



THETFORD ACADEMY
A Sense of Community - A Source of Challenge

Thetford Academy Graduation Standards

TAGS **Manual**

October 2009



Thetford Academy students take **responsibility** for
using their minds well, developing skills in
inquiry, problem solving, and reflection.

They become proficient **readers** and **writers.**

They learn to **express** their ideas clearly and creatively.

They take part in **service** for a better world.

October 2009

To Thetford Academy Students,

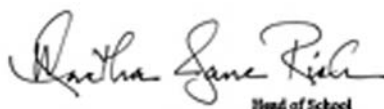
We're asking you to take charge of your education. Taking charge means that you can:

- ❖ see clearly what you need to learn,
- ❖ understand how you learn best, and
- ❖ plan your own personal pathway through school.

To help you see what you need to learn, Thetford Academy has developed Graduation Standards. These define the most important skills for success in school. They are also essential skills for life after high school: for thinking, working, and further learning in the 21st century.

We want every graduate to have these skills when they leave the Academy. We believe every one of you can demonstrate success on these standards. Throughout your years here, you'll be working on achieving that goal. That's your job as a Thetford Academy student. As your teachers, advisors, counselors, and school leaders, our job is to help you succeed. We're all here to give you learning opportunities, guidance, and support.

In this manual, you'll find information on the Graduation Standards and what you need to do to achieve them. We look forward to your good work.



Martha Jane Rich
Head of School

Ms. Rich, for the Administration and Faculty

EARNING YOUR DIPLOMA

To qualify for a Thetford Academy diploma, you do two things:

(1) complete 24 course credits in specified subjects

and

(2) meet 8 Graduation Standards related to those courses

(1) THE COURSE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Your courses help you learn content, explore your interests, and develop the skills to meet standards.

Your 24 credits must include the following:

English: 4 credits: ninth and tenth grade English plus at least one elected credit each year in eleventh and twelfth grades

Mathematics: 3 credits

Social Studies: 3 credits, which include 1 credit each from History 9, U.S. History to 1900, and 20th Century History

Science: 3 credits, including Conceptual Physical Science, Biology, and one additional course

Physical Education: 1 1/2 credits and **Health:** 1/2 credit

Arts: 1 credit, in any of the following: Art, Chorus, Band, Instrumental Music, Drama, Design Technology

See the Course Guide for more information on Technical Center programs, off-campus study, and transfer credits, along with descriptions for all courses offered at the Academy.

EARNING YOUR DIPLOMA

To qualify for a Thetford Academy diploma, you do two things:

(1) complete 24 course credits in specified subjects

and

(2) meet 8 Graduation Standards related to those courses

(2) THE STANDARDS

To become a Thetford Academy graduate, you will show that you can meet eight standards. These represent “vital results” — the most important, useful, and powerful things you can take away from your high school education.

The first two are habits of learning to develop and apply in all areas of your work:

1) RESPONSIBILITY

2) REFLECTION

The next five standards represent essential skills for lifelong learning:

3) WRITING

4) READING

5) INQUIRY

6) REASONING & PROBLEM SOLVING

7) EXPRESSION

The final standard reflects a commitment to community membership and responsible citizenship:

8) SERVICE

HOW THE STANDARDS WORK - THE TAGS VOCABULARY

Each **Standard** has **Elements** that describe the skill and define what it means to do that skill well: for instance, what it takes to be a good writer, or a responsible learner, or an effective problem solver.

The standards and their elements are the same for all grades. That's because they're essential in every grade. They're the core skills you'll be using throughout your years at the Academy.

During those years we expect your skills will grow and develop. Each new skill you learn will prepare you for the next step in your work here at TA. You will meet certain expectations in each grade as you build your skills.

Through your years at the Academy, you gain increasing independence and meet higher levels of challenge. We have created three **Divisions** to mark important stages of your work:

Division I:	Grades 7 & 8	Middle School
Division II:	Grades 9 & 10	Early High School
Division III:	Grades 11 & 12	Advanced High School

At the end of each Division, you will prepare for a **Transition**. Transitions take place in grades 8, 10, and 12. At these times, you will show that you are ready to move to a new stage of your education. The final one, of course, is graduation: the transition to life after TA.

