

## Advice and Guidance

### Post 16 – Making Choices

Making choices for Post 16 study is not as easy as it seems. There are many things that you need to consider before you make up your mind.

The decisions that you make for your studies at Post 16 should take into account:

- What career you wish to follow when you leave school
- Whether you want to go to university and what you want to study there
- What subjects most interest you
- What subjects you are good at

Once you have decided on these things you then need to do some research on the subjects that you would like to study in Post 16.

Consider the following:

- I know what *level* of subject I should be choosing
- I know what subjects will help me to get the university place that I want
- I know what subjects will help me to get the job that I want
- I have spoken to subject staff and other people to help me make my decisions
- I know exactly what I will be studying in each of my subject areas
- I know how I will be assessed in each of my subject areas
- I know how much work I will be expected to do for my subjects

How many of the statements can you answer 'yes' to?

If you answered yes to most of the statements, then you are ready to make your choices.

It is really important that the decisions you make are right for you. Don't choose a subject just because your friend is choosing it or because you like the teacher! Making the wrong choices only wastes your time and can sometimes mean an extra year at school!

This evening is your opportunity to start gathering all the information you need to make the right choices for your future.

#### **Important Dates – 2017-18**

- Thursday, 16 November 2017 – Post 16 Options Evening
- Tuesday, 4 December 2017 - Follow up interviews commence
- Friday, 12 January 2018 – Complete your online application by this date to ensure your choices are used to create the option blocks
- February 2018 – Formal offer letters will be posted home

Finally, don't forget to ask your teachers. These people know you and your capabilities. For further information don't hesitate to contact Mr S Bing.

***Good luck!***

## Post 16 Course List 2018 – 2019

You should choose your options for 2018-2019 from these blocks. If you will be studying Level 2 courses, select from the Level 2 only.

	<b><u>BLOCK 1</u></b>		<b><u>BLOCK 2</u></b>		<b><u>BLOCK 3</u></b>		<b><u>BLOCK 4</u></b>		<b><u>BLOCK 5</u></b>	
		(X)		(X)		(X)		(X)		(X)
Level 3 Courses	HISTORY (IB)		SOCIOLOGY (A Level)		PHILOSOPHY (IB)		PSYCHOLOGY (IB)		Extended Project Qualification	
	HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE (BTEC Single)		HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE (BTEC Double) <i>Tick both blocks</i>		BIOLOGY (IB)		BUSINESS (IB)		IB CORE	
	ART (BTEC)		MUSIC/ MUSIC TECH (BTEC)		ENGLISH LANG & LIT (IB)		FILM STUDIES (IB)			
	Digital Media (Camb. Tech)		BUSINESS (Camb. Tech)		IT in a Global Society (IB)		MATHS STUDIES (SL)			
	SCIENCE (BTEC Single)		MATHS (A Level)		MATHS STUDIES (IB SL)		ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS & SOCIETIES (SL)			
	SPORT (BTEC Double) <i>Fills both blocks</i>				SPORT – Football Academy (Triple BTEC) <i>Requires BTEC Sport Double</i>					
You cannot mix level 2 and level 3 courses. Choose above OR below this line.										
Level 2 Courses	Hair		Beauty		Catering		Plastering		English & Maths Functional Skills	

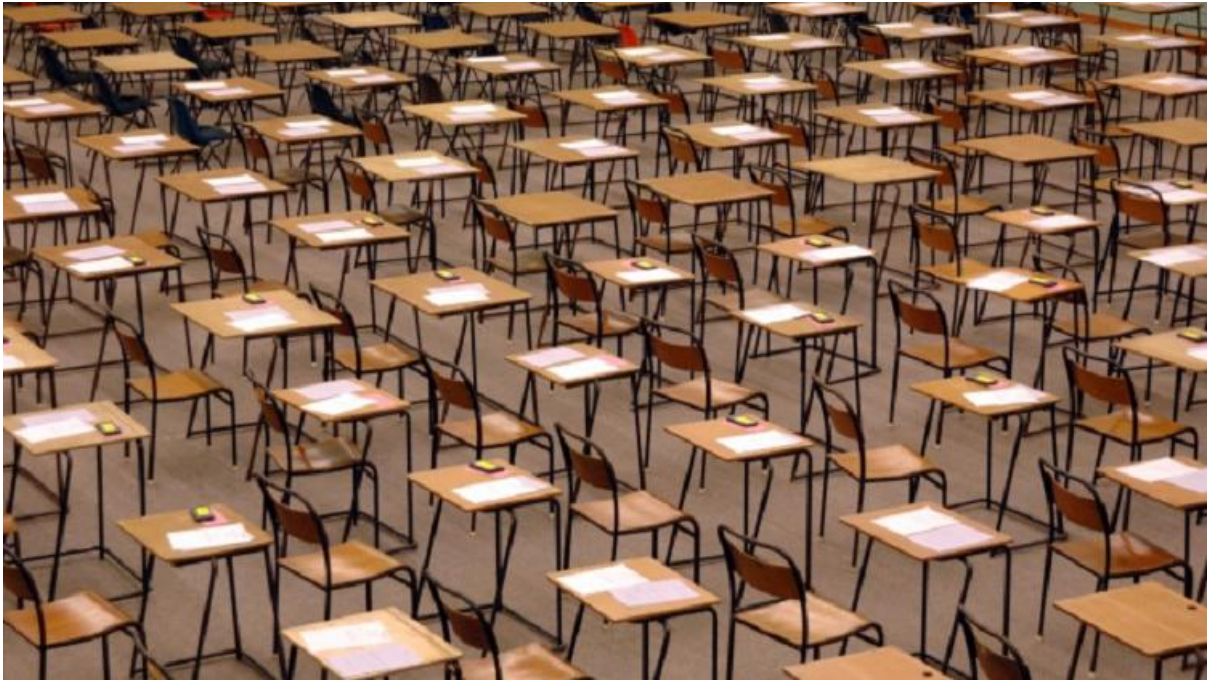
**Please note:**

Where a subject is selected as a double, this counts as two choices.

