



25th January 2021

Dear students and families,

Year 9 Options Process

Welcome to the start of the Year 9 Options Process. Over the next few weeks you will receive information about the subjects on offer and this will lead to you making choices about the subjects you will continue to study in Years 10 and Year 11. It is crucial that you use this time wisely and think carefully about the choices you will make.

Every student will have a core offer of subjects that are compulsory to all Key Stage 4 students; these are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Maths
- Science - for the majority of students this will be science trilogy which equates to two GCSEs

In addition, all students will continue to have core PE and PSHE lessons every week; these are non-GCSE subjects but are compulsory.

Students then have their option choices to make and this year we are hoping to accommodate four choices for each student. If you decide to opt for separate sciences instead of science trilogy, which is physics, biology and chemistry, this will go in your first option choice and instead of having 2 science GCSEs, you will get three – one in each of the science subjects – this will leave you with a remaining three options to choose.

The Department for Education recommends that all students choose at least one of the following subjects – separate science, French, computer science, geography or history. At Newhouse Academy we do not insist that you take one from this list but we do stress this recommendation.

When you receive your option form, you should put your first choice subject at the top, followed by your other subject choices in preference order. You will be asked to choose a reserve subject in case we cannot accommodate all of your first choices. It is worth noting that if the numbers for a specific subject are too low, we may not be able to run it. Likewise, if there are too many students who choose one subject, we will take into account each individual student's attitude to learning, commitment to the subject during key stage 3 and school attendance, to support the decisions that we make.

There will be videos available via the academy's website and Google Drive from all Heads of Department explaining more about what it's like to study their subject at Key Stage Four. They are accompanied by a short video from me explaining the process that is to follow. Please watch all of the videos and carefully read the Options Handbook. There will be plenty of information about the content of the curriculum, what you can expect from lessons and how you will be assessed or examined during and at the end of each course.

Continued...

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There is an opportunity to take time to talk to staff about their subject either during Google Meets, via email or by asking for a phone-call to find out further information. In choosing your option subjects, it is vital you think about which qualifications will best suit your needs as you move on from school to either further education, apprenticeships or employment.

We want our students to choose subjects they enjoy, subjects that they look forward to going to, subjects that will give them the platform they need to excel in their chosen route after leaving school. Students must be committed to their own learning and be ready to show their independence and diligence in the areas they choose.

We would take this opportunity to warn all students against choosing options because you like a specific member of staff or because think you will be in a class with friends... there are no guarantees about what classes will be like or which teacher you will have.

We recommend that students have a balanced and broad range of options so the next few weeks is the time for students to speak with their class teachers, the academy's careers advisor, their form tutors or Head of Year and of course their families, about the right choices for them. I am available via email or on the phone to support this process and to help answer any questions you have, or to put you in contact with staff who can help. My role is to ensure that all families have access to enough information to ensure all our students make the best choices for themselves.

Key contacts:

Mrs Gregory-Harris – Deputy Headteacher – Gregory-HarrisH@newhouseacademy.co.uk

Mrs Gibbs – Head of Year – GibbsD@newhouseacademy.co.uk

Ms K Hodgson – Careers Advisor – KarenHodgson@positive-steps.org.uk

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you have about subjects, the process itself or advice for post-16 provision.

Yours faithfully



Mrs H Gregory-Harris
Deputy Headteacher