

Friday 18 March 2022

Dear families

This cycle, your child will be selecting their optional subjects for GCSE. This is an exciting time for students as they make important decisions about their studies. The academy puts a range of measures in place to support students, including dedicated sessions during PDS and individual meetings with senior staff. Students will continue to be taught a broad curriculum in year 9, but this options process will identify the examined routes that your child wishes to uptake. For example, if a student chooses History, they will still continue to study Geography as well until the end of year 9.

As the health and safety of our families is paramount, we have taken the decision to not hold Options Evening as we usually would have this year. We have, however, implemented some additional layers of support for students and parents to ensure you feel confident to support your child with making their options decisions.

The following measures will be in place for this academic year:

- The options process has been presented to students during their whole year group careers session this week. This presentation included information on subject choices, permissible combinations, how to complete the options form correctly, and information about support available.
- Each department has put together a short video presentation for their subject that will be available on the school website. This will also be accompanied by a video presentation including how to complete the options form correctly, how grades are awarded at GCSE and information about support available to your child. You will receive a link for this via text message or can find the webpage here: <https://www.dixonsta.com/why/year-8-options>
- One of the most important forms of support is the advice of family members. An options information booklet has been sent home with this letter to support you in helping your child with making their decisions in consultation with family members.

Please note that this is an initial expression of interest. Once all forms have been returned, subjects will be finalised based on student interest. Students will then have the opportunity to select their final option choices. The deadline to return expression of interest forms is **Friday 1 April**. Students will need to hand their form into their advisor during morning meetings.

Please don't hesitate to contact Miss Blythe with any questions that you might have.

Yours faithfully,

Charlotte Blythe  
**Assistant Vice Principal**

