



Welcome to Year 9 Parents' GCSE Options evening 2026

This slideshow is being recorded



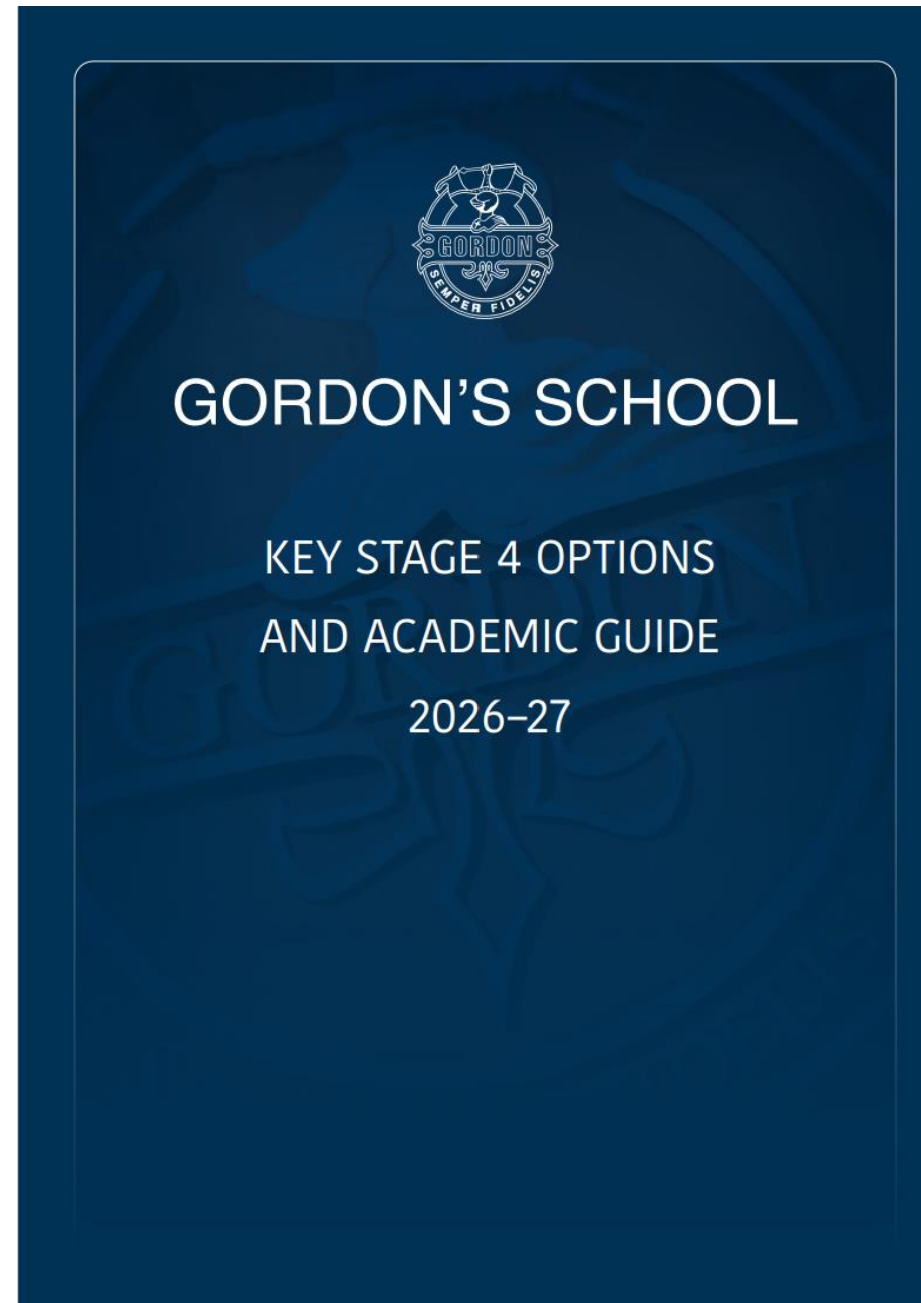
Introduction & Timings

- Mr James Greggor – Head of Lower School
- igreggor@gordons.school
- We aim to finish at 7.30pm
- Opportunity for Q&A at the end.



