

# Welcome to your year 9 options information evening

# The rules of the evening!

1. Please stay muted throughout – there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end;
2. Please do not record the presentation – I will email a copy after we have finished;
3. If you have any personal questions please email me directly – [r.cornell@Smithswood.fmat.co.uk](mailto:r.cornell@Smithswood.fmat.co.uk)

# What am I going to cover?

1. What I mean when I talk about options;
2. Why 'options' are so important;
3. What the process is for choosing options;
4. How 'options' should be chosen.

# What are 'Options'?

The term **Options** refers to year 9 students choosing their subjects / qualifications to study in year 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4).


The subjects will be studied for 2 years and once a course starts, they cannot be changed.

It is possibly the most important decision a young person will ever have to make.

# Why are they so important?

- They will lead to formal qualifications;
- They will shape the route a person takes through life because:
  - They are the only route to post 16 courses after Smith's Wood;
  - They are used to decide which **level** course a student will study after Smith's Wood;
  - They are the only way students will be able to access A-Levels, higher level BTECs, higher and advanced apprenticeships and ultimately, University.

# What do I mean by level?

<p><b>Level 2 courses</b> These are the courses we study in year 10 and 11 (Year 10 and 11)</p>		<p><b>Level 3 courses</b> These are the courses we would like our students to study when they leave us in year 11. (Year 12 and 13)</p>
GCSEs		A Levels
BTEC (L2)		BTEC (L3)
OCR Cambridge Nationals		Advanced apprenticeship
<p><b>THESE ARE THE COURSES WE ARE DISCUSSING TODAY</b></p>		<p><b>THESE ARE THE COURSES TYPICALLY STUDIED IN 6<sup>TH</sup> FORM OR COLLEGE.</b></p>



# What are GCSEs?

- They are qualifications in a wide range of academic subjects;
- They are structured differently depending on the subject;
- They are assessed differently depending on the subject:
  - 100% exam;
  - Exam & coursework;
  - Exam & performances.
- The exam is always taken at the end of year 11;
- They are level 2 qualifications.

# What are BTECs?

- BTEC stands for the Business and Technology Education Council.
- BTECs are specialist work-related qualifications.
- BTECs are divided into units, which cover specific areas of knowledge, skills, and understanding;
- They are assessed by both exams and coursework;
- They are level 2 qualifications and are equivalent to GCSEs



# What are OCR Cambridge Nationals?

- They are similar to BTECs and are designed to prepare students for specific aspects of working life through specific skills.
- They are 50% coursework and 50% exam;
- They are level 2 qualifications and are equivalent to GCSEs

# The subjects!

2 types of subject:

1. Compulsory subject

- Students have to legally take these subjects.

2. Option subject

- A subject chosen by a student.

# Compulsory subjects

## Every student will study:

1. Mathematics;
2. English Literature;
3. English Language;
4. Science
  - Combined science (2 GCSEs) or
  - Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3 GCSEs).
5. PSHE / RE
6. PE

## 95% of students will also study

- History or Geography.

# Option subjects

Students will be able to choose from:

- GCSE Art
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE RE
- GCSE Sociology\*
- GCSE Spanish
- BTEC First award in Sport
- BTEC First award in Travel and Tourism
- BTEC First award in Media Studies
- BTEC Tech award in Health and Social Care
- OCR Cambridge National in Creative iMedia
- OCR Cambridge National in Enterprise and Marketing

# Guidance from us

We will place students in a pathway based on their **academic ability**.

This pathway influences the type of choices a student can make. For example:

## Pathway 1

(Typically students in  
9s1/9w1)

Maths

English Literature

English Language

**Biology**

**Chemistry**

**Physics**

History or Geography

**1 additional vocational or  
GCSE choice**

PSHE / RE

PE

## Pathway 2

(The majority of students)

Maths

English Literature

English Language

**Double Science**

History or Geography

**2 additional vocational or**

**GCSE choices**

PSHE / RE

PE

## Pathway 3\*

(A very small number of  
students)

Maths

English Literature

English Language

Double Science

**3 additional vocational  
choices**

PSHE / RE

PE



# Choosing a subject.

## When choosing a subject, you should consider:

1. The content of the subject – does it interest you?
2. The requirements of the subject – what skills are required?
  1. You will do an exam in each subject;
  2. You will have to write in each subject.
3. What are your aims for post 16? Please don't think that a GCSE or a BTEC is going to get you a job – it is about the range of subjects and the grades achieved;
4. Do not consider the teacher;
5. Do not consider what your friends are doing.
6. USE THE OPTIONS PROSPECTUS / GUIDE.

**We cannot guarantee you will get your 1<sup>st</sup> choice, you will therefore be asked to choose more than 1 subject per choice and indicate your preference.**

# The Smith's Wood guide to options

## GCSE History

### Course Highlights

*"Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."- George Santayana*

We follow the AQA syllabus which enables students to develop an understanding of a breadth of History making this course both fascinating and relevant. Students will discover the answers to key questions such as: How did The Normans take control of England in 1066? How did Germany become a dictatorship in 1934? What caused the First World War, why was it fought in trenches and how did it end? What was ancient medicine like and how did it change through time?

### Course content

#### Paper 1 – Understanding the Modern World.

The period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism.

The wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of the Great Powers and other states. It focuses on the causes, nature and conclusion of the First World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred, and why it proved difficult to bring the war to a conclusion. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and how they were affected by and influenced international relations.

#### Paper 2 – Shaping the nation.

The thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of how medicine and public health developed in Britain over a long period of time. Students will have the opportunity to see how some ideas and events in the wider world affected Britain throughout time.

The depth study allows students to study in depth the arrival of the Normans and the establishment of their rule. The depth study will focus on major aspects of Norman rule, considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints of this period and arising contemporary and historical controversies.

### How is it assessed?

Paper / unit	Unit Title	Assessed	Weighting
1	Understanding the Modern World	<a href="#">2-hour</a> exam	50%
2	Shaping the Nation	<a href="#">2-hour</a> exam	50%

### What skills will I develop?

Students will develop the skills to be able to analyse a wide variety of sources in order to determine their utility and reliability. Students will develop their written skills so that they are able to formulate an argument which is supported by historical facts and conclude with judgments.

### Where can the subject take me?

Main careers for people who study History: The Law, Journalism, Media, Politics, Police, Business, Banking, Insurance, and many more. Historical skills are flexible and transferable. It is a good qualification for jobs that involve presenting reports, producing proposals or, indeed, using verbal or written communication skills. 'A' Level History is highly recommended by universities for those wanting to study Law at degree level.

### For further information

Speak to Miss Hashmi, Miss Cantle, Mr Barclay

# The process and timeline

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November** an introduction to Options;

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January** – Year 9 Parents Evening

- Not sure in what form this will happen (Covid etc)
- Options booklet published (on-line);
- Options system goes live (on-line).

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February** – Deadline for the online completion of Options.

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April** – Confirmation of options

# Extra support

We will:

- Provide on-line assemblies to help guide you with your choices;
- Give you access to our Careers Advisor to help you choose wisely;
- Provide support through mentor time sessions;
- Provide 1:1 meetings to help you with your choices;
- Provide technical support for the on-line process.



# Other information:

Help with GCSE options from the BBC

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrjh92p>

More help from the internet:

<https://www.studential.com/GCSEs/choosing-your-GCSE-subject-options>

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/choosing-gcse-options-19-questions-ask/>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/gcse/choosing-your-gcse>



# Key contact

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Mr Cornell (Deputy Head of Academy)

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Please email us with any questions at any time.

# Thank you.

I will email this presentation this evening and I will place on the school website tomorrow.