

Year 8 Option Choices Booklet 2026

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Introduction



This booklet is designed to provide useful information about the option process at Temple Moor, to allow students to make informed choices as to the options they pick. The information contained within explains what the options process involves and gives students and parents/carers information about the courses which we offer.

What will students study at Key Stage 4?

Our aim is to give students access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes knowledge and ensures that students leave school highly literate, numerate and well rounded. The curriculum we offer allows students to pursue a range of qualifications that will support their future ambitions and provides access to high quality pathways for further study and apprenticeships after Year 11.

English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science are compulsory courses that students must study until the end of Year 11. In support of our vision, we also require all students to continue to study at least one Humanity subject (History or Geography). Students will gain at least one GCSE from each of these courses.

In addition to these, all students also participate in Core PE, Religious Education and Personal Development lessons, but these cover statutory content only and do not lead to qualifications.

However, as students move into Key Stage 4, they get the opportunity to choose to specialise in some subjects and gain access to new subjects which are not covered at Key Stage 3. Students select 4 options choices in total; one of these is picked this year, to start in September 2026, and three more options are chosen next year at the end of Year 9 (to begin in September 2027).



A split options process



At the end of Year 8, students are only required to choose one option. Students will continue with all the Key Stage 3 subjects they currently study but will select which Humanity subject they wish to continue to GCSE. This choice will receive additional time to enable the KS3 content to be completed by February, and the GCSE course to be started in second half of Year 9.



At the end of Year 9, students will have a second options process where they select the final three options which they wish to undertake qualifications in. These four options, together with the compulsory subjects given on the previous page, will then form the suite of qualifications which students will take at Key Stage 4.

Year	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
8	Chosen at the end of Year 8: History or Geography			
9	KS3 course completed	Chosen at the end of Year 9	Chosen at the end of Year 9	Chosen at the end of Year 9
	Studied during second half of Y9, Y10 and Y11			
10		Studied during Y10 and 11	Studied during Y10 and 11	Studied during Y10 and 11
11	Examined in May/June 2029	Examined in May/June 2029 for most courses	Examined in May/June 2029 for most courses	Examined in May/June 2029 for most courses

We offer a wide range of subjects for students to choose from in the Year 9 options process.

To ensure that students are properly supported and guided to make an informed choice that will enable them to be successful, the school provides support and guidance to students throughout the process.

Subject information- GCSE Geography



Overview of the course:

During the course, you will learn about how the natural environment around you has been shaped by both physical and human processes. You will learn about the challenges and opportunities of human development in significant global places. You will learn about how the UK's landscape has been shaped by coastal activity and glaciers. Alongside this, students will develop geographical skills including building their own geographical enquiry.

What will you learn?

- Living with the physical environment – The challenge of natural hazards; The living world; Physical landscapes in the UK.
- Challenges in the human environment – Urban issues and challenges; The changing economic world; The challenge of resource management.
- Geographical applications – Fieldwork; Geographical skills; Pre-release resource booklet.

How will you be assessed?

The GCSE is assessed through three exams at the end of Year 11:

- Paper 1 – Living with the physical environment (35%)
- Paper 2 – Challenges in the human environment (35%)
- Paper 3 – Geographical applications (30%)

Skills that you will develop:

- Numerical skills- means, percentage changes, data presentation
- Cartographic skills- interpreting maps
- Critical thinking- evaluation, assessing

What do our students say?

“I have enjoyed the fieldwork element of the course the most as I got to collect my own data. This helped me in the exam as I understood it better having experienced it myself on the trip”.

Progression routes and career opportunities:

This course prepares students well to progress onto the A-level Geography course which we offer at Temple Moor in the Sixth form.

Courses in Geography are available at degree level. Geography can also lead to careers including weather forecasting, conservation, surveying, waste and water management, environmental planning, town and transport planning, tourism.

Link to the exam board specification:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035>

Further information:

For further information, please speak to Miss Webb (webbv@tmhs.rklt.co.uk)

Subject information- GCSE History



Overview of the course:

GCSE History will enable you to study some of the most significant events in British, European and American History. Your studies will develop your ability to analyse and evaluate past events, developing your understanding of key historical concepts such as cause and consequence. Studying History gives you the power to ask questions of the past, to better understand the modern world.

What will you learn?

- Medicine: A fascinating study of how medicine has developed from medieval times to modern day. This topic includes focused study of treatment within WW1 on the battlefields in France.
- Anglo-Saxon and Norman England: An in-depth look at how William became the Conqueror and the changes he made to England.
- American West: Focusing on the development of the American West, looking at the lives of Plains Indians and how the US changed as white settlers moved West.
- Weimar and Nazi Germany: An in-depth study of one of the most notorious periods in European History.

How will you be assessed?

