



Year 8: Making the right choices:

A guide for Year 8 students and parents choosing subject options as part of our Information, Advice and Guidance process

This guide contains important information about what our students can opt to study from Year 9 onwards and is essential reading for all parents and students.



Welcome to the Information, Advice and Guidance process

The Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) process is something that all Year 8 students moving into Year 9 undertake. It refers to helping students to select the right subject options to support their future study and career choices. Students have the opportunity to personalise elements of the curriculum but still maintain a broad range of subjects.

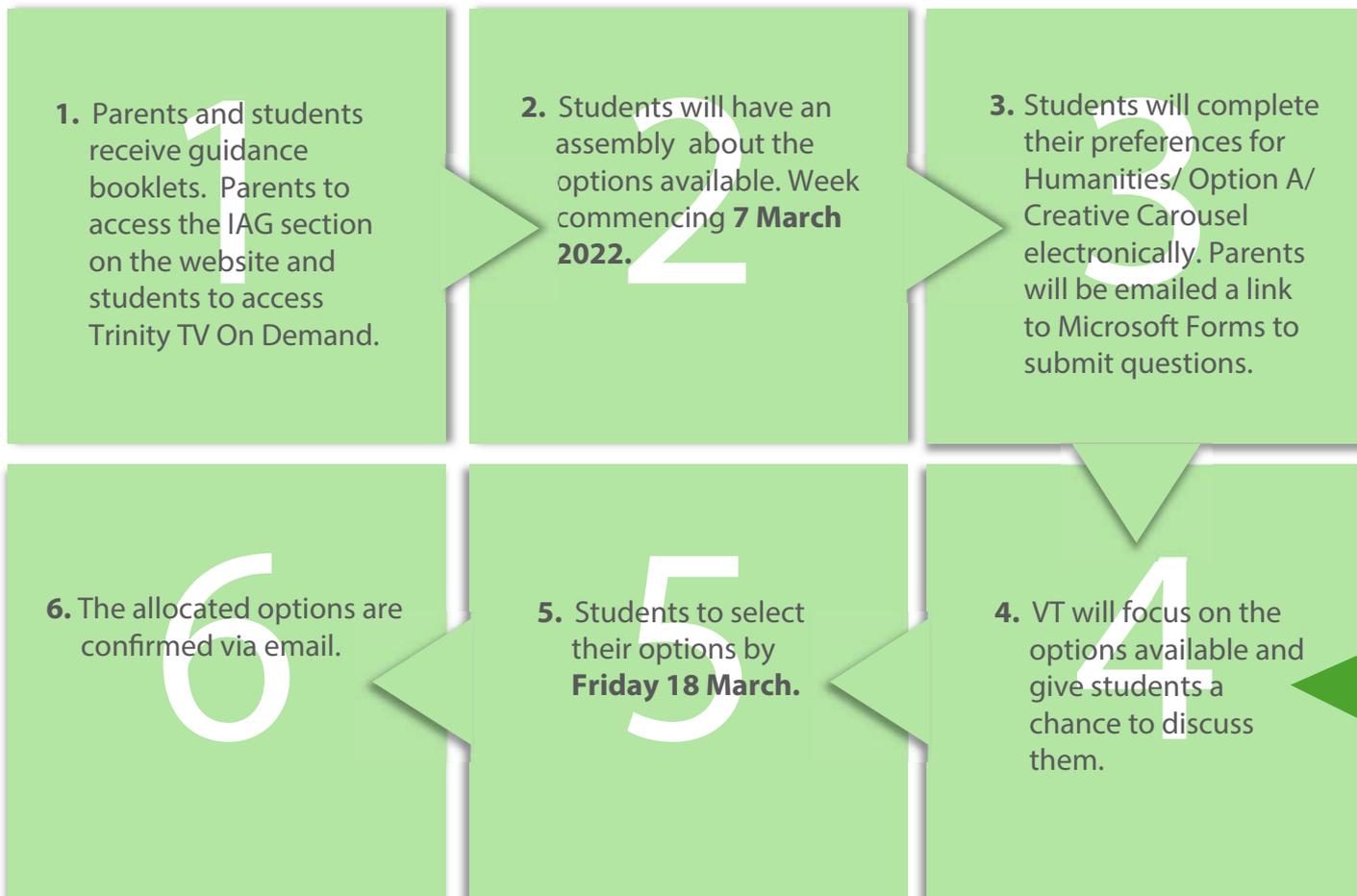
This guide provides a summary of what the curriculum looks like for students when they start Year 9. There will be an opportunity for students and parents to browse videos of what each course entails and speak virtually with subject teachers.

We encourage parents and students to read this guide together. There is basic information about each subject to support students and parents to discuss possible options.

