

Plan your future today

Year 9 Options Guide
September 2024 Entry



Sir Robert Pattinson Academy
Sapientia et Doctrina



There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider world and to prepare for their next steps.

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Welcome to your next step.



Mr D Hardy

Headmaster

Headmaster's welcome

I am delighted to present the Sir Robert Pattinson Academy Year 9 Options guide showing course choices available from September.

Year 9 marks the end of Key Stage 3 National Curriculum subjects and your child now has to take the next important step in their education, which will form the basis of their career pathway post-16. It is important that your child thinks carefully about their next steps in education and it is essential that both the Academy and you as parents support them in the process of making these decisions. Making the right choices means that, at the end of two years of hard work, they will have achieved qualifications needed as the basis for their future success.

As an Academy, we will provide your child with guidance in making their choices in tutor time, lesson time, options week and all information will be uploaded onto our website. There are a range of subjects on offer; some courses demand performance in examinations, whereas others have a more practical or coursework focus. I hope this guide, with details on individual subjects, will support you and your child in making the most appropriate decision about options.

Over the past few years, the examination system has undergone significant change nationally with new grades being introduced, the return to linear courses with examinations taken at the end of two years of study and less emphasis on coursework. Please ensure you read this guide carefully; all of the changes are explained. However, if you have any questions at any point, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the Year 9 Options evening on Wednesday 24 January. House Teams, Mrs Mather, who is Director of Careers, and members of the Senior Leadership Team will also be available to answer individual questions on the options process or future careers during the week.

I look forward to continuing to work with you over the next few years to support your child in achieving their potential.

Taking a closer step towards a brighter future.

This guide is designed to help parents and students make choices from the subjects and courses available in Key Stage 4. Decisions made at this point in time can affect the future direction that students take in life – making the right choices is incredibly important.

In this guide, you will find:

- a guide to the process and timescales;
- advice on choosing courses and combinations;
- a guide to the English Baccalaureate and other important Government initiatives;
- a guide to the qualification types on offer and how they are graded, including the new style GCSE courses that are being introduced;
- a description of each course on offer;
- an overview of our University programme.

Over the coming weeks, a wide array of events and consultation meetings will ensure that each student has a curriculum which is right for them.

A number of staff are involved, including:

