



ALSOP HIGH SCHOOL

26 January 2023



Dear Parent/Guardian

YEAR 9 GCSE Options

I am writing to you with regards to the GCSE Options process.

Recently Year 9 students were introduced to the GCSE Options process through a year group assembly with some general information made available on the school website. Students were introduced to the different pathways available, as well as an overview of core subjects and option subjects. We also have arranged other events in order to assist students to make the right choices about their options, including taster lessons for new subjects offered in Year 10, as well as external advice and guidance who will be available on Year 9 parents and options information evening on Thursday 2nd March.

Year 10 Pathways

When students start their GCSE and BTEC qualifications, there are 2 pathways available for them to follow, the EBacc route and the non-Ebacc route. Each pathway has core subjects, which have to be taken by all students in this pathway, and either 2 or 3 option subjects.

The EBacc route is a student performance measure the government introduced in order to promote a breadth of academic study which was intended to encourage students to progress successfully into further education. The subjects offer the broadest range of knowledge and aim to keep all options open. Consequently, we have designed our options process to encourage students to study the EBacc but with a large element of subject choice. To achieve the EBacc you need to attain at least a grade 4 in; English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science (two qualifications), Geography or History and Spanish. Students then get two free choices from remaining option subjects listed on the following page. All students must also have core PE lessons as well as PSHCE, which takes place with form tutors.

The non-EBacc route is similarly designed, and offers the option to follow the EBacc route if students and parents wish to do so. Core subjects remain the same, regardless of the pathway. All students will have to take English Language, English Literature, Maths and Science. Additionally, one of their option subjects will have to be either History, Geography or Spanish. If students do not wish to follow the EBacc route having been placed in this pathway, then they can select three options from the choices on the following page.

Regardless of the pathway, all students will need to fulfil the Progress 8 requirements. Progress 8 is the national measure which has replaced the traditional 5 A*-C. Eight GCSEs across a range of subjects are normally needed to progress to post 16 study or apprenticeships. Our curriculum plan for you already takes this 'Progress 8' benchmark into account.

In order to determine which pathway is most suitable for your child, we have used a range of academic data, including internal assessments, reading ages as well as attendance records. This data has been compiled in order to ensure your child is placed in a suitable pathway. You will receive notification about your child's pathway, as well as their options form to be completed by students along with yourselves.

Some subjects should not be taken together. For example, Art and Textiles, as there is a considerable amount of overlap between the courses, therefore only one will count towards the progress 8 measure. Students should only select either Psychology or Sociology, and not both social sciences, if they wish to do so. We ask you to select your option choices, plus two reserve choices. The majority of students are able to study their first choices. However, there are occasions when a course cannot run because the number of students opting for the course is too low.

GCSE Option Choices

Music	Computing	Photography	Health and Social Care	Business Studies
Art	Performing Arts	Psychology	Sociology	Religious Studies
Sports Studies	Design Technology	Hospitality	Construction	Textiles

From the options above students are encouraged to take a range of subjects that they enjoy, show a particular aptitude for or links with future further education and career choices. Please consider carefully option choices as it is difficult to change subjects once the selections have been confirmed.

Further course information about all subjects offered in Year 10 can be found on the school website at the following address www.alsophigh.org.uk/students1/year_9_options/. Subject staff will also be available for you to speak to on Thursday 2nd March as well as some external providers and careers advisors.

Following the taster sessions, and the parents and options information evening on the 2nd March, the deadline for submitting options forms is Friday 10th March.

If you have any questions related to the options process, please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Thompson
Assistant Headteacher