

OPTIONS AND CHOICES FOR THE 4TH AND 5TH YEAR

Information booklet for pupils of Secondary 3 and their parents.

GENERAL PRESENTATION

At the end of the Observation Cycle (S1-S3), European Schools' pupils must choose some subjects for the Pre-Orientation Cycle (S4-S5). Their choices will depend in part on the options they have taken during S3 and will determine the range of subjects that they will be allowed to choose in the Orientation Cycle (S6-S7).

What follows is a presentation of the structure of the Pre-Orientation Cycle and of the rules presiding over students' subject choices during the 3rd year.

NUMBER OF PERIODS

The minimum number of periods to choose is 31, and the maximum is 35. Exceptionally, 36 or 37 periods may be allowed by the Director of the school following a recommendation of the class council.

SUBJECTS AVAILABLE IN TES AND CHOICE STRUCTURE IN THE PRE-ORIENTATION CYCLE

Compulsory Subjects		Optional Subjects	
Language 1	4p	Latin ¹	4p
Language 2	3p		
Ethics	1p	Economics (in L2) ²	4p
Physical Education	2p	Language 4 ³	4p
Language 3	3p	ICT ⁴	2p
Biology	2p	Art ⁵	2p
Chemistry	2p	Music ⁵	2p
Physics	2p	The minimum number of pupils to set up any optional course is 5. ¹ Latin leads to the <i>Latinum Europaeum</i> certificate at the end of S5 and can be continued in S6 and S7 if the group has enough pupils in it. ² Economics will be taught in L2. Those who wish to take the Economics 4p option in the EB <u>must</u> choose it in S4. ³ Languages available: Finnish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish. ⁴ ICT will be available to all pupils, including those who did not have it in S3. ⁵ Those who wish to take the Art or Music 4-period option in the EB (S6-S7) <u>must</u> choose the corresponding 2-period options in S4.	
Geography	2p		
History	2p		
Mathematics Elementary level*	4p		
or Mathematics Standard level*	6p		
Total (compulsory):	27p or 29p		
*Only those who choose Maths Standard level (6p) will be allowed to choose Maths Standard level (5p) in S6-S7 and Advanced math.			

COMPULSORY SUBJECT: MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATICS ELEMENTARY/STANDARD LEVEL (4 OR 6 PERIODS)

The Elementary level course is intended for pupils who do not consider continuing with studies where mathematics plays a crucial role. Its purpose is to help pupils to understand the scientific and technological world surrounding them without putting too much emphasis on theoretical aspects of mathematics. The normal (and only possible) continuation of the Elementary level course in S6-S7 is the Elementary 3-period course.

The Standard level course is intended for pupils who need mathematics in their higher-level studies and because of this can benefit from a solid foundation and a good general knowledge of mathematics. The normal continuation of the Standard level course in S6-S7 is the Standard 5-period course, although students will be able to opt at that stage for the Elementary 3-period course. Also, particularly keen mathematicians will have the possibility to add in S6-S7 to the 5-period Standard course a further 3-period Advanced course.

The syllabus of the Elementary level covers, from S4 to S5, topics such as geometry, algebra, probability, statistics and analytical geometry.

The syllabus of the Standard level covers more in depth, from S4 to S5, the topics of the Elementary level, particularly in algebra (simultaneous equations of various kinds) and probability (study of combined and complex events). More importantly, it adds the topic of vectors, not present in the 4-period course.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

LATIN (4 PERIODS)

The teaching of Latin offers pupils a unique opportunity to understand the way their own mother tongue functions: the relations between Latin and the mother tongue, through different ways of translating, which serve to consolidate and reinforce the lexical and syntactical bases leading to a firmer mastery of the mother tongue.

In addition, the teaching of Latin is a valuable and effective aid to the learning of third and fourth languages, and to developing methodically the linguistic competences of the second language (general and specialised vocabulary, syntax).

The teaching of Latin (a language with declensions and a grammar that is both rigorous and flexible) always confronts its learners with situations demanding care and precision. The pupil must formulate analytical hypotheses and find or construct accurate connections between disparate parts of a sentence. Along with Greek, Latin illuminates most scientific vocabulary, particularly that of medicine, as well as the origin of many academic and scientific areas.

As Latin is not primarily a language of oral communication, this can lead to a more reflective and distanced approach to language. Latin requires a precise attention to the details of words in all their dimensions, to their expression and meaning. It is an effective training in precision. As Latin has this particular position, its teaching provides creative learning situations which lead to independence of thought.

The teaching of Latin provides a continuous cross-curricular approach through its interactive use of several disciplines at the same time; and as it is multidisciplinary by nature, Latin incorporates language, literature, history, and philosophy. As a result, the knowledge and skills which develop Latin are transferable to other subject areas.

Learning Latin permits us to understand the contemporary world better: it brings unequalled insights, it compares our societies to ancient ones and it provides key insights into the economy, the law, religion, and social and political life. Europe today maintains relations of both cultural difference from, and identity with the Roman world: learning Latin, therefore, contributes to the development of this sense both of identity and of difference in the collective life of a more complex society.

Such knowledge enables the pupils to define more precisely the points of conflict in the contemporary world: this excursion to antiquity permits them to put the present into perspective, to relativise, and to free themselves from the tyranny of the present. It is a training in critical thinking. It is also a factor in the development of tolerance, as it involves an advanced level of knowledge of different types of society and religion.

For the European Schools in particular, Latin (as well as Greek) is specifically an international language of culture: it particularly encourages the perception of the convergences and points of comparison between the cultures of Europe; it invites pupils to explore the foundation texts which have nourished and which continue to nourish the culture, the imagination and the arts of Europe and the world, yesterday and today.

ECONOMICS (4 PERIODS)

Economics is concerned with the enquiry into the allocation of resources to the production and distribution of income and wealth. It strengthens the role and importance of economic issues in a modern society and tries to guide the development of a basic economic understanding. This might help the pupils to play a full and responsible part in that society.

The aims of the syllabus in years 4 and 5 are to give the pupils the necessary tools to develop an awareness of economic concepts - enable them to apply these concepts - understand the different economic systems - focus particularly on the European Union level - cope with the concepts of economic change and the impacts on growth, development and the environment.

Students who wish to study Economics in TES have two options: 4 years of Economics 4-period from S4 to S7 (for those who really want to invest a lot of time and energy in the subject), or 2 years of Economics 2-period from S6 to S7 (for those who wish to complete during their secondary education a basic course on all the main economic notions).

LANGUAGE 4 (4 PERIODS)

	Early education	Primary	Secondary Year 3	Secondary Year 5	Secondary Year 7
L2	0	A2	B1	B2	C1
L3	0	0	A1+	A2+	B1+
L4	0	0	0	A1	A2+
L5	0	0	0	0	A1+

In Secondary 4, students who like languages have the unique possibility, alongside the compulsory study of L1, L2 and L3, to embark on the new adventure represented by the serious study of a fourth language, which they will be able, if they wish, to deepen for four years, 4 periods (180 minutes) per week, and which will represent a further option at the time of the Baccalaureate examinations.

The target levels of the various languages studied in the European Schools are listed in the table above.

Differently from L3, in L4 there is less emphasis on literature.

ICT (2 PERIODS)

In these two years the students will go deeper into the topics, which were taught in S1-S3 and will use more advanced features of applications. They will understand more and more the connections between those applications and how they can learn things by themselves using ICT.

The course includes also some new topics like databases and computer graphics. At this stage it is very important to make the students aware of things like data security and copyright, that they can take the right decisions when they use modern technologies in everyday life.

The 2-period course in S4-S5 is also in continuity with the following complementary S6-S7 2-period course (the latter cannot be taken without the former), and is recommended for those students who intend to master by the end of high school all the fundamental topics in information and communication technology.

ART (2 PERIODS)

The subject Art in the European Schools means The Visual Arts. Visual arts contain the complex process of perception, reflection and interpretation of the world around us and result in the creation of images. This process and the resulting products are the main working areas of the subject art.

The Art course develops the acquisition of skills. By our participation in the processes necessary to solve the problems of image and form creation, we gain experience in the handling of a diversity of materials, tools and techniques. By applying increasingly complex activity-, project- and process-orientated methods, art supports the student's various subject-specific, methodical, personal and social competences.

In S4 and S5 it is assumed that the students have acquired these skills and can now be given more room to experiment, explore and develop their own solutions with less guidance from the teacher. They must learn how to document and present this development process as part of their solution. This approach will require more personal responsibility and autonomy of the students and should enable them to achieve their full potential.

The 2-period art course is recommended for those students who, apart from having a cognitive interest in the visual art, are endowed with deep interest for their practical performance and with adequate skills. Those who have a more general interest in the arts, are advised to wait for the 2-period Art History course that every student can choose in S6.

Only those who have chosen this course will have access to the 4-period Art course in S6-S7, leading possibly to a practical Baccalaureate examination.

MUSIC (2 PERIODS)

Music is an important means by which young people shape their sense of individual and collective identity. They use it as a means for expressing ideas, concepts, feelings and thoughts and to come to a richer and more meaningful understanding of the world. Music also develops creative and lateral thinking skills which have a positive impact on other areas of learning. Most importantly, music is a practical subject where young people gain most when they are enabled to act as artists and musicians.

Positive interaction with music develops students' competence as learners and increases their self-esteem. It brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. Music can help foster personal development and maturity, engender a sense of achievement and self-worth, and develop the ability to work with others. Music education develops students' critical skills: their ability to listen, to value a wide variety of music, and to make judgements about musical quality. It also develops self-discipline, creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.

Music plays a key role in delivering one of the key objectives of the European Schools which is to provide young people with opportunities for creative endeavour and to promote an understanding of a common European heritage.

The Music syllabus for S4-S5 is topic-based and builds upon the skills, knowledge and understanding that students have developed in S1-S3. It reflects the principles and the rationale that young people's musical learning should take place through musical encounters involving composing, performing and listening to music. Topics reflect the breadth and variety of music genres and traditions across the world with a particularly focus on European music in all its diversity.

The aim of the curriculum in Years 4-5 is to provide students with progressive development of their musical knowledge, skills and understanding in the context of in-depth studies of a range of musical genres, styles and traditions. To gain a meaningful understanding of music young people develop critical awareness of its context, its history and its potential for future development.

The 2-period Music course is recommended for those students who are endowed with deep interest for the practical performance of music and with adequate skills. Only those who have chosen this course will have access to the 4-period Music course in S6-S7, leading possibly to a practical Baccalaureate examination.