



GCSE COURSEWORK 2008-2010



June 2008

Coursework is an important component of most GCSE courses. It is designed to assess skills that are not easy to test under examination conditions and to give pupils who perform better outside the examination room an opportunity to play to their strengths.

Coursework can be such an integral part of the course that it will be done throughout the GCSE years, but in some subjects it is given time and priority at specific stages. There are also modern language orals, which demand a school-based assessment quite separate from the written papers.

This booklet contains information about the coursework to be completed by summer 2009. We have tried, as far as possible, given examination board deadlines and requirements, to spread the coursework load evenly over the two years. There are, however, going to be some times, which are inevitably and unavoidably busier than others. The end of the Easter Term in the Upper Fifth year may prove somewhat hectic and pupils will need to undertake careful preparation.

We have also tried to give you a clear and sensible indication of how much time is needed for the coursework to be done thoroughly, as well as particular advice that departments feel is important to enable pupils to do their best. Please note also that full details of the content of the coursework are included in the GCSE booklet.

With this booklet you will find a calendar of the next two academic years showing the periods in which coursework takes place for all subjects except English, where interim deadlines are set by individual teachers. The calendar also indicates when internal and external examinations take place. We hope that you will find it useful to display this prominently at home!

One final note of warning.

It is absolutely forbidden to borrow coursework material from another pupil or to lend coursework material to another pupil or in any other way to assist a pupil with coursework in a manner which contravenes the regulations of the examination boards.. The School is rightly jealous of its reputation as an accredited centre for coursework and will report any dishonest practice to the relevant Examination Board. The sanctions, which the Boards can impose, at their discretion, may involve **disqualification from the subject and may even extend to all other GCSE subjects for which a candidate is entered in that particular year.**

M J Garner
Master of the Middle School

ART

The course is divided into two areas:

- Coursework. Three units of practical work with art historical links, worth 60% of final grade.
- Terminal Examination. Candidates produce a folder of work concluding with a final piece produced during a 10 hour supervised period. This is normally divided into three, three-hour afternoon sessions and one hour during a double period. This is worth 40% of final grade.

The specification requires candidates to have experienced artwork of arts or craftsmen/women first hand - to this end we arrange at least one visit per year to an exhibition/gallery and provide workshops by visiting artists.

Deadlines

- Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth deadlines are in the last week in the Easter term
- The Examination ten-hour period occurs in the first two weeks of the summer term.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

- The GCSE Resistant Materials: 60% of the final grade.
- Electronic Products: 60% of the final grade.

Deadlines

The teacher will provide guidance and interim deadlines for key sections of the project. Students will design and manufacture their final project starting after Easter of the Lower Fifth and complete the project by February half term in the Upper Fifth.

ENGLISH

Four pieces of written work - 20% of the final grade (response to modern poetry from different cultures*; response to a Shakespeare play*; writing to argue, persuade and advise; writing to explore, imagine & entertain)

Speaking & Listening presentations - 20% of the final grade.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Three pieces of written work - 30% of the final grade (response to poetry published after 1914*; response to a Shakespeare play*; response to prose published before 1914)

* denotes those pieces of work that could cross over between the English and English Literature coursework folder.

In total therefore, for the collective written folder, there will be five pieces of work.

Deadlines

Work is completed during the two-year course. Writing is often planned in class, drafted at home and re-drafted following consultation with the teacher. Units of written coursework are spread across Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth and they may take between two to six weeks to complete dependent on the nature of the task. At least three of the pieces of coursework are completed in the Lower Fifth.

GEOGRAPHY

- One piece forming a teacher guided investigation. 2,500 to 3,000 words.
- Word processed and candidates must use ICT at the appropriate points.
- Worth 25% of the final grade.

Deadlines

- One day trip to collect data in Lower Fifth.
- To access the highest grades, pupils must carry out some extension work, which is normally a return visit during the summer holiday to gather extension data in order to make comparisons.
- Coursework is written in the ICT rooms in classtime and for all homeworks during the first half of the Christmas term in Upper Fifth.
- Weekly tasks sheets are issued providing progress checks with short term internal deadlines.
- Submit first lesson back after half term.
- Pupils have a chance to re-draft parts after the January exams in their own time.. Final submission - first day after the Easter half term.

