Year 9 2026: Futures
March 2026

Year 9 2026 Futures

Ms. Maskell - Vice Principal: Curriculum

Mr. Kothari - Year 9 Assistant Principal

Mr Pineiro-Vincente - Director of Key Stage 4

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The Process and KS4 Programme
Ms Maskell

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What is the Futures Programme?

- Start students thinking about the choices that they have ahead of them
- Learn about the different options post Key Stage Three
- Explore careers and how to get on the right pathway
- Start to examine their interests, aptitudes and personal qualities
- Create excitement about the future and build aspiration

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Selecting KS4 Courses

- First time students can decide which non – core subjects to study.

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What can I choose?

When do I choose?

How do I choose?

How do I make up my mind?

Who will help me?

The Process

February

- Research subjects in detail
- Research careers and post-16 Options

4th March

- Final tutor sessions and discussions

March

- Progress and Attitude Report
- Information Evening and opportunity to meet teachers (5th)
- Final choices made (16th March)

April

- Follow up for anyone with incomplete or inappropriate
- Level 2 courses confirmed

May

- Timetables and classlists finalised.
- Decisions will be communicated after KS3 Exam Week

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What is Key Stage 4 like?

- You have 6 English lessons.
- You have 6 Science Lessons.
- You have 5 Maths lessons.
- You have 2 Core PE lessons.
- You have 1 PHSCE lesson.
- The rest is Options: 12 lessons a week are Options lessons (3 per subject)

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What courses do we offer?
Ms Maskell

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What can you choose?

1 from Option 1	+ 3 other subjects + 2 reserves	
• GCSE History • GCSE Geography • GCSE MFL (German, Spanish or Mandarin) • GCSE Art • GCSE Drama • GCSE Music	• Cambridge National Health and Social Care • GCSE Art • GCSE Business Studies • **GCSE Computer Science** • GCSE Design & Technology • GCSE Drama • **GCSE Economics** • GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition • GCSE Geography • GCSE German	• GCSE History • GCSE Mandarin • GCSE Music • GCSE Photography • GCSE Psychology • GCSE Religious Studies • GCSE Sociology • GCSE Spanish • King's Trust Achieve • Level 2 ICT • Level 2 PE

Subjects in red have entry requirements and not all students will be able to select these options

What are Cambridge Nationals

- They are challenging and well respected qualifications equivalent to GCSEs.
- Instead of being 100% exam, they feature coursework and internally assessed units which may suit some students better.
- They provide you with knowledge and highly sought-after skills.
- They provide access to A Levels and degree programmes in most colleges and universities.
- Faculty Leaders can help decide which is the best course for students to pursue.

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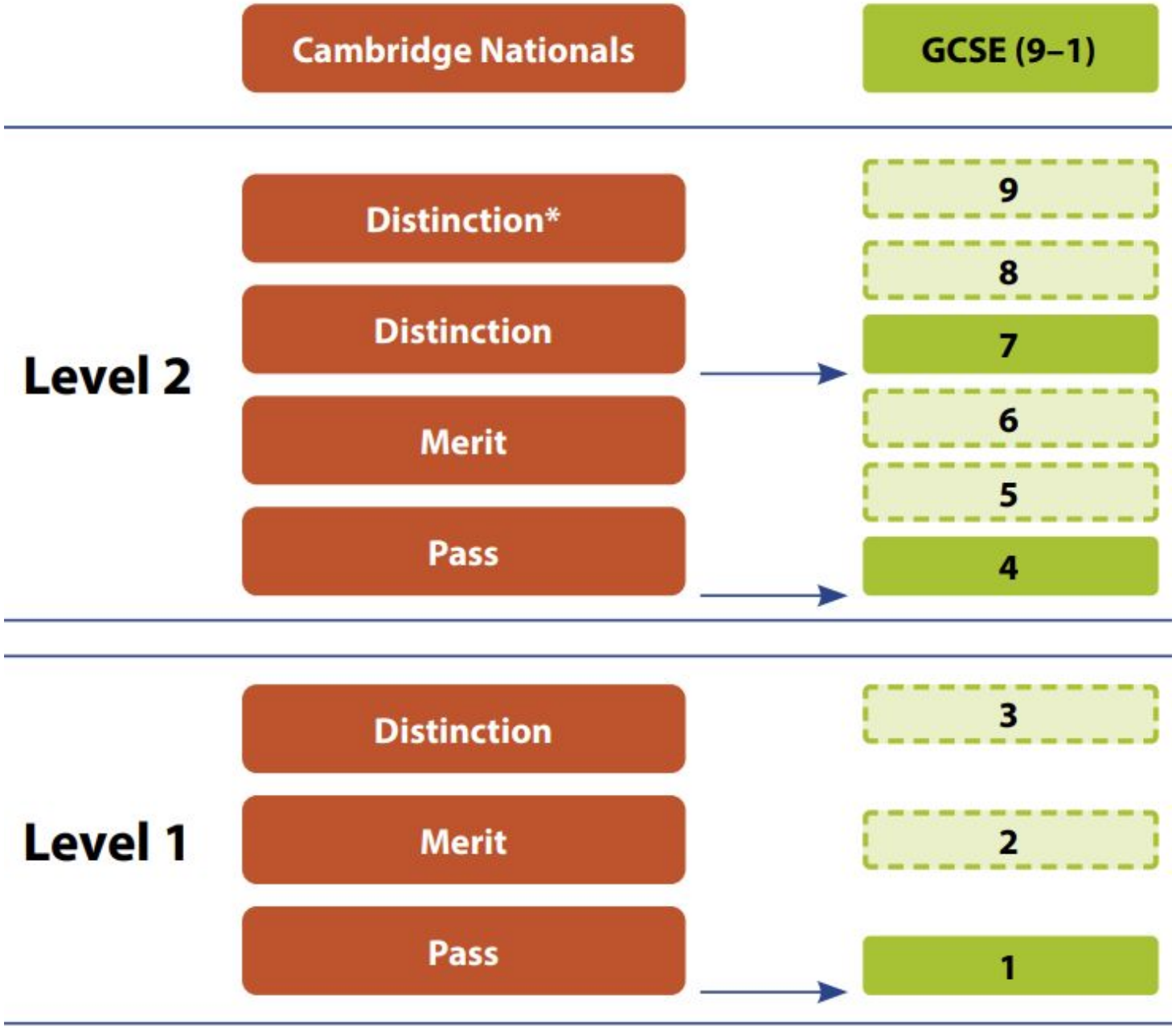

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Subjects with more than one course

- You **cannot** select two courses of the same or very similar subject as your main choices.
- You can select one as a main choice and one as a reserve though.
- E.g. You can select GCSE Art as a main choice and GCSE Photography as a reserve choice. They cannot both be chosen as main choices.
- The same applies to GCSE Economics and Business Studies.
- To maximise choices available Post 16 we recommend choosing a range of subjects from different disciplines: consider doing at least one creative subject, one of the Humanities, a language and something practical.

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Languages

- You can only select one language (German, Mandarin or Spanish) and that should be the one you are studying at the Academy now.
- You cannot select one of these languages if you are not studying it at the Academy now. If you want to discuss this, then please speak to the Faculty Leader for Languages, Mr Hillage.
- GCSE exams in community languages can be sat at the Academy. The Faculty Leader for Languages will advertise this to parents and students next Academic year.

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Will students get their first choices?

