New Features in *Options 2018*

More Solutions on the Shuffle Screen

The Shuffle Screen now shows more-complicated shuffles. You can use these shuffles to change the size of a group (while allowing the students to keep the same subject choices).
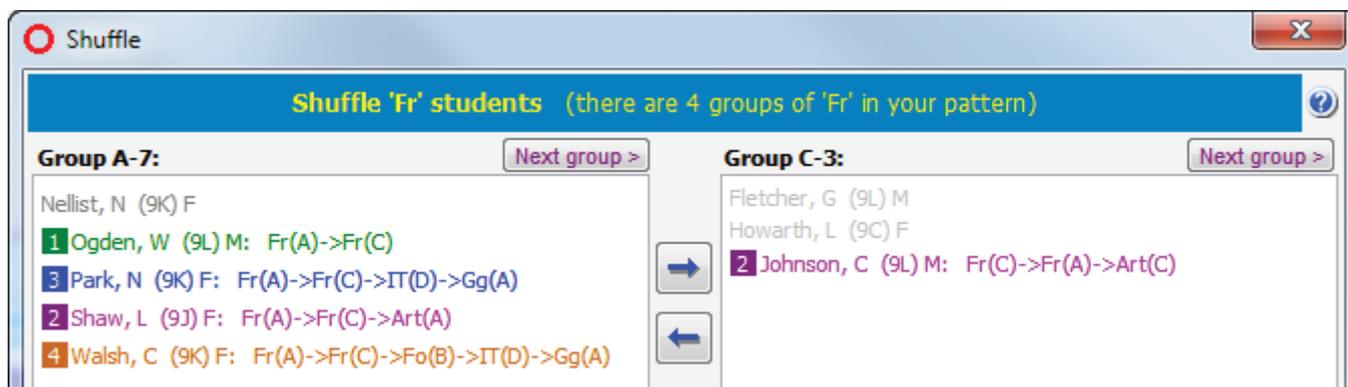
In the examples shown above, to shuffle French students currently in Block A:

- Nina Nellist, in 9K, is grey. She cannot be moved, her subject Choices do not allow it.

1 Wayne Ogden, is green, meaning that he can move in a 1-step move to Block C, without affecting any other Block.

2 Lauren Shaw, is purple, meaning that she can move to other groups (French in Block C, Art in A) in 2 steps.

3 Nicola Park is in blue, meaning she can be moved by a 3-step shuffle, involving blocks A, C, D.
If you select her then drag her across (or click on the blue arrow, or double-click on her name) you are shown more details of the move, as shown here:

It shows the 'Before' situation and it shows the 'After' assignments if you choose to click on Apply.

4 Chris Walsh is in orange, meaning that this shuffle would be a 4-step move, as shown in orange above.
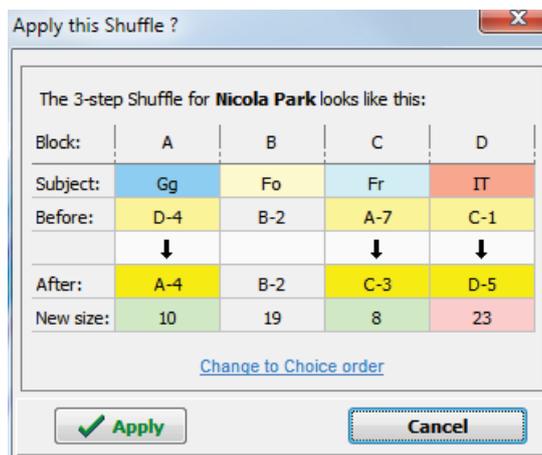
Small groups are tinted green; big groups are in pink

Report on Choice Priority

For some schools, the student choices are in no particular order, or at least choice 4 is no less important than choice 1.
But for other schools, choice 1 does mean more than choices 2, 3 or 4.
For example, because the students have been asked to put their most treasured choice first, or else because it is for EBacc and the first 2 choices have to be one Humanity and one Language, whereas choices 3 & 4 are more open/free-choice.