To make a Transition, you will complete a set of **Assessments**. These are the things you do to show that you have achieved the necessary skills to move on. Your teachers will be helping you learn those skills. Most of the assessments will be part of your work in courses, although some will be completed independently. There will be some assessments in each grade. You will collect your work in a **Portfolio of Assessed Work (PAW)** and share it in a **PAW Presentation** for each Transition.

THE PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN (PLP)

Taking charge of your education is more than just finishing a set of assignments or a checklist of activities. It means working to understand yourself as a learner and making choices based on that understanding.

Your Personal Learning Plan is a way to explore your own strengths, needs, and interests. It helps you reflect on your progress and think about your choices. Each year in the first quarter, with your advisor, you will set goals and select strategies to help you meet them. Later in the year, you will review your progress. Maintaining your Personal Learning Plan is an assessment for the Responsibility and Reflection Standards.

STANDARD 1: RESPONSIBILITY

Elements of Responsibility:

Planning:

- You develop a plan for current and continued education to meet your personal and career goals.
- You take responsibility for completing independent or self-paced work, including mathematics competencies.

Healthy choices:

- You identify choices that promote health, safety, and well-being for yourself and others.
- You demonstrate skills in relationship building, stress management, negotiation, respectful communication, and conflict resolution.
- You demonstrate the effort, attitude, and skills needed for a lifetime of physical activity.

Learning style:

- You understand your strengths, needs, and interests as a learner.
- You develop strategies to help you learn.
- You advocate for yourself as a learner.

Personal responsibility and productivity (PRPR):

- You maintain a positive attitude toward participation and work.
- You show effective organization of your time, materials, and assignments.
- You respect others.
- You show initiative.
- You pay attention, staying focused and involved.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF RESPONSIBILITY

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9	PLP	Advisory
	Fitness Testing Participation	PE 9
	PRPR: meet standard at least two quarters	All courses
Grade 10	PLP	Advisory
	Fitness Testing Participation	PE 10
	PRPR: meet standard at least two quarters	All courses
	Health Assessment	Health 10
	PAW Transition Presentation	Advisory

STANDARD 2: REFLECTION

Elements of Reflection:

- You review your decisions, your actions, and the work you produce, with the purpose of learning more about yourself and your work.
- You explore the significance of your work to your academic and personal success.
- You look for connections among varied learning experiences.
- You identify areas of progress, pride, and growth over time in relation to your goals.
- You document your progress with evidence.
- You develop skills of self-directed learning: managing, monitoring, and revising your work.
- You communicate your thoughts about your work to others and engage in critical response, giving and receiving feedback to improve quality.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF REFLECTION

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
2.A	Letter based on reflection journal	English 9 or History 9, Spring
2.B	PLP Review	Advisory
Grade 10		
2.C	Anthology Preface	English 10
2.D	PAW Introduction Letter	Advisory

STANDARD 3: WRITING

Elements of Writing:

- Your writing makes your thinking visible.
- Process: You use a writing process to draft, revise, edit, and critique your work.
- Purpose: You establish and maintain a clear intent.
- Organization: Your writing demonstrates order and coherence.
- Details: You select details to develop ideas, evoke images, clarify information, or otherwise elaborate the content of the writing.
- Voice: You establish and maintain a clear and appropriate tone or voice.
- Conventions: You show command of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
- Types: You show mastery of varied types of writing, including response to literature, reports and research papers, procedures, narratives, personal essays, and persuasive essays.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF WRITING

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
3.A	Response to Literature	English 9
3.B	Research (Writing to Inform)	History 9
Grade 10		
3.C	Personal Essay	English 10
3.D	Research Paper	History 10

STANDARD 4: READING

Elements of Reading:

- You read for meaning, using a variety of skills and strategies.
- You apply reading skills routinely and fluently for basic understanding.
- You use the following strategies to help you understand and develop a personal response:
Before you read, you think, scan, and predict.

While you read, you visualize, ask questions, self-check, and re-read.

