

GCSE Options

Mr Bland

Deputy Headteacher

Choice...

So far students have had little choice about what subjects they study at school.

As they progress through education they will have more choice.

At high school there are some subjects that they will ALWAYS have to study.



We review and change the options process every year.

We consider...

What we think is best for students

Government policy

Financial situation

Staffing considerations

Analysis of previous results



Common questions - Science

Core students will have two biology, two chemistry and two physics lessons a week.

For GCSEs they will sit 6 exams, each an hour and a quarter long.

The marks for these exams are combined and give a combined science worth 2 GCSEs.

If a student chooses separate science as an option they will have the same six lessons **plus** two or three (depending on year) timetabled lessons to cover the extra content.

They will still sit 6 exams, but they are an hour and three quarters.

This leads to **THREE** separate GCSEs, one in biology, one chemistry and one physics.

Separate sciences is strongly recommended for students considering STEM careers.

Common questions - PE

All students must do a minimum of one hour of PE per week.

This is not examined and does not lead to a qualification.

Students can also choose PE as one of their options.

The PE at KS4 is a level 2 V-Cert.



Common questions - V-Cert or GCSE?

Educational Level: Both are Level 2 qualifications. This means achieving a Level 2 V-Cert is officially equivalent to passing a GCSE at grades 4–9 (the old C–A* grades).

Next Steps: Both are fully recognized by colleges and employers, meaning either qualification can be used to progress to Level 3 study, such as A-Levels, T-Levels, BTECs, or apprenticeships.

Common questions - V-Cert or GCSE?

Learning Focus: GCSEs are generally academic and theoretical (e.g., History, Science). V-Certs are vocational and applied, focusing on real-world skills for specific career sectors (e.g., Hospitality and catering).

How You Are Tested: GCSEs are almost always assessed through written exams at the very end of the course, although some creative subjects include a practical element. V-Certs take a blended approach, assessing students through a mix of hands-on coursework projects (internal assessment) and written exams (external assessment).

Grading System: GCSEs are graded on a numerical scale from 1 up to 9 (highest) . Level 2 V-Certs are graded using letters: Pass (P), Merit (M), Distinction (D), and Distinction* (D*).

Options

We are very proud to be able to offer rich and diverse options that give equal weighting to a broad number of subjects, including creative, sporting, traditionally academic and technical level 2 V-Cert qualifications. This comes at a time when schools are under intense budgetary pressure.

Whilst we hope that it does not happen, if there is not enough demand for some courses the school will not be able to fund them.



What are my options and
how do I choose?

It is a different process this year!

Previously students chose subjects from option blocks.

I would make the blocks beforehand as a best guess to what students would like.

It is inevitable that for some students their top choices would be in the same block.

Some students struggle to find anything that they would like to study in one block.

This year

Students will rank their choices in order.

I will then make the option blocks retrospectively to give the best possible match for the majority of students.

Not everyone will get their first choice option, but most will.

There are both a maximum and a minimum class size, usually 32.

Some subjects such as DT have to be even smaller for safety reasons.

Staff members will speak to individual students if there is a problem with class sizes.

If necessary we will decide the best courses for students based on a range of factors such as their ability and their attitude to learning both at home and in class for a given subject.

How to choose...

Complete the google form, that I will share with students, by the end of Easter break at the latest.

To complete the form students must be logged in to the device with their school account.

Option 1

You have to choose either Geography or History.

The lessons are at the same time so you can not do both.

Option 1.



Do you want to study Geography or History?

Geography

History

Options 2 and 3

You will rank the options in order from the one that you most want to do to the one that you least want to do.

Almost all students will get their first choice, unless the subject is over subscribed.

Most will also get their second.

Nobody will get their very low down choices.

Options 2 and 3, to rank

Art GCSE

Business Studies GCSE

Computer Science GCSE

Design Technology GCSE

Drama GCSE

Health and Social Care (V-Cert)

Hospitality and Catering (V-Cert)

Music GCSE

PE (V-Cert)

Religious Studies GCSE

Separate Science GCSE

Sociology GCSE

Spanish GCSE

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Art	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer Science	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drama	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health and Social Care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality and Catering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious Studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Separate Science	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sociology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1 Separate Science

2 Computer Science

3 Music

4 Design Technology

5 Business Studies

6 Sociology

Deadline - end of Monday 13th (first day back)

There is no first come first served. All students who get their choices in before the deadline will be treated equally.

I will start working on the sets Tuesday 14th.

Any students who have not replied by that point will be lowest priority if a set is full.

Things to think about - students

Don't choose something just because your friend is doing it, there will be several classes and you may not be in the same class as your friend even if you take exactly the same options.

Discuss your thoughts with your family or carers.

You will not be able to change your choice once you have started year ten.

Choose the course, not the teacher - teachers change.

How do I find more information?



The screenshot shows the website for Whitworth Community High School. The header includes the school logo, name, and tagline "Climbing Higher". Navigation links include Home, About Us, Key Information, News and Events, Curriculum and Assessment, Students, and Safeguarding. A dropdown menu is open over the "Curriculum and Assessment" link, listing options: Able, Gifted and Talented, Assessment, Curriculum Statement, Faculty Curriculum Information (highlighted), Reading, and SEND. The main content area features a "Latest News" section with two articles and a "Calendar Dates" section with two events.

Whitworth Community High School
Climbing Higher

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Home About Us Key Information News and Events Curriculum and Assessment Students Safeguarding

Latest News

Whitworth Muay Thai boxer fundrais...
6th May

Boy, 14, who 'had free time' earns £1.3...
25th March

→ Read more news

Calendar Dates

12th May
GCSE exams start

14th May
Y9 Parents' Evening 4-6pm

→ View all dates

Able, Gifted and Talented

Assessment

Curriculum Statement

Faculty Curriculum Information

Reading

SEND

Ask the teacher! If you are interested in a subject then ask the teachers who lead that subject what sort of things they do.

There are links to each subject on the school's website.

You have been given an options booklet with more information.

At some point this evening...

Please complete the parent feedback form.

GCSE Options

A copy of these slides will be on the school website.

I am available all evening to answer questions
except when I am in here for these talks.

Any questions?