

10 WEEKS TO START OF EXAMS

ISSUE 2 – March 2017

It is a stressful time of year for Year 11 students. Should I have started revising? Should I be doing more? Where is the time to do all of this? How will I manage? Which subjects do I prioritise?

There are a plethora of maxims and messages out there that students can look at for guidance and advice but ultimately my favourite is that if you don't believe that you have the time to do something once, how on earth will you find the time to do it again? In other words, do it and do it right first time.

I'm a great one for lists, so I suggest that students spend some time making a list of the things that they need to do and make sure that the first item on the list is 'make a list', and then they can cross it off as soon as they've completed the task. There's nothing more satisfying than crossing a task off a list!

The key to success will be being honest with themselves with regard to what they have done, what they need to do, and getting on and doing it!

Mr Bowman
Head of Year 11

Well done to all our students in their recent PPEs



A* - A	9
	8
	7
B	6
	5
C	"Good pass"
	4
D - G	3
	2
	1
U	U

New Grades for GCSE Maths and English

This August, your son/daughter will receive their exam results under the new grading system.

This table shows the connection between the old letter grades (A*-G) and new number grades (1-9) for Maths and English.

The Government intends that:

- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4+ as currently achieve a grade C+.
- Grade 5 will be awarded to roughly the top third of students gaining the equivalent of a grade C AND the bottom third of students gaining the equivalent of a grade B.
- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7+ as currently achieve a grade A+.

These changes are potentially quite worrying for your son/daughter who may feel concerned about how they will perform under the new system.

You play an important role as a parent and can help your child by encouraging a positive attitude, as this system of grading is fair and achievable. Your son/daughter will do just as well under the new system as they would have under the old one as it will be adjusted to reflect parity with previous years.

Grades of letters or numbers can sometimes become a target which limits true potential, try and encourage your child to focus on the process of revision, working hard and persevering. The grades will then ultimately take care of themselves with 100% effort and determination.

Promtastic!

Parents are reminded that students must have 95% attendance between 30.01.17 and the day of the Prom on 23.06.17 in order to attend the Prom. Tickets are now on sale and available online via School Gateway priced at £12. If you require further information, please contact Miss Walsh on the main school number.



ENGLISH UPDATE

All Year 11 students are working towards GCSEs in English Language and English Literature.

They will sit four exams in total, on the following dates:

- 22 May English Literature Paper 1: Shakespeare and post-1914 Literature
- 26 May English Literature Paper 2: 19th century Novel and Poetry since 1789
- 6 June English Language Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing
- 12 June English Language Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing

Other key dates:

- 23 February English Language Paper 2: PPE
- 27 February English Literature Paper 2: PPE
- 13 March After-school English Revision begins
- 17 March Final deadline for Spoken Language Endorsement

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Which exam board do we use?

We use Edexcel for both English Language and English Literature – the breakdown of both GCSEs is on the following page.

2. Which texts have students studied?

Students have read and studied: Shakespeare's Macbeth; Journey's End by R. C. Sheriff; A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens and Edexcel's Conflict Poetry Cluster. All students have their own copies of the texts to revise from.

3. Which revision guides do we recommend?

Pearson Education Limited has published a series of revision guides for English Language.

Target 5 Writing, ISBN 0435183295, £3.99

Target 5 Reading, ISBN 0435183264, £3.99

English Language Revision Guide, ISBN 1447988083, £5.99

English Language Revision Workbook, ISBN 1447987896, £5.99

CGP Ltd has published various guides for English Literature.

Macbeth, ISBN 1841461164, £5.99

A Christmas Carol, ISBN 1782943099, £5.99

4. What revision can be done at home?

There is always revision which can be done at home for English. We recommend that students re-read their texts for English Literature at home at least once before the exams. There are now quizzes on SMHW to help them revise the key points from each text and practice questions to complete and hand in to teachers for marking and feedback. Any reading of 19th century fiction or modern non-fiction texts (such as newspapers, biographies, obituaries, travel writing or speeches) will add to their understanding of what is meant by Audience, Purpose and Mode.

5. What is the Spoken Language Endorsement?

The Spoken Language Endorsement has replaced traditional Speaking and Listening and is a compulsory assessment which all students must complete in order to gain a GCSE in English Language. Students will be given time to prepare a short presentation on a topic of their choice which will be assessed in class by their teacher. Students will be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction for which they will receive a separate certificate. A sample will be recorded and sent to the exam board for moderation.

