Year 8 Options 2022





Introduction

Dear Year 8 student

You are now at the exciting stage of choosing which subjects you want to study during Key Stage 4. Options assemblies, SPHERE lessons and form time will provide you with advice and guidance on the content of all subjects available for selection. You will need to think carefully about this process and ask plenty of relevant questions which will enable you to select the best subject choices. Do not panic, you have lots of time for this, the deadline for making your choices is **March 30th**.

Wednesday 2nd March	Options process information released to parents and students at Tutor evening.
Wednesday 9th March	<u>Options Subject Evening</u> – come and find out about subjects you are interested in by talking to the teachers
2nd-30th March	Discussions between form tutors and their Year 8 students about interests, progress and potential options choices. All tutors must countersign students' final options choices. SPHERE lessons during this period will focus on options choices.
Wednesday 30th March	Options deadline. All forms must have been returned to tutors.
Summer Term	Options confirmation communicated to students.

It is important that you discuss your potential options with people you know well and who can help you make an informed choice. Clearly your parents or carers will be important in this process, however, other useful people include your form tutor; individual subject teachers and subject leaders; and Mrs S Miles, our Careers Leader.

When you are making your choices please consider the following:

- choose subjects you enjoy
- consider the benefits of a broad and balanced course selection
- read the subject booklet, ask questions where needed
- don't choose a course because your friends have or because you like the teacher

Please look carefully through the pages of this booklet, and talk to the subject teachers about the subjects that you have an interest in.

Mr K Lister - Deputy Headteacher

Mr P Stacey – Assistant Headteacher

Mr A Dionisi - Progress Leader Year 8

Why take Options in Year 8?

Why Choose Options in Year 8?

Year 9 provides the bridge into GCSE where we can establish a strong connection between the curriculum in the lower years and GCSE syllabus. Our intent is to link the knowledge, confidence and skills gained in year 7-8 with GCSE choices. Year 9 balances continuity with change. Prior learning from KS3 is interleaved with new subject knowledge across a very broad and balanced range of GCSE and non-GCSE options.

It has been shown that:

- students who have a longer lead time before an examination are more likely to achieve better results. Most subjects have terminal examinations – this means they are tested at the end of the course in Year 11
- a longer key stage gives time for students to adapt and familiarise themselves with the pressures of multiple examinations at the end of Year 11
- ongoing Mock Examinations in these three years will allow students to practice and develop their technique and confidence prior to final examinations in summer 2025.

The Process for 2022

For 2022 we are asking Year 8 to select 6 subject options to learn in Year 9. This allows them to experience further learning in a wide range of subjects before narrowing down further in a second round of options at the end of Year 9.

Towards the end of Year 9 we will ask students to reflect on and rank their option subjects in order of preference and we will then allocate groups for Year 10 and 11 to continue subjects based on these preferences. There will no opportunity to start a new subject in Year 10, the second round of options is only choosing from those already studied in Year 9.

Making option choices is a commitment to six subjects, which then becomes four subjects for the next **three** years. Changing courses during Years 9 to 11 beyond the options process is usually impossible, and students are expected to complete all courses that they carry into Year 10. Therefore, prior discussion advice and guidance with parents and teachers should be taken before choices are made.

Physical Education/Sports Science

For Year 9 we expect all students to study sports science theory in addition to their core practical PE. As part of the options process at the end of Year 9 this subject is added into the options pot so students can express a preference to continue with this to a formal qualification in Year 11 (either GCSE PR or OCR National Sports Science/Sports Studies), or they can indicate that they would prefer to retain one of their other options instead. (Regardless of this preference all students continue with practical PE throughout Year 10 and 11)

We offer a very broad curriculum choice

To do this, ***we cannot completely guarantee all option preferences will be met in full for all students.*** This year with more options to choose from there is a higher chance that you can select the subjects and combinations you want, but we cannot possibly foresee every potential combination and preference. Students and parents/carers must be aware that any one option subject will absorb 6% of their curriculum time during Year 9, rising to 8% in Years 10 and 11. Conversely, all other subjects cover 94 to 92% of the timetable. Therefore, although your option choices are important to us, we cannot guarantee all choices will be met for all students. As such we also ask for two reserve course choices. Occasionally, a student will be required to accept one of their reserve choices which we hope they will understand in this context. ***Please consider your reserve choices very carefully and remember to include them on your form.***

The GCSE Exam Structure

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- All GCSE examinations will be taken at the end of Year 11 in Summer 2025.
- Coursework or Controlled Assessment is expected in Technical Awards (e.g. BTEC or OCR qualifications), Geography, Design and Technology, Art and Photography. Moderated practical assessments will be required in subjects such as PE and Drama.
- GCSE subjects will all receive a grade structure ranging from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade available. Technical awards have other grade structures, usually ranked as Pass, Merit or Distinction.
- Both English Language and Literature will be taught as part of the compulsory core GCSEs alongside Maths and Combined Science.
- Up to three non GCSE equivalent qualifications, known collectively as Technical Awards, will be recognised by the Government – these are as rigorous as a GCSE subject and will have examinations as well as offering some practical and technical elements. In our subject offer, Technical Awards are likely to be available in Architecture, Dance, Hospitality and Catering, Health and Social Care, iMedia and some areas of Sports Science.

General Guidance

In addition to the examined core subjects, all students must participate in the non-examined SPHERE course outlined below. This is in line with Government guidelines and consequently students are not able to 'opt out' of these lessons. This non-examined subject is aimed at providing students with a basic grounding in personal health, ethics and society. These are all important 'employability skills' for students.

