



TARBIYYAH SECONDARY SCHOOL

مدرسة التربية الثانوية الإسلامية

32 New Heston Road, Hounslow, London TW5 0LJ · 0203 719 8697 · secondary@tarbiyyah.co.uk

KEY STAGE 4 OPTIONS BOOKLET

Choosing your GCSE subjects for Years 10 and 11

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026 – 2027

Document	Key Stage 4 Options Booklet
For	Pupils currently in Year 9 and their parents, choosing subjects for Year 10 entry in September 2027
Approved by	Haneef Sandhar
Position	Headteacher
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CONTENTS

- 1 Welcome to Key Stage 4
- 2 The Curriculum We Offer
- 3 How the Options Process Works
- 4 Key Dates
- 5 The Core Curriculum
- 6 The Option Blocks
- 7 Curriculum Reform — What Is Changing Nationally
- 8 Additional Qualifications
- 9 Sitting GCSE Exams Early
- 10 Beyond the Examined Curriculum
- 11 What Key Stage 4 Will Ask of You
- 12 Costs
- 13 Support, Special Educational Needs and Access Arrangements
- 14 How to Choose Well
- 15 Questions Families Often Ask
- A Appendix A — Subjects at Key Stage 4
- B Appendix B — GCSE Options Choice Form
- C Appendix C — Related Documents

1. Welcome to Key Stage 4

Choosing your GCSE subjects is the first real decision you make about your own education. It is not a decision to rush, and it is not one to make alone. This booklet is written for you and for your parents, so that you can sit down together and work through it.

You have already begun. In Year 9 you started the Islamic Studies and Arabic programmes, and moved into a transitional phase towards the sciences in the latter part of the year, so you should be a little familiar with the workload and the systems in place. The next stage is to take on the remaining GCSEs, which commence in Year 10.

A word before you start. The subjects you choose matter, but they matter less than the effort you bring to them. A boy who chooses well and works poorly will do worse than a boy who chooses adequately and works with resilience and consistency. Choose thoughtfully — then commit.

2. The Curriculum We Offer

The curriculum at Tarbiyyah Secondary has been designed to give you what you need to follow whichever career you choose. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is built on your choices: the timetable is decided after you make them, not before. Alongside our careers programme, this gives you the best chance of studying the subjects you want and the subjects you may need.

The core subjects ensure a broad and balanced education through to the end of Year 11. The options allow you and your family to choose subjects that complement the core and let you develop knowledge and skills in particular areas.

What we believe about subjects

We do not believe that some subjects are more important than others. Every subject at this school is taught seriously and is worth studying seriously.

Good teaching and learning lead to the best possible results, and that is helped when pupils have a genuine choice and can engage fully with what they are studying.

We want you to choose subjects that leave open the widest possible range of futures, and in which you have the best possible chance of achieving well.

3. How the Options Process Works

Step	What happens
Step 1	You receive this booklet and read it with your parents.
Step 2	You attend the Options Evening, where subject teachers explain their courses and answer questions.
Step 3	You talk to your subject teachers, your form tutor and the careers lead about what suits you.
Step 4	You complete the Options Choice Form at Appendix B with your parents and return it to school by the deadline.
Step 5	The school builds the timetable around the choices made across the year group.
Step 6	You are told which subjects you have been allocated. Where a subject cannot run, you are contacted and offered an alternative.

Although we do our very best to offer a wide range of choices, we cannot guarantee that every subject will be available. The most likely reason is that a course has not recruited enough pupils to run. If that happens, we will speak to you before deciding anything.

4. Key Dates

Stage	Date	What you need to do
Options booklet issued	January 2027	Read it with your parents.
Options Evening	January 2027	Attend with a parent and talk to subject teachers.
One-to-one guidance meetings	January – February 2027	Discuss your choices with your form tutor.
Deadline for the Choice Form	Friday 12 February 2027, before the Spring break	Return the signed form to the school office.
Allocations confirmed	Summer term 2027	Check your allocation and raise any concern straight away.
Year 10 begins	September 2027	Courses start.

5. The Core Curriculum

Every pupil studies the following.

Core subject	Grades	Periods per week, Year 10	Periods per week, Year 11
GCSE Arabic	9–1	3	3
GCSE Mathematics	9–1	4	5
GCSE English Language	9–1	2	3
GCSE English Literature	9–1	2	3
GCSE Science (Double Award — 2 GCSEs)	9–1	6	6
GCSE Islamic Studies	9–1	2	2

The core alone gives you seven GCSEs. With your two option subjects, most pupils leave with nine. Some pupils complete up to eleven.

6. The Option Blocks

You choose one subject from each of the two option blocks below.

Block	Choose one
Option Block 1	GCSE History or GCSE Geography
Option Block 2	GCSE French or GCSE Computing or GCSE Business Studies

Each option subject is timetabled for three periods a week in both Year 10 and Year 11.

7. Curriculum Reform — What Is Changing Nationally

Following the Curriculum and Assessment Review led by Professor Becky Francis, the Government has accepted the recommendation to remove the English Baccalaureate performance measure and the associated headline entry and attainment measures. The stated reason is that the EBacc did not succeed in increasing take-up of subjects such as languages, and constrained pupils' choices.

