



The Castle School

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GCSE OPTIONS GUIDANCE 2022-2024 COHORT – JANUARY 2022 YEAR 9 OPTIONS PROCESS.

Important Dates:

w/c Monday 13 December – Year 9 Curriculum Guides sent home.

Friday 7 January – Year 9 Options Assembly.

Monday 17 January – 6.00-8.00pm **GCSE Options Evening**, opportunity to talk to teachers and students for all subjects, this is an essential fact-finding opportunity.

Tuesday 18 January – online booking open for individual interviews for 25 January.

Tuesday 25 January – 4.30-7.00pm individual option interviews – only if parents and students have outstanding questions/concerns.

Friday 4 February – Deadline for options returns to Form Tutor.

Dear Parents/Carers

Year 9 students are now at the stage where they need to choose their GCSE courses for Years 10 and 11.

Compulsory subjects:

English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (most will take two GCSEs in Science known as Combined Award Science).

All will study short course RE in Year 10 only, PSHE and Physical Education.

Some of the Year 9s are currently studying a first GCSE after school. However, all students now need to select three subjects to study in Year 10 and 11.

Details of the option subjects are in the curriculum guide, see attached. This guide gives you information to help make decisions. You will receive a link to a Microsoft Form by email on Tuesday 18 January, after the information evening. Once your child has decided on their option subjects please complete the form and submit online. The deadline for option choices is **Friday 4 February**. If you have any difficulty completing the form, please contact the school.

At this stage we have built one option block, named 'Option 1'. The next is a free choice for students. Our reasoning behind this is to maximise the potential to give everyone as many of their options as possible, ideally most will get three out of three. If a subject does not attract a minimum number of students, we may not be able to put this on. If an allocation difficulty arises, the students will be informed and we will work together to select different options.

Advice

There are basic, common sense rules for students to follow when making their option choices. It is most unwise to choose a particular subject because a friend is doing so, or because of liking or disliking a particular teacher. There is no certainty at all that friends will be allocated to the same teaching group, nor that they will be with the teacher of their choice.

Options should be made according to these principles:

- ability in the subject;
- interest in, and liking for, the subject itself;
- relevance of the subject to future career (if known);
- preferred assessment style (eg look at the balance between non-examined assessment (NEA) and terminal exams).

It is essential for the students to be proactive in finding out about the courses. Where a student does not have any definite career ideas, it is wise to aim for a balanced choice of subjects which would ensure good all-round education and flexibility for future career choices.

Following the Options Evening on 17 January, if you or your child still have questions, there will be an opportunity to speak with the Head of House or your child's tutor on Tuesday 25 January 2022.

All the best, please make good use of the support and guidance that is available to you.

Yours sincerely



Mr J Thomson
Deputy Headteacher

ASSESSMENT TABLE

Option 1

You need to select one subject from the below list (these subjects also appear in the later list, so you are able to choose more than one of these subjects).

GCSE Computer Science	Exams: 2x50%
GCSE French	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE Geography	Exams: 1x35% 1x35% 1x30%
GCSE German	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE History	Exams: 2x40% 1x20%
GCSE Mandarin	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE Spanish	Exams: 4x25%

Options 2 and 3

You need to select a further two subjects from this list. You will also need to select a reserve:

GCSE Art & Design : Fine Art	Non-Examined Assessment (NEA): 1x60% Exam: 1x40%
GCSE Art & Design : Photography	
GCSE Art & Design : Textile Design	
Child Development Cambridge Nationals	CW: 2x25% Exam: 1x50%
GCSE Computer Science	Exams: 2x50%
GCSE Dance	CW: 1x60% Exam: 1x40%
GCSE Drama	NEA: 2x30% Exam: 1x40%
GCSE Design Technology	NEA: 1x50% Exam: 1x50%
Engineering Design Cambridge Nationals	CW: 3x25% Exam: 1x25%
GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition	NEA: 1x50% Exam: 1x50%
GCSE French	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE Geography	Exams: 1x35% 1x35% 1x30%
GCSE German	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE History	Exams: 2x40% 1x20%
ICT Technical Award	NEA: 1x50% Exam: 1x50%
GCSE Mandarin	Exams: 4x25%
GCSE Music	NEA: 2x30% Exam: 1x40%
OR BTEC Music	NEA: 2x30% Exam: 1x40%
GCSE PE	NEA: 1x40% Exams: 1x36% 1x24%
OR BTEC Sport	NEA: 4x25%
GCSE Religion and Philosophy	Exams: 2x50%
GCSE Spanish	Exams: 4x25%
You cannot select a subject from either list if you are already doing this as a First GCSE on a Tuesday evening after school.	