

Senior Phase Option Choice 2021- Pupils in S3 February 2021

Whilst young people are focused on the work of the current session, now is also the time to consider option choices for session 2021-2022. At the time of writing, it is unclear what the pattern of school attendance is going to be over the coming weeks. Therefore, option choice processes must differ from those of previous years.

Young people are requested to submit choices in one of three ways:

1. On the option form enclosed with this communication underline choices and note levels, then email a photograph of the form to dalkeith.hs@midlothian.gov.uk.
2. On the option form enclosed with this communication underline choices and note levels, then post the form to Dalkeith High School, 2 Cousland Road, Dalkeith EH22 2PS.
3. Complete the option summary form that will arrive by email and return the summary form to dalkeith.hs@midlothian.gov.uk.

In S4, all young people continue with English and maths. In addition, a further four subjects are taken forward from S3. Young people can select subjects in the senior phase that have not been studied in S3. Ideas and interests develop over time and this is recognised. However, for ease of transition and the continuity of learning, it is anticipated that most young people will select their qualifications from those they are undertaking in S3.

Within the senior phase, there are several different types of course on offer. Parents and young people are directed to the school's video presentation, which explains the qualification system and outlines matters to be considered when making option decisions. A link to this presentation is posted on Show My Homework and will be emailed to all homes. Also emailed home and made available on Show My Homework and the school website, is the Senior Phase Option Choice Booklet. The introductory pages form essential reading and summaries of every subject are offered.

Many things are different this year but, as always, courses can only be deemed viable if there are sufficient numbers for them to run.

Various supports are in place to ensure young people make appropriate coursing decisions. Teaching staff have made recommendations as to the appropriate level of study for each of a student's S3 subjects and this information is enclosed. The information demonstrates the areas in which a young person is most likely to achieve at the highest possible level. The levels are advisory and may change in accordance with pupil progress during the remainder of S3 and into S4. The mathematics department has provided a table outlining likely progression routes. Some of the subject recommendations may be for vocational courses with titles different to subjects followed in S3. For example, Science and Technology may be the most appropriate science course for a young person studying Biology in S3.

In order to be able to make informed choices, it is important that young people have an understanding of the employment and education opportunities that exist. In normal times, the school hosts a careers fair. As a replacement, young people, parents and carers are encouraged to view Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce careers event videos. These videos are local to the Lothians and Scotland, and are up-to-date. The link is posted on Show My Homework and in the email communication.

A Parents'/Carers' Meeting is scheduled in the calendar for Wednesday 17 February. Details will be published soon as to the format of this event.

Young people who wish to talk to their PSL about course choice should send a brief text message to 07795354432, and include their name, class and the number on which they prefer to be phoned.

Subject teachers can be reached through Show My Homework. Support is also available from the school's careers advisor, Barbara Moir, who can be contacted by young people and parents at barbara.moir@sds.co.uk or 07887 831027.

Clearly young people need time to make important option choices. A return as soon as decisions are made is requested and is required by Friday 26 February.

Yours sincerely

J. Bones

Depute Headteacher