

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Making options choices can be daunting. It is the first time a student can influence the diet of subjects they experience at School. Until now most students in the year group have had the same curriculum experience as their friends.

Students who make the best choices are the students who:

- Know themselves well. They know what “inspires them” and what “turns them off”. They know how they like to study, and what motivates them to work hard. They know what they do and don't enjoy. They have a good understanding of their current performance in the subjects they have studied so far.
- Have made the effort to research and understand the options available to them. They have listened carefully during options assemblies. They have read the information on the web site. They have spoken to subject teachers about the details of the courses on offer. They know the skills and attributes that are required to successfully achieve each qualification.
- Understand they are already on a career journey. They have begun to think about their longer-term education/ career goals. They either have a clear idea of what they want to do and how they are going to get there, or they have no clear long-term objectives and so are looking to keep their “options open”.

Ks4 pathways

Everyone is unique. All subjects are valuable. Success is achieved by hard work and dedication. It is with these thoughts in mind that we have designed our option choices.

We believe that all option choices should be open to all students and that all students should be encouraged, guided and helped to select the curriculum that is most likely to bring about success for them. Success for us is preparing students for life beyond school, for their next steps, for their journey.

Below are three broad routes that a student may be considering. We have decided to highlight these three routes based on the majority of questions we have received from students and their families in previous years.

- Keeping your options open
- When you know what you want to do
- Looking for academic excellence

Keeping your options open

If you are not sure about your future yet and are looking to “keep your options open” we would recommend that you choose a broad range of subjects. Choose the subjects you are most likely to excel at.

Many students will not have a clear long-term goal and will need to keep their “options open” for the future.

In two years time students will be required to make their “Post 16 choices” when they decide to stay on in the Sixth Form, go to the University College Isle of Man College or enter employment. The vast majority of students (over 90%) will continue with their studies.

The courses chosen and the grades achieved at Ks4 will determine the range of courses available to each individual 16 year old. Therefore these students should choose a broad range of subjects based on:

- What a student is likely to excel at.
- What a student is motivated by.
- What a student enjoys.

Students who demonstrate a passion, ability or interest in a particular subject should strongly consider studying it. All subjects develop a set of desirable and transferable skills that sit alongside the specific skills and knowledge that are directly associated with the specific subject.

Employers and further/higher education establishments recognise and value all subjects because they develop desirable transferable skills at the same time developing the subject specific skills and knowledge.

When you know what you want to do

If you already have good idea of the sort of career path you wish to follow then you need to ensure you choose the subjects that will best prepare you for this journey. Focus on developing the specific skills, and experiences you know you will need for your next steps.

If is it further study you have in mind make sure you are choosing the subjects that will provide the most relevant preparation, and ensure you have researched any essential qualifications/skills that you need in two years time.

Students considering employment need to consider their employability skills alongside their academic performance and qualifications. Vocational and pre-vocational subjects are ideal for students who are interested in a career path in a specific sector or have an interest in a specific area of study as these subjects develop worked based competencies alongside subject based knowledge and skills.

Whatever you have in mind we highly recommend having at least one backup plan, just to be on the safe side, so you are prepared if things do not go as expected or if they go better than expected.

Academic excellence

If you are focused on achieving the highest levels of academic achievement, perhaps you are considering medicine, or are thinking of Oxford or Cambridge then it is important you achieve the very best grades at GCSE in the most relevant subjects. We would recommend that you study at least one language, alongside separate sciences or computer science, and either History, Geography or English Literature.