



CHARTERS
— SCHOOL —

YEAR 9 OPTIONS

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CARERS

UNITY RESPECT EXCELLENCE

TYPES OF QUALIFICATIONS

Core Curriculum

The core curriculum is a selection of subjects that every student in the school will study. It has been designed to ensure that you will have a broad and balanced education at Key Stage 4. It will allow you to maintain a wide choice of future pathways at the age of 16. The core curriculum consists of:

- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Combine Science (2 GCSEs)
- Core PE (not examined)
- Citizenship+ (not examined)
- PSHE (not examined)

GCSE Qualifications

GCSE stands for 'General Certificate of Secondary Education'. These are academic qualifications that are recognised and valued by schools, colleges, employers and universities so they will be useful whatever you are planning to do in the future. GCSE courses involve studying the theory of a subject and usually include some investigation work. Some may involve practical work.

Some subjects have 'tiers' of entry (Higher and Foundation) to support students studying at different levels of ability.

Vocational Level 2 Qualifications

Vocational qualifications are work related qualifications that provide a more practical, real-world approach to learning alongside a key theoretical background. They can be studied alongside GCSEs and A levels and are widely valued by schools, colleges, universities and employers.

Progress is measured throughout the course via the completion of units. Each course is made up of a number of units depending on the level and size of course being studied. Students are able to track their progress across the two years. Approximately 25% of the course will be assessed externally although this varies for different subjects.

We offer 2 types of vocational qualifications:

- BTEC
- Cambridge National
- RSL Awards

English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

The English Baccalaureate is not a qualification in itself. It is a measure which recognises students' achievements across a core of selected academic subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Two Sciences
- A humanities subject (History or Geography)
- A modern foreign language (French or Spanish)

These subjects are considered by the government as essential to many further education routes and create a number of opportunities. We believe that following this challenging pathway will ensure all subjects are open to students at A level. The qualifications gained will also be viewed favourably by the Russell Group* Universities and blue-chip high-level apprenticeship programmes.

*The Russell Group of Universities is a group of universities that have a shared focus on research and a reputation for academic achievement.

More information on each subject available at Key Stage 4 can be found in the 'Subject Information' section.

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CARERS

The time has arrived for you to decide which subjects you will study over the next two years for your Key Stage 4 curriculum. Your decision is a very important one as it will affect:

- Your progress over the next two years.
- Your choices for further study at the end of these two years.
- Your prospects for employment.

The information we have uploaded onto the website is designed to help you make these decisions, so it is important that you spend time looking at all of your options and discuss your thoughts with parents/carers, teachers and your tutor. In it you will find details of all the courses that are available at Charters, some are compulsory and others are optional. As a school we firmly believe in studying the correct courses to suit your needs and to support your future aspirations. Along with recommendations from teachers and the data we have analysed, we have suggested the most suitable pathway for you. We would advise that you consider a variety of subjects before making your decisions.

This is an exciting opportunity for you to choose courses which you enjoy and which suit your interests, skills and future career ambitions. In the first instance, use your pathway information to identify how many free choices you have to make then consider the answers to these questions:

- What are the subjects you want to do and will enjoy doing?
- What is your progress like in these subjects? Will you be successful?
- What will your choices lead to in the sixth form, college or employment?
- What career do you want?
- What are your skills?

When making your choices we strongly suggest that you select subjects that you enjoy, give you a **broad and balanced** experience, support your career plans (if you have them) and that you are successful in.

Do	Don't
Talk to parents/carers, tutors and subject teachers about courses and your capacity to be successful.	Choose a subject because your friend is doing it. This is about your future and it shouldn't be based on anything other than your dreams and aspirations. Remember, you might not be in the same group.
Read the subject details on the website carefully and ask if you need more information.	Choose a subject because you like a particular teacher. They may not be your teacher next year.
Opt for a balanced choice of subjects to keep your future options open.	Avoid a subject because of your experiences of being taught by a particular teacher. Again, you don't know who will be your teacher next year.
Choose subjects which will allow you to excel	Choose a subject because it 'looks fun' - fully investigate it before you make a decision.

PEOPLE TO ASK ABOUT THE OPTIONS TIMELINE

Please speak to us if you need extra advice regarding the options. Your tutors should be the first point of contact, however, if you require more detailed information about the subject then please contact the subject teacher.

