



SUBJECT OPTION CHOICE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

April 2020

What influences the subject choice we offer?



- The School's Vision and Mission Statement.
- National Curriculum Framework.
- Secondary Education Certificate [SEC] exams.
- Vocational Education & Training [VET] exams.
- Post-secondary education entry requirements.
- Mixed abilities in the student population.

What challenges do we face?



- **Staff organization**

We are a small school and many teachers teach across the lower and upper seniors. This can lead to time-table restrictions.

- **Student population and group numbers**

We offer an open combination of option subjects in a year group of 52 students. The wider the choice, the smaller some groups can be. This is an advantage, but can also be a disadvantage if groups are too small to be viable.

Compulsory Subjects in Senior III

Compulsory Subjects leading to SEC Certification:

- Religion
- Mathematics
- Maltese
- English Language
- English Literature
- Social Studies

Compulsory Subjects NOT leading to SEC Certification:

- PSCD
- PE
- ICT C3*

* Leading to certification other than SEC

Option Subjects



All students are to choose an additional
4 OPTION SUBJECTS

which must include at least

one Science subject

one Foreign Language

SEC Certification



On completing their secondary education in
Senior V

our students can sit for

10 SEC Exams [MQF Level 3]

They would also have completed ICT C3 at MQF Level 3.

Post-Secondary Education

SIXTH FORM

- Students need 6 passes in SEC Exams, at grade 5 or higher, to enter **Sixth Form**.
- These 6 SEC Exam passes *must include* Maltese, English Language, Mathematics, one Science subject [Physics or Biology or Chemistry] and *any two* other subjects.

MCAST

- Foundation Courses at other post-secondary institutions like MCAST are available for students who do not achieve 6 SEC Exam passes.

Option Subject Choice

1. **Compulsory Science:** Choose **ONE** of the following:

Physics Biology Chemistry

2. **Compulsory Foreign Language:** Choose **ONE** of the following:

French Italian

3. **Additional Option Subjects:** Choose **any TWO** of the following:

Accounts Art Biology Chemistry Physics
French Italian Physical Education Home Economics
Computer Studies Economics Information Technology [SEC VET]

Option Subjects

- All students will take Physical Education as a core subject throughout their secondary school years.
- We also offer **Physical Education as an option subject**, leading to SEC certification in Senior V.
- All students will take ICT C3 as a core subject throughout their secondary school years, leading to certification at MQF Level 3 in Senior 5.
- We also offer **Information Technology as an option subject**, which is a vocational option subject different to **Computing**.
- Four lessons a week are dedicated to every subject option.
- All option subjects lead to a SEC Certificate at MQF Level 3.

PE Option – SEC Certificate

- Students who choose to take **PE Option** will require a medical certificate that shows they are fit to undertake swimming sessions at the National Pool, Tal-Qroqq and Athletics sessions at athletic venues outside the school.
- Transport to these swimming and athletic sessions will be organised by the school but will have to be paid for by parents, as will rental fees for pool lanes & track. This should cost around €50 per scholastic year, per student.
- Payment will be made in October for the full school year; students who are away from school on the days when swimming/athletic sessions are held will not be reimbursed.
- Every effort will be made to have swimming and athletic sessions organised during school hours, but some after-school sessions may need to be organised too.

PE Option – SEC Certificate



Students who choose ***PE Option*** at SEC Level will be able to continue taking the subject at Intermediate Level at Sixth Form.

It is envisaged that further openings at University Level in Sport Education are also part of national plans.

IT Option – SEC VET Certificate

Three Units spread over three years, from **Senior III to Senior V**

Every year, each Unit will be assessed by **THREE assessment tasks**:

- Assignment 1 [30 marks]
- Assignment 2 [30 marks]
- Controlled Assessment [40 marks]

There will be no Mid-Yearly Exams for SEC VOC IT

Assignments are verified internally by the school

IT Option – SEC VET Certificate

The **controlled assessment** will be set by the MATSEC Board and it will be common for all schools.

This assessment will be designed on a selected set of criteria which will be published in advance and communicated to all schools.

The controlled assessment will be held on the same date and at the same time in all schools.

The controlled assessment will be supervised by the MATSEC Board.

The controlled assessment will be marked by the teacher and verified externally.

IT Option – SEC VET Certificate

For students in Senior III and IV, the controlled assessment is to take place at the end of *May*.

