



# Year 9 Options Process 2026

# **Information for Year 9 Students & Parents**

Qualifications for first study  
from September 2026



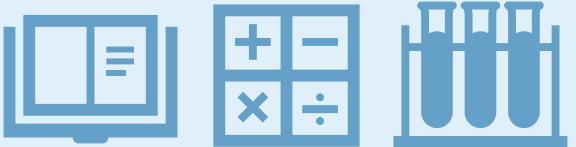
Year 10 and Year 11 (also known as Key Stage 4) are when you will complete your GCSE Qualifications.

### At Key Stage 4

- you will build on the knowledge, skills and understanding you have developed so far
- study towards achieving formal qualifications
- impact on the steps you are able to take after you have turned 16.

Choosing Options is an exciting (and potentially a daunting) time, as it is the first time you have some **element of control** over the subjects that you study.

# Core Qualifications



## Open Choice



## Subjects

## Guided Choice



## Subjects



## Personal Development





# Core Qualifications



**All students will study qualifications in English, Mathematics and Science, as these are the subjects that provide the foundations for life.**

Most further learning opportunities at post-16 will consider results in at least 5 qualifications, including the three core subjects. Employers will also look at these exam results as a benchmark for recruitment, so success in core subjects provides a strong grounding for access into the job market.

Core subjects are not just valued by schools, colleges, universities and the workplace, core subjects are also an integral part of our daily life. If you are able to equip yourself with the skills to understand the foundations of English, maths and science, you will have the tools to become a confident individual, up for a challenge, able to problem solve and ultimately able to make informed choices about your future.

In short, the more credible the grades you can achieve in these critical subjects, the more opportunities will be open to you when the time comes to make decisions about your future.



# Open Choice



## Subjects

**Open Choice Subjects give you the opportunity to continue your studies in areas that you choose.**

There are a wide range of subjects for you to choose from; some of them will be subjects that you haven't studied before, for example Business Studies, Construction or Photography, whilst others will be more familiar to you, such as Art, Drama, Graphics, Music, PE or Textiles, as well as Geography, History and Languages.

Your Open Choice will give you opportunity to preference subjects that interest you or that you enjoy, subjects that you feel you are good at, or subjects which link into areas you would like to study beyond 16, or pursue a career in, at some point in the future.

**Through your Guided Choice Subjects we ensure that the profile of qualifications you leave us with opens up the best possible opportunities for you.**

Guided Choice Subjects are academic (theory-based rather than practical) qualifications, and ones which are recognised as facilitating subjects.

These facilitating subjects are most likely to be required or preferred for entry to degree courses and ones that will keep the most doors open for you.

Even if you're not thinking about following a university pathway now, these qualifications will still provide you with knowledge and skills that will stand you in good stead for the future.

# Guided Choice



# Subjects



**The qualifications you achieve will only provide opportunities for you if you are able to demonstrate that you have the understanding, personal attributes and attitude that means you can contribute effectively to society and the World around you.**

This includes the ability to manage risk and keep yourself safe, understanding how to lead a healthy lifestyle and manage your own mental health and wellbeing, appreciating diversity and valuing equality of opportunity for all, as well as understanding your own worth.

Mentor time and the assembly program will be complemented by taught lessons in RCS (Religious and Citizenship Studies which includes Personal, Social and Health Education) and PE, which will form the 'unexamined' elements of your timetable.



# Personal Development





options@  
penistone-gs.uk

#AimHigh  
#Classof2028  
#YourChoiceYourFuture

# Core Qualifications



## Open Choice



## Subjects

## Guided Choice



## Subjects



# Personal Development





## Open Choice



## Subjects

Art & Design  
Belief & Ethics  
Business Studies  
Citizenship  
Computer Science  
**Construction\***  
Drama  
Economics

Food & Nutrition  
French  
Geography  
Graphics (Design & Technology)  
**Health & Social Care\***  
History  
**Hospitality & Catering\***  
**IT (Creative iMedia)\***

Music  
Photography  
Physical Education (PE)  
Resistant Materials (Design & Technology)  
Separate Sciences  
Spanish  
**Sports Studies\***  
Textiles (Design & Technology)

Everyone will be given **two** from  
the following **Open Choice** subjects





# Open Choice Subjects



On the Options form, you will tell us your **five** favourite subjects to study in order of preference.