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The IAG Process



Important notice for parents:

Please note students will use Microsoft Forms to select their options. The survey will be available between **Wednesday 9 March** and **Friday 18 March**. We strongly advise that you ensure that you have discussed the options that your child plans to select prior to them submitting their final preferred choices.



Support available

IAG section of the academy website

We have established a dedicated section of our academy website containing information and videos to support parents and carers with the options process. Here you will find a video presentation explaining how the options process works and what support is available to students. There is also a frequently asked questions section which we will continue to update. Through the website page there is an opportunity to submit questions directly to the options team.

IAG assemblies

You will have a year group assembly at the beginning of term 4. In this assembly we will go through in detail the options process, show you how to access support and explain what subjects are available to study. Following this assembly you will be provided with the options booklet and have a chance to discuss your options with your class teachers and tutors.

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Subject promotional videos on Trinity TV

Promotional videos are available via Trinity TV 'On Demand' to support students. These videos are made by subject leaders explaining the course and why students may wish to choose this option. Students can watch short videos for all the options subjects to ensure they are fully informed before making their choices.



Parent Consultation Evening (PCE) support

Year 8 PCE takes place in week commencing 7 March. To support with the options process, we invite all parents and carers to come in and meet with VT tutors to discuss which options may be most suitable for students.

Following this, we will add any frequently asked questions to our IAG section of the academy website.



Top Tips...

We have a wide range of courses that you can choose from. Students and parents will naturally be keen to ensure that they choose the right ones to support future careers. Here we include our top tips for students and parents to make sure that selected options support future career and university ambitions.

The academy will fully support students to be successful, whatever their chosen career path. Advice will be available to ensure that final choices support both the student personally and their long-term ambitions.

Top tips...for students

- Have a think about what your future career might be. Some subjects have strong links. For example, if you want to become a lawyer then A level history is often a requirement, and you would naturally need to consider specialising in history.
- Check out all your options. You may really like a subject now, or be keen to study a particular one, but don't discount other choices! Do have a shortlist, but be open to hearing about how opting for another subject may help you in the future.
- Remember you will submit your choices online and it is vital that you have discussed your choices with your parent(s)/carer(s) before you submit.
- Allow enough time to make your decision. You will be asked to choose a first, second and third option for Option A in the event that we cannot timetable your first choices.

Top tips...for parents

- Encourage your child to read this booklet and watch the subject promotional videos Trinity TV, and discuss with you their shortlist of choices. Whilst enjoying a subject is crucial, it is important that their choice supports their future plans.
- We ask that parents reinforce that students must choose a first, second and third choice in Option A so students need to dedicate enough time to making this decision.
- Support your child to complete the Microsoft Form to select their choices in each option block, by the deadlines outlined in this booklet and on the IAG invitation email.

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What does the curriculum look like during Year 9?

For students, moving into Year 9 will feel like a natural progression. The structure of lessons will remain the same, but opportunities will be made for students to go beyond the National Curriculum.

Students study a core curriculum, plus their options. The chart below illustrates the programme of study for students during their time in Year 9.

The curriculum during Year 9

Maths	English	Science	History	Geography	RS	PE	MFL	Computing	Option A	Creative Carousel
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

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Throughout Year 9 we are constantly monitoring students to ensure that they are on track to achieve their potential. We challenge students every step of the way. All students are enrolled on to our 'Achieve' programme which provides a range of additional support and advice – see page 15 for further information about this.





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Students sit the majority of their final examinations at the end of Year 11. A small percentage of exams are taken in Year 10. This is to help students manage their workload and experience success in a wide range of qualifications.

Important information about the curriculum

All students will study the core subjects of English, Maths, science, history, geography, MFL (French or Spanish), religious studies, computing and PE throughout Year 9.

History and Geography

Students will continue to study both history and geography in Year 9. They will select which subject they would like to specialise in for two lessons per week. Students will then continue with the other subject for one lesson per week.

Option A

Option A provides students with seven creative subjects to choose from. Students should select a first, second and third choice option (only one will be allocated). The subject will be a GCSE or equivalent qualification which will be completed in Years 9 and 10.

Creative Carousel

In order to ensure students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum they will take part in a creative carousel. During Year 9 they will complete three rotations, enabling them to study three additional creative subjects. Personal Development will be compulsory for all students and students will then study two further options. These subjects will be different to the one they select for Option A. Students should rank the subjects in the Creative Carousel in order of preference.

The table below indicates the subject choices available to students:

Humanities	Option A	Creative Carousel
History Geography	RSL Performing Arts: Dance RSL Performing Arts : Acting GCSE Photography WJEC Level 2 Hospitality and Catering RSL Music OCR Level 2 Engineering GCSE Art	Music Product Design Performing Arts Art Food Dance



Which subjects can students choose from?



