

B **BRANSTON**

COMMUNITY ACADEMY

**KEY STAGE 4
HANDBOOK**

**ACADEMIC YEAR
2018-2019**

SECTIONS





		Page No
Section 1:	Introduction	2
Section 2:	Online Learning and Support	3
Section 3:	Learning Skills/ Examination Preparation	6
Section 4:	Revision Programmes	11
Section 5:	Internal Exams	11
Section 6:	Course Information	12
Section 7:	Controlled Assessment Timetable	21
Section 8:	Y11 Timeline 2018-2019	22
Section 9:	Vocational Examinations	23
Section 10:	Parental Support Section	24

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

At Branston Community Academy we are all committed to helping our young people achieve as well as they possibly can. To do that we all need to be as aware as possible about the challenges, requirements and opportunities of the next eight months.

This document brings together important pieces of information in one booklet. We hope that students and parents will find it useful.

You might use it to:

-  plan ahead
-  as a reference for questions/queries
-  to help you access learning materials
-  to help you become more aware of how all the different pieces of the learning 'jigsaw' fit together

We are fortunate at Branston to have many parents playing very active roles to support the achievement of our students. The evidence suggests that this nearly always impacts positively on the progress of students.

We also believe that starting the revision process early enables students to approach the examination period confidently, allowing opportunities to address all areas of each course.

SECTION 2: ONLINE LEARNING and SUPPORT

Computing based learning resources offer students the opportunity to:

- ☞ Work independently
- ☞ Work at their own pace
- ☞ Use interactive learning materials
- ☞ Access a large amount of high quality learning materials from a single point (a desktop computer)
- ☞ Access past paper questions with mark schemes
- ☞ Catch up on missing work
- ☞ See work in the context of a whole module/section/course

All students have access to a wide range of electronic learning resources located on the Academy Intranet or 'Learning Web'. These resources can also be reached from outside of the Academy via the 'Remote Access' button on the homepage of the Academy website (www.branstonca.lincs.sch.uk).

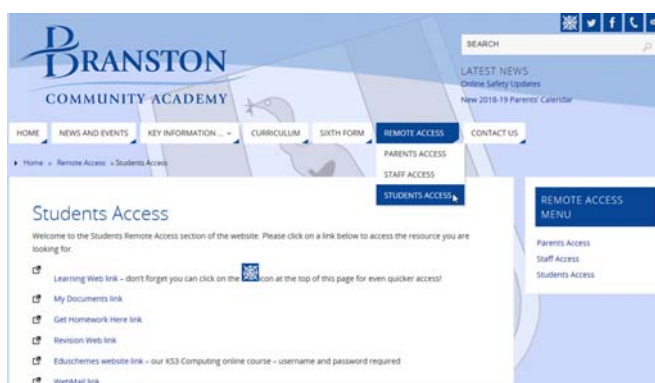


Figure 1: www.branstonca.lincs.sch.uk



Figure 2: Branston Community Academy Intranet or 'Learning Web'

Notable resources include:

- Lesson resources – these resources include interactive PowerPoint presentations and other e-learning materials, in-house generated work sheets, examination papers and answers as well as samples of work etc.
- Access to the BCA Revision Web – this is a central store of examination papers, mark sheets and exemplar work for a number of departments.
- Direct links to SAM learning – an online resource of learning materials containing interactive revision exercises and past papers that are automatically marked with instant feedback provided.
- Direct links to My Maths and Maths Watch – excellent Maths resources that students have access to using a specific username and password

This remote access to the Academy network also provided access to the following:

- Academy email
- Home folders – enabling work to be put onto the Academy network from a home computer
- Access to the 'Get Homework here' area of the Academy network from a home computer

Sensible and responsible use of these resources is covered by the Home – Academy Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) agreement that all parents and students were asked to agree to in Year 7 by signing page 23 of the student planner.

Online Revision Resources

Resource	Details	Further Information
Sam Learning	A revision site covering all subject areas at Key Stage 3 and 4. Self-marking examination questions are particularly useful as revision material.	<p>www.samlearning.co.uk</p> <p>Centre id: In4bc2</p> <p>Username: date of birth in ddmmyy format followed by first and last initial e.g. 110789FB</p> <p>Password: date of birth in ddmmyy format followed by first and last initial e.g. 110789FB (this is usually changed)</p>
My Maths	Specialist maths site covering all key stages.	<p>www.mymaths.co.uk</p> <p>Username: branston</p> <p>Password: obtuse (from Sept 2018)</p>
Maths Watch	Specialist maths site covering all key stages with lots of video tutorials.	<p>vle.mathswatch.co.uk</p> <p>Username: username@branston.ca</p> <p>Password: obtuse (from Sept 2018)</p>
Quizlet	Excellent bank of shared online quizzes. Also allows creation of flip cards and revisions games. A mobile app is also available for free download.	<p>www.quizlet.com</p> <p>Free to register or log in with school email address</p>

SECTION 3: LEARNING SKILLS/ EXAMINATION PREPARATION

How students learn most efficiently and how they best prepare for examinations are really important issues.

1. Students should have already started working on developing their preferred revision technique over the summer break using the 'Year 10 GCSE Revision introduction Booklet'

This section revisits some of the idea covered in that booklet.

