



**Welcome to the Year 9
Parent/Carer Options Evening
12th March 2025**

Support Information for 2025



- Options Booklet – *on website*
- FAQ – *on website*
- Tutorial guidance
- Year 9 Parents' Evening
- Example Option Forms
- Options Form
- This powerpoint – *on website*



Types of Qualification

- GCSEs (9-1)
- Cambridge Nationals (*Graded Pass, Merit, Distinction*)

Exams sat at end of Year 11



GCSE Information

- No coursework for most subjects
- Single tier of entry in most subjects (no foundation/higher in all apart from Maths, Science and Modern Foreign Languages)
- Less coursework in some practical subjects
- Greater emphasis on Literacy
- More content and more challenge in all subjects



“Gold Standard” since 2016

- **The Old “Gold Standard”:**
5 A*-C GCSE including English and Mathematics
- **The New “Gold Standard”: Ebacc**
Students must achieve at least 8 GCSEs (grade 5 and above) divided into **groups** as below:
 1. ***GCSEs in English and Mathematics***
 2. ***3 English Baccalaureate GCSEs***
(Science, Computer Science, MFL, History, Geography)
 3. ***3 other GCSEs or equivalents***



The Curriculum at The Gilberd

- All subjects studied in Year 7 and Year 8
- Mini Options chosen in Year 8
- Transition to GCSE in Year 9
- GCSE courses studied Year 10 and Year 11

Four options over two years to retain choice and to continue to support a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Curriculum at The Gilberd



- A fair balance that allows students to meet the government's requirements **AND** have a reasonable amount of choice in the subjects studied.



Compulsory Subjects

All students will study:

Broad and Balanced Curriculum

English Language

English Literature

Maths

Combined Sciences (2 GCSEs)

Core PE (non exam)

RE (short course GCSE sat in Year 10)

Personal Development (non exam)

Compulsory Humanities Subject with some choice



Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Humanities	Choice
History	
Geography	

MFL Subject for the Gold Standard of Ebacc



Broad and Balanced Curriculum

MFL	Choice
French	
German	



KS4 Option Subjects 2025-27

Broad and Balanced Curriculum

GCSE Subjects:

Art

Business

Computer Science

Design Technology

Dance

Drama

Food Preparation &

Nutrition

Technical Award:

Health & Social Care Cambridge Nationals

Science

French

Geography

German

History

Music

Textiles

PE

Religious Beliefs in Action

KS4 Option Subjects 2025-27



Students can not study the following combinations:

- Art AND Textiles

How many Qualifications will students study?



The vast majority of students will study **9 qualifications** at KS4:

- 5 GCSEs in the core subjects - English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science (2 GCSEs)
- 4 GCSEs/Technical Awards in their 4 option subjects

STEPS Course

(Supportive Training & Education Pathways Scheme)

Students who would benefit from studying a reduced number of options are advised by our SENCO (Miss Parker) to take the STEPs Course.

Students study **two option** subjects of their choice and the core subjects.

They also work towards accredited qualifications that post-16 providers recognise (Duke of Edinburgh).



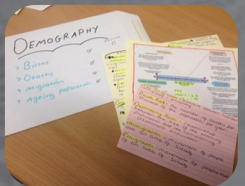
PACE Course

(Practical Assistance for Curriculum Enhancement)

Students who would benefit from studying **one** less option will be advised by their tutor or our SENCO (Miss Parker) to take the PACE Course.

Students study **three option** subjects and the core subjects. *One of their choices must be either History or Geography.*

They will then spend 5 lessons a fortnight working on their study skills to support their other GCSE subjects. They may also work towards accredited qualifications that post-16 providers recognise.



“Open doors to the future ...”



Broad and Balanced Curriculum

- Modern Foreign Languages

The student must achieve at least a grade 6 in the language to take it at A level.

- Music

Music GCSE is not essential to access Music A level or music at the Institute. The student must be able to prove their ability to perform and read music to grade 5 standard.

- Art or Textiles

GCSE Art or Textiles are not essential to access Art or Textiles A level or any Art course at the Institute.



“Open doors to the future ...”



Broad and Balanced Curriculum

A Consideration?

To study ‘A’ Levels that require extensive essay writing skills, such as **Economics, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology** or **Law**, students will need to have GCSEs at grade 5 in...

- Either English Literature or English Language,
- Plus at least one of English Literature or English Language, History or Full course Religious Studies



“Open doors to the future ...”

Thinking about going abroad for A levels?

- The entry requirements may well be different
- Make sure the research has been done before choices are made

The Separate Sciences?



- Separate Sciences option – “core” science time, 9 lessons – plus the 5 lessons of option time.
- Study Chemistry, Physics and Biology and get 3 GCSEs at the end of Year 11.
- Combined Sciences – study Chemistry, Physics and Biology and get 2 GCSEs.
- To study Science ‘A’ Level you do not need to have studied Separate Sciences. You need grades 6 and above. You also need to have at least a grade 6 in maths.



Dos and Don'ts for students

Do choose a subject because:

- you enjoy it
- your teacher thinks you will do well at GCSE
- you know it will help you in the future
- you like the sound of the lessons/type of activities
- you are willing to fulfil what is expected

Don't choose a subject because:

- a friend is doing it
- a sibling did it
- you like the teacher
- you think you might get away with less work!



The Process

Processing the Option Forms

- The order of **subjects is important** because we try to build the blocks around students' choices.
- Students must be prepared to study **any** of the six choices they make.
- It is not usually possible to allow more than two Arts or Technology subjects per student – the staffing doesn't work!

Finding out their options:



1. Timetable is finalised - usually mid-June.
2. If there are any students who cannot have 4 of their 6 options, they will be spoken to.
3. Options are published to students.
4. If a student is unhappy with their options, they will need to come and talk to Mr Ratcliffe or Mrs Percival to see if they can help. There will be specific times and dates for this.



Typical Post-16 Routes

- The Grammar Schools
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Colchester Institute
- Post 16 Colleges beyond Colchester
- Apprenticeships
- Employment (with training)



What Next?

- Read the Options Booklet
- Contact relevant Subject Leader if you have a subject query
- Check Post-16 requirements
- Check FAQs
- See subject teacher at Parents' Evenings – X Pop 26th March; Y Pop 2nd April
- Submit forms to form tutors by 4th April

Friday 4th April

Deadline for your form tutor to
hand completed forms to me.