

Frequently Asked Questions about GCSE Options

1. How many GCSEs will I study?

Most students will study **nine GCSEs**. These include five compulsory GCSEs: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, and Science (worth two GCSEs). Students will then study **four additional GCSEs** from their chosen option subjects.

Students following the enrichment pathways will complete eight GCSEs alongside their enrichment qualifications.

2. Will studying additional GCSEs outside school improve my child's chances of getting into a 'top' university?

No. Universities place greater value on the **quality of qualifications achieved**, rather than the number taken. Studying a broad range of subjects helps develop a wide set of skills and keeps future pathways open.

3. What happens if my preferred combination of option subjects does not fit into the option blocks?

We aim to create option blocks and a timetable that accommodate students' preferences as far as possible. If it is not possible to allocate all preferred choices, we will use the student's **reserve choices**. If this still cannot resolve the issue, we will contact the student directly.

4. Am I guaranteed to study the subjects I select once I submit my options form?

No. Occasionally, certain subject combinations cannot be timetabled, or some subjects may not run due to low demand. We always try to minimise the impact of these situations and will use reserve choices where necessary. If this is not possible, we will contact the student.

5. Do I need to study separate sciences to take science A-levels in the Sixth Form?

No, although it is strongly recommended. Studying GCSE Triple Science (separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics) is **not a requirement** at TSWA for A-level study, but it provides a stronger foundation. A **minimum grade 6 in Mathematics** is required.

6. Which subjects should I choose?

The best choices depend on your strengths, interests, and future aspirations. Consider which subjects you enjoy most and perform well in. Think about possible career paths or subjects you may wish to study in the future, while keeping in mind that plans often change. Choosing a **balanced range of subjects** is a sensible approach.

7. What is the deadline for submitting the options form?

Completed forms must be returned to tutors by **Friday 27th February**.

8. When will I find out which subjects I have been allocated?

You will be informed in **May 2026**, once the school timetable has been completed and finalised.

9. Why can't I choose more than one of Art, Graphic Communication, or Textiles?

These courses are all pathways within the **same GCSE qualification**, each with a different specialism. Therefore, students may only study **one** of these subjects at TSWA. In some cases, these subjects may be taken at A-level without having studied the GCSE, at the discretion of the Head of DT & Art.

10. Can all students choose Triple Science?

Yes, although Triple Science is designed for students who are academically strong and have a genuine interest in science. If you have been recommended for Triple Science, this will be indicated on your options form. If you have not been recommended but would still like to study Triple Science, please state this in the student comments section.

11. Can I drop a subject if I am not enjoying it?

No. You are required to continue with your chosen options through to the end of Year 11, so it is important to choose carefully and ensure your subjects are ones you enjoy and can succeed in, within the available option choices. There may be an opportunity to switch to another subject up to **Wednesday 22nd July 2026**, provided there is space available; however, this is discouraged as you will be expected to catch up on work missed during the first few weeks of the course. After this date, no changes will be permitted.