SPHERE – Social, Personal, Health and Religious Education

All students will participate in SPHERE over the next three years. The aim of the course is primarily concerned with helping students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for the transition from school into the adult world. Great emphasis is given to the careers aspects of the course and the development of each student's readiness for the next step in their education, employment and training beyond sixteen.

Other aspects include an understanding of personal health, relationship education, citizenship and economic well-being as well as exploration of the primary religious characteristics and diversity and values of the United Kingdom. This course is not examined but is intended to develop rounded the individuals and support students as they move to adulthood.

Career Education Guidance:

Our nationally recognised career information and guidance is integrated into the curriculum in a number of ways. In particular, during the school year students will receive impartial career information through their SPHERE lessons. There will also be times when extra-curricular support is provided for specific courses, often through visiting professionals, and regular assembly slots.

How to make your course choices

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Compulsory Core Examination Subjects for Year 9:

These courses are set for all students:

English Language

English Literature

Combined Science

Mathematics

PE/Sports Science

They are not included in the options forms as these are required subjects. If you are encouraged by your science teacher to choose the three separate sciences these will replace combined science in your compulsory courses and also count as one of your six options choices.

English Baccalaureate

The English Baccalaureate

You may have heard mention of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) by the Government or media. The EBacc is not a qualification, but a grouping of highly valued, facilitating academic subjects that are recognised by the Government as giving a broad and balanced education.

The EBacc measure requires students to gain a strong pass in the existing 'core subjects' of English, Maths and Science, plus:

One Humanities subject (Geography or History)

and

One Language (French or Spanish)

The EBacc offers a subject combination which can open doors and opportunities for students beyond GCSE. In a rapidly changing world, the EBacc gives the flexible skills necessary to thrive in professional life and the Government encourages this route to a broad and balanced education.

All students are allowed to choose to study EBacc subjects, however if we believe it is particularly in your interest for your future, your Progress Leader may specifically guide you towards choosing subjects that cover the EBacc. This is intended to maximise your choices for careers and further courses beyond Year 11.

Options Form - How to Complete

Options Form - How to Complete it

The core subjects of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Combined Science and PE are all pre-selected for you, therefore you do not need to write them on your application form.

Select one subject from each of the six option blocks (A to F). Clearly identify your choice in the area provided.

Underneath each of your six subject choices, indicate clearly which is your **first, second, third, fourth, fifth** and **sixth** rank order preference. In the event of an option subject being unavailable, this information will allow us to consider carefully any changes that we may need to make on your behalf.

Indicate clearly **two** further reserve choices in the event that we are unable to meet all of your first choice options.

Not all subject combinations are possible due to the constraints of timetabling. Please check your choices and reserves carefully before submitting your form.

Changing Option Choices: Students are not expected to change their option choices once they have been agreed. In certain exceptional cases changes can be made, but these will be done in consultation with staff and parents and cannot occur after the first few weeks of the Autumn Term. It is therefore very important that you consider both your first choice options and your reserve choices very carefully.

In order to offer a breadth of curriculum to all students, there may be a need to compromise and prioritise choices in some areas. Your choices will be reviewed by senior staff and you may be asked to change in light of our broad and balanced curriculum principles. Please make careful choices and be aware of your reserve choices.

Subjects that need extra guidance

Some courses are particularly suited to certain students. If you are considering **Separate Sciences** or **Computer Science** it is essential that you have discussions with the relevant subject teachers and/or Mr Dionisi before applying for these to make sure that you maximise your chances of success at GCSE.

Option Blocks

Now select from the option blocks and row groupings below. These blocks represent how the lessons are timetabled to avoid clashes. You must select **one option from each block**.

In order to maintain and encourage breadth of study we expect students to select at least one subject from each row grouping of subject type (see guidance on the right of each row). You can select more than one in each row

Please return to your form tutor by 30th March

Options Form

	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	
Humanities Row	History	History	History	History	History	History	Must choose at least one from this row
	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography	
Creative Row	Art	Art	Photography	Photography	Dance	Music	Must choose at least one from this row
	Drama	Drama	Art	Drama	Photography		
		Photography	Dance		Art		
Design, Technical, Media & Business & Food Row	Resistant Materials*	Hospitality and Catering	Hospitality and Catering	Hospitality and Catering	Architecture	Architecture	Must choose at least one from this row. * Note: Textiles and Resistant Materials CANNOT be chosen together.
	Textiles*	Resistant Materials*	iMedia	Textiles*	iMedia	Computer Science **	
	Architecture	Business Studies		iMedia	Business Studies	Media Studies	
		Media Studies		Business Studies			
Social & Languages Row	Sociology	Citizenship	Health & Social Care	Health & Social Care	Sociology	Sociology	Must choose at least one from this row
	French	French	Sociology	Citizenship	Citizenship		
	Spanish		French	French	French		
			Spanish	Spanish	Spanish		
Separate Sciences			Separate Sciences **			Separate Sciences **	Optional choice of one of these in this row (discuss with Science teacher)

** Before selecting these subjects please make sure that you have discussed your suitability for the course with the subject staff or Mr Dionisi – failure to do this may result in you being placed in an alternative option.

	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	
First choice subject							Must have one subject in each column
Subject rank (1=first priority, 6=lowest priority)							Complete numbers 1-6
Reserve subject							Two subjects from any block

Student Name..... Tutor Group.....

Parent/Carer Signature..... Tutor Signature



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