- 92% of students received all their main choices last year
- There will be some combinations that cannot work on the timetable
- A subject may have too many students so we use order of preference and student information from the course leaders to allocate places
- A student has to meet entry requirements for certain subjects
- **Students should list choices in order of preference**
- We will always seek to give students their first choice and their second and third choice.

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Two Important Reminders:

1. Make your choices in your order of preference. You first click is your first choice.
2. Meet the deadline: **Monday 16th March**.
3. If you have not selected 6 options by the deadline (4 choices + 2 reserves) you will need to choose AFTER the subject have been placed in timetable blocks.
4. This will limit your choice and some subjects will be full.

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Key Date 5: Monday 16th March

- Options Online closes for students.
- You will need to have made your choices.
- You will need to have checked your choices.
- You will need to have listed your options in order of preference.

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Key Date 5: Wednesday 18th March

- Parents will be sent a letter listing students' options choices.
- If you want to change an option choice at that point the parent should email Ms Maskell.
- After this date there will be no opportunity to change options or choose different subjects.
- **It is important to discuss the choices and consider carefully the right options.**

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How do students make their choices?
Mr Kothari

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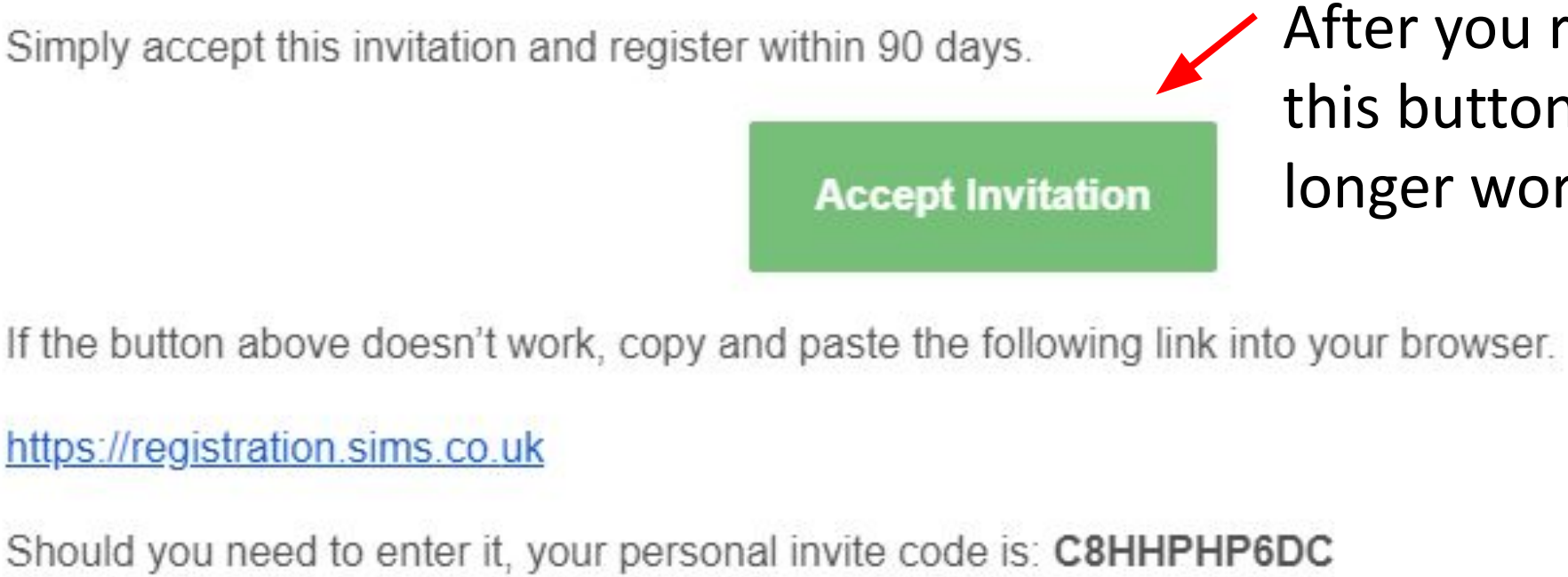
Invitation email from “noreply@sims.co.uk” sent to your Academy email address - click on “Accept Invitation”



After you register, this button will no longer work

You will need your invite code later on

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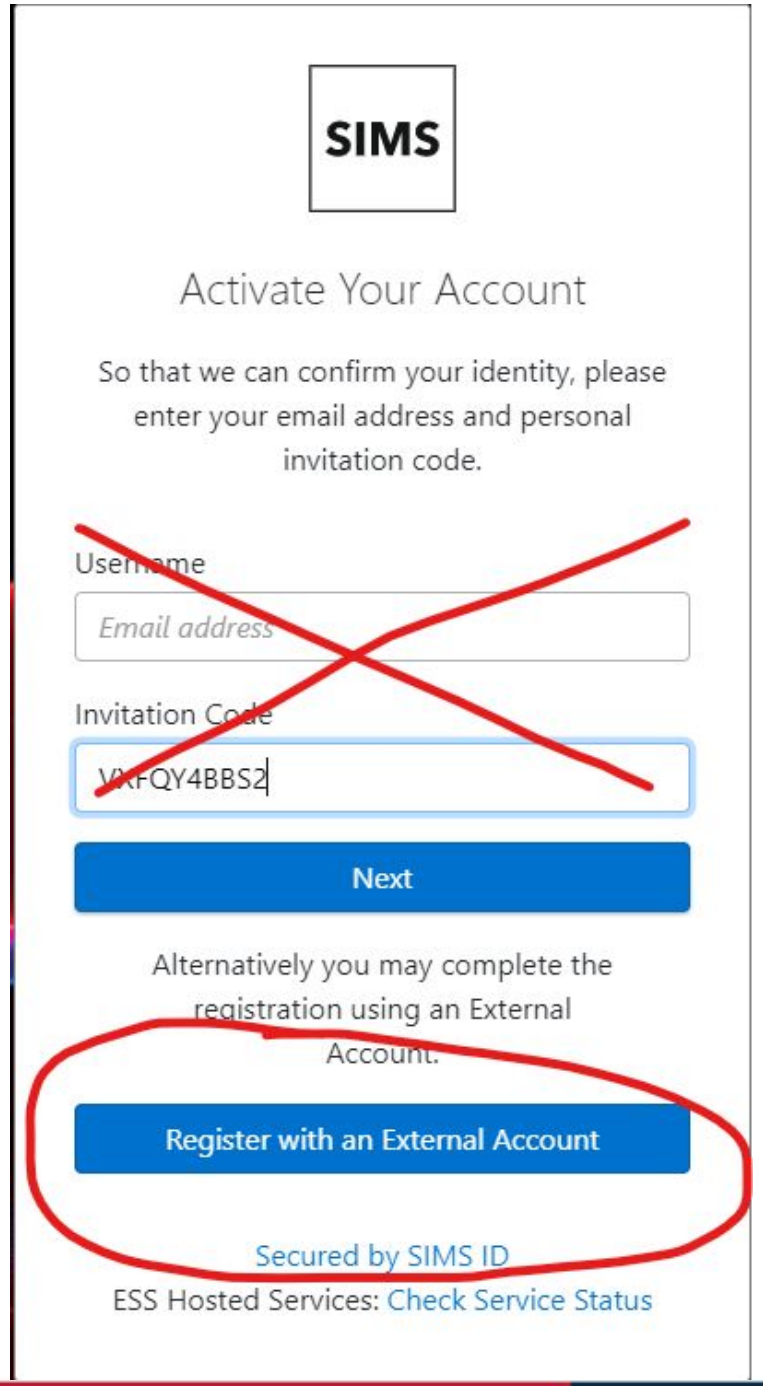
Click on “Register with an External Account”

