

William Ellis School

nurtures successful students and good citizens
through strong relationships



The aims of this presentation

- The overall purpose of the Key Stage 4 curriculum and how GCSE choices fit into that.
- To understand what curriculum or subjects you will be studying for the next two years, and the choices you have within that.
- To consider how to make your choices.
- To know how to complete your GCSE options form and when to submit it.



The importance of the curriculum

A group of schoolboys in blue uniforms walking outdoors on a path. The boys are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a brick building and green foliage.

“The school has developed an ambitious curriculum. High aspirations for its pupils are reflected in its ensuring that almost 90% of pupils are entered for the EBacc. Pupils’ achievements in the Ebacc, Maths and Humanities are particularly high.

The school has given careful thought, across the subjects, to the knowledge that it wants pupils to know. Teachers have the subject expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively. Pupils build their knowledge securely over time and revise their work often. This helps them to retain key knowledge in their long-term memories. Staff identify pupils’ knowledge gaps and misconceptions.”

Nurturing successful students: ambitious curriculum, great outcomes

- **30%** of the year group achieved at least three GCSEs at the **top grades 7 to 9**.
- Attainment in **English and Maths was strong at all levels:**

	English		Maths	
	William Ellis	Boys nationally	William Ellis	Boys nationally
Highest grades (7-9)	24%	12%	32%	18%
Standard pass (4-9)	79%	53%	80%	59%

- In **Languages**, 58% achieved a grade 5 or above. **20%** achieved a grade 5 or above in **two foreign languages**.
- **62%** of the cohort achieved **2 or more Science GCSEs** at grade 4 and above.
- **43%** of students achieved the **English Baccalaureate**. **32%** achieved a grade 5 or above.
- **43%** of GCSE results in **Music** were **graded 7 to 9**.

Nurturing successful students: ambitious curriculum, great outcomes



7-9 grades above boys nationally

**English Language and Literature,
Sociology, PE**

+10%

Maths, German, PE, Music

4-9 grades above boys nationally

**And also: History, Physics, Chemistry,
Geography, French**

+20%

German, English Language, Mathematics



What are GCSEs?

The main qualification completed at the end of KS4 (Year 11).

They have slightly differently structures depending upon the subject.

Most subjects are sat as one GCSE.

They are assessed differently depending on the subject

- 100% exam
- Exam and Coursework (Non-Exam Component)
- Exam and Performances

They are a **LEVEL 2** qualifications, graded 9-1.

Some subjects may be offered as a vocational qualification (BTEC) – these are also **LEVEL 2**.



GCSEs prepare you for life in one of several pathways:

- Sixth form – LaSWAP
- Further education at college
- Apprenticeship
- Employment

You may not know your next steps after GCSEs – that's fine – there is time, and the process of GCSE options will ensure ALL future pathways open.

GCSEs are a **STEPPING STONE** to the next chapter in your educational journey.

Make choices now that keep your options open is perfectly **normal** and probably **sensible**.

What about **after** GCSEs?

LaSWAP offers a variety of pathways

Level 3: A Levels (traditional, academic); BTECs (established, vocational); T Levels (new, technical)

Level 2 & 3: 3 year sixth form: the opportunity to spend a year specialising in a particular subject (media, business, art, sport), whilst also developing the skills to be successful on a L3 course

ALL L3 courses offer a path to university OR an apprenticeship (including degree apprenticeships) OR straight into work.

