



**EMMANUEL COLLEGE**  
*Emmanuel Schools Foundation*

16 March 2020

Dear Parent

### **GCSE Options Process**

Due to the current uncertainty with regards to the Coronavirus and what the advice will be next week in relation to large gatherings, we have taken the decision to cancel the forthcoming Pathways evening, originally scheduled for Monday 23 March. Hopefully through the information contained within this letter and the options booklet due to be issued to all Year 9 students, we can cover the majority, if not all, of the information planned to be covered in the meeting.

At Emmanuel College, we aim to provide a challenging, yet balanced and rewarding curriculum to all our GCSE students. In line with guidance from the Department of Education, we follow a curriculum which keeps options open for our young people. We continue to be consistently one of the top comprehensive schools in the north east of England, with nine out of 10 of our students achieving a grade 4 or better in English and maths, as well as at least three other GCSE subjects. Four out of five of our sixth form students take up university places, with one-third going to the very best institutions.

When choosing options, I stress to students that they should make their choice based on three factors:

- What they are good at
- What they enjoy
- What they need to ensure their intended next steps are possible

I will be speaking to the year group in the coming days about their options. They will have the opportunity to listen to current Year 10 students, who are studying the various options. The Year 10 students highlight the importance of it being their decision, as they will be the ones sitting in the classroom doing the subject. They should listen to advice, but ultimately should choose a subject which suits them, and not because it's something their friends will study. The Year 10 students will talk about the benefits of picking subjects which contain coursework and those which do not. Some students are more suited at taking a purely exam-based subject, while some students are good at completing coursework. Some subjects require a great deal of time spent outside of lessons on homework and coursework. Some subjects make requirements on students to be involved in activities outside of lessons. Please encourage your child to speak with their teachers over the next week to find out more about the subjects they are interested in studying.

Please read the options booklet, available [here](#), where each course is detailed. Every student in Year 10 and 11 studies a curriculum, which involves:

- Mathematics
- English literature
- English language
- Separate sciences or combined science: trilogy
- Religious studies

Students then choose:

- A language (French, German or Latin)
- A humanity (geography or history)

Students are then asked to choose two options, one from each option list shown in the booklet. The options allow students, who wish to, to study more than one language or humanity.

From the outset, please be aware that there may be certain subject combinations which are logistically difficult to accommodate, it may also not be possible for all students to do their chosen first two options due to maximum numbers in some subjects. Where there is insufficient student interest in a subject, it might not be viable to run the course. In these situations, we will meet to understand a student's future plans and seek to resolve the situation by considering alternatives. For this reason, we ask for additional third and four place choices for each student.

Please [click here](#) and complete the form **by Monday 20 April** to indicate at this stage what courses your child would like to study in Upper School.

We intend for all students to meet with a member of the Upper School Team or a member of the Senior Management Team at the start of the summer term to discuss their options. On 15 May we will email parents with the option choices we are offering for each student and courses will start on Monday 1 June.

Please do get in touch with either myself or one of the Upper School Team if you have any specific questions, which are not answered in the options booklet.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Ridley  
**Head of Upper School**