The following pages provide a brief summary of the options available to students. We recommend that parents and students read these together. Please submit any questions about the subjects via the Microsoft Form link which can be found in the initial IAG parent email.

Humanities options

All students will continue with history and geography. However, students should pick which subject they wish to specialise in. Students will have two lessons per week of their first choice subject and one lesson per week of their second choice.

Geography

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Geography is all around us. Studying geography allows students to understand the processes that shape our planet today, such as tectonic, rivers, economics and how we use resources. We will be looking at the big questions that our planet faces over the next 50 years: Is the world becoming more risky? Is the world becoming more interconnected? How can we become more sustainable? How can we close the urban development gap? How does water sculpt our landscape? We will investigate the broad geographical themes of risk, development, sustainability and inequality, while looking at topical, up to date examples that will allow you understand the complex and interconnected world that we live in. Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future, and understanding our planets human and physical processes is vital to understanding our complex world.



History

The study of history into Year 9 will challenge you to answer even bigger questions from the past such as: What have the Romans really done for us? How measly really were the middle ages? How revolutionary was the renaissance? What can we learn about our future from the past 100 years? The events that have unfolded over the last 1500 years have shaped the world that we live in. Through the study of political, technological and social change, we will uncover the journey that humans have been on. We will consider what has changed over the years to create the world that we live in today along with areas that remain very similar to the roman or medieval period. The study of history will equip you with skills necessary to thrive in the modern world.

All students will study Religious Studies as a core subject.



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Option A

RSL Performing Arts: Dance

This course is practical with no written exam and compliments your academic studies. Dance gives young people confidence to present themselves, as well as the opportunity to develop problem solving and leadership skills. It enhances memory recall to support other studies and nurtures their wellbeing and physical health. Students will tap into their creativity, building self-confidence and gain an understanding of future prospects in the industry and how this subject supports careers in the wider world.

A dancer requires the application of physical and interpretative skills, techniques and practices that enable you to produce and interpret performance work. You will communicate intentions to an audience through a variety of dance styles. There are two units of study; Ensemble Dance (internally assessed) and Live Performance (externally assessed). Students will experience many workshops with professional dancers and dance companies as well as experiencing live performances at the theatre.

GCSE Photography

Students looking to study photography at GCSE will be given an introduction into how to use a camera for a variety of techniques. Students will have access to and learn how to use a professional photography studio. They will also explore a range of image manipulation techniques using Photoshop. To begin with some content will be classroom-led to get a good understanding of how you create an e-portfolio of work. Themes that the students will cover include still life and disguise. A creative mind is essential to develop ideas into successful and original outcomes. The students will also have the opportunity for their work to be displayed in a public art gallery at the end of the course.

RSL Performing Arts: Acting

This course is practical with no written exam and compliments your academic studies. Students are given the opportunity to nurture and develop valuable life skills, from decision-making and presentation skills to team work and empathy. Students will tap into their creativity, building self-confidence and gain an understanding of future prospects in the industry and how this subject supports careers in the wider world.

Working as a performer requires the application of skills, techniques and practices that enable you to produce and interpret performance work. You will communicate intentions to an audience through a variety of acting styles. There are two units of study; Performing text (internally assessed) and Live Performance (externally assessed).

Students choosing performing arts will develop commitment and focus through the enjoyment of inspiring and engaging practical lessons, they will experience live theatre trips and professional workshops and be enriched in the culture of performing arts.



Option A (continued)

WJEC Level 2 Hospitality and Catering

The aim of the course is to develop student knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers, these include restaurants, hotels and bars and also airlines, tourist attractions, hospitals and sports venues, how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful. Students will also learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In addition, students will develop food preparation and cooking skills, preparing numerous dishes and learning about nutrition and ingredients. They will gain an understanding of future employment opportunities within the hospitality and catering sector which can range from waiting staff and catering assistants to chefs and food technologists in food manufacturing.



RSL Music

Music Production has a huge presence on our daily lives, whether you're walking to school, in the car, watching TV or studying. This is a multibillion-pound industry for a reason, and we just love it! Units include: studio production techniques, producing tracks, beat manipulation and sound recording, as well as insight into different styles of music and their context. Music offers students the ability to engage in an unforgettable experience, generating lifelong skills that can apply to all prospects, developing discipline, self-reflection, a community, passion, and self-belief in their ability to be a part of something extraordinary.

In Music Performance, students will undertake a memorable 2-year experience, developing confidence in both their musical ability and personal growth as young adults. Units include rehearsal techniques and reflection tasks on their chosen instrument, developing as a performer, as well as insight into different styles of music and their context.