After reading, you paraphrase, summarize, and reflect about what you've read, by:

- ◆ drawing on what you've read to generate questions
 - ◆ developing a complex or original point of view that's supported with rich, relevant, and accurate details
 - ◆ analyzing and synthesizing the information.
- You make choices, finding the books you most like to read and identifying your personal connection to the selections you make.
 - You participate as a member of a literate community, talking about books, ideas, and writing.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF READING:

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
4.A	Literate Community	English 9
4.B	Choice & Connection	Independent
4.C	Science Article Response	Science 9
Grade 10		
4.D	Literate Community	English 10
4.E	Choice Response	English 10
4.F	Science Article or Book Response	Biology

STANDARD 5: INQUIRY

- You find, evaluate, synthesize, and communicate information accurately.
- You interpret and analyze data presented in a variety of ways, distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information, and identifying differences among fact, opinion, and interpretation.
- You use scientific methods to describe, investigate, and explain phenomena, using these steps:
 - ✓ Frame a question
 - ✓ Gather data
 - ✓ Interpret the data
 - ✓ Draw conclusions
 - ✓ Communicate findings
- You design and conduct experiments. You represent and analyze and synthesize the results of your investigations.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF INQUIRY

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
5.A	Lab Report with written analysis	Science 9
Grade 10		
5.B	Lab Report with written analysis	Biology

STANDARD 6: REASONING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Elements of Reasoning & Problem Solving:

- You apply logical reasoning, prior knowledge, curiosity, imagination, and creativity to solve problems.
- You select strategies suited to different types of problems: mathematical, artistic, scientific, social, environmental, and technical.
- You exhibit competence in mathematics (numeracy) by:
 - ✓ solving basic mathematical problems
 - ✓ demonstrating numbers sense using estimation
 - ✓ demonstrating competency in computation

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF REASONING & PROBLEM SOLVING

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
6.A	Problem Solving Evidence	Mathematics or course of your choice
Grade 10		
6.B	Problem Solving Evidence	Mathematics or course of your choice

STANDARD 7: EXPRESSION

Elements of Expression:

- You convey information effectively and persuasively in oral presentation.
- You present your ideas about life, learning, or literature through personal expression to an audience.
- You use at least one art form to communicate, showing the ability to define and solve artistic problems with insight, reason, and technical proficiency.
- If you choose to learn a second or third language, you show proficiency in speaking.

DIVISION II: ASSESSMENTS OF EXPRESSION

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
7.A	Oral presentation	History or Eng 9, or French or Spanish
7.B	Artistic expression	Any arts course (may also be done in grade 10)
Grade 10		
7.C	Personal expression	English 10
7.D	PowerPoint presentation	Biology

STANDARD 8: SERVICE

Elements of Service:

- You connect your personal learning with an active role in the community.
- You plan, implement, and reflect on activities that respond to community needs.
- You apply academic skills and knowledge in real-life community situations.
- You work cooperatively and respectfully with people of various groups to set community goals and solve common problems.
- You demonstrate understanding of natural and human communities; the ecological, economic, political, or social systems within them; and the ways human actions affect sustainability of these systems.

DIVISION II ASSESSMENTS OF SERVICE

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Grade 9		
8.A	Community service experience with reflection	Independent
Grade 10		
8.B	Service Learning plan	Advisory



GRADE 9 TAGS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

NAME: _____

ADVISOR: _____

*When you complete an assessment, take this checklist to your teacher to sign and date.
Bring the assessed work to your advisor and include the work in your TAGS binder.*

STANDARD 1: RESPONSIBILITY

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
1.A	PLP	Advisory			
1.B	Fitness Testing participation	PE 9			
1.C	PRPR: meet at least two quarters	All courses			

STANDARD 2: REFLECTION

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
2.A	Letter based on reflection journal	English 9 or History 9, in spring			
2.B	PLP Review	Advisory			

STANDARD 3: WRITING

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
3.A	Response to Literature	English 9			
3.B	Research (Writing to Inform)	History 9			



STANDARD 4: READING

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
4.A	Literate Community	English 9			
4.B	Choice & Connection	Independent			
4.C	Science Article Response	Science 9			

STANDARD 5: INQUIRY

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
5.A	Lab Report with written analysis	Science 9			

STANDARD 6: REASONING & PROBLEM SOLVING

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
6.A	Problem Solving Evidence	Math or other course			

STANDARD 7: EXPRESSION

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
7.A	Oral presentation	History or English 9, or French or Spanish			
7.B	Artistic expression	Any arts course (may also be done in grade 10)			

STANDARD 8: SERVICE

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	MET	Teacher	Date
Grade 9					
8.A	Community service experience with reflection	Independent			