

Year 9 Preferences Process Assembly January 2026



Ms S Brookes
Deputy Headteacher (Raising Standards)



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KS4 Preferences Process January and February 2026: Timeline of Events

<u>Curriculum Needs Analysis</u> Meeting of Deputy Headteacher (Raising Standards), Deputy Headteacher (Ethos and Behaviour), Head of Year 9, Year 9 PSM and SENDCO to discuss the learning and curriculum needs of all Year 9 students.	Week Beginning 5 th January 2026
<u>Curriculum Team Support</u> All departments will provide detailed information to students through lesson time and Google Classroom. Individual pupils can access guidance from class teachers should they need it.	Monday 5 th January – Thursday 12 th February 2026
<u>Targeted Preferences Guidance Meetings</u> SLT, Head of Year 9, Year 9 PSM and SENDCO will meet with key pupils. Any pupil will access guidance from the team should they request it via Deputy Headteacher (Raising Standards).	Monday 5 th January – Thursday 12 th February 2026
<u>GCSE Course Booklet</u> GCSE Courses Booklet 2024-26 is available on the school website in section entitled 'Year 9: GCSE Preferences Process'.	Wednesday 7 th January 2026
<u>KS4 Preferences Assembly</u> Preferences assembly where full process explained to all pupils and KS4 Course Booklet provided.	Wednesday 7 th January 2026
<u>Tutor Time Information Giving</u> Tutors will gradually share the recordings from each subject to Year 9 tutor groups to help pupils make well-informed choices regarding their preferences.	Monday 12 th January – Friday 6 th February 2026
<u>Aspiring Futures Careers Event</u> An evening to support course choices and career aspirations. A drop-in careers fayre with a range of employers, Further Education and Higher Education institutions.	Thursday 15 th January 2026
<u>Parent and Pupil KS4 Preferences Evening</u> A drop-in event where pupils and parents will have the opportunity to ask subject leaders questions about GCSE courses.	Thursday 22 nd January 2026
<u>Taster Session Registration Link</u> A taster session link will be sent along with the preferences form link to allow pupils to sign up to taster sessions if they are considering certain subjects.	Wednesday 28 th January 2026
<u>Taster Session Registration Deadline</u> Deadline for registering interest in taster sessions with Mrs. Case.	Wednesday 4 th February (11am) 2026
<u>Taster Sessions</u> Pupils who have chosen subjects they have never experienced will have the opportunity to take part in a short taster lesson to check it is what they want to pursue.	Friday 6 th February 2026 (& Thursday 5 th too if needed)
<u>Window for Option Choices Opens</u> Preferences form is released to pupils via Google Form	Friday 6 th February 2026 (5pm)
<u>Final Option Form Deadline</u> Deadline for the submission of preference choices to Mrs. Case.	Friday 13 th February 2026

Timeline of Events





GCSEs and Technical Awards

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is the award offered by the majority of courses. Students will take external examinations at the end of the two-year course. In some subjects there is also controlled assessment/coursework. The amount of internal and external assessment is explained on the page for each individual subject. The grading system for all GCSEs goes from 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest). GCSEs can be followed by A-levels, T-Levels, Apprenticeships or Vocational Qualifications. In Year 11, students will receive our full support in preparing for post-16 courses and applying for Post-16 institutions.

Technical Awards e.g. OCR National courses

Technical Awards, for example OCR National awards are nationally recognised qualifications which are equivalent to one GCSE. These courses have a greater emphasis on the application of the subject. These courses are recognised by the DfE as being high-quality qualifications that equip students with applied knowledge and associated practical skills. They focus on the applied study of an industry sector or occupational area, or the acquisition of practical and technical skills. They will fulfil entry requirements for both academic and vocational study post-16, alongside GCSEs.

Courses

The **core subjects** are the courses which all students follow. These are:

- English (Language and Literature)
- Mathematics
- Combined Science
- Physical Education
- Relationships and Sex Education (year 10 only)
- Religion and Worldviews



Ebacc Pot

All pupils must take at least one subject from the Ebacc Pot:

- History
- Ancient History
- Geography
- Computer Science
- French, German or Spanish
- Separate Sciences



Combined Science V Separate Sciences

To take Separate Science as an option you must:

1. Be working at a grade 6 in Science and a grade 5 in Maths.
2. Have a good homework and in-class learning record.
3. Have a positive attitude to learning.
4. Have a good attendance record.
5. Have a passion for and enjoyment of science.

Speak to your Science teacher before selecting Separate Science. If you choose it but don't meet the criteria you will automatically be placed on your reserve choice. If you don't meet point 1 but want to do Separate Sciences a parental meeting can be arranged with the Head of Science and Ms. Brookes. See Mrs Spencer in the first instance.