Choices at 16



LaSWAP

**Another sixth form
Apprenticeships, work-
based training**

LaSWAP Pathways

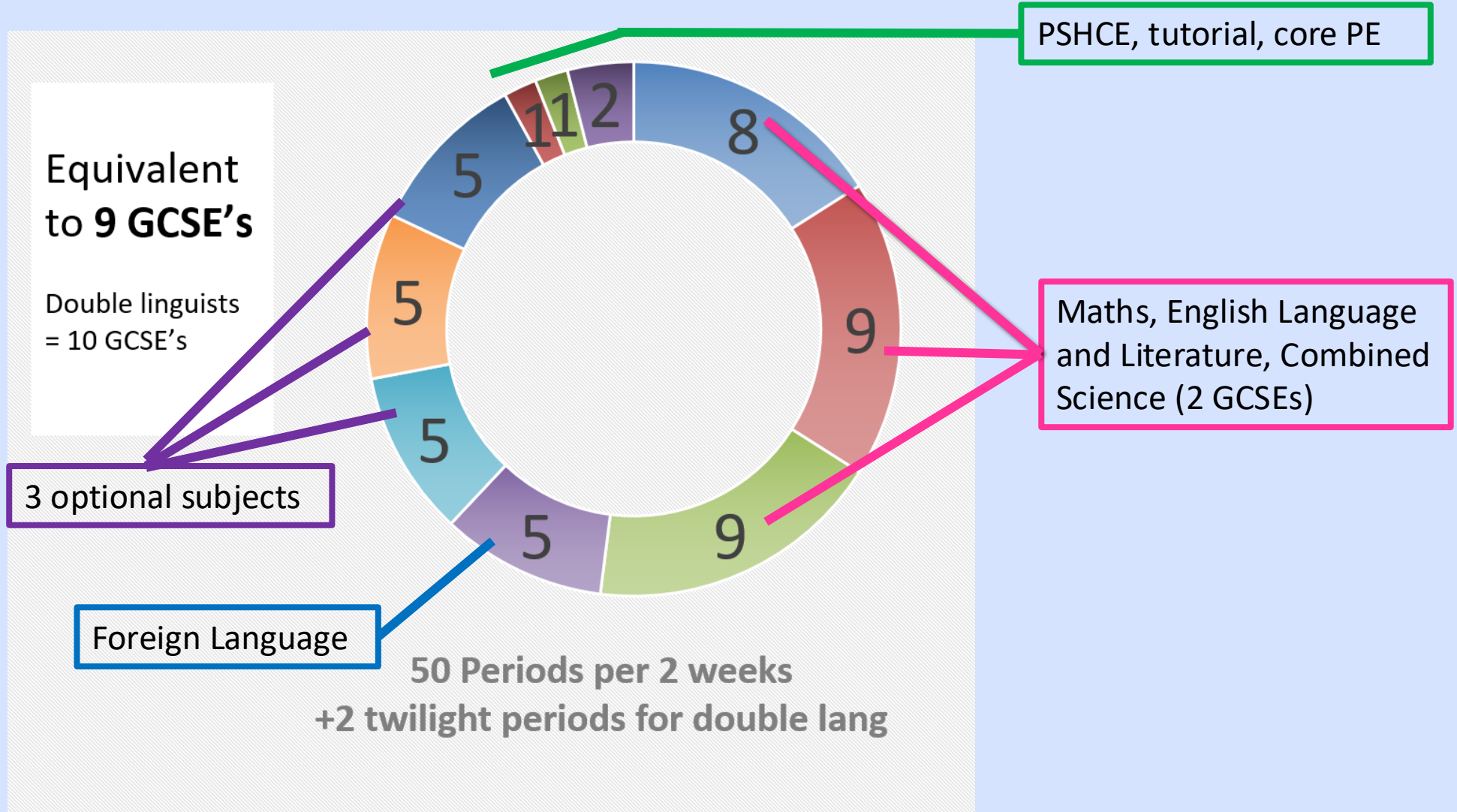
Level	Pathway	Entry Requirements	Qualifications
1	Careers in sport	All GCSE grades (Grade 1+)	BTEC L2 and L3 in sport and coaching
2	3-year sixth form	8 GCSE grades 3 & 4 Or a Level 1 diploma	Level 2 BTEC followed by Level 3 BTEC GCSE English and maths
3	A Levels Or Applied courses	At least a grade 5 in English Language GCSE 8 GCSEs grades at 6+ 8 GCSE grades 4 & 5 or Distinction in a L2 diploma	A Levels Level 3 vocational courses - (eg BTEC)

Beyond LaSWAP or another 6th form



- Many students choose to go to university, to study a wide range of subjects.
- All universities look at GCSE scores when making offers to study with them. Some universities also look at the choice of subjects and require students to have particular grades in subjects at GCSE.
- It is more important to work hard and do well, than to worry about choice of subject – but do contact Ms Wilson if you have questions about how to get to study medicine or dentistry or about competitive universities.

