



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL



Year 8 Mini-Options 2023 - 2024



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Links to information about Options Subjects is available on SIMs Options online.

Please read *'How to complete the Options Form Online – a guide for students'* to see exactly where this information is.

Year 8 Mini-Options 2023/24 – The Process

What are your choices?

Compulsory Subjects:

English, Mathematics, Science, PE and Mandarin (if it was selected as a language in Year 7)

Option Subjects:

Five subjects in total from the following blocks:

Arts Subjects	All Subjects Block	Ebacc Subjects
Art	All subjects are in this block (Arts and Ebacc) allowing you to take an extra Arts or an extra Ebacc Subject – it is your choice	History
Dance		French or Spanish
Drama		Geography
Food & Nutrition		Computing
Music		
DT: Papers & Boards		
DT: Timbers		
DT: Fibres & Textiles		
Religious Studies		

Students may only select one Design & Technology (DT:) subject.

We have reviewed each student's progress and students have a personalised offer to support their individual needs. This will determine how many options you are offered in each block. Our experience tells us that the combination we offer is the best one to support students to fulfil their potential in future and maintain a broad and balanced curriculum.

What do you need to do?

- All students must have registered on SIMs Options during tutor time
- Go to the Mountbatten Portal and click on 'Options Online'
- Select your options from the available list – check how many choices you have in each block.

Useful Dates

- Thursday 23 February 2023 – Assembly to the Year Group
- Wednesday 1 March 2023 – Mini-Options Booklets emailed to students and parents
- Wednesday 1 March 2023, 6:00pm – 7:00pm – Year 8 Mini Options Evening for parents and students (live event)
- Thursday 2 March 2023 – Options Online system opens at 9:00am
- Monday 27 March 2023 – Options Online system closes at 3:00pm

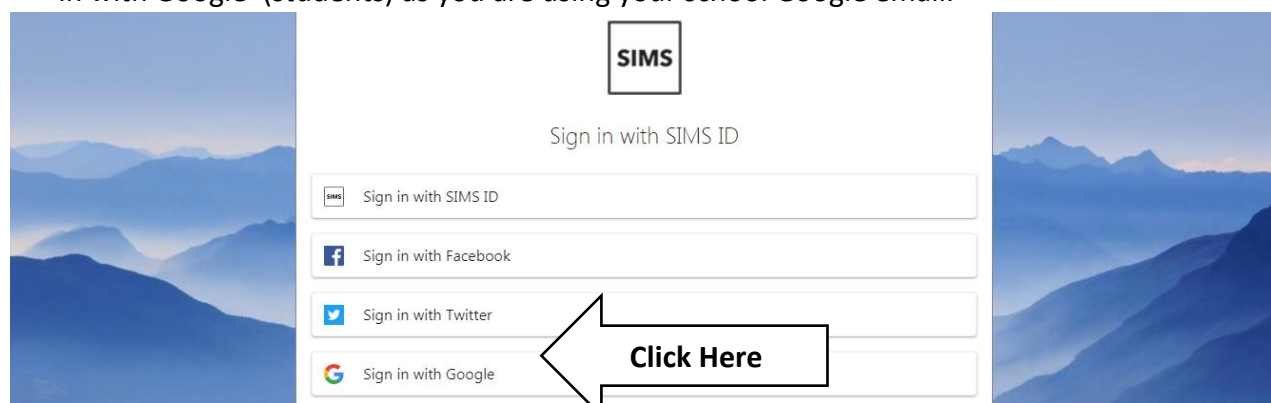
How to complete the Options Form Online – a guide for students

Before the February half term, students were supported during registration to register at SIMs Options online ready for selecting their Options. Parents should also have received an email to register. If students were absent during the registration process, parents did not receive an email or you have difficulty accessing the online system, then please contact Toby Rogers in our IT department who will be able to support you. If parents do not have access to the internet, you should contact IT Services so that we can help to support you. Their email address is itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk

