

Senior Phase Options Choice Guidance: 2024



Inverclyde Academy



Our Rationale

Inverclyde Academy has a proven track record of supporting our pupils into positive school leaver destinations. Key to this success is how we support all of our pupils at important times of transition.

As a result, our Senior Phase Curriculum is designed to ensure that every young person can develop a personalized pathway that meets their needs and aspirations whilst articulating with SQA qualifications, wider achievement awards and employability skills.

In S4, we encourage all our young people to achieve at least 6 qualifications from a broad range of courses from SCQF Levels 3-5 whilst still engaging with core PE, RMPS and PSE.

In S5/6, the range of courses expands further taking in qualifications and awards from SCQF Levels 3-7 alongside a wider offer from our partners at West College Scotland. We also have greater expectations of S5/6 pupils as leaders in their school environment. We want to utilise the strengths of all seniors and create opportunities for them to contribute to the school, supporting other young people as they move up each year.

We hope that the information in this booklet is helpful and fully supports young people and families to make key subject choices as we move from S3, S4 and S5 to S4, S5 and S6. We wish you every success on the next step of your learning journey.



“Inverclyde Academy has clear ambitions and targets to achieve close to 100% of pupils in a positive destination.”

LA REVIEW, NOVEMBER 2022

Understanding the Option Choice Form

We prioritise the importance of parity of esteem at Inverclyde Academy and regularly review our processes to ensure that every young person is able to achieve their full potential in readiness for life beyond school. However, pupils and parents should note that only courses that achieve a sufficient uptake will run, and so all **RESERVE subjects should be selected carefully** as they may be required to be taken as full courses.

Advice to support your choices comes from a range of sources including:

- S3, S4 and S5 report comments from class teachers
- PSE lessons and discussions
- 1:1 discussions with your Pupil Support Teacher
- Meetings with Careers Adviser, Larry Hansen
- Advice from family and friends.

Myth Buster:
Employers only value
N5s & Highers... FALSE!

We will provide a paper copy of your Options Choice Form for you to use in discussions in class and at home before you make your final choices, which you will then input onto the online MS Form on your House Teams Page.

Number of Subjects

Pupils must follow a set number of courses in S4, S5 and S6 as indicated below:

- S4 – English/ESOL and Maths plus 4 other courses must be selected at levels 3-5.
- S5/6 – 5 courses must be selected if not studying any courses at L7.
- S6 only – 5 courses (minus one for each Level 7 course to a minimum of 3).

S4 & S5 should also note that they are not permitted to ‘crash’ new subjects out with their current pathway unless specifically agreed with Guidance teachers. You must make choices based on the subjects you are already taking. **‘Crashing’ is only available in S6.**

Consortium Courses

Inverclyde Academy is part of a consortium that includes all Inverclyde schools and West College Scotland. If you are unable to study a specific course in S5/6, we may be able to arrange for you to take the course at a consortium school. Columns and choices may need to be flexible to secure the courses you most desire, but young people should consider the enrichment offered by attending a different educational establishment while retaining links with their home school.

Prior Results

Look carefully at your results for the different areas assessed in your most recent report. Think about which subjects are your most successful and which departments are congratulating you on your hard work and effort in these areas. Consider your progress in these subjects and the success you could see next year if you were to take this subject at the level above. Your past success in subjects will be of great help in your decisions for the following year.

Choosing Your Pathway

When choosing your courses, you must decide what subjects and level of course would suit you best. To help you make your choice, you should consider your abilities, future career needs and interests as these will determine which pathway you should follow.

You should find out which courses and levels of qualification are needed for the college, university, apprenticeship or employment pathway you have in mind. Do not assume you know what they expect; **you could be surprised by some of the entry requirements so ensure you have done your research before making your choices.**

Discussing your ideas and research with subject teachers can also be of huge benefit as they know a great deal about the pathways linked to each curricular area.

Equal Opportunities

Young people used to be misled into thinking that certain subjects and careers were better suited to girls or boys. PSE lessons about the dangers of stereotyping encourage students to be open-minded when making subject and career choices. Employers are most concerned about getting the right person for the job so your choice of subjects and career should be based on your skills, abilities, interests, personality and health.



Myth Buster:
Apprenticeships are only for 'Trades'... FALSE! See <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/> for a wide range of options.

The Option Form

Here is an example of the current S4 Options Form:



Inverclyde Academy – S3 into S4 Options Form



The information below is for Guidance as you prepare to make your final choices. When choosing your courses, you must decide what subjects and level of course would suit you best. To help you make your choice, you should consider your abilities, future career needs and interests as these will determine which pathway you should follow.

You should find out which courses and levels of qualification are needed for the college, university, apprenticeship or employment pathway you have in mind. Do not assume you know what they expect; you could be surprised by some of the entry requirements so ensure you have done your research before making your choices.

Discussing your ideas and research with subject teachers can also be of huge benefit as they know a great deal about the pathways linked to curricular areas.

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
1. On the grid below, you must pick ONE SUBJECT in EVERY COLUMN.
 2. You must then write a RESERVE subject at the bottom.
 3. Once checked and agreed by your Pupil Support Teacher, final options will be completed electronically on your House Teams page.

NAME: _____ YEAR: _____ HOUSE: _____

	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F - S4 only
Levels 3, 4, & 5	L5 Visual Comms	L5 Cyber Security	L5 Health Sector	L5 Applied Lab Science	N3/4 English	N3/4 Maths
	N4/5 Admin & IT	N4 Env Science	N4/5 Business Mgt	L5 Business & IT	N5 English	N5 Maths
	N4/5 Art	N4/5 Biology	N4/5 Computing	L5 Photography	N3/4/5 ESOL	
	N4/5 Biology	N4/5 Chemistry	N4/5 D&M	N4/5 Admin & IT		
	N4/5 D&M	N4/5 Computing	N4/5 Geography	N4/5 French		
	N4/5 PE Team Sport	N4/5 Drama	N4/5 History	N4/5 Graph Comm		
		N4/5 PE Team Sport	N4/5 Modern Studies	N4/5 History		
		N4/5 Prac Woodwork	N4/5 Music	N4/5 Music		
			N4/5 Physics	N4/5 Music Tech		
			N4/5 Prac Cookery	N4/5 PE Aesthetics		
			N4/5 Spanish	N4/5 Physics		
				N4/5 Prac Cookery		

RESERVE SUBJECT & LEVEL (from list above but cannot be something you have already selected): _____

SCQF Level Guidance

You will notice on your form that all subjects have a Level 3-7 assigned to them. This is from the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and is a way of comparing Scottish qualifications you can achieve at school, college, university or at work. The level of a qualification shows how difficult the learning is.

The SCQF Framework has 12 levels that make it easier to describe, compare and understand qualifications. For example, an NPA at SCQF Level 5 is at the same level as a National 5. Most Scottish universities and colleges use SCQF levels to describe courses.

You can find out more about SCQF on page 13 or by visiting <https://scqf.org.uk/>

School Leaving Dates

Curriculum for Excellence is built on pupil learning from the ages of 3 to 18. As our curriculum provides courses matched to all pathways and levels, we strongly advise all of our pupils to remain in education, for as long as possible, unless they have secured a positive school leaver destination such as a suitable college or university place, apprenticeship or full-time employment before the end of S6.

Students whose 16th birthday falls between 1st October and 28th February of S5 must stay in full-time education until Christmas of S5 unless you have a Personalised Learning Package (PLP) approved by the Education Authority. For more advice on bespoke PLPs, please speak to your Pupil Support Teacher.

Careers Advice and Support

Our Careers Zone, in the school library, is home to a team of practitioners working together with staff across the school and beyond to support all young people into appropriate pathways and sustained, positive leaver destinations.



Skills Development Scotland (SDS):

Our designated Careers Adviser, Larry Hansen, works with pupils to develop Career Management Skills. Additional help can also be found on the award-winning, My World of Work website, which is packed with information to help young people, parents and carers explore career pathways: <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

DYW Coordinator:

Our appointed coordinator works with targeted young people to support them with the application and interview processes for university, college, apprenticeships, employment and training. They also coordinate work experience placements.

MCR Pathways:

Our MCR Coordinator supports our most vulnerable young people to realise their potential, recruiting mentors from all walks of life to spend one hour a week with identified young people discussing progress and future plans such as careers.