Role	Name	Contact Details
Head of Year	Mr G Devine	g.devine@chartersschool.org.uk
Options Co-ordinator	Miss C Torlop	c.torlop@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9A	Mrs Dabbaj	f.dabbaj@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9B	Mr Hoare	a.hoare@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9C	Dr Armitage	j.armitage@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9D	Miss Hamilton-Eadie	h.hamiltoneadie@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9E	Mr Hoyle	j.hoyle@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9F	Mr Riches	a.riches@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9G	Miss Brown	h.brown@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9H	Mr Bennie	j.bennie@chartersschool.org.uk
Tutor 9I	Ms McWalter	s.mcwalter@charterschool.org.uk
Careers Co-ordinator	Mr Dhesi	J.dhesi@chartersschool.org.uk

Options Process Timetable

19 Jan	Tutor Period	Time to consider what subjects suit your interests and aspirations.
4 Feb	Information Evening	Information about your option pathway and how to make the right choices.
4 Feb	Information available on the school website	Information about every course available will be on the school website for you to look at with your family.
18 Mar	Parents evening	A chance to speak to your subject teachers about your suitability for the GCSE/BTEC courses on offer.
22 Mar	Completion of options form	Option portal closes

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

Careers Education is co-ordinated by Mr Dhesi in conjunction with Adviza, our external careers advice partner, Heads of Years 10 and 11 and tutors. Adviza offer impartial careers advice and guidance to our students. This is done on an individual and group basis at school which parents are welcome to attend. In addition, our careers personal advisors from Adviza attend Parents' Evening in Year 11 for consultations and are available during the sixth form prospective evening to offer advice and guidance to students.

Careers Education will help students develop the knowledge and skills they need to make successful choices, manage transitions in learning and move into work. Careers Education is delivered through the tutor period programme for pupils in Year 10 and careers events in Year 11.

In Year 10 students use 'Kudos', a computer-based questionnaire which considers their strengths and abilities, their personal skills and interests and explores possible career choices. Students also view a series of short films and have discussions on:

- a) How to succeed at job and college interviews
- b) Evaluating different career choices
- c) Main option choices available to students at 16

During the year, students will make initial preparations for their mock interview by completing their CV, writing a letter of application and filling in a job application form.

In Year 11 all students have an individual mock interview which is designed to help them with job interviews and sixth form and college interviews as well. Our interviewers are local employers. Students also have the opportunity to attend the annual Careers Fair which takes place in March and meet in excess of 40 business organisations as well as representatives from local colleges.

What can I do after Year 11?

Charters Sixth Form

Currently, the majority (72%) of our Year 11 pupils will continue with their studies at Charters and join the Sixth Form. Entry into the Sixth Form does depend on how well you do in your courses at Key Stage 4. Both GCSE and BTEC courses provide a route into the Sixth Form. During Year 11, you are given clear advice about how to apply and what grades you will need to achieve to study particular courses. If you are keen to research this in advance, you can find the information on the school's website.

Sixth Form Colleges

Currently, 24% of our pupils will join a sixth form college. Entrance requirements for sixth form colleges vary by college, and can usually be found easily by browsing their websites. We also hold prospectuses for all these colleges in the careers office. At college, pupils are able to study a full range of vocational courses as well as A levels and BTEC's.

Apprenticeships

Currently, 3% of our pupils go directly into apprenticeships or other types of employment with training. We are keen to promote these routes, which can provide excellent opportunities. During Key Stage 4, we will provide you with regular information on apprenticeship opportunities.

SUBJECT COST

Parents/Carers have asked us to provide a list of indicative costs for the subjects studied in years 10 and 11 to help them to budget. The list below is not exhaustive and the costs are approximate but nonetheless we hope you will find it helpful. Please note that not all these items are essential purchases.

Students in receipt of free school meals will be given support to purchase all resources that directly impact their studies.

Subject	Cost in Year 10/11	Description of item	Approx cost £
Art and Design	Year 10	A3 Sketchbook and 2 x trips	£32
	Year 11	A3 Sketchbook	£8
Business (Enterprise)	Year 10	Resources for examined units	£4
Citizenship Plus & PSHE		None anticipated	
Computer Science	Year 10	Revision guide	£6
Dance	Year 10	Dance Department t-shirt and fleece	£10/£15
	Year 10/11	One trip per year to see a professional work	£20
Drama	Year 10/11	Theatre trips. Cost per trip	£15-25
English		Students are encouraged to purchase their own copies of the English Literature texts, so they can annotate in class and use them for revision. A copy of one Shakespeare play, a modern play and the 19th Century novel can be purchased through the Department in July of Year 9.	£20
Food Prep. and Nutrition	Year 10/11	Incidental ingredients to support student's practical work	£20
French	Year 10	Grammar workbook (compulsory)	£4.75
French	Year 10	Year 10 Homestay Montpellier (optional)	£790