6. How many after-school revision sessions should students attend?

This year we will be using the results of students' PPEs to tailor-make revision lessons which will address key areas of misunderstanding. We will compile a revision timetable and students will be able to attend sessions on the areas which they need most help with. We do not expect students to attend every session; completing practice questions and revising at home can often be more beneficial than extra learning in a classroom environment.

8. Who can I contact about KS4 English?

Mrs Harvey - KS4 Coordinator and Miss Mesher - Head of Languages.

ENGLISH UPDATE

English Language GCSE

Exam board: Edexcel

Specification code: 1ENO

Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing (40% of GCSE)

Section A: Reading: questions on an unseen 19th-century fiction extract. Section B: Writing: a choice of two creative writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extract. The total number of marks available is 64. Exam length: 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing (60% of GCSE)

Section A: Reading: questions on two thematically linked, unseen non-fiction extracts from the 20th and 21st century. Section B: Writing: a choice of two transactional writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extracts. The total number of marks available is 96. Exam length: 2 hours.

Spoken Language Endorsement (compulsory element)

AOs (marks in brackets)	Paper 1	Paper 2
1. Identify information from texts	Q. 1 (1) and 2 (2)	Q. 1 (2), 4 (1) and 7a (6)
2. Explain how the writer uses language and structure, use subject terminology	Q. 3 (6)	Q. 2 (2), 3 (15) and 5 (1)
3. Compare writers' ideas and perspectives		Q. 7b (14)
4. Evaluate how writers present their ideas	Q. 4 (15)	Q. 6 (15)
5. Communicate and structure your ideas clearly and imaginatively for different audiences and purposes	Q. 5 or 6 (24)	Q. 8 or 9 (24)
6. Use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar	Q. 5 OR 6 (16)	Q. 8 or 9 (16)

English Literature GCSE

Exam board: Edexcel

Specification code: 1ETO

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature (50% of GCSE)

Section A: Shakespeare: Macbeth: a two-part question: (a) Analyse an extract of approximately 30 lines. (b) Explore how a theme reflected in the extract is explored elsewhere in the play and how this links to context. Section B: Post-1914 British play or novel: Journey's End: one essay question. The total number of marks available is 80. Exam length: 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Paper 2: 19th century Novel and Poetry since 1789 (50% of GCSE)

Section A: 19th-century novel: A Christmas Carol: a two part question: (a) Analyse an extract of approximately 400 words. (b) An essay question exploring the whole text. Section B: Part 1: ONE question comparing a named poem and another from the Conflict Cluster. The named poem will be shown in the question paper. Part 2: ONE question comparing two unseen contemporary poems. The total number of marks available is 80. Assessment duration: 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Both exams are closed book (texts are not allowed in the examination).

AOs	Macbeth	Journey's End	Christmas Carol	Poetry	Unseen
1. Understand texts	Part b (15)	(16)	(20)		(8)
2. Analyse language, form & structure	Part a (20)		(20)	(15)	(12)
3. Explore contexts	Part b (5)	(16)		(5)	
4. SPaG		(8)			
Compare texts				✓	✓

MATHEMATICS UPDATE

All Year 11 students are working towards their GCSE in Mathematics.

They will sit three exams in total, each 1 hour and 30 minutes, on the following dates:

- 25 May Mathematics Paper 1 Non calculator (both Tiers)
- 8 June Mathematics Paper 2 Calculator (both Tiers)
- 13 June Mathematics paper 3 Calculator Paper (both Tiers)

Other key dates:

- 20 February PPE2 Mathematics paper 1 Non calculator
- 27 February PPE2 Mathematics Paper 2 Calculator
- 1 March PPE2 Mathematics Paper 3 Calculator
- 7 March After-school Mathematics Revision begins

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Which exam board do we use?

We use Edexcel

2. What is the difference between Higher Tier and Foundation Tier?

Higher Tier covers grades 4-9, Foundation Tier covers grades 1-5

3. Are all papers calculator papers?

No, there continues to be an element of the course which assesses basic numbers skills and that is paper 1

4. Do all students need to have a scientific calculator?

Yes, there are questions on both tiers that will require the use of a scientific calculator

5. Is there a calculator that you recommend?

We generally use Casio calculators in school

6. How much revision will be done in school?

In lessons all the relevant topics will be covered, but students will be provided with plenty of resources to consolidate and secure their understanding away from the classroom

7. Who can I contact about KS4 mathematics?

Mr Ansell - KS4 Coordinator and Mr McGee - Head of Mathematics

SCIENCE UPDATE

Year 11 students are studying either GCSEs Double Science (Core and Additional Science) or Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) awards.

