

Year 9 GCSE Subject Options presentation

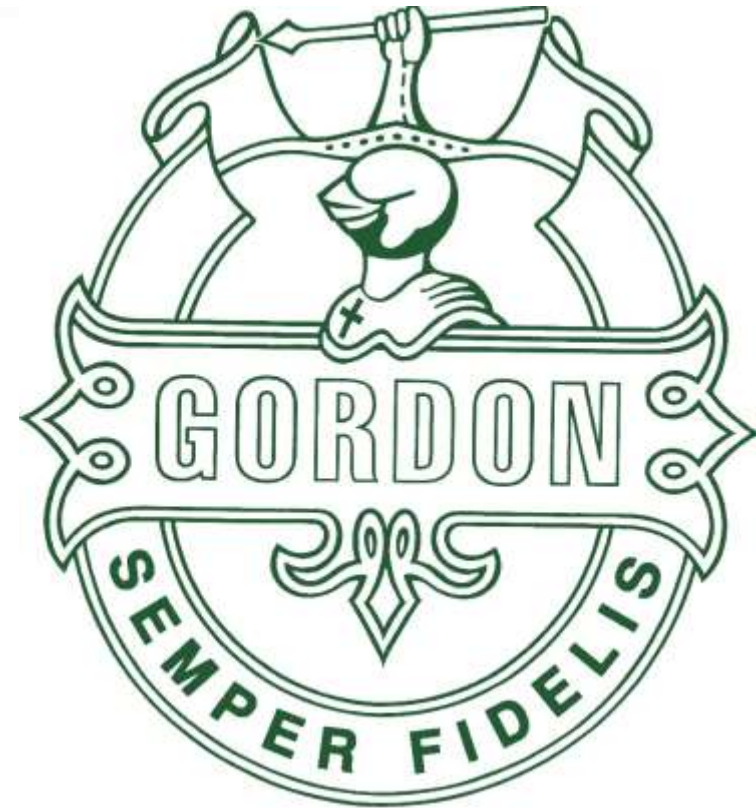
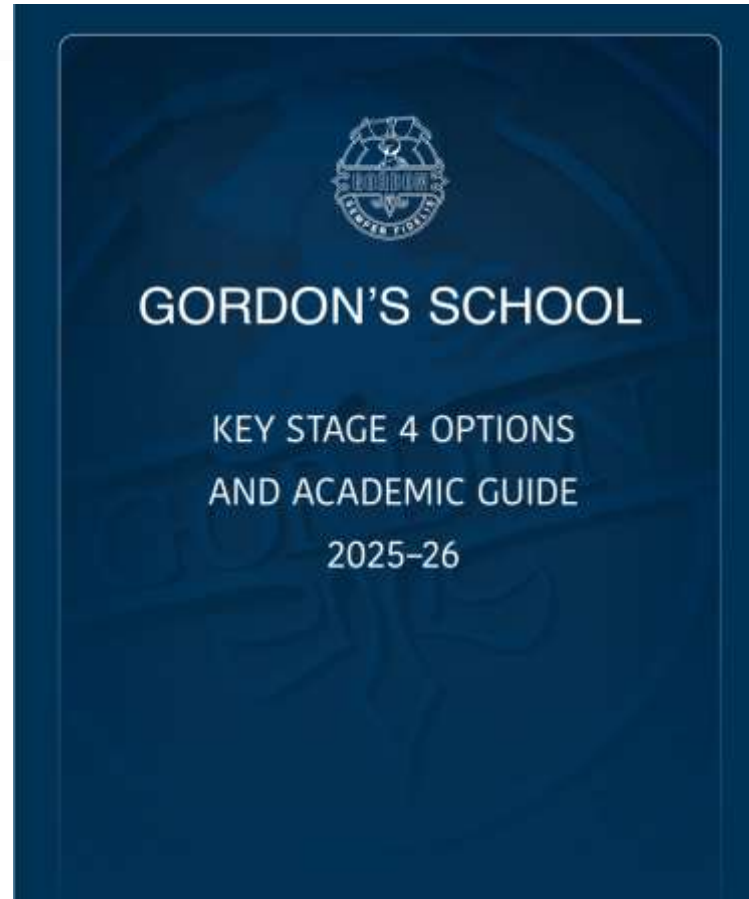
January 2025

Mr James Greggor – Head of
Lower School

Jgreggor@gordons.school

Welcome!

