

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is a Cambridge National qualification?

A. These are broad and engaging level 1 and level 2 qualifications that equip students with applied knowledge and associated practical skills. Similar to a BTEC qualification, they will have a coursework element to them.

Q. Are BTEC subjects and Cambridge Nationals worth the same as GCSE subjects?

A. All subjects are worth the same: one GCSE.

Q. If I do BTEC subjects, or a Cambridge National qualification, can I still get into this Sixth Form?

A. Yes, as long as you have a minimum of five GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. These must include English and Mathematics.

Q. Can I do a mixture of BTEC, Cambridge National and GCSE subjects?

A. Yes, that is absolutely fine.

Q. Can I do more than one Design and Technology subject?

A. No because of the high coursework demands, we recommend just one D & T subject.

Q. How are my choices fitted into the option blocks?

A. Once we have everyone's options and reserve choices, a computer program sorts them to achieve the fewest clashes. This ensures that the majority of students receive their first choices. We also decide how many classes to assign for each subject.

Q. Will I get all of my first choices?

A. While most students do get their first choices, we have to allocate some reserve choices, so it is important that you select reserve choices you are willing and able to do. If there is low demand for a subject, we may not run it.

Q. Do I have to take a language?

A. Language qualifications are rigorous, academic and challenging. To take a language subject at GCSE shows grit and determination, along with a roundedness of character increasingly important in today's global community. Languages are also valued by universities and employers, and enable you to be awarded the English Baccalaureate. All current linguists should continue to study at least one language at GCSE. Students not electing to study a language will have a short meeting, along with their parents, with a senior teacher to ensure it is the correct decision for them.

Q. What Science option will I take?

A. All students study the sciences. Triple Science is for students who show a strong aptitude for Science. Students following Triple Science will achieve GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics. Students not taking Triple Science will be studying GCSE Combined Science. This covers all three sciences and is awarded as two GCSEs. Students following the Combined Science route and achieving good grades (Grade 6 or above) can go on to study Science A levels at The Cotswold School Sixth Form. **Unlike in previous years, Triple Science does not occupy an option block.** When you fill in your options selection form, please indicate whether you would like to be considered for Triple Science.

Q. When do I find out which subjects I have been given from my choices?

A. You will find out which subjects you have been allocated early in the Summer term. If you think we have made a mistake or you are not happy with your options, talk to Mr Smith, Deputy Headteacher and Head of Key Stage 4, about this. If we have concerns about the subjects you have chosen, we will contact you to discuss them.

Q. If I start a subject and later realise that I have made a mistake, what can I do?

A. This happens to a few students each year and you may want to request a change. Sometimes subject groups are full and students are unable to move but we do our best to help. By the end of September, we have to stop making any changes as you will have missed too much work to begin a new subject and it will be too disruptive for others in the class.

Q. Can I drop a subject and do eight qualifications?

We have high expectations of our students and the vast majority will be expected to study for nine qualifications. We do not have the staffing capacity to allow students to drop a course at any point during the two years of Key Stage 4. For a very small number of students, we will invite them to do Personalised Learning, from the outset, if we believe that they would benefit from consolidating their study.