



Milton Keynes Academy Frequently Asked Questions - KS4 Options 2025

Which subjects are compulsory?

Mathematics, English Literature, English Language and Combined Science are the core subjects which everyone must take at GCSE.

Which option subjects should I take?

This is down to a combination of things, including your own interests, and your future. You are in the driving seat now and can start to shape your own education. This is the first time you can focus on the subjects you like the most and feel you will do well at.

Should I base my option subjects on what I am good at?

It is worth including this as a factor when choosing your subjects. You are likely to enjoy the subjects at which you are good. What is more, learning more about a subject you have natural ability in, might be useful when making career choices later down the line.

Should I base my option subjects on what I enjoy?

It is fine to consider choosing subjects you like. You will be studying these subjects for three periods a week for the next two years, so it will help if there are aspects of the subject you enjoy.

Should I choose my option subjects because I like the teacher?

A great teacher can inspire you to do your best in a subject. However, how much you like your teacher should not be one a factor when choosing your subject options. Some subject areas have more than one teacher and it is not guaranteed that your teacher will be teaching you on the course next year.

Should I choose my option subjects because my friends are doing it?

It is better not to choose a GCSE option just because your friends are taking it. Doing different GCSEs should not have any effect on your friendships – it will just mean you have lots to talk about when you are together at other times. Plus, you are likely to make new friends in the subjects you choose.

Whose advice should I listen to when choosing my option subjects?

Teachers at your school are well-placed to offer you advice and support; do talk to your teachers if you have any questions about your option subjects and if you need any further information about a course. Your **parents/carers** can also help – discuss any worries that you may have as they will have your best interests at heart. Your **friends** will be going through the same experiences as you, so you can bounce ideas off each other. It is important to remember it is your final decision.

What does EBaccs stand for and what is it?

EBacc stands for English Baccalaureate which is a combination of subjects that offer an important range of knowledge and skills, not a qualification in its own right. If you are thinking of going to one of the top Universities, the EBacc is also recommended by Britain's most prestigious Universities. The EBacc comprises of Mathematics, English (Language and Literature), Science, a humanities subject (History or Geography) and a language.



What is Triple Science?

Triple Science is the route allowing students to study all three of the Science disciplines: Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects. It is ideal for students who have a real passion and interest in the sciences. Students who select Triple Science will spend a significant part of their week studying science. This curriculum would not be appropriate to all students and so applicants are reviewed before options are confirmed.

Can I choose any combination of subjects?

You should choose a set of options which is broad and balanced – this will prepare you well for your future choices and shows employers that you have many talents! Please note that some subject curriculums are very similar and as a result, students are **only permitted to choose one from each group**:

Arts - Fine Art, Textiles Design and Graphic Communication.

Performing Arts – Drama or Music.

What does BTEC mean?

BTEC stands for the Business and Technology Education Council. BTECs are specialist work-related qualifications. They combine practical learning with subject and theory content.

Why do I have to select reserve subjects?

You need to select reserve subjects in case some of your options are not available. Sometimes courses are oversubscribed and sometimes the combination of options does not fit with the timetable. We will let you know if we need to use your reserve.

Is it a first come first serve process?

No – all option forms that are submitted within the deadline will be considered equally and we will aim to give students their option choices where possible.

What will happen if I hand the options form in late?

You will not get priority for your options. Forms submitted by the deadline are given priority for course places. Please ensure that you hand in your form by the deadline of **Monday 18th March 2025**.

Can I change my options once I have started them?

It can be difficult to change your options once you have started on the course. There could be timetable difficulties but also, classes may be full and have already completed important coursework. If you do have concerns about your options at the start of Year 10, please speak to your Head of Year who will discuss with your parent/carers and our Vice Principal in charge of the curriculum.

Is there any additional support available?

On **Tuesday 4th March, from 3.30-5pm**, the Senior Leadership Team, the SENCO and the English as Additional Language team will be in the Hub to support families with this process. This is a voluntary drop-in for those that want additional support only.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,

Josh Connolly, Vice Principal