



Robert Clack Sixth Form

How do I choose the best courses for me?

We understand that, with so many courses on offer at Robert Clack Sixth Form, it can be difficult to choose the best combination of subjects to study. But, whether you feel like you've got your choices fully finalised, or you're struggling to know where to start, the advice below should help you to make such a key decision.

Don't take this lightly...

You are about to make important decisions about your course choices at Robert Clack Sixth Form that can have an impact on your options later in life. However, if you are not yet sure what you want to do after you leave Robert Clack Sixth Form, you can still make sensible choices that will give you options and open doors for you. Either way, it is important that you think carefully, maturely and sensibly about your choices and research your options fully.

Look back; look forward...

This is a pivotal moment of change for you. So, it is useful to look back on your experience of education so far: think about what you have enjoyed and where you have been successful in your school career so far. How might this guide your choices?

Equally, it is important to look forward: what are your career plans and ambitions and what do you need to do to achieve these? How might this guide your choices?

Strike a balance: realism vs aspiration...

It is important that you choose subjects that will challenge you and enable you to strive towards your ambitions. But it is also vital that you choose courses that are manageable for you and in which you are likely to achieve success.

Look carefully at the entry criteria for each subject and how they relate to your current APS and predicted grades. It may be sensible to make both an aspirational and a realistic plan. Your realistic plan should be a combination of subjects that are achievable based on your current predicted grades. Your aspirational plan could be based on the subjects you might be able to take should your predicted grades go up in key subjects.

And more balance: enjoyment vs achievement...

Certainly, it is important that you choose subjects where you are confident that you can achieve highly and be most successful – this will enable you to have an exciting range of options for further study at university.

However, it is also important to think about how much you enjoy your learning in subjects. You will be studying subjects intensively and at a challenging level for at least two years and possibly on into university. Therefore, it is crucial that you choose subjects in which you enjoy the learning so that you will be motivated to work and study hard to meet the challenges to come in your chosen courses.

Out with the old; in with the new?

Having studied the same subjects for the last five years, it may be that the opportunity to study a new subject excites you. There are subjects offered at Robert Clack Sixth Form that you may not have studied for GCSE, and some subjects encourage applications from students who have never studied it before. So, you may wish to give some thought to taking on a new challenge!



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Killer combos

Take time to consider your combination of subjects carefully. Certain combinations of subjects form a brilliant pathway to certain careers and degrees. Equally, choosing subjects that complement each other will help you to reinforce skills and knowledge and make impressive links in your learning. You have options: you may wish to combine STEM subjects *or* a combination of Arts and Humanities or Social Science subjects *or* practical and vocational subjects. After research, you may wish to take a combination of subjects from different areas of learning. Whatever your choice, though, think carefully about your subject combination.

Facilitating subjects

Facilitating subjects are a group of A-level subjects that are often commonly asked for in universities' entry requirements. So, if you would like to go to university but are unsure yet what you would like to study, choosing one or two of these subjects may keep a range of options open for you.

The facilitating subjects are: biology; chemistry; English; geography; history; maths; modern and classical languages; physics.

Do I need to choose specific subjects for certain uni courses?

If you aspire to study a particular degree then it is essential that you undertake research into the entry requirements for this course before making your Sixth Form choices. Certain degree courses require you to have studied specific A-levels, so ensure that you investigate this carefully first.

Equally, there are lots of university courses that will consider a wide range of A-level and vocational choices and do not have essential subject requirements as part of their entry criteria. Again, careful research prior to selecting your Sixth Form choices is essential here.

Are any subjects a 'no no' for certain unis and degrees?

Certain universities and specific courses do specify that they will not consider applications from students who have studied certain courses or combinations of courses. It is important to research this carefully and talk to your teachers and the Sixth Form team if this is a concern for you.

And finally... how not to choose your subjects?

Avoid making poor choices by:

- Not being led by hearsay, gossip or opinion – do the research and talk to the experts!
- Thinking there are “easy” subjects – all Sixth Form choices will involve a step up!
- Just copying your friends – make the choice that is right for you!
- Thinking only about the present and not the future – where do you want to be after Sixth Form?
- Sticking to your comfort zone – challenge yourself or try something new.
- Taking a subject because of a favourite teacher! The teaching at Robert Clack Sixth Form is outstanding across the board and you are likely to be taught by a range of teachers in many subjects, so this should not be a factor in your choices.

Some helpful further reading and resources:

<https://university.which.co.uk/advice/a-level-choices>

<https://university.which.co.uk/courses>