On the main Current Pattern Screen, you can click on the **More** button to choose (for example) 'Students whose 1st or 2nd choice is not satisfied'.
Then you'll be shown only those students who have either not had their 1st choice satisfied/assigned to the pattern, or have not had their 2nd choice assigned, (or both).
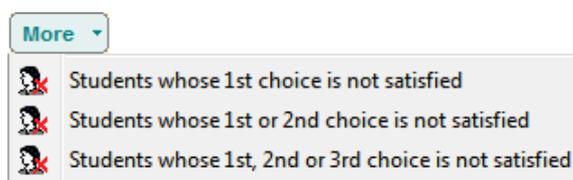
Then you can use other tools, for example the Review & Counsel Screen, to fix it.

New ways of collecting Choices in TOOLS

In previous versions of TOOLS there was just a 'Free Choice' Screen, like the one shown here:

If you haven't used TOOLS yet,
see www.timetabler.com/TOOLS/

If you don't want to host it in school, see
www.studentoptions.co/student_options.html
and
http://studentoptions.co/documentation/TOOLSHostingAgreement.pdf

Free Choice Screen

In TOOLS 2018 there is a new, extra, way of offering choices to the students & parents.

It is called a "Choose ONE" screen:

"Choose ONE" Screen

So now there are several ways for you to use TOOLS:

Model A
Use a 'Free Choice' Screen only, as in the first screenshot above.
For example, for the Lower Sixth A-Level Choices.

Model B
Use one "Choose ONE" Screen only, as in the second screenshot above.
For example, for the current Year 7 (or S1) to choose a Modern Foreign Language to study in Year 8 (S2).

Model C
Use one or two "Choose ONE" screens, followed by a 'Free Choice' Screen.
For example, for the EBacc,
• a first "Choose ONE" Screen offering a choice between History & Geography,
• a second "Choose ONE" Screen requiring a choice between French, German & Spanish,
• then a Free Choice Screen allowing them to choose the remaining subjects.

Model D
Use several "Choose ONE" screens, with no 'Free Choice' Screen.
For example, in a school that still keeps to Fixed option columns, to find out the size of the groups this year, before using the Student Counselling Screen in *Options* to tweak the groups.
For example, for IB, use six "Choose ONE" screens, one for each of the subject areas of the IB.

More details are in the TOOLS Manual, accessible in *Options* via: [TOOLS Overview & Manual]

Two New Rules for Students' Choices

It is always essential to check that all the Students have followed any rules that you have imposed.

For example, for EBacc, at least one Humanities subject, at least one MFL (as well as Ma, En, Science).
For example, for IB, one choice from each of the 6 subject areas.

In addition to the existing 11 Rules we have added two more, at Students & Choices ⟹ Set Rules.

1. Choose from Defined Sections

Rule
Choose from Defined Sections

In this Rule you can specify Subjects grouped in each Block / Column, eg. to match what you set up in TOOLS.

For example, this school (for EBacc) is specifying that the students
MUST choose Geography or History, and
MUST choose German or French or Spanish.
Any student not obeying these rules will be flagged up.

'Section' is used here because that is the word used in TOOLS.

For IB, you'd have 6 columns here to mirror the 6 subject areas.
This Rule would then check that your students have chosen validly.

(If you use TOOLS to collect the students Choices then you'd set up the same sections in TOOLS.)

	Humanities	MFL	Section 3	Section 4
ON/off:	ON	ON	off	off
Art				
CD				
De		Y		
Dr				
Fr		Y		
Fo				
Gg	Y			
Gra				
Hi	Y			
IT				
Mu				
PE				
Sp		Y		
Te				
Total:	2	3	0	0

2. Choose number of Subjects from each Faculty

If you place your subjects in 'Faculty groupings' (not necessarily real faculties) on the Subjects Screen, then you may find this Rule useful.

The screenshot shows the possible rule for each 'Faculty'.

This Rule could be used for EBacc, and for IB.

