



GLOUCESTER
ACADEMY

Year 9 Options 2023 – 2025



Work Hard. Be Kind

Important Dates

w/c 10th October	GCSEs and BTECs: An Introduction
w/c 31st November	Making the Right Choice: GCSEs
w/c 14th November	Planning Backwards: Careers and GCSEs
7th March 2023	Letter detailing the event to parents
17th March 2023	Options assembly
27th April 2023	Options booklet handed out
27th April 2023	Options Evening 6.00pm - 8.00pm
27th April 2023	Sims options goes live
5th May 2023	Deadline for return of options
June 2023	options are allocated

After the deadline is reached, interviews will be held with any child who has not been able to get all their first options so that we can discuss alternatives.

If at any point you would like to discuss options with a teacher, please email them using the email addresses in the options booklet or contact madavies@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Contact Details

Mr M Davies

Assistant Headteacher

E-mail: madavies@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

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Welcome to Options 2023

Re: Class of 2025 Options

Dear GA families,

In this booklet you will find all the details you will need to make an informed choice around which subjects your child would like to study next year. You will hopefully have received this booklet as you have attended the options event where you were able to meet with teachers and discuss the different subjects we have on offer. If however you were unable to attend the event please use our website to find out more about each of the subjects, read the information in this booklet and email any teacher you would like to contact for any help you require.

This is an extremely important decision and one that should be taken after careful thought and consideration. Not only does this decision decide which subjects they will study at Gloucester Academy for the next two years, but it also has implications for their Post-16 study options, and future education.

At Gloucester Academy we ensure that we offer a broad choice of subjects so that your child can choose the route they wish to take up the mountain to the best Universities and professions. If you need help at any stage please contact us and we will be happy to help.

How will my child actually select their options?

Using the SIMS app

The whole process of selecting subject options will be completed online through the SIMS app. Therefore, it is vitally important that you check that you have access to the app as soon as possible. For those who are yet to log into the SIMS app, you will receive a letter shortly explaining how to access it. If you are still having problems accessing the app, please email Mrs Lloyd ylloyd@gloucesteracademy.co.uk or phone her at the school 01452 428800, who will be happy to help. The process of selecting subject options online will go live on 27th April 2023 so it is important you have access by this date.

Subjects that are compulsory

There are, of course, some subjects (GCSE Maths, GCSE English Literature and Language, GCSE Science) that every child *must* study. Students will also continue to have weekly 'core' PE lessons, though this will not be counted as an additional qualification.

Priority choice

As a priority, all students will need to **choose at least one of the following subjects**: History, Geography or Spanish. This ensures they have a broad and balanced curriculum throughout their school career.

Open choice

In addition to their 'priority choice' above, all students will then choose an additional three courses, along with two reserve options. The subjects in the '**open choice**' will be a range of GCSEs and/or Vocational courses to supplement their current curriculum offer which can be seen below:

GCSEs: History, Geography, Spanish, Religious Studies, Citizenship, Art, and Drama.

Vocational courses: BTEC Music, Hospitality & Catering, Cambridge National Level 1/2 in Sports Science, BTEC level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Social Care, BTEC Level 1/2 Technical award Engineering

Will my child definitely get their chosen subjects?

We cannot guarantee that students will get all of the subjects they wish to study due to the staffing and timetable structure, as well as minimum numbers to run courses. However, we will try to ensure that student satisfaction is maximised wherever possible.

I hope this information helps start the thought process regarding Year 9 options .

Yours sincerely

Mr Mason Davies

Assistant Headteacher

madavies@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Introduction

Key Stage 4 is an exciting opportunity to choose the subjects that you will study for the next two years and possibly beyond. Deciding what you want for yourself at the end of Key Stage 4 is an important decision and one which you should not consider taking alone. Outlined below as a guide to help you, are some of the questions you may ask. Please take time to read this section carefully.

Why choose?

In most schools, Year 9 students will be choosing which subjects to continue with into Year 11. This is an opportunity to study the subjects they enjoy in depth and to master the content of each course. We ensure that students have a wide breadth of choice, so they do not narrow their learning. Our students will continue to have the opportunities around their academic learning to broaden their understanding of the world around them to ensure they grow up to be well rounded, well read and informed members of the society.

What subjects must I take?

The ability to speak and write clearly and to understand numbers and quantities is essential in almost any walk of life. Therefore, you must continue to study English and Mathematics. In addition, all students will continue to study Science as this is an important area of knowledge for all.

In order for you to prepare for life beyond school and keep healthy there will be opportunities through the year to receive Career information and guidance so you can continue to make the best decision for your future as part of our character education programme.

Will I be allocated all of my options?

We cannot guarantee that students will get all of the subjects they wish to study due to the staffing and timetable structure, as well as minimum numbers to run courses. However, we will try to ensure that student satisfaction is maximised wherever possible.

Sometimes a subject will become oversubscribed. In this instance students will be interviewed individually to try and reallocate places. In the event of this not easing the problem, there will be a random choice of students to ensure everyone has a fair chance of studying the course.

How should I make my options?

Think about:

- What subjects do I enjoy?
- What am I good at?
- What and how will I learn?
- How will I be tested?
- What could I go on to do when I finish?
- What qualification will I get?



Good reasons for choosing a course:	Bad reasons for choosing a course:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You are good at the subject. ● You think you will enjoy the course. ● It goes well with your other options. ● You are interested in the knowledge and skills it develops. ● It will give you plenty of choice in the future. ● You think that you might want to continue studying it after Year 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Your friends are doing it – don't pick something just to be part of the crowd ● People say it is easy. ● You think it is a good course for a boy or for a girl. ● Someone else thinks that it is a good idea, but you disagree. ● You like the teacher you have now. ● You did not have time to research your options properly

Careers and Your Choices

When choosing their GCSEs it is important that our students 'plan backwards' and consider what GCSEs may be needed for their future career or further education plans.

Students may choose to use Unifrog to help them 'plan backwards'. Unifrog is a Careers and Higher Education platform that can be accessed within school or at home. All students have Unifrog login which is their school email address and have received training on how to use the platform to search different career and higher educational opportunities that may assist them in choosing GCSEs.

