

HOLY TRINITY

A Catholic and Church of England Voluntary Academy
The Hallam Schools' Partnership Academy Trust

YEAR 9 OPTIONS 2021



The GCSE Curriculum

The Year 9 Options process is a very important stage in your life. For the first time you will make key decisions as to which subjects you would like to choose to study to GCSE and possibly beyond.

To help you decide we have produced a booklet which outlines the subjects available, as well as explain the qualification and assessment details for course.

There has been a great deal of change in the educational landscape over recent years as new courses and qualifications have been introduced.

All GCSE courses are assessed at the end of the two year course and are graded on a system of number rather than letter grades. These will be on a scale from 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest. A grade 5 represents a 'good' pass and a grade 4 represents a 'standard' pass.

Despite the unique situation we currently find ourselves in, we want to make sure that you all get the opportunity to discuss your choices and have the opportunity to ask questions and develop your own understanding of the option process.

However, we appreciate that you will not have the opportunity for personal interactions with members of staff at present, but we have a number of ways to help you.



GCSE Curriculum choices

Our priority is to provide you with courses that will enable all of you to maximise your potential and enhance your opportunities after you leave Holy Trinity and move on to the next stage of your education.

We have identified a 'core curriculum' that the majority of students will study. We believe that this offers you a broad range of subjects in order to prepare you for life after Holy Trinity.

The core curriculum includes:-

- English Language
- English Literature
- French
- Religious Studies
- Mathematics
- Science

All students then choose a Humanities subject
- they can choose between
History or Geography



Optional Subjects

Later today your parents / carers will get a text with a link to the appropriate booklet for you with all the information in about the compulsory subjects and the optional subjects – please look through it carefully.

We have a broad range of subjects to choose from across the three guided pathways



Art (Fine Art)
Business
Computer Science
Creative I Media
Drama
Engineering
French
Geography

Health & Social Care
History
Hospitality
Music
Sports Science
Statistics
Triple Science

How should I make my choices

DO -

1. Talk to someone who know you best as a person
2. Talk to your Form Tutor and to Mr. Smith your Head of Standards - they knows you and your strengths in school
3. Talk to your subject teachers, who can tell you about the individual courses
4. Ask the Senior Leadership Team, who can also give you information about jobs and future courses (tdolan@holytrinitybarnsley.org)
5. Arrange to speak to our careers team - Mr McInerney (gmcinerney@holytrinitybarnsley.org) or Miss Hardcastle (hhardcastle@holytrinitybarnsley.org) or go onto some careers websites
6. Look at the websites for colleges and universities as these can help also help inform your choices
7. Take subjects that you enjoy: there is time to specialise further later on
8. Take subjects that you are good at: there is something to be said for working to your strengths
7. You – don't forget to trust yourself to make the right decisions

DON'T -

1. Choose a subject because your friend is doing it
2. Choose a subject because you particularly like a teacher: there is no guarantee that they will teach your class
3. Take subjects purely to please other people



How do I complete the form?

Follow the link in the text message to take you to your Google form on the school website, for your guided pathway (the colour is the same as the colour on your booklet)

STEP 1:

Make sure you enter your full name and then click 'next'

The image shows three overlapping screenshots of Google Forms for Year 9 GCSE Options. The top screenshot is for the Yellow pathway, the middle for the Red pathway, and the bottom for the Blue pathway. Each form has a header with the Holy Trinity logo and the pathway name. The instructions are: "Please use this form to select your GCSE option choices from the drop down menus. Please make your choices once you have read the GCSE booklet available on the website and in Term 2 and given yourself time to think about which subjects you would like to study. Using the drop down menus, choose the following: Choice of Humanities (either History or Geography) Option 1 choice Option 2 choice One reserve choice (just in case)". The bottom screenshot shows a text input field for "1. *What is your full name?" and a "Click 'Submit'" button.

STEP 2:

Using the drop down menu, choose the following:

- Choice of Humanities (either History or Geography)
- Option 1 choice
- Option 2 choice
- One reserve choice (just in case)

Click 'Submit'

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form for the Year 9 GCSE Options Red pathway. The form is titled "Year 9 GCSE Options Red pathway 2021 - 2023". It has two tabs: "Questions" and "Responses". The "Questions" tab is active. The form contains two questions:

2. Humanities subject *
 - History
 - Geography
3. GCSE Option choice 1 *
 - Art
 - Business
 - Computer Science
 - Creative I Media
 - Drama
 - Engineering
 - Geography
 - Health & Social Care
 - History
 - Hospitality
 - Music
 - Sports Science

What happens next?

Everyone's responses will be collated by the school and then work on creating student timetables will begin. We may contact students and their parents/carers to discuss their choices with them. As you will appreciate, this is a very time consuming job to try and maximise the success of all the students' choices. Due to the current situation, we ask for you to be patient while this is being processed.

Key dates:

Y9 Options booklet/letters issued **Wednesday 10th February 2021**

Y9 Options interviews available from **Wednesday 10th February 2021** (please email Mr. McInerney or Miss Hardcastle and they will arrange a Teams appointment or phone call with you)

Y9 Options forms **to be returned** (electronically) **Wednesday 24th February 2021**

Confirmation letters to follow w/c **Monday 12th April 2021**



Frequently Asked Questions

What if I don't know what I want to do when I leave school?

That is not unusual at this stage. We would always recommend choosing options that give you a broad and balanced curriculum overall. This will mean that you leave your options open to specialise at a later date. Choose subjects you enjoy.

I have to do certain subjects for my chosen career path, so what should I do?

A very small number of careers may require specific subjects to be studied, but this is usually the case after GCSE's. However, if you know this is the case then choose the subjects that you need. If you are unsure about what these may be, then use various careers or college websites to find out.

Why are some subjects compulsory and not others?

The government decides some of the compulsory subjects, such as English and Mathematics, and others are decisions that have been taken by the school. For example, RS is studied by all pupils up to GCSE due to the fact that we are a Faith school. Other subjects have been made compulsory as we feel that these best prepare pupils for success after they leave Holy Trinity.

Who can a contact for help?

Mr. Smith is the Head of Standards Year 9 and has a strong overview of pupil progress and attitude to learning across all subjects. Mrs Dolan can answer questions regarding the options process but not about individual progress in subjects. Heads of Department are in charge of each subject area and can give more information on qualifications.

Will I get all my choices?

We try to ensure that all students get their chosen options, however, this is not always the case. There are a number of reasons why a pupil may not be able to study their chosen options: The pupil may have chosen a 'banned combination,' subjects may clash and be timetabled at the same time or too few pupils choose the subject resulting in it not running that year. If a pupil cannot study their chosen option they will be given their 'reserve' choice.

Can I just put anything for my reserve choice?

We recommend you think carefully about your reserve choice. I know this can be difficult, but in the event you have to study this subject, it is important that you have given it proper thought and chosen wisely.

What if I choose a subject and I get a teacher I was not expecting?

It is important to choose 'the subject and not the 'teacher.' You may not be assigned a particular teacher or staffing may change. Refer back to the 'do's and don'ts' section of the presentation.