Click here



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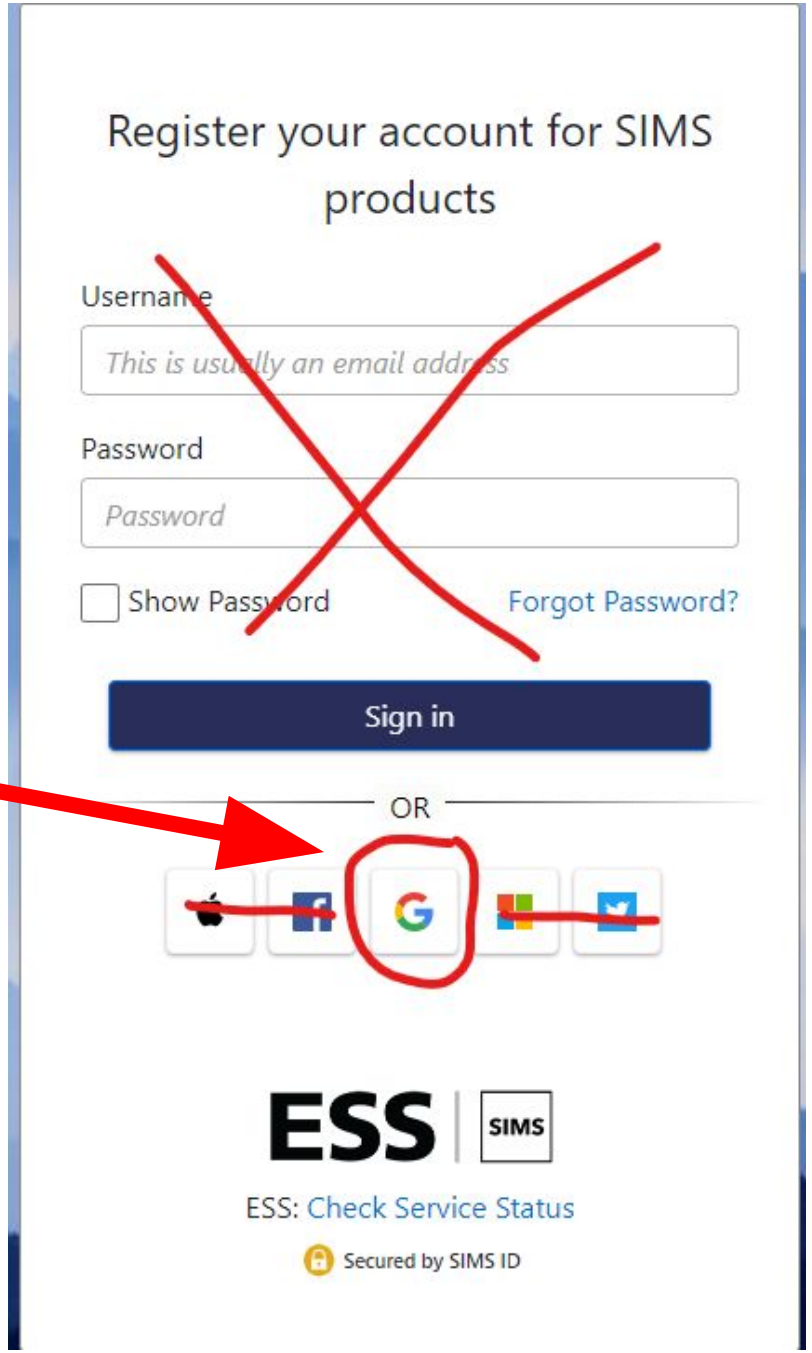
Click on the Google icon

Click here



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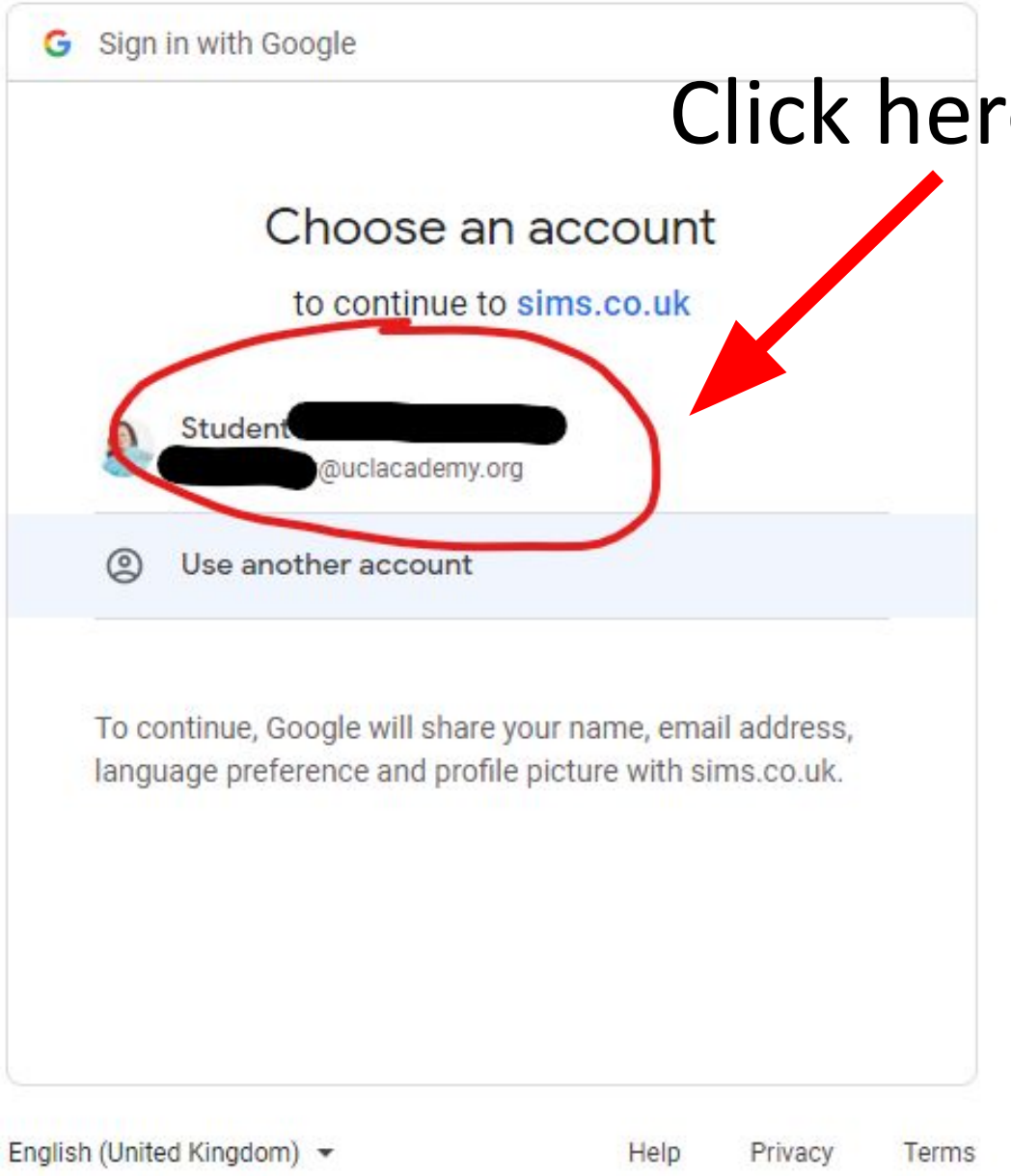
If you are already logged into the Academy's Learning platform (e.g. Gmail), then click on your account.