The GCSE is assessed through three exams at the end of Year 11:

- Paper 1 – Thematic study and historic environment (30%).
- Paper 2 – Period study and British depth study (40%).
- Paper 3 – Modern depth study (30%)

Skills that you will develop:

- Problem solving
- Analytical skills
- Using evidence to justify statements.
- Using and organising information.

What do our students say?

‘History is enjoyable as I like learning about what has happened in the past and the topics are new areas I have not studied before.’

‘History challenges me and helps me learn about how the past has shaped the world I live in.’

Progression routes and career opportunities:

This course prepares students to progress onto the A-level History course which we offer at Temple Moor in the Sixth form.

Courses in History are available to degree level. History can also lead to careers in law, the media, the public sector, and hospitality.

Link to the exam board specification:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/history-2016.html>

Further information:

For further information, please speak to Mr Audsley audsleym@tmhs.rklt.co.uk or any other History teacher.

Timeline for the options process



Options process launched in assembly and via a parental video

Week commencing 9th February



Options evening (5-7pm)

Monday 23rd February



Final deadline for submission of options forms

Friday 27th March



Students notified of allocated courses

Late April

Indicative options next year



To help students to make informed choices this year, here is an **indicative** list of the options that are likely to be offered next year. Please note that whilst the options above are listed in good faith, they may be subject to change (dependent upon uptake and future staffing).

Option 2 - 2-year course. Pick one from this list:	Option 3 and 4 - 2-year course Pick two from this list, <u>plus</u> one reserve choice (which cannot be the same as chosen in Option 2):
<p>GCSE Design Technology</p> <p>GCSE Fine Art*</p> <p>BTEC Fashion & Textiles*</p> <p>GCSE French (if studied at KS3)</p> <p>BTEC Music Practice</p> <p>BTEC Performing Arts – Dance</p> <p>BTEC Performing Arts – Drama</p> <p>GCSE Photography</p> <p>GCSE Spanish (if studied at KS3)</p>	<p>GCSE Business Studies</p> <p>GCSE Computer Science</p> <p>BTEC Construction and the Built Environment</p> <p>BTEC Creative Media Production</p> <p>GCSE Design Technology (Product Design)</p> <p>BTEC - Drama (Performing Arts)</p> <p>BTEC Enterprise</p> <p>BTEC Fashion & Textiles*</p> <p>GCSE Fine Art*</p> <p>GCSE Geography</p> <p>BTEC Health and Social Care</p> <p>GCSE History</p> <p>Eduqas Hospitality and Catering</p> <p>BTEC Music Practice</p> <p>GCSE Photography</p> <p>GCSE Psychology</p> <p>GCSE Religious Education</p> <p>Cambridge Nationals Sport Studies</p> <p>GCSE separate (Triple) sciences</p>

In addition, all students will study GCSEs in English Literature, English Language, Maths and Combined Science qualifications, which are compulsory.

* Only one subject from Fine Art and Textiles can be studied across the option blocks.

Help & Advice



There are many sources of help and advice that students can access in making decisions about their options. Different people often give advice from different points of view. It is important to realise and understand this when seeking help.



Do's and Don'ts for students



DO's



DO choose subjects **YOU** want to do and which suit **YOUR** aspirations. You are the person who must do the work.



DO choose subjects that you are good at and that you enjoy.



DO talk to your tutors, subject teachers and your parents/carers to ensure you get their advice. They want to help you.



DO consider what you might want to do after Year 11 in terms of further education, apprenticeships and future employment.



DO challenge yourself. Don't be put off choosing a course which you like just because you think it will be difficult. You will be surprised at what you can achieve!

DON'TS



DON'T simply choose a subject because your friends have chosen it. They may have different career interests to you, and there is no guarantee you will be in the same class as your friends. Think about your own future.



DON'T choose a subject because you like the teacher you have this year. They might not teach you next year.



DON'T choose a new subject just for a change. Find out about it first to make sure it is right for you, as once you start it you cannot change.



DON'T make any subject choices without having read and understood the information in this booklet.

How to choose options



All students will have a year group assembly during the w/c 9th February, where the options process will be introduced and explained to them. Form time will also be used to discuss the process and the choices available to students.

From Monday 9th February, an explanation video will be available to parents via the school website.

The options video will cover all the necessary information regarding the options process and the choices available. However, if further information is required, parents/carers and students are invited to join us at an **Options evening** which will be on **Monday 23rd February from 5-7pm**. During this, students and parents/carers will have the opportunity find out more about the History and Geography courses from the subject teams who teach them. However, attendance at this evening is not a requirement if students and parents feel they have enough information from the options video.

Submitting options choices

Student choices should be submitted by completing the options form and returning this to their form tutors. Options choices must be received no later than **Friday 27th March**.

Please note that priority for oversubscribed courses will be given to students who have submitted their choices by the deadline.

What happens after 27th March?

Once course choices have been made, they will be collated, analysed and students will be assigned to groups. Parents/carers will be informed via the Arbor app of the choices which have been allocated to students in late April.

