

# Year 9 Options Evening

**Thursday 22 January 2026**

Options and their place in the KS4 curriculum

Mr Davis – Vice Principal

Mr Perrins – Assistant Principal



# Options Evening

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- Overview of the GCSE curriculum at HEA
- Progress 8 measure
- Choosing your options
- The options process



# Mr Davis – Vice Principal



# Exciting Decisions

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Tonight sees the next step of a journey taking you to July 2028 and beyond, and the impact of the choices you make over the next few months are important ones.

This is your first real opportunity to shape your educational pathway and is a stepping stone to the next 3 stages:

- What does post-16 look like for me? 6th Form/College.
- What does post-18 look like for me? Employment/University/HE Training.
- What career do I want to pursue?



# Introduction to GCSEs

GCSEs are graded from 1-9, with 9 being the best. The only grade below this is a U, or Ungraded, meaning not enough marks were scored for the paper to receive a grade.

Most students at HEA will gain 9 GCSE grades, with triple scientists gaining 10. Some students might gain more if they are studying an additional language, or additional Maths courses.

This is what the grades mean when compared to the old grading system.

How the new grades compare with old ones

Old grades	New grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6 5 Strong Pass 4 Standard Pass
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	
U	U

Source: Ofqual



# GCSE Government Measures

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## Attainment 8 and Progress 8

A8 = The total of a students' best 8 grades, divided by 10.

P8 = A student's A8, compared with other students in the UK.

Pupils may be on a GCSE or a Level 2 qualification

### English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)

- ✓ English
- ✓ Maths
- ✓ Sciences
- ✓ History or Geography
- ✓ Spanish, French or German



# Attainment Eight (A8) measure

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A student's best English grade, plus their Maths grade.

The best 3 grades a student achieves in EBacc subjects.

The best grades of a student's remaining GCSE quals.

This bucket is doubled.

Outside of English and Maths.

Can include any subject.



These 3 buckets are then added together and divided by 10, giving all students a score similar to a Grade Point Average.



# Progress Eight (P8) measure

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Attainment 8 scores for students are then compared across the country, students are matched up with individuals with the same KS2 score as them.

That comparison with peers, then gives each student a 'Progress' score and determines whether they have made more or less progress than their peers in their time at Secondary school.



# HEA's KS4 Curriculum

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At HEA, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum with traditional values, whilst blending together both academic and vocational qualifications.

We have a strong set of Core subjects, developing a wide array of transferable skills, and have a clear focus on mastery of knowledge – securing the basics.

Alongside this, we provide a variety of Option subjects, allowing students to tailor their education to their passions and start the journey to being experts in their field.

We unapologetically want students at HEA to leave with the best outcomes possible, offering each individual greater choice in future endeavours.



# GCSE curriculum overview

Core Curriculum	Option 1 (choose one of)	Option 2	Option 3
English	Geography	Free choice	Free choice
Maths	History		
Science	French		
PE (Core)	German		
RE	Spanish		
Character Development	Computer Science		

There are opportunities for students to gain additional qualifications, with access to Triple Science, Higher Statistics and Further Maths.



# RE at HEA

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Ever more frequently, UK schools are including RE in their compulsory examined curriculum – just as we do at HEA.

RE is a compulsory part of the national curriculum at KS4 – why not secure a qualification from it?

The Eduqas GCSE RE curriculum is broad, 50% focuses on Philosophical and Ethical studies, and 50% focuses on specific religions.

Last year in the UK, RE was the highest performing GCSE qualification. 31% of students secured a grade 7 or above.