Otherwise sign in with your Academy .org email address



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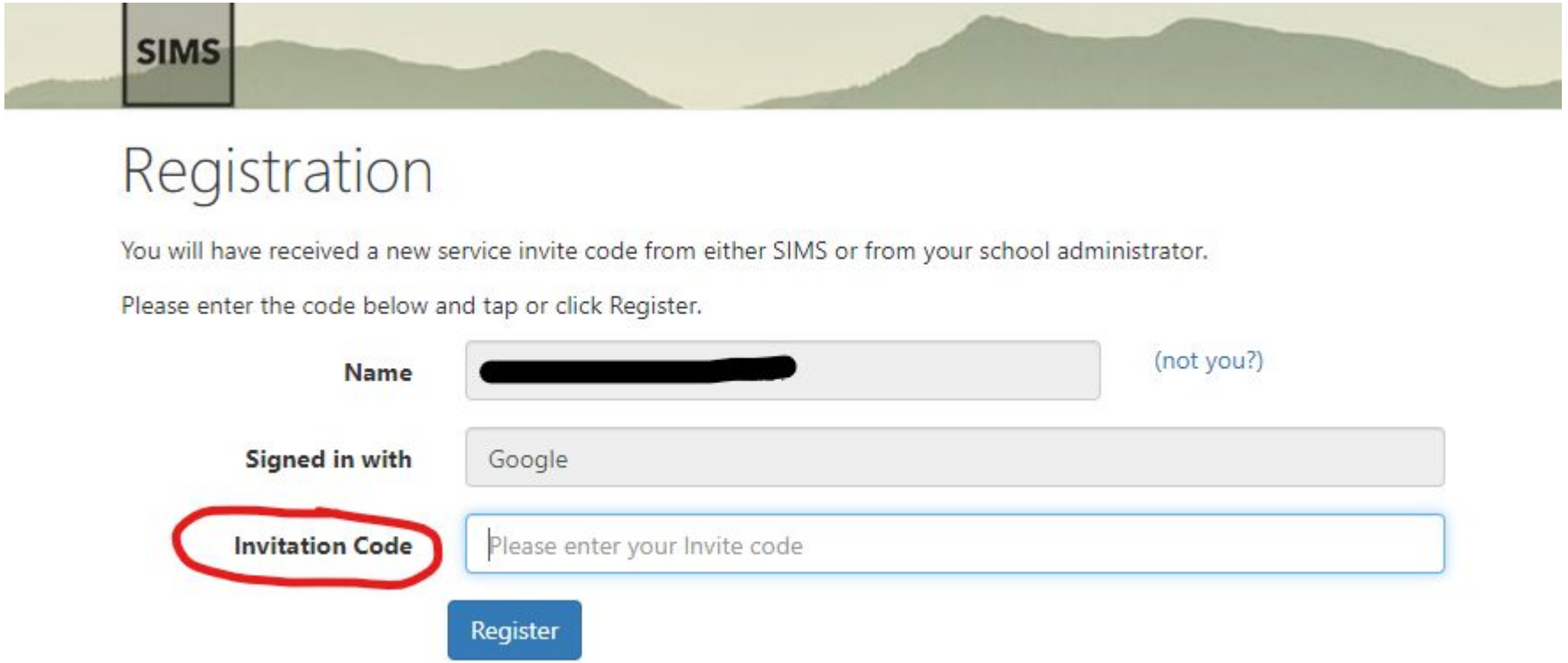
Type in the invite code from your invitation email



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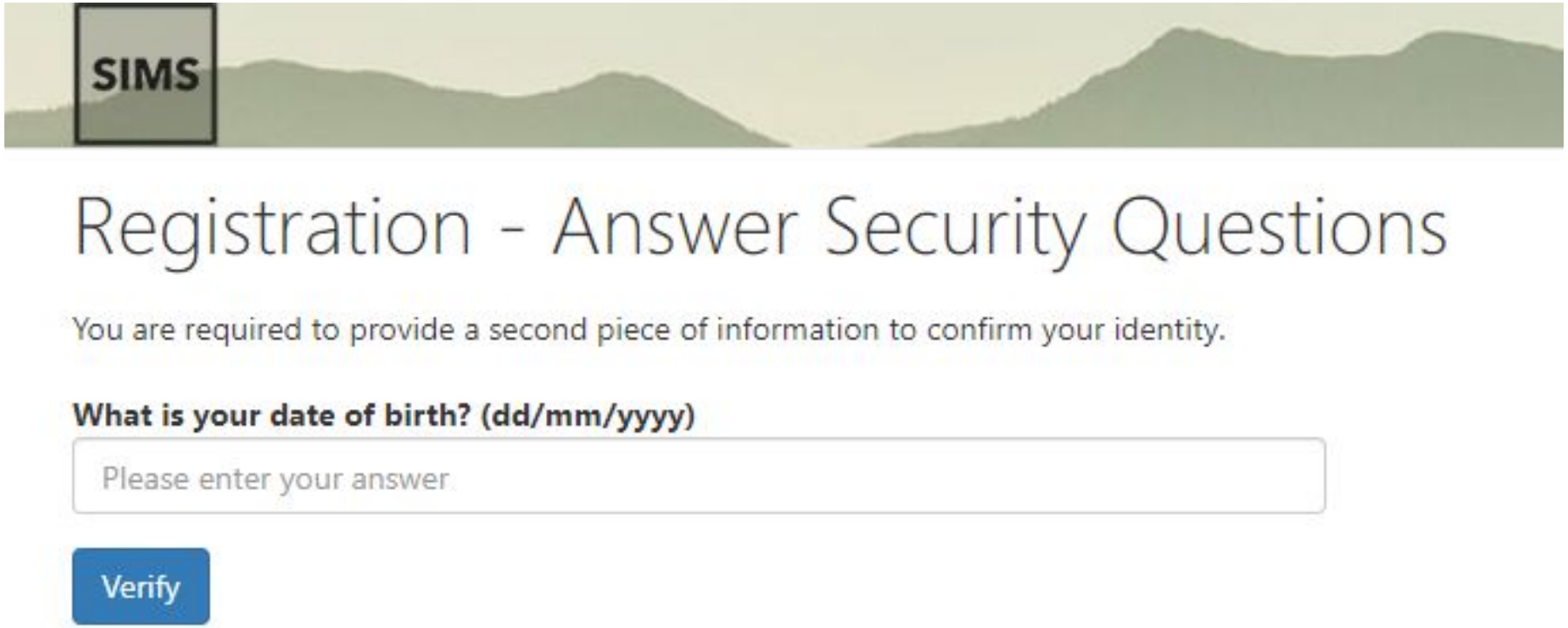
Type in your date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)



