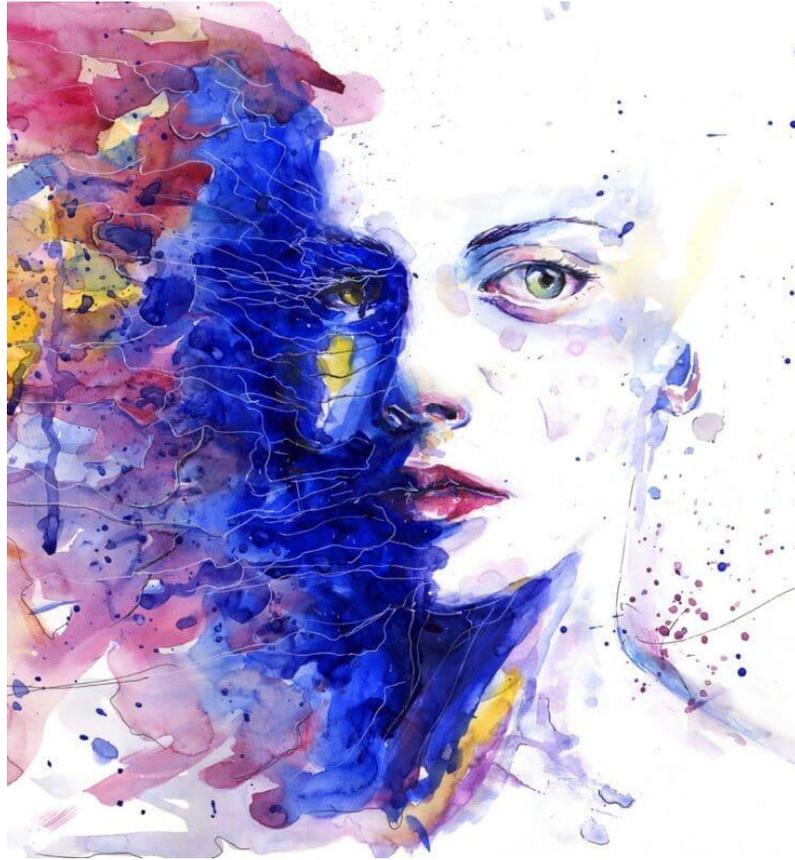
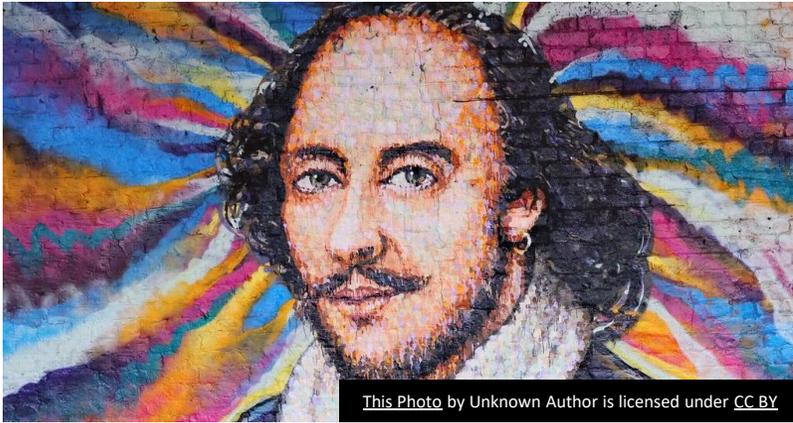




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Year 9 Preferences 2026

How does the process work?

What will do students study in Years 10 and 11?

All students will study:

- **Maths** (1 GCSE),
- **English Language** (1 GCSE),
- **English Literature** (1 GCSE),
- **Combined Science** (2 GCSEs).

You may choose to study Chemistry, Physics and Biology separately (Triple Science) through the preferences process, gaining three GCSEs in Science subjects.

All students will also have lessons in **PE** and **Religious Studies, Self and Society (RS,S&S)**. These two subjects are not GCSEs. They are subjects in which all students (nationally) must continue participating.

How much choice is there?

We will ask students to let us know their “preferences”.

We will help students to carefully think about which are the most appropriate subjects for them by asking them to consider the following questions:

What are your strengths?

Which subjects do you perform best in?

Which subjects do you enjoy studying?

Which type of assessment are you best at?

Do you have any future career plans / ambitions for which some subjects are required?

Which subjects are available?

Students will choose **four preferences, one from each of 4 'blocks'**.

There is a very wide range of subjects which **could** be on offer:

Art

Business Studies

Design & Technology

Drama

Fashion & Textiles

Food & Nutrition

French

Geography

Health and Social Care

History

Photography

Physical Education

Sociology

Travel and Tourism

Triple Science

For some students:

Horticulture

Motor vehicle studies

The preferences blocks:

There are two different pathways.