Alongside this, the Government has said it will reform Progress 8 to encourage pupils to study a greater breadth of GCSE subjects, and that arts GCSEs will be given equal status to humanities and languages. The review also recommended retaining the academic group of subjects within Progress 8 under a new name, making triple science available more widely, revising the computer science GCSE, and reducing total examination time.

What this means for you at Tarbiyyah

Nothing about the quality or ambition of our curriculum changes. What changes is the label attached to it nationally.

Our core curriculum already includes English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science, Islamic Studies and Arabic, and our option blocks guarantee a humanity. That combination remains a strong, broad and academically serious one whatever it is called.

Arabic remains our modern foreign language, and every pupil studies it to GCSE.

If you are considering university, choose subjects you will enjoy and do well in. Strong grades in a broad set of subjects open more doors than a particular combination on a certificate.

8. Additional Qualifications

Qualification	How it works
Science (Triple Award)	Pupils sit either Double Award or Triple Award Science. Placement is based on the end of Key Stage 3 science assessment.
Further Mathematics	Offered as an additional qualification for the most able mathematicians who have completed their Mathematics GCSE. It is a Level 2 Certificate rather than a GCSE.
Art & Design	Delivered after school and leading to an additional GCSE for those who wish to take it. It involves external coursework assessment, extra tuition, resources and a summative assessment. A separate charge applies. It is confirmed in writing before the course begins, and no family is committed to it until they have accepted that charge.

9. Sitting GCSE Exams Early

There is a possibility for high-performing pupils to sit some examinations in Year 10. The school applies the following conditions before a pupil is entered early.

- The pupil must be working at a level where a grade 7 or above is achievable, evidenced by a full mock examination and prior attainment.
- The judgement is made by the subject teacher on the basis of the mock examination and prior attainment, and is confirmed by the Headteacher.
- Parents are consulted before any early entry is made, and the decision is explained to them in writing.
- A pupil may sit a maximum of three GCSEs in Year 10.

Think carefully before entering early

Early entry suits a small number of pupils very well and does not suit most. A grade banked in Year 10 is a grade that cannot be improved by another year of teaching.

Sitting examinations early also means carrying an examination workload in Year 10 alongside starting other courses.

The school will never enter a pupil early in order to improve a headline figure. The only question is whether it is right for that boy.

10. Beyond the Examined Curriculum

Physical Education

All pupils in Key Stage 4 have at least two hours of timetabled physical education each week. In addition there are annual Sports Days and sports leadership programmes providing on average a further hour a week. Lessons focus on individual and team skills across a range of sports, and on improving personal fitness and health.

Community contribution

As part of our community commitment, pupils have the opportunity to undertake community service. This may involve projects to raise money for charity or to improve awareness of important issues.

Work-related and enterprise skills

Work-related and enterprise learning is delivered through PSHE, covering routes into work, risk-taking, marketing, negotiation, problem-solving and other workplace skills, alongside further education and apprenticeships. In Year 10 you undertake a week-long work experience placement.

The school checks every placement before it begins — including a risk assessment and confirmation of the employer's insurance — and helps any pupil who cannot find one.

11. What Key Stage 4 Will Ask of You

Key Stage 4 is a step up. The standards in the Student & Parent Handbook apply throughout, and in Years 10 and 11 they matter more than ever, because the work is cumulative and missed learning is hard to recover.

Area	What is expected in Years 10 and 11
Attendance	Examination courses are taught once. A boy who misses lessons misses content that will be assessed. Attendance is monitored closely at Key Stage 4 and is discussed at every parents' evening.
Punctuality	Registration begins at 8:30 am. Three lates in a half term results in an after-school detention.
Homework and independent study	Homework is set through Microsoft Teams and increases significantly at Key Stage 4. Non-completion results in a C3 detention. You should expect to work independently most evenings.
Coursework and non-examined assessment	Where a subject has coursework or non-examined assessment, deadlines are fixed by the awarding body and cannot be extended by the school. Missing them can mean losing marks that cannot be recovered.
Equipment	You are expected to have the full equipment list every day, including any subject-specific equipment such as a scientific calculator.
Uniform and conduct	Full uniform and the school's behaviour expectations apply exactly as before. The C1–C5 Consequence System continues to operate throughout Key Stage 4.
Examination conduct	Awarding body rules apply in every internal and public examination. Breaches can result in a candidate being disqualified from a subject or from an entire series — a consequence the school cannot undo.

If any of this would be difficult for you because of a disability or a health condition, tell us now rather than in Year 11. Adjustments can be put in place, and the earlier they are agreed the better they work. See section 13.

12. Costs

The tuition fee covers your normal curriculum. The following are charged separately, and you should know what they are before you choose.

Item	Cost	Notes
GCSE examination entry fees	Approximately £150 – £200 per entry	Examination board entry fees and the administrative fees charged by the examination centre. At the time of writing our examinations are held at Cranford Community College.

