



South Dartmoor Community College

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Empowering everyone to be the best they can be.

12 February 2026

Dear Year 9 Parent / Carer

GCSE Options Process

I hope this letter finds you well.

As your child approaches a significant milestone in their education, I am writing to provide you with important information regarding the Year 9 Options and to gather your thoughts.

After half term, Year 9 begin the Options process and this starts with a face to face Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 3 March at 5pm followed by the Year 9 Progress evening, online, on Thursday 5 March from 4pm until 6.30pm. More details on these events will be sent out on Tuesday 24 February.

In addition, earlier this year, the government released a paper on new progress measures and curriculum changes for all schools at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). While these changes are not yet finalised, we feel it is important to keep you informed. Here is a [link](#) to that consultation paper.

Whilst the consultation will not directly affect students due to take their GCSEs in 2028 (current Year 9 students) it has prompted us to review our curriculum offer and seek parental opinion. Our core examination offer remains unchanged with the 5 qualifications listed below which all students study:

English Literature	Mathematics	Combined Science 1
English Language		Combined Science 2

In addition students will continue to have the opportunity to select a number of option subjects to complement their core offer.

Currently we have a **four-option** scenario. 9 qualifications in total. (10 if Triple Science is pursued)

History or Geography	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
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The alternative is a **three-option** scenario. 8 qualifications in total. (9 if Triple Science is pursued)

History or Geography	Option 1	Option 2
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In either scenario, Triple Science is considered outside of the options and facilitated via a timetable adjustment utilising some PE and Core RS lessons. Students are advised through their science lessons if they should be considering studying Triple Science. We are seeking to gauge parental opinion on the two different scenarios.

Scenario 1

Four Option Subjects: (5 Hours per option per fortnight)

- ? **Pros:** Provides a broader curriculum experience, allowing your child to explore a wider range of interests and talents. This may offer greater flexibility if your child is unsure of their future career path.
- ? **Cons:** Potentially greater workload studying more GCSEs and less time per subject, which could impact depth of learning and overall attainment in each subject.

Scenario 2

Three Option Subjects: (6 Hours per option per fortnight)

- ? **Pros:** Enables more focused study and allows additional time for each subject, which could support deeper understanding and higher achievement. This may also help reduce pressure and support student wellbeing.
- ? **Cons:** Limits the number of subjects studied, meaning student will need to be more selective and may have to prioritise some subjects over others.

We encourage you to discuss these two scenarios as a family and would welcome your feedback by Friday 20 February via this [short form](#).

We value the thoughts and opinions of our community and encourage you complete the form to share your voice. We also look forward to welcoming you to our Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 3 March.

Kind regards,



Mrs E Gallagher
Deputy Headteacher

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