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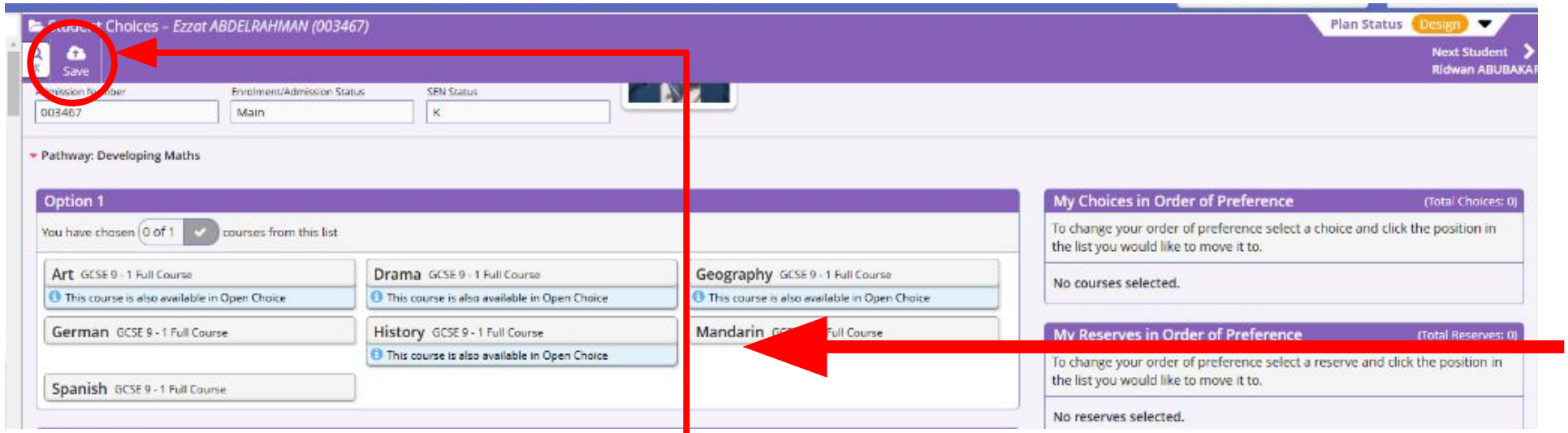
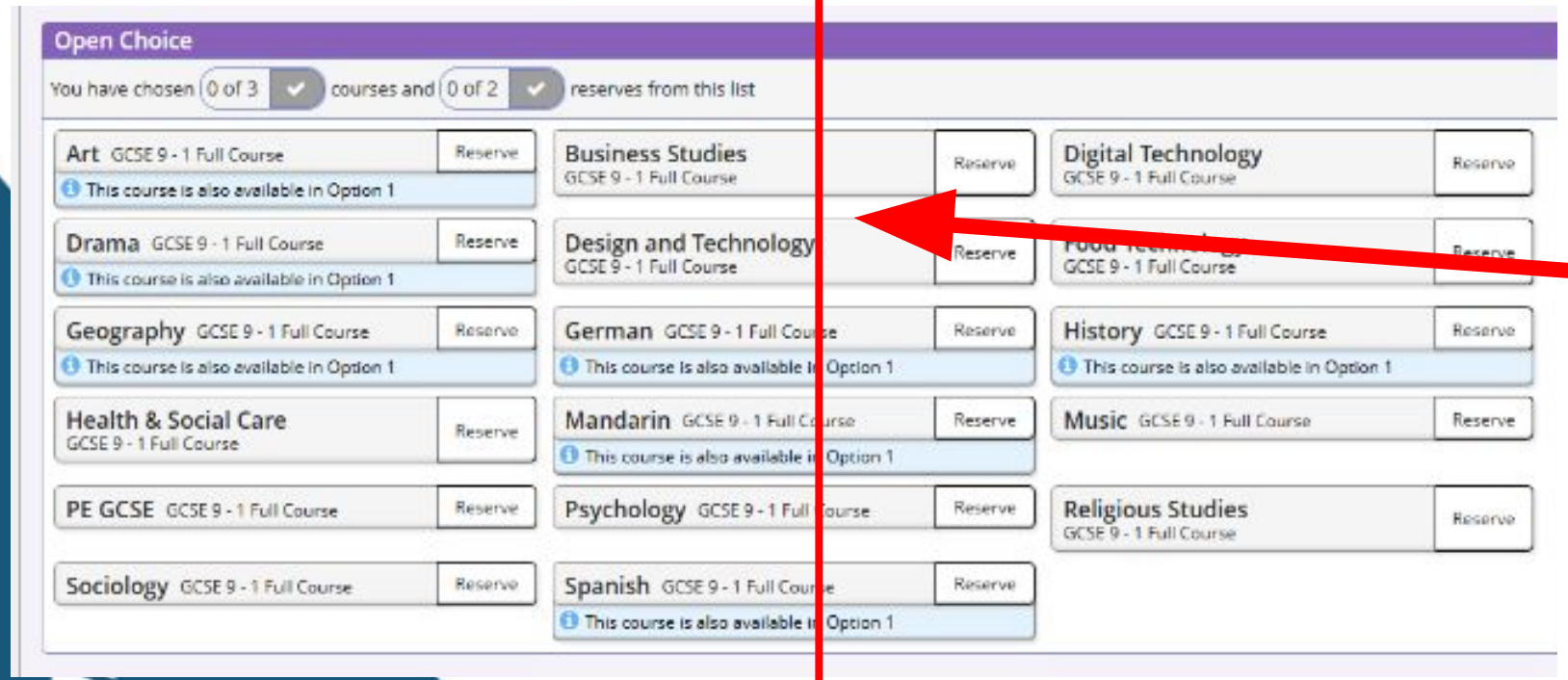


Choose 1 from here by clicking on the subject.



And choose 3 from here. Then choose 2 reserves from here by clicking on the reserve button next to the subject.

Save, save, save!!

