



GCSE CENTRE ASSESSED UNITS 2009-2011



September 2009

The Centre assessed unit 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.

A Centre assessed unit 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. This booklet contains information about the centre assessed units to be completed by summer 2011. We have tried, as far as possible, given examination board deadlines and requirements, to spread the centre assessed unit load evenly over the two years. There are, however, going to be some times which are 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 realistic indication of how much time is needed for the centre assessed units 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 these centre assessed units 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 centre assessed units are completed 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!

There has been a significant change in the regulations for completing centre assessed work over the last few years; this means more work is to be conducted under "controlled conditions". What examination boards mean by this varies from subject to subject. For example, in science this involves a Centre Accessed Unit including a test paper, Geography students work on the computer only in lesson time and cannot take work home on pen drives. This is a significant change to what you may have experienced before with older brothers and sisters.

One final note of warning.

It is absolutely forbidden to borrow centre assessed unit material from another pupil or to lend centre assessed unit material to another pupil or in any other way to assist a pupil with centre assessed unit in a manner which contravenes the regulations of the examination boards. The School is rightly jealous of its reputation as an accredited centre (for centre assessed unit) 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
Head of the Middle School

ART

The course is divided into two areas:

- Centre assessed unit. Three units of practical work with art historical links, worth 60% of the 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 the final grade.
- Art and Design Portfolio. A portfolio of practical work with art historical links, worth 60% of the final centre assessed grade.
- OCR Set Task. 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 the final centre assessed grade.

The specification requires candidates to have experienced artwork of craftsmen/women at 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

- 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 half term in the Christmas term of 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. The pupils will be assessed on three separate presentations. There will be an individual one, a group one and a drama-based activity. These presentations will assess the pupils' ability across three areas:

- a. Their ability to Explain, Describe & Narrate
- b. Their ability to Explore, Analyse and Imagine

And finally:

- c. Their ability to Discuss, Argue and Persuade.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Three pieces of written work worth 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 centre assessed unit 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 centre assessed unit are spread across Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth and they may take between two to six weeks to complete depending on the nature of the task. Two or three of the centre assessed units are completed in the Lower Fifth.

GEOGRAPHY

Controlled assessment replaces coursework unit in Geography. It is a new form of assessment which in some ways is very like coursework unit but in other ways is like an examination. Controlled assessment is an investigation in which you undertake a fieldwork task, guided by your teacher. You then write a report based on your results, completed under examination conditions and supervised by your teacher.

The writing up stages of your investigation must be completed individually – without help from others, in the classroom, under the close supervision of your teacher. This work cannot be taken home – it has to be handed in at the end of each lesson, so that you cannot continue working on it in your own time. For some stages of your investigation you will be able to work in your own time – at home, in the library or elsewhere. You will also be able to work in groups.

The fieldwork will take place in the summer term of the Lower Fifth, after the examination period has finished, and will involve a day trip. The location is likely to be the Malvern Hills. This may change from time to time to meet the requirements of the new specification. The writing up of the report will begin before the end of the summer term of the Lower Fifth, and will continue during the first half of the Christmas term of the Upper Fifth. Your teacher will guide you closely through the entire process, and will offer advice where necessary.

Controlled Assessment in Geography provides an excellent opportunity for candidates to develop as independent learners. The completed reports are marked internally by your teacher.

Deadlines

Late June, post examinations	one-day field course to gather data locally
Summer holiday 2010	collect data for extension work – most likely a return visit to the field study site
First half of Christmas term 2010	Write up report under highly controlled conditions during lessons, and with teacher guidance.
Thursday 22 nd October 2010	Submit work.

HISTORY

- Two assignments worth 25% of final mark.

Deadlines

- The centre assessed unit will be completed during the Christmas term of the UVth year.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Three projects, worth 60% of final grade:

- Project 1a, Communication, creating an information System using 8 PowerPoint slides.
- Project 1b, Modelling, usually a spreadsheet model.
- Project 2, System Analysis, create database management system to help a user solve a real life problem.

Deadlines

The deadlines are indicated on the centre assessed unit calendar.

- 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 centre assessed unit in Latin.

MATHEMATICS

There is no centre assessed unit in Mathematics.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

There are four skills tested in Modern Foreign Languages, of which the Speaking and Writing components will be tested throughout the Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth years. These assessments will be tested throughout the course. See the table below.

These assessments represent 60% of the final grade. Listening and Reading will be tested in a terminal exam at the end of the Upper Fifth Year and represent 40% of the final mark.

Here are the Year Assessment deadlines for the Lower Fifth

FRENCH

w/c		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
19 Oct 2009					W
Exam week	Jan 4	L	R	S	
8 Feb 2010					W
19 April 2010				S	
Exam week	June 7	L	R		W

SPANISH / GERMAN

w/c		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
2 Nov 2009					W
Exam week	Jan 4	L	R	S	
22 Feb 2010					W
26 April 2010				S	
Exam week	June 7	L	R		W

Assessment deadlines for the Upper Fifth will be communicated home in summer term 2010.

MUSIC

Three out of four Music modules are centre assessed unit:

- Module 1 Composing, one original piece, linked to a 'brief' set by AQA (20%)
- Module 2 Performing, free choice of one individual and one group piece (40%)
- Module 3 Composing, one original, free choice piece (20%)

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 centre assessed unit in Religious Studies.

SCIENCE

There is no centre assessed unit in Science that requires a pupil to carry out any written work outside of lessons.

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, which are 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 18 marks, section 2, 16 marks.

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 several ISAs in each subject, with the best marks being carried forward. The assessment runs alongside the taught subject content.

Questions that centre assessed unit examiners ask

The questions below will make the student think about his/her centre assessed unit from the examiner's point of view. They can be used as a checklist to ensure that a centre assessed unit 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/she has collected to answer the problem he/she 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?