

Tuesday, 27th January 2026

Key Stage 4
Guided Choices
Year 9 into Year 10

Mr Vallance

SAMWORTH
CHURCH
ACADEMY



70 Great Years

The focus of our curriculum has always been and will continue to be :

- High quality outcomes for all students.
- Breadth of choice.

Our Aims

- Broad and balanced curriculum
- Innovative and knowledge rich
- Entitlement for students to study the full EBacc

What are the Guided Choices Subjects?

- Course choices which are personal to each student. They are subjects you choose to pick to study.
- There will be a mixture of GCSE and other approved courses (e.g. BTEC).
- Choose 3 subjects which students start in Year 10. All courses will complete at the end of Year 11. Students do choose back-up choices.
- The Academy will offer information, advice and guidance to help students choose the courses that are right for them (careers guidance interviews are available).



Process So Far...

- Wednesday 14th January – PSHE day sessions
- Wednesday 21st January – guided choices assembly
- Tuesday 27th January – guided choices evening
- Ongoing – Progress Careers appointments available

What is the difference between GCSE and (e.g.) BTEC?

- GCSE courses tend to be assessed with a final (terminal) exam which carries a significant weighting in the overall grade.
- BTEC (and other vocational courses e.g. Cambridge Nationals) tend to be assessed with ongoing portfolio work and a smaller exam element.

GCSEs were changed...

- They will be graded 9-1 instead of A*-G (with 9 being the highest grade).
- They are being phased in over the next few years
- A GCSE grade C+ is/was classed as a 'good' grade; a Grade 5+ will be classed as a 'good' grade.
- For current Year 9 students, GCSEs in all subjects will be 9-1.

New GCSE Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Current GCSE Grade	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	A*	



Core Curriculum

Students automatically study the following subjects, these are not influenced by the guided choices process:

GCSE Maths (9 lessons a fortnight in both year 10 and 11)

GCSE English Language and Literature (10 lessons a fortnight in year 10 and 11)

GCSE Combined or Separate Science (9 lessons a fortnight in year 10 and 11) – **a process to choose the Science pathway for you will take place between May and June**

GCSE Short Course in Religious Studies (2 lessons a fortnight in year 10 and 11)

Core PE (2 lessons a fortnight in year 10 and 11)

Course Subjects

All six lessons a fortnight (each)

BTEC Animal Management
GCSE Art and Design
GCSE Photography
GCSE Business Studies
GCSE Computer Science
GCSE Dance
GCSE Drama
BTEC Level 2 in Construction
GCSE Design and Technology (Specialising in Timbers)
GCSE Design and Technology (Specialising in Systems)
GCSE Design and Technology (Specialising in Paper and Boards)
GCSE Design and Technology (Specialising in Textiles)
Technical Award in Hospitality and Catering
GCSE French
GCSE Geography
City and Guilds Hairdressing Level 1/2
BTEC Health and Social Care
GCSE History
GCSE Media Studies
GCSE Film Studies
GCSE Music
GCSE Psychology
GCSE Physical Education
GCSE Religious Studies (Full Course)
Cambridge National in Sports Science and Sports Studies
GCSE Spanish

Separate Science – separate process in May/June. These do not occupy any of a student's option choices.

What will it look like?

Students will fall into one of four categories:

- Students choosing one EBacc subject and two non-EBacc subjects to start in Year 10.
- Students choosing two EBacc subjects and one non-EBacc subject to start in Year 10.
- Students choosing three EBacc subjects and no non-EBacc subjects to start in Year 10.
- Students choosing three non-EBacc subjects and no EBacc subjects to start in Year 10.

What opportunities does this KS4 curriculum offer?

- Students have a good amount of time to complete their option subjects. We exceed the guided learning hours on all of our courses.
- Learning over time for Guided Pathway courses in Years 10 and Year 11 to promote best possible outcomes for students.
- A chance to study a variety of subjects and a mixture of GCSEs and BTECs.

Points to consider.....

Begin with the end in mind!

Points to consider

Full English Baccalaureate (Full EBacc)

GCSE English

GCSE Maths

GCSE Science × 2

Humanities – GCSE History or Geography

Language – GCSE French, German or Spanish

GCSE Grades at 5+

The full EBacc is highly valued by the universities widely regarded as the top universities (Russell Group)