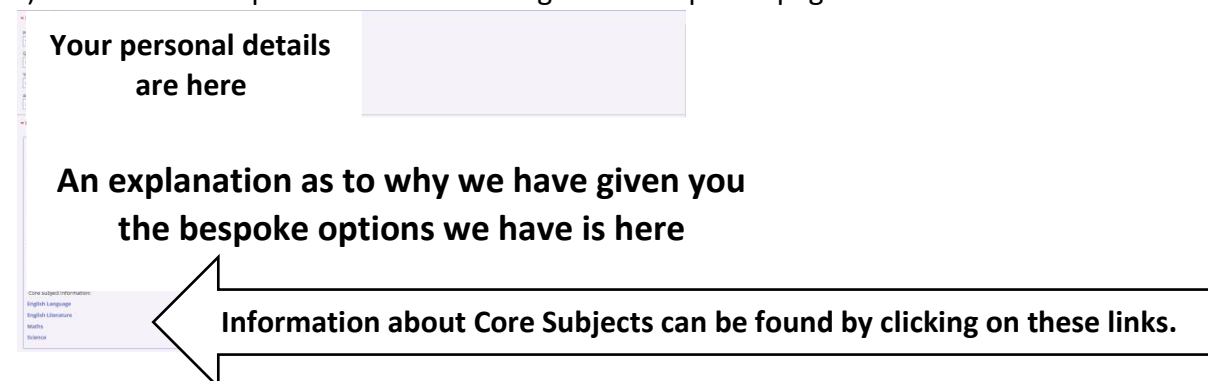
Students selecting their options

You can either enter this web link and sign in (using the instructions from Step 3.) <https://www.sims-options.co.uk> or you can sign in via the student portal.

- 1) Students/parents should go to the school website www.mountbatten.hants.sch.uk and click on the portal tab on the far-right hand side.
- 2) You will then be asked to enter your Username and your Password. If you have forgotten or have any issues, please contact IT Services on itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk and they will be able to help you.
- 3) Then click on Options Online tab. You will then see the screen below appear. Please click on the 'sign in with Google' (students) as you are using your school Google email.



- 4) You will then open the software and get to the options page which will look like this:



- 5) There are a number of option blocks. In each block there is a link to more information about each subject in that block. You are also shown how many choices you need to select. In the example block below you must select 2 choices and 2 reserve choices.

Open Choice

Geography
History

You have chosen 0 of 2 courses and 0 of 2 reserves from this list **0 of 2 choices selected, 0 of 2 reserves selected**

BTech Art & Design BTEC Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Child Development Cambridge Nationals Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve
Food GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	GCSE P.E. GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in other lists.</small>	Reserve	Hospitality and Catering NQF Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve

6) Select the option choices by clicking on the subject name. Select reserves by clicking on 'reserve' next to the subject name. As you select choices they go blue. Reserve choices go orange. As you select choices the indicators at the top go orange and then green to show you have selected all the choices. Red indicators show you have selected too many options. See the examples below.

You have chosen 1 of 2 courses and 1 of 2 reserves from this list **Amber, some choices selected**

BTech Art & Design BTEC Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Child Development Cambridge Nationals Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve
Food GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	GCSE P.E. GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in other lists.</small>	Reserve	Hospitality and Catering NQF Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve

You have chosen 2 of 2 courses and 2 of 2 reserves from this list **Green, all choices selected**

BTech Art & Design BTEC Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Child Development Cambridge Nationals Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve
Food GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	GCSE P.E. GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in other lists.</small>	Reserve	Hospitality and Catering NQF Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve

You have chosen 3 of 2 courses and 2 of 2 reserves from this list **Red, too many choices selected**

BTech Art & Design BTEC Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Art GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	Child Development Cambridge Nationals Award Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve
Food GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve	GCSE P.E. GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course <small>This course is also available in other lists.</small>	Reserve	Hospitality and Catering NQF Level 1 & 2 <small>This course is also available in Open Ebacc</small>	Reserve

7) Once you have selected all your choices these will appear on the right-hand side. Below is an example of what this looks like. In total, you should have selected five choices.

My Choices in Order of Preference (Total Choices: 5)

To change your order of preference select a choice and click the position in the list you would like to move it to.

- 1 Art
GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Arts
- 2 DT: Papers & Boards
GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Arts
- 3 French
GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Ebacc
- 4 Geography
GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course All subjects
- 5 History
GCSE 9 - 1 Full Course Ebacc

8) At the bottom of the form there is a place to add comments if you wish. However, if these comments are important we encourage you to contact your child's tutor to discuss.

