

Sept 09

Dear Parents (new Y9)

I write to outline some of the expectations as your child enters Key Stage 4.

This is an exciting time where they have chosen some of their courses of study. It is also a demanding time in their education where all courses lead to external assessments and a qualification. The workload will increase steadily across the Key Stage and students will find themselves with significantly more homework than lower down the school.

Students will be assessed regularly during their courses via assignments, mock exams, external exams and controlled assessments. The enclosed leaflet gives an overview of when the main external assessments are planned to take place – the results of these assessments will count towards their final grades at the end of the course. There is also detailed information on expectations on the back of the leaflet.

As you will appreciate, good organisation is very important in managing this workload and therefore I welcome your support in working with your child on meeting deadlines and completing homework.

Progress will be reported to you via the 9 reports each year and, as always, your point of contact for any query, is the Personal Tutor.

Yours sincerely

JF

What to expect in Key Stage 4



**Thomas Telford
School**

September 2009

An overview of the subject areas – draft assessment schedule for the Key Stage

This gives an outline of when the main EXTERNAL assessments are planned for each subject.

Subject	Year 9 2009	Year 10 2010	Year 11 2011
English Language	Early entry group only: coursework for Easter (40%) and 2 exams in June (30% each) Edexcel Pilot groups PC based exams Feb half term to Easter (30%)	OCR students coursework for Feb half term (40%) and 2 exams in June (30% each) Edexcel Pilot groups internally assessed unit from Sept to Dec (50%) and Speaking and Listening for Easter (20%)	All students: Re sit of Language GCSE in January if required (2 exams)
English Literature	All groups (apart from early entry) Drama texts unit May (20%)	Early entry only: Drama texts unit January (20%) Coursework - Feb half term (30%) Poetry and Prose exam May (50%)	All groups (apart from early entry) Feb: coursework (30%) Poetry and Prose exam May (50%)
Maths		Top set - GCSE Maths in June: 2x2hr paper, 50% weighting each.	All: Jan: GCSE Maths 2x2hr paper, 50% weighting each.
Science		Jan: B1, C1 & P1 exams (75%) Throughout year - Teacher Assessed Tasks (25%)	
Additional Science			Jan :B2, C2 & P2 exams (75%) Feb/Mar - Teacher Assessed Tasks (25%)
Biology		Jan :B1 exam (25%) Throughout year - Teacher Assessed Tasks (25%)	Jan: B2 Exam (25%) May/June: B3 Exam (25%)
Chemistry		Jan: C1 exam (25%) Throughout year - Teacher Assessed Tasks (25%)	Jan: C2 Exam (25%) May/June: C3 Exam (25%)
Physics		Jan: P1 exam (25%) Throughout year - Teacher Assessed Tasks (25%)	Jan: P2 Exam (25%) May/June: P3 Exam (25%)
Applied Science		Jan: Unit 2 Exam (33.3%) May/June – Unit 1 (33.3%)	Jan: Unit 3 (33.3%)
Technology			Assessed Task(60%) Exam (40%)
Electronics			Assessed Task (60%) Exam (40%)
Art			GCSE Exam (40%) coursework portfolio (60%)
Health & Social Care	Sept /Mar 26hrs Controlled Assessment Externally marked March – end of year Computer based exam (50%)	Exam at end of year (20%)	Sept/May Controlled Assessment Externally marked (30%)
OCR Nationals ICT	100% coursework Final moderation = July. Course ends in Y9.		

