

# CHOOSING YOUR OPTIONS

Technical  
Guide & Info



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## **Advantages of Options Online**

- Our students and their parents will enjoy the convenience of selecting their options online.
- SIMS Options allows us to seamlessly manage the whole process.
- Once students have made their selections these are automatically fed back and classes are automatically created.

## **Intuitive and convenient for students and parents**

- Students and parents benefit from the convenience of being able to select their GCSE choices online through a simple intuitive portal.
- They can find out about the subject options, make selections from their assigned pathway, list subjects in order of preference and add reserves, as well as add comments.
- Submissions are instantly fed back into SIMS.

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## **Improve efficiency and save time**

- The process will save countless hours of administration time.
- It will no longer be necessary to manually input, collate and sort each individual submission as SIMS Options does this automatically.
- Submission Queries will be answered quickly and easily, as all of the information will be available instantly within the software.
- SIMS Options frees valuable time, allowing focus on other priority areas.



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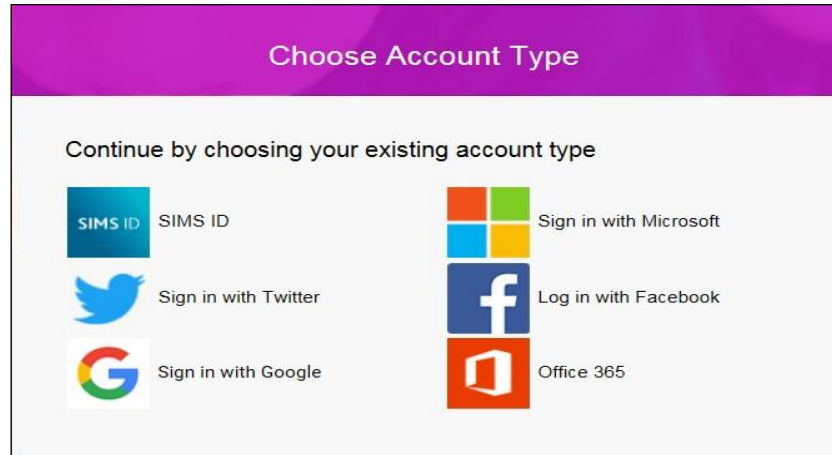
## Getting Started Registering as a Parent

- *NOTE: Users with multiple roles need to register only once. For example, users who are both a parent and a teacher should register as either a parent or a teacher but should not register as both. Once registered, all of the relevant parent and teacher information will be available.*
- You will receive a registration email from [noreply@sims.co.uk](mailto:noreply@sims.co.uk) containing a unique invitation code. You will need this code to set up your SIMS Online Services account. If you have not yet received a registration email, please check your junk folder before contacting your school.
- *IMPORTANT NOTES: To register for SIMS Online Services products, you will need one of the following accounts: Microsoft, Office 365, Google, Facebook, Twitter.*

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Follow the link in the email to be directed to the Sign in page.



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- **IMPORTANT NOTES:** Parents and students must not attempt to register using SIMS ID. The SIMS ID option is for use by school staff only.

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- Users should register with a Microsoft, Office 365, Google, Facebook or Twitter account. Click the icon for the relevant Third Party account and you will be directed to sign in using your existing details.
- For verification purposes, parents are required to enter the Date of Birth of one of their children attending the school. Students are required to enter their own Date of Birth.
- Once registration has been completed successfully, pupil/students can access their details and parents can access their child's details.



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**REGISTRATION IS NOW COMPLETE**

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## SIGNING IN

- Users can sign in via the following URLs.
- SIMS Options Online <https://www.sims-options.co.uk>
- This can be done from the website URL (above) or from within the SIMS Parent and SIMS Student apps. The apps are available for iOS and Android devices.



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Click the icon for the relevant Third Party account that you registered with. Parents and students must not attempt to register using SIMS ID. The SIMS ID option is for use by school staff only. A new window is displayed. **Enter your sign in details.**

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## Why can't I register?

You should register with a Microsoft, Office 365, Google, Facebook or Twitter account. Click the icon for the relevant Third Party account and you will be directed to sign in using your existing details. If you try to enter your Third Party details in the SIMS ID **Username** and **Password** fields, the following error will be displayed.

Register your account for SIMS products

For users with an existing SIMS ID account please sign in here

wrongusername@yahoo.co.uk






Password

**Error: invalid username or password**

In the interest of security you are advised not to save your username or password in the browser

Sign in

For users registering with a third party account please select a sign in option below

 Microsoft	 Twitter
 Facebook	 Google
 Office 365	

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## **Remember** **Help Is At Hand**

- Before completing the registration process, users should be signed out from all accounts. Alternatively, the registration process should be carried out in a private browser window.
- If you have forgotten your password, please contact your Third Party account provider (e.g. Google, Microsoft, etc.) and request a new password.
- Who do I contact for help?
  - ▶ If you have a question please contact the school.
- Once you have signed into your SIMS Online Services product, further help is available by selecting Help from the menu.

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## KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM – The Core

The core subjects are the ones that all students must do.

The core subjects are as follows:

THE CORE	Qualification	Time Allocation
English (Language and Literature)	2 GCSEs	5 periods
Mathematics	1 GCSE	5 periods
Science (Trilogy or Triple)	2-3 GCSEs	7 (or 9 periods)
Physical Education(PE)*	1 GCSE/1 BTEC	2 (or 3 or 4 periods)
Religious Studies(RE)*	1 GCSE	1 (or 2 or 3 periods)
Lifeskills, Citizenship and Work Related Learning		1 period
Personal Study		up to 3 periods
Options	3 GCSEs/BTEC/ Tech Award	9 periods

**\*Students can decide which one of PE or RE to ‘top up’ into a full counting qualification.**

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## The Examination and Awards System

Our Year 10 and Year 11 courses lead to the awards of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). We also offer some Technical Qualifications.

**BTEC First Awards or Technical Awards (new)/OCR Cambridge National Certificate** – are worth **one** GCSE and delivered as a single option. The course is designed to provide the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to prepare learners for employment, through a programme of realistic challenges. The qualification is highly regarded by employers and colleges. There is now an examination at the end of this course. All the assessment tasks are based on real life projects from the world of work. At the end of the course students are awarded a Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction at either Level 1 or Level 2. Level 2 grades; a pass is worth a 4 points, a Merit is worth 5.5 points and a Distinction/Distinction\* is worth 7 or 8.5 points.

**Non Exam Assessment(NEA)/Coursework** – projects and assignments form part of the final GCSE grades for some subjects and have to be completed by a set date. The subject teacher marks these.

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**Examination Boards** – **AQA** (Assessment and Qualification Alliance), **OCR** (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations) and **Edexcel** are used. The **syllabi** and **assessment** methods (examinations or coursework) are created by the examination boards.

**Grades (New)** – coursework (NEAs) and examination marks count towards the final subject grade shown on the GCSE certificate. Grades are 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. 9 is the highest grade you could be awarded and 1 is the lowest.

**Examinations** – are undertaken mainly at the end of Year 11 in either May or June. Examinations cannot now be taken throughout the year for GCSEs; some BTEC examinations can be taken during the two years.

**Tiered Examination Papers** – are available in some subjects. Pupils have a wide range of abilities and in order for both the more able and less able to demonstrate their abilities adequately, different papers are set. Pupils in these subjects are entered for the most appropriate tier.

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## Course Name/Qualifications and Exam Board Links

The Core
English Language GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700</a>
English Literature GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702</a>
Mathematics (9-1) GCSE <a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/mathematics-j560-from-2015/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/mathematics-j560-from-2015/</a>
Triple Science (3GCSEs)
Biology - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461</a>
Chemistry - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462</a>
Physics - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/physics-8463">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/physics-8463</a>
Combined Science: Trilogy (2 GCSEs) <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464</a>



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## Course Name/Qualifications and Exam Board Links

The Options
Art and Design: Textile Design GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/subject-content/textile-design">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/subject-content/textile-design</a>
Art, Craft and Design GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/subject-content/art-craft-and-design">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/subject-content/art-craft-and-design</a>
Computer Science GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/computer-science-and-it/gcse/computer-science-8520">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/computer-science-and-it/gcse/computer-science-8520</a>
Creative iMedia - Level 1/2 Award - <a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualification/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-award-certificate-j807-j817/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualification/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-award-certificate-j807-j817/</a>
Creative Media Production - BTEC Technical Award - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/creative-media-production.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/creative-media-production.html</a>
Dance: Performing Arts - BTEC Technical Award - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/performing-arts.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/performing-arts.html</a>
Design and Technology GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552</a>
Drama GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261</a>
Enterprise and Marketing - Level 1/2 Certificate - <a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/enterprise-and-marketing-level-1-and-2-certificate-j819/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/enterprise-and-marketing-level-1-and-2-certificate-j819/</a>
Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585</a>

