



# COOMBE WOOD SCHOOL

## Year 9 Options Frequently Asked Questions

When is the last date for selecting GCSE subjects?

Monday 19th April 2021.

Is it possible to see the course content for each subject?

The options booklet provides details about each subject including the exam board and specification for each subject offered. If you would like more detailed information, you may visit the exam board website and look at the qualification specification, which provides course content information.

Are students guaranteed the options they choose?

We cannot 100% guarantee that students will get the options that they choose, but it is likely that most options selected will be possible. Students are asked to order the options they select in preference and are also asked to select two reserve choices. If a student does not get their first choice, we will, wherever possible, give them one of their reserves instead.

When will students know whether they will be sitting Foundation or Higher tier?

Firstly, not all subjects offer Foundation and Higher tier entry any more, so this is not always an option. Where Foundation and Higher tiers are available, the tier that each student will be entered for will be decided in Year 11.

Will students who are currently in transition be in mainstream classes for Year 10 and 11?

Students from transition will be in some mainstream classes, but the exact details and extent of this will not be determined until after options have been selected. We are currently investigating alternative qualifications such as ASDAN and a new vocational Princess Trust course as possible options for a small number of students.

What are the minimum and maximum number of subject choices?

All students will choose one EBACC subject and three additional subjects.

Is there a reason why the school is not offering Business or Media related options?

You do not need to study Business Studies or Media Studies at GCSE level in order to be able to study these subjects at university level or pursue a career in either field. Instead, we would advise that you choose a range of subjects that are related to your chosen field. For example, choosing French or Spanish would help you to prepare for a career in business, as it would enable you to communicate more effectively on a global platform. For a career in media, you may want to choose a Creative Arts subject like Graphic Design, as this would support the visual nature of the role.

Will it be possible for some students to take some of their subjects a year early?

There are no plans for students to take their exams early. At CWS, we believe that students will have a better chance of being able to succeed if they are given the time to develop and master their learning. For this reason, we are not planning on entering students early.

What is the minimum class size to make an option viable?

There is currently no specific minimum class size. We plan to run all of the subjects that are listed as options.

Are any courses related to Information Technology/Computing being offered?

At the moment we are not able to offer any ICT or Computer science qualifications, as we mentioned during the options evening. This is due to the difficulty in recruiting specialist staff. We will continue to advertise a vacancy for this teaching post, but until we have employed a teacher, we are unable to offer this option.

What sort of career opportunities are related to PBE?

A qualification in Philosophy, Beliefs and Ethics (Religious Studies) provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers in different sectors including law, journalism, medicine, the media, the police, education, and politics.

Do you need to study Triple Science if you want to study Psychology at A Level?

No, you do not need to study Triple Science GCSE to study A Level Psychology.

Is it possible to change options in Year 10?

It is not recommended that students change options once Year 10 begins. This is because changing options once a course has begun would mean that there would not be enough time to cover the course content and would, consequently, put students at risk of not achieving a good grade.

What is the difference between GCSE Sports Studies (PE) and Cambridge National Sport Studies?

GCSE Sport Studies has both a theoretical component (60%) and a practical component (40%). You complete two exam papers at the end of the course and you are assessed practically in your performance in three different sports. It is essential that you regularly practice your practical sports choices. Cambridge National Sport Studies is the equivalent of one GCSE, whereby you are assessed internally (75%) and externally (25%) in four different units, and your cumulative score makes up your final grade. Cambridge National Sport Studies has fewer written exams.

Who should I speak to if I have subject specific questions?

If you have subject specific questions, you can contact the relevant Head of Department by emailing [enquiries@cws.foliotrust.uk](mailto:enquiries@cws.foliotrust.uk).

What is covered in Product Design? Is it computer based?

Product Design is a Design and Technology GCSE. It is an even split of 50% theory based exam, taken in year 11, and 50% design and make coursework project. Students will be required to learn a range of practical and design making skills in the workshop, and also gain an understanding of computer aided design and manufacture using some of our state of the art facilities. It is not an easy option due to the theory content and is often seen as a good preparation for careers in engineering and architecture.

Can students take 10 subjects?

No, students are not able to take 10 subjects. At CWS all students will take 9 GCSEs because we believe that this will allow enough curriculum time for each subject.