Too often students prepare for exams by just reading notes/exercise books. This is an important feature but also worth considering are:

- using past paper questions and mark schemes;
- answering questions verbally - revising with a member of the family/friend;
- using online revision sites (*see section on Computing learning and support*).
- creating mind maps, cue cards and online mnemonics.

2. Making Your Learning Smarter

Spacing

- Doing something little and often – spacing – beats doing it all at once, or cramming.
- Revising for eight hours in one day is not as effective as doing one hour of revision for eight days. This is because the time in between allows you to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in your long-term memory. In some studies, using spacing instead of cramming has resulted in a 10% to 30% difference in final test results.

Interleaving

- Where spacing is about how long you leave between revision sessions, interleaving is about what you do with your time.
- When students dedicate a whole day to revising one subject – “On Monday I will do Chemistry, and on Tuesday I will do French” – this is known as blocking. Interleaving is the opposite, mixing up subjects and doing a bit of both on each day.

Mind Map Sheet

Research shows this is one of the most powerful learning techniques there is. The sheet that follows 'Making Your Learning Smarter' explains why.

Chunking

Similar to a Mind map - dividing up work into 'chunks' helps manage and define the problems involved with revision.

3. All students are part of our lunchtime sessions offered for English, Mathematics and Science. Many other departments will run lunchtime and after school sessions at various points in the year.

MAKING YOUR LEARNING SMARTER

INTERPERSONAL

- ☞ Ask people to question you on what you have studied
- ☞ Form 'study buddy' partnerships or groups
- ☞ Make tests for each other
- ☞ Discuss your learning
- ☞ Talk during breaks

INTRAPERSONAL

- ☞ Find useful ways to memorise effectively
- ☞ Use well-chosen revision strategies
- ☞ Gather useful resources
- ☞ Ensure quiet conditions for work
- ☞ Work steadily, pace yourself

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC

- ☞ Discuss what has been learnt
- ☞ Display key words and subject glossaries
- ☞ Ask people whether you can teach them
- ☞ Reading
- ☞ Note-making, including condensing each time

LOGICAL/ MATHEMATICAL

- ☞ Use post-it notes to sequence ideas/facts
- ☞ Turn content into questions
- ☞ Carry out similarities and differences exercises
- ☞ Use flowcharts as one way of making notes
- ☞ Find patterns or structures

VISUAL/SPATIAL

- ☞ Use mind maps
- ☞ Charts and posters
- ☞ Highlighters
- ☞ 3-D models
- ☞ CD-Roms, video, revision, website
- ☞ Colour
- ☞ Design attractive notes

Multiple Intelligences

BODILY/ KINAESTHETIC

- ☞ Use post-it notes - move them around
- ☞ Learn different subjects in different rooms
- ☞ Take frequent breaks and move during them
- ☞ Have Water
- ☞ Move during learning
- ☞ Make learning active

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC

- ☞ Use different styles of music for different activities
- ☞ Create rhymes or chants
- ☞ Create tapes
- ☞ Mnemonics
- ☞ Use rhythm
- ☞ Put subject content into favourite songs/tunes
- ☞ Relax to music during breaks

NATURALIST

- ☞ Create an organised environment
- ☞ Create a stimulating learning environment
- ☞ Light, sound, warmth
- ☞ Charts, posters
- ☞ Fresh air
- ☞ Nutrition
- ☞ Work in the garden

