



# *Year 9*

## *How to choose your Pathway Subjects*



January 2025

Dear Parent

This booklet outlines the courses available at our college for your child to study in Years 10 and 11. These years represent a crucial stage in your child's education, as their subject choices will significantly influence their future career and educational pathways. It is important that students approach these decisions thoughtfully, selecting subjects for well-considered and valid reasons while keeping their long-term goals in mind. Once GCSE courses commence in September, opportunities to make changes will be limited, so making informed decisions is essential.

To support your child in this process, Mr. Edmunds and Mrs. Corbin are key staff members responsible for finalising pathway choices. Additionally, Mr. Taylor, Head of Year 9, along with your child's subject teachers, can provide valuable guidance to help ensure informed and suitable decisions are made. We are committed to working closely with you and your child to develop a curriculum tailored to their individual needs and aspirations.

While we aim to accommodate your child's option choices wherever possible, please note that delivering a course depends on a sufficient number of students enrolling in it. In some instances, we may invite you and your child to discuss their selections further. We also reserve the right to adjust your child's options if we believe that a particular subject may not be in their best interest. Factors such as prior academic performance and attitude to learning will be considered in such cases.

We are here to support you and your child throughout this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Greg McClarey  
Headteacher



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Compulsory Core GCSE subjects	Pathway GCSE subjects Choose 1 subject	Pathway Choice subjects Choose 2 subjects
Religious Education	Computer Science (EBacc)	Computer Science (EBacc)
English Language (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)	French (EBacc)
English Literature (EBacc)	History (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)
Maths (EBacc)	French (EBacc)	German (EBacc)
Triple Science (EBacc)	German (EBacc)	History (EBacc)
	Spanish (EBacc)	Spanish (EBacc)
		3D Design
		Business and Enterprise
		Child Development
		Creative iMedia
		Design and Technology
		Fine Art
		Food Preparation and Nutrition
		Graphics
		Music
		Photography
		Physical Education
		Physical Education – Sports Studies
		Textiles

Compulsory Core GCSE subjects	Pathway GCSE subjects Choose 1 subject	Pathway Choice subjects Choose 2 subjects
Religious Education	Computer Science (EBacc)	Computer Science (EBacc)
English Language (EBacc)	Triple science <b>Replaces Combined Science if chosen</b> (EBacc)	French (EBacc)
English Literature (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)
Maths (EBacc)	History (EBacc)	German (EBacc)
Combined Science (EBacc)	French (EBacc)	History (EBacc)
	German (EBacc)	Spanish (EBacc)
	Spanish (EBacc)	Triple Science (EBacc) <b>Replaces Combined Science if chosen</b>
		3D Design
		Business and Enterprise
		Child Development
		Creative iMedia
		Design and Technology
		Fine Art
		Food Preparation and Nutrition
		Graphics
		Music
		Photography
		Physical Education
		Physical Education – Sports Studies
		Textiles

Compulsory Core GCSE subjects	Pathway GCSE subjects Choose 1 subject	Pathway Choice subjects Choose 2 subjects
Religious Education	Triple science ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> ) (EBacc) <b>Replaces Combined Science if chosen</b>	Computer Science (EBacc)
English Language (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)	French (EBacc) ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> )
English Literature (EBacc)	History (EBacc)	Geography (EBacc)
Maths (EBacc)	French ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> ) (EBacc)	German (EBacc) ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> )
Combined Science ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> ) (EBacc)	German ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> ) (EBacc)	History (EBacc)
	Spanish ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> ) (EBacc)	Spanish (EBacc) ( <b>Foundation GCSE</b> )
		Triple Science (EBacc) <b>Replaces Combined Science if chosen</b>
		3D Design
		Business and Enterprise
		Child Development
		Creative iMedia
		Design and Technology
		Fine Art
		Food Preparation and Nutrition
		Graphics
		Music
		Photography
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The EBacc is a set of subjects at GCSE that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers. The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors.

# How to choose your Pathway subjects

## Step 1 – Receiving Your Invitation

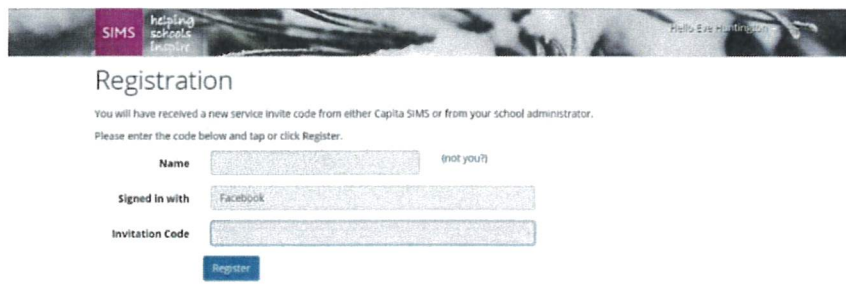
Your child will soon receive an email to their school email address from [noreply@sims.co.uk](mailto:noreply@sims.co.uk).

