

Guidance on Grading – 2019-20

Understanding the broad range of grades across Key Stage 3, GCSE and A Level can be a challenge. This guide aims to provide you with simple details about what each grade means. Parents will receive progress updates in line with our reporting programme. Parents may also log in to our Go 4 Schools system to access progress information on their children.

At Key Stage 3 (in Year 7 & 8), the following two types of grading are used:

- 1) Age-Related GCSE Grades – used to reflect what GCSE grade the child is currently on track to achieve (if they continue at the same rate of progress), and more importantly the level of progress being made.
- 2) Approach to Learning grades – used to represent that approach that your son / daughter is showing towards their learning, with a particular focus on effort, behaviour, home learning, organisation and attendance.


In all other years, the following two types of grading are provided for each student in every subject:

- 1) Academic Grades - used to reflect where your child currently is and where we think they can get to. Due to differing national requirements at each Key Stage, these grades vary from year group to year group.
- 2) Approach to Learning grades – used to represent that approach that your son / daughter is showing towards their learning, with a particular focus on effort, behaviour, home learning, organisation and attendance.

Key Stage 3 (Year 7 & 8)

Age-Related GCSE Grades

Year 7 & 8 students are preparing for GCSE courses using the 9-1 grading system, which replaced the old A*-G range. Here, 8 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest.



Grading new GCSEs

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

Comparing 9-1 grade to the old A*-G – with 9 new grades and only 8 old ones it is not a straightforward fit. There are, however, three matching points: the bottom of a new grade 7 is directly aligned to the bottom of an old A grade; the bottom of a new grade 4 is aligned to the bottom of an old C grade and the bottom of a new grade 1 is aligned to the bottom of an old G grade. OFQUAL have produced this graph to help parents understand the new grades.

It is really important to note that the Department for Education has stated that a grade 5 is going to be classed as the new 'Strong Pass' at GCSE. Thus, while the bottom of a new grade 4 is the direct equivalent of the old C grade (the old 'Good Pass' grade), students need to be aiming for a grade 5. In simple terms, 5 is the new C.

In Year 7 & 8, one academic grade will be recorded for every subject:

- **Age-Related GCSE Grade** – Students are assessed according to their progress throughout Years 7 & 8. Towards the end of Terms 2, 4 & 6, assessments will set in each subject that are marked against 'Age-Related GCSE Grades'. These grades refer to a student's position in the performance distribution for their age group and indicate the grade that they are likely to achieve in Year 11 if they continue at their current level of effort and progress. These grades do not tell you what a student would get if they took a GCSE at that moment in time. Assessments get harder from term to term and year to year, so that a grade 6 in Year 8 represents a higher standard than a grade 6 in Year 7. Staying at the same grade as a student moves through Year 7 into Year 8 is making progress.

Further information about this and other reforms to GCSE and A-Level qualifications can be found at the DfE website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-qualification-our-regulation-gcse-as-and-a-level-reforms>

Approach to Learning Grades

Outstanding: Displays an excellent attitude, ambition, sustained learning and demonstrates integrity. They are highly motivated, show endurance, and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning, making a full contribution.

Good: Consistent approach that enables good progress. They are motivated, make a positive contribution and demonstrate a high level of integrity. They show endurance and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning.

Requires Improvement: Does not always show ambition. Their approach can lead to disruption, lack of consideration and lack endurance in their learning. They struggle to work collaboratively and to try new approaches. Their work fails to meet expectations.

Cause for Concern: Consistently displays an approach that lacks ambition. They show a lack of integrity which leads to disruption and a lack of consideration. They do not demonstrate versatility or endurance and need prompting to engage and to work collaboratively. Their work rarely meets expectations.

Where a teacher has indicated that a student's approach to learning is not at least 'Good' they will also have given a reason. This should help parents to identify areas to work on with their sons and daughters. The school will use this information to identify and support underachieving students. One of five reasons will be given:

- Home Learning The standard of home learning does not meet expectations and/or has not been completed on regular occasions, which is impeding progress.
- Behaviour The student displays behaviour which is detrimental to their own and/or the progress and learning of others.
- Organisation The student lacks the necessary levels of organisation and/or has failed to bring the required equipment to the lesson on regular occasions, which is impeding their progress.
- Effort & Concentration The student does not make the required level of effort and/or contribution to the lesson, which is impeding their progress.
- Attendance The student's progress is being impaired by low attendance (below 90% of lessons) and/or poor punctuality.

Key Stage 4 (Year 9)

Academic Grades


Year 9 students are studying GCSE courses with the 9-1 grading system, which replaced the old A*-G range. Here, 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. For reporting, we also sub-divide the grades for greater accuracy. 5+ means attainment at the upper end of grade 5, almost reaching grade 6; 5 means working consistently at grade 5; 5- means attainment at the lower end of the grade 5 range, just above a grade 4.

Comparing 9-1 grades to the old A*-G – with 9 new grades and only 8 old ones it is not a straightforward fit. There are, however, three matching points: the bottom of a new grade 7 is directly aligned to the bottom of an old A grade; the bottom of a new grade 4 is aligned to the bottom of an old C grade and the bottom of a new grade 1 is aligned to the bottom of an old G grade. OFQUAL have produced this graph to help parents understand the new grades.

It is really important to note that the Department for Education has stated that a grade 5 is going to be classed as the new 'Strong Pass' at GCSE. Thus, while the bottom of a new grade 4 is the direct equivalent of the old C grade (the old 'Good Pass' grade), students need to be aiming for a grade 5. In simple terms, 5 is the new C.

In Year 9, two academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **End of Year Challenge Target** – This is the minimum grade that we think your son or daughter should be able to achieve by the end of Year 9. Depending on the progress being made by your son or daughter, we may move this grade up or down during the course in order to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.
- **Working At** – This is the grade that best reflects the current work of your son or daughter. If they sat the exam now this is what we think they would get.