Geography	Year 10/11	2 separate days of fieldwork approx. cost based on 2018 figures (compulsory)	£30 £12.50
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		Optional cost of WideWorld magazine subscription	
Graphic Products	Year 10/11	Wood, metal, plastics. Adhesives, abrasive papers, paper, card, primer paint etc. Revision guide £3	£15
Health and Social Care		Contribution towards work related visits over two years	£15
History		None anticipated	
ICT	Year 10	Revision guide	£10
Mathematics	Year 10	Casio calculator, model FX-83GTX	£12
	Year 11	Revision Pack	£10
Music	Year 10/11	Weekly instrumental or vocal peripatetic lessons	Varies
		At least one trip per year to see a professional orchestra in concert. (optional)	£30
		Revision guide	£10
Music Technology		None anticipated	
PE	Year 10/11	Pearson Revision guide and Work Book (optional)	Approx
		GCSE PE Kit (optional)	£10 £20
Photography	Year 10	Materials used for coursework (darkroom photographic papers, project materials)	£20
	Year 11	Materials used for coursework (darkroom photographic papers, project materials)	£20
		Students will be expected to print off their final pieces on photo paper and have the work framed outside of school	
Religious Studies	Year 11	Revision Guide	£5
Resistant Materials	Year 10/11	Year 10: Wood, metal, plastics, adhesives, abrasive papers, paper, card, primer paint.	£15
		Individual material cost of Controlled Assessment as designed by student in Year 11 typically £10-£35	£10-£35
		Revision guide	£3

Science—combined	Year 10	Contribution towards the cost of the online textbook and the AQA Required Practicals lab book Tassomai subscription	£7.50 £8
Science—triple	Year 10	Contribution towards the cost of the online textbook and the AQA Required Practicals lab book Tassomai subscription	£8 £8
Sociology	Year 10/11	Textbook	£21.99
Spanish	Year 10	Year 10 Homestay Salamanca (approx. 20 students) (optional)	£660
Sport Studies	Year 10/11	Revision Guide (optional) Sport Studies Kit (optional)	Approx £4.50 £20
Textiles	Year 10	Charge for incidentals used for practical work over the 2 years (thread, interfacing, wadding and various other items of haberdashery). Revision guide and workbook	£15
Young Apprentice		Cost of Tyr Abad trip YA Kit (optional)	approx. £340 £20

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Which options should I choose?

Choose subjects you like, know you can do well in and reflect your interests or help you learn in the best way for you. You may want to think about your future plans but, if you are unsure about this, try and choose a balanced selection. Do not choose a subject because:

- your friend is planning to do it- your friend may be put into a different group;
- you think it may be easy- the subject may be harder than you think;
- you like your current teacher- you may have a different teacher!

Also, be very careful of choosing a subject which an elder sibling has done- you may have very different abilities and interests.

What should I do if I am unsure about my choices?

Get information, advice and guidance from different sources: your form tutor, Head of Year, subject teacher, parents/carers, or students already studying the subject.

Will I get the options I choose?

There is no guarantee you will get all your choices. The aim of picking an extra subject is for us to be able to ensure you go on to study options that you enjoy and would like to take at key stage 4.

What if I don't like my choice of subject?

There is no guarantee you will be able to change your choice in September as the timetable and option blocks are written around what the year group choose, it is therefore important you take time choosing your options.

I missed the Options Information Evening, how do I submit my choices?

Watch the video that is for your given pathway, there is a walk through on how to make your option choices.

Why are there different pathways?

We have placed all students on to a pathway that we feel will support them in achieving a successful suite of results at the end of key stage 4, appropriate to their ability. This might mean a broad and challenging suite including a humanity subject and language or the Princes' Trust qualification that provides extra English and Maths support in order to gain the core GCSE's.

How will I know if I am suitable for the options I want to choose?

It is important to have that conversation with your subject teacher. You can do this via email or by making an appointment with them during year 9 parents evening in March. If it is a subject that you haven't studied before, contact them with the questions they have and they will be able to help you identify if you are suitable for that type of subject.

I have already filled in the form. Can I change my mind?

You can change your options and resave on the portal up to the deadline.

Is the availability of places on over-subscribed subjects decided on a first come – first served basis?

No. If a subject is over-subscribed, further discussions will take place to ensure all students are placed on the most suitable courses, based on their aspirations and talents.

Why don't you offer GCSE Media Studies or GCSE Business Studies?

We have chosen to focus on a range of rigorous, academic GCSEs that will prepare students for a wide range of A- level courses and further study pathways. Media Studies and Business Studies can be picked up at A-level with no need to have studied the subject at GCSE.

When will I find out what subjects I've been allocated?

After May half term, after the school timetable has been completed and our offer has been finalised.