

KEY STAGE 4
OPTIONS
SEPTEMBER 2024

EVERYONE
MATTERS
EVERYONE
ACHIEVES



What students study in Keystage 4

In Years 10 & 11 students have a greater flexibility in the subjects they learn. It allows them to concentrate on subjects they enjoy most, perhaps study further after GCSES whilst maintaining a good breadth of curriculum.

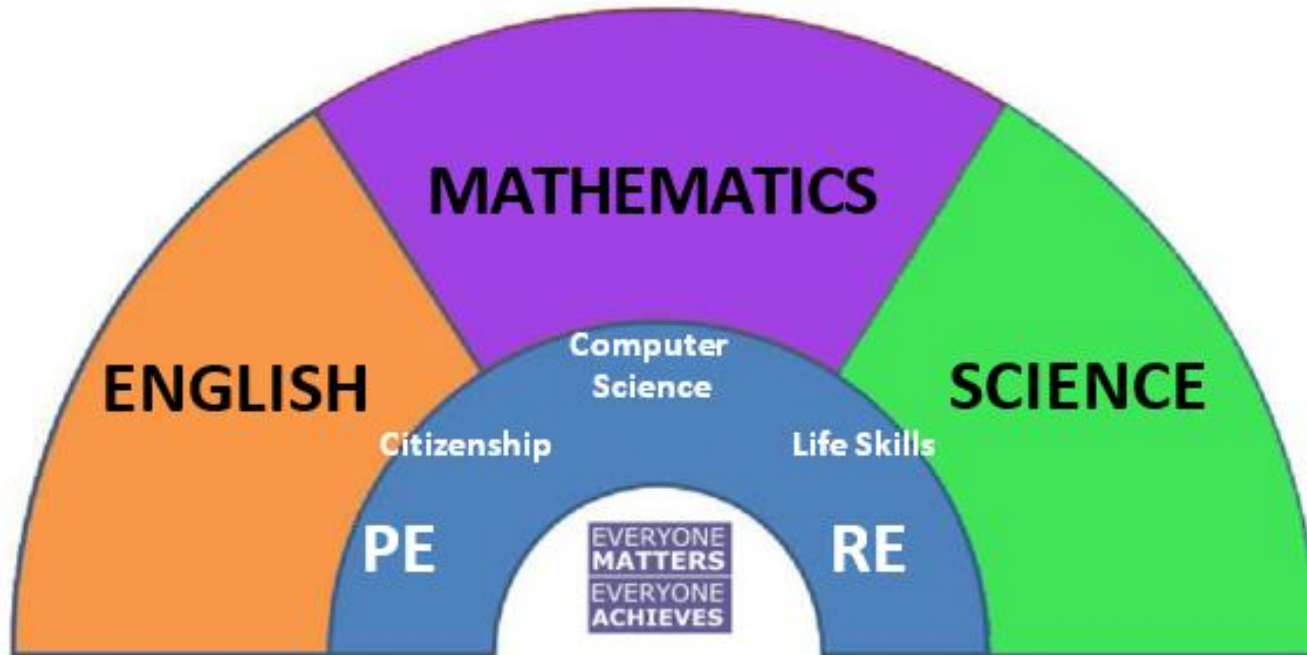
Students will study:

- **core** subjects (which all students follow) and
- 3 **option** subjects (ones they can choose)



All students will follow these subjects

The Core



English Language and English Literature (2 GCSEs)

Mathematics (1 GCSE)

Science Courses (Triple -3 GCSEs or Combined -2 GCSEs)

Religious Studies (1 GCSE)

Core Physical Education (non-examination)

**That's 6 or 7
core GCSEs
depending on
pathway**

Pathways and time allocation per fortnight

Pathway	English	Maths	Science	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	PE	RS.
Pathway A	8	7	12	6	6	6	2	3
Pathway B	8	7	10	6	6	6	2	5
Supported Path	8	7	10	6	6	6	2	5

The Pathways Explained

The school will decide on whether you will be on Pathway A, Pathway B or the Supported Pathway. This is not part of the choice students have in the process.

Pathway A

Pathway A students study the three sciences biology, chemistry and physics as a part of the core offer, they study GCSE Religious Studies. Triple Science is full content for each subject and worth 3 GCSEs. Students then choose 3 options including at least one facilitating subjects.

Pathway B

Pathway B students study combined science as part of their core offer and also the full Religious Studies. Combined Science is Physics, Chemistry and Biology with less content worth 2 GCSEs. Students then choose 3 options including at least one facilitating subjects.

The Supported Pathway

Students on the supported pathway receive extra support in helping to make the best decision for their options, giving them the best chance to succeed. This may include not choosing a facilitating subject.