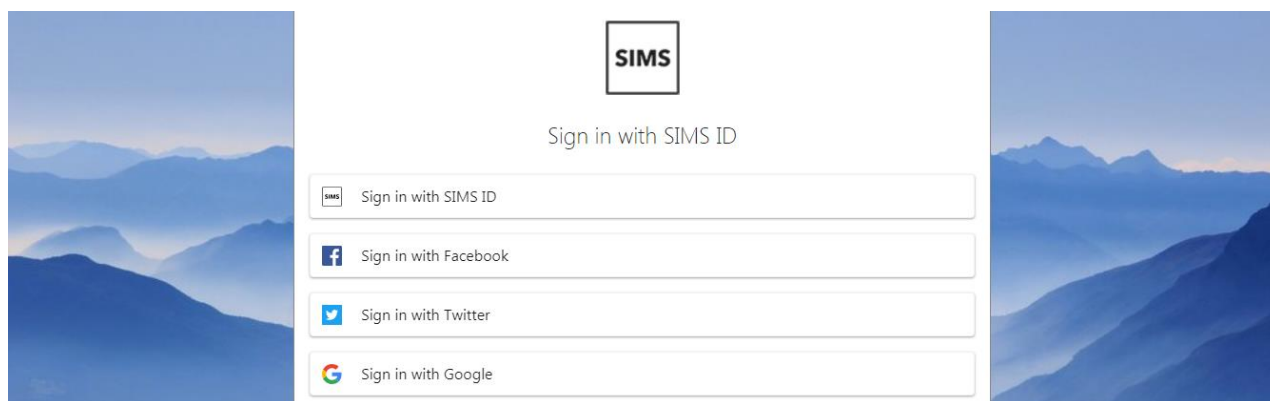
9) Then click save at the top

Save Show Notes Hide Notes

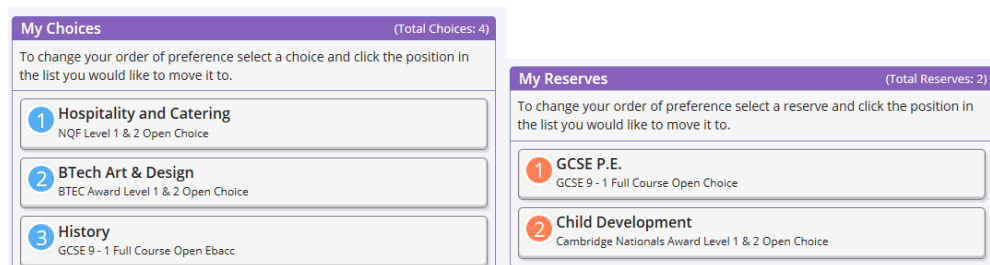
How to approve my child's options choices – a guide for parents

You will have registered with SIMs online when the students were in Year 8. For new students to our school, IT Services will have already sent out your invitation to join. If you have not received this, or are experiencing any problems with accessing the system, then please contact IT Services on itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk

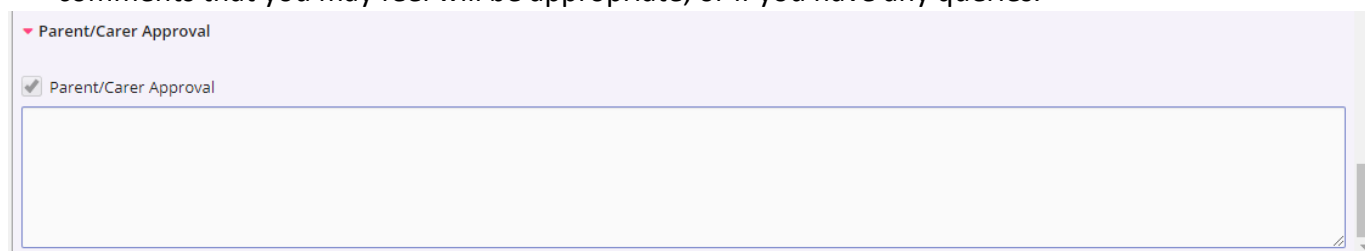
1. Please see Steps 1-3 above for ways to log into Options Online. Please choose the appropriate account to match your own email account.



2. Once logged into the system, you will see your child's details and the subjects they have to choose from in the blocks set out. As you scroll down, you will see to the right the option choices they have made as shown below.



3. It is very important your child chooses all 5 subject choices along with both reserve choices, before you tick the parental box at the very bottom, as shown below. You do have an option to add any comments that you may feel will be appropriate, or if you have any queries.



Please note that the deadline date for completing Options is Monday 27 March 2023

Year 8 Mini-Options 2023/24 – FAQs

1. Why have a Mini-Options process in Year 8?

You will probably be aware that there have been some significant changes nationally to the GCSE examinations system and the curriculum. Over recent years it has been necessary for us as a school to review all our systems in response to the new GCSE content for all subjects, the new GCSE grades 1-9 (9 being the highest), and the removal of national curriculum levels in Lower School (Key Stage 3). It has become very clear that the additional content of the new GCSEs needs more curriculum time but we are also aware that during Year 9 many students already have an idea what they want to do at GCSE and become disengaged in some subjects. By putting these two issues together, we have decided to make better use of Year 9 curriculum time and allow our students to opt for a reduced number of subjects with increased curriculum time – more time to study the subjects they are interested in. The mini-options should not be seen as making the final GCSE selection, as it is more about ceasing the study of the areas that you feel certain will not form part of your GCSE options.

