

# Year 9 Options KS3 to KS4 Progression



# KS3 Options

In year 9, you can select some of the subjects you would like to study in years 10 and 11. This is called choosing your options.

- Everyone has to study Maths, English, Science and History at GCSE-level
- The other subjects you can take can be found below. You will be able to choose at least one course from each of the following areas: arts, humanities, and modern languages (Arabic).

## Why does it matter?

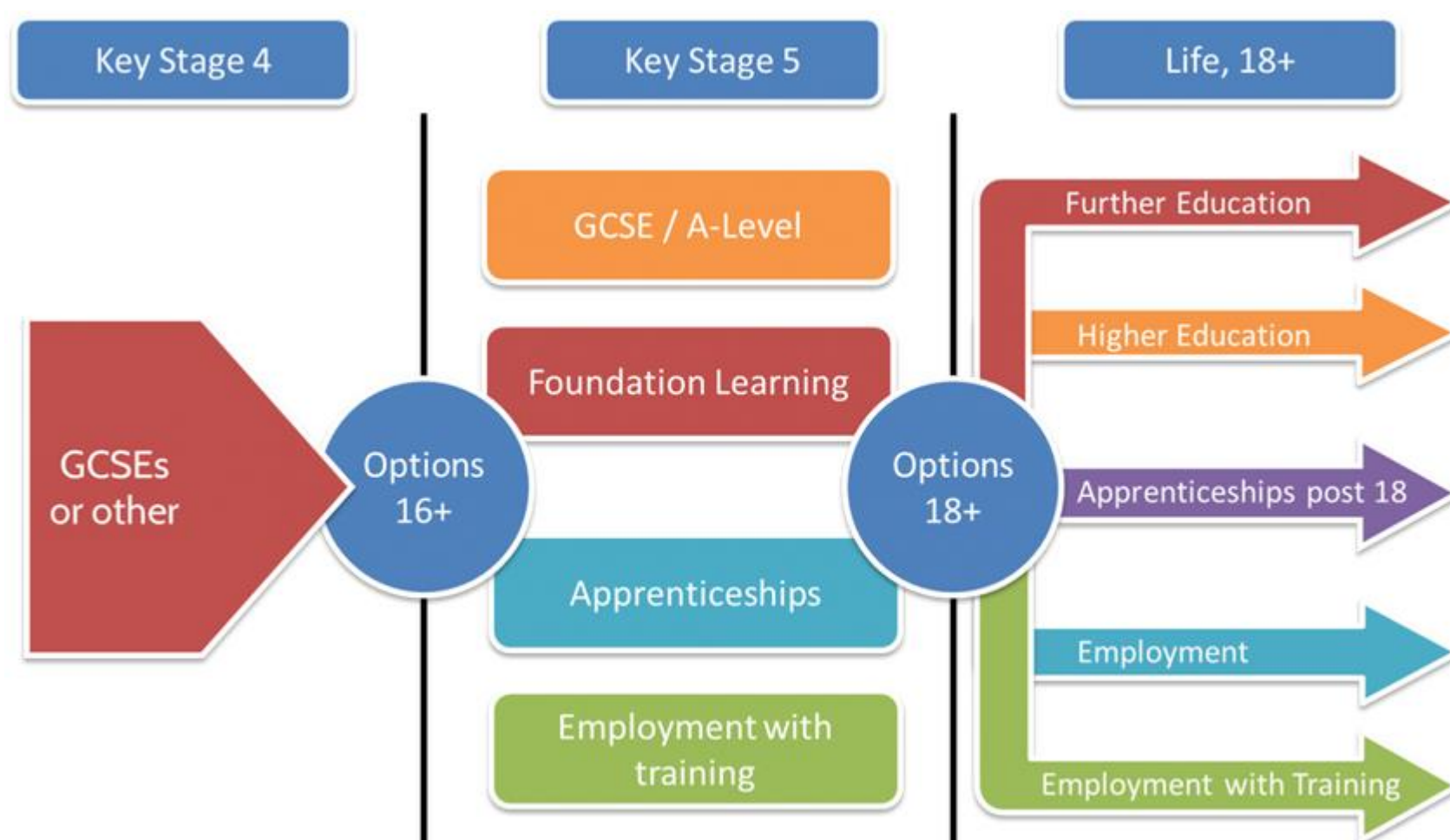
You'll be studying the subjects you choose for the next two years, and it's no fun being stuck with one you don't really like. It's also worth looking ahead as decisions you make now may narrow your choices later. What do you want to do after year 11? Can this help you decide which subjects to choose?

Sometimes you need a GCSE in a subject in order to study it at A-level. In the same way, university courses have set entry requirements and often require certain subjects at A-level. Check carefully as this is not always the case and you can start some subjects from scratch, both at A-level and university.

## What to think about

Take time to think things through.

- Consider which subjects you are good at, are interested in or enjoy
- Look at the way courses are marked. If you don't like exams, you may prefer some subjects which include coursework, such as art or drama
- Choosing a balance of subjects may help to keep your future options open.
- If you're trying to choose between two subjects, think about how each option fits with your other GCSEs. Does a subject go well with your other choices? Or does a subject provide a welcome change? If you're taking lots of essay-based subjects, it can be nice to include one choice with a more practical focus.



