

April 2024

Options and Technology Changes (Year 9 & Year 10)

Dear Families,

I am writing to inform you of some changes to the 'open option' subjects which are currently being studied by students in Year 9 and 10. I will outline the changes which are being made, and explain the rationale behind both the changes, along with the choice of timing.

All students in current Year 9 and 10 (10 and 11 from September 2024) are currently studying two 'option' subjects. We are going to reduce this to one option subject for all students from April 2024. Each student will retain one of the two options which they were studying and continue this to the end of Year 11, when they will receive a qualification alongside the rest of their GCSE subjects.

The option which they carry forward is being allocated using data which we have available, both internal (cycle assessments etc) and external data which has been collected in preparation for submitting to examination boards.

The rationale for this reduction is based on comparing our curriculum model to that of other very successful academies within the Dixons Academies Trust. Our most successful academies only include one option subject in their curriculum model and they achieve outstanding results. This is due to a combination of students having more curriculum time for these subjects and the reduced load of having only one subject to focus on. We are aligning with the majority of other academies in the Trust in this way so we can provide students at Dixons McMillan with the best possible chance of climbing their mountains and achieving the highest outcomes possible. We have also taken student voice into consideration which showed that students would feel more confident focusing their efforts on coursework for one option, supporting their workload and wellbeing.

The change has been made now and there will inevitably be some period of 'settling' into the new structure with the possibility of a small number of students moving between subjects and staff getting the students in their new classes and aligned with course content. It is better that this happens before the Summer holiday instead of in September when all students in Year 9 and 10 will be preparing for coursework submissions due in December.

If you have any questions, queries or concerns, please contact the school reception in the first instance. There will be a drop in session, open to all families, at the parents' evening being held on **Thursday 2 May**. All families are welcome to drop-in between 3.30pm and 6.00pm to discuss these changes further.

Yours faithfully

Paul Murray
Vice Principal