Then connect related ideas to the main branch, and so on

CONNECT MAIN BRANCHES TO CENTRAL IMAGE

START IN THE CENTRE

Landscape paper

Allows your brain to work by association, connecting ideas

Sparks off further thought

Continues a basic structure

Branch out

Radiant

Creative

MAKE BRANCHES CURVED

Interest

Straight can be boring

USE A CENTRAL IMAGE

Creative

Attractive visually

Focus for attention

USE MINIMAL WORDS

Words and images spark new thoughts

USE IMAGES THROUGHOUT

Images and symbols

Easy to remember

Stimulate new, creative connections/ideas

USE COLOUR

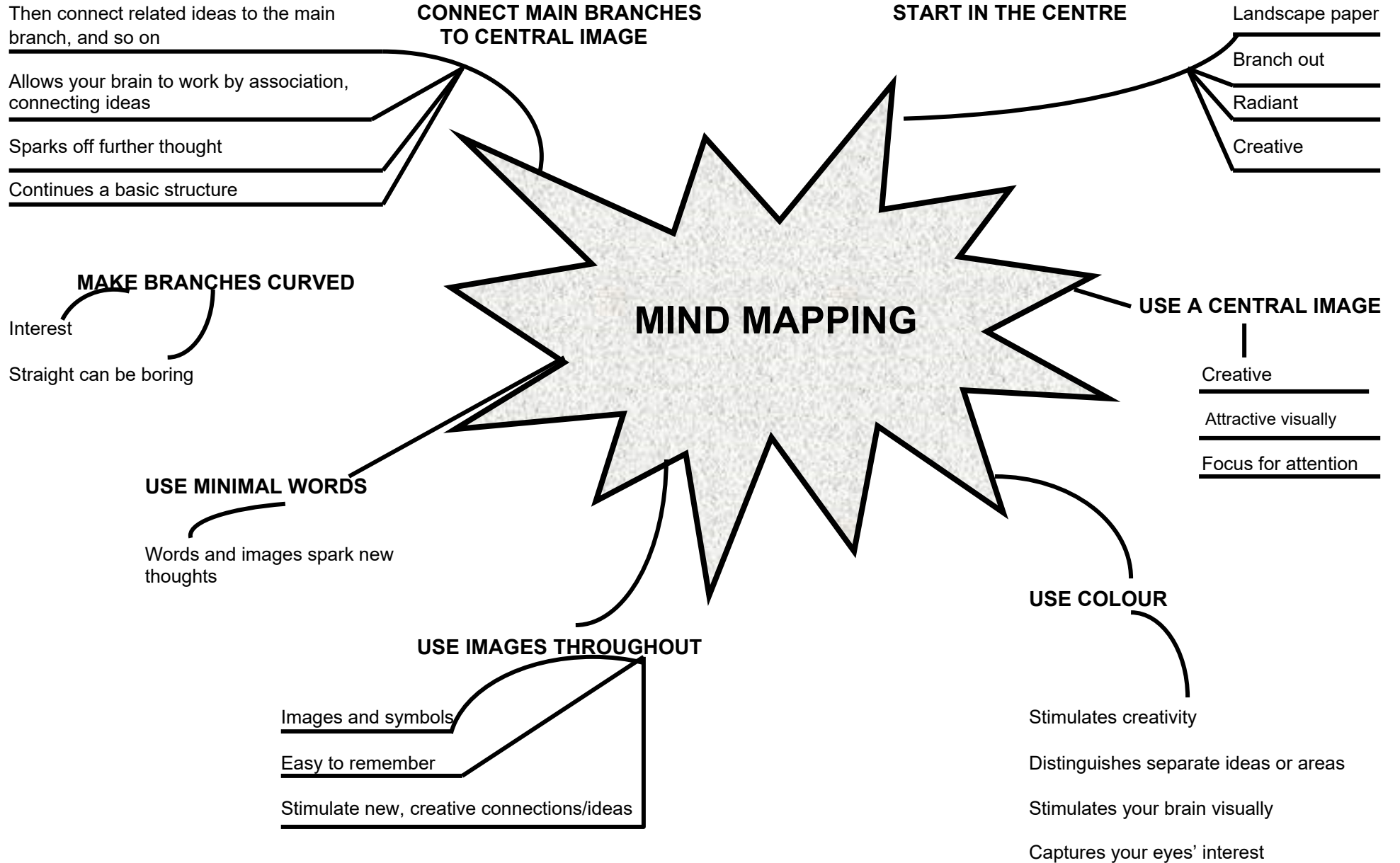
Stimulates creativity

Distinguishes separate ideas or areas

Stimulates your brain visually

Captures your eyes' interest

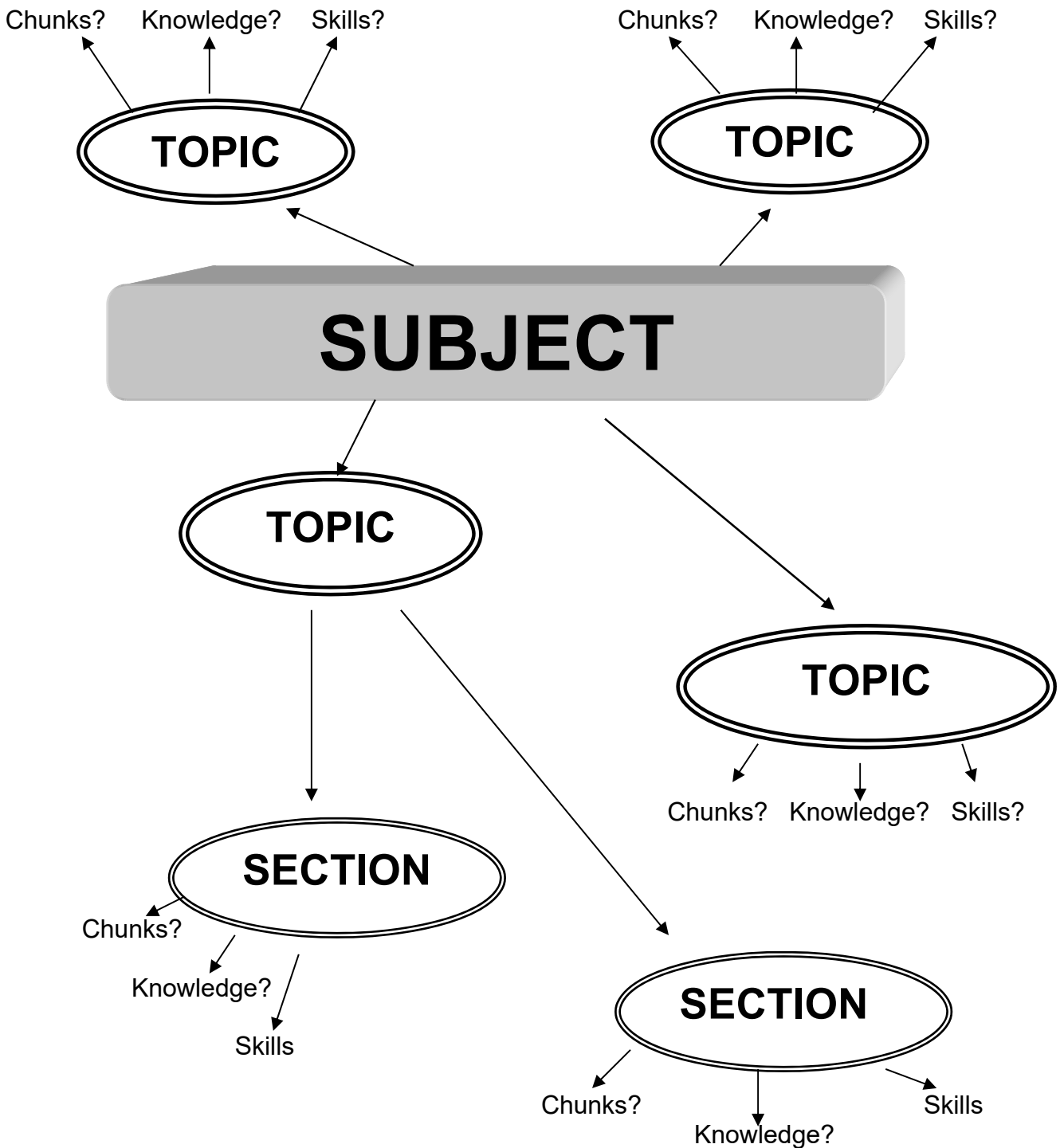
MIND MAPPING



PLANNING YOUR REVISION

Name: _____ Tutor Group: _____

OVERVIEW and CHUNK your subjects. For example:



ORGANISING YOUR TIME

Revision Plans

- ☞ If grids like the example below aren't your thing, then do this differently!!
Don't be put off. What is the best approach for you?
- ☞ Make this planning work for you; don't become a slave to it.
- ☞ Plan time off as well as time working!
- ☞ Enjoy ticking off each session as you complete it.
- ☞ Use your key intelligences to help you decide how to approach each activity.
- ☞ Be creative and colourful!
- ☞ Know what you aim to achieve, how and by when.
- ☞ You will need separate timings for weekends, holidays and study leave, compared with school days.
- ☞ Know your patterns; aim to work hardest when you are usually most alert during the day.
- ☞ Make each work session somewhere between half an hour and an hour generally.

So make an exam preparation plan. For example:

<i>Timings</i>	<i>start</i> → <i>finish</i>	<i>start</i> → <i>finish</i>	<i>start</i> → <i>finish</i>	<i>start</i> → <i>finish</i>
MONDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
TUESDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
WEDNESDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
THURSDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
FRIDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
SATURDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?
SUNDAY	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?	Subject? Topic/Chunk? How?

SECTION 4: REVISION PROGRAMMES

The Academy offers additional coursework and revision sessions with a focus on Year 11 students.

In addition, programmes for the Easter and May half term holidays will be offered and parents will

Programmes for the Easter and May half-term holidays will be receive information at the appropriate time. These sessions are generally open to all students following a particular course, but where there is a particular need, letters inviting your son/daughter to a session/series of sessions will be sent.

Like most schools we offer learning and revision support right up to the examinations. We are very confident that these sort of programmes have helped our students prepare more thoroughly for examinations and hence achieve better.

Exams start in the two weeks before the half-term holiday at the end of May. Students will follow their normal timetable until that holiday.

After the holiday, the Academy then offers revision sessions in different courses. Students are expected to attend all relevant sessions. It is organised so that sessions are offered shortly before the exam in that subject.

A detailed timetable will be sent home to all students and parents after Easter.

SECTION 5: INTERNAL EXAMS

Students have two opportunities to formally practise sitting for external examinations in the Academy examination centre:

Year 10	March
Year 11	November

We feel it is very important that our students recognise how important it is to develop good habits about preparing for examinations and we would ask for your support in emphasising the benefits from consistent preparation.

SECTION 6: COURSE INFORMATION

This section gives information about each course available to students at Branston Community Academy in Years 10 and 11.

For each course there is information about:

- 📖 Title of course and Examination Board
- 📖 Assessment framework: i.e. how many marks come from the final exam, from coursework, from module tests
- 📖 Coursework: basic information about what it is and deadlines (*see also section on Coursework*)
- 📖 Foundation and higher tiers are available in Mathematics and Science GCSEs
 Foundation Grades 1 – 5
 Higher Grades 4 - 9

New grading for GCSEs

New grading		Old grading
9		A*
8	=	A
7		A
6		B
5	=	C
4		C
3		D
2	=	E
1		F
		G
U	=	U