If you have a firm career idea, choose subjects that you will need for the next stage of your career journey – the ones you need to go into Further or Higher Education or into an Apprenticeship. Use [Unifrog](#) to help you 'plan backwards' and think ahead. .

Think first, what qualifications and subjects will you need? Then work backwards. For example, if you want to study Medicine, you will need A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics; for Engineering, you need Maths and Physics, for Law it is helpful to have A-levels in humanities, etc. Choose subjects that will allow you to continue them at the next step of your journey. Many Further and Higher Education (FE and HE) providers accept BTEC and other vocational qualifications but some sixth forms might require a certain number of GCSE subjects as an entry requirement. If in doubt, please check with Miss Blick, lblick@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

If you do not have a firm career idea, choose subjects that will allow you to keep your options open. Get to know yourself. Use your Unifrog account to 'plan backwards' by researching your future career and what GCSEs may set you up for success. Additionally, [Unifrog](#) hosts a fantastic range of psychometric tests or 'Profile' quizzes, which will suggest potential careers and subjects based on your interests, likes and dislikes!

Do not be afraid to ask for help and advice from your teachers, parents or carers.

Useful Websites:

- For help choosing options: <https://www.unifrog.org/sign-in>
- For finding out more about careers: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> or www.icould.com
- SACU quiz: <https://www.grows.ac.uk/resources/sacu-spartan-test>

Before you decide which options to make, it may be worth asking your teachers what are your chances of gaining a good grade in the qualification.

What guidance has your child received so far?

At Gloucester Academy we will support every pupil to climb their own personal mountain to the very best universities and professions. We are unapologetically ambitious for every student, every minute of every day. We will ensure that every student is equipped with the knowledge, skills and experiences to make an informed decision when choosing their GCSEs to ensure they are able to thrive academically now, as well as later in life as they access A-Level courses and undergraduate studies.

Our Year 9 pupils have accessed a wide range of Careers Information throughout their time at Gloucester Academy which will help them make an informed decision when choosing their GCSEs. This has included a fortnightly careers lesson, which have included a series of lessons in Unit 1 based around planning backwards, and linking their future plans with their GCSE choices. Alongside this, each child has had the time and opportunity to explore Unifrog to help inspire and inform them about their future choices and options.

Our Year 9 pupils have had a plethora of opportunities to learn about career pathways and the wide range of employment opportunities they are able to pursue. We have been delighted to welcome speakers from Aim a Little Higher, University of Gloucestershire, Cushman and Wakefield, British Engineering Manufacturers Association and from many other employment sectors to inspire our Year 9 students and help them to consider their futures.

In order to prepare for their future Careers, we encourage Year 9 pupils to carefully select their GCSE options with their Career aspirations in mind. In order to support this, information about current events and opportunities such as Sixth Form open evenings, careers fairs, work experience and subject specific events are regularly posted in our Daily Message Board and sign posted to pupils in fortnightly careers lessons. If your child would like to discuss their GCSE options in relation to their Career Aspirations further please contact Miss Blick.

Post-16

As your child makes this important and exciting decision about the subjects they want to study next, it is not too early to start thinking about their options beyond Gloucester Academy. It is worth noting that the more GCSEs at the higher grades you achieve, the more course options you will have when the time comes to move into Further Education. Traditionally there are two routes after Year 11; Sixth forms and Colleges and these are explained further below:

Sixth Forms generally offer A-Level and some Level 3 vocational courses, which allow students to continue on to further university and apprenticeship studies or employment beyond the age of 18. Students usually study three different subjects at Sixth Form and are usually required to pass at least 5 of their GCSEs at Grade 5+, including English and Maths. Some sixth forms may also require students to have specific grades in the subject(s) they want to take for A-level. Individual sixth forms may have their own specific entry requirements so it is worth looking at some local options to see for yourself.

Colleges offer A-Levels alongside vocational BTEC courses at various levels, allowing students to focus on a specific area of interest, such as Business, Sport, Music or Engineering. Entry criteria depend on the level of the course and the majority of courses will accept a GCSEs pass (grade 4) in four subjects to access Level 3. Most universities accept BTEC qualifications as entry requirements for their undergraduate courses, however if you are looking to study at a more prestigious university (such as those from the Russell Group), it is best to choose A-levels as your qualification.

A new suite of courses, called T-levels, are available through some colleges in Gloucestershire. They are two year courses equivalent to 3 A-levels and offer a mixture of classroom learning and on-the-job experience with at least 315 hours spent in an industry placement. Some of the areas T-levels are offered in are: Childcare and Education, Healthcare, IT, etc.

In addition to many Sixth Forms and Colleges in Gloucestershire, there are also independent training providers who offer vocational courses, traineeships and programmes preparing students for work.

Apprenticeships are increasingly gaining popularity with young people allowing them to earn and learn at the same time. As with all jobs, new apprenticeship vacancies appear throughout the year so it is worth checking the government website (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>) regularly for updates if your child is interested in one. In addition, companies regularly invite applications to their programmes and many of the most sought-after companies within Gloucestershire regularly recruit to their apprenticeship programmes.

If you have any questions or would like to further discuss any of the options outlined above please contact Miss Blick at lblick@gloucesteracademy.co.uk.

Local Sixth Forms and Colleges

Holmleigh Park Sixth Form

As part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust family, GA students get preferential entry to Holmleigh Park Sixth Form.

The GCSEs you choose now can lead you on to a number of different courses at Sixth Form and beyond – so it's worth thinking about your future options when picking your options.

Why pick HP Sixth Form?

- Rated GOOD by Ofsted (2018)
- Strong teaching
- Dedicated facilities
- Personalised support

Our courses

A-Level Pathway

Three A-levels may be taken in subjects such as Art, Chemistry, Biology, Criminology, Psychology, Physics, Politics and Physical Education, amongst a wide range of other subjects.

Technical Pathway

Extended diplomas may be taken in subjects such as Art and Design, Business Studies, Applied Science, Sports Science, Performing Arts and reactive Digital Media Production.

Find out more!

Visit www.hphigh.co.uk or email sixthform@hphigh.co.uk for more information!

Although this list is not exhaustive, please find a list of local sixth forms and links to their websites below:

Holmleigh Park Sixth Form	https://www.hphigh.co.uk/sixth-form
Churchdown School Academy Sixth Form	https://www.churchdownschool.com/page/?title=W elcome+to+Our+Sixth+Form&pid=21

Chosen Hill School Sixth Form	https://www.chosenhillschool.co.uk/welcome/65.html
The Crypt School Sixth Form	https://www.cryptschool.org/sixth-form/welcome-to-the-sixth-form
Denmark Road Sixth Form	https://www.denmarkroad.org/sixthform
Newent Community School Sixth Form	https://newent.gloucs.sch.uk/sixth-form/
Ribston Hall Sixth Form	https://www.ribstonhall.gloucs.sch.uk/sixthform
Sir Thomas Rich's Sixth Form	https://strschool.co.uk/sixthform
St Peter's Sixth Form	http://www.stpetershighschool.org.uk/SixthForm/
Pate's Sixth Form (Cheltenham)	https://www.patesgs.org/6th-form/6th-form-life/

Further Education Colleges in Gloucestershire

Cirencester College	https://www.cirencester.ac.uk/
Gloucestershire College	https://www.gloscol.ac.uk/
Hartpury College	https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/college/
South Gloucestershire and Stroud College	https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/

Independent Further Education Provision

Bridge Training	https://bridgetrainingltd.co.uk/
MPTC (The Military Preparation College)	https://mpct.co.uk/location/gloucester/
Prospect Training Services	https://www.prospect-training.org.uk/home

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships	https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
Traineeships	https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship

The Grading structure of GCSE.

Students are now graded using a numerical system and are awarded in grades from 1 up to 9, with grade 9 being the highest grade.

GCSEs have all of their exams at the end of a two-year course of study and in *most* subjects, do not group students in different ability *tiers* for the purposes of assessment – only Maths, the Sciences and Languages will have different papers for different groups of students.

The diagram below shows how Ofqual (the government Office for Qualifications) equates the prior A*-G structure with the new 9-1 structure.

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

VOCATIONAL options

In addition to the traditional GCSEs, students will have the opportunity to choose from the following vocational subjects:

- BTEC Music
- Hospitality & Catering
- Cambridge National Level 1/2 in Sports Science
- BTEC level 1/ 2 Technical Award in Health and Social Care
- BTEC Level 1/2 Technical award Engineering

The vocational subjects qualifications are recognised by Further Education providers and are well suited to students who want a more practical learning experience. They are broken into units and assessed through set tasks or sets, with a grade for each unit - Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*. For more information, please refer to the specific subject information in this booklet.

The diagram below shows how the 9-1 GCSE structure compares to the vocational grade equivalent.

Level Equivalent	New Grade
Level 2 equivalent	9
	8
	7
	6
	5 Strong pass
Level 1 equivalent	4 Standard pass
	3
	2
	1
	U

Students that choose to study vocational courses need to ensure that they have the highest attendance as these courses are weighted heavily towards coursework. As this cannot be completed at home, students with low attendance will not be considered for these courses.

Core subjects

GCSE English Language

Exam Board: AQA

[Curriculum Intent](#)



Why is English Language important and what's in the course?

Every student at Gloucester Academy studies English Language as part of their core GCSE package. It is a central pillar, not only to support students' access to other subjects, but also as a GCSE required by many employers and college courses. The course will offer students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in the two main key skill areas: reading and writing. Paper 1 is a fiction based examination and Paper 2 is non-fiction. The course is assessed through two final examinations at the end of Year 11.

GCSE English Language is skill based and features unseen texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Students will become skilled in reading unseen texts and being able to extract information and to analyse the way the text has been put together.

At Gloucester Academy we give students opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills through a range of interesting and varied materials, encouraging them to develop well-reasoned personal opinions. Students will study GCSE English Literature alongside GCSE English Language course giving them two GCSEs by the end of Year 11.

It is vital that students are present in all lessons and that they are prepared to work to their full potential. The workload for this subject is very high and it is imperative that students are able to be independent and self-motivated. As a Department, English is highly successful and we look forward to welcoming you on to this dynamic and exciting course!

How will I be assessed in English Language?

Students take two exams; each is worth 50% of the final GCSE. They will be taken at the end of Year 11

GCSE English Language will be graded from 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

Students will also have to complete a Spoken Language assessment, which will be graded and reported separately. However, whilst this is a compulsory component, this will not form part of the final GCSE mark.

What careers can it lead to?

All careers require English; specific examples include careers in film and television, journalism, professional writing, advertising and editing.

English Language Curriculum video:

[English Language Loom Video](#)

For further information, contact Mrs Pearce
at vpearce@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

GCSE English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

[Curriculum Intent](#)



Why is English Literature important and what's in the course?

English Literature is the second GCSE in the English suite and is studied by all students at Gloucester Academy. This GCSE is focused on a range of different literature from different times, genres and places.

The GCSE tests students' ability to read and prepare texts in lessons and to recall and write about them under exam conditions. The assessment is 100% examination and is closed book. This means that students are not able to take any materials in to the examination. Therefore, it is vital for students to know their set texts really well and to have memorised key quotations. Students study 4 texts: a Shakespeare play, a 19th century novel, a modern play and an anthology of poetry. They will also be tested on two unseen poems - these are poems that they will not have seen before. In lessons we will be studying each of the texts and will also be preparing students fully for the final exams. It is obviously important, however, that students also take responsibility for their own learning and that all home study tasks are completed effectively.

This GCSE runs alongside the English Language GCSE. Many of the skills required are transferable between the two GCSEs and the methods of teaching will be similar. The texts that we study for the Literature GCSE are:

- Macbeth by William Shakespeare
- An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley
- A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
- The AQA Power and Conflict Poetry cluster in the AQA provided anthology.

As with the English Language GCSE, meeting deadlines and attendance at lessons are imperative for students to achieve their full potential. However, with our excellent team of teachers and well-resourced Department, we know that English Literature will be a successful subject for you!

How will I be assessed In English Literature?

Students take two examinations. They will be taken at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 tests the students on a Shakespeare play and, on a novel, written in the 19th century.

Paper 2 tests the students on a modern text and on prepared (anthology) as well as unseen poetry.

GCSE English Literature will be graded from 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

What careers can it lead to?

English Literature can lead to career opportunities in a wide range of areas including journalism, law, management, teaching, editing, marketing, public relations, banking, retail and many more.

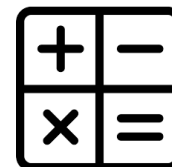
English Literature Curriculum video:

[English Literature Video](#)

For further information, contact Mrs Pearce at vpearce@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board: Edexcel



Why is maths important and what's in the course?

As a core subject, GCSE Mathematics is a required part of the curriculum. GCSE Mathematics expects students to develop their fluency in the subject and use this knowledge and understanding to solve problems that may occur in everyday situations. These skills build on the mathematics taught in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students are taught in line with peers and are extended and supported in their deep understanding of the mathematical content taught. Students are expected to demonstrate certain resilience in their application to in depth problems. Independent thinking and learning play a pivotal role in the success of studying GCSE Mathematics.

Subject content- The subject is split into 6 main topic headings:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Number | 4. Geometry and measures |
| 2. Algebra | 5. Probability |
| 3. Ratio, proportion and rates of change | 6. Statistics |

Curriculum Intent

How will I be assessed in Mathematics?

GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 3 – 9). Students must take three exam papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series. Paper 1 is usually sat before May half term and is non calculator. Paper 2 and 3 are usually both sat after May half term and are both calculator papers. Each paper is equally weighted and worth 80 marks. Students have 1 hour and 30 minutes for each paper to answer all the questions. The total marks for the combined 3 papers generate the final given grade.

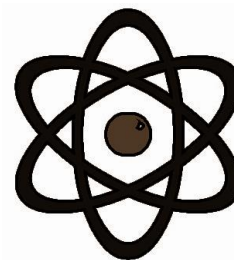
What careers can it lead to?

Mathematics is widely recognised as a crucial subject for a wide range of career options . The GCSE certificate supports applications to a plethora of courses and many institutions see a strong mathematical background as a key factor in offering a course or employment. Feedback and research from major institutions claim that employees often join the organisation lacking key skills in problem solving; a strong mathematical background will open the door to many employment opportunities beyond those with a specific mathematical background. Such careers include: Engineering, Medicine, Vocational courses such as plumbing or hair and beauty, entry to specific roles in the Army, Accountancy and Finance, Science, Technology and many, many more.

For further information, contact Mrs Hitchman at nhitchman@gloucesteracademy.co.uk
[Maths Loom Video](#)

GCSE Combined Science

Exam Board: AQA



Why is Science important and what's in the course?

- Explains the world we live in.
- Helps improve our lives.
- Links your practical experience of the world to ideas that explain them.
- Satisfies curiosity about phenomena with explanations.
- Initiates critical and creative thought.
- Shows you how scientific ideas contribute to technological changes.
- Helps you to question and discuss science-based issues.

[Curriculum Intent](#)

As a core subject, all students will follow a course leading to a double GCSE grade; this will be following the Combined Science route leading to a combined grade e.g., 9-9.

(a)AQA Trilogy: Combined Science

Students study a Biology unit (e.g. Cell Biology and Bioenergetics), a Chemistry unit (Atomic structure and the periodic table) and a Physics unit (e.g. Forces and Electricity), each containing a number of different topics. There are also 16 required practical tasks that need to be undertaken. Students will achieve 2 GCSE grades.

How will I be assessed in science?

Trilogy Combined Science

Students will sit 6 papers at the end of Year 11 (2 Biology, 2 Chemistry, 2 Physics). Each of them will be 1 hr 15 mins long and an equal weighting will be applied to each of the papers. There will be no internal assessment.

What Careers can it lead to?

Careers for which Science is essential include medical services, medicine, research, teaching, armed forces and many other science related professions. Modern day famous Scientists include Brian Cox, Alice Roberts, Sir Robert Winston, Neil deGrasse Tyson and Jane Goodall. A good Science GCSE is also recognised by employers in ALL professions as a valuable qualification to have due to all of the transferable skills acquired throughout the course.

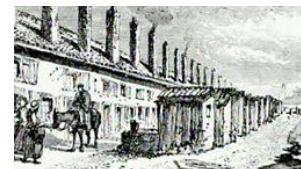
For further information, contact Mrs Emma Craig at ecraig@gloucesteracademy.co.uk or Miss Alex Walker at awalker@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Science Loom Video](#)

Priority choice

GCSE History

Exam Board: OCR History B (SHP)



Why is History important and what's in the course?

As a history student, you will never experience the events that you study; instead, you have to build up a picture from the evidence that has been left. You have to become skilled at asking questions, you have to learn not to take everything at face value. You have to develop empathy and understanding of the actions of others; you have to be prepared to put your case and argue it well; you have to use evidence to draw conclusions and make judgements. These skills are highly desirable in many different careers and taking History is excellent training for any career where you have to use evidence or make decisions, especially where those decisions affect other people.

Historians are trained to look for bias and prejudice in all the evidence they study. There is no other subject that deals so well with sorting out what is useful and reliable evidence and what must be sifted out than history. Imagine believing everything you read in the papers, or believing every statement that politicians make! History helps you to make decisions about other people and to decide if you trust what they say.

