

YEAR 9 PROCESS BOOKLET 2026





LETTER



Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to invite you to our Y9 GCSE Preferences Evening at school on Thursday 29th January. This event is the main introduction to the Y9 GCSE preferences process which engages students, parents and carers in partnership with the school. We would like students to accompany their parents or carers throughout the evening.

All the information needed is available at - <https://www.lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk/students/year-9-preferences> . It would be advisable to use this link to re-watch the looms and accompanying letter distributed earlier in January. Paper copies of the Subject Information and Year 9 GCSE Preferences Process booklets will be provided on the evening.

The preferences process helps each student to carefully consider and then indicate their preferred subjects to study in Years 10 and Year 11. Student preferences then inform the process by which we ensure that all students ultimately follow a broad and balanced curriculum suited to their needs, aspirations and many future careers. The most important principle to remember is that year 9 students are not selecting their preferences based on a single current career plan. All students will study a broad and balanced curriculum in year 10 and year 11. An outline of the career work available during Year 10 and 11 will be provided on the evening. This work will provide multiple opportunities to consider many different careers and therefore will support career and education decisions made at 16 and 18 years old.

Logistics for the evening

Different form groups will arrive at school at either 5.15pm, 6.00pm or 6.45pm as shown below. On arrival, go to the Assembly Hall to collect an information pack and be seated promptly for the presentation. There will be a QR code to scan with a smart device to sign in. Following the presentation, move to the Dining Room to see subject leads and as necessary the SEND team and colleges.

Phase Two - Year 9 GCSE Preferences Evening.	Forms: 9HWL 9CGR 9HWH 9CBI 9CRO	Forms: 9CCT 9MRO 9KYO 9YTO	Forms: 9PWI 9MCR 9SGO 9SSP
Assembly Hall – Presentation will start promptly.	5:15pm	6:00pm	6:45pm
Dining Room – Visit relevant subjects in the marketplace, visit colleges and the SEND team as necessary.	6:00pm	6:30pm	7:15pm

For support with any stage of the process, please email GCSEpreferences2026@lsahigh.org

Yours faithfully,

Mr J Howard
Assistant Headteacher



LETTER



A summary of the key principles of the preference process

1. The first key principle is to avoid making their GCSE preferences around a single career. Careers experts advise students to prepare for five careers over their working lives. A broad and balanced range of subjects is more useful than a narrower range of subjects and should be considered as a whole, alongside the core and additional careers activities provided during Year 10 and 11. The preferences process is not a chance to simply 'drop' a subject because it is challenging. No subjects should not be ruled out yet and students must continue working hard in all subjects.
2. Secondly, consider the whole Y10 and Y11 curriculum to help students see the impact of their preferences. All students have 50 learning hours per fortnight, including 30 core hours of English, Maths, Science, Physical Education and Personal Development. There is a further 5 core hours for which students can make a preference between French, German, Geography or History. Finally, there are three blocks of 5 hours for open choice subjects. Some students may prefer to use one 5-hour open choice block to increase their science time up from '10 hours of combined science in the core', to '15 hours to study single sciences'.
3. The preferences chosen by each student will be considered on a 'case by case' individual basis. We will endeavour to provide the subjects preferred, but only where this makes for a suitable curriculum and supports onwards study and employment routes. Students will indicate three reserve preferences and may be advised to study a reserve choice. In such cases, there will be thorough consultation, support and guidance for students, parents and carers. Changes are difficult once Y10 subjects are confirmed in July. Please assume late changes won't be possible. Late problematic changes are rare when there is good communication between home and school.

Please don't hesitate to contact the preferences team at any stage of the process by emailing GCSEpreferences2026@lsahigh.org.

Subject Information

There are 50 hours of learning each fortnight over week A and week B combined.

Core subjects – All students take GCSEs in Mathematics, English Literature and English Language.

Core Subjects - ensure a broad and balanced curriculum and maximise study and employment opportunities.

- Every student must study a modern foreign language or a humanity – French, German, Geography or History.
- Every student must study either Combined Science or Single Sciences
- **Science preference** – 10 hours of Combined Science or 15 hours of Single Science.

Please re-watch the Science subject loom available on the website.

Science teachers will advise further during our Video Consultation Evening on Thursday 5th February.

Open choice subjects

These subjects are limited in space so please order your preferences carefully, including 3 reserve subjects. Selecting Single Sciences reduces open choice subjects from three open choice subjects down to two subjects.

Combined Science students study French, German, Geography or History and three open choice subjects. Single Sciences students will study French, German, Geography or History and two open choice subjects

Subject combinations allowed or not allowed

It's possible to study both French and German. Select a second language in your open subject preference.

It's possible to study both Geography and History. Select the second subject in your open subject preference.

It is not possible to select both GCSE PE and Sports Studies OCR on any part of your preference form.



The More than Grades Programme

At Lytham St Annes High School we know that the best education takes place both inside and outside the classroom.

