

The Norton Knatchbull School

Year 9

GCSE Option Choices, Information and Guidance



Student & Parents Guide

2026 – 2028

Delivered by Mrs H Vernon - Careers Lead NKS

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Introduction

Congratulations! You have reached the next stage of your seven-year journey here at NKS and it's time to choose your GCSE options.

How will you choose what subjects to study? How will you decide which courses are right for you?

Don't panic! This booklet is full of information, ideas, and useful tasks to help you make informed choices.

Who can help you?

Everyone needs a bit of help with decision-making. Make sure you get all the help and support you need – your option choices are too important to leave to chance!

Who knows you well?

Talk to your parents/ carers and subject teachers. Speak to the people who are helping you with other parts of your life – like friends, your SSM, and the schools Careers Lead Mrs Vernon who is always on hand to help. They all want the best for you. They will tell you if they think that an option will suit you and explain why. They will also help you to explore and think about the alternatives and this should in turn help you raise your aspirations and not to hold back on anything you feel is of interest.

Who knows what you need to know?

Do not let teaching methods, workload and assessment come as a surprise. Find out what an option is really like, where it leads and how it could help you in the future. Check that it suits your abilities and interests. Read all the information you can get either online through the curriculum maps or as part of the options booklet. Talk to the teachers running the courses and the students doing them. Take it a step further and investigate the subject at A Level.

What skills could you develop?

Many subjects are useful in developing transferable skills for the future, often being useful in more than one area. For example, studying geography allows you to learn about world events but also enables you to develop your analytical, comprehension and essay skills; all of which are desirable in the world of work.

Don't forget to visit the school's website to view the GCSE Curriculum maps for all options.

[The Norton Knatchbull School - Key Stage 4 \(Y10 - 11\) Curriculum](#)

Where should you look for information and advice?

www.morrisby.com

This online program will help to create different pathways suited to your learning styles and preferences.

www.direct.gov.uk

Has information and advice about education and training opportunities and careers written especially for you, with links to other useful websites.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrjh92p>

www.Unifrog.org

You should all be logged onto this system as part of work within PD lessons and will find it useful with information regarding options and pathways for post 16 and beyond.

GCSE Grading system

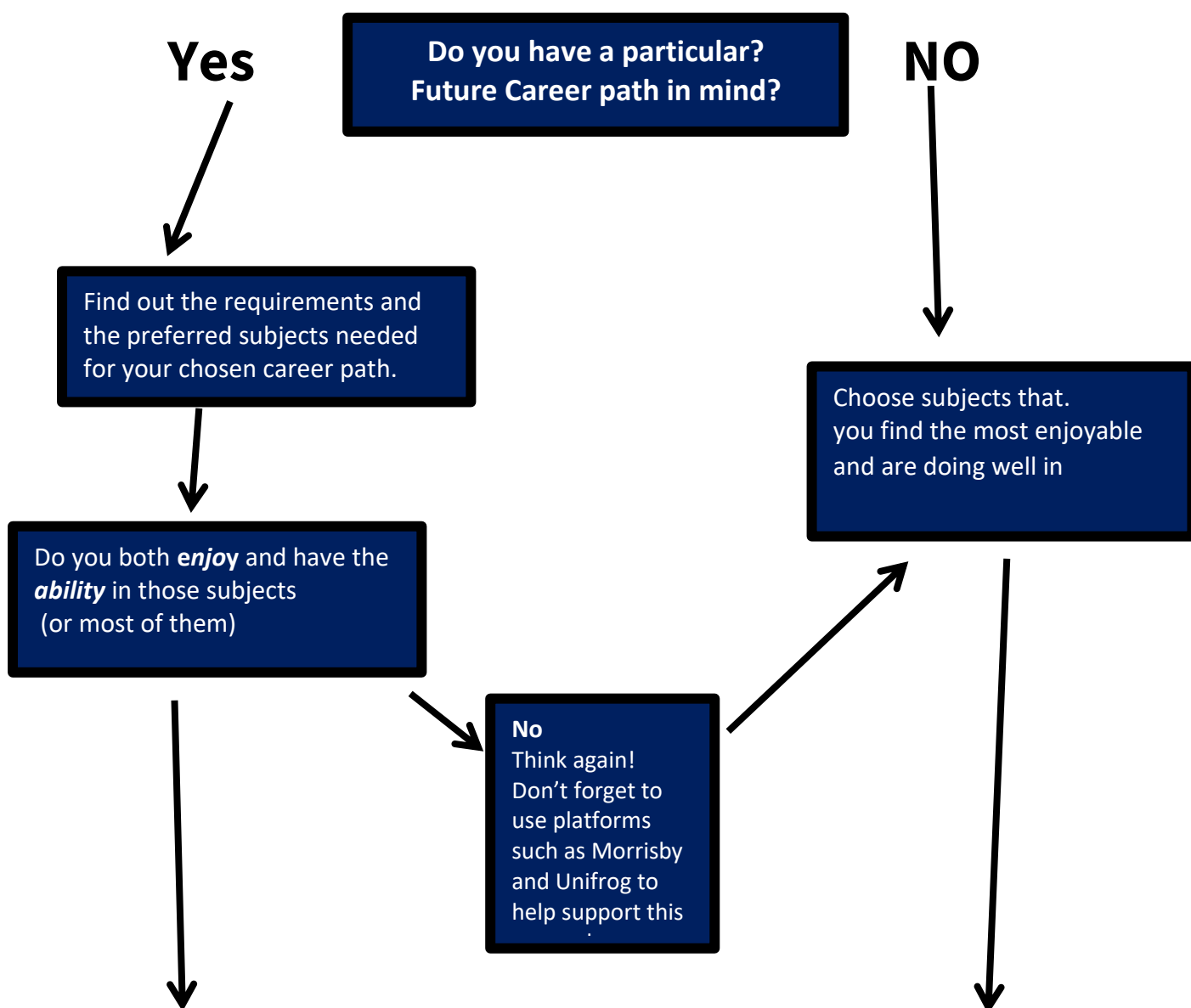
How the new grades compare with the old ones