West College Scotland Transition Programme

West College Scotland offers young people a wide range of vocational courses in subjects that schools are often unable to provide. Places for these courses are limited and are only secured once accepted through a separate application process in March/April.

S4 Vocational Courses – Wed pm only

Course Name	SCQF Level	Campus
Intro to Professional Cookery	Levels 3-5	Finnart St
Childcare	Level 4	Waterfront
Intro to Hair, Makeup & Beauty	Level 4	Finnart St
Rock School Live Performance	Level 4	Finnart St
Construction	Level 4	Finnart St
Computer Games Development	Level 4	Finnart St
Intro to Automotive Refinishing (IMI Level 3)	Level 4	Finnart St
Engineering	Level 4	Finnart St
TV Production	Level 4	Finnart St
Sound Production	Level 4	Finnart St
Medical Laboratory Skills	Level 5	Finnart St
Intro to Pharmacy	Level 5	Finnart St
Sport	Level 5	Finnart St

The college guidance booklet for S4 courses can be found here:

<https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/media/215925/schools-senior-phase-programmes-s4-greenock-2024-5-170124.pdf>

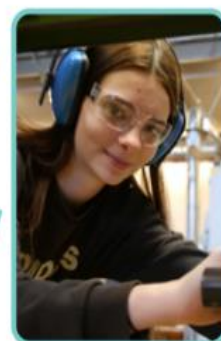
S5 and S6 Vocational Courses – Tues & Thurs pm

S5/6 pupils must be aware that the college selection process will determine whether or not you gain a place on these courses so you are advised to make your Pupil Support Teacher aware of your back up subject at school should you be unsuccessful.

Bear in mind that you may not get a place in your preferred school subject if you need to use it as back-up at a later stage.

“ The lecturers are great and have helped me learn new skills and build my confidence. ”

Inverclyde Academy pupil
Reyna McWilliams



Course	SCQF	Course Credit
Intro to Automotive Maintenance	Level 4	IMI Award
Intro to Automotive Body Repair	Level 4	IMI Award
Introduction to Plumbing	Level 4	2 Units
Professional Cookery with Bakery	Level 4	National Progression Award
Hairdressing	Level 4	Skills for Work
Uniformed Emergency Services	Level 4	Skills for Work
Construction Skills	Level 5	National Progression Award
Early Learning & Childcare	Level 5	Skills for Work
Computer Games Development	Level 5	National Progression Award
TV Production	Level 5/6	National Progression Award
Engineering	Level 5	Skills for Work
Cyber Security with Data Science	Level 5	National Progression Award
Beauty & Hairstyling	Level 5	National Progression Award
Criminology	Level 5	National Progression Award
Sport	Level 5-7	National Progression Award
S6 ONLY		
Higher Psychology	Level 6	Higher NQ
Higher Childcare & Development	Level 6	Higher NQ
Science Practical Skills for Progression	Level 7	Infill
Human Body Structure & Function	Level 8	Infill
ONLINE ONLY		
Politics	Level 7	Personal Development Award
History	Level 7	Personal Development Award
Sociology	Level 7	Personal Development Award

The college guidance booklet for S5 and S6 courses can be found here:

<https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/media/215948/schools-senior-phase-programmes-s5-s6-greenock-2024-5-020224.pdf>

Foundation Apprenticeships – S5/6 only

Learn the skills you need for the future, while you are still at school with a Foundation Apprenticeship!

West College Scotland, working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, deliver exciting Foundation Apprenticeship courses. A Foundation Apprenticeship is the same level of learning as a National 5 (Level 5) or a Higher (Level 6). As pupils are working towards their qualification, they will spend time out of school at college and with a local employer.

What is a Foundation Apprenticeship?

- A Foundation Apprenticeship course allows you to spend time away from school, at college AND with an employer so you get real, practical work experience.
- You get a qualification that employers recognise and the skills you need to start a career in that industry.
- You get to work on real projects with an employer. Some of Scotland's best-known organisations are involved, including Barclays, Network Rail and the NHS.
- It is a chance to try a career out – so you can decide if it is right for you.

Where could a Foundation Apprenticeship take you?

- Straight to Work: An FA gives you skills employers want – like timekeeping, problem solving, communication and teamwork. You'll have connections with employers, work experience and qualifications recognised by industry. All this looks great on your CV.
- A Modern Apprenticeship: In the same subject, you could complete your MA quicker because you will have completed some elements of the MA during the FA. In another subject, you'll already have the experience of learning on the job. That looks good to employers who are recruiting MAs.
- A Graduate Level Apprenticeship: You will have the experience of learning through work – so you are ready to do it a higher level. With a GLA, you can take your studies further, even up to Masters Degree level. All while you have a job.
- College or University: Foundation Apprenticeships are recognised by many Scottish universities and colleges.



As with other college courses, you should ensure you have a back up subject in mind should you be unsuccessful in gaining a place.

COURSE TITLE	LOCATION	LEVEL	TIMETABLE
Construction Skills	Greenock	Level 5	Tues & Thurs pm
Accountancy	Paisley	Level 6	Tues-Fri pm
Engineering Systems	Paisley	Level 6	Tues/Thurs/Fri all day
Social Services Children & YP	Greenock	Level 6	TBC
Childhood Practice	Greenock	Level 6	Tues-Fri pm

If you are interested in applying for a Foundation Apprenticeship, you can find out more at <https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/courses/foundation-apprenticeship/foundation-apprenticeships-at-wcs/>

However, as well as selecting it in your options, **you must also submit an application online by following this link:**

<https://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/courses/foundation-apprenticeship/apply-now/>

HNC Classes – S6 only

S6 pupils who have the necessary entry requirements can opt for an HNC infill course, which will be studied at West College Scotland for approximately 2-3 days per week as indicated below. This is a measure of our commitment to “Opportunities for All”.

Any S6 pupil opting for an HNC is advised to opt for at least 2 more additional subjects to be studied on the remaining days at school. It is important to note that pupils are responsible for catching up with all work missed in school when they are out at college.

COURSE	SCQF LEVEL	DAYS
HNC Music	Level 7	HNC (2.5 days TBC)
HNC TV Production	Level 7	HNC (2.5 days TBC)
HNC Sound Production	Level 7	HNC (2.5 days TBC)



Senior School Life

When pupils reach Senior Phase in Inverclyde Academy, there are many different opportunities offered in an attempt to broaden their experience both educationally and in their life as young adults. There will be many activities that involve them in taking responsibility, making decisions and organising events not only for themselves but for the rest of the school.

Next session, all S5/6 pupils will undertake 2 periods of Leadership & Employability work each week. This will lead to qualifications and experience designed to enhance their Skills for Learning, Life & Work. This will be undertaken as a pathway in addition to the main suite of qualifications and will include options such as Customer Service.

In addition, enterprise activities such as Work Experience or Placements can be arranged by our DYW Coordinator and we would encourage you to make the most of these years to achieve academically and to become involved in the wider life of Inverclyde Academy.

Leadership opportunities

- Leadership Team (Head & Depute Heads)
- House Captain(s)
- Senior Buddy
- Pupil Parliament
- School Committees – Prom, Charities, Leavers, etc
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Supporting pupils in the Impact Zone
- Volunteering in junior classes
- Volunteering in a local primary school



“The school is committed to listening to young people and providing them with opportunities to lead initiatives.”

LA REVIEW, NOVEMBER 2022

Summary of points to remember

- Have a clear pathway that you want to follow and research it fully.
- Find out about entry requirements needed for any jobs, apprenticeships, college or university courses that you are considering. Make sure your information is up to date.
- Use your prior results and exam results carefully to help you make positive decisions.
- Choose subjects you are good at and enjoy. Be realistic about what you are able to do - there is little point in taking a subject which has caused you difficulty in the past.
- Choose the type of course that best suits your abilities. Are you:
 - able to work on your own, e.g. for independent study?
 - better at practical work than written work?
 - prepared to study and work hard for a Level 6 or 7 course?
- Discuss your options with other people. Ask them for information, help and advice - but remember you must make the final decision for yourself.

Checklist for Pupils

Use the list below to make sure you do not miss anything important. Have you...

- Discussed your options with family/friends/teachers.
- Chosen subjects and levels that match your pathway and entry requirements:
 - Jobs
 - Apprenticeships
 - College courses
 - University courses
- Selected the correct number of courses:
 - S4 – 6 courses
 - S5/6 – 5 courses
 - S6 only – 5 courses (minus one for each Level 7 - minimum of 3)
- Checked that your results match the level you selected.
- Chosen subjects you are good at and enjoy.


SCQF Framework

As outlined earlier, Inverclyde Academy has a wide range of courses from SCQF Levels 3-7. To make this system easier to understand, we have included the SCQF Framework below which shows how different qualifications align with one another across the levels.

This should help to reassure you that, for example, a qualification at Level 6 is of equal value to a Higher. This should also help to show you how your qualifications allow you to progress on to the most appropriate apprenticeships, college and university courses.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.



SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12			Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11			Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9		Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma	Diploma Of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher			Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5			Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3			
2	National 2, Awards			
1	National 1, Awards			



Myth Buster:
 Highers are the only qualifications that count... FALSE! 93% of all Level 6 qualifications are NOT Highers.

Subject Specific Information

A list of all courses on offer across the school is included but more information about each subject can be found in the pages that follow as well as on our school website <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/>

Course name	Stage	L4	L5	L6	L7
Acting & Performance	S5/6 only			✓	
Administration & IT	All	✓	✓	✓	
Applications of Maths	S5/6 only	✓	✓	✓	
Art & Design	All	✓	✓	✓	✓
Biology	All	✓	✓		✓
Business Management	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Business & IT	S5/6 only		✓	✓	
Chemistry	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Communication & Literature	All		✓	✓	
Computing Science	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Cyber Security	All	✓	✓		
Design & Manufacture	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Drama	All	✓	✓		
English	All	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Science	All	✓			
ESOL	All	✓	✓	✓	
Excel in Sport -SFA Ref	S6 only			✓	✓
French	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Geography	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Graphic Communication	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Health Sector	All		✓		
History	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Human Biology	S5/6 only			✓	
Applied Laboratory Science	All		✓		
Mathematics	All	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modern Studies	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Music	All	✓	✓	✓	✓
Music Technology	All	✓	✓	✓	
Personal Finance	S5/6 only		✓		
PE	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Photography	All		✓	✓	
Physics	All	✓	✓	✓	✓
Practical Cookery	All	✓	✓		
Practical Metalwork	S5/6 only	✓	✓		
Practical Woodwork	All	✓	✓		
Scientific Technologies	S5/6 only			✓	
Spanish	All	✓	✓	✓	*
Sport & Recreation	S5/6 only		✓		
Sports Leaders	S5/6 only		✓		
Technical Theatre	S5/6 only			✓	
Visual Communication	All		✓		

Please note that subjects with an asterisk * are only offered at consortia schools.

Course Information by Pathway

The information on subjects is linked across pathways and departments are developing more detailed information about how different qualifications link together. However, there is a basic outline of subject-specific info for each department at the links below:

English:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/english-national-5/>

ESOL:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47404.html>

Maths:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/maths/>

Modern Languages:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/modern-languages/>

Sciences:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/sciences/>

Humanities:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/social-subjects/>

ICT:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/ict/>

Design Technology:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/technical/>

Performing Arts:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/performing-arts/>

Art:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/art-department/>

Health & Wellbeing:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/health-and-wellbeing/>

Impact Zone:

The Senior Phase can be a challenging time for young people for a wide range of reasons. To support with this, many young people are referred to our partner agencies such as School Health, Barnardo's, Action for Children or CAMHS. However, in-house, we have developed an essential support resource in our Impact Zone.

The Impact Zone is an area for planned, bespoke support from S4-6 pupils where they can be supported to achieve essential qualifications in readiness for life in the world of work. This will always be done through consultation with parents and young people with a clear plan and achievable outcomes that are regularly reviewed.



You can find more detailed information at:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/in/inverclydeacademy/impact-zone/>

Employability Pathways – Labour Market Information

Based on local Labour Market Information, people employed in Inverclyde fall into the following main categories:

Employee Jobs by Industry	%
Human Health & Social Work	20
Wholesale & Retail Trade	14
Education	10
Admin & Support Services	8
Manufacturing	7
Accommodation & Food Service	7
Transport & Storage	5
Information & Communication	5
Financial & Insurance Services	5
Professional Scientific & Technical Services	4
Public Admin & Defence	4
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	3



This helps to identify which areas have greater opportunities for employment and allows young people to consider the most beneficial areas of specialism for local jobs.