

CHOOSING YOUR OPTIONS

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Guide & Info



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Key Dates

W/C Monday 8th January	Year 9 Options Launch Week
Wednesday 10th January	New subject showcase in assembly
Friday 12th January	Option booklet goes live
Tuesday 16th January	Year 9 options assembly
	Options form goes live
	Year 9 Options Evening 5pm-7pm
Wednesday 31st January	Deadline for completing options form
By Friday 24th May	Options letter with subject allocations sent out

This guide has information on how to register and choose your options using SIMs Options Online and should be used alongside the Options Booklet, which has information on all the courses available.



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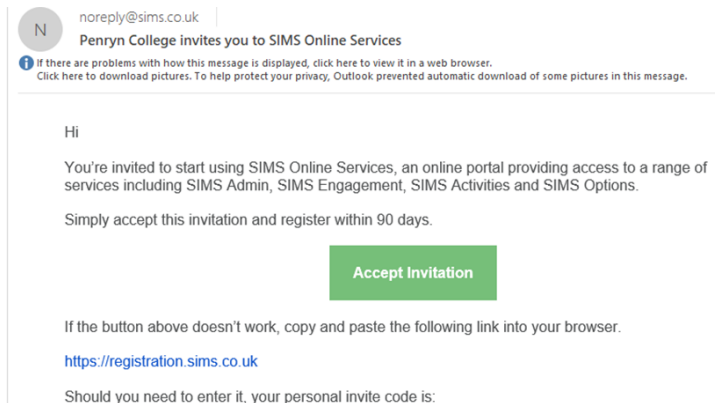
Registering as a Parent/Carer

*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. **Parents/carers who have already registered for an older child will not need to register again.***

Step 1 - Receiving your invitation

You will receive a registration email from noreply@sims.co.uk containing a unique invitation code, which you will need to register.

If you have not received a registration email by 12pm on Tuesday 9th January, please check your junk folder before contacting the school.



Step 2 - Registering your account

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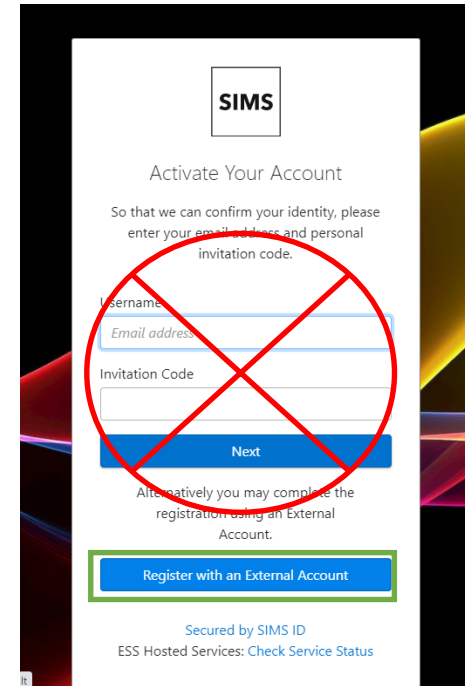
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Follow the link in the email to be directed to the sign in page.

The first registration page may well look like the image to the right, depending on your browser.

Parents and students must choose to **register with an external account** and must **not** attempt to activate a SIMs ID account. **Please do not enter the username and invitation code on this page.**



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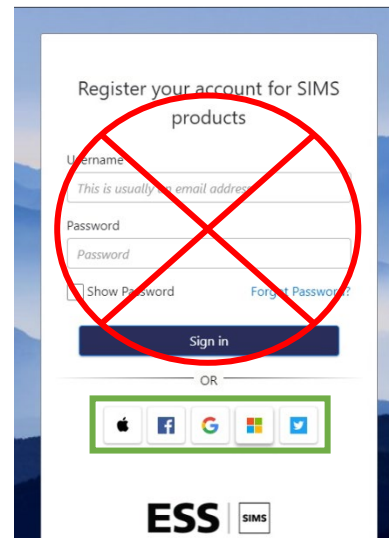
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Parents/carers should register with a Microsoft, Office 365, Google, Facebook, Twitter or Apple account and should not create an account for SIMS products. Click the icon for the relevant third party account and you will be directed to sign in using your existing details. You may then be asked to enter your unique invitation code, which can be found in the registration email.

For verification purposes, parents are required to enter the date of birth of one of their children attending the school.

Once a **student** is registered he or she will be able to sign in, make choices and write in the student comment box. Once a **parent/carer** is registered he or she will be able to sign in, make choices on behalf of their child, approve their child's choices, and add comments.



