



OPTIONS

YEAR 9 OPTIONS BOOKLET 2024

YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Dear Year 9 Student (and Parent/Carer)

This is an exciting and important time for our Year 9 students, where you choose which subjects to study as you move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.

Making the right choices now will ensure a smooth start to Year 10, so you are ready to learn and study subjects that you enjoy. This will help you to develop your confidence and knowledge, to ensure you thrive as you move to the next stage of your education.

The decisions you make now will have a profound effect on your future. It is important to read this booklet carefully and gather as much information as possible. If you aren't sure, just ask - *we are here to help and guide you along the way.*

Miss Hansom
Deputy Headteacher

KEY DATES

Tuesday 20 February	Students' Options Assembly
Thursday 22 February	Options Evening
Tuesday 27 February	Taster Day Deadline
Wednesday 6 March	Taster Day
Thursday 7 March	Year 9 Progress Evening
Friday 15 March	Options Deadline

OPTIONS PROCESS

At Key Stage 4, students follow a range of examined and non-examined subjects, some of which are compulsory and some of which can be selected by students from a range of options.

We constantly review our curriculum and the courses that we offer to ensure our students have the best possible opportunities to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

All the courses lead to a qualification which is usually a GCSE. However, there are several courses that lead to equally important qualifications, such as Vocational Awards.

It is important that each individual takes great care in selecting their option choices and considers the full range of subjects available. In addition to the core subjects, all students will take four further optional subjects.

By now, students will have had a special Options Assembly to ensure they are well-informed of the choices available and the process. Additionally, the Year 9 Options Evening on Thursday, 22 February, will also provide an opportunity for parents and carers to find out more.



Don't forget you can talk to your subject teachers at any time to discuss your options or if you have questions about how to complete your Options Form



Options are **NOT** allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. We look at everyone's choices together, unless you miss the deadline **9.00am, Friday 15 March 2024**

ASSESSMENT METHODS

There are two types of qualifications:

GCSE (9-1)

These are 'linear' (all or the majority of the assessment takes place at the end of the course). Assessment will include an exam at the end of Year 11 (May/June 2026).

Grading is awarded on a numbered scale from 9 to 1 (9 is the highest grade). These grades do not exactly match the old A*-G grades, which parents may be more familiar with. Grade 4 is in line with the old grade C and is classed as a 'standard pass' and Grade 5 is classed as a strong pass. Entry requirements for college courses vary but Grade 5 is often set by colleges and employers as the 'benchmark' for students. However, for purely academic courses, some of our local colleges require students to be working at Grade 6 in at least 3 subject areas.

GCSEs are designed to provide a greater challenge to students in terms of application and understanding.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a set of GCSE subjects that, when taken together, may add further weight to applications for Higher Education, especially Russell Group universities. Subjects are taken in a combination of English, Mathematics, Science (including Computer Science), Humanities and a Modern Foreign Language.

The EBacc is not compulsory for any students at Honley High School. Further information can be found on our website.

Vocational Awards

Students complete the majority of the assessment in the classroom under controlled conditions e.g. coursework. These qualifications are aimed at equipping learners with the practical, transferable skills and knowledge they need to progress to further general or vocational study, including Level 3 qualifications (equivalent to A-Level), employment or apprenticeships.

The grades do not match exactly to the GCSE grades but the table below provides a guide.

GRADE SYSTEM

VOCATIONAL AWARD LEVEL	VOCATIONAL AWARD GRADE	GCSE EQUIVALENT
2	Distinction*	9
		8
2	Distinction	7
2	Merit	6
		5
2	Pass	4
1	Distinction	3
1	Merit	2
1	Pass	1



If you are considering college as your next step, check college websites to gain an idea of what grades you need to work towards

CORE SUBJECTS

There are certain Core examined subjects that **EVERYONE** has to take:

- English Language and English Literature (two GCSEs)
- Mathematics (one GCSE)
- Combined Science or Triple Science (two or three GCSEs)

There are also **three non-examined courses** which all students must study:

- Physical Education
- Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
- iGEN (Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education)

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

We offer a wide range of optional subjects to choose from.

You choose **FOUR** Optional Subjects in total, one from each of the four Options Blocks. You cannot select the same subject twice.

