

Year 9 Options



St Martin's
School
Be the best you can be

2025-2027

Guidance for the successful
selection of GCSE courses

Year 9 Options



Dear Parents and Carers

The following slides are designed to support you and your child in making the right decisions regarding Key Stage 4 courses.

We want you to feel confident that you have all necessary information and support to make this process as easy as possible.

We want you to know that as your child begins the transition to Year 10 and the start of GCSEs, we will make every effort to ensure it is a smooth one.

Underpinned by our core values: Traditional Values, Learning for the Future and Outstanding Personal Achievement, we endeavour for your child to continue to flourish and be **The Best They Can Be**.

Key Dates



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W/B Monday 3 February 2025 (Year 9 Options Launch Week)

- Options booklet, Options form and additional information sent out to parents/carers.
- Options booklet and additional information available on school website.

Monday 3 February

- Year 9 'Drop Down' – an introduction to the Year 9 Options.

Thursday 6 February 2025

To facilitate the evening, and to avoid large numbers of parents arriving at the same time, we would be grateful if you could attend during the times allocated to your child's band.

- Options Fayre

X Band 16:00 – 17:00

Y band 17:15– 18:15

(an opportunity to speak to subject staff about subject courses)

Monday 3 March 2025

- Deadline to submit completed Options Form

July 2025

- Key Stage 4 option subjects will be confirmed to pupils and parents/carers.

N.B. All pupils with Special Educational Needs will be contacted by the SEND department to discuss and support the decision-making process. If you have any queries or would like further advice regarding options, please email: options@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

GCSE Examinations



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Understanding the grades

If this process is being undertaken by your eldest child, you may not be familiar with the new GCSE grading process that was introduced a few years ago.

The chart opposite can be used for comparison purposes.

A 'standard pass' is generally the minimum requirement to enter post 16 courses. However, many institutions will be looking for 'strong passes' and you will often need a higher grade in the subjects you wish to study at A level/BTEC.

How the new grades compare with old ones

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

The Core



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The Core

All pupils must study the following core subjects at GCSE:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science

In addition, pupils will continue to have lessons in Core PE, as well as Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE)

Additional Subjects



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St Martin's is fortunate to be able to offer a wide range of subjects to meet pupils' needs, aptitudes and interests.

Art and Design
Business Studies
Computer Science*
Design and Technology
Drama
Food Preparation and Nutrition
French*
Geography*
German*
Health and Social Care (Cambridge National Award)
History*
ICT Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Eduqas
Media Studies
Music
Philosophy, Religion and Ethics (PRE)
Physical Education (PE)
Sociology
Learning Support (in consultation with the SENDCo)

*Indicates an Ebacc subject

The Ebacc



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The Department for Education recommends these core subjects which make up the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) and help keep options open for young people:

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- History or Geography
- A modern foreign language

WHAT IS THE EBACC? The EBacc is not a qualification in its own right. It is a combination of GCSE subjects, including a language, that offer an important range of knowledge and skills to young people.

EBACC FUTURE PROOFS YOUR CHILD'S PROSPECTS.

For more information about the EBacc, please read the leaflet on our website here:

The Selection process



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You will be sent a Microsoft Forms link to complete the Options process. There are two pathways for pupils (a pupil's pathway will be determined by their SATs scores and/or their aptitude in languages.)

The only difference between Pathway A and B is the expectation that pupils on Pathway A continue with a language.

However, if a pupil on Pathway B wishes to take a language, they can opt to do so as one of their 3 choices. Our options process enables all pupils to achieve the full English Baccalaureate should they want to.

Please note that the pathway your child is placed on **will not affect** the setting or groupings for any subject.

If you have a query regarding you child's pathway, please email: options@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

What should I do first?



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1. Read the Options Booklet

The Options Booklet provides detailed information about the options process, as well as all the Key Stage 4 courses on offer.

2. Look at your last report

Use this information to guide your decisions. Think about where you are making good progress, what you enjoy and where your strengths lie.

Look at your Approach to Learning grades. Grades 1 and 2 suggest you engage well with your learning.

