

YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Advice and Guidance on
making the right choice

*LISKEARD SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CAREERS DEPARTMENT*

Contents

| | Page |
|---------------------------|------|
| Forward | 3 |
| Who can help you? | 4 |
| Start Planning | 5 |
| Do your research | 5 |
| GCSEs | 6 |
| Vocational Qualifications | 7 |
| Your decision | 8 |
| Deciding what to do | 10 |
| Final choices | 11 |
| Questions and answers | 12 |

Forward

Congratulations! You have made it successfully through year 7 and 8 and are now progressing well through year 9. Now is the time to start thinking about the next stage of your education and this time you get to choose what you want to do.

You probably have lots of questions and are not sure about what subjects you are going to take in year 10 – don't worry, we are here to help you through the process and make sure the courses you choose are right for you.

In this booklet you will find lots of useful information, there is also an information booklet for your parents or carers so that they are able to help you through the process.

Your education and training will continue until you are 18. This will help you get the skills and qualifications needed to get the job that you really want.

You will get the choice of where you want to continue your education or training at the end of year 11.

Parents and carers only want the best for you so make sure you involve them in your decision making.

Things have changed a lot since they went to school, so you must help them understand what you are doing and why.

WHO CAN HELP YOU MAKE THOSE IMPORTANT DECISIONS?



We all need a bit of help sometimes when making important decisions. Make sure you get as much help as you can – choosing your options is far too important to leave it to chance!

Who knows you well?

It's a good idea to start with your parents or carers as they are the people that know you best. You will also have other people who help you with other parts of your life, teachers, mentors, friends, coaches, careers advisors etc. They want what is best for you and will tell you if they think that an option will suit you and explain why. They should also be able to help you think about alternatives too.

What you need to know

Try to find out about subjects including teaching methods, assessments, workloads – the more you know, the less the surprise! Speak to teachers about their subject and where it could lead you in the future. It might be a good idea to speak to someone who is already doing the subject.

Who can give you expert advice?

Speak to Mrs Carlin in Careers; her office is opposite the New Hall. She will be able to help you with your option choices, explain how subjects can help you with future career plans and where they will fit in with your year 11 plans.

The more information you have – the easier it will be to make your final decisions.

Can I get information and advice on the internet?

If you browse the internet you will find many websites that offer advice. The 'Young People' pages on www.direct.gov.uk have lots of information on them, especially written for you. Also check out the National Careers Service website and Careers SW.



Hot tip

Get as much information and support as you can. If you have no particular career in mind, look for options that will give you plenty of choice post-16. If you have an idea, research it and choose those that are suitable

Do your research

| To do x | Done √ |
|------------|-----------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

- Read all the options information school gives me
- Check what subjects are compulsory – the ones I have to do
- Talk to teachers to see if they think it is a good idea for me to do the course
- Talk to people who are taking the courses that I am interested in
- Talk to my parents/carers to find out what options they think I should take
- Go with my parents/carers to options events
- Have a look at careers that interest me in the Careers Library
- Use online websites for help and advice regarding choices at 13 and 16
- Speak to my Careers Co-ordinator about my choices and ideas
- Speak to my Careers Co-ordinator if I just need some help (parents too!)

Hot tip

If you have no idea regarding what career you might like to do have a look on the National Careers Service Website and complete the Skills Health Check. You will need to create an account to do this. Answer all the questions fully and at the end it will give you an idea of some careers that might be suitable based on the answers you have given.

GCSEs

GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) are a key element of a broad education up to the age of 16

Qualifications

- GCSE – one full GCSE
- GCSE Double Award –two full GCSEs

Subjects

Schools decide what subjects they offer students

Learning

Mostly classroom learning with a mix of theory and subject based investigations. The amount of practical work will depend on the subject being taught

Assessment

- Mix of written examinations, coursework or internal assessments
- The majority of achievements are graded A* to G
- Some subjects have two tiers of assessment. Foundation and Higher - your school will decide which tier you should do. Higher leads to grades A* to D and Foundation leads to grades C to G.
- Schools will begin teaching the new GCSEs in English, English Literature and Maths in September 2015. Results in August 2017 will be awarded from grade 1 to 9 and there will still be a U grade for those who fall below that level. For more information on this new system, please see the insert on the left of the Careers Web page.

Next Step

GCSEs will help you with whatever you plan to do after the age of 16. You can use them to meet entry requirements for schools, colleges, training courses, apprenticeships and employment. Having 5 A* to C grades (*or above grade 4/5 on the new system*), including Maths and English, will give you a much better choice of post-16 options. *The Department of Education have yet to decide whether a grade 4 or 5 will be the international benchmark equivalent grade.*

Vocational Qualifications

Do your options include vocational qualifications?