Business Studies		June: Unit 1 exam (40%)	Sept/Oct: Unit 3 Controlled Assessment (25%) May: Unit 2 exam (35%)
BTEC Hospitality & Catering	Unit 7 Basic Culinary Skills – Practical assessment & assignment. Unit 1 The Hospitality Industry – Assignment (33%)	Unit 3 Safety for Hospitality – Assignment. Level 2 Food Safety – exam. Unit 2 Customer Relations – Practical assessment & assignment (33%)	Unit 7 Serving Food and Drink – Practical assessment & assignment. Unit 6 Planning and Running an Event – Practical assessment & assignment (33%)
BTEC Dance	End of year first dance performance assessment	Two Jazz dance assessments Two Contemporary assessments One Dance performance assessment	Final Dance performance assessment Dance Showcase
BTEC Drama		Acting (Term 1) (16.6 %) Devising Plays (Term 2) (33 %) Performing Scripted Plays (Term 3) (16.6 %)	Performing Scripted Plays (Term 1) (16.6 %) Acting (Term 1) (16.6 %)
Music		Completion of Solo and Ensemble Performances (30%)	Sept – Feb: 2 compositions (30%) May: Paper 3 Exam (40%)
History		Oct: Controlled Assessment on Northern Ireland (25%)	June: exams on Crime & Punishment (45%) and Germany (30%)
Geography		June: Paper 1 (30%) Controlled assessment (25%)	June: Paper 2 (45%)
RE		June: Mark's Gospel exam (25%)	June: Ethics exam (25%) Judaism (50%)
Languages		Jan: Controlled Assessment (Speaking) 15% June: Listening exam 20% Reading exam 20% Controlled Assessment (Writing task) 15%	Controlled Assessment (Writing task) 15% - Spring term Controlled Assessment (Speaking) 15% - Spring term
P E			May: exam (40%)
	4 Controlled Assessments (60%) (formally assessed through years 9-11)		

Please note: this table gives an outline of when key, external assessments fall and is subject to change – students will have internal assessments and Mock Exams regularly plus there may be some retakes of external examinations.

External exams are typically during January and May/June although can also take place during other months eg. Science in November – statements of entry will be issued in advance for your information.

Mock Exams: Year 9 and 10 = Easter time, Year 11 = December

Should you require further, more specific information at any time, please contact the Personal Tutor

What to expect in Key Stage 4

What will be studied?

Key Stage 4 covers Years 9 to 11 at Thomas Telford School and is an important phase in your child's education as they work towards a set of external qualifications. The majority of courses that will be studied are 3 years long and will result in either a GCSE qualification or a BTEC First Certificate (equivalent to 2 GCSEs). The exceptions to this are the OCR Level 2 National First Certificate in ICT which is studied over Years 8 and 9 – this is equivalent to 3 GCSEs and students are already approximately half way through this course. This is then followed by a 2 year GCSE Business course for all students that begins in Year 10. Some students at Key Stage 4 will follow a personalised programme which allows for early entry in subjects such as English Language or for additional booster sessions in subjects such as Maths.

Assessment

BTEC courses such as Dance, Drama and Hospitality and Catering are assessed by assignments which are spread across the course. The OCR Level 2 National First Certificate in ICT is 100% coursework and is continually assessed until the end of Year 9 when the course ends. This means that personal organisation and meeting deadlines are vital as students need to manage their time effectively

GCSE courses combine external (real) exams with exam-style assessed tasks that are usually completed in class time. These will be spread out across the 3 year Key Stage and often students will complete Modular exams that contribute a certain percentage to the final, overall GCSE mark. Most students will sit at least one external exam in Year 9 and more in Years 10 and 11. The most common time for these exams is in January and May/June although there are other key times during the year and assessed tasks may run at almost anytime in the school year. It is therefore vital that holidays are not taken during the school term as there are assessments regularly throughout the Key Stage. Please note that the dates of external exams are set by the examination boards and cannot be changed by the School. Before any external examination sittings, a Statement of Entry will be sent home for you to sign and return – this is an important document that gives the dates and times of all real exams to be sat. Mock exams are usually scheduled for Easter time in Years 9 and 10 and then in the December of Year 11.

Homework

This will now be set in **all** subjects and students will be required to dedicate increasing amount of time to study outside the classroom. As a guide, students should be spending **at least 45 minutes most evenings** on homework. If at any time you are concerned that a student is not completing regular homework, or you wish discuss any other aspects of your child's education, please contact the Personal Tutor to discuss this further.

This is an exciting and demanding time for students when personal organisation and hard work are very important. Progress will be reported to you for all subjects regularly via the 9 Reports and your continuing support during the next phase of your child's education is appreciated.

Jeanette Furlong

Deputy Head, Key Stage 4