



# Year 8 Options Advice

## **How do I choose?**

You might feel nervous about choosing what to study for the next three years. Perhaps you don't know what you want to do. Or you have some ideas but want to make sure you're making the right choices.

- Don't just choose what your friends are doing. It's your life – so choose the subjects that work best for YOU.
- Choose subjects or options which you're good at and which you enjoy.
- Have a look at some new subjects that interest you.
- Look into what each subject / qualification involves.
- Could a subject help with your future career plans? If you've an idea of what you would like to do in the future it's important to check to see what qualifications you need. That way, you can make sure you choose the right subjects for your future career.
- Do as much as you can yourself to research your options
- No-one expects you to have your future plans all sorted out at age 13. If you're still not sure about your future plans, choose subjects that keep your options as wide open as possible
- As well as choosing what subjects you want to take, you'll need to think about the way you prefer to study and learn. For example, vocational (job-related) courses offer you a chance to learn work-related skills through practical learning, projects and real workplace experience.

## **Who can help you?**

Don't feel that you have to make all of these decisions by yourself! You can get as much help and advice as you need from all sorts of places. Here are some suggestions:-

- Your parents / carers, family and friends probably know you better than anyone. They can help you focus on what you're good at / your likes and dislikes / what you're like as a person. Share your ideas with them – they might have some useful suggestions.
- Teachers at school know what's involved in the subjects they teach and know how you like to study. They also have a very good knowledge of all the GCSEs and BTECs the school has on offer and what might suit you.
- Your Personal Tutor and other members of your tutor group will help to talk through your choices and give you advice, based on their own experiences.
- Our Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), Mrs Harding-Jack. If you have a learning difficulty or disability that affects your studies, Mrs Harding-Jack or one of the learning support assistants would be a good person to talk to about your future plans.
- The Careers team can help you explore all your options and give impartial information about subjects and qualifications and their suitability for the career you're considering. You can ask your Personal Tutor to organise a meeting for you, or you may be able to just pop-in at break times for a chat and to use the careers resources.

### **Other sources of help and advice**

The [National Careers Service website](#) has information on over 750 jobs showing you what skills and qualifications you need.

There's useful information on the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 in [GOV.UK's Guide to the National Curriculum](#)

[Careers box](#) is a free online library of careers related films, news and information. The case study films show real people doing real jobs to give you an idea of what a job is really like.

[I Could](#) has over a thousand career videos as well as games and lots of information. In the career stories people talk about what they do, what it's like, how they got there and their hopes for the future.

[Plotr](#) is a free website where you can explore career worlds, view employer profiles, browse opportunities in your local area, and find careers advice on all sorts of topics from choosing your GCSEs to what not to wear at a job interview

If you're stuck for career ideas you might like to try [Kudos](#) where you can answer questions about your interests to come up with some career suggestions. Just remember, Kudos isn't telling you what to do, it's there to help give you some ideas. Please come and see the Careers Team if you would like to use this tool.

# Year 8 Options Advice -FAQs

## **What if I've no idea what I want to do in the future?**

Don't worry if you've no career in mind yet. Choose a broad range of subjects that will give you lots of choice post-16. Why not have a go at [Kudos](#) to give you some ideas of careers that you might be interested in?

## **Why can't I do just what I want?**

It may not be possible for us to offer everything you want, when you want it. And unless you are very sure of what career you want to pursue, you should make sure you have a good balance of subjects rather than simply opting for your favourites.

## **Isn't it a bit early to be choosing to study for a work-related qualification?**

A vocational qualification can be a good way of beginning to learn about an area of work or a job and can give you a head start. As long as you have a balance with the rest of your subjects there isn't a problem. But don't feel that you have to take a vocational course. Do if it's right for you.

## **How do I find out what a subject will really be like in Years 9, 10 and 11?**

Ask the subject teacher. Also try asking some students in Years 9, 10 and 11 and have a look at the work they've done. You might like to ask them about what topics the course includes and how their work is assessed.

## **Why can't I just choose the same subjects as my friends?**

You can - having friends around can be a big help when things aren't going well. But **don't let someone else make your choices for you**. Your friend isn't you, and what's perfect for them may not be right for you.

## **I'm choosing German because Mrs Greatrix is my favourite teacher. What's wrong with that?**

Nothing. A good teacher can make a subject interesting, and if you're interested you're likely to do well. But what happens if Mrs Greatrix leaves or she doesn't teach you in Year 10?

You have to like the subject as well as the teacher.

## **The career I want means that I have to study a subject I'm useless at and don't like. What should I do?**

First check with the Careers Team if you **definitely need** the subject. If you do you've got two choices: a) either work hard at the subject so you do well, or b) take a chance and take another related subject. Ask yourself why the career needs the subject and, if you hate it and can't do it, then have you got the right idea about that career?