

21st April 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Year 9 Options

Firstly, please can I express my appreciation with the patience shown over the options process. We have had many technical challenges to overcome to utilise the online SIMS Options Online platform; however, it is now ready to launch.

Your child will have been sent an invitation to their school email address to register with SIMS Options Online. When they log into their email they will need to:

1. Open the email.
2. Click the green 'Accept' button, which will open a new registration box.
3. They will then need to enter their school email address again and then click 'Next'.
4. They will then enter their date of birth using the format DD/MM/YYYY and click 'Next'.
5. They will then need to create a password following the instructions on the screen. Note that is cannot include their forename or surname. Then click 'Next'.
6. They should get a message to let them know that the account has been successfully created and the log in screen should appear. They use their school email address and their new SIMS password.
7. Students are having an assembly on Monday 24th April, where they will see a demonstration of how to complete their choices. It takes about 3-5 minutes to do so.
8. Options choices need to be made by 3pm on Thursday 27th April.
9. We will be running session on Thursday 27th April for any students who have struggled to complete their options choices at home. We appreciate that using IT can sometime throw up challenges...

Students need to pick 3 first choice subjects of which one must be an EBACC subject (French, Geography, German or History). Please note that since the options booklet was published, we have decided to make a change to the structure of the curriculum at Key Stage 4, and Triple Science is no longer an EBACC options choice.

The reason for this change is that we have given an additional hour per week of curriculum time to science. This means that all students will have the curriculum time needed to study for the Triple science GCSEs. This means that they will sit separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

There are a number of reasons why we have made this decision:

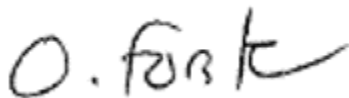
- Triple Science offers a wider breadth of knowledge and skills in science than the combined science course.
- Students will achieve 3 GCSEs, rather than the two that they achieve in combined science.

- Triple Science is a better preparation for further study at post 16 level in and technical, scientific or engineering based subjects.
- Combined Science requires students to be equally successful in all three sciences as the exams are a mixture of all three subjects. However, naturally, some students may have one science that they are stronger at. By doing Triple Science, it allows students to gain the top grades in the subject that they are strongest in.
- For example, as student may be working at Grade 6 level in Chemistry, but Grade 5 level in Biology and Physics. In combined science, it is likely that they would achieve grades 55 (equivalent to two grade 5s). However, by doing Triple science, they could achieve a grade 6 in Chemistry, and a grade 5 in Biology and Physics.
- All students will learn the combined science content in Year 10 and the Triple Science content in Year 11.
- For a small number of students, it may be appropriate that they do eventually take the combined science exam. We will facilitate this for those students, in discussion with parents and carers at the end of Year 10.

If you have any technical issues with completing the options forms, please contact Mrs Minchin (Data Manager) on sminchin@oiea.co.uk.

If you have any other questions about making options choices, please contact Mrs Clarke (Head of year 9) on sclarke@oiea.co.uk or me on oforster@oiea.co.uk.

Kind regards,



Oliver Forster