The Norman Conquest 1065 - 1087	This option focuses in depth on the major influences on political and social life as well as religious controversy during the Norman conquest. Students will be able to see how events such as the Norman conquest have had a significant impact on the world today as they know it.
The Making of America 1789 - 1900	This option focuses on the unfolding narrative of America from the inauguration of the first president to how the USA became one of the world's most dominant powers.
Living under Nazi rule 1933 - 1945	This depth study allows us to take a shorter period of time and really focus on how the Nazis impacted the German people and those across Europe.
Crime and Punishment c.1250 - Present	This option focuses on the changes and development of crime and punishments over an extended period of time. This will allow us to fully understand how the legal system and society has evolved. Students will focus on 4 key time periods, within this they will look at the nature of crime, enforcement of law and order and the punishment of offenders.
History Around Us Focus on Gloucester Docks	In this module we will focus on a particular site in its historical context. You will learn about the site, how it developed and the impact it had on people's lives in the past. You will look at physical features, the strengths and weaknesses and how the site fits into wider historical context.

Curriculum Intent

How will I be assessed In History ?

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes 40% of total GCSE (Crime and Punishment and Norman Conquest)

Paper 2: 1 hour 20 % of total GCSE (History Around Us)

Paper 3: 1 hour 45 minutes 40% of total GCSE (The Making of America and Living under Nazi rule)

What careers can it lead to?

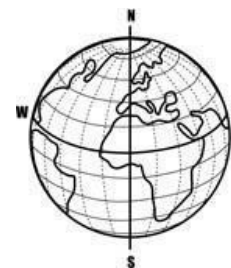
History students are not just limited to "becoming another history teacher" (unless they want to!). Nor are they destined to work in a museum or library (unless they want to!) There are many careers out there that require the skills history can bring, for example law, medicine, business, finance, accountancy, tourism, town planning, politics and journalism.

For more information contact: lbolton@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[History Loom Video](#)

GCSE Geography

Exam Board: AQA



Why is Geography important and what's in the course?

Some of the most important issues facing the world today are climate change, globalisation, lack of resources and destruction of natural habitats. All of these issues are Geography related. However, it is not just these issues that makes Geography so important, it is also; population growth, hazard management, multiculturalism, industrial growth, landscape erosion, economic development and much more. If you study Geography you are learning about issues that affect us and the world on a daily basis. To appreciate its relevance, watch the news, look at aspects of your own life and you will realise that nearly every issue is related to Geography in some way.

Unit 1 Living with the Physical Environment 1 hour 30 minutes exam which makes up 35% of the total grade	Topics to be covered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Challenges of Natural Hazards● Living World (Cold environments option)● Physical Landscapes in the UK (Rivers and coasts options)
Unit 2 Challenges in the Human Environment 1 hour 30 minutes exam which makes up 35% of the total grade	Topics to be covered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Urban Issues and Challenges● Changing Economic World● The challenge of resource management (food option)
Unit 3 Geographical Applications 1 hour 15-minute exam which makes up 30% of the total grade	Section A: Issue evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students will answer questions on a pre-released issues booklet based on one of the core topics they have studied. Section B: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students will be expected to answer questions about unseen fieldwork as well as answer questions based on their two field trips.

[Curriculum intent document](#)

Progression and career opportunities

Why study Geography? Well for a start, you will probably visit more countries than your parents and travel to areas of the world only normally seen on television.

Geography could lead you to exciting career prospects. Remember geography achieves good examination results nationally and is one of the most versatile subjects. Geography is classified as a science subject in many universities when studied at A Level.

Career paths include architecture, environmental conservation, town planning, teaching, countryside management, journalism, travel and tourism, social work, surveying, environmental health and oceanography.

If you enjoy Geography, it can lead you to a great future. You can count the likes of Mother Teresa, Prince William, Michael Jordan, Matthew Pinsent, James Cracknell, Michael Palin as other famous graduates/teachers!

For more information contact: kfudge@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Geography Loom Video](#)

GCSE Spanish

Exam Board: Edexcel



Why is Spanish important and what's in the course?

Spanish is the second-most widely spoken language in the world (after Mandarin Chinese), with 450 million native speakers, and it is the official language in a staggering 21 countries, spanning South, Central and North America, as well as Africa and Europe.

Learning Spanish will open your mind to a world of opportunities both professionally and personally, allowing you to access the language as well as Hispanic music, food, film, dance and art through diverse cultures. By studying Spanish you will not only learn how to communicate in the language with native speakers, but will learn about the countries and cultures where Spanish is spoken.

The GCSE Spanish course covers a range of topics explained here in our [Curriculum Intent](#). By the end of the course you will be able to discuss:

Modules	Content
1	Family and friends: Physical descriptions, character descriptions, describing family, friends, role models, relationships, When I was younger, future family plans
2	Free Time and Hobbies: Shopping, social media, technology and the internet, hobbies, music, sport, reading, films, TV
3	Daily Life and Celebrations: Customs, festivals, music concerts, traditions, celebrations in the present, past and future
4	Town, Region and Local Area: Eating out, shopping, buying gifts, opinions about food, the weather, places to see and visit, describing a region or town, countries and nationalities
5	Holidays, Travel and Tourism: Hotels, hotel preferences, camping accommodation, transport, directions, experiences, problems
6	School: subjects, the school day, rules, problems, primary school, success in school, trips, events, exchanges, teachers
7	Future Aspirations, Study and Work: future plans, education, using languages, work experience, volunteering, careers and training, part-time work, money
8	Global and International Issues: Sporting events, music events, global issues, environmental action, natural resources

How will I be assessed in Spanish?

Paper 1	Listening examination	25%
Paper 2	Speaking examination	25%
Paper 3	Reading examination	25%
Paper 4	Writing examination	25%

What careers can it lead to?

A foreign language qualification opens up a large variety of options for your future. Because our world is becoming increasingly globalised and companies will have clients from all over the world, language skills are highly sought after by employers and further education providers.

In addition to speaking a foreign language, this course builds skills that are widely recognised by employers and providers of further and higher education, including: communication skills, cultural awareness, public speaking, problem solving skills and literacy skills

Language students can be more employable and there are many career opportunities available, including: the Foreign Service - GCHQ and MI5, the import/export industries, travel and hospitality, leisure industry, teaching, translating/interpreting, accountancy, marketing. Did you know that learning languages have helped the following people to be successful in their careers? Dakota Fanning (actor), Mark Zuckerberg (CEO), Matthew McConaughey (actor), Serena Williams (Athlete), Cardi B (rapper).