The first subject is the one you most want to do, going down **in order** to the fifth subject.

We will give you your highest preference subjects that the timetable allows.

2 Please select your **first** preference Open Choice subject

3 Please select your **second** preference Open Choice subject

4 Please select your **third** preference Open Choice subject

5 Please select your **fourth** preference Open Choice subject

6 Please select your **fifth** preference Open Choice subject

Select your answer

Separate Sciences (GCSE)

Art & Design (GCSE)

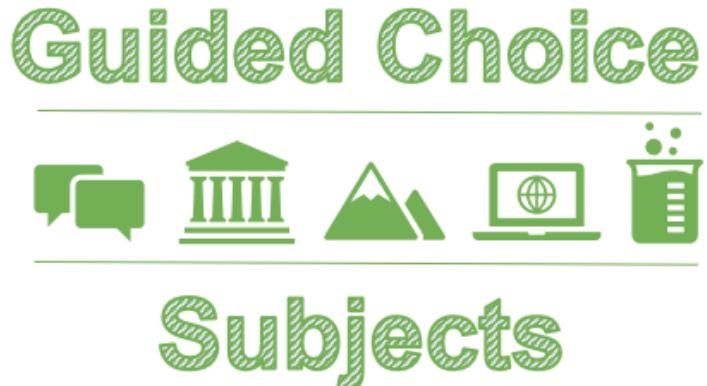
Belief & Ethics (GCSE)

**Business Studies (GCSE)**

Citizenship (GCSE)

Computer Science (GCSE)

Construction (Vocational)



You will then follow a pathway for your **Guided Choice subjects** ...



Be  
Determined  
Pathway



Aim High  
Pathway

You will select **two** from the following  
Guided Choice facilitating subjects...

French

Geography

History

Separate Science

Spanish

You will select **one** from the following  
Guided Choice facilitating subjects ...

French

Geography

History

Separate Science

Spanish



# How many qualifications will I leave school with?



**Total Qualifications: 9**

**Core Qualifications**



English Literature  
English Language  
Mathematics  
Science (double-award worth 2x GCSEs)

Be Determined Pathway



5

**Open Choice Subjects**

Open Choice Subject One  
Open Choice Subject Two

2

**Guided Choice Subjects**

Guided Choice One  
Guided Choice Two

2

**Total Qualifications: 8**

**Core Qualifications**



English Literature  
English Language  
Mathematics  
Science (double-award worth 2x GCSEs)

Aim High Pathway



5

**Open Choice Subjects**

Open Choice Subject One  
Open Choice Subject Two

2

**Open Choice Subjects**

Guided Choice Subject

1

**Guided Choice Subjects**



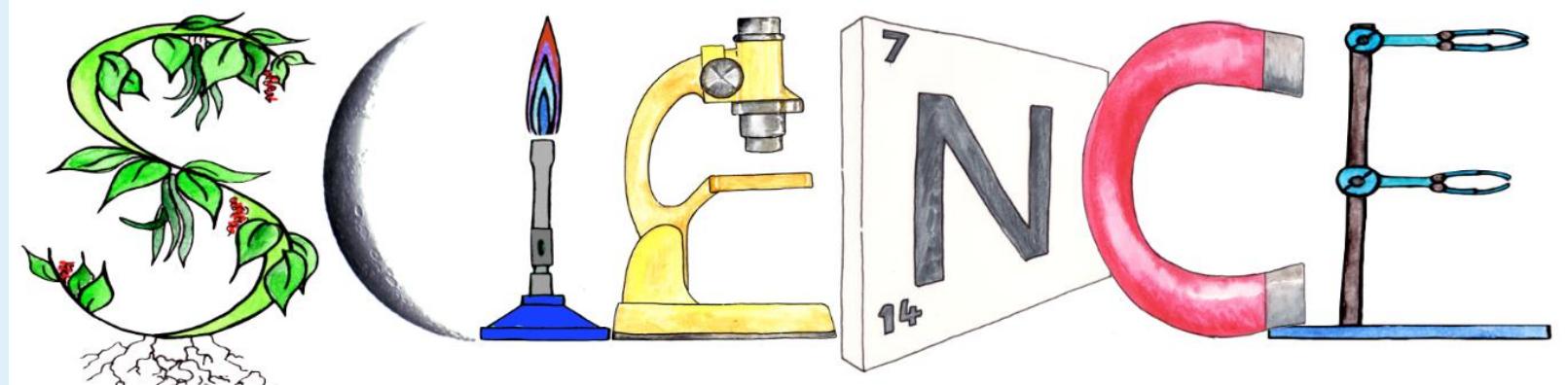
How will I find out  
which **Guided Choice**  
pathway I will be  
following?