Rule
Choose number of subjects from each Faculty

Click below to change how many Subjects must be chosen from each Faculty:

Faculty:	Choices:	Subjects include:
Faculty 1	1	Art-Art
Faculty 2	2	Gg-Geography
Faculty 3	1 or 2	De-German
Faculty 4	(any)	Fo-Food Technology
Faculty 5	0	-
Faculty 6	1	-
Faculty 7	2	-
	0 or 1	
Faculty 8	0, 1 or 2	-
	1 or 2	
Faculty 9	at least 1	-

Gender-balancing

If you have 2 groups of the same subject, you may not want one to be mostly Girls and the other mostly Boys. To help with this, on the main Current Pattern Screen select: Style ⟹ Highlight Gender-bias (2:1).

Any group in which there are 2 or more Girls for each Boy**, will turn pink … and any group in which there are 2 or more Boys for each Girl**, will turn green. More balanced groups will turn white.
(**but only if the group is large enough with at least 3 members of the dominant sex).

There is also a 'Highlight Gender-bias (3:1)' option – this highlights groups where the ratio of one sex to the other is 3:1 or higher.

You can then use the Shuffle Screen to move some Girls or Boys around.

Style ▾

☑ Show Boys/Girls
☑ Highlight Gender-biased groups (2:1)
   Highlight Gender-biased groups (3:1)

Archiving a Student

You can now (temporarily) 'Archive' (Suspend) a Student, at Students & Choices ➠ Move ➠ Archive. This means that he or she still appears on the Students & Choices Screen (and can be edited or have their choices edited), but s/he will not appear on other screens or reports, and will not be assigned to the Pattern.

Reason: occasionally, a Sixth Form College takes the details of students who then choose to go elsewhere. However, the College wishes to retain their details and have the option to quickly apply them to the Pattern, should they change their mind/ come back to the College.

Exporting the final Pattern to *TimeTabler* without Levels

In Scotland particularly, 'Levels' are often used in **Options**. *For example,* you may have subjects called 'Bio 4', 'Bio 5' and 'Bio H'.

You are now given the choice, when you export from **Options** to **TimeTabler** to export the 'Subject minus the Level'. In this example it would export all 3 Biology subjects as a single subject 'Bio'.

Other new features in *Options 2018:*

- **Clash Table:** if you have subjects which no student has chosen, you can now simplify the Clash Table by omitting these subjects – just un-tick the new 'Show unused Subjects' tickbox.

- **Clear Current Pattern:** if you have a pattern you like, but want to make widespread changes to which students are in each group, it can be easier to start again than to tweak existing assignments. You can now do this more easily: go to Tools ➠ More ➠ Clear all assignments.

- **GDPR:** with the new Data Protection Rules coming into force in 2018, we have given you a reminder: after creating the TOOLS usernames & passwords, a message pops-up saying: "Please confirm that you have the agreement of the relevant Parent or Guardian".

- **Review & Counsel Screen:** you can now hide other students' details while counselling someone.

- **Choice Rules:** when a student breaks a Rule, you are now told more clearly which of your Rules was broken (for example, '[Rule 2]') – in case it wasn't obvious.

- **Teaching Group Names:** The automatic creation of TGNs has been improved in a couple of ways:
  - Some schools like to give *every* TGN a 'set number' …even if, for example, there is only *one* 7A/Hi group, they still call it: 7A/Hi**1**.
    You can now do this, by ticking "If no set number required, still use '1'", which is shown at: Current Pattern Screen ➠ TGNs ➠ Assign Automatic TGNs
  - There may be spaces in your subject names (especially in Scottish schools using 'Levels'). You can now decide how you want to handle this, via the 'Spaces in Subjects' drop-down list at: Current Pattern Screen ➠ TGNs ➠ Assign Automatic TGNs

- **Student name format in Excel:** On the Printouts screen, there are various choices for how you want your Student names to appear on screen / printouts. There is now also the option to customize how Student Names appear in the Excel file, via the Students & Choices Screen. Go to Students & Choices ➠ Print ➠ (Student format for Excel File).

- All reported bugs have been fixed. The HelpScreens have been updated.

Features that were added in later Updates to *Options 2017* that you may not be aware of:

- The export-import to the Bromcom MIS was improved.

- Printing Student Timetables : two extra features were added:
  - On the Advanced Printing Screen: **t**   print teacher initials (to get more-compact printouts)
  - On the Day & Period Labels Screen: a period labelled *D will be shaded out on the printout.