The Curriculum





English language and English literature GCSEs

- ENGLISH LANGUAGE (AQA 8700)
PAPER 1 – EXPLORATIONS IN CREATIVE
WRITING AND READING (8700/1)
PAPER 2 – WRITERS' VIEWPOINTS AND
PERSPECTIVES (8700/2)

- ENGLISH LITERATURE (OCR J352)
PAPER 1 – EXPLORING MODERN AND
LITERARY HERITAGE TEXTS (J352/01)
PAPER 2 – EXPLORING POETRY AND
SHAKESPEARE (J352/02)

- THE WORK DONE IN ENGLISH
LITERATURE GREATLY SUPPORTS
SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE.

Downloadable syllabus outlines:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/specification/specification-at-a-glance>

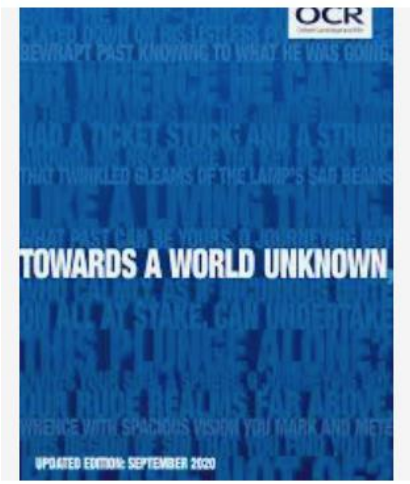
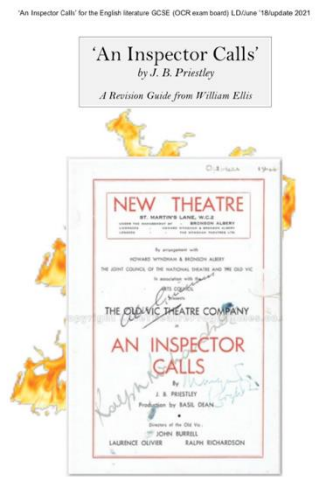
<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/168995-specification-accredited-gcse-english-literature-j352.pdf>

Resources and Additional Suggestions

We strongly recommend **wider reading** or viewing **rather than pre-reading** our four set texts. For example, reading *A Christmas Carol* in advance, would familiarise students with aspects of Charles Dickens's style and the fictional worlds he creates, but *Smith* by Leon Garfield is a 20th century children's novel that would also make a brilliant, Year 9-friendly introduction to our 19th century novel.

All students should be reading fiction and non-fiction (e.g. articles in the *Guardian* which has no pay-wall).

Home copies of these texts would be really useful. (We cannot provide copies of *An Inspector Calls*, but would love students to have their own second-hand or new copy at home. We can provide copies of *Romeo and Juliet* for a subsidised price – or free for some families)



AQA English Language GCSE
A guide to the exams from William Ellis School

8700/1 Explorations in creative writing and reading

Unseen texts

8700/2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Our Camden Libraries

Our Camden Libraries

We welcome you to Camden Library Services and during these times of isolation hope you can make use of your Digital Libraries

