

General information on the choice of subjects s1-s7

Dear pupils

Dear parents and guardians

Our school offers a very wide range of subjects which enable pupils to increasingly specialise according to their own wishes and preferences. In the Baccalaureate cycle s6/s7 pupils can, to a large extent, design their own teaching programme according to their interests and future outlook. In the following summary we would like to give an overview of these possibilities.

1. Basic regulations

Regulations on the range and choice of subjects can be found in the General Rules¹ and in the Document on the Organization of Studies and Courses in the European Schools². Some particularly important regulations are listed here in excerpts:

- Course selection must be made in such a way that the minimum and maximum number of hours per week are met.
- A course in s1-5 must reach the minimum number of seven pupils to be established. In s6/s7, optional courses are opened if at least five pupils have chosen this course.
- For cycles s1-3 and s4/s5, the Joint Pedagogical Committee in 2014 reiterated that an optional subject chosen at the beginning of the cycle must in principle be taken until the end of the cycle.
- In some cases, subjects can only be chosen if they have already been taken in previous years.
- The first language (L1) determined at the time of the pupil's enrolment is in principle definitive. A change of the first language can only be initiated by members of the class conference. It can only be approved by the school management if there are compelling pedagogical reasons duly established by the class conference.

¹ „General Rules of the European School“ to be found on the website for the Office of the Secretary General of the European Schools at <https://www.eurasc.eu/BasicTexts/2014-03-D-14-en-11.pdf>

² Document „Revision of the Decisions of the Board of Governors concerning the organization of studies and courses in the European Schools (2019-04-DE-13-en-2)“ <https://www.eurasc.eu/BasicTexts/2019-04-D-13-en-2.pdf>

2. Information for s1-3

In the first three years, pupils are taught in their mother tongue in most subjects. A second foreign language (L3) is now compulsory for all pupils from S1 onwards. Here they can choose between German, English, French, Italian or Spanish. Pupils whose nationality is Irish or Maltese can also take Gaelic or Maltese as optional subjects.

Latin is optional from s2 onwards. If Latin is chosen, it must be continued in s3 and can only be discontinued in s4. In the case where Latin is chosen, computer science (ICT) cannot also be taken in s3, but it can be chosen from s4 onwards without having taken it beforehand in s3. For pupils with L1 Greek, Ancient Greek is offered as an optional subject.

In s3, all pupils are taught humanities, religion or ethics in their first foreign language (L2). Those who have chosen Latin continue with this subject. The remaining pupils are offered Computer Science (ICT) as an optional subject.

3. Information for s4/s5

In the fourth and fifth year, the compulsory subjects in integrated sciences are differentiated into physics, chemistry and biology, and in human sciences into history and geography. Pupils can choose between the standard course (4 hours) and the intensive course (6 hours) in mathematics. Optional subjects include art, music, computer science (2 hours), economics, Latin (if already taken in s2 and s3), ancient Greek and a third foreign language L4 (4 hours each). The chosen teaching programme must be between 31 and 35 hours per week.

In mathematics, a subsequent change of level between the intensive and standard course is only possible on the basis of a written justified application with the approval of the director and the class conference; in the case of a request of the higher level, an examination is required. If the change is requested in s4, the application must be submitted by 15 January of the current school year at the latest, with the change then coming into effect in the 2nd semester. For applications received by 31 March, a change in the new school year (s5) can be approved.

4. Information for s6/s7

S6 and s7 form a cycle of study and lead to the Baccalaureate. Although a number of compulsory subjects are set (L1, L2, religion/ethics, mathematics (standard or intensive course), a science subject, philosophy, physical education, history and geography), pupils have a wide range of further options, such as another foreign language L5 or laboratory courses. In

addition, they can choose between two-hour, four-hour or so-called advanced courses. The chosen teaching programme must be between 31 and 36 hours per week.

When choosing a subject for s6 (deadline: 31.01. in the school year of s5) - and only then - a change of the choice of foreign language can be applied for, whereby the relevant regulations (e.g. organisational requirements of the school, successful passing of language assessment) must be observed. Approval can then be given for the choice of a different L2 (with language test), an increase in the level of a certain language (e.g. from L4 to L3, with language test) as well as a downgrading of the level of a particular language (e.g. from L2 to L3). If a change of L2 is approved, the former L2 remains the language of instruction for history, geography, economics and all chosen supplementary subjects.

The possibilities for changing subjects for pupils who are promoted from year 6 to year 7 are regulated in the document "Arrangement for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate"³. After a written request (deadline 31.03. of the current school year), the agreement of the Director and class council, the following can be approved at the beginning of Year 7:

- A change in mathematics from the intensive to the standard course.
- Change from a 4-hour optional subject to a 2-hour compulsory subject (e.g. history, geography, biology, philosophy).
- Change from a 2-hour compulsory subject to a 4-hour optional subject (examination required).

Important: At least two option subjects must be chosen. In addition, the substitution of an option subject for another is not permitted.

5. Deadlines for the choice of subjects

The deadlines for the choice of subjects are as follows:

- Choice of subjects in s1 for s2 (online): 31.01. of the respective school year
- Choice of subjects in s2 for s3 (online): 31.01. of the respective school year
- Choice of subjects in s3 for s4/s5 (online): 31.01. of the respective school year
- Choice of subjects in s5 for the s6/s7 (online): 31.01. of the respective school year

6. Provisions for the subsequent change of the choice of subjects

If there are important pedagogical or health reasons which make a subsequent change in the choice of subjects absolutely necessary, the following regulations and procedures apply:

³„Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate (Applicable for the Year 2023 European Baccalaureate session) to be found on the website for the Office of the Secretary General of the European Schools at <https://www.eurasc.eu/BasicTexts/2015-05-D-12-en-35.pdf>

A written, signed application must be submitted to the school management by the parents, legal guardians or the adult pupil via the responsible educational advisor who will provide the form "Application to opt out of a subject". In the application, compelling reasons must be explained in detail, if applicable with supporting documents. The deadline for such requests is 31 March of the current school year for all grades. In year 6 there is the exception that in special cases the change can still be approved within the first eight days of the new school year on the basis of a justified application. Applications received after these deadlines cannot be considered for organisational reasons. In certain cases, examinations have to be taken for the purpose of level classification. Depending on the regulations, the consultation and opinion of the class conference is then necessary. In the end, the director decides on the application on the basis of the available documents.

If you have any questions about the choice of subjects, please visit our regular information events. You are also welcome to contact the Education Advisory Service or Careers Guidance who can also advise you, for example, on the requirements of certain degree programmes in the various countries.

Kind regards,



Martin Duggen
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