

CHOOSING YOUR OPTIONS

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College
Achieving through
Challenge



Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Key Dates

W/C Monday 12th January	Year 9 Options Launch Week
Tuesday 13th January	New subject showcase in assembly
	Options booklet goes live
Tuesday 20th January	Year 9 options assembly
	Options form goes live
	Year 9 Options Evening 5pm-7pm
Friday 30th January	Deadline for completing options form
By Friday 22nd 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.

Some subjects have provided additional information on the Showbie group. If students have not yet joined the Showbie group, the code is DPG9Z.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College
Achieving through
Challenge

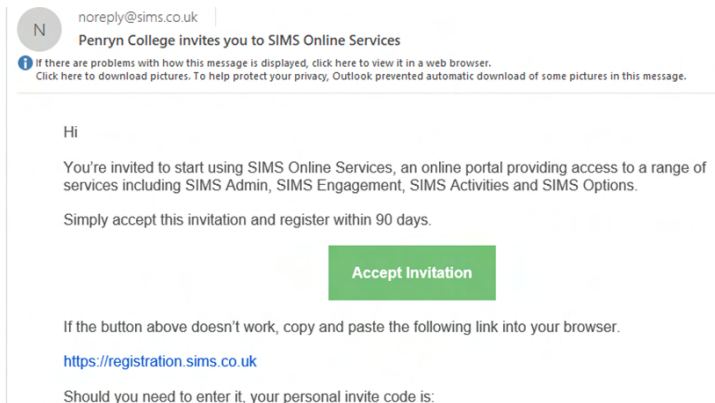
Registering as a Parent/Carer

*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 Wednesday 14th January, please check your junk folder before contacting the school.



Step 2 - Registering your account

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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.**

SIMS

Activate Your Account

So that we can confirm your identity, please enter your email address and personal invitation code.

Username

Email address

Invitation Code

Next

Alternatively you may complete the registration using an External Account.

Register with an External Account

Secured by SIMS ID

ESS Hosted Services: [Check Service Status](#)

Technical Guide & Info



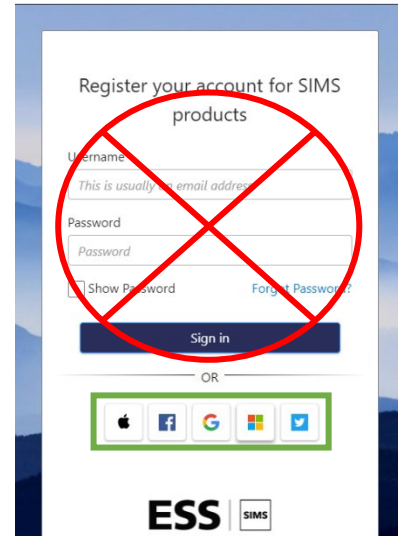
Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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/carers** 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

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

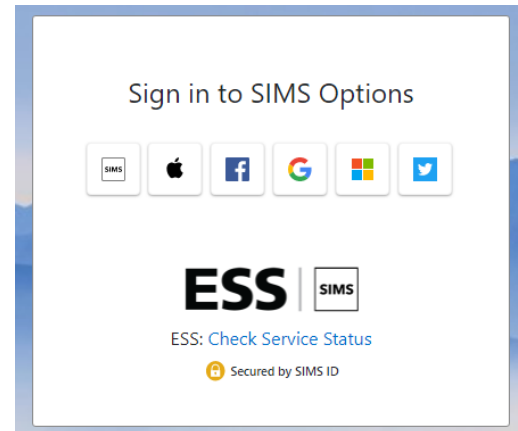
Achieving through
Challenge

SIGNING IN

- Users can sign in at SIMs Options Online:

www.sims-options.co.uk

- Once users have registered, the form will appear blank until the Options form goes live on Tuesday 20th 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.



Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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 form titled "Register your account for SIMS products". The form is for existing users to sign in. It contains two input fields: "Username" with the value "wrongusername@yahoo.co.uk" and "Password". Below these fields is a red error message: "Error: Invalid username or password". There is also a blue informational message: "In the interest of security you are advised not to save your username or password in the browser". At the bottom of the form is a blue "Sign in" button. Below the "Sign in" button, there is a section for third-party registration with icons for Microsoft, Twitter, Facebook, Google, and Office 365.

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

Technical Guide & Info



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 regarding registering for Options Online please contact the school at options@penryn-college.cornwall.sch.uk.
- Once you have signed in, further help is available by selecting Help from the menu.

Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

Subject	Qualification	Fortnightly time allocation
English (Language and Literature)	2 GCSES	6 periods
Mathematics	1 GCSE	6 periods
Science (Trilogy or Triple)*	2 or 3 GCSEs	7 or 9 periods
PE (core or top up)*	1 GCSE/CNAT (top up only)	2 or 5 periods
RE (core or 2 year)*	1 GCSE (top up only)	2 or 4 periods
Life skills, Citizenship & Careers		1 period
Extended Tutor/Personal Study		Up to 3 periods
3x Options	3 GCSEs/Tech Awards	12 periods

= 9 GCSEs/Technical Awards

*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.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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 for the majority of subjects. 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. For 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.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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. Technical awards have assessed components throughout the two year course.

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.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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 C 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	
G	1				1.75
U	0		Unclassified	0	0

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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	AQA
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.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

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
Business	GCSE	AQA
Computer Science	GCSE	AQA
Creative iMedia: Digital iMedia	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
Food Preparation and Nutrition	GCSE	AQA
French	GCSE	Pearson
Geography	GCSE	AQA
Health & Social Care	Level 1/2 Certificate	OCR
History	GCSE	Pearson
Music GCSE	GCSE	WJEC
Sociology	GCSE	AQA
Spanish	GCSE	Pearson

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

English Baccalaureate (to be phased out)*

What is the English Baccalaureate? (EBacc)

The English Baccalaureate is not a new qualification or certificate. It was 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.

* Following the government's November 2025 Curriculum and Assessment Review, the English Baccalaureate is due to be removed as a performance measure.

They 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.

Technical Guide & Info



The “Compulsory” Option

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

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



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Main Options Block

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.

Sociology is a new course for September 2026. If you select this course, you must speak to Dr Coley and add a comment explaining your reasons.

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

- *Art and Textiles;*
- *Creative Media Production and Creative iMedia: Digital iMedia;*
- *Design Technology and Engineering;*
- *Drama and Dance (in very special circumstances we sometimes allow this);*
- *Photography and Art or Textiles (in very special circumstances we sometimes allow this).*

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

Top Up Option

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

All students must study core RE and PE, and will automatically be enrolled on the Combined Science course. You will 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 achieving close to 70% or higher in their end of unit assessments in English and Maths, and 70% 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 as your top up option, select Sport Science as your top up option and add a comment requesting to be considered for GCSE PE.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Top Up Option Combinations

Students who would like to study Triple Science **and** PE must select Triple Science as their top up option and add a comment stating that they would like to study PE in addition to Triple Science, should they be successful. Students who study PE as well as Triple Science will study the GCSE PE course, not the Sport Science course. **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 or the Triple Science/GCSE PE pathway. If you would like to be considered for the RE Fast Track course, you **must** add a comment with an explanation.

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College
Achieving through
Challenge

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 in 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Business GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <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"/>
Engineering GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	French GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> <small>This course is also available in Compulsory Option</small>
Food & Nutrition GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Geography GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> <small>This course is also available in Compulsory Option</small>
Creative iMedia Cambridge Nationals Award Level 1 & 2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	History GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> <small>This course is also available in Compulsory Option</small>
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 GCSE GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Creative Media Production BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Dance BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Photography GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>
Sociology GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	Spanish GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input type="button" value="Reserve"/> <small>This course is also available in Compulsory Option</small>
Textile Design GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="button" value="Reserve"/>	

Technical Guide & Info



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge

Changing your order of preference

- 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 or a combination of any of these, 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

Technical Guide & Info



Saving and Approving Choices

- 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.



Penryn College

Achieving through
Challenge