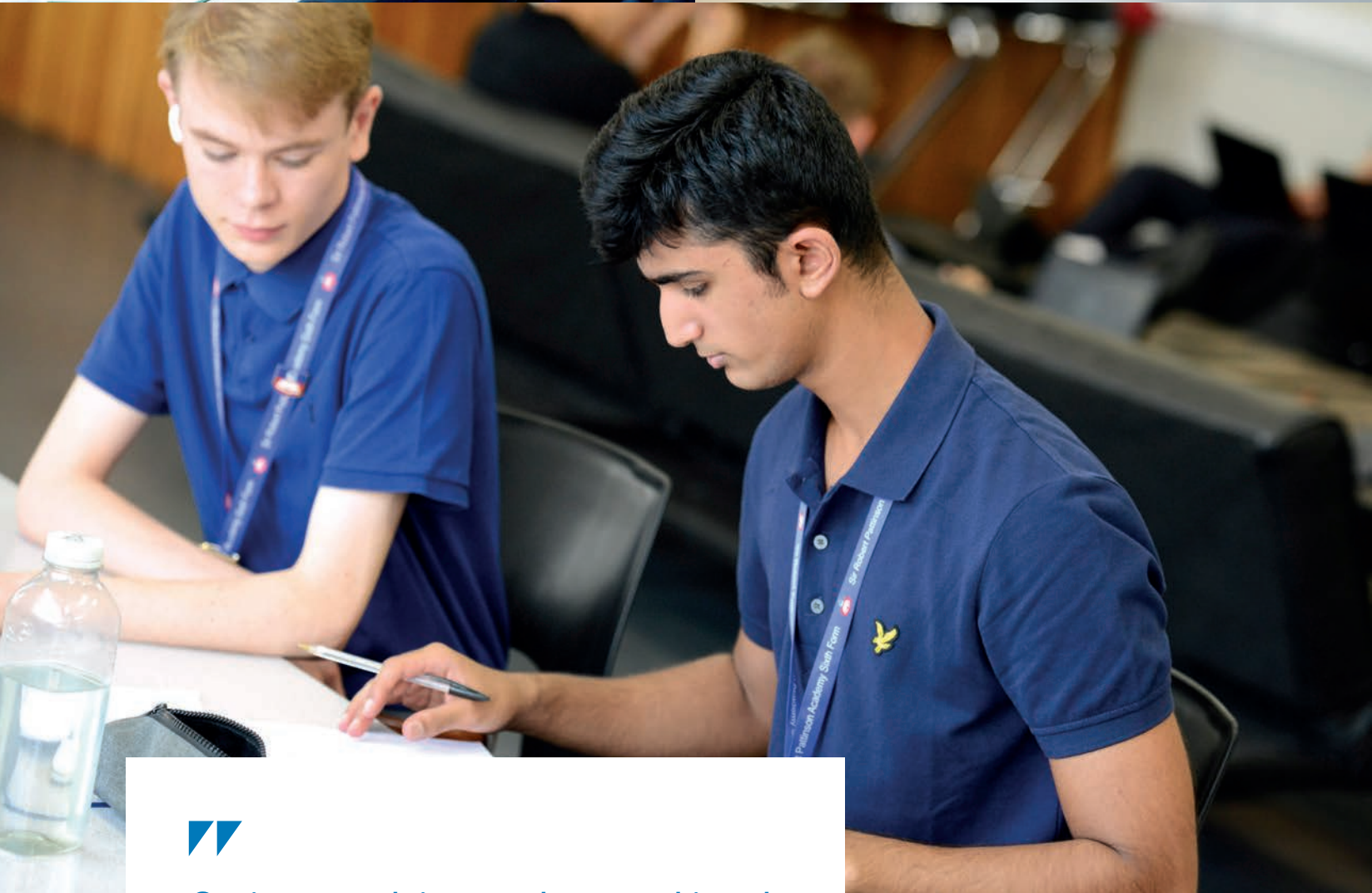
- the Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team;
- Directors of Achievement;
- Heads of House;
- Heads of Department;
- Class Teachers;
- our Career Adviser; and,
- your child's R2L Tutor.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Academy.



The support that teachers give pupils, and that pupils give each other, helps make the school the caring community that it is.

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Options week is not about making the choosing easier; it's about making sure you are well-informed before reaching a decision.

SRPA student

Helping you make the right choices.

Options Week: w/c 22 January 2024.

Year 9 Options Assembly:
Monday 22 January 2024.

Options Evening



Wednesday 24 January 2024

(Website from Monday 22 January)

Mr Kirk's talk will contain information about national changes to the examination system and how these will affect our students.

Our staff will also try and answer any further questions for you by email throughout the week. You will be able to find the contact details of individual staff in the subject pages.



Friday 2 February 2024

Deadline for applications, on FROG and through the website

It is important for students to experience the true nature of the courses on offer at Key Stage 4. During options week, students should make every effort to talk to the teachers of subjects that they have not studied at Key Stage 3.

Subjects such as:

- Computer Science
- Business
- Art & Photography
- Engineering/Design & Technology/
Hospitality & Catering
- Media Studies
- Physical Education
- Sociology

The more you grow, the further you will go.

The Link to Careers

Choosing your GCSE options can be a difficult task, especially if you do not yet know which career you wish to pursue. In general, no career will be closed to someone who has chosen a broad and balanced curriculum at KS4.

It is only at post-16 that career sectors start to be restricted as students specialise down to three or fewer subjects/vocations. However, some post-16 courses require you to have studied a subject at Level 2 (GCSE level). For example, to study French at A-Level, you must have studied French at GCSE.

Most careers require good grades (4/5 or above) in English, Mathematics and Science at GCSE level. There are a vast number of jobs and positions in the modern world; this is exciting and some even say that up to 50% of our students will one day be doing a job that has not even been invented yet.