For further information, contact Ms Grewal ggrewal@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Spanish Loom video](#)

Open choice

GCSE Drama

Exam Board: Edexcel



Why is Drama important and what's in the course?

GCSE Drama is an interesting and exciting subject which gives learners the opportunity to develop as informed performers in a practical learning environment. It provides the opportunity to develop leadership, collaboration and performance skills through creative and written activities. The course covers a range of performance styles, as well as both performance and written assessments.

[Curriculum Intent](#)

How will I be assessed in Performing Arts?

Component 1 – Devising (40%) Internally assessed.

Component One requires students to work in groups and create an original performance piece from a range of stimuli. Throughout this process, students develop research and negotiation skills alongside performance and design experience. Students will document the creative process by producing a written portfolio which is submitted alongside a recording of their final performance, accounting for 40% of their final GCSE grade.

Component 2 – Performance from Text (20%) Externally assessed.

Students will work on two performance extracts from the same professional play to prepare for their Component Two performance exam. Students can work within a group, or individually. They will learn how to develop characters using a range of practitioner techniques, and present their final performances to a visiting examiner. This performance accounts for 20% of their final GCSE grade.

Component 3 – Theatre Makers in Practice (40%) Written examination - Externally assessed.

Component Three focuses on the work of theatre makers, as well as performers. Students will have the opportunity to explore various design options made by theatre makers to communicate ideas to an audience. Students will also watch a piece of professional live theatre to evaluate the production values as an informed member of the audience.

What careers can it lead to?

There are many valuable transferable skills that can be acquired through studying GCSE Drama. These include collaboration, leadership, self-confidence, communication, presentation, listening and evaluation skills, which are desirable attributes in a wide range of careers.

After studying Drama at GCSE, you can go on to a higher level such as GCE in Drama and Theatre Studies or BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts.

For further information, contact Ms Crocker hcrocker@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Drama Loom Video](#)

GCSE Art

Exam Board: AQA



Why is Art important and what's in the course?

Art and Design (Art, Craft and Design) is a two-year course. It is a broad area of study and students will produce practical and critical/contextual work in areas such as drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, land art, installation, print making and lens based and/or light based media, ceramics.

The course consists of two components. Component 1 is a 'no time limit' portfolio of work that shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project developed in response to a theme, task or brief. It must also include a selection of further work.


Component 2 is the externally set assignment. Students must choose one starting point from a selection of 7 in January of the second year. Students must show evidence of covering all four assessment objectives in the preparatory work, followed by 10 hours of supervised unaided work in which intentions are realised and a personal outcome is produced.

Students will be expected to keep a sketchbook and folder of work (available to borrow or purchase at the start of the course). Most materials are provided, although a small supplement maybe required, and students are advised to invest in their own materials. Academy homework tasks and independent study, related to the course, is of vital importance and must be undertaken. Extra art sessions after the Academy day are highly recommended and often required.

As well as being enjoyable and a chance to be creative in a personal way, the success of gaining a GCSE in Art will add to your general qualifications and enable you to progress to 'A' Level and other Post-16 Art courses. There are also many Arts based career opportunities.

If you are hardworking, self-motivated, creative, and good at thinking outside of the box and love art, then this is the course for you.

How will I be assessed in Art?

Portfolio = 60% of Final Mark.  Externally Set Assignment = 40% of Final Mark. (2 components assessed separately)

4 Assessment Objectives which must all be covered - each one is marked out of 24 to give 96 marks in total.

What careers can it lead to?

Further study at Post-16, art & design, creative media, fashion, graphic design, interior design, set design, art history, curating, art restoration, photography, directing arts festivals, creative directing, architecture, marketing and advertising plus many more.

For further information, contact Miss Kelly at skelly@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Art Loom Video](#)

GCSE Religious Studies

Exam Board: AQA



Why is Religious Studies important and what's in the course?

The briefest of glances at the television news tells us why religion is important. Across the world, religious belief drives individuals and nations to incredible acts of heroism and kindness, but also of cruelty and violence. Regardless of how non-religious British society might have become, religion still underpins our history and our culture. Equally, Britain is a diverse and outward-looking nation that is home to many different religions. Understanding beliefs – and why people hold them – is vital to navigating the modern world.

GCSE Religious Studies allow students to explore two religions - Christianity and Islam – as well as debating philosophical and ethical themes. In Unit 1, you will study two religions - Christianity and Islam, students will examine the beliefs, teachings and practices held within those faiths. Unit 2, the Thematic unit, encourages students to consider ethical issues surrounding 'Religion and Life' and 'The existence of God and revelation'. Unit 3 will explore Religious, Moral and Spiritual Truths.

Unit 1 The study of Religions: Christianity and Islam 1 hour 45-minute exam 50% of the total grade	Topics to be covered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianity: Beliefs and Teachings and Practices • Islam: Beliefs and Teachings and Practices
Unit 2 Thematic Studies Unit 2 and 3: 1 hour 45-minute exam 50% of the total grade	Topics to be covered are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion and life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Origins of the Universe and of human life ○ The use and abuse of the environment and pollution ○ The use and abuse of animals ○ Abortion ○ Euthanasia ○ Death and the afterlife • The existence of God and revelation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Design, First Cause and Miracles arguments ○ Arguments against the existence of God
Unit 3 St Mark's Gospel Religious, Moral and Spiritual Truths	Part 1: The Life of Jesus: Students will explore the life of Jesus including his birth, ministry, death and resurrection from a historical and theological background. Part 2: Mark's Gospel as a source of religious, moral and spiritual truths: Students will explore the relationship of Jesus towards those disregarded by society - issues such as sickness, the poor, widows.

[Curriculum Intent document](#)

How will I be assessed In Religious Studies?

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of total GCSE (The study of religions - Christianity and Islam)

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 Minutes 50% of total GCSE (Thematic Studies and St Mark's Gospel)

Progression and career opportunities

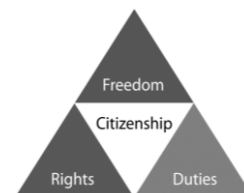
Studying Religious Studies is important as it allows students to develop key skills including decision-making, problem solving and questioning. These skills will be valuable whatever career you consider. Religious Studies enables students to enter into many public service industries including medicine, policing and social work, along with law, teaching, the Armed Forces, retail and community work.

