



13 January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Year 8 assessment week and options – Update for parents and students

I am writing to further inform you of the important events taking place in the next few weeks, which aim to offer guidance and support for both you and your child regarding their option choices. The calendared dates are shown below.

Date	Event	Details
11-15 January	Year 8 Assessment Week	There will no longer be a formal assessment week, but teachers will be assessing the work completed by students during their remote learning.
19 January	Key Stage 4 booklet	Options booklet containing information about the options process and the subjects your child can opt for. A copy of the booklet will be sent to you via email and will be available on the school website.
19 January	Options form published	The form to be filled in to express your child's preferences. This will contain a recommendation about the types of subjects your child is best suited to study. This will be sent via email.
18- 22 January	Options Taster Sessions	<p>Students will receive a 30 minute 'taster' session in the following subjects during their lesson time that week: Computer Science, Creative iMedia, Drama, Music, PE, Photography, Product Design and Food and Nutrition. Please note this may mean that teachers will deliver a synchronous lesson extra to the remote learning timetable.</p> <p>Business Taster sessions. These are for students interested in finding out more about Business Studies GCSE.</p> <p>M side of the year group 19 January 9:00am Click here to join the meeting. Meeting ID: 931 9735 0696 Passcode: 302467</p> <p>E side of the year group 19 January 9:30am Click here to join the meeting. Meeting ID: 959 5864 8573 Passcode: 908758</p> <p>Economics Taster session 19 January 11:15am Click here to join the meeting. Meeting ID: 983 4950 2084 Passcode: 795876</p> <p>Please note that Economics has entry requirements of 3L in both Maths and English in students' DCP2 results.</p>
21 January	Option Information	Information videos from the Curriculum Leaders of each option subject will be available on the school website from 21 January. These will provide key information regarding each subject area.

	published on website	
28 January	Key Stage 4 6.00pm Options Evening	Information about the options process and the opportunity to ask questions to the Curriculum Leaders of the optional subjects.
08 February	Report	Data Collection Point 2 provides a report from your child's current subject teachers.
24 th February - 5 th March	Individual Student Meeting	Each Year 8 student will meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team for 10 minutes to discuss their options. If lockdown continues, this will take place virtually.
25 February	Year 8 Progress Meeting	An opportunity to meet (virtually) with your child's current teachers to discuss progress. Mrs Gibbs will also be available to discuss the options process and selections with you.
1 March (PM)	Options surgeries	Optional 15-minute consultations by appointment with Mrs Gibbs for parents and students who may have further questions or issues about the options.
3 March (AM)	Options surgeries	Optional 15-minute consultations by appointment with Mrs Gibbs for parents and students who may have further questions or issues about the options.
5 March (AM)	Option form submission deadline	Option forms must be submitted by Year 8 students to their tutor.

Options Booklet, Recommended Pathway and Option Form

On Tuesday 19 January, your child will be given an options booklet in advance of the Options Evening. A letter giving the school's recommendation as to which curriculum pathway your child should follow including an options form will also be given out. This form should be filled in and returned by **Friday 5 March**.

The options booklet can be used, in conjunction with the information evening and progress meetings, to help you and your child make options choices.

Curriculum Pathways

To help guide students and parents in their selection of subjects we place all students into Options Pathways. These **do not** represent any kind of streaming or setting process. Rather, they are a means of guiding students and parents towards the subjects that experience has shown those students in that particular pathway are likely to succeed in.

These pathways are:

Blue – students are required to study the English Baccalaureate (please see below for further details).

Green – the majority of students are advised to study the English Baccalaureate but may not do so if they choose not to opt to study a language.

Yellow – students are not required to study the English Baccalaureate and will have an increased number of practical or vocational subjects available to them.

Core Curriculum

Irrespective of their pathway, all students will study for GCSEs in:

- English Language and Literature;
- Mathematics;
- Science;
- At least one of History or Geography;
- Religious Studies.

English Baccalaureate

The majority of students in Year 8 will be required to study those subjects that make up what is known as the 'English Baccalaureate'. These are English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish).

Economics and Computer Studies

Some subjects have entry requirements

- Computer Science – 3L in Mathematics by the time of the report in February 2021;
- Economics - 3L in both Mathematics and English by the time of the report in February 2021.

Options Information Evening

There will be an Options Information Evening for all Year 8 parents and students on Thursday 28 January 2021.

Students and their parents are invited to attend a Zoom meeting at 6.00pm. The meeting will give an outline of the options process and the factors that students and their parents should consider. When the presentation is over, at approximately 6.20pm, parents and students will have the opportunity to ask any questions to the curriculum leaders of option subjects. Please ensure you have watched the relevant presentations on the school website in advance.

I should stress that this is **not** an evening to discuss the progress of individual students.

Parents' Evening

Parent consultation meetings where you have an opportunity to meet, virtually, with your child's subject teachers are scheduled for Thursday 25 February. Please note that students are encouraged to attend. Appointments can be made nearer the time via the Parents Evening System.

The Consultation Sessions

On Monday 1 March (PM) and on Wednesday 3 March (AM), I will be available to answer any questions that you may still have about your child's options. To book one of the available 15-minute appointments, please contact the school's reception from 10.00am on 22 February. Your child will also be able to attend the meeting if you wish. A Zoom link will be sent in advance, please make sure that the school has your current email address.

Any further questions regarding the Year 8 Options process, please contact the school office and your query will be passed on to the relevant person.

Yours sincerely

S. Gibbs

J. Rabin

Mrs S Gibbs
Deputy Headteacher

Mr J Rabin
Head of Year 8