3. Have lots of discussions.

What do you enjoy? What subjects might you like to take in the Sixth Form? Do you want to go to university? Complete an Apprenticeship? What might you want to do as a career? Do you want to keep your options open?

A piece of advice – don't make decisions on the options you choose based only on the teachers you like or because your friends might choose it. The timetable for next academic year is not written yet and we do not know which teachers will be teaching Year 10 at the moment.

4. Research

Research potential careers and the qualifications you will need using Unifrog. Look at entrance requirements for our sixth form.

St Martin's Sixth Form



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We know many of you are looking forward to attending our Sixth Form in two year's time.

Learning at St Martin's is not just about academic qualifications – it is about developing you as a whole student and ensuring you go on to excel in every aspect of your future life.

Academic excellence is just as important as social development – all areas we take pride in and hope you will develop across a seven year journey learning with us.

Here in our Sixth Form, we aim to develop the whole person and many of the wider skills needed in life. These include: student leadership, subject ambassadors, public speaking, charity fundraising, mentoring and working with the wider community.

Our vision for each Sixth Form student is that they are confident, resilient and motivated. We make sure we know every child and are there to guide and support them on the pathway from childhood to self-realisation as a young adult so that they become the **Best they can Be**.

On the next two slides you will find the current entry requirements for our Sixth Form.

Sixth Form Entry Requirements



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Subject	Entry requirements
Art & Design	Art & Design 6
Biology	Biology 6 and Maths 6
Business Studies	Business Studies 6 or Economics 6 or BTEC Business at Distinction level
Business Studies Extended Certificate BTEC	Business Studies 5 or Economics 5 or BTEC Business at Merit level
Chemistry	Chemistry 6 and Maths 6
Computer Science	Computing 6
D & T (Product Design Graphics with Materials)	Technology 6
D & T (Textiles)	Technology (Textiles) 6
Drama & Theatre Studies	Drama 6 or BTEC Performing Arts Merit
Economics	Economics 6 or Business Studies 6
English Language	English Language 6
English Literature	English Literature 6 and English Language 6
Food Science and Nutrition – Level 3 Diploma	GCSE 9-4 in one or more of: Food Prep & Nutrition, Hospitality & Catering or Home Economics: Food & Nutrition
French	French 6

Sixth Form Entry Requirements



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Further Maths (must also be studying Maths)	Maths 8
Geography	Geography 6
German	German 6
Government and Politics	English 6, History 6, Sociology 6 or equivalent Humanity 6
Health and Social Care Extended Certificate BTEC	Health and Social Care Level 2 BTEC Merit.
History	History 6
Maths	Maths 7
Media Studies	Media Studies 6
Music	Music 6
Music Technology	Music 6
Photography	Photography 6 or Art 6
Physical Education	Physical Education 6
Sport Extended Certificate BTEC	Physical Education 5
Physics	Physics 6 and Maths 6
Psychology	English 6, Biology 6 (or double science 5/5) and Maths 5
Philosophy	English, History, Sociology or equivalent Humanity 6
Sociology	Sociology 6

Unifrog



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Unifrog is an on-line careers platform for students. It offers a one stop shop where students can easily explore their interests, then find and successfully apply for their next best step after school.

Unifrog helps you explore your key interests and what career paths you can take to reach your goals.



Completing the Options Form



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Please read each section of the form and follow the instructions provided.

We will do our very best to meet your preferences, but please be aware that in some cases, this may not always be possible. In these cases, we will look at your reserve choices.

A smartphone displaying a digital form titled 'remaining choices.' The form includes a red header with the text 'remaining choices.' and 'If you have any queries regarding the process, email options@st-martins.essex.sch.uk'. Below the header, there are three required fields, each marked with a red asterisk and a small icon: '1. Surname *', '2. First Name *', and '3. Tutor Group *'. Each field has a white input box with the placeholder text 'Enter your answer'.

Completing the Options Form



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Please complete the Microsoft Form
by Monday 3 March.

Information regarding option
preferences will be issued by July
2025.

Support



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- Guided Options Booklet
- Unifrog
- Internet
- Teachers
- Family/Friends

**NEVER MAKE
PERMANENT
DECISIONS ON
TEMPORARY
FEELINGS**

Communication



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