Overview

- The aim of this evening is to provide information about GCSE subject Options for Year 9
- Build on the information in the academic guide sent to parents
- Provide an opportunity to ask any questions



Prior to the Christmas break



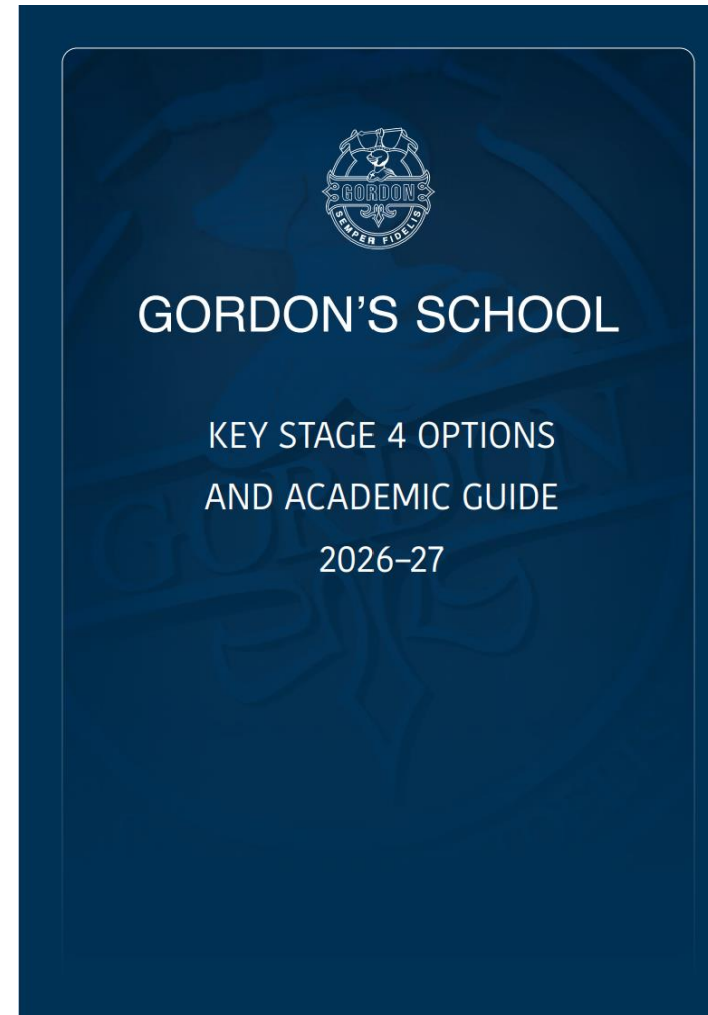
You have already been sent a link prior to the Christmas break to the ***Key Stage 4 Options and Academic Guide***.



This can also be accessed via the school website.



I hope students and families were able to have a look through this over the break prior to this evening.



GCSE Grading system explained

- The grading system of 9-1 applies across all GCSE subjects (BTECs are different).
- New grading system was introduced to better differentiate between students of different abilities.
- ***Broadly the same proportion of students achieve a grade 4 and above as previously achieved a grade C and above.***
- ***Broadly the same proportion of students achieve a grade 7 and above as previously achieved a grade A and above.***

GCSE Grading System

Old Grades	New Grades
A*	9
A	8
	7
B	6
C	5
	4
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	
U	U





CONTACT DETAILS

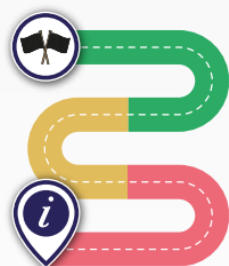
Head of Department

Mr P Berry
pberry@gordons.school

Exam Board
AQA

Specification
8700

CURRICULUM MAP



CURRICULUM INTENT

English Language aims to promote a love of reading and writing, developing students' clarity, confidence and variety of written and spoken expression, with excellent technical accuracy and the ability to analyse, critique and interpret.

We promote the subject as the basis for all other areas of study in the curriculum. We encourage students to engage with, enjoy and confidently approach a range of unseen fiction and non-fiction texts, and to develop their ability to analyse and dissect texts from a range of authors and sources. The goal is to empower students to develop the lifelong skill of being able to deal with any text that they encounter and likewise to become a confident producer of texts as well.

English develops students' communication skills that are required in all jobs and careers; more specifically, the subject is important for careers that depend on the written word, such as: journalism, marketing and law.



COURSE SUMMARY

In English lessons, students study fiction and non-fiction extracts to develop their reading and writing skills, all of which is brought to life through lively speaking and listening activities such as: discussions, debates and individual presentations. This speaking work leads into the Spoken Language assessment, which provides students with a separate grade alongside the GCSE English Language grade.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

EXAMINATION PAPERS	% OF GCSE	DETAILS
Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing	50%	Section A Reading: 25% (40 marks) One literary fiction text (1x4 marks, 2x8 marks, 1x20 marks). Section B Writing: 25% (40 marks) Descriptive or narrative writing (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy).
Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives	50%	Section A Reading: 25% (40 marks) One non-fiction and one literary non-fiction text (linked but from different periods) (1x4, 1x8, 1x12, 1x16 marks) Section B Writing: 25% (40 marks) Writing to present a viewpoint (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy).
NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT	% OF GCSE	DETAILS
Presentation	0%	The final level/grade for speaking and listening will appear as an endorsement on the students' GCSE certificate. (Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail).

SCHOLARS' PROGRAMME

	WATCH	LISTEN	READ	CREATE	WRITE	DO
YEAR 10	Watch a MASSOLIT lecture series on one of your Literature set texts.	Listen to two BBC Radio 4 'In Our Time' podcasts – on your Literature set texts.	Read a classic twentieth-century novel from the English KS4 reading list on the website.	START WRITING! Start writing your own short stories – your own flash fiction (200-500 words).	Enter writing competitions!	Get involved in debating!
YEAR 11	Watch a play of your choice and write a review of the performance	Listen to two 'In Our Time' culture podcasts.	Read a book of your choice and make a note of what you enjoyed.	START WRITING! Start writing your own short stories – your own flash fiction (200-500 words).	Choose 3 poems from this website and analyse them using what you have learnt in your class.	Enter writing competitions!

Subject information in the KS4 Options guide

- Look at subject pages very carefully
- Ensure students understand what will be studied for subjects they are considering
- Understand how students will be assessed in the subjects they intend to study
- Gain knowledge of the NEA requirements for subjects



Compulsory GCSE subjects at Gordons school



English Language



English Literature



Mathematics



Science



Modern Foreign
Langage



Compulsory subject information- Science

- In Year 9, in Science, students are placed in mixed ability streams.
- **All classes in Year 9 are taught GCSE Separate Science content for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.**
- Students are then set in Year 10 and through Year 10 and 11, will be filtered into taking either GCSEs in Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics), or taking Combined Science GCSE, **based on attainment.**

Should there be any queries, please contact
Mrs Claire Gauson-
Science Coordinator
cgauson@gordons.school



Science continued...

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Science Coordinator
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- **Combined Science** GCSE covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics and is equivalent to **two GCSEs** at the end.
- **Separate Science** is equivalent to **three GCSEs**
- It is important to note that students taking GCSE Combined Science will not be disadvantaged if they choose to study Sciences at A Level and meet minimum entry requirements for these courses.
- Any class or Set movement will be based on results from major school assessments taken in Year 9, 10 and 11.



Compulsory subject information - MFL

Why is a Modern Foreign Language compulsory at Gordon's?

- Academically valued
- Proven to help develop literacy skills
- Broader career opportunities
- Part of the English Baccalaureate



MFL Setting arrangements

- **KS4 Sets are decided at the end of Year 9**
- Sets will be based on performance in Key Assessments and the Year 9 exam.
- Students are therefore encouraged to prepare properly for these assessments.
Generally, there are two Sets for each language.
- **Set 1** will be automatically entered for Higher Tier.
- **Set 2** will generally be entered at Foundation Tier although there may be students who are entered at Higher Tier if their attainment levels warrant it.



English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a measure used in England to encourage students to take a balanced set of academically rigorous GCSE subjects. It is not a separate qualification but rather a recognition that a student has achieved a good grade in key subjects.



EBacc Subjects

- To meet the EBacc standard, students must achieve a grade 4 or above in the following subjects:
- ***Mathematics***
- ***English Language or Literature***
- ***Combined or Separate Science***
- ***A Modern Foreign Language***
- ***History or Geography (both can still be taken)***

Purpose of the EBacc

- The EBacc is designed to ensure that students keep their future education and career options open by studying a core set of academically challenging subjects. It is particularly valued by Universities and employers.



English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

Benefits	Criticisms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourages breadth in education.• Prepares students for further education or professional pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May reduce focus on creative or vocational subjects.• Some argue it doesn't suit all students' needs or interests.

- Gordon's is keen to see an increase student up-take of EBacc subjects to ensure our young people are able to access all the A Level and University courses they would wish.
- We therefore encourage all students to consider following an EBacc pathway to ensure they keep their options open for further study and future careers.

However ultimately, we want students to pick areas of strength and interest



New Subjects - Business

GCSE Business	BTEC Enterprise (Business)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More academically challenging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More vocational
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% Externally marked exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40% External assessment• 60% Internally assessed coursework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better preparation for A Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better preparation for vocational post-16 qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exam focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combined exam and coursework

Please discuss any questions you may have with, Ms Stojakovic and Mrs Brar-Gill after the presentation, who are here this evening.



Alternative Provision

- **Some students in the year group may require alternative curriculum provision at Key stage 4.**
- **This may require a bespoke offer as a result of a particular special educational need or an attainment gap where a traditional compliment of GCSE subjects may not be appropriate.**
- Myself and staff in our SEND department will be contacting students and families who we feel may be suitable for this.
- The offer will involve a more vocational approach with a narrower subject offer and potential vocational college course.
- If you feel your son or daughter may fit this criteria, and we haven't contacted you, please do get in touch.



Students making their
choices *their* choices



Options subjects available to students

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

The subjects that must be studied at Gordon's until the end of Year 11 are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Separate Sciences or Combined Science
- A Modern Foreign Language; French or German or Spanish
- Physical Education*
- PSHE*

** Public Examinations are not taken in these subjects*

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Three subjects and a reserve to be selected:

- Art & Design
- Business GCSE
- Enterprise: BTEC (Business)
- Computer Science
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Design & Technology
- Drama
- Geography
- History
- MFL: French (as a second modern foreign language)
- MFL: German (as a second modern foreign language)
- MFL: Spanish (as a second modern foreign language)
- Music
- Photography
- Physical Education (GCSE)
- Religious Education (Full Course)

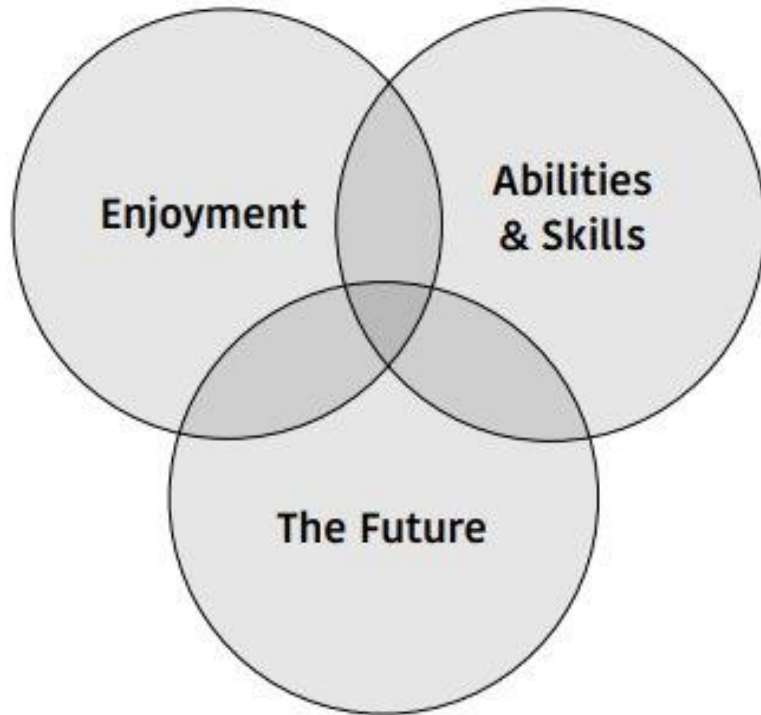
- There is no guarantee that all subjects will run.
- This is why it is important that students select a 'reserve' subject.
- Option subjects will run based on the following pre-requisites:

Student Demand

Staffing



Factors to consider when making their choices

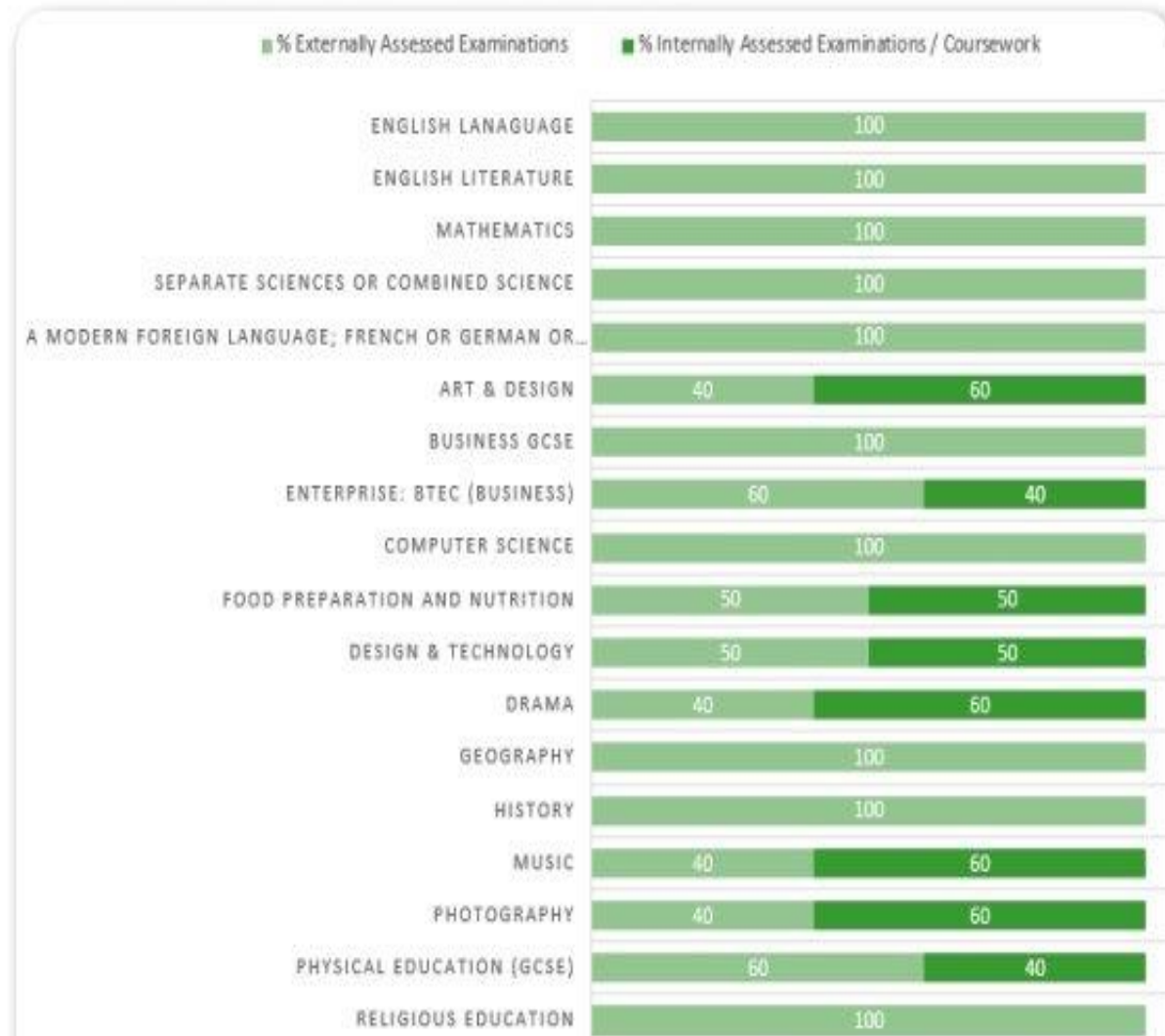


SUBJECT	ENJOYMENT	ABILITIES & SKILLS	THE FUTURE
Art and Design			
Business GCSE			
Enterprise: BTEC (Business)			
Computer Science			
Design and Technology			
Drama			
Food Preparation and Nutrition			
Geography			
History			
MFL: French (as a 2 nd MFL)			
MFL: German (as a 2 nd MFL)			
MFL: Spanish (as a 2 nd MFL)			
Music			
Physical Education GCSE			
Photography			
Religious Education (Full Course)			

Supporting Options choices

- Discuss the options as a family/at home
- Discuss with teachers and encourage students to ask specific questions
- Review the types of assessment – link to strengths and/or balance across subjects chosen

% EXAMINATIONS/COURSEWORK PER SUBJECT



6 Common pitfalls when making subject choices

1. **Peer Pressure:** Avoid choosing subjects based on friends' choices.
2. **Parent Pressure:** Pushing students into areas that may not suit them.
3. **Trends:** Picking subjects because they seem 'easier' or more popular.
4. **Research:** Ensure you are familiar with subject requirements and assessments.
5. **Preferred Teacher:** They may not be here!
6. **A Levels:** Closing doors.



Academic Consultation Evening **Tuesday 20th (Tomorrow)**

- Please use appointments with staff to discuss the subject at GCSE if your son or daughter are considering particular subjects
- Ask their advice, there is a huge amount of experience and expertise
- If you don't manage to speak to a particular Subject teacher, contact details are in the KS4 Options and Academic guide