REGISTRATION IS NOW COMPLETE

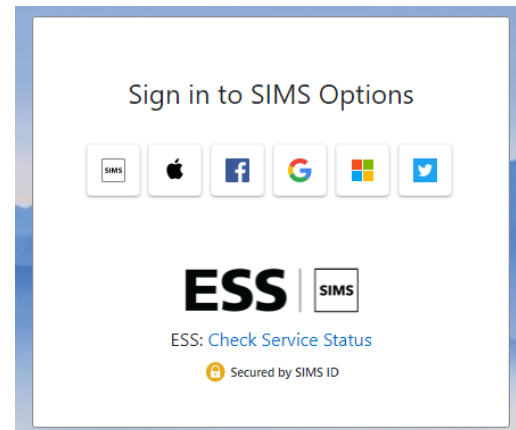
SIGNING IN

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- Users can sign in at SIMS Options Online: <http://sims-options.co.uk/>
- Once users have registered, the form will appear blank until the Options form goes live on Tuesday 16th January.
- Click the icon for the relevant third party account that you registered with. Parents/Carers must not attempt to sign in using SIMS ID. Students and Penryn College staff should register and sign in using their Office 365 account. 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.

A screenshot of a web page titled "Register your account for SIMS products". The page has a purple header. Below the header, there is a section for existing users with a sign-in prompt, a username field containing "wrongusername@yahoo.co.uk", a password field, and a red error message: "Error: Invalid username or password". Below this is a blue box with a security warning: "In the interest of security you are advised not to save your username or password in the browser" and a "Sign in" button. The bottom section is for new users, with a prompt to select a sign-in option from icons for Microsoft, Facebook, Office 365, Twitter, and Google.

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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.

KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

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Subjects	Qualification	Time Allocation
English (Language and Literature)	2 GCSEs	5 periods
Mathematics	1 GCSE	5 periods
Science (Trilogy or Triple)*	2 or 3 GCSEs	7 or 9 periods
PE (core or top up)*	1 GCSE/BTEC (top up only)	2 or 4 periods
RE (core or 2 year)*	1 GCSE (top up only)	2 or 3 periods
Life Skills, Citizenship & Careers		1 period
Extended Tutor/Personal Study		up to 3 periods
3x Options	3 GCSEs/Tech Awards	9 periods

= 9 GCSEs/BTECs

*Students can 'top up' **one** of Triple Science, PE or RE into a full counting qualification. Students who are selected to study the Fast Track RE course will gain an additional qualification. This course can only be studied in addition to Triple Science or PE as the top up option.



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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 Technical Awards/OCR Cambridge National Certificates 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 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), **Pearson Edexcel** and **WJEC** (Welsh Joint Education Committee) are used. The **syllabi** and **assessment** methods (examinations or coursework) are created by the examination boards.

Grades – 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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What is it all worth?

Old GCSE Grades	New GCSE Grades	Level	Technical Qualification Overall Grade	Technical Award Points	
				OCR Cam Nat/BTEC TECH AWARDS	BTEC FIRST/WJEC AWARDS
A*	9	Level 2	L2 Distinction*	8.5	8.5
A	8		L2 Distinction	7	7
B	6		L2 Merit	5.5	5.5
C	5		L2 Pass	4	4
D	4	Level 1	L1 Distinction	3	
E	3		L1 Merit	2	
F	2		L1 Pass	1.25	1.75
G	1				
U	0		Unclassified	0	0

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Course Name/Qualifications and Exam Board Links: Core Subjects

The Core		
Subject	Qualification	Exam Board
English Language	GCSE	AQA
English Literature	GCSE	AQA
Mathematics	GCSE	OCR
Combined Science: Trilogy	GCSE	AQA
Top Up Options		
Triple Science*	GCSE	AQA Biology
		AQA Chemistry
		AQA Physics
PE GCSE	GCSE	AQA
RE	GCSE	AQA
Sport Science	Level 1/2 Certificate	OCR

* Students who study Triple Science will study all three sciences.

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Course Name/Qualifications and Exam Board Links: Options

The Options: Main and Compulsory		
Subject	Qualification	Exam Board
Art, Craft and Design	GCSE	AQA
Art and Design: Photography	GCSE	AQA
Art and Design: Textile Design	GCSE	AQA
Computer Science	GCSE	AQA
Creative iMedia: Digital Graphics	Level 1/2 Certificate	OCR
Creative Media Production	BTEC Technical Award	Pearson
Dance: Performing Arts	BTEC Technical Award	Pearson
Design and Technology	GCSE	AQA
Drama	GCSE	AQA
Engineering	GCSE	AQA
Enterprise and Marketing	Level 1/2 Certificate	OCR
Food Preparation and Nutrition	GCSE	AQA
French	GCSE	Pearson
Geography	GCSE	AQA
Health & Social Care	BTEC Technical Award	Pearson
History	GCSE	Pearson
Hospitality and Catering	Level 1/2 Certificate	WJEC
Music GCSE	GCSE	AQA
Music Practice	BTEC Technical Award	Pearson
Spanish	GCSE	Pearson

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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. We strongly advise that students with the aptitude should seriously consider selecting this combination of subjects.

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

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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.

If you want to follow the **Ebacc** pathway you must choose either French or Spanish and then either one or both of 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**'.