We would advise against students choosing both Horticulture and Motor Vehicle Studies, as this limits the number of GCSE subjects taken.

Standard pathway (Pathway A):

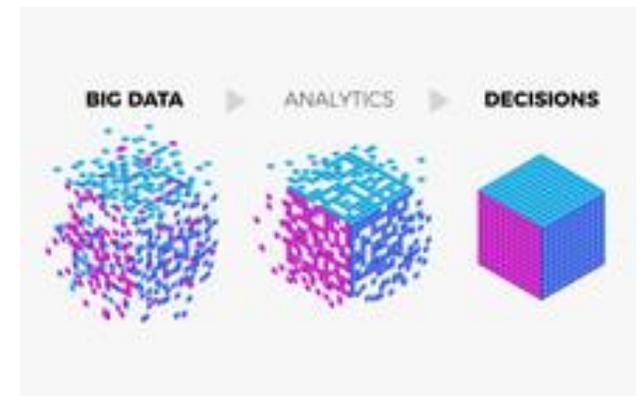
Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Art	Business Studies	Drama	Business Studies
French	Geography	Design and Technology	Design and Technology
Geography	Health and Social Care	Food and Nutrition	Fashion & Textiles
Travel & Tourism	History	Photography	History
Photography	Physical Education	Triple Science	Sociology

Vocational pathway (Pathway B):

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Art	Business Studies	Drama	Business Studies
French	Geography	Design and Technology	Design and Technology
Geography	Health and Social Care	Food and Nutrition	Fashion & Textiles
Travel & Tourism	History	Photography	History
Photography	Physical Education	Motor Vehicle Studies	Sociology
Horticulture			Motor Vehicle Studies

How have we decided which subjects are in each block?

- Students received subject information in an assembly
- Students completed an initial online survey ranking their preferred subjects
- An online algorithm was used to determine the blocks which enable most students to have access to all of their preferences.



How do we choose?

- **5th March** – Information evening for students and parents / carers. Introductory talk and then visit individual subject area ‘stalls’ to find out more. Students and parents / carers will be given a preferences booklet containing full details of the courses.
- **6th March** - Students will receive a link to an online form for making their choices. Students must complete these with parents / carers.
- **19th March** - Year 9 parents’ evening. Discuss with subject teachers. An IT room with printing facilities will be available for those wishing to finalise their choices that evening. Staff will be on hand to support if required.
- Complete the online form, picking one subject from each of the four blocks. Complete this form by **Monday 23rd March**. Please be aware that once the form has been submitted, you will not be able to make changes.

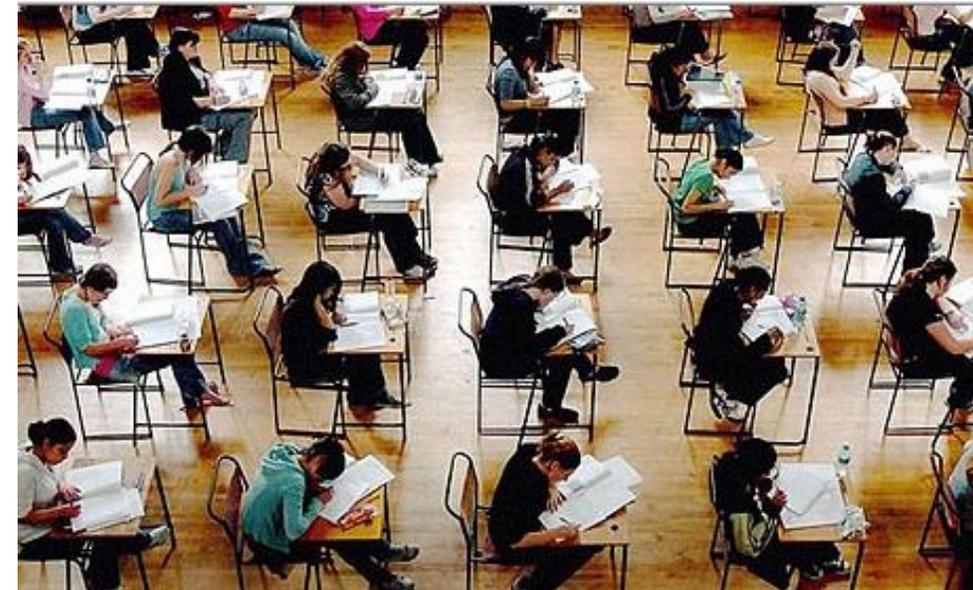
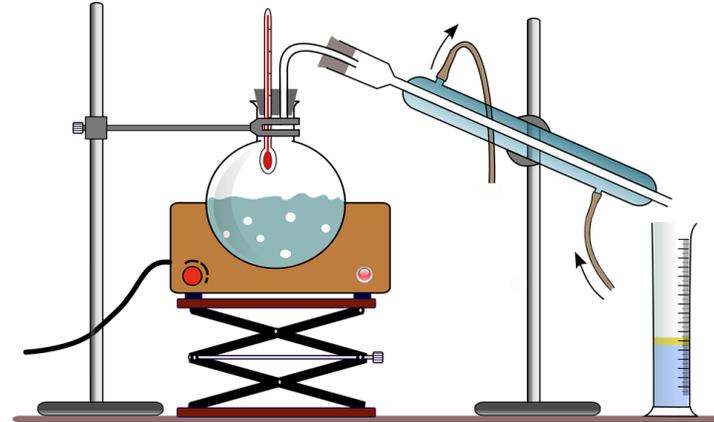
When will I find out if I have my preferred subjects?