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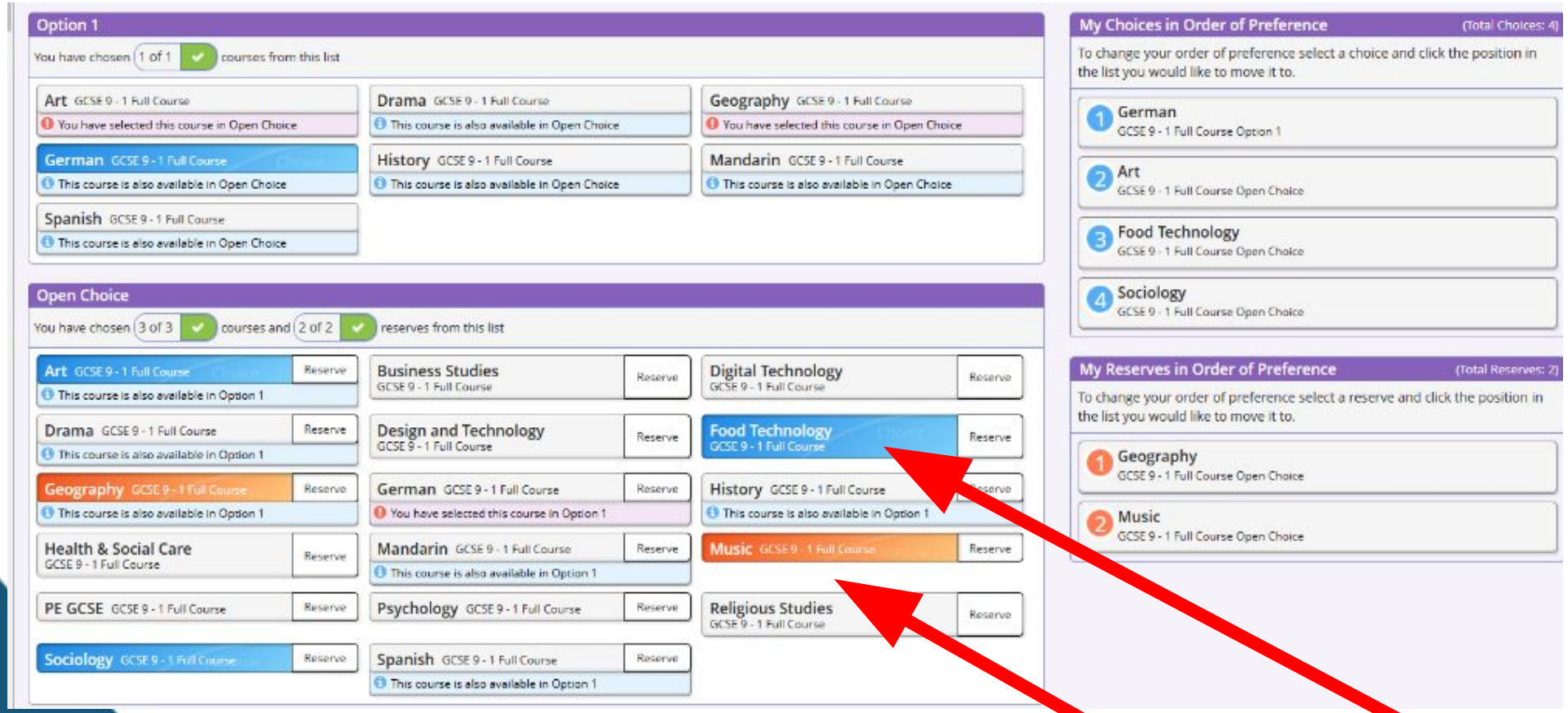

A completed Options choice will look like this

Firm choices are blue

Reserve choices are orange

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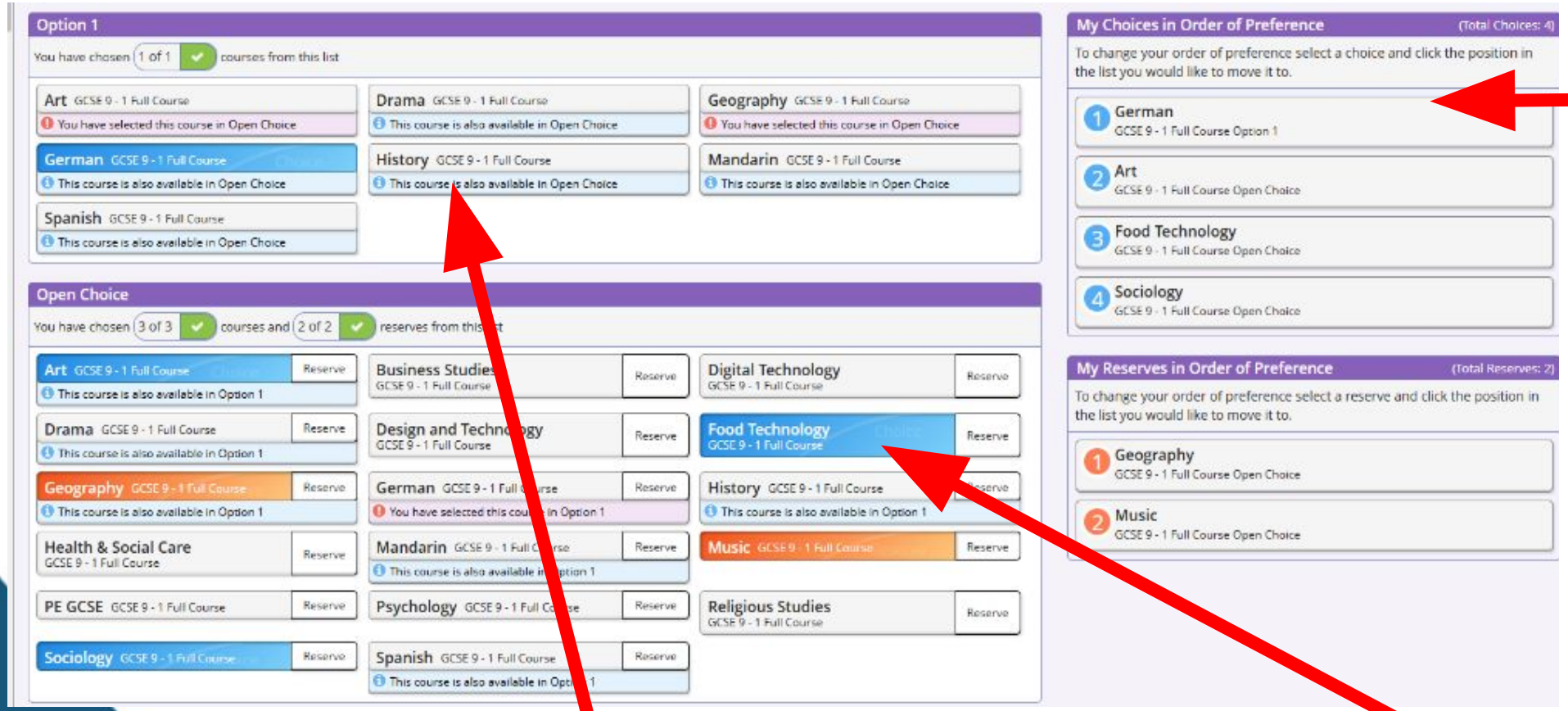
Save, save, save!!



The order of your list is VERY important. We will prioritise 1st and 2nd choices

You can make your selection from the Option 1 list after you make any from the Open Choice list

Change your order by deselecting subjects and reselecting in the correct order

Save, save, save!!

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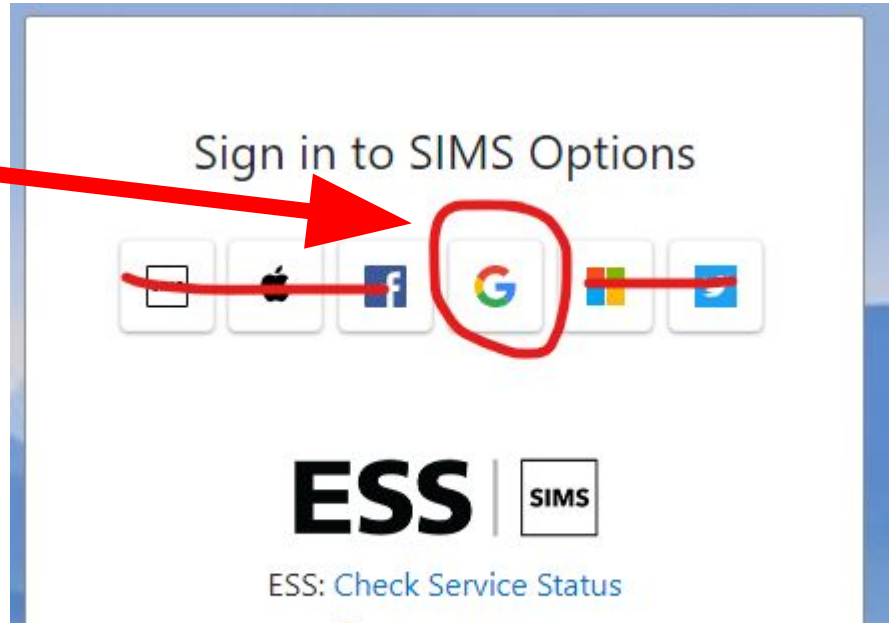
To log back in, go to

(Don’t use the invite email to log back in. It will not work!)

www.sims-options.co.uk

Click on the Google icon and log in using your Academy .org email address.



