



Year 9 Options January 2026

For Key Stage 4 2026 - 2028



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Year 9 Options



Compulsory Subjects

Subject	Qualification
English Language and Literature	GCSE (2 certificates)
Science (Trilogy or Separate)	GCSE (2 or 3 certificates)
Mathematics	GCSE (1 certificate)
Physical Education	None

Compulsory subjects account for just over 3/5th of the curriculum (16 lessons)

The remaining 9 lessons are for Option Subjects

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E-Bacc or not?

Year 9 Options



The E-Bacc (English Baccalaureate) is a recognition of a good pass at GCSE, which means gaining a grade 5 or higher in the following subjects:

- English (Language and Literature) (Compulsory)
- Mathematics (Compulsory)
- Science (Trilogy or Separate) (Compulsory)
- A Language (Spanish), History or Geography (or Computer Science)

What does it mean? *Respect, Honesty, Kindness*
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- It is not an “extra” qualification, just a recognition of grade “5” or better in all those subjects – however students need to study one as an option)
- No local Further Education colleges or 6th forms require it for entry to their courses
- No Higher Education universities state it in their entry requirements (see Russell Group “Informed Choices” document)

Our advice therefore is to pick the subjects which give you the best chance of the best grades



Year 9 Options

The Russell Group

This is the following group of Universities

University of Birmingham	University of Bristol	University of Cambridge	Cardiff University	Durham University
University of Edinburgh	University of Exeter	University of Glasgow	Imperial College London	King's College London
University of Leeds	University of Liverpool	London School of Economics & Political Science	University of Manchester	Newcastle University
University of Nottingham	University of Oxford	Queen Mary, University of London	Queen's University Belfast	University of Sheffield
University of Southampton	University College London	University of Warwick	University of York	

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Year 9 Options



What can students choose?

You must pick one of the following...

- Computer Science
- Geography
- History
- Spanish





Year 9 Options

What can students choose?



You then pick two other option choices from the following subjects...

Art: Art and Design

Business Studies

Drama

Geography

Music

Spanish

Art: Textiles

Computer Science

Food and Nutrition

History

Religious Education

Physical Education (GCSE PE or Vocational Sports Studies)

Vocational Engineering Manufacture or Construction

- Vocational subjects are good choices for some, but not all students and this will be discussed with your child.
- At the beginning of Year 10 students will start their studies in science. Throughout the course their progress is carefully monitored to ensure they are gaining the necessary disciplinary and procedural knowledge. This data is then used to determine whether students are entered for the Trilogy Science or Separate Science GCSEs.



Year 9 Options



Ineligible Combinations

- Art and Design and Textiles cannot be chosen together.
- If you opt for PE, the PE faculty will make the decision as to whether you are best suited for GCSE PE or Vocational Cambridge National Sport Studies
- If you opt for Vocational Engineering Manufacture or Construction the Technology faculty will make the decision as to whether you are best suited for Engineering Manufacture or Construction



Grade 9 to Grade 1 GCSEs and Vocational Grades

As a guide the numbers are broadly equal to the old grades shown below:

‘Standard’ GCSE Pass

↓

‘Strong’ GCSE Pass

New Numbers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Old Grades	G/F-	F/E	E+/D	C	C+/B-	B/B+	A	A*	A**

This system affects all GCSE subjects.

There are, however, vocational subjects which are graded differently:

‘Standard’ GCSE Pass

↓

‘Strong’ GCSE Pass

Grade	Level 1			Level 2			
	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Distinction*
GCSE Equivalent	1.25	2	3	4	5.5	7	8.5



