

TIME TO CHOOSE

During Year 9 you have to make important decisions about the courses you study that will lead to GCSE or other qualifications.

This booklet tells you about these different courses and answers some of the questions that you may wish to ask.

You will all continue to study English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Religious Studies, Information Technology and Physical Education. Your PDL lessons will continue and concentrate on topics such as Health Education and Law and Government in Year 10, and Careers planning in Year 11. More details will follow about Option K.

Your Choices:

You can choose from a wide range of GCSE and non-GCSE courses on the options form. We will ask you to choose four courses after consultation with your parents /carers, teachers and careers advice.

The Government produced guidance on what will be considered a broad and balanced range of qualifications for 2016 and beyond. To ensure that all pupils gain recognition for their studies, you need to follow the “check-list” to guide your decision making.

1. **Are you studying GCSE Maths and English?** Yes- all students at Malbank study GCSE English, English Literature and Maths.
2. **Are you studying 3 EBacc GCSE subjects that include 2 or 3 Science GCSEs?** Yes. All students study 2 or 3 GCSEs in Science at Malbank. In addition you will need to choose to study either Geography or History. You will also have to study a language (MfL)
3. **Are you studying 2 additional high quality courses?** All KS4 courses at Malbank are judged high quality by the Government. Please remember that in the performing arts subjects, Dance/Drama/PA are judged by the Government as too similar in content, so only count as 1 qualification, so you can't choose to study both at Malbank.

How is your choice to be made?

We expect that you will consult parents/carers, subject teachers and Careers advisors. Appointments can be made with the careers advisor through the KS4 office.

There will be an online Year 9 Options Information Sharing Event in January where representatives from subjects will explain the courses in greater detail.

How should I decide?

Choosing your option subjects is very important.

DO

- Think about yourself, about the kind of person you are.
- Consider what sort of life you want to live after you leave school.

- Ask yourself what sort of job you might enjoy.
- Think honestly about your strong subjects and the weaker ones. You cannot always do only what you like doing; life is not like that.
- Be flexible and aim for a wide range.
- Do your research if you know the type of career you want to go into.

DON'T

- Choose a course only because a friend is choosing it you need to really like it too.
- Give up a subject because you find it difficult. If you like it and find it interesting, it may be worth considering.
- Choose subjects according to examination marks alone.
- Be influenced by the fact that you like or dislike a particular teacher.
- Try to select all your choices around your current career choice. It is likely to change!!
- Choose a subject because it sounds good without finding out all about it.

Will I get a choice?

We will make every effort to ensure that you can study the subjects that you choose. However, we might have to withdraw courses that are under subscribed and therefore financially not viable. In some subject areas, where there are different qualifications available (eg GCSE and BTEC) we will determine which pathway would be the right one for you, this will be in consultation with your Progress Manager and Subject teachers.

Your Progress Manager will review your choices and use your progress data to determine whether the courses you have chosen are the right ones for you. Some subjects require a good level of knowledge and understanding in Maths and Science in order for you to succeed. You may be advised to choose another option.

Whilst the school will make every effort to accommodate your choices, sometimes timetabling restrictions prevent us from doing this. In such a case we will talk with you to find an alternative that is appropriate to your interests and choice of career.

REMEMBER

- If in doubt ask questions.
- To use the careers resources at school.
- To go for the subjects (and later the jobs) that attract YOU.

Websites you may find useful

<https://www.startprofile.com/> this is a careers platform used by school and your son/daughter will be given a login via PDL lessons, However there is also useful features that can be accessed without a login

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices/>

www.ucas.ac.uk

<http://getingofar.gov.uk> –National Apprenticeship Website

If needed your son/daughter can request a one to one Careers interview with the schools Careers advisor. Appointments can be booked via the Key Stage 4 Office

The English Baccalaureate

The EBacc was introduced in 2010. It recognises when students have secured a GCSE grade 4 or better across a range of subjects. These subjects include:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science (Dual award or triple award)
- History **or** Geography
- A Language – French, German or Spanish

These subjects *may* be preferred or required for entry to a degree course at the Russell Group of Universities in the future.

At Malbank all students have the opportunity to achieve the EBacc qualification.