Item	Cost	Notes
Art & Design (after school)	Confirmed in writing before the course begins	Covers external coursework assessment, extra tuition, resources and summative assessment.
Further Mathematics	Examination entry fee only	
Revision guides bought at your request	At cost, only where you ask	Course textbooks and exercise books are provided by the school and are covered by the tuition fee. A charge is made only for replacing a lost or damaged textbook, or for an optional revision guide you ask the school to order.
Results reviews and resits	At cost	Charged at the awarding body and centre rate, except where a review or resit is needed because of a school administrative error, when the school meets the cost.

13. Support, Special Educational Needs and Access Arrangements

- Every pupil is welcome to study every subject offered. A special educational need or a disability is not a reason to be steered away from a course.
- Where a pupil has an identified need, the SENDCo discusses the options with him and his family before the form is returned, so that support can be planned into the timetable rather than added afterwards.
- Access arrangements for examinations — extra time, a reader, a scribe, a separate room, assistive technology, rest breaks — are arranged by the SENDCo on the basis of the pupil's normal way of working. Evidence must be gathered during Years 9 and 10, so it is important to raise any need early.
- Reasonable adjustments are never charged to a family.
- If you are unsure whether a course will suit you, ask. The answer is usually about how a subject is taught and assessed, not about whether you are capable of it.

14. How to Choose Well

Good reasons to choose a subject

You enjoy it and you are willing to work at it for two years.

You are good at it, or you can see how you would become good at it.

It leads somewhere you are interested in going.

It gives your overall combination breadth.

Poor reasons to choose a subject

Your friend is choosing it.

You like the teacher who teaches it now — staff and timetables change.

You have heard it is easy. There are no easy GCSEs.

Someone told you it is the subject universities want. Choose subjects you will do well in.

Talk to your subject teachers, your form tutor and your parents. Look at what each course actually contains and how it is assessed — some subjects are almost entirely examined, others carry substantial coursework, and those suit different people. Then decide, and commit to the decision.

15. Questions Families Often Ask

Question	Answer
How many GCSEs will my son take?	Most pupils take nine. Some take up to eleven, where they are placed on Triple Science or take an additional qualification.
Can he change his mind after submitting the form?	Yes, until the deadline for the Choice Form. After that, a change is possible only where a place is available and the subject teacher agrees it is in your son's interests.
What if his chosen subject does not run?	We will contact you before deciding anything, and offer an alternative from the same block.
Does he have to take Arabic and Islamic Studies?	Yes. Both are part of the core curriculum for every pupil.
What if he is new to the school and has not studied Arabic?	He still follows the Arabic GCSE programme. In exceptional cases where a pupil joins late in the school year, the school will discuss the position with the family individually.
Who do we contact with a question?	The school office — secondary@tarbiyyah.co.uk — which will pass your question to the right member of staff.

A. Appendix A — Subjects at Key Stage 4

Each subject teacher gives full details of the course, the exam board and how it is assessed at the Options Evening.

Subject	Core or option	What it involves
Arabic	Core	Listening, speaking, reading and writing in Arabic.
Mathematics	Core	Number, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability, at Foundation or Higher tier.
English Language	Core	Reading fiction and non-fiction, and writing for different purposes and audiences.
English Literature	Core	Shakespeare, a nineteenth-century novel, modern drama and poetry.
Science (Double Award)	Core	Biology, chemistry and physics, leading to two GCSEs, with required practicals.
Islamic Studies	Core	Islamic beliefs and practices, and their application, studied in depth.
History	Option Block 1	British and world history, including a historic environment study.
Geography	Option Block 1	Physical and human geography, with fieldwork.
French	Option Block 2	Listening, speaking, reading and writing in French.
Computing	Option Block 2	Computational thinking, programming, and how computer systems work.
Business Studies	Option Block 2	How businesses start, grow and operate, including marketing and finance.
Science (Triple Award)	Additional	Biology, chemistry and physics as three separate GCSEs.
Further Mathematics	Additional	A Level 2 Certificate extending GCSE Mathematics, for the most able.
Art & Design	Additional, after school	A portfolio of practical work, and an externally set task.

B. Appendix B — GCSE Options Choice Form

Please complete this form with your parents and return it to the school office by the deadline given in section 4.

Pupil name

Current form group

Core subjects — studied by every pupil

English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (Double Award), Arabic and Islamic Studies.

Now choose one subject from each option block

**Option Block 1 — History /
Geography**

**Option Block 2 — French /
Computing / Business Studies**

Additional qualification

**GCSE Art & Design, after school —
yes / no**

A further cost applies to Art & Design. See section 12.

Anything we should know

**Any special educational need,
disability or health condition
affecting these choices**

Agreement

I understand that my son is expected to study all the core subjects and one subject from each option block.

I understand that the school will discuss with me, in advance and in writing, any proposal not to enter my son for a subject he has begun, and that I will have the opportunity to give my view before a decision is made.

I understand that additional costs apply as set out in section 12 of this booklet.

Pupil signature

Parent or guardian signature

Date

C. Appendix C — Related Documents

- Student & Parent Handbook 2026–27
- Fee Policy 2026–27
- Curriculum Policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Disability Equality and Accessibility Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Examinations Policy and access arrangements information
- Academic Calendar 2026–27

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