Source: Ofqual



GCSE COURSE INFORMATION

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Art & Design (Fine Art)	AQA	8202	Portfolio	Coursework	N/A	60%
			Externally set Assignment	Examination	Preparation and 10 hours	40%
Art & Design (Graphic Communication)	AQA	8203	Portfolio	Coursework	N/A	60%
			Externally set Assignment	Examination	Preparation and 10 hours	40%
Art & Design (Photography)	AQA	8206	Portfolio	Coursework	N/A	60%
			Externally set Assignment	Examination	Preparation and 10 hours	40%
Business Studies	Edexcel	2BS01	Multiple Choice Exam	Examination	45 minutes	25%
			Coursework completed under controlled conditions	Coursework	3 hours maximum with 6 hours research	25%
			Written Exam	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	50%
Design & Technology Graphic Products	Edexcel	2GR01	5GR01 Controlled Assessment	Controlled Assessment	40 hours	60%
			5GR02 Written Paper	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	40%
Design & Technology Electronic Products	Edexcel	2EP01	5EP01 Controlled Assessment	Controlled Assessment	40 Hours	60%
			5EP02 Examination	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	40%
Design & Technology Resistant Materials (Product Design)	Edexcel	2RM01	5GR01 Controlled Assessment	Controlled Assessment	40 hours	60%
			5GR02 Written Paper	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	40%

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Performing Arts Technical Award	AQA	3745	Unit 1 – Unlocking Creativity	Performance/Presentation and Controlled Assessment		30%
			Unit 2 – The Production/Performance	Performance and Controlled Assessment		30%
			Unit 3 – The Performing Arts Experience	Written Exam	1 hour 30 minutes	40%
English Language	AQA		Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	80 marks 50%
			Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	80 marks 50%
			Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language. An essential component to enable the GCSE to be awarded	Assessment	Teacher set throughout the course	Separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)
English Literature	AQA		Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19 th Century Novel	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	64 marks 40%
			Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry	Examination	2 hours 15 minutes	96 marks 60%

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Food Preparation and Nutrition	Edugas		Non – exam Assessment (NEA) (15% Food Investigation and 35% Food Preparation)	Assessment	25 hours	50%
			Examination	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	50%
French	Edexcel/ Pearson	IFR0	Writing Examination	Examination	Foundation 1 hour 10 minutes Higher 1 hour 20 minutes	25%
			Speaking Examination	Examination	Foundation 7-9 minutes + 12 minutes preparation time Higher 10-12 minutes +12 minutes preparation time	25%
			Reading Examination	Examination	Foundation 45 minutes Higher 60 Minutes	25%
			Listening Examination	Examination	Foundation 35 minutes Higher 45 minutes	25%

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Geography	Eduqas	C111QS Geography A	Changing Physical and Human Landscapes	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	35% Qualification
			Environmental and Development Issues	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	35%
			Applied Fieldwork Enquiry	Examination	1 hour 30 minutes	30%
German	Edexcel/ Pearson	1GN0	Writing Examination	Examination	Foundation 1 hour 10 minutes Higher 1 hour 20 minutes	25%
			Speaking Examination	Examination	Foundation 7-9 minutes + 12 minutes preparation time Higher 10-12 minutes +12 minutes preparation time	25%
			Reading Examination	Examination	Foundation 45 minutes Higher 60 Minutes	25%
			Listening Examination	Examination	Foundation 35 minutes Higher 45 minutes	25%

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
History	Edexcel	History A	Paper 1 Thematic Study and the Historic Environment - Crime and Punishment in Britain 1000 – present and Whitechapel (1870 – 1900): Crime, Policing and the Inner City	Examination	1 hour 15 minutes	30%
			Period Study and Depth Study – Early Elizabethan England, 1558 – 88. Superpower Relations and the Cold War 1941 - 91	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	40%
			Modern Depth Study – Weimar and Nazi Germany. 1918 - 39	Examination	1 hour 20 minutes	30%
Mathematics	Edexcel	1MA1	Linear Edexcel Papers in June	Examination	3 x 1 hour 30 minutes	100% (80 marks available each paper)
Music	Rockschool	Year 1 MUSPRA 229 Level 2	Music Rehearsal Skills	Written Report/Video Recording, Diary	Internal Option Continuous during Year 1	
		Year 2 MUSPRA 208 Level 2	Music Style Development	Research and presentation as PPT or written report. Evaluation written report	Internal Option September – December	

		Year 2 MUSPRA 230 Level 2	Live Music Performance	Written plans, video recording, evaluation report	External Core Assessment Video of live performance externally assessed	
Physical Education	AQA	8582	Practical Performance Written Coursework		Practical Moderation Sample to Moderator	30% 10%
			Terminal Theory Paper 1	Examination	1 hour 15 minutes	30%
			Terminal Theory Paper 2	Examination	1 hour 15 minutes	30%
Religious Studies	AQA	8062	The Study of Religious Beliefs, Teachings and Practises (Christianity and Judaism)	Examination	2 x 1 hour 45 minutes	50%
			Thematic Studies	Examination	1 hour 45 minutes	50%
Combined Science Trilogy	AQA	8464	Biology Paper 1 Topics 1-4 Biology Paper 2 Topics 5-7	Examination Examination	1 hour 15 minutes 1 hour 15 minutes	16.7% 16.7%
			Chemistry Paper 1 Topics 8-12 Chemistry Paper 2 Topics 13-17	Examination Examination	1 hour 15 minutes 1 hour 15 minutes	16.7% 16.7%
			Physics Paper 1 Topics 18-21 Physics Paper 2 Topics 22-24	Examination Examination	1 hour 15 minutes 1 hour 15 minutes	16.7% 16.7%
Separate Sciences (Triple)	AQA	Biology 8461 Chemistry 8462 Physics 8463	Biology Paper 1 Topics 1-4 Biology Paper 2 Topics 5-7	Examination Examination	1 hour 45 minutes 1 hour 45 minutes	50% 50%
			Chemistry Paper 1 Topics 1-5 Chemistry Paper 2 Topics 6-10	Examination Examination	1 hour 45 minutes 1 hour 45 minutes	50% 50%
			Physics Paper 1 Topics 1-4 Physics Paper 2 Topics 5-10	Examination Examination	1 hour 45 minutes 1 hour 45 minutes	50% 50%

VOCATIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Business BTEC First Level 2	Edexcel		Unit 1 Enterprise in the Business World	Coursework		25%
			Unit 2 Finance for Business	Examination		25%
			Unit 3 Promoting a Brand	Coursework		25%
			Unit 4 Recruitment, Selection and Employment	Coursework		25%
BTEC First Level 2 Engineering	Edexcel	600/4788/4	Unit 1 The Engineered World	Examination		25%
			Unit 2 Investigating an Engineering Product	Coursework		25%
			Unit 7 Machining Techniques	Coursework		50%
BTEC Level ½ Tech Award in Health and Social Care			Unit 1 Human Lifespan Development	Examination		30GLH
			Unit 2 Health and Social Care Values	Coursework		30GLH
			Optional Units (60GLH will be chosen from the following): Unit 2 Effective Communication in Health and Social Care	Coursework		30GLH
			Unit 4 Social Influences on Health and Wellbeing	Coursework		30GLH
			Unit 5 Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Coursework		30GLH
			Unit 6 The Impact of Nutrition on Health and Wellbeing	Coursework		30GLH
			Unit 7 Equality and Diversity in Health and Social Care	Coursework		30 GLH
			Individual Rights in Health and Social Care	Coursework		30GLH

Subject	Board	Code	Component	Assessment	Duration	% Weighting
Cambridge National Certificate Level 2 in Creative iMedia	OCR	J807	Unit R081: Pre-Production Skills	Written Paper	1 hour 15 minutes	25%
			Unit R082: Digital Graphics Editing	10-12 hour task based on a model assignment	30 hours	25%
			Unit R085: Creating a Multipage Website	10-12 hour task based on a model assignment	30 hours	25%
			Unit R092: Developing Digital Games or Unit R087: Creating Interactive Multimedia Products	10-12 hour based on a model assignment	30 hours	25%
BTEC First Level 2 Travel and Tourism	Edexcel		Unit 1 The UK Travel and Tourism Sector	Examination	1 hour	25%
			Unit 2 UK Travel and Tourism Destinations	Coursework	30 GLH	25%
			Unit 4 International Travel and Tourism Destinations	Coursework	30 GLH	25%
			Unit 5 Factors affecting Worldwide Travel and Tourism	Coursework	30 GLH	25%


SECTION 7: CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT TIMETABLE


YEAR 10

MONTH	SUBJECTS
September	Performing Arts, PE
October	Performing Arts, PE
November	Performing Arts, PE
December	Performing Arts, PE
January	Performing Arts, PE
February	Performing Arts, PE
March	Performing Arts, PE, Music
April	Performing Arts, PE, Music
May	Performing Arts, PE
June	PE, Food and Nutrition (NEA2)
July	PE

YEAR 11

MONTH	SUBJECTS
September	Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), PE, Performing Arts
October	Design Technology, PE, Performing Arts (weeks 1 & 2)
November	Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), PE, Business Studies, Performing Arts
December	Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), Performing Arts, PE, Business Studies – Food and Nutrition (NEA1) – Food exam 15%
January	Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), PE, Performing Arts
February	Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), Business Studies, Performing Arts, PE, Food and Nutrition (NEA2) – Food exam 35%
March	Business Studies, Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), Performing Arts, Music, PE
April	Business Studies, Design Technology (Electronics, Graphics and Product Design), Performing Arts, Music
May	PE Moderation - Practical

 Subjects in which Controlled Assessment is on-going throughout the two years:
PE, Performing Arts and Computing (iMedia), Art and Design (Fine Art), Art and Design (Graphics Course), Art and Design (Photography)

 Subjects in which there is no Controlled Assessment:
Maths, English, Science, History, Geography, RE and MFL

SECTION 8

YEAR 11 TIMELINE - 2018/19

N.B. Controlled Assessment tasks take place throughout the year.

DATE	EVENT
25 th September	Year 11 Information Evening
10 th October	Year 11 Parents' Evening
31 st October	6 th Form Options Evening
19 th – 23 rd November -	Year 11 Mock Exam Week
January	GCSE Exam Entries Made
4 th – 8 th March	Year 10 Mock Exams
Easter	Deadline for all Controlled Assessment Work Several departments hold revision classes
May/June	Bespoke revision lessons before each exam
13 th May – 28 th June	Exam period
22 nd August	GCSE Results

SECTION 9

VOCATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Vocational Examination Timetable for Vocational Examinations

These courses are predominately controlled assignment based but now have an external examination included as part of their assessment.