Look for the email sent to student's @penistone-gs.uk  
email account on Wednesday 14 January 2026\*

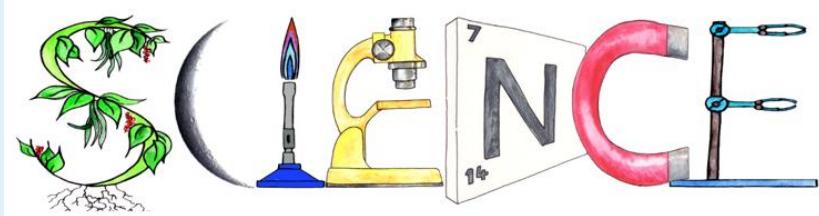
*\*A copy of the email is also sent to parents*

The



Department

Science Options



## Trilogy (Combined Science)

- 2 x GCSEs
- 6 x exams (1h 15min)
- 10 lessons per fortnight
- Rotations of **Biology**, **Chemistry** & **Physics** (Approximately 25 lessons each)

## Separate (Triple)

- 3 x GCSEs
- 6 x exams (1h 45min)
- 15 / 16 lessons per fortnight
- Linear **or** rotations of **Biology**, **Chemistry** & **Physics** lessons (25 lessons + option lessons)

# Advantages of Separate Science

## Course Content

Same base Biology, Chemistry & Physics content as Combined Science

Topics studied in greater depth and some new topics e.g. space physics.

## Scientific Skills

Extra emphasis on cognitive skills such as deduction, evidence-based conclusion & evaluation.

Developed mathematical skills.

## Additional GCSE Grade

Three individual grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics rather than two combined grades.

Fewer subjects to study for during revision periods – reduces pressure.

## Extended Material

Each topic is covered at an extended and deeper level, which supports the transition to A-level Science.

# Science at Post-16

**Within our Y13 cohort last year:**  
Over 50% studied Science/Maths

	Students doing A-level from Separate Science			Students doing A-level from Combined Science		
	% of A-level cohort	% achieving grade <b>B</b> or better	Average A-level grade	% of A-level cohort	% achieving grade <b>B</b> or better	Average A-level grade
Biology	70	62	B	30	27	D
Chemistry	86	58	B	14	50	C
Physics	67	83	B	33	50	C