Vocational Qualifications are work related qualifications. Our school offers them to run alongside your GCSEs.

Qualification

They offer a broad area of work and develop the knowledge and skills that employers are looking for. At key stage 4, most students will study for Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2 qualifications, depending on ability. These subjects can be studied further at post-16.

Subjects

The school will decide which vocational courses and qualifications are on offer.

Courses

All courses develop knowledge and understanding of an industry sector. They also develop practical skills relevant in the workplace such as communication, team working and problem solving.

Learning

Mix of theory and practical activities. Mostly classroom based and may include some work experience.

Assessment

Mix of projects, written assignments and practical tasks. Achievements are usually graded pass, merit or distinction. There will also be an exam element but this will be for quite a low percentage – some will also be on-line.

Next Step

Vocational Qualifications prepare you for further learning and entry to work. You can go on to study for higher-level qualifications or apply for an apprenticeship.

Your decision

Are you the sort of person who makes their own decision or do you follow the crowd? If you let other people choose for you, you could end up studying subjects that suit them better than they suit you.

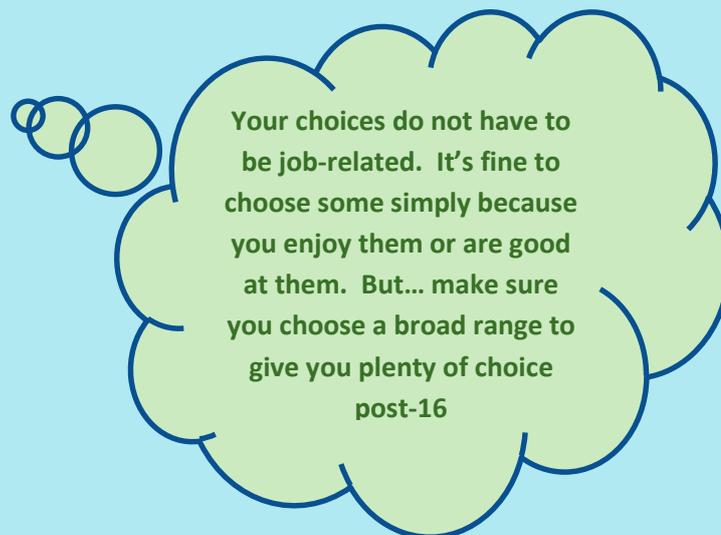
Do choose a subject because: ✓

- It fits your interests and abilities
- You are good at it and think you will enjoy it
- It goes well with your other choices
- It links to a career idea
- You think you might want to continue studying it post-16
- It will help you meet entry requirements for post-16 options
- It will help to give you plenty of choice post-16

Do not choose a subject because: ✗

- Your friends have chosen it
- You think it will be easy
- You think it is a good course for a boy/girl
- Someone else thinks that it is a good idea for you to do it
- You like the teacher you have now
- You didn't have time to research your options properly to get any information, advice or guidance

Think.....



Deciding what to do

Are you ready? Now is the time to start making your choices.

| I have looked at all my options √ | | Options I like | Qualification I get | What I can do at 16 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | GCSEs | | | |
| | Vocational Qualifications | | | |
| | Other Learning | | | |

Dreaming or reality.....

My **ideal** option choices are:

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

I have chosen these because:

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

The courses I can actually do are:

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |

I can bring my dreams closer to reality by.....

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |

My final choices

First choices:

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

Reserves – just in case I don't get my first choice:

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

Double check that you have not overlooked any choices that might suit you

Frequently asked questions

Q How do I know if I have chosen the right options?

A Have you thought about and researched your choices thoroughly? Have you chosen options that interest you and match your abilities? Have you chosen options that you think you will enjoy and that link into a career you have been thinking about? Do they give you plenty of choice in the future? If so, you can be confident that you have chosen well.

Q I like sports and creative subjects the best – can I do just these?

A No. You must study compulsory subjects such as Maths, English and Science and choose from the option blocks in the 'Options Booklet'.

Q I have a career in mind that I would like to do when I leave school but my friends say I won't be able to do it because of my gender. How can I find out who is right?

A It is never a good idea to choose or dismiss a career simply because of your gender. Speak to your Careers Co-ordinator, Mrs Carlin, to discuss your concerns. She will help you think through your ideas and how well they match your interests and ability. Most (but not all) jobs are open to either gender, it is whether you are suitable and have the necessary qualifications to do the job that is important.

Q What should I do if I know I have chosen the wrong subjects?

A Speak to a member of the school staff immediately.

Q I have changed my mind about what career I would like to do when I leave school. I have already started my year 10 courses and do not know what to do.

A Don't worry. There are many different ways you can get to where you want to be. Speak to your Careers Co-ordinator, Mrs Carlin, who will help you through the process and discuss your next steps with you.