Subject	Date of Exam	Exam Length
Engineering	January to May 2018	2 x 1 hour
Business	January to June 2018	2 x 1 hour
Travel and Tourism	11 th January 2019 20 th May 2019	1 hour 1 hour
Health and Social Care	1 st February 2019 – 16 th May 2019 (re-sit if required)	1 hour
Music	14 th January 2019 – 28 th March 2019	30 hours
iMedia	June 2018	1 hour 15 minutes

SECTION 10: PARENTAL SUPPORT SECTION

The most common frustrations for parents

He always leaves everything to the last minute. One moment he has all the time in the world; the next it's all stress and stropping because he's got an assessment tomorrow...

There are a million websites to help but how do you know which are any good?

I don't understand all these tiers, new GCSE grades, set tasks, required practicals and coursework – it's completely different from when I was at school

She's always got an excuse – I don't know what to believe

I can't stand arguments and stress when I tell him exams are important, and try to make him work – it always ends up with him saying it's his life and slamming the door

She's always panicked in exams – when I try to help her, it always ends in a slanging match. I encourage her but it always seems to end in me making her more stressed

Surely she shouldn't be going out **again** when she's got exams coming up

How can I make a difference?



Some parents may feel at a loss when their children enter their final year of GCSE. If you feel like this, you are not alone? The exam system has changed greatly over the past few years with the focus now being more on the terminal examinations in May/June. Your involvement during these crucial years can make an enormous difference – the crucial difference between your child achieving their full potential.

*Parental support is **eight times** more important in determining a child's academic success than social class, according to a new study.*

And the good news is – you don't have to be an expert in any of the subjects your child chooses to make a real difference, and you don't have to become a 'super-parent', giving up your own life and responsibilities – you just need to know how best to spend the time you do have, at each stage of the process.

So, how can parents help?

- Developing their abilities to overcome frustrations, and strategies for persisting when they are learning material that they find challenging.
- Organising themselves, notes, hand-outs and information for different subjects, and different topics within these.
- Completing more work at home, independently.
- Organising and planning their time over longer periods of time, building in breaks and leisure activities.
- Understanding the exam structure and the relative importance of each element to their final grade.
- Preparing for internal and controlled assessments.
- Planning and carrying out their revision (especially now that most subjects are examined at the end of the two year period).
- Perfecting their 'exam technique'.
- Organising a study space at home.
- Noting when revision and support sessions are running and ensuring they attend.
- Encouraging excellent attendance.
- Manage social media/gaming devices.

Perhaps the hardest demand on Year 10 and 11 pupils is that of understanding the long-term importance of doing the best they can, and learning when to shelve short-term fun at times in the interest of long-term benefits (not easy even for adults).

Unfortunately for us, from the teenage perspective interest and effort in education and the long-term benefits these can bring often come rather a long way down the priority list, after friendships, the 'right' clothes, social life, romantic concerns and hobbies.

In addition, children will differ in their levels of maturity, their ability to take responsibility for their learning, organisational skills and levels of motivation.

And this is where you come in. You are the expert on your own child and have always been his or her most important teacher. Your support, encouragement and interest can make a spectacular difference to your child's motivation and ability to cope with the academic and organisational demands of the exam years.

When you, your child and school work in partnership, you can be sure that your child will achieve the best results possible.

Your role may include some of the following:

- Partner with school and child – going to parents' evenings, asking questions and finding out how you can best help your child at home.
- Provider of the tools for homework and revision – a quiet space, a 'workbox' of pens, paper and other necessities.
- Banker – paying for the tools, files and revision guides they need.
- Study buddy – showing an interest in the subject, helping with homework (but not doing it for them), testing them when they ask you etc.
- Entertainments officer – finding out about TV programmes, theatre productions, films, exhibitions relevant to your child's learning, and enjoying them together.
- Sounding board and adviser – helping your child to break tasks down so that they are manageable, keeping a subtle eye on progress and celebrating achievements, and seeing a positive way forward when things go badly.
- Project manager – agreeing the rules for homework or revision (they won't work if they're imposed), helping them to make a realistic timetable, balancing work against the 'fun stuff' and revising the plans as necessary.
- Go-between – for your child and the school when necessary; making sure problems are nipped in the bud and asking the questions your child can't or won't.
- Information provider and interpreter – finding copies of old exam papers, searching out websites, finding out about the subject, exam structures and content.
- Facilitator – discussing current affairs and your child's opinion about items in the news.

Whatever your child's needs, your chief role will always be that of the person who cares most in the world, the champion of their needs and admirer of every achievement. The most important role you will play is that of the person who will love them and be proud of them whatever happens.

