OPTION GUIDANCE

You have reached an important time in your life where you will make some important decisions for the next two years.

⇒ ***How will you choose what subjects to study?***

⇒ ***How will you decide what courses are right for you?***

DON'T PANIC! Complete some simple quizzes to help you choose well

* Education and training are vital to your future success. The number of jobs for poorly qualified, unskilled people are shrinking quickly.
* Your education and training will continue until you are eighteen, which will help you to gain the knowledge, skills and qualifications you need.
* Involve your parents/carers. Help them to understand what you are doing and how they can help you.
* Speak to your subject teachers, Form Tutors or the Pastoral Support department who can help you.

Plan how to get Help and Support.

Is there a careers adviser you want to talk to? **If so, what is their name and when are they in school?**	
What kind of help do you need? **Who can you ask for this help?** **Where can you go to get this help?**	

As students get older, they have more choice, but with choice comes responsibility.

In KS4 you, the student, will be able to choose some of the subjects you study but more will be expected of you in personal organisation and independent work.

So what will your Curriculum be in Years 10 and 11?

In Key Stage 4 there are some subjects you must study at The Highcrest Academy. We call these subjects the '**Core**' and they are English, Mathematics, Science and PE. Pupils will study Combined Science where students will experience all three disciplines – Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In English, most students will also study English Literature. Maths has one GCSE for most. The core PE lessons are not examined, but will maintain your fitness and develop your skills across several sports. These core subjects make up 30 of 50 lessons per fortnight.

PSHE will also continue for all pupils. This will cover important topics of social and health education as well as religious, moral and ethical issues. It is not examined (one lesson per fortnight).

You will then have a number of option choices. These will each be three lessons each week and this makes up the final twenty lessons of your fortnightly timetable. These options are grouped in 'blocks' and you must choose a subject from each block.

The Government is encouraging students to take an 'EBacc' combination of subjects and Universities are listing this in entrance requirements. We therefore will require that you choose <u>one</u> subject from either History, Geography or a Modern Foreign Language and if your ambition is to attend University we recommend you take a Modern Foreign Language.

Total lessons per fortnight:

Core (English, Maths, Science, PE and PSHE) : 30 lessons

Options x 4 : 20 lessons

RESEARCH CHECKLIST

When you know exactly what your options are, you can research those that interest you. Use this checklist to make sure you don't forget anything.

To Do ✔	Done ✔	Things To Research
		Read all the options information school gives you
		Check which subjects are compulsory ie the ones you have to do
		Talk to teachers to see if they think that it is a good idea for your to do their course
		Talk to people who are taking the courses that interest you
		Talk to your parents/carers and find out which options they think you should do and why
		Go with your parents to information and other events eg taster activities to see what an option would really be like
		Look up careers which interest you to find out which subjects, qualifications and grades you will need
		Find out what Apprenticeships could offer you after Year 11 www.apprenticeships.org.uk
		Speak to your Careers Leader, Options Co-ordinator or a Careers Adviser about your option choices and career ideas

THINKING AHEAD

Although you may not have planned what you want to do after Year 11, use this checklist to see how your options might help you to get where you want to be.

If you could do anything you want at the end of Year 11, you would…

Tick as many as you want:

- ☐ Study A Levels/vocational qualifications so I can do a higher education course at University
- ☐ Study A Levels/vocational qualifications so I can get a job
- ☐ Get an Apprenticeship or other form of job *with* training
- ☐ Prepare for supported employment and/or independent living

Now think about how the options that interest you might help you to get where you want to be.

Option	Lets You Do…	Stops You From Doing…

Choosing Options that interest you and motivate you

What interests you? What makes you work hard? Try this quiz to find out.

Tick anything you enjoy doing or that you would enjoy doing.

1:

- **A** ○ Building things
- **B** ○ Being active and working outdoors
- **C** ○ Making and fixing things
- **D** ○ Using tools and machines
- **E** ○ Solving problems

2:

- **A** ○ Designing and displaying things
- **B** ○ Being on television
- **C** ○ Writing a book
- **D** ○ Playing in a band
- **E** ○ Doing a makeover

3:

- **A** ○ Helping people
- **B** ○ Sorting out arguments
- **C** ○ Showing people what to do
- **D** ○ Looking after people
- **E** ○ Doing voluntary work

4:

- **A** ○ Finding out how things work
- **B** ○ Doing experiments
- **C** ○ Researching and testing ideas
- **D** ○ Designing a new computer game
- **E** ○ Doing calculations

5:

- **A** ○ Organising parties and other social events
- **B** ○ Buying and selling things
- **C** ○ Running a business
- **D** ○ Entering competitions
- **E** ○ Campaigning for change

6:

- **A** ○ Making plans
- **B** ○ Using a computer and calculator
- **C** ○ Arranging things over the phone
- **D** ○ Putting CDs/DVDs into the right order
- **E** ○ Organising your money

Check your scores

How many ticks did you get in each section? Write your scores in below. Most people have more than one interest so check out any scores of three and over.