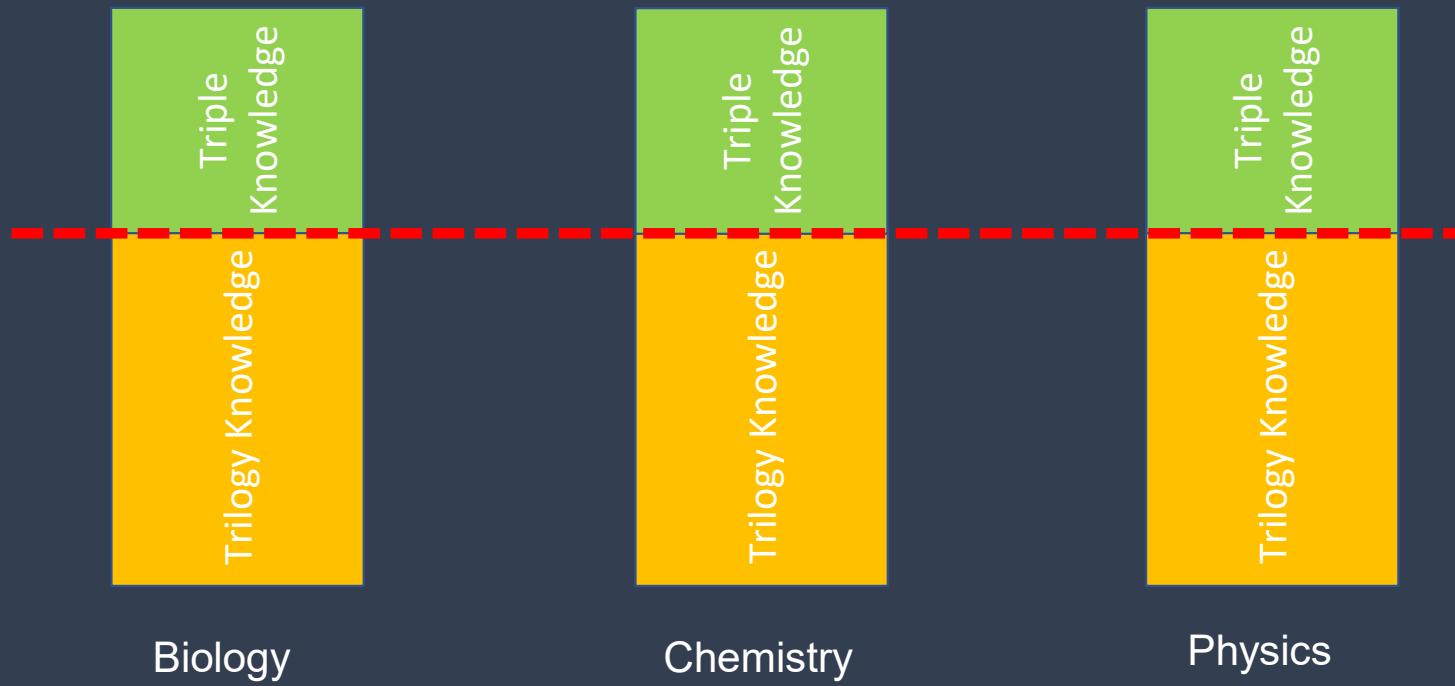
Science: Trilogy vs Separate



- Separate Sciences (Triple)
- Trilogy Award Science (Double)

}

Both courses include the study of Biology, Physics and Chemistry





Advice for Students



- 1. Choose subjects they are likely to do best in.** Use the information from reports and the feedback from teachers as guidance
- 2. Don't make a choice just because they like the teacher.** That teacher may well not be taking the group students end up in
- 3. Be realistic** about strengths and weaknesses and accept advice about the type of courses on offer.
- 4. Complete research** by reading the options booklet thoroughly and talking to teachers
- 5. Above all don't choose a subject because friends are doing it!** There is no guarantee they will end up in the same class!



Guidance



We will guide students to courses which we know will offer the very best chances of achieving the best grades.

Vocational options offer the best progression routes for some students. However, they are less suitable for others.

The options interview, if required, will be an opportunity to discuss the best combination of subjects for your child to get the best possible outcomes.



Making informed choices based on KS3 performance



Gained a SATS score of 110+ in Y6

Gained a SATS score of 100-109 in Y6

Gained a SATS score below 100 in Y6

Descriptor (Above)

Descriptor (Expected)

Descriptor (Towards)

Descriptor (Above)

Descriptor (Expected)

Descriptor (Towards)

Descriptor (Above)

Descriptor (Expected)

Descriptor (Towards)

Access to GCSE grades 7, 8, 9

Access to GCSE grades 4, 5, 6+

Access to GCSE grades 1, 2, 3+

Our KS3 curriculum is not capped. Once a student masters a skill, they consolidate it and move on to another. If a student works hard, they can make faster progress and improve their chances of a better GCSE grade.