NB: *The word 'parent' is used throughout the booklet, but of course you don't have to be a parent to make the difference. Carer, older sibling, grandparent or neighbour – it won't make any difference to the effect you can have.*

Quick Tips for Revising

- Make yourself start however much you don't want to – the hardest bit is over then!
- Build in short breaks
- Do frequent short exercises – stretches, neck and shoulder rolls, walking around etc.
- Drink water and get fresh air. Keep the temperature cool.
- Eat 'brain food' – avoid sugar and have lots of healthy snacks around to eat little and often.
- Take a day off and do something completely different.
- Don't leave the difficult bits to the end.
- Do something relaxing between revising and bedtime.
- STOP and take a break if you start feeling frustrated, angry, overwhelmed. Make a note of the problem to take to your next lesson, and move on to something else.
- Focus on what you have done, not all the things you haven't – every little helps.
- Promise yourself little rewards after each session – a favourite TV programme, reading a trashy novel or going out with friends.
- Put your phone away during revision
- At the end of each session, file away your notes and clutter so that your work-area is clear for the next session.

Tips for Parents

Supporting your child in setting themselves up for revision

- Talk to your child about how you can support them and what they would find helpful.
- The simplest things often get in the way of starting revision – weeks can be lost while pupils ‘are going to get some folders soon...’. Get around these by simply providing the files, dividers, wall-charts etc. your child will need for the revision period.
- Encourage your child to empty their bag and file hand outs and information from lessons at the end of each day. They won’t seem important until they need them, at which point they are likely to be lost under a mountain of random papers...
- Support your child in choosing one good revision guide or programme for each subject – it’s the best investment you will make. There are lots around so check with the teacher yourself if you are not sure which is the best.
- Help your child to plan their revision timetable. It will take an investment of your time (probably several hours), but it is the single thing that will make the biggest difference to the effectiveness of the revision, and therefore the outcome. Children vary in the amount of support they need at each stage of the process.

Supporting your child in doing the revision

- Support your child in sticking to their revision plan and keeping to the start and finishing times they have agreed. Praise them when they do it, and if necessary agree a reward structure. Don’t make treats dependent on certain results – it will only add to their feelings of disappointment and failure if they don’t do as well as expected.
- Quietly top-up the ‘workbox’ with pens, rulers, paper pads etc. Don’t get wound up about lost items if you can help it – motivation is hard enough to find for revision, and arguments about a 50p pen just aren’t worth it.

Be in it to win it! The importance of attendance...

The single biggest favour you can do for your child is to send them to school EVERY day, on TIME!

Well, my child’s got a 90% attendance record –
that seems pretty good to me!

90% attendance means that your child is missing **half a day** of lessons every **week!**

In a single year this would mean your child has missed **four whole weeks.**

Over 5 years it means that your child has missed **half a school year or one and a half terms!**

Every Lesson counts...

General – support for teenagers

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/>
- www.childline.org.uk (Tel: 0800 1111)
- www.youthaccess.org.uk/

General – parent support

- www.familylives.org.uk (formerly www.parentline.org.uk) Also confidential helpline for parents on 0808 800 2222
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/advice> offers advice on a whole range of issues that might worry your son/daughter

Exam board websites

- www.aqa.org.uk the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
- www.edexcel.org.uk Edexcel
- www.ocr.org.uk Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- www.wjec.co.uk the Welsh Joint Education Committee(WJEC) (Welsh language version: www.cbac.co.uk)
- <http://www.cie.org.uk/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-secondary-2/cambridge-igcse/>

Coursework and revision

(Before using any information from coursework sites, please check with your child's school as copying others' work – plagiarism – is harshly dealt with).

- www.markedbyteachers.com (formerly www.coursework.info)
- www.essaybank.co.uk
- www.gcseguide.co.uk – Use the 'bookshop' option to see what revision guides are available in each subject area
- www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize
- www.gcse.com
- www.s-cool.co.uk
- http://www.schoolsnet.com/pls/hot_school/sn_revision_page_pls_show_subjects?x=16180339
- Visit www.positivelymad.co.uk for some excellent and fun ideas for remembering information
- <http://revisionworld.co.uk/gcse-revision> This offers a range of tips and support for different subjects

7 Ways That Parents Can HELP

A Parent's Survival Guide to Revision
by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk



- 1 Have high expectations and provide plenty of support**
Both are needed to help your child improve, perform and develop resilience
- 2 Help them work smarter**
Not all revision techniques are equal. Spacing out their revision and quizzes are better than cramming and highlighters
- 3 Cope well with their setbacks**
There will be highs and lows. How you react to their lows will impact how many highs they have
- 4 Minimise distractions**
Provide a revision area with minimum distractions (this include mobile phones!)
- 5 Rise and dine**
Make sure they eat breakfast. It plays a big role in concentration and memory
- 6 Regular bedtimes and lots of sleep**
If they sleep right, they will think right the next day
- 7 Avoid cabin fever**
Encourage them to get fresh air each and every day

GOOD REVISERS

by @Inner_Drive
www.innerdrive.co.uk

POOR REVISERS

Eat breakfast



Skip breakfast

Sleep 8-10 hours a night



Get little sleep

Have regular bed times



Have inconsistent bed times

Get fresh air each day



Stay indoors all day

Exercise regularly



Do no exercise

Do past papers



Mostly revise highlighting "key" passages

Spread out their revision



Cram their revision

Keep a diary to capture negative thoughts



Dwell on worst case scenarios

Revise in a quiet environment



Revise while listening to music or TV

Drink water regularly



Forget to stay hydrated

Put their phone away during revision



Revise with their mobile phone next to them