Option Blocks A, B and C subjects are taught for 5 hours per fortnight, and Block D subjects are taught for 4 hours per fortnight.

You must select at least **one** of these subjects:

- Geography
- History
- Spanish



Check the notes on page 8 carefully, some options have additional information

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES

By the time you are ready to make your decision, you should have considered the following, so you can be sure your choices work for you.

DO

- Read all the information about the choices available
- Think carefully about the next step - research backwards from where you want to be
- Look carefully at the different skills and demands involved in each subject to help achieve a balance
- Think about your likes, dislikes and interests and which ways of learning suit you best
- Ask for advice and information - your teachers and Mrs Hesselgrove are here to help
- Choose for yourself but do talk to your parents/carers and teachers
- Choose subjects which you enjoy, you are good at and may be useful to you in the future

DON'T

- Choose a subject just because you like or dislike the teacher - you may get a different one
- Choose subjects to be with your friends - they may have different interests, strengths and plans for the future
- Choose an 'easy' subject - all KS4 subjects are demanding
- Rush into your choices without doing some research
- Be afraid to ask for help
- Reject certain courses/subjects because you do not know anything about them
- Dismiss a subject you enjoy because it doesn't directly lead to a job you want to do. Consider transferrable skills it may develop, such as critical thinking or self-discipline. You are likely to work harder and do better in subjects you enjoy

KEY STAGE 4 SUBJECTS

BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	BLOCK D
Computer Science ¹	Spanish	Computer Science ¹	Triple Science ¹
Geography	Statistics & Further Maths ²	History ³	Citizenship
History	Art ⁴	Textiles ⁴	Religious Studies
Spanish	Citizenship	Art ⁴	Statistics
Supported Learning (SEND only)	Photography	Drama	Dance
	Design & Technology	Photography	Music
	PE / Sport Studies ⁵	Design & Technology	Travel & Tourism
	Child Development	PE / Sport Studies ⁵	
	Construction	Child Development	
	Creative iMedia	Construction	
	Enterprise & Marketing	Enterprise & Marketing	
	Hospitality & Catering	Hospitality & Catering	

KEY:

- GCSE
- EBacc
- Vocational

READ the Year 9 Options Subject Guide to find out in detail what each course covers



¹Teacher recommended only

²Teacher recommended and if selected Triple Science in Block D

³Only select History in Block C if already selected Geography in Block A

⁴This combination of subjects cannot be studied together

⁵Students will be allocated to either the GCSE or Vocational option, depending on which suits them best

SPEAK TO THE SUBJECT LEADERS

CORE SUBJECTS

English	Mrs R Sweeney-Hirst
Mathematics	Miss J Hall
Science	Mr J Addy

OPTIONS SUBJECTS

Art	Mr T Smith
Child Development	Mrs A McMillan
Citizenship	Mrs G Darwin
Computer Science	Mr Y Patel
Construction	Mr A Ghorbani
Creative iMedia	Mr Y Patel
Dance	Mrs S Broadbent
Design & Technology	Mr B Myers
Drama	Mr J Cotgrave
Enterprise & Marketing	Mr Y Patel
Further Maths	Miss J Hall
Geography	Mrs H Hill
History	Mr J Pulsford
Hospitality & Catering	Mrs A McMillan
Music	Mr J Cotgrave
Photography	Mr T Smith
PE	Mr N O'Connor
Spanish	Mrs R Green
Sport Studies	Mr N O'Connor
Statistics	Miss J Hall
Textiles	Mrs A McMillan
Travel & Tourism	Mrs H Hill

WHO ELSE WILL HELP?

In addition to this booklet, we run our Student Assembly, Student Taster Day, Year 9 Options Evening and Year 9 Progress Evening, plus there is additional information on our website and 'MyDirections'.

Subject Teachers: the experts who know most about the courses and your abilities and skills

Form Tutors: know you best and can point you in the right direction

Employers: can give a wealth of advice about training and employment and are often happy to answer enquiries directly or via their business websites

Parents/carers: know you best as a person

Older siblings and friends: can share their experiences of going through the Options Process and Key Stage 4

Pastoral Support: if you need a little extra support in making your decisions, you can speak to a member of our key staff:

Mrs Cowen - Head of Year 9

Mr Corcoran - Pastoral Support for Year 9

Mrs Bardell - SENDCo

Mrs Thompson - Teacher in Charge Resourced Provision

You can also arrange a one-to-one discussion with your form's

Senior Leadership Options Buddy:

9A - Mrs Barber

9D - Miss Hansom

9G - Mr Oliver

9B - Mr Clee

9E - Mrs Lord

9H - Mr Stephenson

9C - Mrs Halliday

9F - Mr Meads

9I - Miss Hansom



If you have any questions about your Options, please don't hesitate to speak to someone in school - we are here to help you!