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Options Form

- Students need to make three choices from the subject list.
- Any two choices can be made from Box A and one choice from Box B (please bear in mind the combinations that cannot be chosen from earlier in this presentation)
- Deadline is Friday 6th February 2026

Box A - Choose any 2		Box B - Choose 1
GCSE Choices ¹		Vocational Choices ² :
Art: Art & Design	History ³	Level 1/2 Engineering Manufacture or Construction ⁶
Art: Textiles	Music	Computer Science
Business Studies	Religious Education	Geography ³
Computer Science	Spanish ⁴	History ³
Drama	Physical Education ⁵	Spanish ⁴
Food and Nutrition		
Geography ³		

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Options Interviews

- Students can have an option interview with their parent(s) and a member of the Senior Team if they want to.
- These will be available on Wednesday 28th January 4.30pm – 6.30pm and Wednesday 4th February 4.30 - 6.30 pm
- Appointments can be made via Arbor – this will go live on Friday 23rd January please select **one** slot with **one** member of the SLT team only.
- The deadline for completion and return of the options form is Friday 6th February 2026



Support



Guidance from staff during Parents' Evening

Options interviews

School Website:

- Option booklet
- Russell Group "Informed Choices"
- BBC Bitesize Option Support
- Subject Choices at Year 10 link from the Government of Northern Ireland
- Useful links to Careers websites
- This presentation



Year 9 Options

Welcome to our Year 9 Options support page.

Year 9 have come to an important point in their education as they now must make their choices about which subjects to study during their final two years of High School in Key Stage 4.

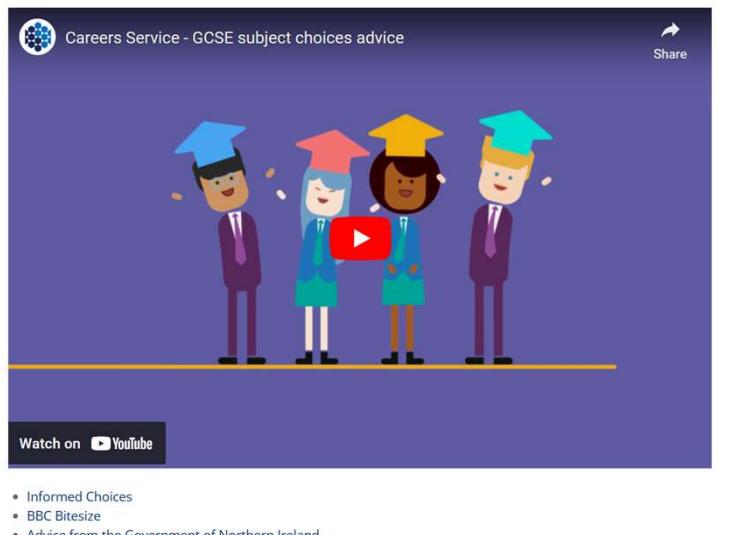
Options Booklet 23

Contact Us

Please use the following email address for any questions regarding the options process or to inform us that you require an options interview: year9options@hhhs.net

Supporting Materials

Careers Service GCSE Subject Choice Advice:



Support: Hawley Website

Includes:

- This presentation
- A pdf version of the options booklet
- Options form
- Careers Service subject choice advice
- Links to other useful websites

School website: School Life > Year 9 Options

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Support: Informed Choices



- Useful as it will help you make you option choices if you know what you want to do in the future

- Allows you to choose which A Level course you are interested in
- Points you towards degrees that your A Level choices could lead to and Universities that offer these

www.informedchoices.ac.uk



Attendance Matters

Research shows that attendance at school has a significant impact on students' chances of achieving five good GCSE Grades:

If attendance is 95.1% to 100%...

HIGHLY LIKELY TO ACHIEVE WELL



If attendance is 90.1% to 95%...

QUITE LIKELY TO ACHIEVE WELL



If attendance is less than 90%...

NOT VERY LIKELY TO ACHIEVE WELL



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Attendance Matters



Five or more GCSE grades at grade 4 or above can increase potential wages by 41%.

Nationally students with 91% attendance or less will drop at least **ONE GCSE** grade.

Now think about this!
Taking just 10 days holiday in term time means that your **MAXIMUM** attendance can only be 95%

And this!
Taking a day off every couple of weeks means that your **MAXIMUM** attendance can only be 90%

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Key Dates

- Wednesday 28th January and Wednesday 4th February – options interviews take place if required
- Options form deadline Friday 6th February
- Monday 9th February onwards – option groups are generated
- Monday 23rd February onwards - Year 10 options start to feed into the school timetable for next year
- The vast majority of students will study their initial choices
- It is likely that a small number will have to be interviewed again and choose a different combination due to timetable clashes. Families and students will be contacted if this is the case.



Key Contact Information

The most efficient method of communication for questions is via email to:

year9options@hhhs.net