MORE INFORMATION

Reading

Writing

SHORT STORY

GOOD WRITERS

WASHBY SELA

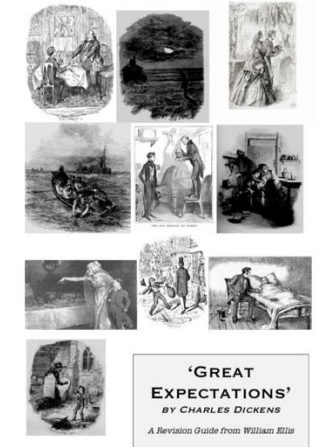
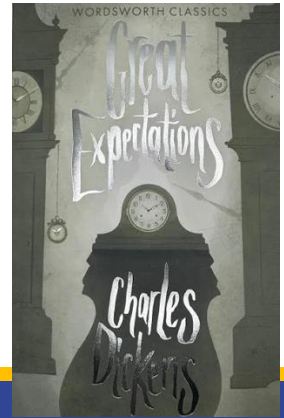
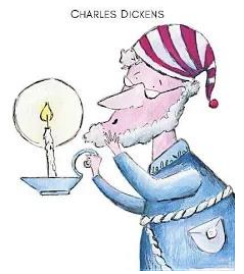
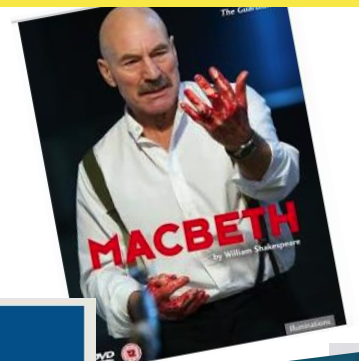
THEY TALK

VERBS OF SPEECH

I WILL WRITE MY NOVEL IN THE PRESENT TENSE

AN WRITER OF NOVELS IN THE PRESENT TENSE

FINALLY MY NOVELS IN THE PRESENT TENSE



We have made and provide lots of in-house revision guides and resources for literature. There is no need to buy anything extra.

The English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)

- English (language and literature)
- Mathematics
- a modern language
- History or Geography
- the sciences (this can include computing)

This combination of academic subjects **can** provide a good basis for Key Stage 4 programme of study, a breadth of skills and qualifications useful for future study and training, including Oxbridge and Russell Group universities **if students achieve a strong pass (5+) in all subjects.**

But, all subjects in our Key Stage 4 offer provide valuable qualifications, enriching experiences and develop vital skills. This includes those not named in the “EBacc”.

Students progress well in subjects that match their interests and where they are motivated to learn, and this should be the key consideration in their choices.

Why at least one language at GCSE?



- Builds global citizens with skills for our interconnected world
- Opens career doors in the UK and internationally
- Improves memory, listening and literacy across all subjects
- Reflects our diverse community and long-standing school values