- 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
- Give the opportunity to ask any questions



Prior to the Christmas break



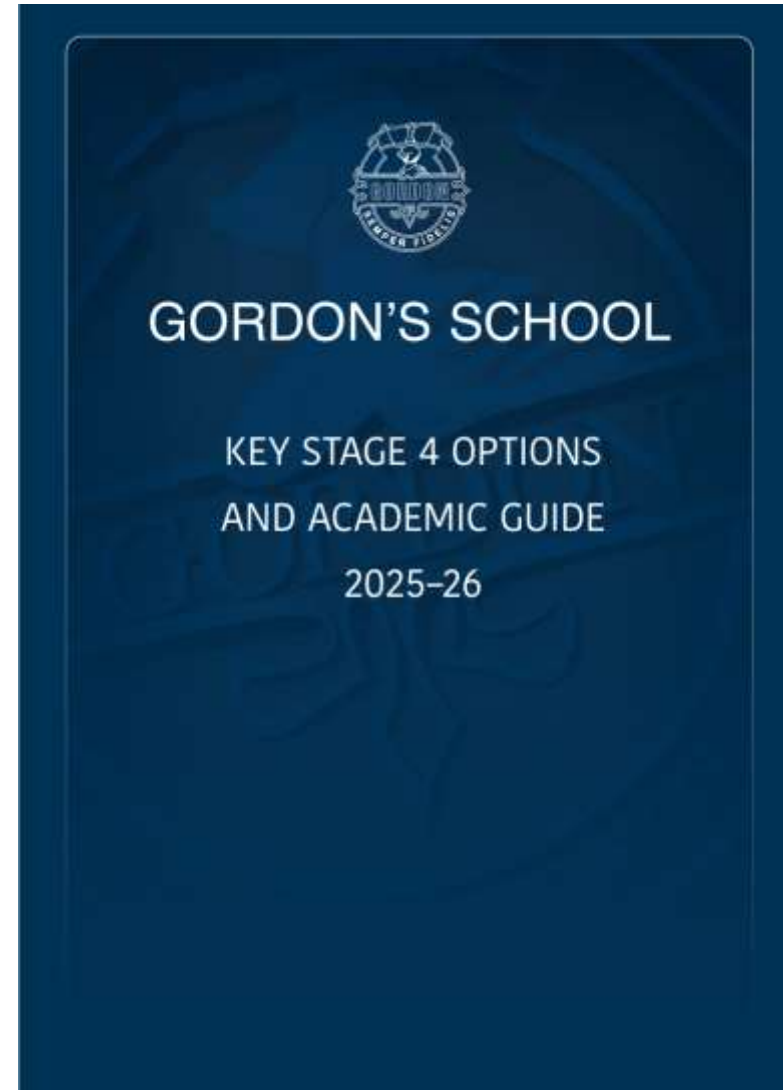
You have already been sent a link prior to the Christmas break to the ***Key stage 4 Options and Academic Guide.***



This can also be accessed via the school website.

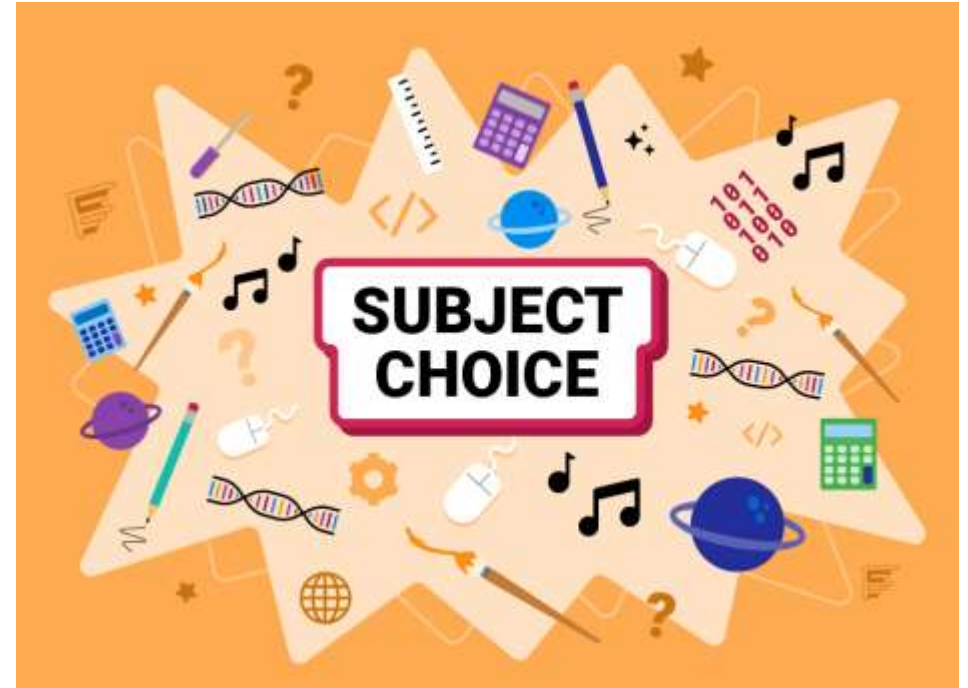


I hope students and families were able to have a look through this over the break prior to this evening.



Factors for students to consider when choosing subjects?

- **Strengths and Interests:** Encourage students to pick subjects they enjoy and are good at.
- **Future Plans:** Link subject choices to potential career paths or A-Level/college course requirements.
- **Balance:** Stress the importance of a well-rounded selection.



Common pitfalls when making subject choices

- **Peer Pressure:** Avoid choosing subjects based on friends' choices.
- **Trends:** Picking subjects because they seem 'easier' or more popular.
- **Research:** Ensure you are familiar with subject requirements and assessments.



The following are all compulsory GCSE subjects at Gordons school



English Language



English Literature



Mathematics



Science



Modern Foreign
Langage



GCSE Grading system explained?

- The grading system of 9-1 applies across all subjects.
- 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
<hr/>	
B	6
C	5
<hr/>	
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
<hr/>	
U	U



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)



Compulsory subject information - Science

- **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.

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



Compulsory subject information - Modern Foreign

Languages

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



Compulsory subject information – 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 (or the equivalent) in the following categories:
 - **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

- Encourages breadth in education.
- Prepares students for further education or professional pathways.

Criticisms

- 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



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





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 and Academic guide

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



Business – GCSE and BTEC offer

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% Externally marked exam• 60% Internally assessed work
<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 the course leader, Mrs N. Brar-Gill and Mrs N. Barnes.



Key points to reinforce for Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and 11)

- 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 is no circumstance in which a student can drop a subject to work elsewhere in private study.
- Alternative Provision in very limited circumstances may be off site.



Academic Consultation Evening Tuesday 21st (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