Most career sectors offer two or more tiers of positions:

- vocational training on-the-job, sometimes highly skilled;
- a professional tier, often containing indicators such as chartered, registered, commissioned etc.

Professional positions are usually higher paid and attract better working conditions of service. The GCSE courses needed for a few of the popular professions are shown on the page opposite.

Further careers information can be found on websites or additional guidance can be provided by our careers team.

The Academy's careers service also provide drop-in sessions at lunchtime to support students with their options.

nationalcareersservice.gov.uk
(includes information about apprenticeships).



This is a calm, happy and caring school. Pupils flourish as a result of the good quality of education and the opportunities open to them.

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Popular Professional Careers



Architect (Chartered)

- 5 GCSEs at grades 4 above to include English, Mathematics and Science.
- 3 A-Levels or equivalent in useful subjects e.g. Mathematics, Physics and Art.
- Degree in architecture from a university and Postgraduate study.



Teacher (Secondary)

- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 – 4 to include English and Mathematics.
- 3 A-Levels to include subject being taught.
- Degree in chosen subject from a university and teaching qualification.



Engineer (Chartered)

- 5 GCSEs at grades 4 above to include English, Mathematics and Science.
- 3 A-Levels or equivalent to include Mathematics and Physics.
- Degree in engineering from a university.



Nursing

- 5 GCSEs at grades 4 above to include English, Mathematics and Science.

Important national initiatives and qualification types.

English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

This is not a qualification in its own right. However, a student has achieved the EBacc if they have gained grade 5 or above in:

- GCSE English;
- GCSE Mathematics;
- GCSE Combined Science or two of the separate sciences;
- GCSE Geography or GCSE History; and,
- a GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language.

Whilst this is not presently a separate qualification, many students are now following such a curriculum although clearly this is not right for everyone.

The EBacc suite of subjects at GCSE level has become increasingly important and is looked upon favourably by universities and employers; we recommend any student who is thinking of higher education in the future to ensure their options include such a combination.

Raising participation age

All students now have to remain in some form of education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

This does not have to be a school sixth form; it can be:

- full-time study at a college or other training provider;
- an apprenticeship or work-based training; or,
- part-time study whilst in employment.

Ensuring that our pupils are well-qualified at the end of Key Stage 4 remains our first priority, but future destinations post-16 should also be considered.

Qualification levels

In the UK, qualifications are offered at different depths and difficulties of knowledge. A GCSE, passed at a grade between 1 and 4, is said to be a Level 1 qualification. Similarly a GCSE, passed at a grade of 5 or above, is said to be a Level 2 qualification. There are other Level 2 qualifications, including BTECs, CNATs, Awards and Certificates.

A-Level courses are known as Level 3 qualifications. Universities and higher education providers offer degree level courses and certificates that may range from Level 4 to 8.

GCSE courses

GCSE stands for the General Certificate of Secondary Education and is studied in a traditional manner. These have undergone huge reforms; students currently choosing their options will study the new-style GCSEs.

To be awarded a GCSE in some subjects, you may have to produce a number of pieces of work called controlled assessments and/or take a number of examination papers at the end of the course.

All examinations will be taken at the end of the two-year period, following recent reforms to the examination system. There are currently no opportunities to resit modules or units.

The new-style GCSE courses, which were introduced from September 2016, are graded from 1 to 9 with 9 being the highest. The content of them is more demanding than the old GCSE qualifications that they have replaced.

The new grading system is being advertised as equating in the following way:

New graded structure	Current graded structure
9	A*
8	
7	
6	B
5	
4	
3	C
2	
1	
U	D
	E
	F
	G
U	U

All GCSE courses now contain marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Vocational courses

All vocational qualifications are assessed by portfolio and assignments over the course of study as well as an examination.

The GCSE, being a general certificate, is more broadly based, while a vocational course is usually focused on a particular area of employment and is intended to start preparing pupils for work in a particular sector. Assignments are set and marked by the staff of the Academy, but externally moderated.

Vocational courses are generally graded using a four-point scale of pass (P), merit (M), distinction (D) and starred distinction (D*).