The Options Process

SUBJECT INFORMATION

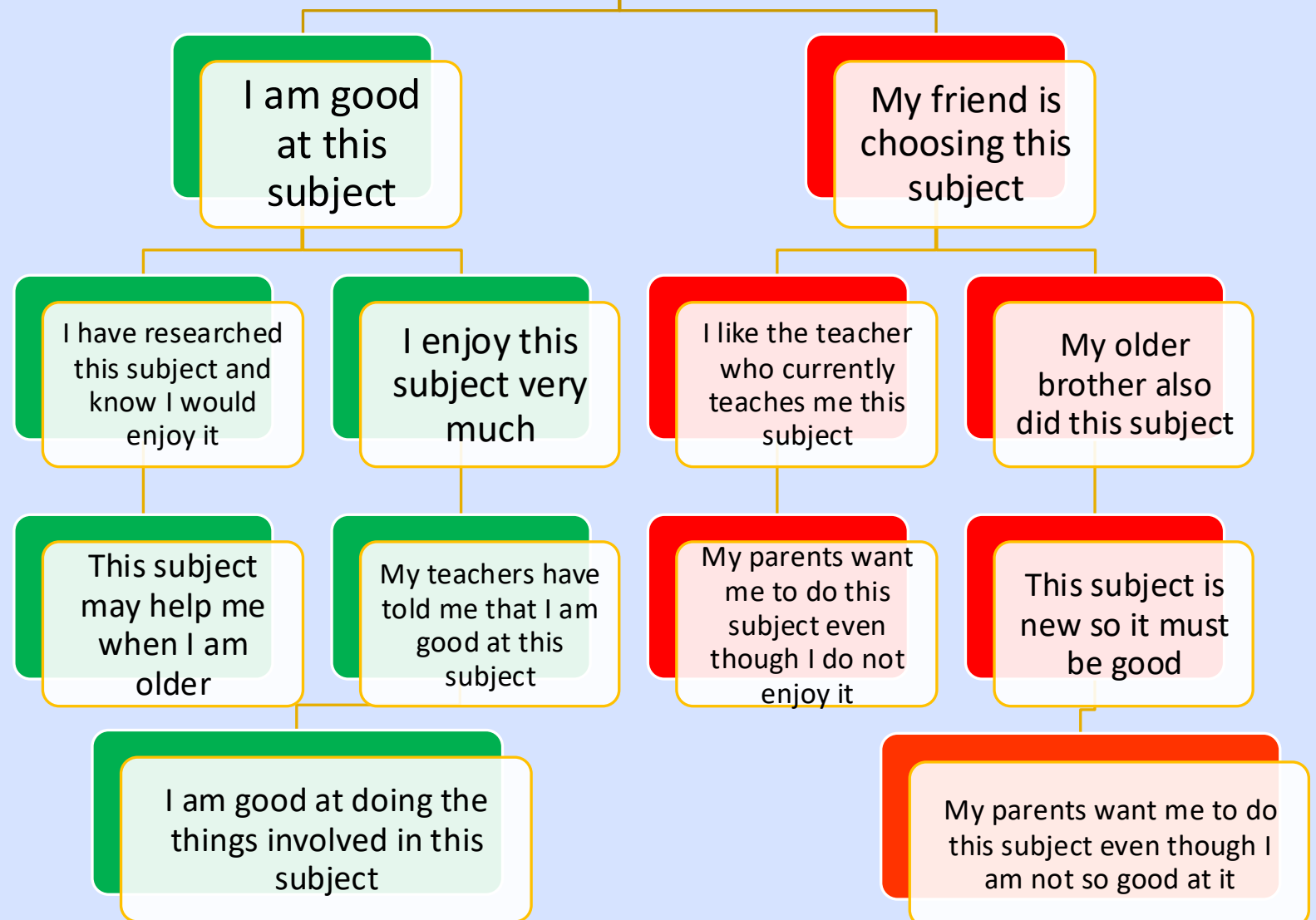
OPTIONS FORM COMPLETION

Making your GCSE choices

Good reasons

Reasons to take an option

Bad reasons



Students studying 8 GCSEs (10% of students)	Students studying 9 GCSEs or additional courses	Students studying 10, 11 or 12 GCSEs (20% of students)
<p>English Language, English Literature, Maths Combined Science (worth 2 GCSEs) non-examined: core PE and PSHCE</p>		
<p>Three optional subjects – you must choose 5 in order of preference One subject should be a Humanities subject: History, Geography, RE, Sociology, Business or Economics or Travel and Tourism. One subject should be a creative or performance-based subject: PE, Art or Graphics, Drama or Music. You should then choose one further subject - this can be one of the subjects listed above or Triple Science, Computer Science, Hospitality and Catering.</p>		
<p>Additional study support and Level 1 Princes Trust course</p>	<p>French or Spanish</p>	
<p>We would like all students to select their preferred language on the form.</p>		
		<p>A second foreign language and/or a community language; Further Maths GCSE</p>

Options booklet contains details of every course

William Ellis School



Key Stage 4 Courses

How to complete the form

You will need to make a language choice - almost all students study at least one Foreign Language and you all need to choose your preference.

You will then be asked to make your choices.

- One subject should be a **Humanities** subject: History, Geography, RE, Sociology, Business or Economics or Travel and Tourism.
- One subject should be a **creative or performance-based** subject: PE, Art or Graphics, Drama or Music.
- You should then choose **one further subject** - this can be one of the subjects listed above or any other that is listed.