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Successful transition from Y9 to Y10

Mr Pineiro-Vicente - Director of KS4

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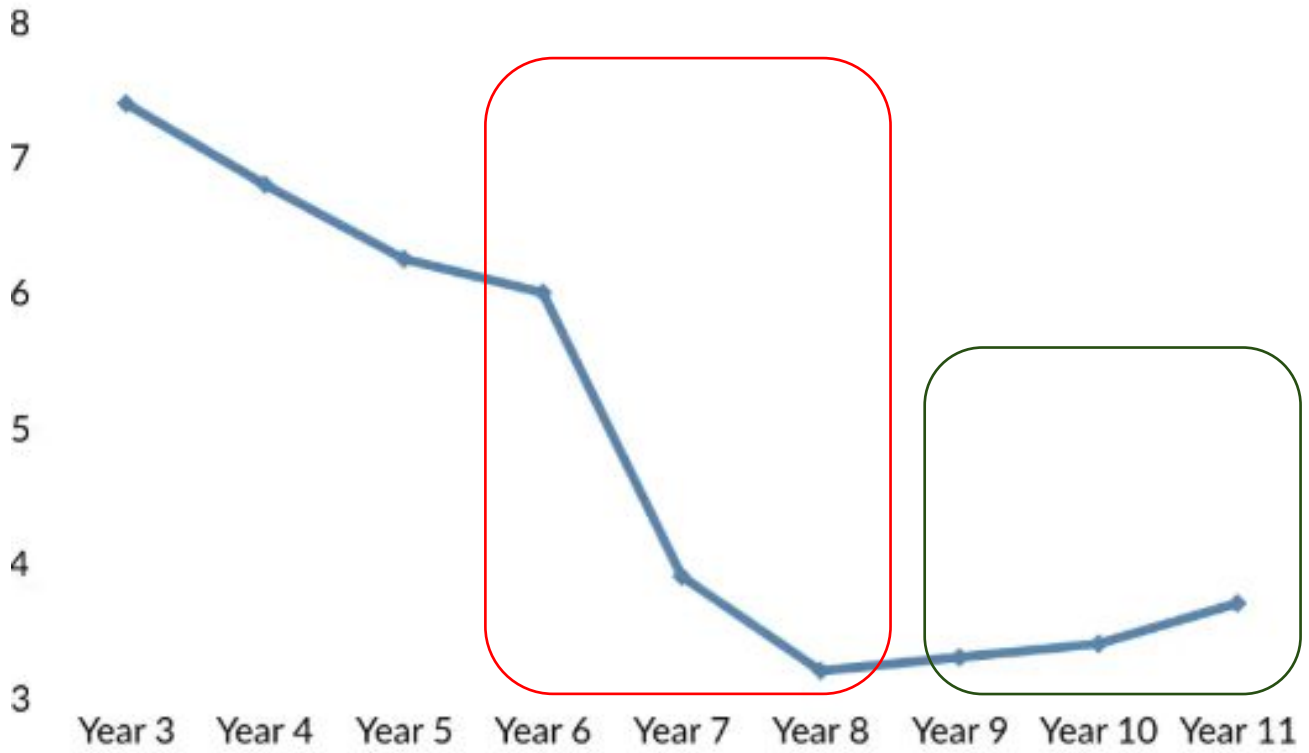
Options = More Enjoyment in Y10 and Y11



Change in enjoyment of school by year group

(ImpactEd, May 2025)

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The timeline to bridge the gap (first round)

1. **March 2026:** Choose subjects via SIMS Options.
2. **April/May 2026**: Year 9 options **agreed** in partnership with Faculty Leaders.
3. **June 2026:** Year 9 options **shared** with students and carers/parents.
4. **June 2026: First survey** (Google Forms) allowing students to request some **subject changes** at this point we will only change reserve choices.
5. **July 2026**: Subject options process has been **completed**.

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The timeline to bridge the gap (second round)

1. **September 2026:** students need to follow their Key Stage 4 **timetables** for **two weeks**.
2. **September 2026** : **Second survey** allowing students to request **subject changes**.
3. **September 2026**: Changes **reviewed** with senior leaders and faculty leaders.
4. **September 2026**: final subject changes **communicated** to students and carers/parents.
5. **From 1st October 2026**: students will be unable to request changes.

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A focused GCSE

- **Subject selection (options)** will define the study path in Y10 and Y11
- A more **specialised** and **deep curriculum** aligned to individual interests.
- **Organisation** and **hard work** will contribute toward successful learning.
- Increased expectations for **independent study.**
- Greater emphasis on **exam preparation** to improve routines and sustain knowledge.

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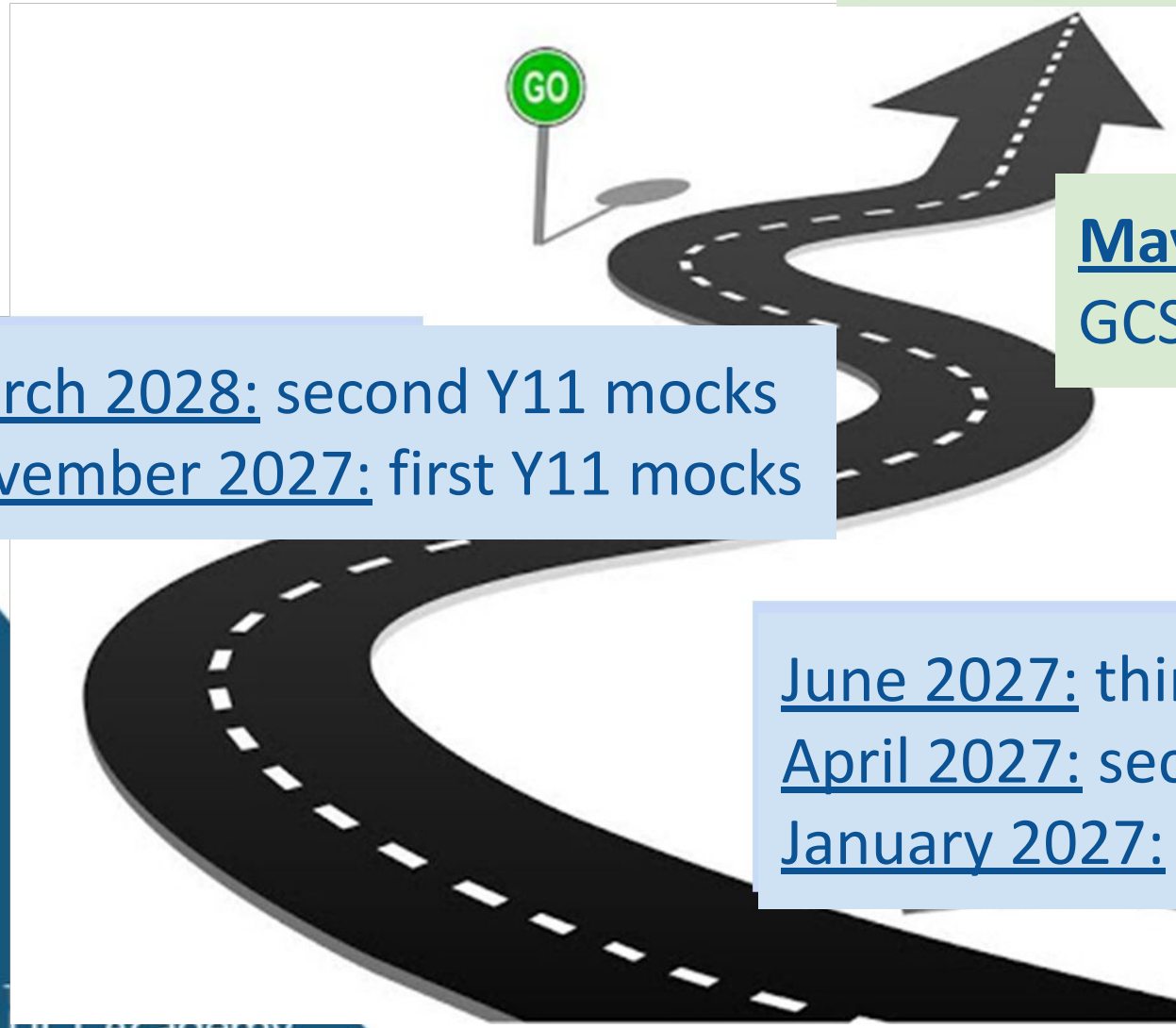
August 2028
GCSE Results day