Other certificates and awards

Vocational certificates, technical awards and awards are offered by a number of awarding bodies, including City & Guilds and other professional organisations. They share many of their features with BTECs. They are available at Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE) and higher, often being known at higher levels as diplomas.

We offer a number of certificates, technical awards and awards; they are often focused on particular career sectors and specific job roles.

Unlocking the skills that will help you thrive.



Personal Development Curriculum

Personal development at SRPA forms a huge part of the curriculum. Our students acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to succeed in life, now and in the future. During this programme, students will develop the qualities and attributes they need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.

Through the SRPA Personal Development Programme our core aims are to;

- support the development of physically, emotionally and socially healthy young people (PSHEE and RSE);
- develop essential employability skills for the 21st Century;
- reduce or remove barriers to learning, such as bullying, low self-esteem, unhealthy or risky behaviours;
- promote British values, including democracy and prepare students to become an active member of society;
- promote equality and diversity so that students respect others, as well as promoting tolerance and understanding of different religious and cultural beliefs.

There are five key elements to personal development at SRPA. These are:

- The R2L Programme
- Personal Development Days
- The Careers and Work-Related Learning Programme
- The Enrichment Programme
- The Learn to Learn Programme

*PD is also taught through subject curriculum areas.

Personal Development Days

At SRPA we have an entire day each half term dedicated to students' personal development. All of our students from Year 7 through to Year 13 will experience a completely different timetable of sessions. These are all focussed on our core aims highlighted on our Personal Development introduction.



Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They use this well to plan learning and to support pupils in lessons.

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Careers and work-related learning programme

There are a number of key elements that make up our careers programme. These are:

- Our University Programme
- Work experience
- Entitlements programme per year group Y7 to Y13
- Supporting our parents

Enrichment

We are particularly proud of the enrichment provision we have for our students here at SRPA. The variety of opportunities our students have are wide ranging and provide further support with building character.

- **Extra-curricular activities calendar**
Rise and read through to Science Club, check them out!
- **PE sports clubs**
All students have the opportunity to be active and get involved!
- **Expressive Arts clubs**
Will you be involved in the next production?
- **Termly house activities calendar**
Will it be a bake sale or a spelling bee? Can you win House points for your House?

- **Student leadership**
Get involved with your House Team! Could you support other students around the Academy?
- **Mathematics challenge**
Problem solving and chances to represent the Academy against other schools nationwide!
- **Reading challenge**
Read books and get House points for it! Read the book of the month for extra House points!
- **House fundraising challenge**
Can your House raise the most for your own nominated charity?
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award**
Do you love an adventure and want to meet like-minded people?

These amazing opportunities all develop 'the qualities and attributes students need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society', supporting our core aims set out in our personal development programme.

University programme.

The Academy is proud to offer a University and Employer programme across Years 7-13 to support the Gatsby Benchmarks. The programme sits within the Personal Development curriculum and aims to raise aspirations and awareness of the variety of opportunities available to students for post-16 and post-18 destinations.

Students are given the opportunity to visit Further Education (FE) and Higher Educations (HE) providers, employment establishments as well as taking part in school-based workshops.

We have fantastic links with local FE and HE providers, Lincoln College, Riseholme College, The University of Lincoln, Bishop Grosseteste University in addition to Loughborough, Nottingham and Hull Universities. We are regularly involved in taster day activities, welcome visiting speakers and attend subject master classes when available.

Our core programme includes the following opportunities and interactions:

Year 10

- CV building
- Financial awareness
- NHS Careers Fair
- Encounters with a range of employers/employees
- Resilient Me programme
- Careers Fair
- Teenage employment
- Positive online presence
- Investigating different career paths
- Unifrog webinars
- Aspiration clinics

Gatsby Benchmark

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from careers and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance



Year 11

- Health and safety at work
- Preparing for examinations
- Interview skills
- Academic resilience
- Apprenticeship talk
- CV/covering letter/application clinic
- Careers interview
- Targeted visits to local FE providers

Our courses Information sheets




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