A =	Mostly As: You seem to like practical work. Look for options where you can use practical skills, do something active and work on different types of projects	Subject ideas: Child Development, Construction, Design & Technology, Engineering, Food & Cookery, Physical Education, Textiles
B =	Mostly Bs: You sound creative. Look for options where you can express yourself and work on new ideas	Subject Ideas: Art & Design, Creative iMedia, Drama, Music, Textiles
C =	Mostly Cs: You seem to be a social person. Look for options where you can find out more about people and how society works	Subject Ideas: Geography, Languages, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology
D =	Mostly Ds: It seems you like to investigate things. Look for options where you can use your number and thinking skills to find out more about why things are the way they are	Subject Ideas: Biology, Chemistry, Geography, History, Maths, Physics
E =	Mostly Es: You sound like an enterprising person. Looks for options where you can use your energy, communication, number and thinking skills to test your ideas about how to improve the world	Subject Ideas: Business , Computer Science/ICT, Creative iMedia, Languages, Psychology
F =	Mostly Fs: Being well organised seems important to you. Look for options where you can use your planning, communication and computing skills to find out more about the systems and structures that keep the world working properly	Subject Ideas: Business, Creative iMedia, History, Computer Science/ICT

Choosing an Option

Are you ready to make your own decision?
Or are you tempted to follow the crowd?
Use these tips to help you decide.

* Research all your options before making a decision
* Don't think some classes are only for girls or only for boys
* If you have a firm career idea, choose subjects that you need for future opportunities that interest you or for further/higher education
* If you don't have a firm career idea, choose a broad spread of subjects that will give you plenty of choice after Year 11
* Speak to your family, friends, teachers, Form Tutors and the Careers department to help you decide

Do choose a course because:	**Don't** choose a course because:
* It fits your interests and abilities	* Your friends have chosen it
* You are good at it and think you will enjoy it	* Someone else thinks it will be a good idea for you to do it
* It links to a career idea	* You think it will be easy
* You think you might want to continue studying it after Year 11	* You think it's a good course for a boy/girl to do
* It will help you meet the entry requirements for the post-16 options which interest you	* You don't have time to research your options properly or to get any information and advice
* It will help you give you plenty of choice post-16	* You like the teacher you have now

Equal Opportunities for All

The Highcrest Academy has an equal opportunities policy and we want to put it into practice. Each subject is open to everyone; male or female and from any background. If you want to take a subject but think there may be problems for you, speak to your Tutor or any member of staff. **We will 'go out of our way' to help you.**

Deciding what to do

Are you ready to start firming up your choices?
Use these grids to help you organise your ideas

Options that interest me	The qualifications I will get:	What I could do post-16

Your Action Plan

Use this plan to finalise your option choices:

WHERE AM I NOW? (eg thinking about my options; speaking to family and teachers; almost ready to choose)	**WHO CAN HELP ME AND HOW?** (eg parents or carers, teachers and Head of Learning)

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO AND WHEN?
(eg read the options booklet; look at online prospectuses; talk to my parents/carers, teachers and careers adviser; go to option evening; complete and return my options form)

Actions	By What Date	Completed?

Checklist

Looked at Highcrest's options information _____

Been to the options evening _____

Studied the options form _____

Done my research _____

Asked people for advice _____

Made my choices _____

Returned my options form _____

The Examination Grades

All GCSEs will be graded using the number system 9 to 1. 9 is the highest grade and will demand knowledge and skills above the current A*, 4 is equivalent to the current C grade but "good" passes are likely to be considered as 5 and above.

An alternative to GCSEs offered in some subjects is a BTEC or NCFE V certificate.

BTEC is a qualification offered by the Edexcel Exam Board. V certificates are offered by the exam board NCFE. A pass will be worth one 4 grade at GCSE, a merit is worth a 5/6 and a distinction an 8/9. In these qualifications, tasks are set in a vocational (real world) context and you build up a folder of your work for assessment. The qualification will also include an externally set assessment which may be a written examination or in the form of an online test. They have very strict deadlines and you must be organised to meet these.

How you are tested may be something to consider when making your choices.

What is EBacc?

The Government have set a combination of subjects that they have called the "English Baccalaureate" which has become known as the "EBacc".

These subjects are English, Maths, Double Science, History or Geography and a modern language. Students who attain a 4 grade or above in **all** these subjects will have attained an 'EBacc'. The EBacc is becoming more well-known and may well become necessary for entry into University or other Higher Education. Students who are able to achieve these 4+ Grades should consider taking this range of subjects to keep future options open. Your tutor will discuss this with you. Highcrest requires students to take either, History, Geography or Computer Science and recommends a Modern Language. Again you may wish to discuss this with your tutor.

So what is the next step?

Please review the Options Booklet and leaflets carefully with your parents, and compile any questions you have for the Q&A sessions with teachers. You can ask older siblings and friends for their advice and experiences as well!

After the Options Evening, your Head of Learning will send you an Options Form. These must be sent back to them by the May half term holiday in order for your option choices to be prioritised. The later you submit it, the lower your chances of getting your top choices.

If we cannot accommodate everyone's first choice, we will use the student's average attainment grade.