We also understand the importance employers and Universities place on the wider achievements of candidates. Through the More Than Grades Programme we hope to ensure that all our pupils are able to develop wider achievements and have interesting, valuable skills and experiences to talk and write about.

Each one of our pupils is more than a collection of grades; they are unique individuals each with different talents, skills and abilities. Some of which they haven't even discovered yet.

In each year of school the More than Grades Programme seeks to introduce every pupil to new experiences or events out with the classroom in each of the following 6 areas

Aspiration & Careers
Love of Learning
Leadership & Citizenship
Sport
STEM
The Arts

To ensure our pupils get the best experience possible during their time in school, **every year all pupils must participate in at least one activity or event in each of the 6 areas and document it in their More Than Grades Logbook.**

Of course we hope pupils will get involved in lots more than that and there are no limits on how many events and activities pupils can experience.

Form Tutors are vitally important in supporting ALL pupils to get involved, helping them to decide what to do and to make sure they have all the information they need. **The Programme is also designed to develop independence** and it is every pupil's own responsibility to make sure they participate in something within each of the 6 More Than Grades areas across the year.

On completion of each section in their logbook pupils will receive an Achievement Point in one of our 4 values.

The weekly Pupil Bulletin is available on our website and emailed home.

Please encourage your child to get involved. We hope you enjoy hearing about all the different clubs and events they take part in.



Answers to common queries:

1. Pupil Logbooks are kept by Form Tutors in school.
2. Pupils use Form Time on a Monday to complete their log books.
3. Parents, carers & guardians will be able to see the More Than Grades Logbook at Meet the Form Tutor Evening.
4. Pupils can include events that they participate in outside of school too. They should document anything extra that fits into one of the 6 More Than Grades areas.
5. Pupils can take part in as many activities as they like; there are no limits.
6. We know some pupils will specialise in one area but we still want them to explore each of the 6 areas. Who knows what new skills they may discover!
7. Extra Curricular activities at school are all advertised in the Pupil Bulletin on a Friday which Form Tutors will go over during Form Time. The Pupil Bulletin is displayed around the school and in form rooms too.
8. Sometimes activities that take place during the school day are worth recording in the logbook too. (E.G. If pupils experience a theatre performance, work with a visiting poet or complete a science workshop; perhaps take part in a STEM competition or an athletics workshop with an Olympian. Anything out of the ordinary is worth documenting as a record of the experiences they have had.)
9. Pupils may wish to bring in a photograph of an event to glue into their logbook as evidence of what they have taken part in.
10. At the end of Year 11 pupils will be given their 5 completed logbooks to support them in their applications for colleges, apprenticeships, employment and/or university.

We hope that this programme will ensure that ALL our pupils are introduced to Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, The Arts and Sport in ways that are not simply class based. We hope to nurture a true love of learning and support our pupils in being able to evidence the ways in which they are aspirational and endeavour to give their best. To encourage pupils to be both team players and independent thinkers. We hope that they will have more confidence in applying for leadership roles because of their wider experiences. In short we hope we continue to encourage every pupil in our learning community to be the very best they can be.

If you have any questions about the **More Than Grades Programme** or would like to offer to deliver an activity or workshop please contact Jamie Howard Assistant Head Teacher on 01253 733192 or via e mail Jamie.howard@lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk

LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE (LMI)

What is LMI?

Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) refers to a wide range of information that helps people make informed decisions about education, training and future careers. Recent LMI data has identified seven priority sectors that are particularly important to the local economy, offering strong employment prospects for young people.

What are the 7 Priority Sectors?

The priority sectors are industries with growing demand, ongoing investment and a wide range of career opportunities. These sectors are actively seeking skilled and motivated young people and are expected to continue growing in the coming years.

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced Manufacturing plays a vital role in the local economy, producing high-quality products that are used both nationally and internationally. The sector includes engineering, robotics and high-tech production.

With an ageing workforce and increasing demand for UK-made goods, there are strong opportunities for young people, particularly those with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) skills.

Food and Agriculture

The Food and Agriculture sector supports food production, processing and distribution, as well as farming and land-based industries. It is a key sector that combines traditional skills with modern technology, sustainability and innovation. Careers range from food science and engineering to farming, logistics and quality control, offering opportunities for people with a wide range of interests and abilities.

Construction

Construction is a large and diverse sector supporting the development of homes, public buildings and infrastructure. It offers a wide variety of job roles, from skilled trades and site management to design, surveying and project planning. The sector continues to grow due to ongoing development and investment, creating long-term career opportunities for people at all entry levels.

Energy and Low Carbon

The Energy and Low Carbon sector focuses on sustainable energy production, efficiency and reducing environmental impact. This includes renewable energy, green technologies and low-carbon solutions. As the UK moves towards cleaner energy and environmental responsibility, demand for skilled workers in this sector continues to rise, offering future-focused and environmentally driven career paths.

Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care supports people across all stages of life, from early years to older adulthood. With an ageing population and increasing care needs, this sector continues to grow and offers a wide range of roles. Careers include healthcare professionals, support workers, therapists and administrative roles, all focused on improving wellbeing and quality of life.

Creative and Digital

The Creative and Digital sector includes areas such as media, design, software development, marketing and digital content creation. As technology continues to evolve, demand for digital and creative skills remains high. The sector offers opportunities for people who are innovative, artistic and technically skilled, with roles across both creative industries and wider business sectors.

Tourism and Culture

Tourism and Culture plays a key role in supporting local communities and economies. The sector includes hospitality, events, attractions, arts and heritage. It offers a wide range of customer-focused roles and opportunities to develop transferable skills such as communication, teamwork and leadership. Continued growth in tourism creates ongoing employment opportunities across many locations.



KEY DATES



GCSE Preferences Process 2026 – Key dates and events – Over three main phases

From early **January** form tutors will show students a series of 'subject information Looms'. We encourage students to re-watch looms with parents and carers.

On 9th January students (in form time) and parents and carers (by email) will receive an **introductory letter, timeline and loom** mapping out the key aims and dates of the preferences process.

<https://www.loom.com/share/96e68064737741428391959c416967ed>

Please note this is not a full description of the preferences process, that follows on the 29th January 2026.

On **Thursday 29th January 2026**, the **Assessment 2 spring term full report** will be emailed to parents and carers and distributed to students on paper.

On **Thursday 29th January 2026** the main event, the **GCSE Preferences Evening** runs from 5.00pm – 8.00pm.

This event is designed for students to accompany their parents and carers.

Different forms arrive at invited half hour intervals and move through three phases.

We start by providing a talk in the **Assembly Hall** to explain the whole preferences process.

We will explain how lesson time goes 'hand in hand' with our Aspiration and Careers advice Programme to support future careers through providing both academic qualifications and wider careers experiences.

You also collect a paper copy of both booklets '**Y10 subject information**' and '**Year 9 Preferences Process**'.

This is followed by a marketplace in the **Dining Room** where subject leaders are available to provide general advice for each subject on offer.

There is also a help desk, SEND advice and college representatives in the **Dining Room**.

On **Thursday 5th February 2026** we have the **Y9 Subject Video Consultation Evening** during which teachers provide specific feedback on student progress across eight subjects. We expect most parents to book to see teachers from English, Maths, Science and 5 other potential subjects. General support appointments are also available. Parents and carers will receive an emailed invitation one week ahead of this event.

By **Tuesday 10th February** students must electronically **submit their online GCSE preference form**.

On a Microsoft Form students indicate preferences for:

-Combined Science or Single sciences.

-All students must select at least one Humanity or MFL subject (Geography, History, French or German).

-Open choice subjects in preference order, **including reserve** preferences, from the subjects on offer.

From **February to June**, we will carefully scrutinise the preferences indicated by every student contacting and consulting with parents and carers as necessary. We will endeavour to accommodates the most suitable preferences that students have indicated. We guarantee every student a fair preference process and a curriculum package which supports career and study paths.

We are unable to guarantee every student all their top preferences in the open choice subjects meaning students must thoroughly consider all open choice subjects and accurately indicate their preferences and their reserves in priority order.

In **July**, students, parents and carers will receive a **final confirmation of Y10 subjects** once the timetable for September 2026 is completed.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

General advice for all parents and carers

- Analyse the progress and attitude shown on the assessment 2 report as usual, but also with a view to your preferences and with whom to book at the video consultation.
- Book in to see subject teachers related to preferences on Year 9 subject Video Consultation Evening on Thursday 5th February. As usual all parent/carers will receive an invite to book their appointments.
- Make sure you meet the deadline to complete the online preferences form no later than Tuesday 10th February 2026. The link to the form can be found on the school website.

Further Advice

- A small number of parents/carers will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your child's GCSE preference choices. If you receive an invitation, it is essential that you attend.

For parents and carers who are unable to attend the GCSE Preference evening

We recommended that the parent/carer and student sit together and work through the resources from the website in the order suggested below.

Website link - <https://www.lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk/students/year-9-preferences>

For support with any stage of the process please email GCSEpreference2026@lsahigh.org

1. Start by watching the subject Looms which explain the details of each subject. These are available on the school website. Follow the link above.

a. Try to watch as many as possible

b. Try not to rule out any subject at this stage!

2. Cross reference the subject information using the Yr10 Subject Information booklet.

3. Watch the introductory Looms from Mr Howard.

4. Go through the Presentation from the GCSE Preference Process evening. This is available on the school website. Use the link above.

NOTES

ASPIRATION - ENDEAVOUR - INTEGRITY - RESPECT

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LSA year 9 Preferences Flow chart and Curriculum Map 2026