## GCSE Options List

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
1 <sup>st</sup> English GCSE (compulsory)	Biology	Citizenship
Mathematics	Chemistry	Art/ Rel. St.
	Physics	2 <sup>nd</sup> English GCSE (compulsory)
	Arabic/Computer St.	
	History	

To get a place in any good sixth form or college you will need to pass a bundle of GCSEs known as the ‘Ebacc Qualification’

This is made up from your best scores from 8 GCSEs in total of which at least 5 must be from Group 1 & 2 as illustrated in the table above and both GCSEs in Group 1 are compulsory. The remaining 3 can also be taken from these groups or from Group 3. We offer 2 English GCSEs (Language & Literature) and both are compulsory.

By the end of Year 9 you will need to choose between Arabic or Computer Science from Group 2 and either Art or Religious Studies from Group 3. However, please do bear in mind that your option choices are *subject to overall demand and availability*.

By the end of Year 10 you may also be required to opt for Combined Science Award (worth 2 GCSEs) instead of the Triple Science Award (which is worth 3 GCSEs) at the beginning of Year 11 as long as this choice will not affect your your EBacc qualification. This will also depend upon your progress in Years 9 & 10.

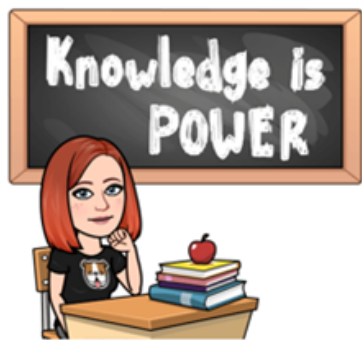
Below you will find a useful guide to all of these GCSEs and I hope you take the time to review them so that you are in a good place to start this new year with us in September

# How to choose your Options

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Because you enjoy the subject

Because you have researched the subject and think you will be good at it



Because the subjects interest you

Because they may link to future career ideas

# How NOT to choose your options

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Because you like the teacher

Because you think it will be easy

Because your brother/sister took the subject

It is a new subject and you don't really know what it involves

Because your friends are taking the subject

## Where can you get advice in school?

Your subject teachers

Your Form Tutor

Careers Lead: Ms Afsha Mohamed

(afsha.mohamed@alkhairschool.org.uk)

Research college courses to check entry requirements

## Useful web pages

GMACS - <https://gmacs.co.uk/> Up to date information on Apprenticeships, Careers, Post 16 steps.

National Careers Service - [www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk) Get information and advice on post-16 options.

National Apprenticeship Service [www.getingofar.gov.uk/](http://www.getingofar.gov.uk/) Up to date information about apprenticeships including vacancies and how to apply.

Informed choices - [www.russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/) Advice from the Russell Group on how A level choices can affect university entry.

UCAS - [www.digitalucas.com](http://www.digitalucas.com) Information and entry requirements for higher education/university courses in the UK.

Prospects - <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/> advice and guidance on careers, careers quizzes and where A level and degree subjects can take you.

# Got a decision to make but don't know what to choose? Use this list to help you focus.

## 1. List the pros and cons

Take a piece of paper, divide it in two and write down the advantages and disadvantages of your decision. Then work your way through each of your points and think about how important each one is to you. What seems the best choice on balance?

## 2. Look ahead

Say you're choosing your GCSE options and are trying to decide between art and ICT. Where could either choice lead? Does one choice reduce, maintain or increase the options open to you further down the line?

## 3. Start at the end and work backwards

This only really works if you know what where you want to go. So if you have a job in mind, what training or qualifications will you need? If you need a degree, what A-level subjects will you need to get a place on a university course, and in turn will you need any set GCSE subjects to take your chosen A-levels?

## 4. Consider effort v. results

How much time and energy will you have to put into each option and what is the likely result? Back to art or ICT – if you're naturally good at art you may get a good grade without much effort, but if you're not so gifted at ICT, you'll have to put in a lot more work to get the same grade.

## 5. Rate your options

This is a way to compare the value you place against each option. Say you're choosing a sixth-form college, you could set measures such as course content, college facilities and journey time and score colleges out of five for each measure. You can also create an overall score for each option but bear in mind that some measures may be more important to you than others (if you want to get technical, you can always give a double score to any measure you think is more important).

## 6. Consider the mix

Try not to think about your choice purely in terms of A or B (yes it's art or ICT again), but think about what else is going on (such as your other GCSEs). Which option is a good fit or welcome break from your other choices?

## 7. Remove extremes

List out all your options and strike off those at the top and bottom such as the best and worst; most and least expensive; nearest and furthest. What are you left with?

# Research for my options and planning for my options meeting

What subjects do I enjoy?	What subjects am I good at?	How do I like to learn?
		<p><b>Visual</b> - You learn best when you can read the material or look at diagrams or pictures. Chances are, you would rather read the textbook or online than listen.</p> <p><b>Auditory</b> - You learn best when you hear the material, like when a teacher speaks or you can discuss it in class. You probably like reading aloud to yourself or repeating facts to remember them.</p> <p><b>Tactile</b> - You learn best when you can get hands-on experience with the material. Physical activity, like role playing or building a model, might make learning easier.</p>

**Research I have already completed**

**Questions to ask at my options meeting**