Old grades	New grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6
	5 STRONG PASS
	4 STANDARD PASS
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U

How to Choose a Subject

In choosing your options, keep in mind both your ability and interest in the subjects.

The following diagram emphasises the main points you should be considering:



Final Check

1. *Have my choices closed any career paths which I might later take an interest in?*

- Check with Mrs Vernon – hvernon@nks.kent.sch.uk

2. *Have I talked over my ideas with my parents and subject teacher?*

- You should, as another point-of-view is always useful.

3. *Are my choices over-influenced by close friends, parental pressure or because I*

Your Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Over the next two years you will study and prepare for important public

examinations. Your curriculum will consist of a range of core subjects and additional options:

Core Subjects

These subjects are compulsory for all students:

English Language and English Literature	2 GCSE qualifications in: English Language English Literature
Mathematics	1 GCSE qualification in Mathematics
Triple Science	3 GCSE qualifications comprising: Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics

EBacc Subjects

In addition to English, Mathematics and Science the subjects below combine to form the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of qualifications. These subjects are increasingly viewed as the prerequisite for most job applications and further/higher education places and hence are vital qualifications for your future success. All students will have opportunity to study these subjects:

Humanity	Choose either Geography <i>or</i> History
Modern Foreign Language	This will be the language you have studied in years 7-9 (i.e. French or Spanish)

Additional Subjects

In addition to the core and EBacc qualifications, all students should choose further options. These will allow all students to personalise their learning and pursue their own strengths, interests, and aspirations for the future.

Art and Design: Fine Art	History
Business Studies	Music
Classical Civilisation	Physical Education
Computer Science	Product Design
Drama	Religious Studies
French (if not previously studied)	Sociology
Geography	Spanish (if not previously studied)

Core non-examined subjects

All students will also study 2 non-examined subjects:

Personal Development
Physical Education

Timeline of Events

- January/February 2026 Subject presentations delivered via lessons and assemblies
- Personal Development lessons focus on option choices using platforms such as Unifrog and Morrisby careers to support career research and understanding the options available at KS4 and KS5.
[Careers Advice & Guidance Online Platform - Morrisby](#)
[How important are GCSE choices when it comes to university? - The Uni Guide](#)
- January/February 2026 Careers Guidance 1-1's on offer for GCSE options delivered by Mrs. Vernon on request from students, parents/carers, and teachers.

- Please email hvernon@nks.kent.sch.uk if you would like to arrange a bespoke 1-2-1 to discuss option choices.
- Year 9 Options Evening - **Thursday 23rd April 2026 6pm – 8pm**
An opportunity to gain information on all options available at GCSE – Mrs. Vernon will be available at this event to answer any questions.
- Year 9 Parents Evening **Thursday 30th April 2026 Online**
- Deadline to submit GCSE option choices **Tuesday 5th May 2026**
- Any questions please email hvernon@nks.kent.sch.uk or contact Mrs. Vernon directly on 01233 620045 ext. 231.

Morrisby Careers

Sign into: www.morrisby.com.

Use code: **MC37M85Q**

Make a note of these details below.

Username:

Password:

CAREER RESEARCH:

Career Title: _____

Read the **Description** and **Routes to Career**:

What do I like about this career?

What do I dislike about this career?

What subjects must I study in year 9, is there any that are required?

Is there any skill or subject that I would need to improve at if I want to follow this career?

Having researched this career, do I feel that it is right for me?

Career Title: _____

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Login Information Reminders

Unifrog - an invitation email has been sent to your school email account, to enable you all to access Unifrog, please make a note of your username and password.

Username:

Password:

Notes:

