

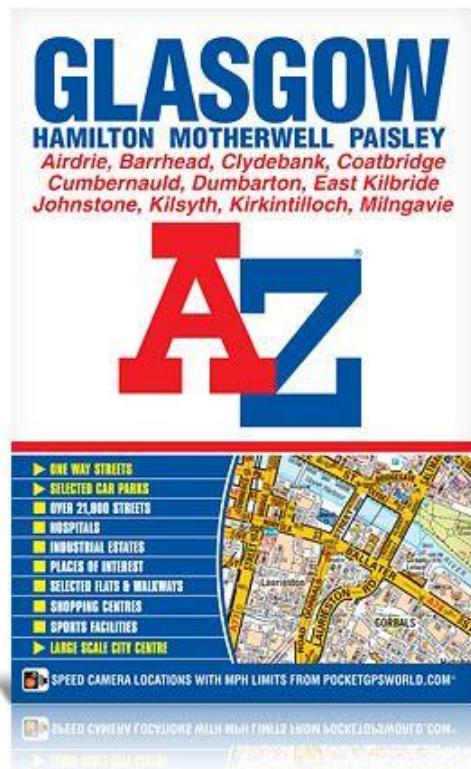
# S4 Options Choices

Options Choices: Navigating the  
Journey

# Options Choices: Navigating the Journey

- You will often hear us speak about student destinations
- Destinations are the next stage in life that a student moves to following the completion of their schooling
  - Employment
  - College
  - University
  - Apprenticeships
  - Training
- Senior options choices represent a key directions students will take towards their preferred destination.
- Of course we want every pupil to arrive at their preferred destination.
- But some journeys have the occasional bump in the road or obstacle to work around!

# How to Navigate the Journey Towards Your Destination



- Is the information you are using to guide your journey the most current that's available?

# How to Navigate the Journey Towards Your Destination



- Does the information make sense to you?
- Is the information the correct advice for you?
- Does the information guide you towards the quickest or more sensible route?

# How to Navigate the Journey Towards Your Destination



- You may need to ask for help to make sure you have the **most current, accurate and suitable information** to guide you
  - Pastoral Care Teacher
  - PT World of Work (Mr G. Mullin)
  - Careers Advisor (Vanessa Kokota)
  - Senior Leadership Team
  - Universities, Colleges, Training Providers

# S4 Options Choices

- You should select your “Best Five” in S5
  - Your “Best Five” are the 5 best qualifications you achieved in S4 (of the 8 subjects you selected for S3-S4)
  - Selecting your “Best Five” gives the best opportunity to achieve 5 strong awards in S5
  - Remember that you can review your options choices in August after you have received your result, so you can ensure that you are picking your “Best Five”

# But don't I have to take particular subjects?

- You **don't have to** take any subject that isn't amongst your "Best 5"
  - Is **Higher Maths**\* (in S5) a necessity?
    - Higher Prelim v N5 Course Award
      - » **Of 25 A passes in S5 Higher prelim, 25 had achieved an A in National 5;**
      - » Of 11 B passes in S5 Higher prelim, 9 had achieved an A in National 5, 1 grade B and 1 grade C;
      - » Of 8 C passes in S5 Higher prelim, 5 had achieved an A in National 5, 2 grade B and 1 grade C;
      - » **13 out of 15 pupils who had achieved grade C in National 5 did not pass the Higher prelim at grade A-C.**
  - Are **three Sciences** (in S5) really required?
    - » Will you be happy with such a narrow curriculum?
    - » Can one of these be picked up in S6?
    - » Which destinations require this?
  - Check University/College/Apprenticeship/Other requirements and decide accordingly

*\* It is worth checking whether preferred destinations require a National 5 Mathematics qualification (often required at grade B)*

# Why five options choices?

- Students should commit to completing all courses selected in S5
  - In our recent experience, “dropping” a subject midway through the session does not improve the quality of qualifications achieved in the remaining four subjects
    - If a student’s preferred destination requires 5 qualifications in S5, then this destination may no longer be a possibility
  - Is **time** really the factor which will determine their success (or otherwise) in their subjects?
    - Is the student attending supported study?
    - Has the student sought additional support from their class teacher?
    - Does the student have an independent revision programme?
  - A structured and sustained programme of independent revision (alongside additional supports) is far more effective than “dropping a subject” in ensuring the best chance of successful course awards.
  - Is a curriculum of fewer subjects and less workload really preparing students for University?



# Does a Free Choice Options Form mean I'll be able to choose anything?

- While the options process begins as “free choice”, there is a limit to the range of choice that can eventually be offered.
  - It is not always possible to “re-sit” S4 subjects
    - National 5 classes cannot be offered in all subjects
  - Not every combination of five subjects can be guaranteed
    - Well over 320 pupils will select Senior Options; we attempt to accommodate as many of the combinations selected as possible.
    - You may need to pick up one of your preferred subjects in S6

# Does a Free Choice Options Form mean I'll be able to choose anything?

- Some subjects are available for S6 only (Higher Politics, etc.)
  - S6 pupils do not have the same range of choice as S5 pupils (they have already chosen 5 subjects from the options form in their S5), so some subjects are offered only to S6 to ensure they have an appropriate breadth of choice.
- As they will select their “Best 5” from S4, S5 pupils are not able to “crash” subjects
  - S5 pupils have no “study periods” to fill gaps in learning, having not studied the subject in S3-S4
  - S6 students are permitted to “crash” as they can select 4 (rather than 5) choices, leaving 6 periods per week as study periods where these gaps can be filled.

# The Key Advice: Research, Research, Research!

- Before making options choices, ensure that your proposed options choices reflect the demands of your preferred destinations
  - Be aware that requirements might be different from one college/university/apprenticeship provider to another
  - For example: entry requirements vary from course to course, and from University to University
- Carefully check the entry requirements for the destination in which you are interested
  - Are any subjects/grades identified as a necessity?
  - Are any subjects not acceptable?
  - Some students believe there to be a preference for “academic” vs. “non-academic “subjects; this is not our experience

# The Key Advice: Research, Research, Research!

- Make sure you know the difference between a minimum entry requirement and a standard/typical entry requirement.
  - Make sure you clarify the entry requirements for 1 or 2 sittings
  - First sitting = S5 (not the first time you attempted that particular Higher course)
- Be wary of limiting yourself by aiming only for (and not beyond) the entry requirements of your first preferred destination
  - You may not yet know what you might like to do following this.
  - You'll be writing your school results on application form for many years!

# What's Next?

- Senior Options Forms
  - March (Free Choice)
  - June (Post-Exams)
  - August (Post-Results)
- Which Way Now Evening Sept/Oct 2019 (Date: TBC)