

from DEPUTY HEAD ACADEMIC



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Re: GCSE Options September 2025

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

Please find below the proposed GCSE Option blocks for September 2025, which I shared with you at the Year 9 Parents' Day. (I)GCSE options will form a large part of this term's subject lessons, tutorials and career discussions for Year 9. Decisions are not required until later in the spring term, but you may find it helpful to discuss these as a family when you are next in contact, or during the February half-term.

A reminder that our core subjects are English Language, English Literature, Maths, Christian Theology, Dual Award Science (which covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics and is worth 2 x GCSEs). In addition, students should choose one subject from each of the Option blocks. Details of each subject offered are to be found in the options booklet.

As we announced in 2023, we have taken the decision to offer Year 10 students henceforth three instead of four option choices. This allows us to redistribute subjects which were previously in the fourth option block to achieve the following;

- Add an extra lesson of Maths and of English in Years 10 and 11,
- Increase the number of lessons in the remaining three option blocks from 6 to 7 periods per fortnight.

We believe these moves will enable our students to secure better outcomes in these subjects. Equally, extra Maths and English will have a beneficial knock-on effect in the Sciences, DT, and Humanity subjects respectively. I should reiterate that your child is not losing out academically by taking one fewer GCSE for the following reasons:

- With the core subjects plus three option subjects, this will give your child nine GCSE subjects. This is the norm in the independent sector. Many of our current Year 10 and Year 11 students are taking nine GCSEs.
- Able scientists have the option to take additional science worth three GCSEs in the timetable allocation for Dual Award Science. We have been running this successfully for many years now. These students would gain 10 GCSEs, but they need to be able to cope with the fast pace. This course is called *Separate Science*.
- The most able mathematicians can study for and complete the Free-standing Maths Qualification, sometimes called Additional Maths or "Ad Maths". This is offered as an evening activity to interested mathematicians <https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/fsmq/additional-mathematics/>
- We offer Greek and Chinese lessons as additional activities leading to a GCSE or A level depending on age and ability. Interested students should enquire of the MFL department for more information.

If interested in doing Separate Science, and/or Ad Maths, Greek or Chinese, please tell your Tutor (current students), or Admissions (external students).

Block A	Block B	Block C
Art	Art	Classical Civilisation
Computing	Sport BTEC	DT
Enterprise & Marketing*	Drama	Geography
French	DT	Latin
Geography	History	Music
History		Spanish

* Enterprise & Marketing is a Cambridge Nationals Level 2 vocational course and equivalent to GCSE Business.

Students will need to make one choice from each of blocks A, B and C. Higher demand subjects appear in more than one option block. **If there are any combinations which do not work, please inform your Tutor (internal students) or Admissions (external students) as soon as possible.** It may be that we can rearrange these blocks, though we cannot make any promises. We have built the blocks to accommodate the greatest number of student choices based on past experience. To move a subject now to meet the needs of one student could disadvantage more than one student in return.

We are always mindful that student interests may change between now and September. Students can change their Year 10 option choices right up until the start of September, as long as they are choosing only one subject from each block.

Ampleforth Students: If you would like advice about a subject you already study, please speak to your subject-teacher. If it is a new subject e.g. Sport BTEC, please consult with your Tutor who can direct you to the best person to help.

New entrants to Ampleforth: please speak to one of our Admissions Team who are best placed to direct your enquiry.

To all students, my advice is to study not what your friends are doing, but what you are interested in. If you are interested, then you are more likely to immerse yourself fully in the subject and carry out the independent reading and study that really makes the difference at GCSE and beyond.

Next steps

Ampleforth students: Your Tutor will work with you to make your choices by the end of March. Your Tutor will then discuss and confirm these choices with your parents.

New entrants: Please consider which subjects you would like to study and confirm your choices with Admissions on admissions@ampleforth.org.uk

A link to the options booklet is here - [GCSE Options 2025-26](#)

Best wishes,

John Devitt

Deputy Head Academic – Director of Studies