



**ALL HALLOWS RC
HIGH SCHOOL**

March 2019

Options Process and Changes to Government Policy (Ebacc)

Dear Parents / carers and year 8 students

During key stage 3, students study all the subjects in the national curriculum. However, when they enter key stage 4, students have the chance to choose some of the subjects they study.

Deciding which subjects to study is an important and exciting part of being in year 8, since young people are making choices which will help them to fulfil their future plans and aspirations. It is also necessary to be realistic enough to recognise that things can change and studying a balanced key stage 4 curriculum between the ages of thirteen and sixteen can lead to many different routes a few years later.

At All Hallows RC High School, we have devised a key stage 4 curriculum that tries to achieve a balance between core subjects for all and a variety of pathways to meet the individual needs and interests of our students. Our aim is to provide study routes which are sufficiently balanced to enable students to gain the qualifications they need to make further choices at a later stage, but which as far as possible, also give students the opportunity to specialise in subjects in which they have particular interest and talent.

Government policy is aimed at persuading more students to take Ebacc subjects, and it is possible that in the future an 'Ebacc' may be regarded favourably by higher education institutions and employers. The Ebacc is not a new qualification in itself. It will recognise students' achievements across a range of selected academic subjects.

The English Baccalaureate will recognise 9 to 5 (A* to C) passes at GCSE in five subjects:

- English (compulsory)
- Maths (compulsory)
- Science (compulsory – 2 /3 GCSEs)
- History or Geography (option)
- Modern Foreign Language –Spanish (option)

Currently, students who achieve a grade 5 (C) or above in all these 5 subjects achieve the English Baccalaureate. There will be no grade attached to this, the normal GCSE grading system will be used for each individual subject.

At All Hallows, we think it wise to strongly encourage those pupils who are capable of attaining GCSE grade 5 or above in Spanish and in History or Geography to choose these subjects. (Typically those pupils in English / Maths set 1, 2 and many of set 3.) All pupils will study 3 option subjects in years 9, 10 and year 11 and we do believe that all our students should personalise their choices to match their interests and strengths. We have high academic achievement in all subject areas including ICT, Business, Sport, Technology and Creative Arts and believe strongly that these subjects are of equal value in the curriculum.

We take the process of choosing options very seriously and our principle is that all students should be provided with enough information to make informed choices about their future. Key dates for the options process are detailed below.

Yours sincerely



Mrs A Cavanagh
Headteacher

Mr A Clewlow
Assistant Headteacher (curriculum/options)

KEY DATES

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| • Year 8 options assembly | Tuesday 26 th March |
| • Distribution of options booklets | Thursday 28 th March |
| • Options Fair – for parents and pupils
3.15 pm to 4.15 pm | Thursday 28th March |
| • Deadline for submission of option choices | Tuesday 2nd April |
| • Follow up pupil interviews | 29 th April – 3 rd May |