In the **second half of the summer term**.

If we can’t give you all of your choices, we will work with you to select an alternative.

Subjects assessed by final exams

- English language and Literature
- Maths
- Science (Combined and Triple)
- History
- Geography
- French
- Business Studies
- Sociology



Subjects with a coursework element

- Art
- Fashion & Textiles
- Photography
- PE
- Health & Social Care
- Design & Technology
- Food & Nutrition
- Drama



Key points to note

- **Business** – has maths elements.
- **Art / Fashion & Textiles** – drawing and painting skills needed.
- **Art and Fashion and Textiles** cannot both be chosen.
- **Design and Technology, Drama, Health & Social Care, Food & Nutrition** and **PE** all have written exams as well as practical elements.

Subjects assessed entirely by coursework

- **Motor Vehicle Studies**
- **Horticulture**

- These courses are level 1 – not GCSE equivalent.
- They are suitable for students who may find a full suite of GCSE subjects challenging.
- These courses prepare students for further study and level 2 qualifications at sixth form / college.
- Motor Vehicle Studies is not an appropriate course for students wishing to pursue engineering.
- Places are limited and certain students will have priority, therefore these courses will not be on offer to all students. Only some booklets contain this offer.
- If you have been offered these courses, you do not have to choose them.
- If you have not been offered these courses and want to do them, please visit the relevant stall and add your name to the list. If there are remaining places, we will offer them to the students most likely to benefit. It is not ‘first come, first served’.



The EBacc

- The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors.
- A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with **greater opportunities in further education** and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help **improve a young person's performance in English and maths.**

Ebacc subjects

- English language and Literature
- Maths
- The Sciences
- Geography or History
- a Language

If you are considering going to university in the future, we would strongly advise you to consider including:

Geography or History and French
among your preferences

Choosing Your GCSE Options – What You Need to Know

Choosing your GCSEs is the first step in planning your future. You don't need to know exactly what job you want yet, but it helps to think ahead. The subjects you pick now can affect what choices you have later, so try to keep your options open.

Your interests might change as you get older, and that's totally normal. Don't panic – most jobs don't depend on one single GCSE.

People change careers all the time. But some subjects work like stepping stones: if you stop studying them too early, it might be harder to follow certain paths later. **This is why everyone keeps doing Maths, English and Science.**



Why certain subjects matter

- **Languages (French, etc.):**

Studying a language can boost your confidence and give you qualifications that employers really like.

- **Creative subjects (Art, Photography, Design & Technology, etc.):**

These subjects help you learn important skills like problem-solving, communication, planning, time management and understanding others. They're great for your wellbeing too and useful in any career.

- **The main message** - Don't choose subjects just because they seem difficult or impressive (or you think they will be easy). Pick a balanced mix of things you enjoy, things you're good at, and subjects that keep doors open for the future.

Three key things to remember

Some subjects are gateways.

If you drop them too early, you might limit future choices—even if you're unsure what you want to do. You can speak to our Careers Adviser Emma if you have any questions. **Emma is here this evening if you have any questions.**

- **Enjoyment matters, but balance does too.**

A good mix of strengths, interests, and core subjects gives you the most options later.

- **Think beyond GCSEs.**

Do some research and look at what colleges, sixth forms, apprenticeships, or jobs might expect in the future.

- Spend a bit of time thinking about your choices now—it can save you stress and extra work later on and don't choose subjects based on what your friends are doing.

- There is useful information on the Help You Choose website - [Choices at 13/14](#), BBC Bitesize [The Ultimate Options Guide: 2026 - BBC Bitesize](#) and the Unifrog subject library [Sign In - Unifrog](#).

