

## Year 9 Options FAQs

### Will I get all my first choices?

A. While most students do get their first choices, we have to allocate some second, so it is important that you select second choices you are willing and able to do. If there is low demand for a subject, we may not run it.

### Which Science GCSE will I take?

A. Triple Science is studied by students in the Grammar Stream. Students studying Triple Science will achieve GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics. Students that are not in the Grammar Stream will study GCSE Science Trilogy. This qualification covers all three sciences and is equivalent to two GCSEs. Most Students following this route and achieve high grades and can choose to study Science A levels at Swindon Academy.

### When do I find out which subjects I have been given from my choices?

A. Once we have received students option choices the options team will begin allocation, the deadline for Option Choices is the 20<sup>th</sup> March, you will find out which subjects you have been allocated during term 5. If you think we have made a mistake or you are not happy with your options, talk to Mrs Thompson about this. If we have concerns about the subjects you have chosen, we will contact you to discuss them.

### If I start a subject and later realise that I have made a mistake, what can I do?

A. This happens to a few students every year. There are only four weeks at the start of term when we look at requests for changes and make them if we can. Sometimes subject groups are full, and students are unable to move but we do our best to help. By the end of the first four weeks of the autumn term, we must stop making any changes as you will have missed too much work to begin a new subject.

### What is a Cambridge National qualification?

A. These are broad and engaging level 1 and level 2 qualifications that equip students with applied knowledge and associated practical skills. Like a BTEC qualification, they will have a coursework element to them.

### Are BTEC subjects and Cambridge Nationals worth the same as GCSE subjects?

A. All subjects are worth the same: one GCSE.

### Can a student who chooses History also choose Geography?

A. Yes, this is possible. Choose one or the other in 'choice 2' and then choose the other in 'Choice 3'.

### Can I do a mixture of BTEC, Cambridge National and GCSE subjects?

A. Yes, this is fine.

### What is the difference between the Pathways?

A. The essential difference is that Grammar and EBacc pathways select subjects that make up the Ebacc. The EBacc is a set of subjects that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers. The subjects are: English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science, Geography or History and a Language (Spanish at Swindon Academy). You can find out more about the EBacc by reading this EBacc leaflet produced by the Department for Education: [DfE EBacc Leaflet.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebacc-leaflet)

It is the government's intention for as many people as possible to take EBacc subjects. The Progress 8 pathways still allow pupils to choose the same EBacc subjects should they wish.

## How do I know which pathway my son/daughter is in?

A. All students have received an epraise message with a link to their Options Booklet, this message contains will inform students of their pathway, this can also be found on the back cover of the Options Booklet.

## Why is my child on this Pathway?

A. The pathway your child is taking is based on the data we have collected regarding their potential to achieve success in the subjects offered within that pathway. Students have the option to choose any of the subjects offered in the curriculum.

## Can I choose to do a different Pathway?

A. Your Pathway is fixed, and you cannot change from one Pathway to another.

## Do the Pathways impact the sets for core subjects?

A. Sets for core subjects (English, Maths and Science) are not determined by pupils being on either Pathway. Core subjects are set based on pupils' past and present performance. Sets are regularly reviewed to make sure pupils are receiving the targeted guidance they require to make progress.

## Do I have to study GCSE Spanish?

A. Learning a language is a skill that pupils will carry with them for life- It is something that many adults wish they had kept up. Languages have always been highly regarded by universities and employers. We have chosen to prioritise pupils taking a language at GCSE to keep their future options open and enable them to develop a skill which is highly valued that they will take with them beyond Swindon Academy. **Grammar Stream and EBacc students** will be required to study a GCSE Spanish. Language qualifications are increasingly important in today's global community. They are also highly valued by universities and employers.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
		
Course research	Course Selection	Review of Selection
WB: 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	WB: 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	WB 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
Year 9 students will attend Subject Assemblies every day this week. <b>Students complete their Options booklet, Explore, Research and action activities.</b> Parents can use this time to review the courses that are available on their pathway.	<b>Options Parents Evening. Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 6pm at Swindon Academy.</b> Further questions can be asked following the presentation. <b>At this stage students will make final course selection via an epraise form.</b>	<b>Epraise form closes Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 8pm.</b> Every student's selection will be reviewed by the year 9 options team. From the 14th April students and parents will be contacted if the selected options need to be reviewed. <b>Final option choices will be shared with students during Term 5.</b>

If you have a question that has not been answered in this document, please contact Zoe Thompson via epraise message.