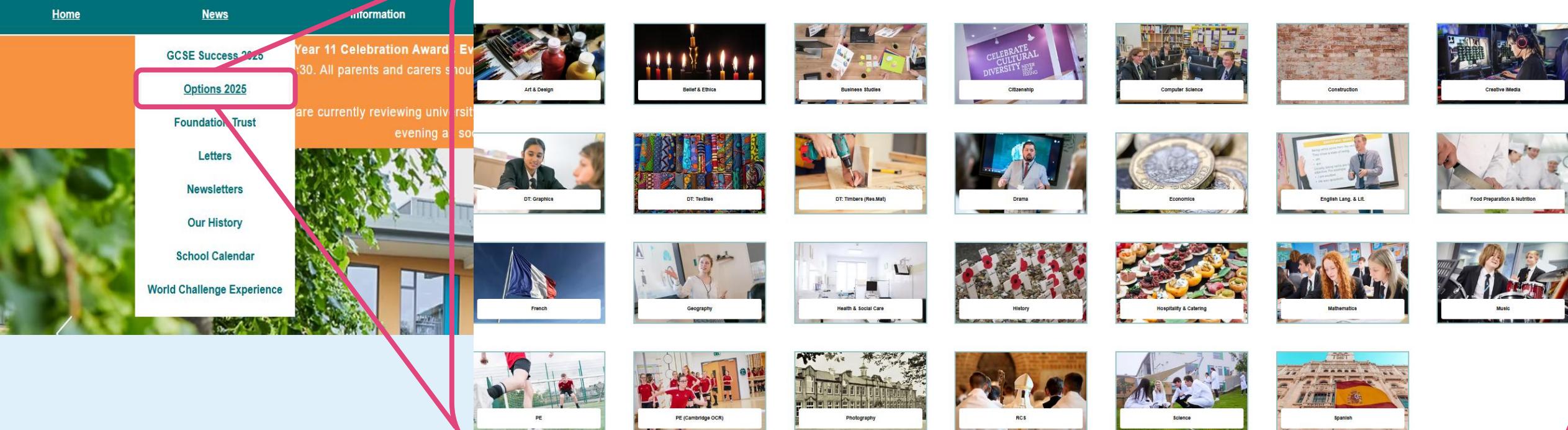
# Penistone Grammar School



## How can I find more information?

Log In  
Calendar  
Report Absence

### Subject Choices



Home

News

Information

GCSE Success 2020

Year 11 Celebration Award - Event 30. All parents and carers should

Options 2025

Foundation Trust

Letters

Newsletters

Our History

School Calendar

World Challenge Experience

Subject Choices

Art & Design

Belief & Ethics

Business Studies

Citizenship

Computer Science

Construction

Creative iMedia

DT: Graphics

DT: Textiles

DT: Timbers (Res.Mat)

Drama

Economics

English Lang. & Lit.

Food Preparation & Nutrition

French

Geography

Health & Social Care

History

Hospitality & Catering

Mathematics

Music

PE

PE (Cambridge OCR)

Photography

RCS

Science

Spanish

## 1. Find out more about all the subjects that are on offer and preference your **Open Choice** subjects.

Art & Design	Food & Nutrition	Photography	
Belief & Ethics	French	Physical Education (PE)	
Business Studies	Geography	Resistant Materials (Design & Technology)	
Citizenship	Graphics (Design & Technology)	Separate Sciences	
Computer Science	<b>Health &amp; Social Care*</b>	Spanish	
<b>Construction*</b>	History	<b>Sports Studies*</b>	
Drama	<b>Hospitality &amp; Catering*</b>	Textiles (Design & Technology)	
Economics	<b>IT (Creative iMedia)*</b>	* Vocational Courses	
	Music		

## 2. Look for the email on Wednesday 14 January which told you which **Guided Choice pathway** you are following.



You will select **two** from the following Guided Choice facilitating subjects...

French      Geography      History  
Separate Science      Spanish

You will select **one** from the following Guided Choice facilitating subjects ...

French      Geography      History  
Separate Science      Spanish

## 3. Make sure you've thought about your choices **carefully**.

- Have you asked **lots of questions** and do you have all the answers you need to make the right choice for you?
- Have you considered what you might want to do after you've **finished Year 11**?
- Have you thought about whether the subjects you are considering **suit your strengths**?
- Are you confident that the subjects you are choosing aren't based on whether your friends are, or aren't taking them or on the teachers you have currently, or think you may have.
- Don't discount a subject because it may not have run previously.
- **Don't rush** – no prizes for getting your form in first.
- **Ask for help!**

## 4. All preference subjects are important as we cannot always give students all their top choice options. Students' **effort; attitude; attendance; commitment; conduct**, may be taken into account.

## 5. Complete your Options Form from Teams by the deadline of **Friday 6 February**.