



Year 9 Options

Spring 2020

Advice already given to students

1. This is important – don't mess it up!
2. If you make wrong choices you almost certainly won't be able to change your mind in September
3. Consider your strengths and weaknesses
4. Consider any possible career implications
5. Consider whether you need the GCSE in order to do A level in that subject
6. Don't aim too high and don't aim too low
7. Don't choose what your friends are choosing
8. Don't choose on the basis of whether you like or dislike the teacher
9. Find out as much as you can about the courses
10. If in doubt, take a broad range of options not a narrow one
11. Don't make a hasty decision

Students making informed choices



Getting students onto the right courses so they will enjoy them and succeed



Our Principles

- Broad curriculum - within the constraints imposed by Government
- Maintain as much choice as possible
- Range of approved courses to suit differing levels of ability

Options Online

- Students choose one of French, History or Geography
- Students then choose an additional three subjects and two reserves
- Most subjects are suitable for all but some are more academic / some are more practical
- Impossible to change choices around later as subjects may not be available on that block / or be full

Options Online

- Students will have access to the Options Online system

www.sims-options.co.uk

- The system will open on March 6th and close on March 27th

Options Online Demo

1. Go to www.sims-options.co.uk
2. Select sign in with google
3. Enter your usual school username and password
4. Select either French or History or Geography
5. Select your three option choices
6. Select your two reserve choices
7. Check the order on the right handside of the screen is correct

Frequently asked questions

1. What if I speak another language?

- English as Additional Language speakers – if you can get a GCSE in your home language without tuition then we encourage you to do so e.g. Chinese, Urdu, Spanish, Bengali, Gujarati, Japanese, Russian etc.
- Speak to your language teacher & to Mrs Johnson
- You need to be fluent – both verbally and on paper
- A GCSE needs to exist in the language

2. Can I take both History and Geography as well as French?

- Yes, this is not a problem at all and many students do this
- Both are highly regarded as subjects
- The options process allows you to pick History + French + Geography

3. What is Triple Science and should I pick it?

- It replaces the two Combined Science GCSEs with separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry & Physics
- This is achieved by using up one of the options choices
- A challenging course, aimed at more able scientists – need to be at Tier 4-P in Y9 Science
- Key thing is to get the best grades you can in Science – whether it is Combined or triple
- If you cannot see Triple Science on the online system when you log in, it means you have not met the entry requirement, please speak to your Science teacher or Mr Dodd

4. Should I take Computing or IT?

- Computer Science GCSE is a challenging course and students need to have reached Tier 4-P in Computing to take this course.
- CS is a mainly *theoretical* course whereas Creative iMedia is mainly the *practical* use of IT
- CS is better suited for students with a keen interest and aptitude for programming
- CS requires logical thinking whereas Creative iMedia is more focused on the creative side
- If you cannot see Computer Science on the online system when you log in, it means you have not met the entry requirement, please speak to your ICT teacher or Mr Martin-Shepherd

5. What about Sport?

- All students will take an hour a week of core PE (this does not lead to a qualification but is a statutory requirement)
- If you would like a qualification in Sport then choose Sport as an option
- There is of course, extra-curricular sport

6. How do the new GCSE grades work?

New GCSE grades

Old GCSE grades

9

8

7

6

5

C

4

3

2

F

A*

A

B

B-

C

D

E-

7. How many GCSE equivalent courses should I pick?

- It does not matter hugely for most students
- All the courses we offer are DfE approved
- Highly academic students will probably want to follow an entirely GCSE curriculum

8. How does this affect 6th form entry?

- Most 6th forms expect at least 5 9-4 passes inc. equivalents
- Oakgrove's current entry requirement =
7 x 9-4 passes (inc. equivalents) inc. English Language & Maths
- For some subjects if you wish to study them at A level it is desirable / essential to have taken them at GCSE
- For other A level subjects it does not really matter

9. Are there any forbidden combinations?

- You cannot pick both Computer Science GCSE and Creative iMedia (*It would be unwise anyway*)
- You cannot pick both Enterprise and Marketing and Business Studies GCSE
- You cannot pick Triple Science unless you are at a Tier 4-P in Science in y9 (*degree of difficulty*)
- You cannot pick Computing unless you are at a Tier 4-P in Computing in y9 (*degree of difficulty*)
- You cannot pick Art and Fashion/Textiles (*same qualification name – would cancel each other out*)

10. What happens after I complete options online?

- The system will close on 27th March - you **cannot** make changes after this date
- Option blocks are built to maximise the number of students to take the options they have selected, this is why **reserve choices are important**
- As a result some combinations will not be possible
- Subjects will only run if there are viable numbers
- If there are problems with your choices I will come and see the student
- No news is good news
- Official letter confirming choices in June

Key points to leave you with

- This ppt will go on the website y9 options page
- Don't make a hasty decision – no benefit in completing early
- Ask lots of Qs / find out lots of information
- As well as tonight, parents' evening on
 - Thursday 27 February or Thursday 5 March
- Make sure your options online is complete by Friday 27th March otherwise you will be at a disadvantage
- Any problems accessing the system let me know on nirwin-morris@oakgrove.school