SPEAK TO MRS HESSELGROVE

Our C&K Careers Adviser, Mrs Hesselgrove, is in school 3 days a week (Monday to Wednesday) and is available for 'drop-ins' at lunchtime or for students to make an appointment.



The Careers Office is in the Library, where you will also find advice and information about career opportunities to help you make decisions.

Mrs Hesselgrove can also be contacted via email at a.hesslegrove@honley.tlt.school and is happy to support you in any way she can.

CEIAG

Throughout high school, all students follow a planned programme of Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEIAG) through iGen, assemblies and specific activities and trips. There is a wealth of resources online which will supplement the school's offer.

It is also important to have conversations at home, to talk about where you see yourself in the future and your ambitions.



Powered by **C+K**

All students have their own login to the C&K Careers website MyDirections <https://ck.mydirections.co.uk>.

Username = school email

Password = set by the individual

Through MyDirections, students can access information on choices, subjects, decisions, courses, exams and qualifications. Plus CareersInfo and JED.

For further information, visit the school website.



Log in to the Job Explorer Database (JED) and CareersInfo to research careers and qualifications

SUBMIT YOUR CHOICES ONLINE



THE OPTIONS FORM WILL BE LIVE ON FRIDAY 8 MARCH

Once you've made up your mind, complete all parts of Options Form to let us know your choices.



DEADLINE - 9.00AM FRIDAY 15 MARCH

All the Year 9 Options information is available on our website at www.honleyhigh.co.uk or scan the QR code

WHEN DO I FIND OUT?

The deadline for the Options form to be completed is **9.00am on Friday 15 March 2024**. After all preferences are analysed, every effort will be made to meet these. However, we cannot promise this, for example if a high number of students choose a particular subject.

It is not possible to run some subjects when only a small number of students opt to take them and some subjects can only accommodate limited numbers with existing facilities.

Once subjects are allocated, changing them can be very difficult, so it is crucial to think carefully before choosing.

Allocation letters will be emailed home in May. This is a key time for us in constructing the school timetable for next year, ready for our new Year 10s to start their courses in September!

For any queries about the Options process or completion of the form, please get in touch with Miss S Hansom, Deputy Headteacher.

Email: s.hansom@honley.tlt.school

Phone: 01484 506484



If you have any questions about your Options, don't leave it until the deadline. Speak to someone in school so that we can help support you to make the best choices for you

FAQS

Can I do the same subjects as my friends?

This is not a good basis for making your decision. Your friends will have different ideas to you and may enjoy different types of subjects. Choose subjects for yourself and try not to be influenced by your friends. Even if you do choose the same subjects you may be in a different class.

I like my teacher. Can I be in their group next year?

The teacher you will be given will depend upon your choices and how the timetable is constructed. It is not possible to choose a teacher. Choose a subject because you like it and think you can do well, not because of the teacher.

Will I get into college if I take vocational subjects?

The different colleges have different entry requirements; these will even vary across subjects within the same college. For some academic courses, only GCSE qualifications count towards the entry criteria. However, no college wants to look at all 8/9 of your grades, so we allow everyone to take vocational courses. We strongly recommend that students explore the different college websites to learn more.

Do I have to take a Language?

No, but you should consider studying a language if you want to achieve the EBacc or are considering attending university.

Can I take five options instead of four?

No, there is no room on the timetable for anyone to study more than four options.

If I don't like my choices, can I drop one in Year 10 or 11?

No. Making the right choices now is essential, as everyone will study their options subjects until the end of Year 11.

Are some subjects easier than others?

All subjects are hard in Key Stage 4! Students must be dedicated and resilient. It's important to work hard, be organised, complete classwork and homework to the best of your ability and meet deadlines. At GCSE level, it is also important not to just do the bare minimum but to be prepared to do additional work and revision to achieve the best results.



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