



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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مدرسة القديسة مريم الكاثوليكية الثانوية

ص.ب. ٥٢٢٣٢، دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة

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OUR REF :

TRN : 10415399800000

DATE: 27th February 2026

**To, Parents of ALL YEAR 8 students at Saint Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai-
Year Nine Subject Options for GCSE study**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's. We are writing to explain why it is going to be necessary to look at Year Nine options into GCSE study in a slightly different way.

Having considered the current subject option process and choices made, it has become clear that to meet the KHDA recommendations for the curriculum to meet the NCFE requirements for KS3 and considering the overwhelming impact that subject options have on future educational pathways, we have decided to now follow a two phased approach over Year Nine and Year Ten.

Attainment data of Year Nine strongly suggests that this new approach will support our ambitions for our students to have the best learning experience possible as we aim to not overwhelm them with all the subject option choices at one go.

In Year Nine, your child will enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum, designed to build essential knowledge and develop a love for learning. Studying English Literature, History and Art are very important in shaping cultural awareness and sensitivity. They will also have the opportunity to choose 4 GCSE options that reflect their interests, strengths and aspirations.

To our dear students, this is your opportunity to begin thinking realistically about your future, be aspirational in your thoughts and aim high. These GCSE years will of course bring increased challenges and greater depth of study, but also wonderful opportunities. With our dedicated Marian family, high academic expectations and supportive environment, we hope that our children will aim to achieve their very best. Many of our students go on to attend famed universities around the world, a true reflection of their hard work here at St. Mary's.

We know that choosing GCSE subjects can be a challenging task, however, please rest assured that our subject leaders and counsellors are here to guide you in every step of the way.

What will this change look like for YEAR Nine students in 2026-2027?

SUITE ONE

Students in Year Nine will study the following subjects as **COMPULSORY GCSE SUBJECTS**

- 1) English Language**
- 2) English Literature**
- 3) Mathematics**
- 4) History**
- 5) Art**
- 6) Geography**
- 7) Religious Studies / Psychology**

(Psychology is only for those students who do not take Islamic Studies or Values Education)

What is the COMPULSORY suite of subject options for students of Year Nine for 2026-2027?

ONE SCIENCE IS COMPULSORY FOR ALL STUDENTS

SUITE TWO

- 1) ICT or Computer Science (ANY ONE)**
- 2) Biology or Accounting (ANY ONE)**
- 3) Chemistry or Economics (ANY ONE)**
- 4) Physics or Business Studies (ANY ONE)**

**** Please note that ICT/Computer Science and one Science have been made compulsory to further closely align with the British Curriculum, as pointed out in our KHDA inspection process over the last few years with a view to furthering students access to technology, thus arming them with the requisite 21st Century skills.*

A minimum of one approved GCSE Science will also be required later if Equivalency is sought in the UAE.

COMPUTER SCIENCE: Kindly note that places for Computer Science will be restricted to those students who currently display a secure understanding and application of computational thinking and problem-solving skills. Programming skills are a core component of this course, and students will be required to have a knowledge of Python and be competent at designing, writing and debugging programmes . In case the places are oversubscribed, the school will have to allot seats strictly based on current academic competence in ICT.

What are the STATUTORY MOE SUBJECTS for students of Year Nine for 2026-2027?

SUITE THREE

- 1) Arabic B (compulsory for non-Arabs till Year 10)
- 2) Arabic A (compulsory for Arabs till Year 13)
- 3) MSC-Moral Social and Cultural Studies (compulsory for Non-Arabs till Year 10)
- 4) Islamic Studies A or B (Only for Muslim students and compulsory till Year 13)
- 5) Social Studies for Arabs (compulsory till Year 10)
- 6) Moral Education for Arabs (compulsory till Year 13)

What will be PHASE TWO of the Subject-Option Choices in Year Ten/ KS4?

Students will continue with the following COMPULSORY Subjects in YEAR TEN

- 1) Students will carry forward their 4 Subject choices from **SUITE 2**
- 2) Students will carry forward the 3 statutory subjects from **SUITE 3**
- 3) Students will continue with the following compulsory GCSE subjects
 - a) English Language
 - b) Mathematics
 - c) Religious Studies or Psychology
- 4) Students will choose **ANY ONE OPTION FROM** (English Literature or Art or History or Psychology)

Students will therefore have a minimum of Eight GCSE Pearson Edexcel Subjects and three Statutory MOE subjects in YEAR Ten.

TIMELINE FOR YEAR NINE SUBJECT CHOICE OPTIONS -SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

	SUPPORTING EVENTS	DATES
1	Letter for Psychometric Testing (Aptitude Testing to parents of Year 8 students)	20 th February 2026
2	Window to decide on Optional Aptitude Testing	20 th February -2 nd March 2026
3	Tentative date for Aptitude and results explained -All online	28 th March 2026 - Online
4	Subject Orientation Sessions Biology, Accounting Business Studies and Physics-GIRLS -Mini Hall	25 th February 2026
5	Subject Orientation Sessions Economics, Chemistry, ICT and Computer Science-GIRLS-Mini Hall	26 th February 2026
6	Subject Orientation Sessions Biology, Accounting Business Studies and Physics-BOYS -Main Hall	27 th February 2026
7	Subject Orientation Sessions Economics, Chemistry, ICT and Computer Science-BOYS-Main Hall	2 nd March 2026
8	Orientation session presentations sent to parents	5 th March 2026
9	Availability of Subject leaders to meet with parents. Parents who wish to speak to subject leaders are invited to come to school and meet the subject leaders in the school library.	7 th March 2026. 8:00 -11:30 am
10	Final Date for return of Subject Option forms to class teachers	6 th April 2026

Parents are asked to complete this by **Monday, 6th April 2026**.

Kindly fill this in and scan it and email the same to your child's class teacher. This will be the final deadline for accepting subject choice forms.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

**SUBJECT -OPTION CHOICE FORMS FOR STUDENTS
OF YEAR EIGHT GOING TO YEAR NINE
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027.**

NAME OF CHILD: _____

YEAR AND SECTION: _____

RELIGION : _____ **NATIONALITY :** _____

- 1) ENGLISH LANGUAGE (Compulsory)
- 2) ENGLISH LITERATURE (Compulsory)
- 3) MATHEMATICS (Compulsory)
- 4) GEOGRAPHY (Compulsory)
- 5) HISTORY (Compulsory)
- 6) ART (Compulsory)
- 7) RELIGIOUS STUDIES (Compulsory for students who take Islamic Studies and Values Education)
- 8) ARABIC A or B (Compulsory MOE subject)
- 9) MORAL AND SOCIAL CULTURAL STUDIES -MSC (Compulsory MOE subject)
- 10) PSYCHOLOGY (Compulsory for students who do not take Values Education or Islamic Studies)

PLEASE TURN OVERLEAF FOR THE OPTIONAL SUBJECT CHOICES

You can choose ONLY ONE SUBJECT FROM EACH OPTION

11) ICT or COMPUTER SCIENCE -Choose ANY ONE

12) BIOLOGY or ACCOUNTING- Choose ANY ONE

13) PHYSICS or BUSINESS STUDIES- Choose ANY ONE

14) CHEMISTRY or ECONOMICS- Choose ANY ONE

- **ONE SCIENCE IS COMPULSORY FOR ALL STUDENTS.**
- **IN ORDER TO TAKE A GIVEN SCIENCE AT A-LEVEL, THE STUDENT MUST HAVE TAKEN THE SCIENCE AT GCSE (effective August 2027).**

NAME OF PARENT: _____

PARENT MOBILE NUMBER: _____

PARENT EMAIL ID : _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____