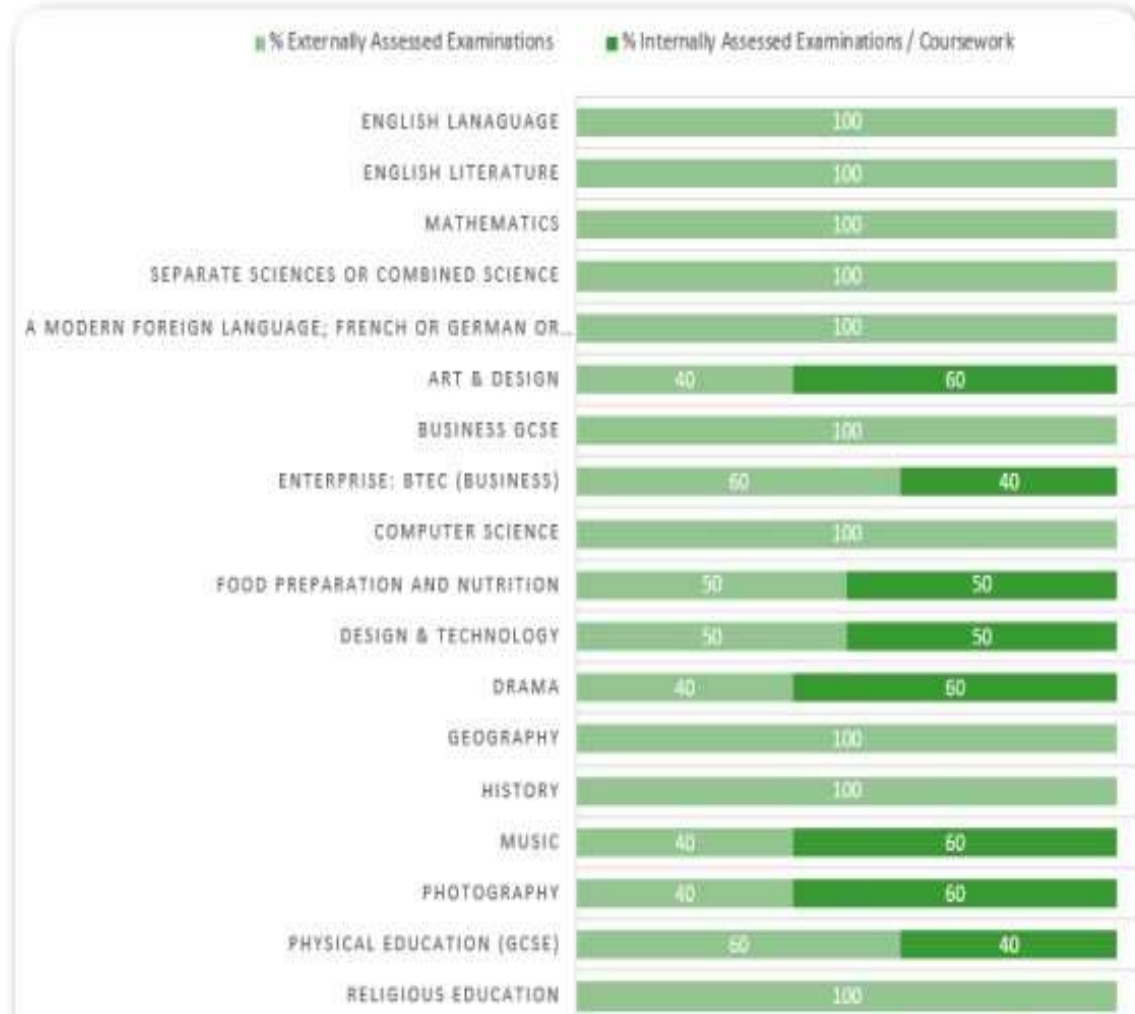
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT CONTACT DETAILS		
Academic Enrichment	Jessica Weeks	jweeks@gordons.school
Art and Photography	Gabriella Croci	gcroci@gordons.school
Business and Enterprise	Navdeep Brar-Gill	nbrar-gill@gordons.school
Careers	Augusta Kennedy	akennedy@gordons.school
Computing	Jamie Sumsion	jsumsion@gordons.school
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	Lucy Mernagh	lmernagh@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 Guillick	mguillick@gordons.school
RE	Fiona Lewis	flewis@gordons.school
Science and Science: Biology	Annabel Beecham	abeecham@gordons.school
Science: Chemistry	Frances Radley	fradley@gordons.school
Science: Coordinator	Claire Gauson	cgauson@gordons.school
Science: Physics	Anthony Wallace	awallace@gordons.school



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

% EXAMINATIONS/COURSEWORK PER SUBJECT



Reasons which may not support the most suitable choices

'I've heard it's easy'