For more information contact: kburtwell@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Religious Studies Loom Video](#)

GCSE Citizenship

Exam board AQA



Why choose Citizenship?

You will gain a deeper knowledge of democracy, government and law, and develop skills to create sustained and reasoned arguments, present various viewpoints and plan practical citizenship actions to benefit society. You will also gain the ability to recognise bias, critically evaluate arguments, weigh up evidence and look for alternative interpretations and sources of evidence, all of which are essential skills valued by higher education and employers.

Citizenship studies investigates how you are enabled by society to play a full and active part and how citizens are empowered to effect change within society. The overarching theme of this specification is **‘How citizens can try to make a difference’**.

The first theme, **Life in modern Britain**, looks at the make-up and dynamics of contemporary society, what it means to be British, as well as the role of the media and the UK’s role on the world stage.

The second theme, **Rights and responsibilities**, looks at the nature of laws, rights and responsibilities within the UK and has a global aspect due to the nature of international laws, treaties and agreements by which the UK abides.

The third theme, **Politics and participation**, aims to give the student, through an understanding of the political process, the knowledge and skills necessary to understand how to resolve issues, bring about change, and how the empowered citizen is at the heart of our society.

[Curriculum Intent](#)

How will you be assessed?

. Paper 1 will cover *Active Citizenship* and *Politics and Participation*. 80 marks 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 2 will cover *Life in Modern Britain* and *Rights and Responsibilities*. 80 marks 1 hour 45 minutes

What can this course lead to?

Citizenship is a *motivating* and *enabling* subject. It can lead to further study in *any* discipline at A - Level and degree level. Citizenship promotes cultural capital and a wider awareness of local, national and global issues, we become thoughtful and active students from this.

Citizenship provides a route into politics, journalism, teaching, international relations, management, business and law.

Any further questions contact jellis@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Citizenship Loom video](#)

Vocational courses

BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice

Exam Board: Pearson



Music is a great option to consider if you have a passion for music and the motivation to practise singing or instrumental skills. On the BTEC music course you will develop composition, technical and performance skills yet there are so many other reasons why you'll benefit from studying this subject. Music benefits learning by activating all areas of the brain: auditory (sound processing); motor (rhythm processing); and limbic (emotions). So, by choosing Music, you could be improving your chances of doing well in other subjects too.

Music involves written, analytical, practical and personal skills such as:

- **Independent learning:** being disciplined about practising on your instrument or voice
- **Team work:** particularly if you're involved in weekly ensembles and performances
- **Performance and presentation skills:** which are useful for any job or career
- **Listening:** this is highly developed in musicians and it is an important part of the course
- **Confidence and self-esteem:** this has a positive effect in all areas of life and learning
- **Creativity and self-expression:** helping young people to think differently and harness the power of their imagination

What will I learn?

<u>Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles - 30%</u> Explore musical styles and techniques and gain an understanding of roles in the industry.	<u>Component 2: Music Skills Development - 30%</u> Develop musical knowledge, skills, and techniques and apply them to a music product.
<u>Component 3: Responding to a Commercial Music Brief - 40%</u> Put skills into practice by responding to a brief as a composer, performer or producer.	

Where could music lead?

If you continue with your studies, you could choose from a range of different subjects. As students, you can choose to continue with Music, by studying A-level or BTEC Music or Performing Arts.

Equally, if you want to study other subjects, choosing Music at KS4 will have benefited you because it provides transferable skills.

Increasingly, employers and universities are looking for young people who have skills that are learned through creative subjects: creative thinking, emotional intelligence, adaptability, communication and tenacity to name just a few. Universities are keen to attract students who have a well-rounded education and who have achieved good results, no matter what the subject.

It can open doors to a range of education and employment pathways:

Being a musician isn't the only career in Music – other options include being a sound technician, music therapist, teacher, or composer, or a range of careers in the Music Industry, in a concert hall or music venue. This might include work in film, TV, theatre, radio, arts administration, or creative education. Music is also highly regarded as an academic subject and so could complement your other studies in leading to a professional career. Music provides skills that will develop a good foundation, whatever pathway you choose.

For further information contact Mrs Chappell at hedds@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Music Loom Video](#)

WJEC 1/2 Hospitality and Catering

Exam Board: WJEC



What is Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering – Food and Catering?

This Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering gives you a whole host of easily transferable skills. They include Developing a wide range of practical making skills including filleting a fish, jointing a whole chicken, making doughs and using decorative and garnishing techniques.

Is Hospitality and Catering suitable for me?

This course is suitable for all students interested in studying food preparation in a commercial environment. It is also suitable for those students who are interested in diet and nutrition. You will be expected to make a range of food products and develop skills related to commercial food preparation including budgeting, food hygiene and food presentation. You will also be expected to apply technical and practical expertise to ensure that food meets customer needs and preferences and is appropriate for a given occasion. This Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering will also develop an understanding of commercial catering practice and an in-depth knowledge of food commodities.

How will I learn?

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry (Externally assessed) – 40%

In this unit, you will learn about the different types of providers within the hospitality and catering industry, the legislation that needs to be adhered to and the personal safety of all of those involved in the business, whether staff or customers. You will learn about the operation of hospitality and catering establishments and the factors affecting their success.

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action (internally assessed) – 60%

The applied purpose of the unit is for learners to safely plan, prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes.

In this unit you will gain knowledge of the nutritional needs of a range of client groups in order for you to plan nutritional dishes to go on a menu. You will learn and develop safe and hygienic food preparation, cooking and finishing skills required to produce nutritional dishes.