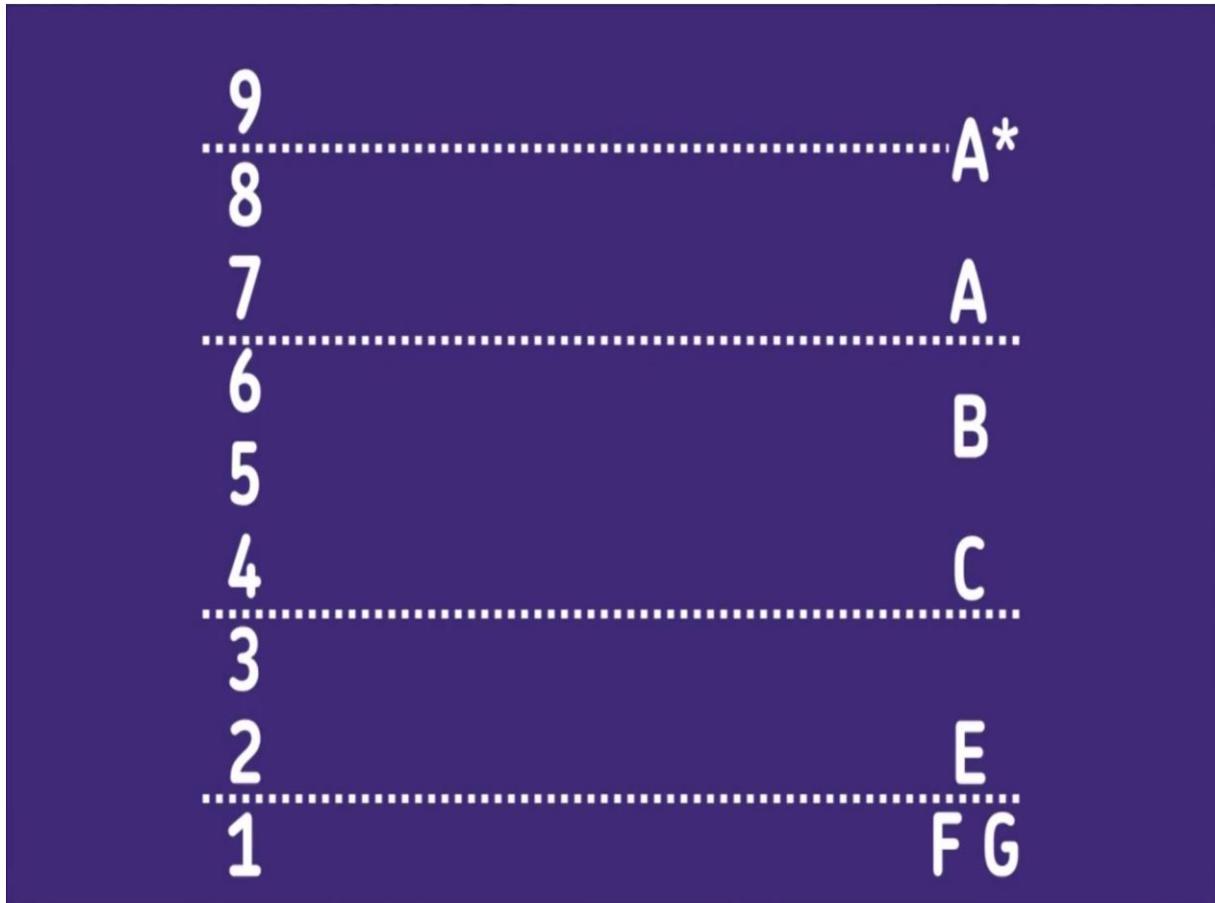
NB: Grade Changes

In this letter grades A* to C have been referred to because this is what we are all currently familiar with. GCSE grade are changing and this will affect your child.

- A new GCSE Grading structure (9-1), will apply to current Y 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6 etc. this began in September 2016.
- Grade 4 will be equated to current low/middle grade C initially, whilst grade 5 will be grade C/B border.
- Grade 5+ will be considered to be a 'higher' pass.

CHANGES TO GCSE GRADING SYSTEM

An important change that has impacted on all subjects is how the final GCSE grades are awarded. The seven-point A*-G grading system has been replaced with a new nine-point scale, with nine as the top grade and one the lowest. Crucially, the new grades don't simply map directly onto the old ones as you can see below.



A key goal is to provide more differentiation, particularly among the highest achievers, and among the many students who "bunch" in the middle grades.

OPTION BOOKLET 2019

CONTENTS

Compulsory Subjects

- GCSE Religious Education
- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Science
- Personal Development

Options

- Art and Design (Fine Art) GCSE
- Business GCSE
- Business and Enterprise
- Computer Science
- Construction CSkills Level 1
- Graphic Design V Cert
- Food Preparation & Nutrition GCSE
- Geography
- Child Development Cambridge National Level 1 / 2
- History
- Engineering Design Cambridge National Level 1 / 2
- Music GCSE
- Performing Arts GCSE
- Physical Education (Sports Science Cambridge National)
- Spanish GCSE

Note

Compulsory subjects have a **blue header and border**

Ebacc option choices have a **green header and border.**

Non-Ebacc option choices have a **yellow header and border.**

