

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## YEAR 8 PREFERENCES 2026

This document provides answers to some commonly asked questions you may have with regards to the Year 8 preference process.

### **Where can I find information about the preference process?**

All information can be found here: <https://www.thehambleschool.co.uk/preferences-2026/year-8-into-9-preferences/>. This includes explanation of the process, a copy of the assembly students had and subject information videos.

### **What will my child study?**

All students will study English, Maths, Science, Core PE and PSHCRE throughout Year 9 -11. These are considered core subjects. In addition to this, students will study 6 additional subjects in Year 9. It is compulsory that one of these subjects is History or Geography. All students must also study at least one subject from either Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama, Dance, Design Technology) or Languages (Spanish or French – whichever they currently study).

### **Can students do both Humanities subjects?**

Yes, they would need choose the other subject as part of their general choices on the preference form.

### **Can students do both a Creative Arts subject and a Language?**

Yes, they would need choose the other subject as part of their general choices on the preference form.

### **Is it a first come, first served system?**

No. We encourage students to take an appropriate amount of time to consider their choices. There is no advantage at all in submitting the form early. However, students submitting forms after the deadline are less likely to receive their first choices.

### **What if they are not happy on the course?**

At the end of Year 9, we will ask your child to choose which 4 out of the 6 subjects they chose, they wish to carry on to GCSE/BTEC. This will be in addition to the core subjects. In the rare case that students decide a subject is not for them, this would be a conversation between the parents/careers, Progress Leader and Head of the relevant subject. *Students will not be able to pick up subjects not studied in Year 9 as there will have been pre-requisite knowledge taught.*

### **Are vocational and GCSE qualifications the same?**

Some of our subjects offer both vocational (NCFE / Cambridge National / BTEC) and GCSE, for example PE. At the end of Year 9 the Head of Department will decide on which qualification route the class will take. In terms of College/University, GCSE and vocational qualifications have similar weighting but some courses will have expectations

about whether a student has studied at GCSE or vocational qualifications, for example some A-Levels. If your child is set on their future pathway, it is sometimes worth exploring college websites to see their entry requirements.

### **Why can the school not always guarantee students choices?**

Whilst the vast majority of the time we are able to offer students their first-choice options, there are times when we might not be able to and for this reason we ask for reserve choices. This can be due to rooming and staffing constraints for example Computer Science. The Progress Leader and Assistant Progress Leader will also look through students' choices and ensure they have made sensible choices that are appropriate for them. Should we have concerns, we will ring home to discuss. Many schools, ask students to select from blocks of subjects. The reason for this is to simplify the timetabling process. As a school, we feel that students should have the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects and also not have restrictive measures on them.

Whilst giving students a broader range of choices makes timetabling much more complex it is much better for the student. However, what that does mean is for some students their mix of subjects will not fit. In these instances, and again this is rare, we will contact home and discuss.

### **My child is still is unsure of their choices?**

In the first instance watch the subject videos on the webpage. Students and Teachers are also encouraged to have conversations in the classroom about the Subjects and what they entail. They will also be discussing their choices in Tutor. If as the parent/carer you still have subject specific questions, please contact the class teacher or Head of Department. If you have general questions about the process, please contact Mr Bateman, Progress Leader for Year 8, through [general@thehambleschool.co.uk](mailto:general@thehambleschool.co.uk)