For students in Senior V, the controlled assessment will take place at the end of the second term.

Once the external verifier releases the marks, the school forwards them to the MATSEC Board.

The marks of the three Units will be added and the cumulative percentage mark determines the grade to be awarded.

Candidates may qualify for Grades 1 to 7. The results of candidates who do not obtain at least a Grade 7 shall remain unclassified (U).

Grades 1 to 5 are considered as MQF Level 3 qualifications and Grades 6 and 7 as MQF Grade 2 qualifications.

Important Considerations

A subject grouping can only be offered if there are enough applicants and if it can be time-tabled.

Students and parents must fill in the online Options Form and submit it by Monday 4th May 2020.

Submitting the form early can give students an advantage, because once a subject group limit is reached, the group may be closed. Many subjects have a limit of 16 students because of lab work.

If it is not possible to give a student her first preference, parents will be contacted individually by email.

All students will be notified about the course they will be taking next year by June 2020.

Important Considerations

Students will NOT be allowed to change subjects after June 2020.

Students are not allowed to drop any subjects in Senior III or Senior IV unless on the specific recommendation of an Educational Psychologist.

SEC & VET Examination Syllabi are set over three years [Seniors III, IV and V].

Coursework must be worked out and handed in over the three years, and its safekeeping is the responsibility of the student. All coursework will need to be handed in for moderation in Senior 5.

Factors influencing choice

Positive Factors:

- Student's preference
- Realistic aspirations
- Right aptitude
- Ability and achievement
- Career opportunities

Negative Factors:

- Liking/not liking a teacher
- Unrealistic aspirations
- Peer pressure
- Parents' imposition

Some points to reflect on ... 😊

- ❑ Choosing the same option subject as a friend does not necessarily mean you will be in the same home class.
- ❑ Remember you will be studying 10 subjects, over 3 years, so choose subjects you will enjoy and that you can manage. Be realistic in your choice by looking at your past academic performance too.
- ❑ There are many career paths and post-secondary institutions to choose from – check out websites and information online before choosing your subjects.

Guiding Students through their Choice

This year's course choice will be the first of many careers-related choices and decisions our students need to make during the next few years.

We are providing the following assistance ...



Live Online Meeting



MS Teams Live Online Meeting
with Mrs Fleri Soler
on Friday 24th April at 5.30pm

If you wish to participate in this online meeting, please send
an email to head@stjosephsliema.edu.mt
by Thursday 24th April
and you will receive instructions on how to join the meeting.

Consultations with Head of School

Parents and/or students who wish to ask for personal guidance by **email** are very welcome to send direct email correspondence to Mrs Fleri Soler at **head@stjosephsliema.edu.mt**

Cell phone conversations are also possible, but please contact Mrs Fleri Soler by email to set an appointment.

Consultations with Guidance Teachers

Ms Nathalie Camilleri and Ms Sarah Grech are very willing to offer your daughters personal guidance through email or MS Teams Chat, and they can be contacted on their work email addresses:

n.camilleri@stjosephsliema.edu.mt

s.grech@stjosephsliema.edu.mt

Option Choice Booklet



Our Guidance Teachers,
Ms Nathalie Camilleri and Ms Sarah Grech,
have prepared an Option Choice Booklet
that is being circulated with this presentation.

The booklet lists important links to post-secondary institutions and also gives information about different subject options.

Option Subjects – Teacher Presentations



Subject Teachers of all the option subjects have prepared a presentation about their subject to help your daughters understand what their subject is about.

The email addresses of the subject teachers are available in the presentations should you wish to email them directly to ask any questions.

Laboratory Contribution



We collect a one-time contribution of Euro 50 to subsidise laboratory expenses for the 3 year period your daughter will be using lab provisions in school.

We usually collect this contribution when option forms are submitted, but since we are working remotely this year, we will collect the Euro 50 from each student in September 2020.

Submitting your daughter's Option Choice

Please submit your daughter's option choice online by clicking on the hyperlink sent to you by email.

The deadline for submission of the online form is

Monday 4th May 2020.

Failure to meet this deadline may mean that your daughter cannot be granted her first choice of subjects.

This deadline cannot be extended because a complex classification and timetabling exercise needs to be worked out before I can let students know whether their choice can be accepted.

Thank You



Thank you for your attention
and for helping us work
on this complex exercise remotely!