Using the KS4 Course Booklet and Website



Qualification		Subject
GCSE (AQA Examination Board)		Art & Design Full Course – Fine Art
This course aims to: • be vibrant and dynamic, encouraging you to work to your strengths and interests by offering a range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to develop and explore your personal interests in art and design • offer a skills-based course in which we develop your knowledge and understanding through a variety of learning experiences and approaches. This will allow you to develop the skills to explore, create and communicate your own ideas • increase knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in contemporary societies and in other times and cultures • encourage you to develop creative and imaginative skills, and the practical ability to communicate and express ideas, feelings and meanings in art, craft and design • develop investigative, analytical, experimental and interpretive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical skills • allow you to demonstrate these skills through the development, refinement, recording, realisation and presentation of your ideas through a portfolio and an externally set assignment.		
Pupil grouping Classes are taught in mixed ability groups.		
Time spent in school on this subject: 5 hours per two-week cycle. Students also have the opportunity to stay after school to attend Art Club and lunchtime Art Club.		
The final grade will depend upon the Component 1 Portfolio, which includes three projects of work, and Component 2, an externally set exam. Students can work in a variety of areas – drawing, painting, sculpture, installation, lens/light-based media, photograph, printmaking, mixed media, land art and ICT. Students will be expected to work using a range of materials, processes and techniques to explore their ideas. Work is assessed under four assessment objectives. Students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to: • AO1 Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources. • AO2 Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes. • AO3 Record ideas, observations, and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses. • AO4 Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.		
Homework 1½ hours. This is set each week and it is a continuation of portfolio work, often to be completed in a sketchbook. It will help the development of the Portfolio.		
Examination Details		Component 1 Portfolio: 60% Component 2 Externally-set Assignment: 40%
Links with advanced courses and careers: • AS and A Level Art and Design courses. Careers in fine art, art history, graphic design, photography, textiles, jewellery design, printing, industrial and product design, architecture, set design, fashion design, multi-media, interior design, film and television design, music and gallery administration.		
For more information please contact: Ms Robinson on Sally.Robinson@weaverhamhighschool.com or speak to your Art teacher.		



Using the KS4 Course Booklet and Website



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Excellence in Learning and Leadership Development

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Learning is Exciting,
Engaging and Inspirational

LEARNING THE
WEAVERHAM WAY

CURRICULUM
JOURNEY

COMMITMENT TO
CREATIVITY

LITERACY

ACCELERATED
READER

TEACHING AND
LEARNING HANDBOOK

FEEDBACK

CHALLENGE
PROGRAMME

KNOWLEDGE
ORGANISERS

DIGITAL LEARNING
PROVISION

EXAMS

EXAMS,
ASSESSMENT AND
REPORTING

YEAR 9 – OPTIONS
AND PREPARING FOR
GCSES

WEAVERHAM HIGH
SCHOOL REVISION
STRATEGIES

INTERVENTION





Name: _____

Form: _____

You have **four option choices** in total. You must have a total of **4 ticks** on the sheet **plus two** reserve choices.

Section 1 English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

If you feel that EBacc is not the right route for you then complete the form on the reverse.

English Baccalaureate (2 ticks)

Choose **(1)** either Geography or History and **(2)** a Modern Foreign Language

Choice 1

Geography

History (Ancient)

History

Choice 2

French

German

Spanish

Section 2:

You now choose any **two** other subjects from the list below:

	Tick Here	Admin Only
Art*		A
Business Studies (GCSE)		Bs
Child Development (Cambridge National Certificate Level 1 / 2)		Cd
Computer Science		Cs
Dance/Performing Arts (Level 1 / 2 Technical Award)*		Da
Design and Technology GCSE		Dt
Drama*		Dm
French		Fr
Geography		G
German		D
Graphic Design. (Level 2 Technical Award)*		Gr
History		H
History (Ancient)		Ha
Hospitality and Catering WJEC Level 1 or 2 Award		Fc
IT – (Cambridge National Certificate Level 1 / 2)		IT
Music		Mu
Physical Education OR Sport Studies (Cambridge National Certificate Level 1 / 2)		Pe / Ss
Religious Studies		Re
Single Sciences – Biology, Chemistry & Physics		S
Spanish		Sp
Photography		Ph
Construction		Con

You have **four options choices** in total.

You need to have a total of **4 ticks** on the sheet **plus two** reserve choices.

List **two** subjects that you have not chosen which you would like as reserve choices:

1

2

• You are **not able** to take **both** Dance and Drama unless you give a clear rationale behind why this combination is right for you.

• You are **not able** to take Graphic Design and Art as an option choice.

Parents' Statement: We have discussed these choices and accept them.

Parent / Guardian: (Signature)



Important Considerations:

1. Make full use of the support available to you.
2. If you have any questions, ask your subject teacher who will be happy to give you impartial advice.
3. Choose subjects you are interested in, have a passion for or that will open the door to your future. DO NOT choose subjects based on what your friends have chosen. DO NOT choose subjects because you like a certain teacher.
4. Start to consider preferences now if you haven't already done so. Changes are often difficult to accommodate and so careful consideration before completing your options form is key.
5. Some subjects will have taster sessions on Friday 6th February. You will be informed if you need to attend any sessions.
6. Final preferences deadline via Google Form: Friday 13th February.
7. Not all students get their preferences– limited spaces, clashes with option blocks etc.
8. Very few changes are permitted once courses have started in Year 10.



Weaverham High School Aspiring Futures Evening *Thursday 15/01/2026*



Be the Best Version of You