GCSE Art

While studying GCSE art, students will be given a general introduction to the subject and will be given the opportunity to develop skills in a wide range of materials and techniques. Students can expect to do drawing, painting, sculpting, ceramics, printmaking, illustration and photography based on an overall theme which could include nature, portraiture or landscapes etc. To begin with some content will be classroom-led to get a good understanding of how to create a body of work. This leads on into year two where students will select their own theme, building on the skills they have learnt and see what ideas take off from there. Students will also have the opportunity for their work to be displayed in a public art gallery at the end of the course.

OCR Level 2 Engineering

This is a great option for students interested in understanding how consumer products are designed and manufactured. This course is of particular interest to students who are looking to pursue a career in areas within a design discipline, for instance, Architecture, or Design Engineering. However, students with an interest in practical occupations such as construction or manufacturing would also benefit from this course. Students will study design techniques including computer aided design, and gain knowledge regarding how quality products are created using computer aided manufacture. Through research and practical activities students will understand how market requirements inform product development and will use practical skills such as computer modelling and model making to produce prototypes. This course enables students to develop team working, problem solving and presentation skills and the qualification can lead to further study at A level.

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Creative Carousel

Personal Development

Personal Development is a compulsory 12 week block of educational lessons to raise awareness of the importance of physical, mental and social well-being. This will include a range of lessons that will focus on topics such as mindfulness, outdoor education, core values, and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. In Year 9, all students will complete both Trinity Challenge and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. These sessions will be used to deliver content for each award, but will also offer students different life experiences which will help develop the whole 'Trinity Student'.

Music

The Year 9 music carousel will give students an experience of live performance, band work and creation of tracks and popular music. Students will be able to choose an instrument/voice to improve on and will have the opportunity to create music using DJ decks and the recording studio/Cubase (music software) to write and arrange music and performances.

Lessons will be tailored to the group of students that have chosen the carousel and will look at the strengths of the students, as well as working on weaknesses they have identified.



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Performing Arts

Students will experience a series of fun and engaging practical workshops studying various styles of theatre. The lessons aim to enhance their knowledge from Year 9, develop memory recall, group work and build upon their reading, speaking and listening skills. Students will work towards a group performance enriched in creative devices and cultural influences.

Be innovative, be inspired, be expressive, be performing arts!

Art

Students will have the opportunity to experiment and try a wide range of artistic techniques and processes. You can expect to enjoy taking part in drawing, painting, sculpting, ceramics, printmaking, illustration and photography activities to kick start a life-long love for the subject. Lessons will be tailored to the group of students that have chosen the carousel and will look at the strengths of the students, as well as working on weaknesses they have identified. The work will be inspired by a range of artists, designers and taking references from different cultures.

Creative Carousel (continued)



Dance

Dance is inclusive. It is creative, interpretative and disciplined, students will engage in practical lessons within a studio setting. They will have the opportunity to explore a range of exciting dance styles through performance, as well as develop their skills in choreography. The lessons will focus on enjoyment, it will allow students to build self-confidence and team work when working towards a project. Dance nurtures student's wellbeing and physical health, it enhances memory recall to support other studies and above all, it's fun!

Food

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Understanding nutrition and learning how to cook are crucial life skills that enable people to feed themselves and others affordably. In food technology you will therefore get the chance to apply the basic baking and cooking skills you learnt in Year 7 and 8 to create tasty predominately savoury dishes so that you will be able to feed yourself in later life a healthy and varied diet. You will understand the source, seasonality and characteristics of a broad range of ingredients and use these to adapt your recipes and improve your awareness of taste, texture and seasoning.



Product Design

Design and Technology is a constant presence in our lives. From the minute you wake up, you interact with products that have been designed by someone to solve a problem and make our lives better. Your bed, smartphone, tablet, clothes, shoes, and toothbrush are the results of countless hours of intense design work dedicated to turning out merchandise that looks, feels, and operates just right. Within the creative carousel you will continue the study of product design to improve your creative appreciation of the world around you, while getting the chance to develop your practical skills in the workshop.

In product design you will learn about the use of structural elements and mechanical systems to achieve product solutions. The practical focus will be on the manufacture of a contemporary product that will allow the use of traditional tools but that also incorporates more advanced practical skills, such as CAD/CAM and electronics.

Securing top grades through the Achieve programme



All students are automatically enrolled onto the Achieve programme. This is a bespoke support programme based on helping all students to achieve their full potential.

We offer a wide range of support to help students excel in all their subjects, such as:

- Workshops and support sessions at the end of the academy day
- Small group sessions on specific areas requiring support
- Revision residential sessions
- Opportunities to be inspired by visiting speakers
- Weekend and holiday sessions

Sessions are based upon the needs of students, and how we can best help them to succeed. Parents are asked to ensure that students attend all sessions as requested, and that the benefits of attending are discussed at home.



