



## **Business Department Curriculum Statement – Update October 2022**

### **Vision**

The Business department offers a varied curriculum providing students with lots of opportunities to develop both academically and personally. We deliver valuable academic rigour across all courses whilst providing students with opportunities to gain and enhance vital employability skills. By allowing students to actively engage in a variety of learning experiences, we hope to support all students to develop into well rounded individuals ready for the next step of their academic and career journey.

### **Action**

The Business Academy holds the development of key employability skills at its core. All lessons across the business curriculum are carefully planned and facilitated to engage all learners in Business and Entrepreneurship whilst embedding core employability skills and business knowledge. Each learner is supported to develop an understanding of specific key terms which are deep-rooted throughout schemes of learning.

The business curriculum is spiralled from years 9 to 11, to ensure that learners can embed a deep knowledge and understanding, over-learning key concepts and terms through mastery techniques. The year 9 programme provides solid foundations to ensure students are ready to take on their next step in level 2 learning, whichever path this maybe. Learning is then sequenced throughout years 10 and 11 to build on prior learning and skills, becoming progressively challenging and ensuring that students can commit all knowledge to long term memory. All learning is underpinned with regular and thorough assessments to measure progress. Students studying in 6<sup>th</sup> form are also offered a broad spectrum of academic opportunities to suit their learning styles. The Business Academy further enhances the curriculum available to students studying at Key Stage 5, incorporating Business and Personal Finance, Economics and Entrepreneurship as well as a programme of enrichment, which includes contact with employer and university partners. All students are supported with a variety of Session 3 activities from small group revision to Business and Enterprise enrichment activities, broadening student experiences and culture.

### **Impact**

Business is a popular subject across all key stages and we consistently deliver strong outcomes both in terms of attainment and progress, compared with national standards. The Business curriculum offer, complemented by vital enrichment activities, supports students to progress into a wide variety of destinations including higher education, degree apprenticeships and school leaver schemes, with organisations such as Capgemini, Deloitte and JLR.

Students across the Business Academy are offered a wide variety of enrichment activities outside of the classroom to support each individual's personal development. These opportunities are not restricted to students studying the subject, starting with Key Stage 3 Enterprise club. We use industry links to support the enrichment of lessons, providing a real-life context to learning. Industry visits and university talks enhance student knowledge of the business world.

The intention is that each student will graduate from the Business Academy with an Employability Passport. Our pledge is to give students entering the Business Academy an opportunity to reflect on their own skills and talents. Each individual will leave with an employer and university endorsed pledge identifying the skills that they have developed and the progress made during their time within the Business Academy. The experiences will support students to develop into well rounded community members ready to enter the next stage of their personal journey equipped with the vital skills that all employers look for.



### **Impact of Covid-19**

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented some unique challenges within the department, but it has also given us the opportunity to reflect on our approach to learning across all courses. Moving to a remote learning model in the first National lockdown, gave us the opportunity to quickly establish a paperless system for coursework and classwork submission and assessment. Staff were ready and keen to use the new technologies that they were presented with to develop a fast and effective way of communicating with students and supporting their individual learning needs. The Business team worked together to produce high quality remote learning materials including pre-recorded and live learning materials to ensure that all students were catered for. Upon our return to school, our priority was to ensure that student's welfare was maintained and that any worry or concern about lack of progress or lost learning was laid to rest. The Business team were able to use data gathered on the return to school, using various methodologies, to put together clear intervention strategies where needed. All necessary interventions and progress were highlighted to parents via the Module Report process. Although student isolation periods had a significant impact on student attendance to lesson during the Autumn term, it did not mean that the students learning, and progress was as directly impacted. Students were all provided with live links into lessons and could take part as if they were in the classroom if they were well enough to do so. All students were also provided with any other materials and lesson support via the online curriculum.

It was clear that when we went into the second national lockdown in 2021, that the Business team were thoroughly prepared. Our standard practice of advanced team planning meant that the team had everything that they needed to support learners from the outset. Coupled with the increase in confidence in using remote delivery, meant that we were also able to provide live lessons. A blended learning approach was taken allowing students to develop independent learning skills whilst still having full access to their teacher if required. The curriculum plan for years 9 & 10 were slightly amended, to ensure that topics delivered remotely were appropriate. This predominantly meant that the Finance elements for both year groups was replaced, leaving this for a return to face-to-face delivery. On our return to school in March 2021, students were once again assessed on their learning using various methodologies allowing the Business team to further support students as needed.

The remote learning approach that students engaged in during the COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive impact on the skills they have developed in order to become work ready. We have seen that many businesses are now choosing to take a more flexible, blended approach to working both in the office and from home. The vital life skills that students have learnt, for example working independently and adapting to new technologies, means that they will have the tools to enable them to embrace new challenges once in employment or higher education. As a result of these skills and challenges, Thomas Telford Students are now adaptable, well-rounded students who are equipped and ready for work and the challenges that this brings.

The Business team continues to ensure that students are provided with a varied and stimulating curriculum. We will seek opportunities to provide students with a variety of enrichment activities in line with guidelines, in the hope that that activities will not only further support the learning of the Business curriculum, but also provide positive life experiences that will support students on their own journey. The Business team will continue to implement strategies to support all learners through the longer-term challenges that we will face following the global Covid-19 pandemic and will continue to provide positive opportunities for students to discuss their experiences and feelings which will also go hand in hand with the school wide PHSE & wellbeing programme.