



Holy Family Catholic School & Sixth Form

ASPIRE TO THE HOLY FAMILY WAY

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

# 4) Frequently Asked Questions



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[www.holyfamily.waltham.sch.uk](http://www.holyfamily.waltham.sch.uk)

# FAQs – why do you place so much emphasis on Maths and English GCSEs?

- Other than the fact they are vital for career progression (Universities and employers take the grades very seriously)...
- ...the government has made it compulsory for students Post-16 to continue to work towards a grade 4 if they do not gain this at the end of Year 11.
- We offer intensive revision classes for GCSE re-sits for those who gain grade 3 and stepping stone qualifications for those under grade 3.
- Re-sitting maths and English while studying a full Level 3 programme is extremely difficult and can result in underachievement across the student's study programme.
- Maths and English skills underpin all Level 3 subjects – they are also the best predictor of success at Level 3 and beyond.



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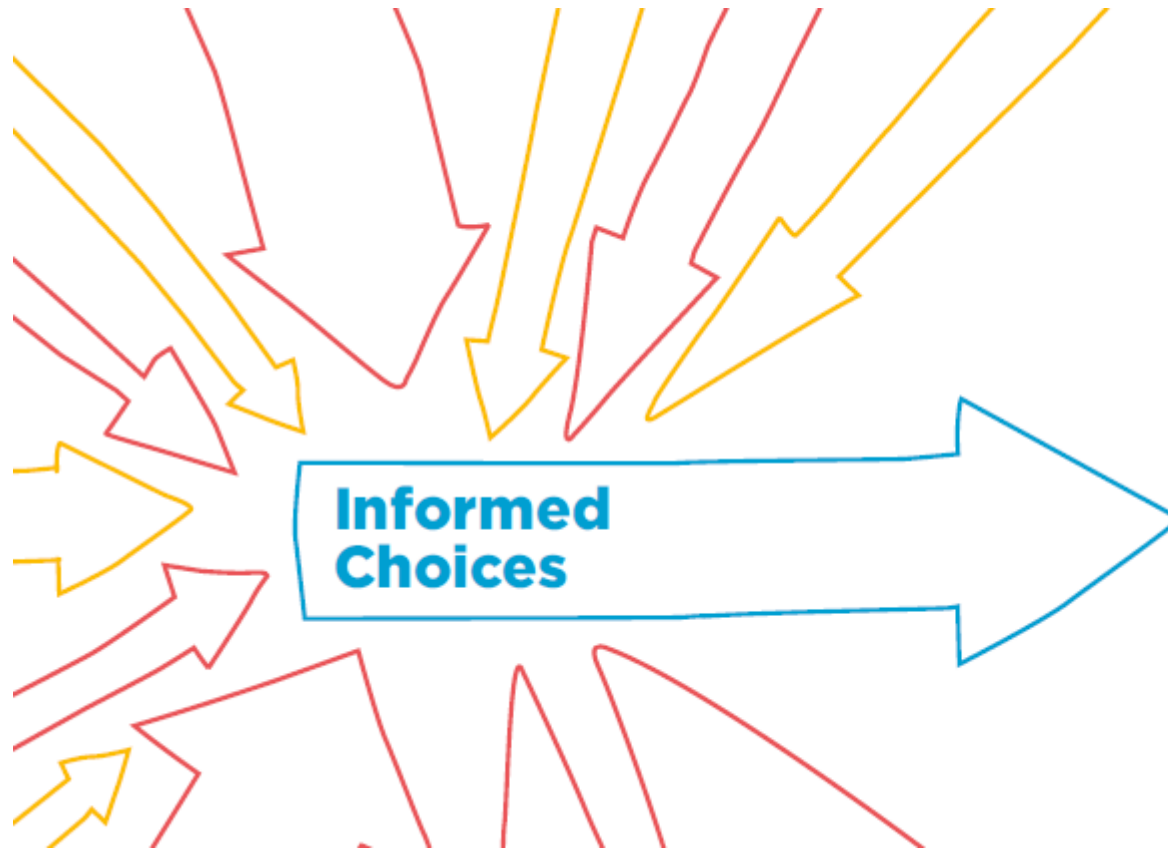
# FAQs – what are the best subject combinations?

- Our best advice is for students to choose subjects that interest and motivate them.
- There are some combinations of subjects which are essential for some careers eg: Chemistry plus one other sciences for Medicine.
- Other career paths require clusters of similar subjects – we can advise more on this either formally at interview or informally at any time – please contact us if you have any questions.
- If you are not sure on a career path refer to point one above!
- Subject combinations will be discussed at interview.
- Russell Group Universities often require a minimum of two facilitating subjects (Search for Informed Choices – Russell Group).



# Informed Choices

**RUSSELL  
GROUP**



A Russell Group guide  
to making decisions  
about post-16 education

2016/17  
Fifth edition

[www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk)

# FAQs – can Level 3 BTECs get me to university?

- The overwhelmingly simple answer is yes!
- And we know this because we send many students each year to university with multiple Dist and Dist\* grades (the equivalent to A and A\* grades at A Level).
- Over 70% of university courses give offers using the UCAS Tariff, which includes a wide range of different course types
- They are highly valued by employers – we know this because they tell us so!
- They are suited to students who have a particular vocation in mind and/or who prefer less examined content.
- Recent govt. reforms have made Level 3 BTECS more academically rigorous with up to 40% examined content in some subjects.



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# FAQs – can I take a subject that I didn't do at GCSE?

- The following A Level and BTEC subjects do NOT require the equivalent to have been taken at GCSE.
- They do however require a deep interest and commitment to them!
  - Art & Design (Photography)
  - Business Studies
  - Economics
  - Geography
  - Film Studies
  - Politics
  - Psychology
  - Religious Studies
  - Sociology
  - BTEC Business
  - BTEC Health and Social Care
  - BTEC Media
  - BTEC IT
  - BTEC Sport
  - BTEC Performing Arts



# FAQs – What can parents do to help?

- Emphasising the importance of The Year 11 Practice/Mock exams – these are crucial in determining the type of offer that students will gain especially in terms of effort/attitude to learning.
- Ensuring students have a quiet study space.
- Making sure students are organised.
- Encouraging students to take rest breaks!
- Give guidance and help in choosing subjects BUT recognising that it is the student's choice in the end.
- Help students research career areas eg: University/Apprenticeships and career options.
  - [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
  - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>



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# FAQs – What happens if I don't make the grades for my chosen subjects?

- While all offers are conditional on attaining the minimum entry requirements, we may be able to offer you an alternative course if you do not meet the grades for your first choice course/pathway
- We would therefore recommend that students think about back up choices in case some courses/pathways are not available
- We will advise on the suitability of chosen pathways at interview
- At enrolment after GCSE results day students and parents attend a further interview where guidance will be provided



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# Important dates

- Sixth form questionnaires  
Current
- Friday lunchtime clinic  
Current
- Internal Taster day sign up  
PSD sessions in November
- Applications open  
November 20<sup>th</sup>
- Year 11 parents evening  
January 9<sup>th</sup>
- Internal Sixth Form Taster day  
January 13<sup>th</sup>
- Deadline for applications  
January 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Interviews (Internal)  
w/b February 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Interviews (External)  
Within two weeks of application from Jan
- All offers sent out  
April 2<sup>nd</sup>
- GCSE results day  
August 27<sup>th</sup>
- Enrolment  
August 27/30/31<sup>st</sup>
- Late enrolment:  
By appointment

