

An Overview of the Year 9 Options Procedure: 2022

For GCSE courses starting in September 2022, course information **and** the actual option selection process will be available online.

Timeline

Sunday 5 th December 2021	Course information will become available on the Dubai College website in the following area: https://www.dubaicollege.org/academic/middle-school
Thursday 6 th January 2022	Year 9 Options Evening
Thursday 20 th January	Option choices go 'live'. Further information about this process will be made available in due course.
Thursday 27 th January	Year 9 Consultation Evening
Friday 28th January	GCSE Option choices deadline: 10.00am

The Options Evening

All students and parents have the opportunity to visit the subjects in which options are available to students. Subject staff will give a brief overview of the course and answer any subject specific questions. Senior staff will provide more general guidance about options.

The Consultation Evening

This will be a 'normal' Consultation Evening where parents and students are invited to discuss the attainment, progress and effort of their son or daughter and whether they may be suitable for further study in the subject.

Key Information

At Dubai College, the option blocks for GCSE subjects are given as detailed on the next page.

- Students choose their **3** preferred subjects online by **Friday 28th January**, subject to one option being chosen in each block

Students and parents need to be aware of the following:

- **We reserve the right to not offer a course if there is insufficient demand for it.** If this does occur, students will be told as soon as possible after the options deadline and offered appropriate advice;
- Students who miss the noon deadline of 28th January may not receive their preferred choices;
- Students *may* change their minds about option choices at a later date; however, they will only be allowed to change (subject to the discretion of Heads of Department) if their new choice fits in with the option blocks **and** there is sufficient space available in subject sets. If there is insufficient space, then the student will be added to a waiting list for that subject. Any changes in options must be completed by Friday 30th September 2022.

GCSE Choices: An Overview

All students have to take the following compulsory timetabled subjects in Year 10 and Year 11:

Mathematics

English Language

English Literature

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

Arabic (or Arabic A for students who hold an Arabic passport)

UAE Social Studies

Games

Islamic Studies (for Muslim Students only)

Available Option Choices

Students must choose one subject from each option

	Choose one from:	Notes
Option 1	Art Design and Technology Drama Latin Music PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Latin is only available to students who studied the subject in Year 9.
Option 2	Computer Science Economics Geography History	
Option 3	Art Computer Science Design and Technology Drama Economics French Geography History Latin Music Spanish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Latin is only available to students who studied the subject in Year 9.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I need to take a language at GCSE?

No. Under the options structure on page 2, there is no compulsion to take any optional language to GCSE Level.

2. Do I have to take GCSE Arabic?

Under KHDA regulations, students now have to study Arabic to the end of Year 10. Our view is that it is important to have a language as part of a 'broad and balanced' curriculum. Therefore all students will continue to study Arabic till the end of Year 11.

In Year 11, students will be able to either:

- Study Arabic to GCSE. This is our recommended option; students will only have a further two terms of study in Year 11 before taking a GCSE in Arabic in the summer of 2024; they should weigh up this extra two terms of study in the subject against the time and effort that they have put into the subject to date when deciding whether to continue with Arabic to GCSE in Year 11.
- Study Arabic with an alternative certification. We are currently exploring a variety of options here and will give you further information on this in term 2. Ideally, this certification may be taken in one or more of the skill areas of listening, reading, writing and speaking.
- Study Arabic as an enrichment subject only.

3. How useful is GCSE Arabic likely to be?

Arabic is a key differentiator of Dubai-based students from other students globally and, increasingly, Arabic speakers will be prioritised for certain job roles within the MENA region. Arabic is also the second most important language for the UK's future, according to the Languages for the Future report produced by the British Council.

4. When will I need to make a decision about which route I will take for Arabic in Year 11?

To ensure that Arabic is staffed appropriately in Year 11, we will be asking for this information in term 2 of 2023.

5. Will I need a foreign language qualification as an entry requirement for university?

In a very few circumstances, yes!

At University College, London, entry requirements include having a GCSE in a foreign language (this, of course, includes Arabic).

Canadian universities generally require French, and many Irish universities require a foreign language. Of course, entry requirements frequently change and you do need to do your own research for universities both inside and outside of the UK.

6. Will doing 9 GCSEs rather than 10 ruin my chances of going to a top university?

We have consulted with a number of UK Russell Group universities (including LSE, UCL, Imperial, Bristol, Exeter, Oxford and Cambridge). They all state that there is **no requirement to take 10 GCSEs**. Only medicine degrees state the actual number of GCSEs required – these look at applicants' best 8 (or 6 in one case) GCSEs.

Both Oxford and Cambridge state that each application is looked at individually: there are no set number of GCSEs that need to be taken and that quality matters more than quantity.