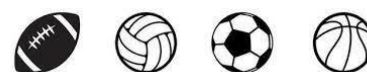
Progression

Where the WJEC Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering is achieved together with other relevant Level 1/2 qualifications, such as GCSEs in English and Maths and Science, learners may be able to access Level 3 qualifications relevant to the hospitality and catering sector, such as WJEC Level 3 Food, Science and Nutrition (certificate and diploma), Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Advanced Professional Cookery or Level 3 Advanced Diploma in Food Preparation and Cookery Supervision. For further information, contact Ms Shadwell mshadwell@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Hospitality and Catering Loom Video](#)

Cambridge National Level 1/2 in Sports Science

Exam board: OCR



Why is this course important and what's in the course?

The Cambridge National in Sports Science gives learners the opportunity to build on knowledge and skills learnt in practical lessons. The Cambridge National gives learners the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- How to prepare to take part in physical activity which reduces the chances of injury. How to prepare participants to deal with and react to common injuries and how to recognise symptoms of common medical conditions.
- Complete a range of fitness tests and learn how to design, plan and evaluate a training programme as well as how to interpret fitness test data and make informed decisions about future training.
- The cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal systems and how they provide the body with energy to produce movement and how exercise helps develop both systems.

Curriculum Intent

How will I be assessed in Cambridge National Sports Science?

3 Units

Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions	Externally assessed written paper	40% of qualification
Applying the principles of training: fitness and how it affects skill performance	Internally assessed coursework	30% of qualification
The body's response to physical activity and how technology informs this	Internally assessed coursework	30% of qualification

This course is marked by a Pass, Merit and Distinction; these will be marked both internally and externally.

What can it lead to?

- Further study, including a Cambridge National Level 3, A Levels or other vocational Level 3 sport courses.
- University degree in sport upon successful completion of Post-16 study.
- Employment opportunities in sport such as; sports coach, teacher, lecturer, nutritionist, physiotherapist and sport scientist.

For further information please contact Miss Barrett at hbarrett@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Cambridge National in Sport Science Loom Video](#)

BTEC Tech Award Level 1/ 2 in Health and Social Care

Exam board: Pearson BTEC



Why is this course important and what's in the course?

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to build applied knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment. The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop applied knowledge in the following areas:

- The life stages and key characteristics of the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of an individual and the factors that can affect an individual's growth and development.
- Live events and how individuals can adapt or be supported through the changes
- Health and social care conditions, how they can be managed and the barriers that the individual may need to overcome
- How physiological indicators and lifestyle options determine physical health and recommended actions to improve health and wellbeing

This course builds on and uses the knowledge and skills you learn in your GCSEs, such as English. It will complement the more theoretical aspects covered by GCSE Biology or GCSE Psychology by allowing you to apply your knowledge and skills practically in a vocational context.

Curriculum intent

How will I be assessed in Health and Social care?

Unit 1	Human Lifespan Development	Internal - Coursework	30% of qualification
Unit 2	Health and Social Care Services and Values	Internal - Coursework	30% of qualification
Unit 3	Health and Wellbeing	Synoptic External - Exam	40% of qualification

The course is marked by a Pass, Merit and Distinction; this will be marked both internally and externally.

What careers can it lead to?

Learners who generally achieve at Level 2 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to:

- A Levels as preparation for entry into higher education in a range of subjects
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Health and Social Care, which prepares to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in aspects of health or social care.

Students can continue their study of Health and Social Care at Level 3 post 16 or at A level. This leads to a range of careers in care, including nursing, social care work and midwifery if a degree is studied after successful completion of the level 3 course.

For further information please contact Miss Barrett at hbarrett@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

[Health & Social Care Loom Video](#)

WJEC Level 1/2 Technical Award in Engineering

Exam board: WJEC



Why is this course important and what's in the course?

You will develop a range of skills which are attractive to employers, colleges and universities including: Communication, Critical thinking, Learning independently, Research, Taking on responsibility and Time management

Unit 1: Manufacturing engineering products : Have the opportunity to interpret different types of engineering information in order to plan how to manufacture engineering products. Develop knowledge, understanding and skills in using a range of engineering tools and equipment in order to manufacture and test a final product.

Unit 2: Designing engineering products : Explore how an engineered product is adapted and improved over time. It offers the opportunity to apply your knowledge and understanding to adapt an existing component, element or part of the product that you will have manufactured for Unit 1.

Unit 3: Solving engineering problems : Introduced to a range of considerations that impact on engineering design and how modern engineering has had an impact on modern day life at home, work and in society in general.

Curriculum intent

How will I be assessed in Engineering?

You will be assessed through a mixture of exams and project work. Unit 1 will involve producing a manufacturing product, which will be worth 40% of the qualification. This can range from a basic hand tool to complex machinery. The product will need to be developed over 20 hours.

Unit 2 will also be assessed through project work and will be worth 20% of the qualification. Here you will apply your problem-solving skills to answer a brief and produce a solution. You will produce your solution over 10 hours. Unit 3 will involve a single exam, which is worth 40% of your qualification. The exam will last 1 hour and 30 minutes. The exam will be made up of multiple-choice questions, and short and extended answers.

What careers can it lead to?

There are a wide range of opportunities within the field of engineering, for example:

Aerospace engineer, Biomedical engineer, Civil/structural engineer, Computer engineer, Electrical/electronic engineer, Environmental engineer, Marine engineer, Mechanical engineer Product engineer and many more.

Engineering can be studied at Level 3 at Sixth Form and College which can lead to a HND or Degree.

Engineering loom video

For further information please contact Mr Lewis at jlewis@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Further Questions & Queries

The following section aims to answer any lingering questions you may still have. If it doesn't, please contact the following people with your questions. We will endeavour to respond to you as soon as we can.

Questions about Options Evening or the Options selection process:

Mason Davies

Assistant Headteacher

Madavies@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Questions about the Sims Online app (the app you will use to select your options):

Yvonne Lloyd

Data Manager

Ylloyd@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Queries about which options would be best for your child:

Lucy Blick

Careers Lead

Lblick@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Most appropriate subjects for specific career paths:

Unifrog

(Please contact Mr Meldrum @ Wmeldrum@gloucesteracademy.co.uk if your child cannot access their Unifrog account)

Any other queries or questions you may have:

Mason Davies

Assistant Headteacher

Madavies@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