The Facilitating Subjects

Students need to choose at least one of these (pathway A & B)



Geography GCSE



History GCSE



**Modern Foreign Languages
(French or Spanish)**



Computer Science GCSE

Facilitating Subjects & English Baccalaureate

- The EBacc consists of English language, English literature, maths, at least two sciences, either history or geography and a modern foreign language.
- Many schools make this combination compulsory for most students due to OFSTED but we believe that the EBacc is an arbitrary collection and though all subjects are valuable educationally so are others not included.

All other option subjects – students can study up to two of these
(pathway A & B)



Art and Design GCSE



**GCSE Design and Technology
(Textiles Design or Product Design)**



Drama GCSE



Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE



Media Studies GCSE



Physical Education GCSE



Sociology GCSE



DIGITAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

BTEC Level 1 or 2



Music GCSE



CHILD DEVELOPMENT (BTEC)

How to choose

These choices are made through a discussion between:

- Parents, students and the school
- Sample lessons
- They are not totally free choices but are made in consultation.
- The final decision about options is made by the school

What to choose

- What subjects do I enjoy?
- What choices will offer the greatest range of progression routes?
- What choices will be most useful for my career interests (if currently known)
- What choices will I be able to be successful at?

How **not** to Choose

Friends

- Friends should choose what is best for them and so should your child. Please ensure that this does not form a part of the discussion on options

Teacher

- The teacher that your child gets on with might not teach them next year. Likewise for a teacher that they might not get along with so well

Making the decision

- Your child will receive an email from 'Applicaa' this week. It will be delivered to their school email address.
- They need to pick 4 subjects and they will be allocated 3 of these.
- The subject that your child most wants to study must be put as choice 1. We will prioritise this.
- The other 3 subjects carry equal weight and it is very likely you will get 2 of these.



Subject Selection



Ranking your preferences



Submitting your choices

Select your preferred subjects

Click on the subjects you would like to choose from the list below, you will rank them in order in the next step.
Any rules you need to follow when choosing are shown on the right.

Available subjects

- Art, Craft and Design
- Child Development
- Computer Science
- Drama
- Food
- French
- Geography
- History
- ICT BTEC
- Media
- Music
- PE
- Product Design
- Sociology
- Spanish

Your choices

1. Art, Craft and Design
2. Drama
3. Food
4. French

All criteria

- You have made enough 4 choices.
- You must select at least 1 subject from the list below:
Computer Science / **French** / Geography / History / Spanish

Making the decision

- If you only choose one facilitating subject you will almost certainly get that choice.
- If you choose history or geography and Spanish or French because you want to want to study the Ebacc we will also prioritise this.
- Your child must be ready to study any three of their four choices.
- It is not first come first served but you need to have submitted your options by February 9th

How will we prioritise?

- We will prioritise everyone getting their first choice (though we cannot 100% guarantee this)
- We are restricted to maximum class sizes that are different for different subjects and restricted by classroom spaces.
- We try our hardest to timetable the best combination of lessons which allows the maximum number of students taking all of their chosen subjects.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can my child change their options?

- You can login again to applicaa after submitting and can make changes before the deadline.
- Once the deadline is over we then plan out the timetable and during this time no changes can be requested.
- When options are given out in July any requests go on a waiting list and if requests coincide then we make the change

Is it true that you will only get an arts subject if it is your first choice?

- No
- It is true that you are only (almost) guaranteed your first choice and this is irrespective of what subject your first choice is
- It is also guaranteed that you will get at least one facilitating subject. If your first choice is a non facilitating subject and one of your other three is a facilitating subject this subject should be guaranteed also

How many GCSEs will my child get?

- From the core offer students get either 6 or 7 GCSEs and with 3 options most students will get 9-10 GCSEs. This is more than adequate and in our experience in year 11 more would be a significant strain even for the highest attaining students.
- GCSEs are harder than they used to be and it is important not to study too many qualifications as this will almost certainly reduce quality of grade.

Why is REP (RS) compulsory at HWS?

- Some parts of the RS curriculum are compulsory nationally (though the GCSE is not)
- Many aspects of the (compulsory) PSHE curriculum can be covered in REP lessons
- There are only 3 (triple science) or 5 (double science) REP lessons per fortnight and this is not enough for another option at HWS. Options take 6 periods.
- We feel that if students have to study part of the course anyway they may as well get a GCSE from it

Why do we need to choose 4 and only get 3?

- No school can guarantee all choices so by listing choices 1-4 we can try to guarantee three of these.
- In the few occasions where we cannot pick 3 subjects from your 4 choices we will discuss this with you