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT CONTACT DETAILS		
Academic Enrichment	Jessica Weeks	jweeks@gordons.school
Art and Photography	Elizabeth Pankhurst	epankhurst@gordons.school
Business Studies	Nikki Stojakovic	nstojakovic@gordons.school
BTEC Enterprise	Navdeep Brar-Gill	nbrar-gill@gordons.school
Careers	Augusta Kennedy	akennedy@gordons.school
Computing	Jamie Sumsion	jsumsion@gordons.school
Design and Technology	Alice Edwards	aedwards@gordons.school
Drama	Laura McConville	lmconville@gordons.school
English	Philip Berry	pberry@gordons.school
Food and Nutrition	Clare Neale	cneale@gordons.school
Geography	Paul Schofield	pschofield@gordons.school
History	Chris Coles	ccoles@gordons.school
Learning Support	Susannah Curtis	scurtis@gordons.school
Mathematics	Mark Eaden	meaden@gordons.school
MFL: French	Isabelle Barnes	ibarnes@gordons.school
MFL: German	Simon Depoix	sdepoix@gordons.school
MFL: Spanish	Joanne Quinlan	jquinlan@gordons.school
Music	Rachel Brazendale	rbrazendale@gordons.school
PSHE Character Education	James Butler	jbutler@gordons.school
PE	Matthew Gullick	mgullick@gordons.school
RE	Fiona Lewis	flewis@gordons.school
Science and Science: Biology	Annabel Beecham	abeecham@gordons.school
Science: Chemistry	Claire Gauson	cgauson@gordons.school
Science: Coordinator	Claire Gauson	cgauson@gordons.school
Science: Physics	Anthony Wallace	awallace@gordons.school

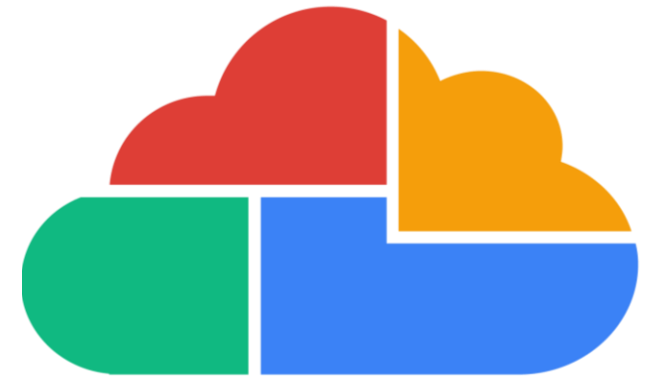


How to select courses?



How/Where to submit GCSE Subject Options choices

- Online form will appear on your child's 'My Child at School' through Bromcom.
- **This opens 21st January and will close at noon on 5th February.**
- We advise not completing this form until you have spoken with staff and considered subject choices carefully.
- **To reinforce, once choices are made, it may not be possible to change them.**




Bromcom



Where to submit GCSE Subject Options choices

Options will appear in the middle pane on the parents MCAS dashboard (example shown below)

 Options

More

Setup Name	Timeframe	Status	View Only
Year 9 GCSE Options 2025	15/01/2025 - 17/01/2025	New	Editable

- Dashboard
- Data Collection Form
- Announcements
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Detentions
- Homework
- Reports
- Timetable
- Academic Calendar
- Options
- School Correspondence

It can also be accessed via the
dashboard menu on the left-hand side



Where to submit GCSE Subject Options choices

Clicking on the link will bring up a form for completion

Option

Pick 3 choices from Option • Choose maximum 1 reserve subjects from Group Option

Choice 1	Choice 2
<div>Select Item</div>	<div>Select Item</div>
Choice 3	Reserve 1
<div>Select Item</div>	<div>Select Item</div>

Save for later

Next →



Trouble logging into My Child at School through Bromcom?

- If you are unable to log into Bromcom please contact Mrs Gwenda Weaver
- gweaver@gordons.school



Please note

A subject will 'run' based on:

- Student demand
- Staff availability

Students must select 3 option choices and a reserve choice.

*Student may **not** be able to change their selections once they have been made, so please encourage your son/daughter to select carefully and thoughtfully!*



Reminders and final thoughts

- We expect students to follow the full GCSE programme right through to the end. Dropping subjects is not something for students/parents to request.
- There are no circumstances in which a student can drop a subject to work elsewhere in private study.
- Once choices have been made, student may not drop any subjects and must give full effort until the end of Year 11.
- **98% of students last year had their first-choice subjects and did not require their reserve choice –**
However, it is essential the reserve choice is considered carefully and is a subject the student would be prepared to do should the need arise!



Questions



Choosing GCSE options should be an exciting time!

It is a great opportunity to think about what students would love to do in the future.