Double Science students will sit six exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics on these dates:

- Tuesday pm 16 May B1
- Thursday am 18 May C1
- Wednesday pm 24 May P1
- Friday am 9 June B2
- Wednesday am 14 June C2
- Friday am 16 June P2

On the other hand, Triple Science will sit nine exams on the following dates:

- Tuesday pm 16 May B1
- Thursday am 18 May C1
- Wednesday pm 24 May P1
- Friday am 9 June B2 and B3
- Wednesday am 14 June C2 and C3
- Friday am 16 June P2 and P3

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Which exam board do we use?

We use AQA for all Science GCSEs.

2. Which revision resources do you recommend?

- AQA Collins Science Revision Guides that the faculty issued to all students free of charge in Year 10.
- Tassomai – Students must log-in every day and spend 5 to 10 minutes on the quizzes. Students can select which topic to quiz from first so should select their main areas of weakness as a priority.
- Mygcsescience (<http://www.my-gcsescience.com/> OR <https://www.youtube.com/user/myGCSEscience>) – Short videos going through key concepts with practice questions.
- AQA website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes>) – Past papers and mark schemes for exams practice.
- BBC bitesize website

3. How much time should I spend on revision?

In order to cover the whole range of the content in Science, students must be spending at least 2 hours a week revising key concepts plus 5 to 10 minutes a night on Tassomai quizzes. This includes making mindmaps, flash cards, posters or practice exams questions.

4. How much revision will be done in school?

Revision in class has already started where students are making some flash cards, going through past questions and doing some Walking Talking Mocks (WTM).

5. Are there any revision sessions after school I can attend?

There is Science club every Thursday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm where Science teachers support students with key concepts.

Also, every Friday after school, there is a past paper practice session in D19 for students to improve their exams skills.

QUIET ROOMS AND SUPPORT SESSIONS

Support sessions are held after school between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.

DEPARTMENT	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Business Studies	Business Club – S1	GCSE Applied Business and Business Studies – Coursework Catch-Up – S1			
Childcare	GCSE Childcare & Health & Social Grade Raising – V4/V6				
Drama/ Performing Arts		GCSE Dance – Practical Rehearsal/Revision – D8		GCSE Drama – Coursework Catch-Up – L1	
English					
History		History Club – E5 (Week 1 only)			
Hospitality	GCSE Hospitality Grade Raising and Coursework Catch-Up – B7				
ICT		ICT – Computing Club – V7			
Maths		Maths Club – F7			
MFL	GCSE French Grade Raising – C3 (Week 1 only)			GCSE French Grade Raising – C3 (Week 2 only)	
Product Design	Catch-Up Session Mr Barnes A5 Mrs Bleach A9 Mr Motteram A4	Catch-Up Session Mr Barnes A5 Mrs Bleach A9 (by prior arrangement) Mr Motteram A4		Catch-Up Session Mrs Bleach A9 Mr Barnes A5 Mr Motteram A4	Catch-Up Session Mr Motteram A4 (by prior arrangement)
Science				GCSE Science Coursework Catch-up – D19	
Quiet room	C2 – 2.30–4.00pm C3 – 2.30–4.00pm C6 – 2.30–4.00pm B1a – 2.30–4.00pm M3 – 2.30–3.30pm D2 – 2.30–4.00pm E7 – 2.30–4.00pm V2 – 2.30–3.30pm L3 – 2.30–3.30pm	C2 – 2.30–4.00pm C4 – 3.00–4.00pm D2 – 2.30–4.00pm E7 – 2.30–4.00pm B1 – 2.30–3.30pm B4 – 2.30–3.30pm C8 – 2.30–3.30pm		C2 – 2.30–4.00pm C4 – 3.00–4.00pm V7 – 2.30–3.30pm E7 – 2.30–4.00pm D14 – 2.30–4.00pm L3 – 2.30–3.30pm C8 – 2.30–3.30pm E2 – 2.30–4.00pm	D2 – 2.30–4.00pm E7 – 2.30–4.00pm C4 – 3.00–4.00pm