



Ringwood School



**Please read this document carefully as it gives you information on:**

Which subjects are still compulsory to study in Year 10 & 11?

Which subjects can I choose to study in Year 10 & 11?

What are the rules around the subjects I can choose?

How will I make my choices?

How will I tell the school my preferred choices?

### **KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

Year 9 Consultation evening: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March

Option form Deadline: Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March

(link to the online form will be sent to each student's email account following Options Evening)

## YOUR CURRICULUM IN YEARS 10 AND 11

### THE COMPULSORY CORE OF THE CURRICULUM

English

Maths

Science

**English:** You will study 2 GCSEs: English Language and English Literature.

**Maths:** You will attain a Maths GCSE.

**Science:** Most of you will study a course called Combined Science. This is made up of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and counts as 2 GCSEs.

If you would like to top up your Science and achieve separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3 GCSEs rather than 2) then you will need to choose Triple Science as one of your subjects from the option blocks.

**Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE):** You will continue to have 1 lesson per fortnight of PSHE to learn about topics such as finance, sexual health, and employability. There is no qualification attached to this lesson.

### THE OPTIONAL SECTION OF THE CURRICULUM

Either: CORE PE or Performing Arts

**Physical Performance:** Unless you choose otherwise, you will do CORE PE. This has no qualification attached and the emphasis is on physical participation to promote health and well-being. However, you may choose to use this time for Performing Arts instead. There is no qualification, but the students will develop in dance and singing.

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Option 4

**Options:** You can choose 1 GCSE/Vocational course from each of the 4 option blocks. The options have been grouped into blocks based on a few variables including our staff and facility availability. There are 2 rules:

1. You **must** choose either French, Spanish, History or Geography in one of your blocks (you can choose all four if you wish).
2. You cannot choose the prohibited combinations (GCSE PE and Sport Studies, Art and Textiles or Music and Music Technology). This is because the government see these subjects as being too similar.

BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	BLOCK D
Art	Art	Art	Art
Business	Computer Science	Business	French
Drama	DT- Graphics	Drama	Geography
DT - Resistant Materials	Food & Nutrition	Geography	History
DT - Engineering	GCSE PE	History	Music
Food & Nutrition	Geography	Photography	Music Technology *
Geography	Health & Social Care*	Religious Studies	Photography
History	History	Spanish	Religious Studies
Media	Hospitality & Catering *	Sport Studies*	Sport Studies*
Sport Studies*	Sport Studies*	Triple Science	Triple Science
IT*	Textiles		

## WHY STUDY A LANGUAGE?

In surveys on skills shortages, employers said they lacked workers who can speak a foreign language and identified this as a performance issue. Therefore, studying a language will increase your future employability. Overall, you won't close future options if you don't take a particular subject in years 10-11 but not studying a Modern Foreign Language is perhaps the one exception. As such our advice to you is this: just as you need to have a good reason for doing your other options, you need to have a good reason for not studying French or Spanish.

*If you have studied **French** from Year 7, we recommend you choose French. If you would like to do Spanish after starting it in Year 9, you will need to do both French and Spanish in blocks C and D to be a **dual linguist**.*

*If you have studied **Spanish** from Year 7, we recommend you choose Spanish. If you would like to do French after starting it in Year 9, you will need to do both French and Spanish in blocks C and D to be a **dual linguist**.*

## A NOTE ON NON-GCSE COURSES

All option subjects in the blocks are GCSE qualifications unless stated. The government changed GCSEs by:

- A) Ending coursework or controlled assessment in most subjects.
- B) Assessing most subjects with exams at the end of year 11 only.
- C) Preventing you from re-sitting GCSEs. The exception is in English and Maths where if you do not get a "good pass" in year 11, you must re-do them in year 12.
- D) Requiring you to write longer answers to questions.
- E) Changing the grading system to numbers 9-1. The grade 9 is higher than an old A\*.
- F) More demanding topics included at GCSE.

To support you with this increased rigour and difficulty, we suggest that you might wish to combine some GCSEs with some non-GCSE courses. There are advantages to doing this because non-GCSE courses still have coursework or performance-based work included in the course. They are structured in units so you can be assessed throughout years 10-11. By mixing GCSEs with non-GCSEs, you can spread the assessment load across the two years by completing coursework in the vocational courses and being able to bank these marks as you do them. This means that there will be less exams at the end of year 11. We are therefore offering non-GCSE courses in Health & Social Care, Hospitality and Catering, IT, Music Technology and Sport Studies. These courses are not any 'easier' than their GCSE counterparts but assessed differently to ease the pressure of the examination period in Year 11.

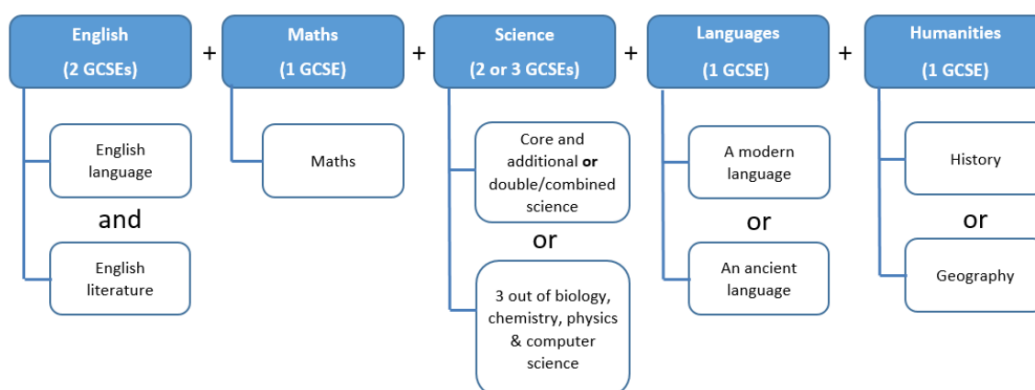
The terms BTEC, Cambridge National and Level 1/ 2 Award are the different names used by the three different exam boards for their non-GCSE courses however all these courses are recognised as being equivalent to a GCSE and are accepted as such by colleges and sixth forms (including Ringwood Sixth Form).

## THE CAVEAT

If the subject that you are selecting does not attract enough students, it may not be viable to run. If this happens, we will contact the student to advise them. Equally, a subject in a block may attract more students than the class can accommodate (30 for most subjects but 22 for Technology and 21 for Photography subjects). If we cannot create an extra group for an oversubscribed option, then the limited places that are available will be allocated according to students' behaviour records. In other words, if you are a student who works hard and behaves well, you will be given priority over students that have chosen to make poor choices. We will of course consider a student's aptitude in particular subjects such as if they have been awarded scholar status in school or received recognition with prestigious acknowledgement in this subject field. We can, will and do refuse students access to a course or withdraw them from it if their behaviour creates a health and safety risk (such as in Food Technology).

## WHAT IS AN EBACC?

The government introduced a performance indicator called the **English Baccalaureate (EBACC)**, which measures the percentage of students in a school who achieve 'good' passes in **the following subjects:**



Including all these subjects within your KS4 curriculum would mean that you are studying the EBACC combination of subjects. These subjects are looked on favourably by universities. This said, it is not a qualification and you will not be accredited with any EBACC certification.

## GUIDANCE TO FILLING IN THE FORM

The COMPLETED options form (which will be emailed to the student's school email account) must be completed by **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March**. As mentioned, missing this deadline could jeopardise your place on oversubscribed courses.

To assist your selection, we have created a page on the school's website where you can view a short video and download individual course information for every option course that we are offering.

You can view this here: <https://www.ringwood.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=KS4+Options&pid=41>