



Post-16 Course Change Policy

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ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

1. Thomas Tallis School Plan 2023-24 has six aims.

1	A powerful curriculum
2	The best teaching and learning
3	Great achievement and progress
4	Excellent personal development
5	Behaviour for a strong community
6	A model for a better world

As part of aim 6 Thomas Tallis School has adopted the *Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education*. This means that we try to behave in a principled and correct manner in everything we do.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. We therefore behave with **selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership**. We demonstrate **trust, wisdom, kindness, justice, service, courage and optimism**.

COURSE CHANGE POLICY AND MOVEMENT BETWEEN COURSES 2021-2023

1. We say in our admissions policy that our overall aim is ‘to ensure that students accepted into the sixth form are placed on appropriate courses where they are likely to succeed’ (Para. 1) and that the ‘school also reserves the right to the final decision about the content of a student’s curriculum, in line with our ‘Pathways’ document and also taking into account the likelihood of a student’s success in each of his or her subjects’ (Para. 5).
2. It is important that a student is placed on the right course for them and all of our advice and guidance up to and during our Enrolment procedure is intended to achieve this aim.
3. This course change policy outlines our procedure for appealing initial course selection in cases where a student comes to feel after starting a course or courses that they have made a wrong choice.

Our initial advice about course selection

4. We will generally run an Open Evening in October, and various Taster Days and familiarisation sessions as appropriate for Year 11 applicants. All these events are intended to give applicants the opportunity to confirm the course choices that they have in mind.
5. Our Enrolment procedures in August are in-person so that we may give students face-to-face advice about the choice of courses best suited to their needs and intentions about progression. The curriculum offer we make to each student is not set until GCSE results have confirmed suitability for particular courses.
6. For a student to be enrolled on a course they must meet the entry requirements, there must be space on the course, and the overall timetable (‘Admissions Policy’, para. 14) for the student must be satisfactory. These requirements also apply to students who wish to change courses.
7. Spaces available for courses vary slightly between courses. In general we cap class size at 26, but some courses e.g. Media, Photography have a smaller class size limit.
8. At the start of the Autumn term staff will continually give help and advice to ensure that the subjects chosen are suited to an individual’s needs.

Our initial procedure for changing courses

9. In general, Year 12 course changes can occur until the end of the fifth full week of the autumn term. This is for two reasons:
 - a. Five full weeks of teaching in a subject amounts to approximately 25 hours of lessons and 25 hours of independent study to make up. Our experience is that most students are able to make up this lost ground if they change one subject before our cut-off date, but it becomes very rapidly much more difficult to do so after it. The difficulty is doubled if two subjects are to be changed, and so on.
 - b. Secondly, the school must take a ‘snapshot’ of the sixth form population in early October which we must report to the DFES for their accountability measures to work. This picture must be accurate.
10. Within this ‘window’ at the start of Year 12 course changes will be straightforwardly

- possible, if the school agrees that it is wise for a particular student to make them.
11. Unless a student has previously expressed an interest in a course but could not be enrolled on it because the course was full at Enrolment, we will accept course change requests from the start of the third full week of Year 12 to the end of the fifth full week. This is because we require students to have a fair grasp of what each of their course involves so that an informed decision about courses can be made.
 12. It should be noted that in most cases where a student is uncertain about a course because they have formed the view that they are unlikely to achieve highly in it, changing to a different course does not in fact lead to better outcomes.
 13. In general we will only allow a student to swap one course. This is because the success rates of students who swap two courses are very poor because of the doubling of the amount of work required to catch up.
 14. We will judge requests to move from BTEC courses to A-level courses on the basis of the professional judgment of staff teaching the A-level courses.
 15. In general we will only allow courses to be changed once. This is because the success rates of students who swap courses repeatedly are very poor. We will try to give students the best advice we can about courses they wish to change to, but a course change decision must be final.
 16. For a course change to be made before our cut-off date, a student must write to their Head of Year explaining in some detail their reasons for requesting a course change. This is so that requests are made after careful thought on the part of the student concerned.
 17. We will ask students to fill in a 'Dropping Form' so that we can be sure that dialogue between home, student and school has happened.
 18. We will aim to move students quickly and within the 'window' so that they may quickly work to catch up on work missed.
 19. After the Census has occurred, it is no longer possible for students to straightforwardly move between courses. This is because we believe it is harder for students starting courses later to catch up and achieve at their potential. Every week that passes gives them another ten hours of work to catch up on. The school must also consider the workload of staff teaching classes and other resource constraints. In addition, as above, we are required to give an accurate picture of what students are studying to the DFES.

Our procedure for changing courses in Year 12 after the fifth full week of term

20. After the end of the fifth full week of term, we will judge each application to change course on its individual merits.
21. In the case of such late requests, the professional judgement of staff about the possibility of a student catching up and of staff being able to assist them to do so will be considered before a decision is reached.
22. The right of the school to decide on the final merits of a late application to change courses is reserved.
23. In general, we will not allow any student to change courses after the end of the first half term.
24. Examples where we may choose to allow a student to move courses after our initial cut-off date include but are not limited to:
 - a. A student who has studied similar or identical courses at another centre and who

- wishes to transfer to Tallis to pursue the same courses.
- b. A student who has studied courses within the same faculty with good initial success where the staff concerned uniformly support the likelihood of a move succeeding.
 - c. A student with an APS of 8 or more together with a 9 in the desired subject.
25. In all such cases the judgment of the school will be final.
26. It will generally be possible to pick up new Year 12 courses (assuming that the entry requirements for such courses are met by an applicant) at the end of a Year 12, for commencement in the academic year following. This will in turn mean that to complete a course, a student will need to stay on for a third year of sixth form.

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