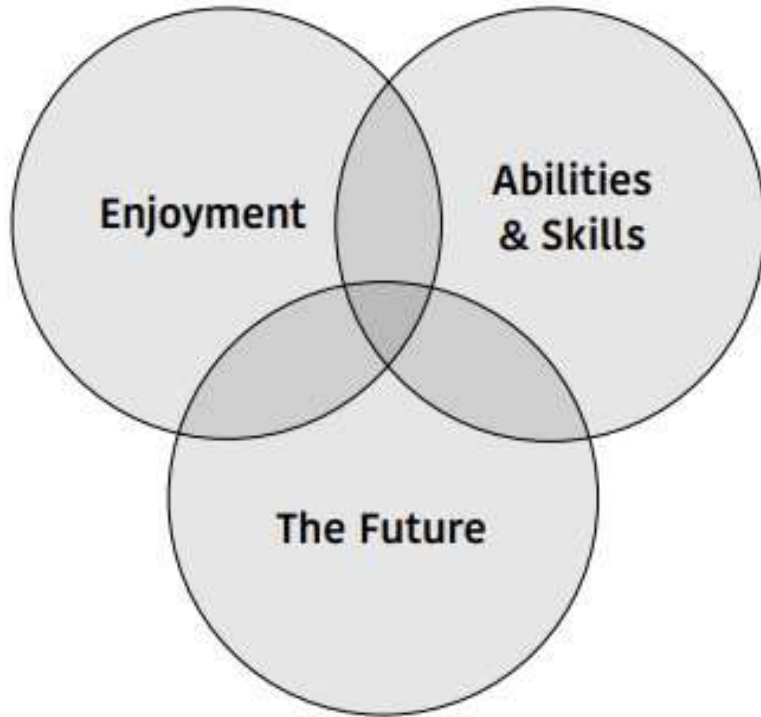
'All my friends are taking it'

'I like my teacher'

'My parents want me to take it'



Supporting Options choices considerations



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)			
Travel & Tourism BTEC			



Supporting Options choices

GORDON'S SIXTH FORM SUBJECT ENTRANCE CRITERIA

Entry 2026 Onwards	Notes	Minimum Entry Requirements: Five GCSE grades 9 – 5 including Grade 5 in English & Mathematics for any A level course
Subject	Notes	The expected entry criteria for each subject is shown below:
Art *	If destination is Architecture, Art typically is taken with Mathematics and/or Physics.	GCSE grade 6 in Art or Photography.
Biology	Needed for some Sports Science subjects at University. Highly recommended for Medicine. Strongly recommended that students have a GCSE English and Mathematics grade 6.	GCSE grade 7-7 in Combined Science, or grade 7 in Biology and grade 6 in Chemistry if Separate Sciences studied.
Business		GCSE grade 6 in Business or Distinction in BTEC Enterprise (Business) if studied. If not studied, grade 5 in English and Mathematics.
Chemistry	Required for Medicine. Complements A Level Biology strongly recommended that students have a strong foundation in Mathematics with a grade 6 at GCSE.	GCSE grade 7 in Chemistry or 7-7 in Combined Science.
Computer Science	Strongly recommended to be taken with Mathematics.	GCSE grade 6 in Computer Science if studied. If not studied, grade 5 in English, and a GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics is required.
Drama & Theatre Studies *	If no GCSE in Drama, previous drama experience strongly recommended.	GCSE grade 6 in Drama if studied. If not studied, GCSE grade 5 in English is required.
Design & Technology *	Strongly advisable to those wishing to study Engineering, Architecture, Product/Graphic Design and aligns well with Arts or STEM subjects. Strongly recommended that students have a strong foundation in Mathematics with a grade 6 at GCSE.	GCSE grade 6 in Technology if studied. If not studied, grade 6 in English and Mathematics.
Economics		GCSE grade 6 in Economics if studied, and GCSE grade 6 in Mathematics. If not studied, grade 5 in English and grade 6 in Mathematics.
English Language		GCSE grade 6 in English Language.
English Literature		GCSE grade 6 in English Literature and grade 6 English Language.
French	Exceptions may be made for native speakers.	GCSE grade 6 in French.
German	Exceptions may be made for native speakers.	GCSE grade 6 in German.
Geography	Biology usually needed if planning to study Geology at University.	GCSE grade 6 in Geography and grade 6 in Mathematics.
History		GCSE grade 6 in History and grade 6 in English Literature.
Mathematics	Mathematics is required for Physics or Engineering. Further Mathematics also needed if Mathematics to be studied at a Russell Group University.	GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics.
Further Mathematics		GCSE grade 8 in Mathematics & must study A Level Mathematics over two years.
Media *		GCSE grade 5 in either English Language or English Literature.
Music	Mathematics needed to study Music Technology at some Universities.	GCSE grade 6 in Music plus minimum grade 5 instrumental/vocal. If a student has not studied Music, then a Grade 5 Instrumental/vocal (any board) and Grade 3 Theory (ABRSM) is required.
Physical Education *	30% of the final A Level grade is practical. Students should be regularly competing at school 1st team standard. If subject studied at GCSE and a grade lower than 5 is achieved, the alternative entry requirements will not be considered.	GCSE grade 6 in Physical Education, or grade 5 in English and grade 6 in Biology GCSE, or 6-6 in Combined Science GCSE.
Physics	Both Mathematics and Physics needed for Physics or Engineering at most Universities.	GCSE grade 7 in Physics or 7-7 in Combined science and a GCSE grade 7 in Maths. A level Physics must be accompanied by Mathematics in Year 12.
Photography		GCSE grade 6 in Art or Photography.
Psychology	Strongly recommended to be taken with other science subject(s) as some Psychology degrees ask for this.	A GCSE grade 6 in Maths and grade 5 in Biology, or grades 6-6 if double sciences studied, and a grade 5 in English.
Sociology *		GCSE grade 5 in either English Language or English Literature.
Spanish	Exceptions may be made for native speakers.	GCSE grade 6 in Spanish.
Other Level 3 courses on offer: Single BTEC Courses unless stated		Minimum Entry Requirements: Five GCSE grades 9 – 4 including Grade 4 in English & Mathematics for any BTEC course
Business (BTEC) Level 3 Extended Certificate	Please note, this subject has a high maths content. Equivalent to one A level	GCSE grade 4 in English and Mathematics are required. Where Business Enterprise level 2 is studied, aMerit is required.
Diploma in Sport (BTEC) Level 3	Double BTEC course, equivalent to two A Levels	GCSE grade 4 in English and Mathematics are required.
Supporting information:		
1. For the sciences, IGCSE Single Award Science (or CIE IGCSE Cambridge Combined Science) is not part of the minimum entry requirement.		
2. In terms of access to A Level courses, IGCSE qualifications are considered equal to ordinary GCSE qualifications. Students taking IGCSE Double Award Science require a grade AA or 7-7 to access any of the three sciences and require a grade BB to access Psychology.		
3. Russell Group facilitating subjects are: Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, History, Geography, Modern and Classical Languages and English Literature. Students are advised to research this area before selecting A Level courses.		
4. Consider accompanying these subjects with facilitating subjects when applying to Russell Group Universities.		