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



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Main Options Block

All students must choose **two courses** from the 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. Some courses are very popular or have limited numbers, and may be oversubscribed. If this is the case, students who have chosen the course as a higher preference will take priority for spaces. You **must** put your main choices in priority order.

Engineering and Computer Science are complex courses. Please take advice from Mr Childs for Engineering and Mr Yule for Computer Science as to whether either of these courses are suitable for you.

Students who would like to be considered to study Photography must select Art and add a comment explaining why you would like to study Photography. This course has limited spaces available.

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

- *Art, Photography, and/or Textiles*
- *Creative Media Production and Creative iMedia: Digital Graphics*
- *Design Technology and Engineering;*
- *Drama and Dance. (In very special circumstances we sometimes allow this).*
- *Food & Nutrition and Hospitality & Catering;*
- *Music GCSE and Music BTEC;*

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

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Top Up Option

All students must study core RE and PE, and will automatically be enrolled on the Combined Science course. You may then choose to top up one of these subjects to gain an additional qualification.

RE: Students who choose to study RE will be enrolled in the 2 year RE course.

Triple Science: All students are automatically enrolled in the Combined Science course, a balanced course studying all three sciences which leads to two GCSEs. Students who study Triple Science as their top up option will gain 3 separate GCSEs. Comprising of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, this is a challenging and broad course that studies each subject at considerably more depth and complexity than the Combined Science course. Students can request to be considered for Triple Science as their top up option, but the decision will be made by the Science department. We recommend that students who are consistently working at a Grade 6 in English and Maths and a Grade 7 in Science may be considered. If you request to be considered for Triple Science as your top up option, you **must** also choose a reserve.

PE: Students who choose to study PE will be enrolled in the Sport Science course. Some students may be offered the opportunity to study the PE GCSE course as an alternative, if their ability and skills are sufficient to meet the requirements of the GCSE content. If you would like to be considered for the GCSE PE course, select Sport Science as your top up option and add a comment requesting to be considered for GCSE PE.

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Top Up Option Combinations

Students who would like to study Triple Science and GCSE PE must select Triple Science as their top up option and add a comment stating that they would like to study GCSE PE in addition to Triple Science, should they be successful. **GCSE PE would not be an additional option; it would replace the second main option.**

Some students will be offered the opportunity to study a one year Fast Track RE qualification, if their ability and skills are sufficient to meet the requirements of the Fast Track course. Fast Track RE can only be studied as an additional course by students who study Sport Science or PE GCSE, or are accepted for Triple Science. If you would like to be considered for the RE Fast Track course, you **must** add a comment with an explanation.

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Selecting your options

- There will be up to 3 sections on your options form. This may change depending on your option band.
- Each section will tell you how many options you need to choose, and how many reserves if applicable.
- Click the subject as a main choice and it will turn blue.
- Click the reserve button next to the subject to select it as a reserve. It will turn orange. This is not available in all sections.
- To remove a subject or reserve, click the subject or reserve button again.
- When you have selected the correct number of subjects on a section, green ticks will appear.

You have chosen **2 of 2** courses and **2 of 2** reserves from this list

Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Hospitality & Catering Level 1/2 Certificate <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Drama GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Design Technology GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Enterprise & Marketing Cambridge Nationals Certificate Level 1 & 2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Engineering GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
French GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> This course is also available in Compulsory Option	Food & Nutrition GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Geography GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> You have selected this course in Compulsory Option	History GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> This course is also available in Compulsory Option
Health & Social Care BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Computer Science GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Music Btec BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Creative Media Production BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Music GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Dance BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Spanish GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> This course is also available in Compulsory Option	Textile Design GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>

Changing your order of preference

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- The "Choices in Order of Preference" box is located on the right side of the form. It shows the order of priority for your chosen subjects.
- Number 1 indicates the highest priority, down to 4.
- To indicate your order of preference, you can move subjects up and down the list. Click the option you would like to move, then click the position you would like to move it to.
- Your compulsory option should be priority 1. Your main options should then be prioritised in order of preference. Your top up option should be option 4. You should also prioritise your main block reserve options.
- You can also add a comment about any of your choices. If you would like to be considered for Triple Science, Fast Track RE, or GCSE PE, you must add a comment explaining your reasons.

My Choices in Order of Preference (Total Choices: 4)

To change your order of preference select a choice and click the position in the list you would like to move it to.

1	Geography GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Compulsory Option
2	History GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Main Options Block
3	Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Main Options Block
4	Sport Science (CNAT) General Top Up Option

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Saving and Approving Choices

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- It is very important that you click the save button in the top left of the screen when you are happy with your choices. If you close the window without saving your option choices, the information will be lost.
- Once a student has selected their choices, parents/carers can log in to view and approve their child's choices. If you are happy with your child's choices, click on the Parent/Carer approval box to approve these choices.
- Parents/carers must use their own log in to approve their child's choices. It is not possible for parents/carers to approve choices via the student log in. You will then need to save the form.



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