

December 2019



Brockington College

A Church of England Academy

LEARNING TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Changes to the Brockington College options process

I am writing to inform you of changes to the Key Stage 4 options process timeline that will affect students in Year 8.

Why have we made these changes?

Every school continually evaluates the curriculum, what is being offered and when that offer is made to students. Over recent years, Brockington College has asked students to make GCSE option choices in Year 8. Students have then begun their GCSE studies in Year 9, allowing them three school years to prepare for sitting exams in ten subjects at the end of Year 11. As you may be aware, GCSEs have changed over the past three years. Students now have more content to remember and they are required to apply the knowledge at a greater depth in order to be successful at the highest levels. There have also been changes to the Key Stage 2 curriculum over the past few years; students now arrive at Brockington College with a greater depth of understanding as this revised curriculum has embedded itself. At Key Stage 3, there is now a greater emphasis on allowing students to spend more time exploring all subjects for as long as possible, before they select their Key Stage 4 options. This allows students to build on what they have learnt at Key Stage 2, to explore new subjects that they may not have studied in depth before, to develop a readiness to begin GCSE studies and to make sure that they have had sufficient guidance regarding careers education to enable them to make informed choices.

What changes are we going to make?

In light of these national changes and as part of Brockington College's own evaluation processes, we have re-considered when it is best for our students to make their options choices and believe that going forward, students are best placed to make options choices when they reach Year 9.

What does this mean for my child?

For current Year 8 students, this means that there will not be an options process this academic year. Students will continue to study a broad range of subjects for another year, before making their options choices in the spring term of Year 9. In some subjects, particularly the core subjects of English, maths, science and Religious Studies, GCSE content will be started during year 9. Across all subjects, essential GCSE skills will continue to be taught and developed throughout Year 9.

How many options will my child choose?

As a result of this change, students will now spend two school years studying their selected GCSE option subjects. As previously highlighted, the new GCSE courses require the study of a larger body of knowledge across a greater number of exams, which all take place at the end of Year 11. Therefore, to help students to manage this load effectively, and to provide ample teaching and revision time, students will be studying for nine GCSEs rather than ten. Students will study English language, English literature, maths, science (combined or triple) and Religious Studies and will then select three further option subjects to study.

What if I have some questions?

Should you have any questions, I would like to invite parents/carers to a briefing on Wednesday 11 December at 6pm where I will talk through these changes again and where the senior leadership team will be available to answer any questions you may have. So that we have an idea of numbers, please confirm your attendance using the following link: <https://bit.ly/35VvBJB>

The intention is to also go through this with Year 8 students, during their assembly in the final week of term.

Yours sincerely

Sadie Batstone
Principal