Careers guidance



The options process provides students with an opportunity to begin to consider which career paths might be of interest in them, as this will potentially guide them in making options choices.

Additionally, all students will be provided with the opportunity to request a careers interview with our Pathways advisor, Mrs Pasfield. Students should request this by contacting Mrs Pasfield directly (her office is in the atrium) or by requesting an appointment to be made via their form tutors.

Parents/carers may also wish to discuss potential career paths with students and undertake further joint research with them. To aid parents/carers in doing this, we have put together a range of useful links and resources. These can be accessed via the following web links:

<https://www.tmhs.co.uk/for-students-parentscarers/careers-information-guidance-progression/career-and-labour-market-information/>

<https://www.tmhs.co.uk/for-students-parentscarers/careers-information-guidance-progression/useful-websites/>

<https://www.tmhs.co.uk/for-students-parentscarers/careers-information-guidance-progression/parent-information/>

Frequently asked questions



How should students and parents/carers use this booklet to make decisions?

This booklet is designed to give information about the process and the subjects that we offer. However, it is not a substitute for watching the video on the school website or attending the options evening to hear teachers' insight about their subjects.

Parents/carers should use this booklet as a basis for having conversations with students to help guide them through the decision-making process and ensure that they are making choices on the basis of sound reasoning.

Do students have to take a reserve choice?

For the Y8 option, students are not required to enter a reserve choice as we will run classes in both History and Geography. Whilst we do not foresee students being unable to take their chosen course, should one of these subjects reach capacity in terms of available staffing, then it may be necessary to assign students to the other subject. In this scenario, priority for places would be given to those who meet the options deadline.

When is the deadline for submitting the final options form?

Student choices will be completed on a paper form provided and submitted to their form tutor. Options choices must be received no later than **Friday 27th March**. Forms not submitted by this time may result in students assigned to the other subject if one subject becomes oversubscribed.

Can students switch courses if they change their mind at a later date?

Unfortunately, once a course begins, we do not allow students to change courses. These courses will be studied to completion at the end of Year 11. This is because once a course begins, the group will accelerate through the KS3 course and onto the GCSE material. Consequently, students would be behind if they were to join a course late. This places undue pressure on students and staff. It is therefore important that students select the most appropriate subject for them and use the options evening to find out what the courses entail.

Is attendance at the options evening required?

If the information in the video makes sense, then attendance is not required. However, we invite all Y8 students to the options evening if they would like to discuss the subjects face to face with teachers of History and Geography, to better inform their decision making.



Can the same subject be selected again in next year's options process?

No, a subject can only be taken once as only one qualification can be awarded in it by awarding bodies. Therefore, students must select different subjects next year. However, they will be able to opt for the other humanity subject next year if they wish to study both History and Geography.

Are students mature enough to make a decision about options in Year 8?

Temple Moor has offered an option in Year 8 for many years and students have demonstrated maturity in making sensible choices which have gone on to provide them with high quality outcomes. We support all students throughout the process with high quality guidance and advice in choosing options, both in Year 8 and Year 9.

Why has the options process changed compared to previous years?

The options process has changed as we have undertaken a curriculum evaluation, in light of the national Curriculum and Assessment Review undertaken by Professor Becky Francis which reported its findings in November 2025. The findings from this review have implications for all schools, and we have acted to ensure that we continue to offer a curriculum which meets the ambitions of the students, satisfies the school's stated intent for our curriculum, and reflects the best in national policy and practice.

Whom should I contact if I need further details about options?

If you have a specific query about either subject, then these can be discussed with subject teachers during Options evening on 23rd February, between 5pm and 7pm. Alternatively, please contact Mr Audsley (Head of History) or Miss Webb (Head of Geography) via the school main email.

If your query relates to the options process generally, then please contact Miss Matthews (KS3 Phase Leader) via the Arbor app or school e-mail. When communicating using the app, please label your message clearly with who the message is intended for so that it can be directed to that person.

What should I do if I lose my options form?

If you lose your options form, form tutors will have spares. Alternatively, please use the Arbor app to contact Mrs Pickering who will print another form.

Y8 Options form



Submit options using this form, which should be returned to form tutors by 27th March. If you have any issues in completing this, please contact Miss Matthews using the Arbor app.

Please select one subject from the list below:

Option 1 – 2 and ½ year course:

GCSE History

OR

GCSE Geography

STUDENT NAME: _____ **FORM:** _____

Subject Choice:

Parent/carer acknowledgement.

By submitting options choices, you are confirming that you have read the options booklet information and understand the following points:

- i). This is the first option which students will study until the end of Year 11 and will gain a qualification in. Three further options will also be chosen next year – the list of these in the options booklet is only indicative at this stage and may change due to staffing specialisms or national qualification change.
- ii). Once options have been started, students are **not** able to change courses.

Signed: _____

Date: _____