## Step 2 – Setting Up Your Account

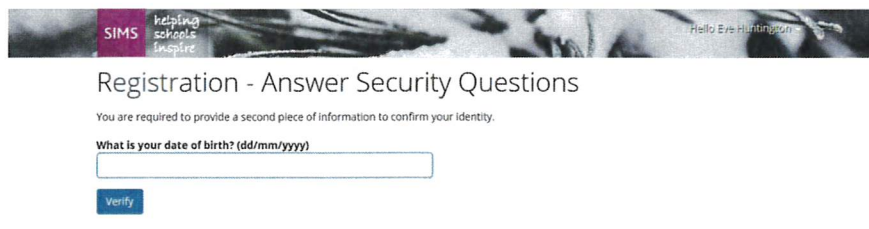
Click on the link at the top of the email that says “click this link”. This will ask you to login. Please use the **School Google/Gmail account login**.



The first screen will be where your details are confirmed (your name and invite code will show here automatically):



On the second screen you will be asked to confirm your child’s date of birth for authentication purposes:

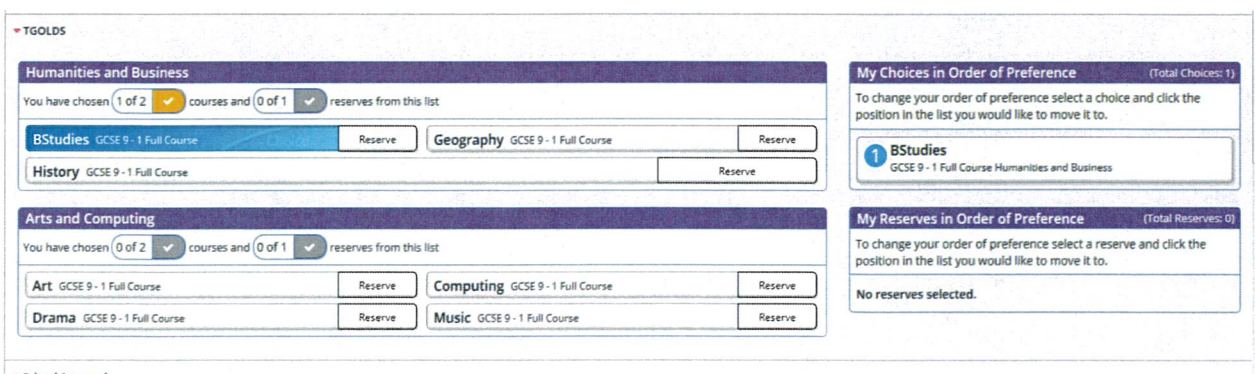


## Step 3 – Signing In

Please note, you only have to enter the invite code once for the process to work. For subsequent logins, simply go to the website [www.sims-options.co.uk](http://www.sims-options.co.uk). Simply sign in with the online service you used when you set your account up.

## Step 4 – Making Options Choices

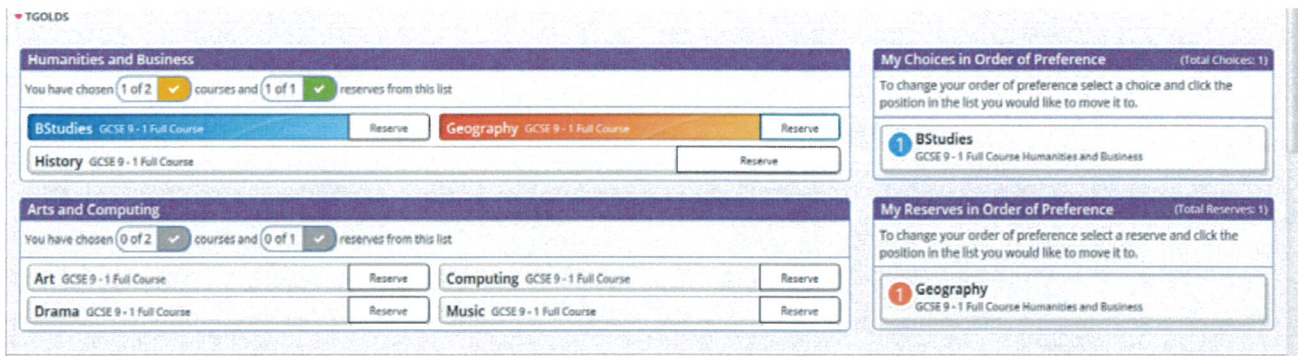
Click on the name of the subject(s) you wish to choose, do not click on the reserve button yet. A selected choice will be highlighted in blue and appear in the list of choices on the right hand side of the screen:





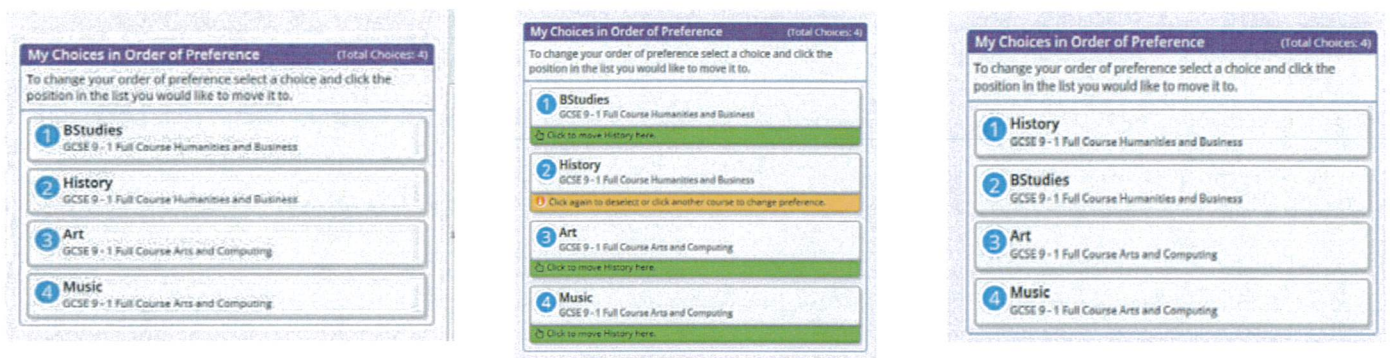
## Step 5 – Making Your Reserve Choices

Once you have made your choices, you need to select your reserve choices. To do this, click on the “Reserve” button beside the subject(s) you wish to pick. Reserve choices appear in orange and appear in the “My Reserves”:



## Step 6 – Adjusting Orders of Preference

Options choices and reservations appear in the order they have been selected by default. If you wish to emphasise that one option is preferred (this is particularly useful for Box 2 and 3 combined options). To alter the order, click on the option you wish to move:



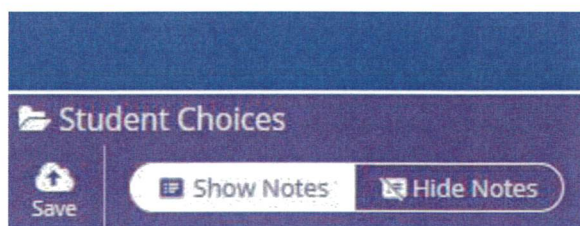
Click on History

Click on the green box for the new position of History, in this case top.

The new order of preference will be displayed, showing History on top.

## Step 7 – Saving Your Choices

It is vital you press the save button at the top of the screen otherwise the choices will be lost when you close the browser.



## Year 9 Pathways – FAQ

### **1. How are students selected for a pathway?**

We aim to offer every student a pathway which will meet their learning needs to maximise success at the end of Key Stage 4.

When choosing a student's pathway we consider several factors which include prior Key Stage 2 performance, academic performance in Year 8 and the start of Year 9, learning behaviour and academic effort.

### **2. Does my child's pathway influence setting in core subjects?**

No. Core subjects set classes independently of pathways.

### **3. How are students set in year 10 ?**

In core compulsory subjects (RE, English Language/Literature, Maths, Science) students are set according to ability. Students can move between sets depending on academic performance over the key stage.

In all other subjects students will be taught in mixed ability groups.

### **4. What is the difference between Foundation and Higher GCSEs ?**

Students who we recommend follow a foundation tier GCSE will have to study a reduced syllabus compared to higher tier students. Foundation students can achieve a GCSE grade 1 to 5, while a Higher tier student can achieve a GCSE grade 4 to 9.

### **5. What help will Red Pathway students receive?**

To support students in our Red Pathway we will give them access to two purchased online Science resources and extra "Lesson 6" time. Lesson 6 time is an after school study support session led by science staff which occur at various times of the year.

### **6. Can students in the Red Pathway choose vocational subjects?**

Yes, Red Pathway students can choose any subject in the free choice pathway.

### **7. What happens if I disagree with the pathway chosen for my child?**

The pathway chosen for your child is the best combination of subjects and choice to maximise their chances of success at the end of Key Stage 4. If a parent/student is unhappy with our suggested pathway we will listen to their concerns and aim to arrive at a consensus, however, we will insist a student follows a particular pathway if we feel it is in their best academic interest.

### **8. If a student performs well during Key Stage 4 can they change their tier of entry ?**

Yes. A student's tier of entry is flexible. Students who show above expected progress in a subject can be entered for a higher tier GCSE at the end of Key Stage 4. Conversely, if a student is struggling to make sufficient progress with the higher tier syllabus we may consider entering them for foundation exams at the end of Key Stage 4.