Student Portal

STUDENT LOGIN

School ID



Username



Password



Remember School ID and Username

[Forgotten Login Details?](#)

[Redeem Invitation Code?](#)

Login

No Account Found

Single Sign-On Providers

 Login with **Google** Account

 Login with **Microsoft** Account

Completing the form

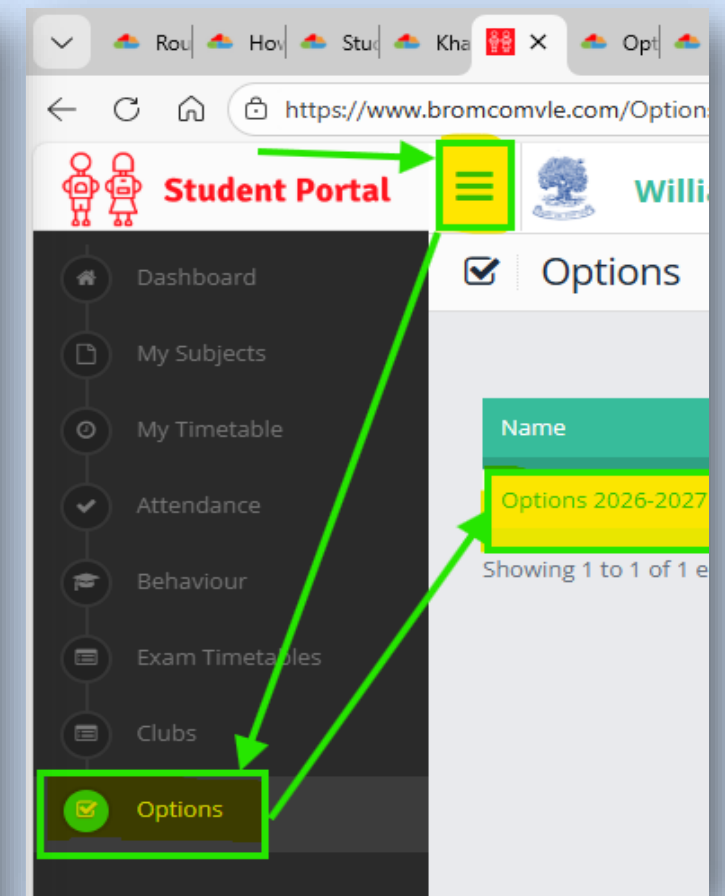
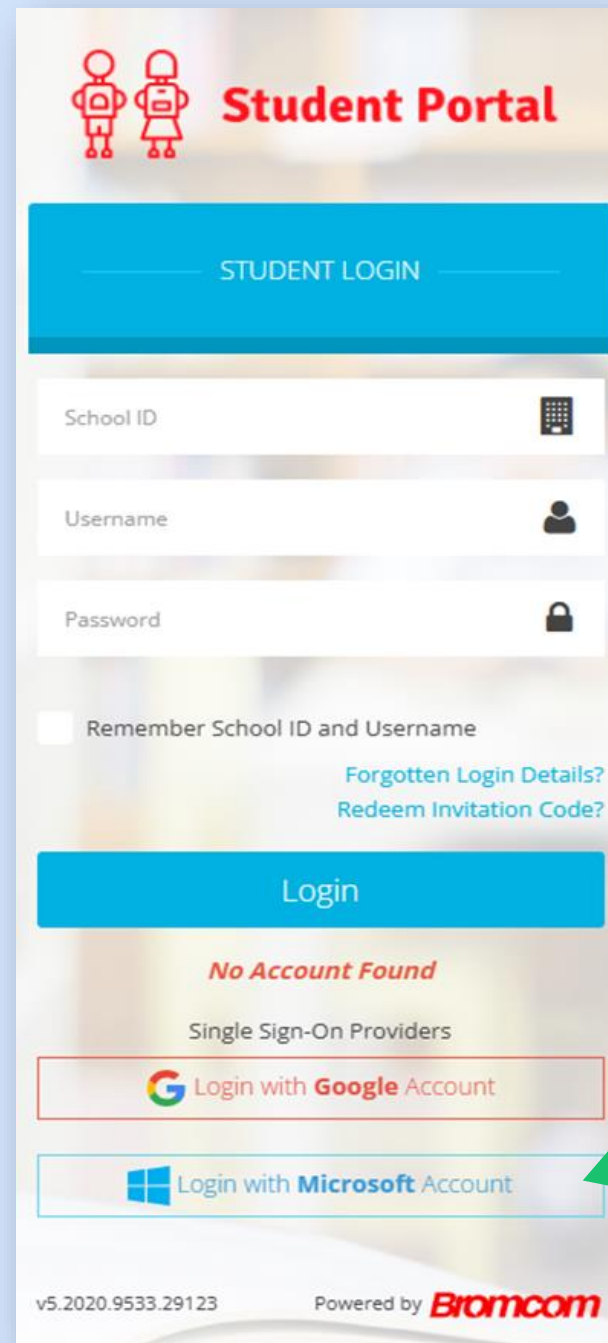
Pupils record in pupil portal:

- Choices and reserve subjects
- Rank choices in order of preference
- Save progress
- Review with parents (choices visible in MCAS)
- Make any amendments
- Submit final selection. By 18/3/2026

Pupil portal

www.bromcomvle.com/

- Login to portal using your school Microsoft account using button at bottom of screen.
- In the portal navigate to Options



Select choices

- You will be presented with a series of questions
- Select your choices for:
 - Languages
 - Humanities
 - Creative or performance based
 - Other (and two reserve subjects)*
- Use set preference to order subjects
- Click **Save for later** and exit

*"Other" and your reserve can be any subject – humanities, creative or another subject you would like to choose

The screenshot shows a multi-step form for selecting subjects. At the top, a progress bar has five numbered circles, with the fifth circle highlighted in blue. Below the progress bar is a light blue banner with the text "Please check your subject order of preference before submitting." and a "Set Preference" button. The form consists of four main sections, each with a heading, a selection instruction, a radio button choice, and an "Edit" button. The sections are: 1. Languages (Select 1 subject from each group) with "Double Languages" selected and "Preference 1" button. 2. Humanities (Select 1 subject from each group) with "Economics" selected and "Preference 2" button. 3. Creative (Select 1 subject from each group) with "Art" selected and "Preference 3" button. 4. Other (Select 1 subject from each group • Select exact 2 reserve subjects from Group Other) with "Sociology" selected, "R1. Business St." and "R2. Geography" as reserve options, and "Preference 4", "Reserve", and "Reserve" buttons. At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Previous", "Save for later", and "Submit". Green arrows point from the numbered steps to the "Set Preference" button, the "Languages" section, the "Humanities" section, the "Creative" section, the "Other" section, and the "Save for later" button.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5

Please check your subject order of preference before submitting. [Set Preference](#)

Languages Select 1 subject from each group [Edit](#)

Double Languages [Preference 1](#)

Humanities Select 1 subject from each group [Edit](#)

Economics [Preference 2](#)

Creative Select 1 subject from each group [Edit](#)

Art [Preference 3](#)

Other Select 1 subject from each group • Select exact 2 reserve subjects from Group Other [Edit](#)

Sociology [Preference 4](#)

R1. Business St. [Reserve](#)

R2. Geography [Reserve](#)

A form can only be submitted once and cannot be changed later. If you would like to modify it, use the Save for later button. If you go back, the preferences will be reset. You may need to check the preferences again

[Previous](#) [Save for later](#) [Submit](#)

Review and submit

- Selections can be reviewed in the MCAS parent app (navigation same as pupil portal)
- Once certain return to pupil portal
- Navigate to options 2026-2027
- Click through questions and press submit
- You will be presented with final confirmation
- Proceed will finalise selection



Do you want to continue?

This action will submit your choices permanently with the following order of preference:

Main Choices

Double Languages

Economics

Art

Sociology

Reserves

Business St.

Geography

If you want to change the order of preference please go back and click on "Set Preference" button.

Cancel

Proceed

How to complete the form

You are asked to enter **fourth and fifth choice subjects**, because the three subjects you have chosen may not be possible if the combination of subjects does not fit into the timetable, too many students have chosen it and we cannot create another group, not enough students have chosen it.

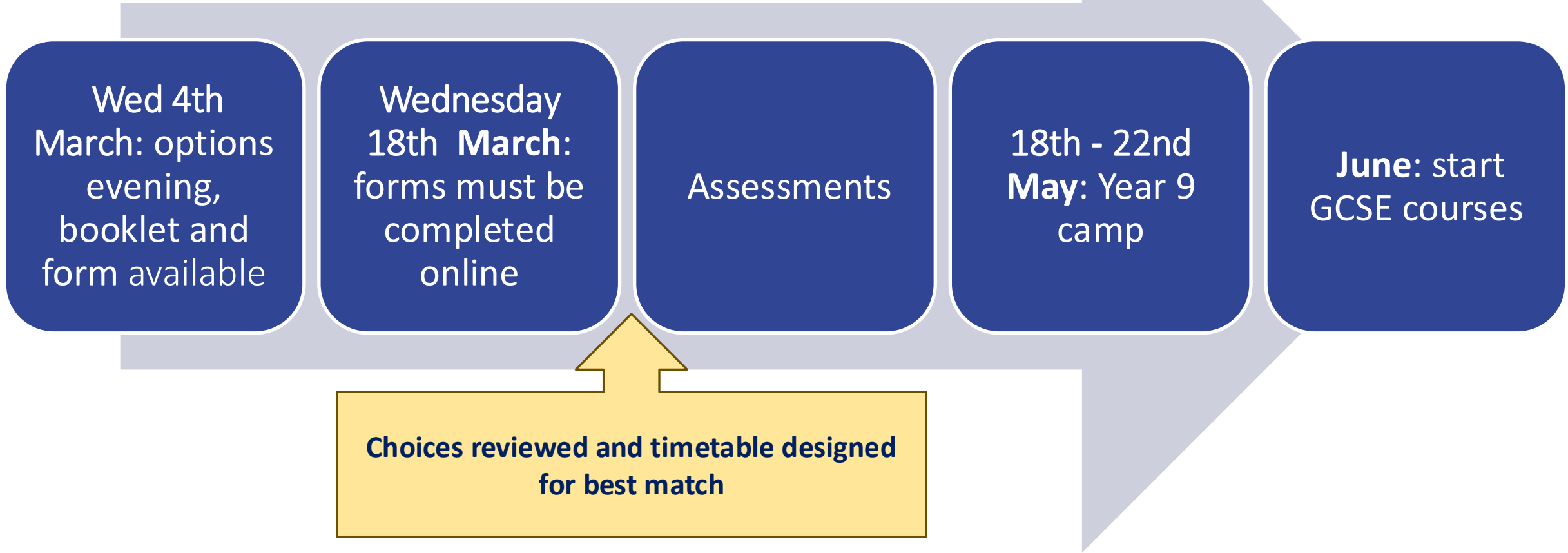
We will not run all the courses on offer, however we will maximise boys' choices. **This is why the preferences are important.**

The pastoral team will speak to students or families where they do not think that the choices made suit students' strengths and interests.

The final decision about student courses rests with the Headteacher and depends, to some extent, on:

- the **most appropriate course for individual students**
- the need for each student to study a reasonably **broad and balanced range** of subjects
- the availability of **teaching staff and accommodation** and resources available

What happens next?



**Year 9 Camp
18th – 22nd May
At The Mill**



Year 9 camp is the qualifying expedition for Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award



The D of E award is a life-changing adventure you don't want to miss...

It's about going the extra mile – learning new skills for work and life, getting fitter, helping others, and exploring the countryside.

Millions of young people in the UK have already done their D of E

What's involved?

The Duke of Edinburgh's award is an internationally-recognised extra-curricular qualification that young people complete during their school, college and university years. The 3 DofE levels are:

Bronze, Silver or Gold D of E Award

To achieve your Award, you'll need to complete your own programme of activities in these four sections:

- Volunteering
- Physical
- Skills
- Expedition

Your Bronze DofE programme

The sections

1. Physical
2. Skill
3. Volunteering
4. Expedition

Duration

- Two sections for 3 months
- One section for 6 months
- 2 day - 1 night trip

Requirements

- Enrolment form
- Enrolment fee
- Section activity ideas

You can backdate activities up to 1 month before you enrol (whether they are completed in lockdown or not)

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