Points to consider

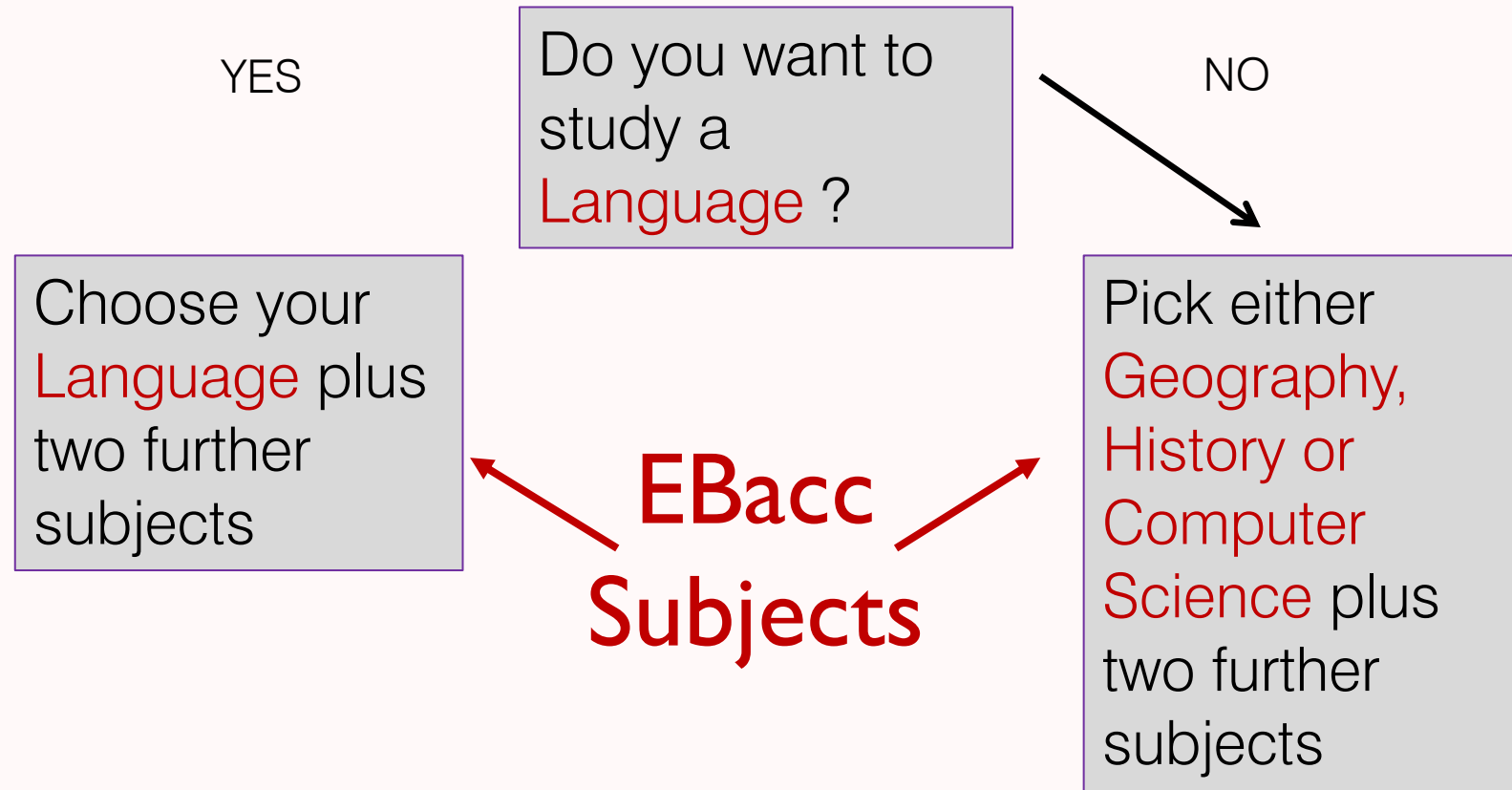
Level 2 Threshold Measure

“Attainment 8”

Bucket	Slot	Subject	Detail
1	1	English	Compulsory – these double count in a student’s Attainment 8 score
	2	Maths	
2	3	EBacc 1	EBacc subjects – GCSEs in Sciences, including Computer Science; Geography/History; MFL
	4	EBacc 2	
	5	EBacc 3	
3	6	Other 1	Approved vocational, further EBacc subjects, all other GCSE subjects
	7	Other 2	
	8	Other 3	

IAG – Choosing your Ebaac subject(s)

To support good achievement in the Level 2 Threshold Measure, follow this guide when choosing options for **Year 10**:



Points to consider.....

Raised Participation Age:

Children should be in education or training until the end of the academic year when they are 18.

Year 9 – Year 10 Guided Choices Form

**** Important information ****

Every effort will be made by the academy to accommodate students' course choices. However, the academy reserves the right to establish courses based on the resources available.

All students and your parents/carers must sign the form

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO STUDENT RECEPTION ON or BEFORE
Monday 9th February 2026

***** Please note *****

Students who return their forms after this deadline (without good reason) will be at the bottom of the priority list if a subject is oversubscribed

Who can help?

- Subject staff (by email and through their subject overview videos) and over the next few weeks
- Recent parents evening
- Mr Vallance
- Older students in other year groups
- Year Group Team – Mrs Walker, Mrs Severn, Mrs Goodwin
- Parents
- Friends – but beware of the dark side!
- Progress Careers – Careers Advisors appointments can be requested via my email address or your Year Group Team
- Make use of report predictions



To summarise

- Three Guided Pathway course choices to start in Year 10 with all to complete in Year 11;
- However, students will pick six subjects, three as insurance/back-up choices (one in each 'option block');
- We believe some students will want to study for the full Ebacc.
- Students need to consider their choices carefully. These should be the main Guided Pathway subjects a student wants to study.

Where can I access support on-line?

Top Menu>Student Experience>Y9 Guided Choices

Resources include:

Copy of this presentation
Guided choices booklet
Subject videos/presentations

Deadline

Monday 9th February 2026

Please hand in to Student Information Desk

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