

Course Choice

Frequently Asked Questions

Holy Rood RC

High School

Questions relating to the course choice process in general:

- **How will my child pick their course choices for S3?**

Pupils will be issued with a Draft Course Choice Form and given a Course choice information Booklet, these will also be able to be viewed on the school website. Pupils will be given advice and support with completing the form from their Year Head (Mrs McIntosh), Curricular Leaders, class teachers and the school Careers Adviser.

- **How many subjects can my child take next year?**

This varies depending on which year your child is entering.

For pupils moving into S3, they will take 8 subjects forward, choosing 5 in addition to studying Maths, English and a Modern Language. Core RE/PE/PSE will also form part of their curriculum.

- **How are our subject choice columns structured?**

S3 columns are structured in curriculum areas e.g., science, technologies and social subjects, with the 8th column allowing for an extra choice.

- **Why does my child have to pick a 1st and 2nd choice in each column?**

Pupils are asked to pick a 1st and 2nd choice so that in the event we are unable to course them into their preferred choice, a backup option is available that is suited to their skills, abilities and interests.

- **Why do some courses end up not running on the timetable?**

Whilst we try to run all courses available in school, some are not possible due to capacity on the timetable with staffing or poor pupil uptake.

Questions relating to qualifications on offer:

• When will my child complete qualifications in school?

For pupils entering S3, they will not complete any formal qualifications until entering S4. These will comprise of various course assignment tasks as well as an exam set by the SQA during the summer exam diet held in May/June.

• What qualifications can my child achieve?

Pupils entering S4 can expect to achieve qualifications at National 3, 4 or 5 level.

We also offer Vocational and National Progression Awards, as well as other youth achievement awards such as the Prince's Trust and Duke of Edinburgh.

• How can my child pick subjects for S5/6 if they don't have exam results yet?

We ask our pupils to work on the assumption that they will pass courses that they currently working through, allowing for clear progression to the next level. E.g. if a pupil is completing a National 5 in S4, we would advise to pick the subject at Higher level in S5 as a progression. Changes can be made in discussion with the Year Head at the point of exam results being issued.

• How will my child be awarded a grade for their qualifications?

Pupils are awarded a grade from A-D for a pass at National 5 level. For those pupils completing a qualification at National 3 or 4, it is awarded based on a pass or fail basis.

• What happens if my child doesn't achieve a qualification in a subject?

Teachers will identify early on where a pupil might be struggling with aspects of a course and attempt to provide targeted support help. Where a pupil continues to find a course challenging, they might drop down a level to ensure that they achieve a qualification that is suited to their ability. If a pupil doesn't gain an award from a course, they will have an opportunity to re-sit the course the following year.

Questions relating to qualifications continued:

• Opportunities for alternative qualifications?

The school currently offers the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award to S3 pupils as well as qualifications from the Prince's Trust.

Questions relating to the support on offer during course choices:

• How will my child be supported during the course choice process?

We recognise the challenges of choosing subjects for next year whilst at home and have ensured our pupils have appropriate access to support, guidance and advice at all stages of the process. Your child's Year Head will be available to offer guidance and advice if required, talking your child through each of their choices and responding to questions. Our schools Careers

Adviser, Louise Winser, is also available for 1-1 meetings to discuss potential course choices and career pathways. Our pupils can contact their teachers for information about subjects and assessment criteria.

- **Will teachers be recommending my child for their subject?**

Teachers will make reference to suitability for a course based on a pupil's skillset and general interest in the subject. This usually happens via the full report card, or at parents' information evening. Pupils have the option to pick a course without teacher recommendation, if it suits their career pathway.

- **Do pupils pick subjects based on their career aspirations?**

Pupils are encouraged to pick subjects in S3 which suit their interest, skillset and general knowledge and understanding. S3 pupils study subjects from all curricular areas, allowing for clear progression in S5 towards a career pathway. Pupils in S5/6 are encouraged to pick subjects where they are likely to gain a qualification which is suited to their chosen career paths. Pupils are guided by the Year Head and SDS Careers Adviser.

- **What if my child doesn't know what job/career they want to go into?**

In this instance, we encourage our pupils to follow their interests and skills, which inevitably will lead towards a career pathway at the end of their school journey. For example, a pupil who has an interest in science, might follow this pathway to the end of S6 and end up heading into a scientific course at university or college, before narrowing down towards a career. The same would apply for pupils who are talented in the Arts, Technologies, Languages and so on. We work hard in supporting all of our pupils towards a positive destination beyond school and feel having the right skills, qualifications and knowledge help when it comes to choosing a career.

- **Can my child change their subjects if they are not enjoying it?**

We carry out a review of learning for all pupils at the end of each academic year. A pupil in S3 may adapt their coursing if suitable towards the end of the year and follow an alternative path. This would depend on availability of courses at that point in the school year.

For information about positive destinations beyond school, please have a look at the

websites below where you will find lots of information to support pupils.

Useful Websites:

- **My World of Work – www.myworldofwork.co.uk**
- **Edinburgh College – www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk**
- **UCAS (University Admissions) – www.UCAS.com**
- **Young Scot – www.youngscot.org**
- **Skills Development Scotland – www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk**
- **Apprenticeships Scotland – www.apprenticeships.scot**

- **Careers Website – www.planitplus.net**
 - **Employment Opportunities – www.edinburghguarantee.org**
 - **DYW Edinburgh – Labour Market Information – www.dyw-edinmideast.com**
- Holy Rood RC High School – Course Choice Information FAQs**