- **Have an open mind** – we have a wide range of co-curricular activities that supplement our curriculum.
- **Careers** – are the options going to narrow or broaden opportunities in the future? Know what you need.
- **Pay attention to the subject entry criteria for Gordon's Sixth Form** - these are all found in the Key Stage 4 Options and Academic Guide.

Important considerations and next steps!

A subject will 'run' based on:

- Student demand
- Staff availability

Students must select 3 option choices and a reserve choice.

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



Students requiring 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.



Next steps!

TO DO

- Read the Options Booklet
- Students should seek advice from their teaching staff and parents ahead of choice submission

DEADLINE FOR OPTIONS CHOICES:
Wednesday 5th February



How/Where to submit GCSE Subject Options choices

- Online form will appear on your child's 'My Child at School' through Bromcom.
- **This opens 20th 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 these are unable to be changed.**



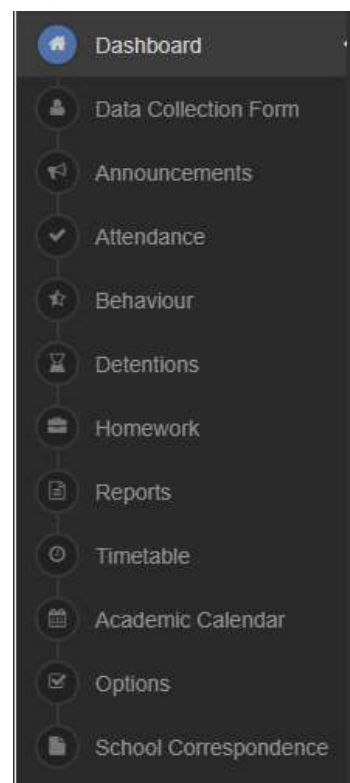
Bromcom



Where to submit GCSE Subject Options choices

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

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



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



Bromcom



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
Select Item ▼	Select Item ▼
Choice 3	Reserve 1
Select Item ▼	Select Item ▼

[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



Questions



Mr James Greggor – Head of Lower School

Jgreggor@gordons.school

Choosing your options should be an exciting time!

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