2. What is the EBACC?

The EBacc is a combination of subjects that the government has suggested can support students who wish to progress on an academic route such as A-levels and then university. In order for students to have achieved the EBacc they must have studied English, Mathematics, two sciences (double or two individuals, including Computer Science), History or Geography (**NOT Religious Studies**), and a language. Any subject that can contribute towards this combination is defined as an EBacc subject, hence the EBacc block. Taking the EBacc provides students with a good basis for a broad and balanced curriculum that supports many students to be prepared for any future study. You should be aware that some universities, particularly Russell Group universities, have a requirement for some EBacc subjects at GCSE in order to be accepted on certain courses. If in doubt you should check with the universities themselves.

3. How many GCSE's are students likely to do? How many Options are there in Year 9?

The majority of students will study 9 or 10 GCSEs. All students will study English Language, English Literature and Mathematics. The most-able Scientists will do Triple Science (Chemistry, Physics and Biology) and the remainder will study Double Science (the three sciences in two GCSEs). This will leave students with four option subjects, which they must select from a list. We also try to offer some after school options that students may take in addition. We find that this is a good balance in terms of enough subjects to keep their education broad whilst not over committing them. In Year 9 students start by selecting five option subjects.

4. Is it possible to take a subject at GCSE if you have not opted for it in Year 9?

The intention of the mini-options process is for students to spend more time in Year 9 working on the subjects they are most likely to take at GCSE. What we are really asking is 'what are the subjects you do NOT want to take at GCSE' and drop those; you will then be left with those you can select from for GCSE. Students will not be able to pick up subjects in Year 10 that they did not choose for Year 9.

5. Are reserve choices important??

Reserves are extremely important. We do all we can to meet all requests – but we cannot always accommodate all first choices. For example: there will be restrictions on Design Technology and Food Technology due to rooming, staffing and capacity – if oversubscribed all students will be considered equally when making allocations.

6. How does the comments box at the end of the Options form work?

The comments box should be used for non-urgent information. Please do not rely on the comments box to explain why forms are incomplete. Please email or telephone the school about all issues that result in incomplete forms, **before the deadline**, otherwise the form will be considered as incomplete and dealt with as such.

7. Do I get first choice if I get my options form in early?

No. There is no priority given to students who complete the options form earlier than others do. All **FULLY COMPLETED** forms, completed by 27 March, will be treated equally. Forms received after the 27 March will be considered after those received on or before 27 March.

8. I cannot take the combination of subjects I want to take, what can I do?

In some cases, combinations of subjects have been made available to some students and not to others. This is because, as discussed at the Mini-Options Evening, we have reviewed each student’s progress and students have a personalised offer to support their individual needs. Our experience tells us that this combination is the best one to support you to fulfil your potential in the future. If you would like any further support then please see your tutor in the first instance.

9. Which subjects in the Year 8 Mini-Options support which Year 9 GCSE Options?

The table below provides information about the 2023 Year 9 GCSE Options subjects and which Year 8 Mini-Options subjects should be taken in order to support taking a GCSE in that subject. In addition, you will see that some subjects are not dependent on the Year 8 Mini-Options.

2023 Year 9 GCSE Option Subject	Year 8 Mini-Option Subject that supports that option.
Fine Art/Art Textiles/3D Design	Art
Computing	Computing
Dance	Dance
Drama	Drama
DT: Fibres & Textiles	DT: Fibres & Textiles
DT: Paper & Boards	DT: Paper & Boards
DT: Timbers	DT: Timbers
Food & Nutrition	Food
French	French
Geography	Geography
History	History
Music/BTEC Music	Music
Photography	Art
Religious Studies	Religious Studies
Spanish	Spanish
Business Studies	These subjects can be taken regardless of the Year 8 Mini-Options chosen
Citizenship	
Economics	
PE GCSE/Sports Studies	
Prince’s Trust	
Statistics	

10. Do students stay in the same band (X or Y)?

At the end of Year 8 we take the opportunity to review the bands students are in. This enables us to make decisions to both support student progress and to enable us to offer as many students as possible their preferred options. There will therefore be changes to bands.

11. How do I find out more about the GCSE subjects?

Full details of the subjects at GCSE are available by clicking on the links at the top of each option block. You may also wish to discuss specific option subjects with subject teachers.

The Mountbatten School Key Contacts

Nature of query	Contact
General queries	Your child's tutor in the first instance
General queries requiring further support	Ms Elaine Jarvis data@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk
Subject Specific Questions	Subject Teachers/Leaders (please see the information sheets in SIMs Options for names if necessary)
Head of Year	Miss Amie Jupp
Overseeing the Options Process/Assistant Headteacher	Mr Ian Dunn
Any IT queries/Password re-sets	IT Services on itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk