



Year 9 Options: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between a GCSE and a Vocational/BTEC course?

The grades awarded are 9- to 1 for GCSE and Distinction* to Pass for a vocational/BTEC courses. GCSE courses are normally 100% exam. Although some of these exams are practical exams done under strict supervision (controlled assessment). Written GCSE exams are taken at the end of the course and there are no re-sit options during Year 11.

BTEC/Vocational courses are more assignment based and grades submitted throughout the two-year course and can be improved upon. There is a short examination for all of these courses that can take place in either Year 10 or Year 11, often the pupil can resit this.

BTEC grades are roughly equivalent to the following GCSE Grades:

- Level 2 Distinction* = Grade 8/9
- Level 2 Distinction = Grade 7
- Level 2 Merit = Grade 5/6
- Level 2 Pass = Grade 4
- Level 1 Distinction= Grade 3
- Level 1 Merit= Grade 2
- Level 1 Pass= Grade 1

What are the core subjects that all pupils must study?

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Maths
- GCSE Science (double award) * equivalent to 2 GCSES

Choosing options:

All pupils will decide between History or Geography. Pupils will then pick one subject as a preference and one subject as an insurance.

Subjects on offer:

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
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History Geography	French Health and Social Care Sport Music	Art Business Religious Studies Performing Arts Psychology Textiles	Health and Social Care Business Triple Science Sport IT
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What entry guidance do you give to pupils when selecting their subject preferences?

When selecting their options we suggest to pupils that by Year 9 they are currently achieving:

- Art – Working At or Working Beyond in Art
- Psychology – Working At or Working Beyond in English
- Triple Science – Working At or Working Beyond in Science and Maths
- Performing Arts - WA or WB in Drama and Dance
- Textiles - WA or WB in Textiles or Food Technology

What good advice do we give our pupils when selecting their options?

- Plan your career path. Higher education, university, apprenticeship, training?
- Know your own strengths. Which subjects have you performed well in during Key Stage 3? Do you perform better in examinations or coursework?
- Think about your interests and the subjects you most enjoy
- Do not choose subjects because your friend has!
- Speak to staff and family. We are all here to support you.