



Nobel

Excellence in Everything

Making Key Stage 4 Choices

Making Key Stage 4 Choices



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The National Picture

- Students must now stay in education or training until they are 18.
- Students are expected to continue studying English Language and Maths until they achieve a level 4 or 5 at GCSE.
- Vocational & technical qualifications (eg OCR Nationals or BTEC Technicals) have become more rigorous and have been brought into line with GCSEs.
- There are fewer GCSE and vocational courses available, as the DfE wants to reduce course content overlap.



The National Picture

- GCSEs have changed in their content, assessment methodology & grading:
 - All GCSEs are graded 9-1;
 - more challenging content. Higher percentage of marks awarded for technical accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar;
 - many subjects no longer have controlled assessment elements, and are assessed by 100% exam at the end of Yr 11. Others retain their controlled assessment content, but the weighting it carries is reduced.



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Grading new GCSEs from 2017

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	A*
8	
7	
6	B
5	
4	C
3	
2	D
1	
U	E
	F
	G
	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above



The National Picture

- A levels have also changed in their content and assessment methodology:
 - A levels are completely 'linear' ie all course components assessed at the end of Yr 13
 - AS levels continue to exist, but as free standing qualifications, not as part of an A level course and few schools choose to offer these



What is the difference between courses?

	GCSEs
Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, for all subjects.• Between 60% and 100% of the overall marks.• Sometimes more than one paper.• All taken at the end of yr 11.
Controlled assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For some subjects.• Generally up to 40% of the overall marks• Completed under supervision at school in yrs 10 & 11
Graded	9-1



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What is the difference between courses?

	GCSEs	OCR Cambridge Nationals/ BTEC Technicals
Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, for all subjects. • Between 60% and 100% of the overall marks. • Sometimes more than one paper. • All taken at the end of year 11. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, for all subjects. • One unit, usually worth 25% of the overall marks. • Can be taken at any point in the course. • Can be taken more than once to ensure the best grade.
Controlled assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a few subjects. • Generally up to 40% of the overall marks (Art is 100%) • Completed under supervision at school in Years 10 & 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, for all subjects. • Three out of four units assessed in this way. • Work can be resubmitted once if it isn't at the required standard.
Graded	9-1	Distinction* - level 1 pass



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What is the difference between courses?

New specification GCSEs	OCR Cambridge National Certificates / BTEC Technicals
8/9	Distinction*
6/7	Distinction
5	Merit
4	Pass
3	Level 1 Distinction
2	Level 1 Merit
1	Level 1 Pass
1	Level 1 Pass



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Which subjects are core at Nobel?

- English Language GCSE & English Literature GCSE
- Maths GCSE
- Science GCSEs
- A GCSE in either a humanities subject (geography or history), a language or computing (depending on pathway)
- RE (Philosophy and Ethics)
- PE
- PSHE



Nobel Pathways

- There are four pathways: Purple, Green, Blue and Yellow.
- Different pathways offer a range of different subjects. Some subjects are in every pathway, whilst some subjects are only in one or two.
- We have designed the pathways to help students get the greatest number of the best possible grades they can, to give them access to as many post-16 options as possible.



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Nobel Pathways

- A student's pathway is determined by:
 - estimated GCSE targets, based on KS2 data;
 - progress in Yr 9;
 - CATs scores
- Student profiles are also discussed with Directors of Faculty and the Head of Year, to check that the right courses are available to the right students.



Nobel Pathways

There is no 'best pathway', just the pathway that is best for each individual student!



Nobel Pathways

Purple Pathway

- Triple science
- choose 3 other subjects from GCSE courses
- at least one choice must be a language, geography, history or computing
- GCSE Psychology is only available on the purple pathway as strong scientific ability is key to success
- GCSEs in computing and PE are available only on this and the green pathways, due to the specific demands of these courses
- leads to level 3 qualifications (A levels or OCR Technicals) or a level 3 apprenticeship at the end of Yr 11



Nobel Pathways

Green Pathway:

- choose 4 subjects from predominantly GCSE courses
- at least one choice must be a language, geography, history or computing
- leads to level 3 qualifications (A levels or OCR Technicals) or a level 3 apprenticeship at the end of Yr 11
- GCSEs in computing and PE are available only on this and the purple pathways, due to the specific demands of these courses
- This year we will be introducing GCSE Film Studies to a small cohort of Green Pathway students as an alternative to other creative choices



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Nobel Pathways

Blue Pathway:

- choose 4 subjects from GCSEs & applied technical qualifications (OCR Nationals)
- at least one choice must be geography or history
- leads to level 3 qualifications (A levels or OCR Technicals), a level 2 or 3 apprenticeship or further level 2 qualifications at the end of Yr 11
- some Blue Pathway students may choose to take the Prince's Trust Certificate in Employability Skills and Personal Development



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Yellow Pathway

- Prince's Trust certificate in Employability Skills and Personal Development
- choose 3 other subjects from GCSEs & applied technical qualifications (OCR Nationals / BTEC Technicals)
- Leads to further Level 2 qualifications or a Level 2 apprenticeship at the end of year 11



Helping students make their choices

- Do I enjoy this subject, and can I be successful in it?
- If I don't have a clear career objective, am I leaving my options open?
- If I do have a clear career objective, are there subjects I need to study now and carry on studying post-16/post-19?
- What is the best course structure for me?
- If I want to do a subject that isn't on my pathway, how can I make better progress this year so that I can move pathway?



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Helping students make their choices

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- information on hundreds of different career paths and ideas of what careers can lead from subjects studied at Key Stage 4 and beyond.
- It also provides details of entry requirements, whether apprenticeship routes are available and whether a degree is required.



Do students get their choices?

- We try very hard to accommodate as many students as possible! The reserve choice helps with flexibility.
- Students might not get their choices because:
 - their combination of subjects can't be timetabled;
 - not enough students choose a subject, so it is not viable for us to run it;
 - too many students choose a subject and we cannot staff another group
- In this case, students and parents are contacted to make new choices.
- Final confirmation letters go out in April/May of year 9
- Changes can be made up until end of September of year 10.



Information & guidance programme

Friday 23 Nov

New subject assemblies start

Wednesday 28 Nov

Yr 9 Parents' Evening

Fortnight beginning Monday 3 Dec

Individual interviews for students and parents, in which to discuss and confirm choices. Please bring application form at the back of the options booklet.

Ongoing work in form time

Speak to Mrs Rose, Mr Spence or form tutor



Frequently asked questions

- **Will all courses run?**
 - Only if the numbers choosing them are high enough
- **How will my child find out about new subjects?**
 - New subject assemblies, reading the booklet, speaking to students already on the course, asking teachers
- **What happens if I can't make my appointment?**
 - We will do our best to reschedule for you but may need to meet just with the student if this is not possible
- **And if I have any other questions?**
 - Please contact Mrs Rose
 - naomi.rose@nobel.herts.sch.uk

