



KINROSS HIGH SCHOOL

LEARNING TOGETHER ♦ ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Course Choice Policy

January 2025

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OVERVIEW

This policy has been written to provide our Learning Community with information about the course choice procedure that young people make as they transition through school (in particular this policy applies to young people in S2 moving on to S3, S3 to S4, S4 to S5 and S5 to S6).

BACKGROUND

Choosing the right courses is important for a young person's future. The courses they take help them get the qualifications they need for their next steps in life. Our main goal is to help them reach their full potential and make the best decisions for their success.

Young people usually know what subjects they want to study, based on what they enjoy and what they are good at. We try our best to give them their first choice. If that's not possible due to high demand, we help them find other suitable options.

You will find answers to potential questions about course choice in the pathways section of the school website: <https://www.kinrosshighschool.org.uk/pupils/pathways/>

Roles and responsibilities

There are a number of key roles in shaping a learners' course choice. At home, support and advice from parents has been shown to have a significant influence on decisions. The My World of Work website ([My World of Work](#)) is an excellent resource that you can access and use to support discussions.

In school, the roles and responsibilities are detailed below:

Staff	Role
Head of House (PT Pupil Support)	PSE lessons in preparation 1:1 meetings with pupils Support applications to partner organisations (e.g. UHI Perth) Liaising with parents where needed
PT Inclusion	Targeted alternative options and support
Head of Year (DHT)	Ensure completion of course choice process for individual year group Review course choice to ensure suitable challenge, ambition and best chance of success
Careers Advisor	Group work with PSE classes 1:1 meetings to advise Provide data to inform offer

Course Choice

What is the course choice offer?

Our course choice offer is driven by several factors which are influenced by national and local policies. Our curriculum rationale provides the basis for our approach to ensuring potential is realised. Please click [here](#) to view our curriculum structure or search [Kinross High School Pathways](#).

S2 into S3

In S3, students will choose 9 subjects based on the Curriculum for Excellence guidelines. These include:

English, maths, a modern language, a social subject, an expressive art subject, a technology subject, a science subject. There are also two free choices to allow specialism in chosen areas.

This structure allows students to personalize their learning while maintaining a broad education.

S3 into S4

In S4, pupils choose to remove 2 of their subjects at this stage and carry on with the remaining 7 subjects (must include Maths and English). This is the point where learners begin working towards their qualifications. The subjects they choose to continue with should be those which give them the best chance of success, based on the assessment data shared through our tracking reports. We will give advice on which subjects are likely to result in the highest level of attainment. All subjects from S3 are offered again in S4. There are some 'new' subjects in S4, which provide opportunities for further specialism in some curriculum areas. In some learning areas, there are level 5 pathways that lead to a 'new' qualification, e.g. National 5 Laboratory Science may be an ideal option for learners that do not need a specific Science qualification and have a high chance of success in the area

All learners who are planning to leave at the end of S4 should choose a work experience option as one of their 7 columns. Additionally, the *skills for life* qualification is recommended for some by the House Pupil Support Teams.

S5/6

In S5/6, the choices offered are based factors such as the expertise of the teachers, the resources available, the offer from partners such as Perth College, and the likely destinations of the young people.

The partner organisations are detailed below. In almost all cases, these are delivered to S6 pupils. No young person should have more than 1 of these courses as part of their school experience. These courses should only be considered where there is the interest, skill and motivation to study more independently.

If interested, please discuss with the relevant House Pupil Support Team.

Other providers' courses:

- TRIC Virtual Campus (Highers and Advanced Highers offered digitally)
- Open University Young Applicants in Scottish Schools
- Foundation Apprenticeship through Perth UHI (open to S5 and S6)
- Other Perth UHI Schools College Partnership courses (open to S5 and S6)

Dates for application are shared early in term 3 each year.

S5/6 options will be reviewed in June each year following the submission of the SQA estimates. Where a learner is predicted to be below the recommended entry requirements for a course (see below), their course choice will be reviewed to consider if the options provide the best chance of success.

S5

The number of subjects studied in S5 is 5. Learners should, wherever possible, choose 5 subjects from the 7 studied in S4. These should be the 5 that give them the best chance of attaining at the highest level. For example, a learner capable of achieving 5 level 6 qualifications (eg Highers) should attempt all 5 in one year. This gives the best chance of successful application to higher education.

All S5s also benefit from 'core' PE, RME and PSE.

S6

The option of returning for S6 provides learners with the opportunity to add to their folio of qualifications and to build wider skills through taking on leadership roles. Engagement with all that S6 offers is essential if choosing to return. This includes 'core' subjects as well as qualifications.

The number of subjects studied in S6 is 4 or 5. Learners should consider what qualifications will be most beneficial to their next steps beyond school. Continuing with previously studied subjects is generally the best approach. Advanced Highers should only be considered where there is a plan for study beyond school in the area. Learners should avoid moving 'backwards' down SCQF levels, e.g. taking level 5 courses alongside Advanced Highers.

Any learner undertaking 3 Advanced Highers can opt to complete their fourth option from one of: Open University, Scottish Baccalaureate, Volunteering, or Work Experience.

Key dates and practicalities

Young people will be issued with forms during February and they will be allocated an appointment with their guidance teacher to discuss their course choice in March.

Each year we will hold a pathways information evening for families during February. You can find the dates for these on our school website.

<https://www.kinrosshighschool.org.uk/about-us/calendar/>

If you require further information about this policy, please refer to our website: <https://www.kinrosshighschool.org.uk/pupils/pathways/> or contact your child's House Pupil Support Team inbox (<https://www.kinrosshighschool.org.uk/contact-us/contact-details/>)

Class size viability

Our aim is to provide young people with their preferred options when making their course choice however, the number of pupils choosing an option will establish whether or not a course can run. Decisions on viability are based on what will benefit the majority of learners.

Where a course has low uptake, we need to consider the viability of the class.

Where fewer than 10 young people have chosen a subject, we carefully consider the implication of running the class and it is likely that the course will not be viable. Class sizes will be reviewed again in June and in September.

In senior phase (S5-6) a further option is considered for smaller classes. These classes may still run but we would opt reduce the teacher contact time. Where there are fewer than 5 young people choosing a subject, the course cannot run unless an alternative arrangement can be reached with a partner school or other provider. This only applies to in-school courses.

Any young person whose first choice is not possible due to a class being undersubscribed will be supported to make appropriate alternative choices by their House Pupil Support Team.



Frequently Asked Questions

Are there entry requirements?

All choices should be made on the basis of the best chance of success, based on the data available. Learners should make informed decisions about the likelihood of achievement in a subject.

S2 into S3

There are no entry requirements for subjects in S3.

S3 into S4

For almost all S4 subjects, young people will have studied the subject in S3. Exceptions to this should be discussed with the Principal Teacher of the subject as well as the relevant House Pupil Support Team.

Higher Courses (S5-6)

In S5/6, there are no entry requirements for level 4 or 5 qualifications. Higher qualifications generally require a pass at National 5 (A-C). Those below C level should consider other options at level 6 or consolidation at level 5).

Advanced Higher Courses (S5-6)

For Advanced Higher qualifications, young people require an A or B at Higher in the subject. Please see the pathways section of the school website for specific details:
<https://www.kinrosshighschool.org.uk/pupils/pathways/senior-phase/>

What happens if a student doesn't get their preferred option?

There are times when a young person's first choice of subjects is not possible. There are also times when some young people change their mind between making their choice and returning to school in August.

This can result in challenges to give young people viable options that suit their needs. There can also be a knock-on effect on the viability of classes if numbers change significantly.

It is important to note that getting the course choice right in the first place gives young people the highest chance of receiving their first choice of subjects.

There are a number of key principles that impact on re-coursing:

1. Places in June are provisional and are dependent on SQA exam results (for S5/6 courses) obtained by students and any recommendations made by staff.
2. Where a class is over-subscribed, a waiting list will be created. Places on the waiting list are prioritised by those most in 'need' of the qualification, assuming the young person has the required entry requirements.
3. If no space becomes available, young people will have to either stay in their original choice or be re-coursed into a subject where there is space.
4. Students who do not meet the recommended entry requirements but who still wish to study a particular course have the right to do so provided there is a space in such a course. Students who do meet the recommended entry requirements will be given priority.
5. In August, S6 students who wish to repeat a subject should firstly discuss this with the Principal Teacher (subject) before making an appointment to see their House Pupil Support Team. If they wish to study the subject, they will continue to follow their June timetable and will be placed on a waiting list (if needed) for their re-sit course. This does not apply to those students who elected to do a course over two years.

Can changes be made to course choice?

Changes to course choice can be made up to the end of August, but not beyond.

What levels will young people be presented at? (S4-6)

A presentation level is the qualification a young person will be entered for, and these generally range from National 3 to Advanced Higher.

We follow a positive presentation policy which enables all young people to have the best chance of success at the appropriate level. This is reviewed with the young person frequently, and formally at each tracking period. Key evidence used to determine presentation level includes a range assessment data such as prelim performance or

timed work in class, prior attainment in the subject, future pathways, and overall progress through the year.

At the beginning of a timetable (normally in May) every young person is committing to a year of study in their chosen subject and courses cannot be 'dropped' through the year.

If a young person is unlikely to achieve the full course award, conversations will happen to discuss what can be achieved by looking at a range of options. These can include sitting the course over 2 years, looking at alternative courses covering similar topics at the same level (eg National Progression Award), completing unit passes, or changing to a lower level. Withdrawal from the course should only be a last resort when all other options have been exhausted.

We encourage all young people to aim high, and they are given every opportunity to achieve a broad range of qualifications at the right level for them. Our expectation is that all young people leave Kinross High School with a minimum of 5 qualifications, including Literacy and Numeracy.

Any decision over presentation level is made in discussion with young people and (depending on age) their parents.