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The Options (Continued)
French GCSE - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/french-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/french-2016.html</a>
Geography GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035</a>
Graphic Design NCFE Technical Award - <a href="https://www.qualhub.co.uk/qualification-search/qualification-detail/ncfe-level-2-technical-award-in-graphic-design-4569">https://www.qualhub.co.uk/qualification-search/qualification-detail/ncfe-level-2-technical-award-in-graphic-design-4569</a>
Health and Social Care - BTEC Technical Award - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/health-and-social-care.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/health-and-social-care.html</a>
History GCSE - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/history-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/history-2016.html</a>
Hospitality and Catering - Level 1/2 Award - <a href="https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/hospitality-and-catering/hospitality-and-catering-level-1-2-award.html">https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/hospitality-and-catering/hospitality-and-catering-level-1-2-award.html</a>
Music GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/music/gcse">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/music/gcse</a>
Music Practice - BTEC Technical Award - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/music-practice.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/music-practice.html</a>
Physical Education GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse</a>

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## Course Name/Qualifications and Exam Board Links

The Options (Continued)
Physical Education GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse</a>
Religious Studies A GCSE - <a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062</a>
Spanish GCSE - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/spanish-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/spanish-2016.html</a>
Sport BTEC First Award (2018) - <a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-firsts/sport-2012-nqf.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-firsts/sport-2012-nqf.html</a>



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## English Baccalaureate

What is the English Baccalaureate? (EBacc)

The English Baccalaureate is not a new qualification or certificate. It is a name given to a group of subjects made up of GCSE English, Mathematics, two Sciences, History or Geography, and a Modern Foreign Language awarded at either Grade 4 (Standard Pass) or Grade 5 (Strong Pass) and above.

Employers, Colleges and Universities want students to gain the highest grades they possibly can in every subject they take at GCSE etc. The Department for Education recommend that EBacc subjects form the foundation for a good all round education which keeps all career options open. These subjects are often referred to as 'Facilitation' subjects.

Please talk with your tutor or the Work Related Learning Team for further information, advice and guidance.

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## Science Pathway

**Triple Science**, comprising of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, is a challenging and broad course which studies each subject at considerably more depth and complexity. We recommend that students who are consistently working at or above a **Grade 6/7** may be considered; if you are unsure of which Science pathway you should follow please talk to your Science teacher.

If you want to be successful in either Science pathway it is necessary for you to spend a significant amount of work and studying outside of lesson time. Triple Science equals 3 separate GCSEs and gets 9 periods a week, Combined Science equals 2 GCSEs and gets 7 periods a week. If you study Triple Science you will not receive the same amount of Personal Study time.

If you would like to be considered for a particular Science course please make your preference and complete the **Student Comment** box with an explanation.

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## The “Compulsory” Option

All students must select at least **one** subject from this group. If you want to pick additional subjects please choose them from the Main Option Block below.

If you want to follow the **Ebacc** pathway you must choose either French or Spanish and then either one or both Geography or History. This combination is **highly** recommended for those students with a strong academic aptitude. This set of subjects are also known as '**facilitation subjects**'.

**Computer Science** is a complex course, please take advice from **Mr Yule** as to whether this course is suitable for you.

Please use the **Student Comment** box to add any further explanation over the choices you wish to make.



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## Main Option Block

All students must choose **two courses** from this Main Option Block. Please select them in the order of preference. Please then select and prioritise **two reserve** subjects. Reserves will only be used if we are unable to offer certain combinations, or if a particular course does not have sufficient students.

Certain subject combinations will not give you a **broad and balanced** curriculum and therefore **cannot** be selected together:

- Creative iMedia and Creative Media Production,
- Music GCSE and Music BTEC,
- Food & Nutrition and Hospitality & Catering,
- Art (Art, Craft & Design) and Textiles (Art & Design: Textile Design),
- Drama and Dance.

Please make your preferences and if you would like to discuss a specific combination complete the **Student Comment** box.

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## Physical Education and Religious Education Qualification Top-up Option

All students must study **Physical Education (PE)** and **Religious Education (RE)**. However, you may top up **one** to gain an accredited qualification in either **PE** or **RE**.

Students who choose to study **PE** will be enrolled in the **PE BTEC** course. Some students will be offered the opportunity to study the **PE GCSE** course as an alternative to the **PE BTEC**, if their ability and skills are sufficient to meet the requirements of the GCSE content.

Students who choose to study **RE** will be enrolled in the **2 year RE** course. Some students will be offered the opportunity to study a **Fast Track RE** qualification which is a one year course, if their ability and skills are sufficient to meet the requirements of the Fast Track content.

In very special cases some students may be able to take both **RE** and **PE**. If you would like to be considered for both please express this at the bottom of your form in the **Student Comment** box.