English and Mathematics GCSE courses will be available to all students, if required, in September 2017. These will not count as part of your choices, but may be required to be taken.

# 'In 2017, not one of my sixth-formers took A levels. It was the best decision I ever made'

Carl Roberts – Headmaster of the Malling School, Maidstone



One head teacher of a secondary modern in selective Kent discusses his decision to look beyond the "narrow and purely academic curriculum" of A levels.

This year, for the first time in almost 10 years as a head teacher, I felt success on sixth form results day. For the first time ever, every student had passed and exceeded his or her target grade. Every student who wanted to go to university had achieved the grades to get into his or her first-choice institution. Every other student had a positive onward route into further education, an apprenticeship or an appropriate job. Two young men started work in the City and are probably already earning more than me.

For many years, students at my school had underachieved in their A levels, failed to get into university and failed to secure positive onward routes after Year 13. Each year, half of them dropped out after Year 12, never to be seen again. Yet this year, only one pupil didn't transfer from Year 12 to Year 13 – and that was because she had gained the confidence to start an apprenticeship. In short, until this year my school had failed too many pupils during their sixth-form years.

What was different this year? We stopped teaching A levels.

## No more A levels

Three years ago, I took the bold decision to stop offering A levels and to introduce the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (IBCP). I remember clearly talking to Paul Luxmoore, at that time head teacher of Dane Court Grammar School and Tony Smith, the retired head teacher of Dartford Grammar School, about the IBCP, which had been running in a few Kent schools for about three years. They spoke very convincingly and with a clear moral purpose about the programme that, until then, I had never heard of.

The problem was they were grammar school head teachers and my school, the Malling School, is a non-selective secondary modern. Wasn't the IB only for very academic students and therefore really only suited to grammar and independent schools? Well, maybe so for the diploma programme – although that is debatable – but the career-related programme is a more accessible course. It combines the academic rigour of the diploma with career-related or vocational elements, to make a programme that develops young people into confident, well rounded, globally focused and employable individuals. The success of my students – not only in their qualifications, but also in their lives – is a testament to that fact.

The Malling School is a non-selective school in fully selective Kent. The most academically-able students attend grammar or independent schools. Selection happens at both age 11 and age 16. Post-16 students in our non-selective schools, therefore, tend to be of mid-academic ability and have often only just achieved the qualifications necessary for Level 3 studies. The number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds tends to be higher in the non-selective schools than in grammar schools – this is certainly true at the Malling School. Students here often join school lacking confidence and without the skills and attributes that are essential for success in life. They often struggle to reach national examination targets, particularly when studying A levels, which leaves them and their teachers feeling demotivated and worthless.

## Impressive results

Kent started trialing the IBCP seven years ago with six schools and results were impressive. Two years ago two further schools started teaching the programme and received their first set of results this year – again, the results were impressive. Pass rates for the IBCP in Kent non-selective schools from 2013-17 were 92 per cent, which is much higher than the equivalent A level statistic. From September this year, after receiving backing and funding from Kent County Council and support from the IB Organisation (IBO) and the IB Schools and Colleges Association (IBSCA), twenty-four schools are teaching IBCP. This represents more than 15 per cent of the world's IBCP schools. It is the highest concentration of IBCP schools in the world.

The key to the programme for me, though, is not the examination success alone but the way in which IBCP develops the whole student. Through the "core" element, the programme teaches the skills and attributes that make a young person well-balanced, confident and interesting. Throughout all IB programmes, the Learner Profile helps develop knowledgeable, principled and inquisitive students who are not afraid to take risks. In short, it develops employable young people.

It's not only me saying that we must stop thinking that A levels are the best option for post-16 education. In its report "Educating the Economic Future", the Education Policy Institute calls on the government not to "close off options of further study and long-term career development with a simplistic bifurcation between academic and technical pathways" – the IBCP keeps them open by combining career-related and academic elements with a development of core skills and attributes.

## 'No longer fit for purpose'

The President of the Royal Society, Sir Venki Ramakrishnan, was quoted in TES last month, stating: "Our narrow education system, which encourages early specialisation, is no longer fit for purpose in an increasingly interdisciplinary world" and, "Britain could learn from A-level alternatives, such as the International Baccalaureate". Or look at the top 10 skills that the World Economic Forum say will be needed for 2020 and how they differ from those needed in 2015. The top three – complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity – are all skills that are actively developed through the IB Learner Profile.

There is a growing swell of opinion that while A levels may be useful in developing academic knowledge in a narrow range of subjects, they are not the right qualification for developing the skills and attributes necessary to thrive in the workplace, at university or in life. If we are going to give our young people, the best chances of success in a global society – and if we are to develop a generation that will really drive our economy – then as educators we must be looking beyond a narrow and purely academic curriculum.

The decision to drop A levels three years ago was probably the best decision I have ever taken as a head teacher. It has transformed the life chances of students at my school by turning them into well-qualified, confident and well-rounded individuals who have the skills and attributes necessary to thrive when they leave my school. Where once students failed, now they succeed and every one of them has a bright future ahead.

*Carl Roberts is headmaster of The Malling School, a non-selective secondary school in the fully selective county of Kent. The Malling School serves a disadvantaged community and the number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is significantly higher than the national average. The academic ability profile of pupils on entry is significantly below the national average.*