# Options

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- Subjects on offer include:

- Art & Design
- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- DT Product Design
- DT Textiles
- Drama
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Geography
- Health & Social Care BTEC
- History
- French
- German
- Spanish
- Music BTEC
- Music GCSE
- PE BTEC
- PE GCSE
- Psychology



# The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

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- The EBacc is not a qualification, but a set of GCSE subjects
- It is recommended by universities and employers
- Studying the EBacc helps students develop a broad range of knowledge and skills
- To follow the EBacc pathway, students choose:
  - **Core Curriculum:** as explained earlier
  - **Option 1:** History *or* Geography
  - **Option 2:** French, German, *or* Spanish
  - **Option 3:** One free choice subject



# What is a BTEC?

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- A vocational qualification; it is linked to real jobs and industries
- Students learn by doing practical work, as well as learning the theory behind it
- Assessment is mainly through coursework completed over Years 10 and 11
- Some BTECs also include an exam or controlled assessment
- BTECs are equal in value to GCSEs and recognised by colleges and employers



# Curriculum – The Final Time

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Whilst we feel the buzz and excitement of the next stage, we can't let 'right now' pass us by.



A promise.

From Year 9.



**RESPECT**

# Mr Perrins – Assistant Principal



# Timeline

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## Options Evening

- Thursday 22 January

## Deadline for initial choices

- Wednesday 4 February

## Deadline for final choices

- Monday 16 March

## Options confirmed

- June 2026



# Making the most of Options Evening

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- Visit **all the subjects** you are considering choosing
- Core subjects are also here this evening if you have any questions
- **Ask staff about the course:**
  - What will you study?
  - How is the course assessed? (coursework and exams)
  - What makes a successful student in this subject?
  - What extra-curricular opportunities are available?
  - How does the course link to **Sixth Form** subjects?
  - What careers could this subject support?

*(Ma10 – Mrs Higman)*



# Making initial choices

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- **Deadline for initial choices:** Wednesday 4 February
- These choices are **not final**, but they help us plan the school timetable and staffing
- Students will receive an email to their school email address with login details
- Once logged in, students choose **three option subjects** and **one reserve choice**



# Email

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**STEP 1:** Click: [my.edval.education/rpc/login](https://my.edval.education/rpc/login)

**STEP 2:** Enter the following WebCode: SEVFG


**STEP 3:** Select subjects you want, in order of your PREFERENCE (Important).

**STEP 4:** Click [Submit].




# Initial Choices

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 **tes** **Timetable Daily**  
Powered by edval

Sign in to your account

Enter WebCode

Stay signed in for 30 days  [Forgot WebCode?](#)

Sign in



# Initial Choices



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Y10OPTIONS DRAFT 2026

Open for submission

Click here



# Initial Choices

Y10OptionsDraft

Main Units	Subject	Units
Priority 1	<input type="text" value="No selection"/>	0
Priority 2	<input type="text" value="No selection"/>	0
Priority 3	<input type="text" value="No selection"/>	0
		Total 0

Reserve Units	Subject	Units
Reserve 1	<input type="text" value="No selection"/>	0
		Total 0

Cancel

Print

Submit



# Choosing subjects on the online form

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- The online system will prevent students from selecting the **same subject twice**
- However, there are a few subjects where you must make **one clear choice**
- **Please note:**
  - **DT (Product Design) and DT (Textiles)** are two pathways within the **same qualification**. Students may choose **one only**
  - Students should choose **either PE (GCSE) or PE (BTEC)**, not both
  - Students should choose **either Music (GCSE) or Music (BTEC)**, not both
  - If you are unsure which course is the best fit, please use this evening to discuss this with staff



# Initial Choices

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- If you submit your choices before **Wednesday 4 February**, you can **log back in and change them** at any point before the deadline
- The window for making draft choices will **close on Wednesday 4 February** for review
- Please choose your **reserve option carefully**
- In some cases, students may be allocated a **reserve subject**, so it should be a course you would be happy to study



# Final Choices

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- We will review students' initial choices alongside the **wider school timetable and staffing**
- We will also consider students' **latest reports** and offer **additional guidance** if any concerns are identified
- If an option is unable to run due to **low uptake or staffing constraints**, we will communicate this clearly and give students **time to consider alternative choices**



# Final Choices

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- Students will receive a **new email** with a link and login details to submit their **final choices and reserve**
- The form will be completed in the **same way as before**
- **All students must submit final choices**, even if they are the same as their draft choices
- **Deadline:** Monday 16 March



# Confirmation

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- Students' final options will be used to create the **whole-school timetable**
- Students and parents will receive **final confirmation in the second half of the Summer Term**



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- Enjoy the evening!