GCSE



May - June 2028
GCSE Exam Period

March 2028: second Y11 mocks
November 2027: first Y11 mocks

June 2027: third Y10 exams
April 2027: second Y10 exams
January 2027: first Y10 exams

Smooth options = successful transition

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Making the Most of Tonight
Ms Maskell

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Tonight's Event: Priority 1

- See your Maths, English and Science teachers and discuss progress and targets.

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Tonight's Event: Priority 2

- Visit the displays stands and speak to the staff leading the subjects you are thinking about taking next year.
- Subjects are organised as follows:
  - MFL = German, Spanish, Mandarin
  - Humanities: Geography, History, Religious Studies
  - Performance: Art, Drama, Music, Photography
  - Social Sciences: Business Studies, Economics, Health & Social Care, Psychology, Sociology
  - Technology: Design & Technology, Food Prep & Nutrition, Computer Science, Level 2 IT
  - PE

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Questions?

Ms. Maskell - smaskell@uclacademy.co.uk

Mr. Kothari - c.kothari@uclacademy.co.uk

Mr Pineiro-Vincente - pineiro-vicente@uclacademy.org

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The Core Subjects

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What are the core subjects?

- Maths
- English language
- English literature
- Science (Combined or Separate)
- Core PE
- PSHCE

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Can a student pick Separate Sciences?

No. The Faculty Leader for Science decides which students are able to achieve well doing the Separate Science qualifications

- Separate Science is high challenge
- Combined Science has increased significantly in challenge
- Both are excellent preparation for A Level
- Key assessments will determine a student's suitability for Separate Sciences at GCSE

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Guidance and Support

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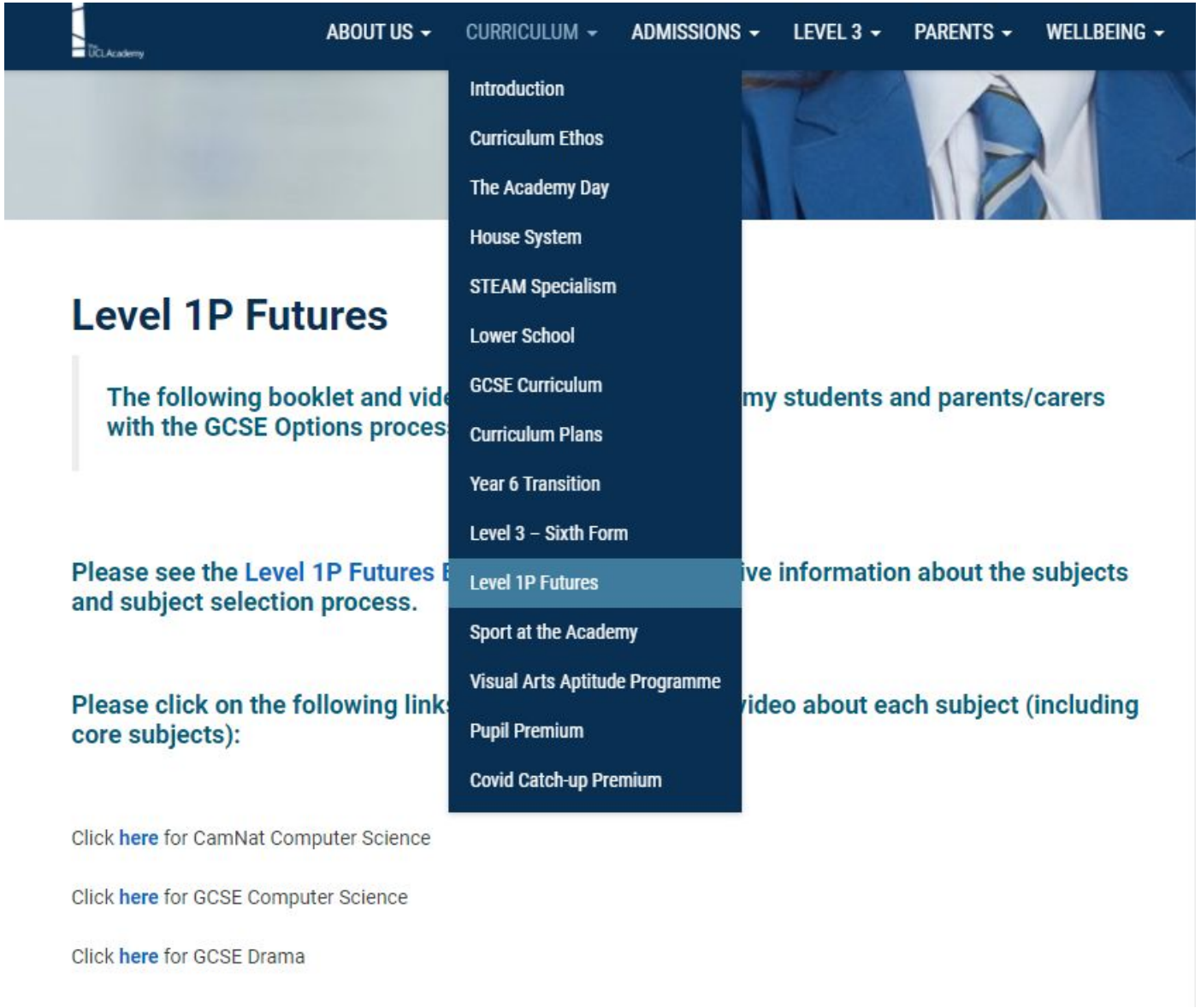
Year 9 Futures section on website



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Support for students and parents

- Futures booklet
- Personal guidance and careers meetings
- Tutor time activities around options and what different careers require

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How can you help your child decide?

- What subjects do they want to study and what do they enjoy?
- What do they have an aptitude for? Grades determine next stage.
- Make sure they are not choosing the same options as their friends.
- All subjects are valued and a balanced set of qualifications is best
- Discuss their ideas about their career/future and watch the subject videos so you know what each course involves.
- Make sure they are talking to staff

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