HISTORY

- Two assignments worth 25% of final mark.

Deadlines

- The coursework will be completed during the Christmas term of the UVth year.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Three projects, worth 60% of final grade:

- Project 1a, Communication, usually making an information leaflet with full justification of all decisions made.
- Project 1b, Data Handling, usually a spreadsheet model
- Project 2, Data Logging, an experiment using automatic measurement of variables. Treated as an exercise in Systems Analysis.

Deadlines

Deadlines are approximate and we will try to finish coursework earlier if we can. Students will be informed of more exact deadlines at the beginning of each section.

- 1a completed during Christmas term of Lower Fifth.
- 1b completed during Easter and Summer terms of Lower Fifth.
- 2 is completed during Christmas and Easter terms of Upper Fifth.

LATIN

There is no coursework in Latin.

MATHEMATICS

There is no coursework in Mathematics.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

There is no coursework for Modern Foreign Languages. However, the oral exam (25% of the total mark) takes place before the Easter break in French and after Easter in Spanish and German.

MUSIC

Three out of four Music modules are coursework, each module is worth 25%, and so coursework is worth 75% of the final mark:

- Module 1 Composing, one original piece.
- Module 2 Performing, free choice of one solo and one ensemble piece.
- Module 3 Integrated Assignment, one composition of a specified brief, with recording.

Deadlines

- Module 1 end of Christmas term of Upper Fifth.
- Module 2 half term of Easter term of Upper Fifth.
- Module 3 end of Easter term of Upper Fifth.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

There is no coursework in Religious Studies.

SCIENCE

There is no coursework in Science. However, it is important to be aware of what is referred to as the Centre Assessed Unit, CAU.

The CAU comprises two parts:

1 Practical Skills Assessment (PSA)

This assesses what candidates can do in terms of using apparatus, working methodically and safely. Teachers will assess such skills at various points during the course when a particular practical exercise lends itself to such assessment. Pupils will of course know that they are being assessed. The school will be required to submit a mark out of 6 for each subject, that is Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

2 Investigative Skills Assessment (ISA)

This assessment will be divided into two sections. Section 1 will assess the ability of pupils to use the data that they collect in an experiment that they discuss and plan with their teacher and carry out in prior lessons. Section 2 assesses the ability of pupils to answer questions on data for a similar activity provided by the Awarding Body (AQA). Section 1 is worth 20 marks, section 2, 14 marks. Both sections are carried out during lessons under test conditions.

So the CAU for each subject comprises 40 marks, 6 from the PSA, 34 from the ISA. The CAU contributes 25% of the total marks for each subject.

The pupils will carry out a minimum of two ISAs in each subject, with the best marks being carried forward. The assessment runs alongside the taught subject content.

Questions that coursework examiners ask

The questions below will make the student think about his coursework from the examiner's point of view. They can be used a checklist to ensure that coursework is properly organised and focused.

Knowledge or the use of information:

has the candidate carried out relevant primary and secondary research?

has the candidate used a variety of presentation methods?

has the candidate fully used all of the information he has collected to answer the problem he addressed?

Application:

has the candidate used the correct terms and concepts?

has the candidate correctly used the terms within the context of the problem or issue being researched?

has the candidate explained why he/she has used such terms?

has the candidate shown care in selecting the terms he/she has used?

Analyse (select/organise/interpret):

has the candidate shown care in choosing the correct information / data needed to answer this problem?

has the candidate interpreted the information and not simply described it?

has the candidate explained or analysed the information he/she has collected?

has the candidate produced sufficient reasons supporting the statements he/she has made?

is the work well organised and easy to follow?

Evaluation / judgement:

has the candidate shown an ability to make a judgement?

has the candidate reached a conclusion?

has the candidate supported his/her conclusion?

has the candidate made recommendations?

has the candidate supported his/her recommendations?