



Course Choice for S5

The priority for the school is to ensure that, as far as is possible, every young person experiences success in the courses they are undertaking in S5 (and S6) and leaves with a set of qualifications which opens as many doors as possible for them beyond school.

The advice we offer each pupil is based on three factors

- ◆ Our personal knowledge of them
- ◆ A detailed understanding of how pupils in Jordanhill School perform in S5
- ◆ National data about the likely level of success based on performance to date



We expect every pupil to be ambitious and to take on a significant challenge. The school believes that a positive, optimistic attitude to education and learning underpins academic successes. We actively encourage pupils to have high expectations and avoid saying that they *won't* cope or *can't* do great things.

However, we do not encourage pupils to set out on programmes which carry a high risk of failure as this is ultimately de-motivating and restricts rather than enhances options beyond school.

Every year, before and after the results are published, we help pupils choose the most suitable courses and ensure that they have the entry requirements for each of their chosen subjects. This can be a lengthy process, but pupils without the individual entry requirements for a subject or the overall grades to study a package of subjects are highly unlikely to succeed.

Factors to Consider

- ◆ Over 90% of pupils in S5 say that the work in S5 is far more demanding than they had expected
- ◆ A minority of HE courses ask for pupils to pass all of their Highers in S5. Increasingly, the universities let applicants use results gained in both S5 and S6.
- ◆ Pupils with 3 'B' grades at Higher are better placed than those with 4 or even 5 'C' grades when applying to university
- ◆ Attempting Highers in all of the subjects in which you have the entry requirements is only a good idea if you have scored highly in all of your S4 subjects
- ◆ Rates nationally for re-sitting Highers are very poor
 - less than 50% of pupils pass a Higher in S6 if they failed it in S5
 - only 15% of pupils who gain a 'C' improve on this grade in S6



The idea that *'I might as well do the Higher because I can always re-sit it next year'* simply does not work.

When we speak to pupils about their course choices at the start of S5, it is common to hear them say they will work much harder in S5 than they did in S4. Many pupils assure us that they will change their work patterns and / or arrange for extra support out of class. Our analysis of Jordanhill pupils and their successes takes all of these factors into account.

Higher Grade Entry Requirements

The entry requirement for most Higher Grade subjects is an 'A' or a 'B' at National 5. For individual Highers the chances of passing are around

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|  | 70% with a Grade A at National 5 |
|  | 30-45% with a Grade B at National 5 |
|  | 10% with a Grade C at National 5 |

Entry to subjects such as Art and Music depend more on the pupil's aptitude for that subject.

Pupils are also expected to reach a threshold of overall performance in S4 from which they have a reasonable chance of success for the combination of course being chosen in S5.

Direct entry to Higher in a subject not studied before is likely to depend on performance in related subjects and/or the mathematical and/or language demands of the course. Prior performance in Mathematics and English will be taken into account.

Plan across S5 and S6

Think carefully about possible destinations beyond school and research the entry requirements for these: apprenticeships, further and higher education. The aim is to achieve as highly as possible by the end of S6. Think about progression from S5 to S6

- What do I need/want to study in S6 so what do I need to do in S5
- What do I need/want to do after school so what do I need to achieve across S5 and S6

A number of subjects offer the opportunity to complete Higher Grade across the two years of S5 and S6. This can be a useful option to avoid overload in S5.