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Approach to Learning Grades

Outstanding: Displays an excellent approach, ambition, sustained learning and demonstrates integrity. They are highly motivated, show endurance, and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning, making a full contribution.

Good: Consistent approach that enables good progress. They are motivated, make a positive contribution and demonstrate a high level of integrity. They show endurance and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning.

Requires Improvement: Does not always show ambition. Their approach can lead to disruption, lack of consideration and lack endurance in their learning. They struggle to work collaboratively and to try new approaches. Their work fails to meet expectations.

Cause for Concern: Consistently displays an approach that lacks ambition. They show a lack of integrity which leads to disruption and a lack of consideration. They do not demonstrate versatility or endurance and need prompting to engage and to work collaboratively. Their work rarely meets expectations.

Where a teacher has indicated that a student's approach to learning is not at least 'Good' they will also have given a reason. This should help parents to identify areas to work on with their sons and daughters. The school will use this information to identify and support underachieving students. One of five reasons will be given:

- **Home Learning** The standard of home learning does not meet expectations and/or has not been completed on regular occasions, which is impeding progress.
- **Behaviour** The student displays behaviour which is detrimental to their own and/or the progress and learning of others.
- **Organisation** The student lacks the necessary levels of organisation and/or has failed to bring the required equipment to the lesson on regular occasions, which is impeding their progress.
- **Effort & Concentration** The student does not make the required level of effort and/or contribution to the lesson, which is impeding their progress.
- **Attendance** The student's progress is being impaired by low attendance (below 90% of lessons) and/or poor punctuality.

Key Stage 4 (Year 10 & 11)

Academic Grades


Year 10 & 11 students are studying GCSE courses with the 9-1 grading system, which replaced the old A*-G range. Here, 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. For reporting, we also sub-divide the grades for greater accuracy. 5+ means attainment at the upper end of grade 5, almost reaching grade 6; 5 means working consistently at grade 5; 5- means attainment at the lower end of the grade 5 range, just above a grade 4.

Comparing 9-1 grades to the old A*-G – with 9 new grades and only 8 old ones it is not a straightforward fit. There are, however, three matching points: the bottom of a new grade 7 is directly aligned to the bottom of an old A grade; the bottom of a new grade 4 is aligned to the bottom of an old C grade and the bottom of a new grade 1 is aligned to the bottom of an old G grade. OFQUAL have produced this graph to help parents understand the new grades.

It is really important to note that the Department for Education has stated that a grade 5 is going to be classed as the new 'Strong Pass' at GCSE. Thus, while the bottom of a new grade 4 is the direct equivalent of the old C grade (the old 'Good Pass' grade), students need to be aiming for a grade 5. In simple terms, 5 is the new C.

In Year 10, three academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **End of Year Challenge Target** – This is the minimum grade that we think your son or daughter should be able to achieve by the end of each year. Depending on the progress being made by your son or daughter, we may move this grade up or down during the course in order to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.
- **Working At** – This is the grade that best reflects the current work of your son or daughter. If they sat the exam now this is what we think they would get.
- **Projected Grade** - This is the grade that we think your son or daughter should be able to achieve in their actual GCSE if they work to the best of their ability. Depending on the progress being made by your son or daughter, we may move this grade up or down during the course in order to provide the most appropriate level of challenge. (This is first reported in July of Year 9 and will be reported throughout Year 11).



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Where a teacher has indicated that a student's approach to learning is not at least 'Good' they will also have given a reason. This should help parents to identify areas to work on with their sons and daughters. The school will use this information to identify and support underachieving students. One of five reasons will be given:

- Home Learning The standard of home learning does not meet expectations and/or has not been completed on regular occasions, which is impeding progress.
- Behaviour The student displays behaviour which is detrimental to their own and/or the progress and learning of others.
- Organisation The student lacks the necessary levels of organisation and/or has failed to bring the required equipment to the lesson on regular occasions, which is impeding their progress.
- Effort & Concentration The student does not make the required level of effort and/or contribution to the lesson, which is impeding their progress.
- Attendance The student's progress is being impaired by low attendance (below 90% of lessons) and/or poor punctuality.

Key Stage 5 (Year 12 & 13)

Academic Grades

Sixth Form students are studying A Levels using the A*-E grading system and Applied subjects using D*-P. For reporting, we also sub-divide grades for greater accuracy. For example, a B1 means attainment at the upper end of grade B, almost reaching grade A. A B2 means working consistently at grade B. B3 means attainment at the lower end of the B grade, just above a C.

In the Sixth Form, three academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **End of Year Challenge Target** – This is the minimum grade that we think your son or daughter should be able to achieve by the end of the year (July of Year 12 or the actual A Level exam in Year 13). Depending on the progress being made by your son or daughter, we may move this grade up or down during the course in order to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.
- **Working At** – This is the grade that best reflects the current work of your son or daughter. If they sat the exam now this is what we think they would get.
- **Projected Grade** - This is the grade that we think your son or daughter should be able to achieve in their actual A Level exam if they work to the best of their ability. Depending on the progress being made by your son or daughter, we may move this grade up or down during the course in order to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.

Approach to Learning Grades

Outstanding: Displays an excellent approach, ambition, sustained learning and demonstrates integrity. They are highly motivated, show endurance, and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning, making a full contribution.

Good: Consistent approach that enables good progress. They are motivated, make a positive contribution and demonstrate a high level of integrity. They show endurance and are versatile and happy in their approach to learning.

Requires Improvement: Does not always show ambition. Their approach can lead to disruption, lack of consideration and lack endurance in their learning. They struggle to work collaboratively and to try new approaches. Their work fails to meet expectations.

Cause for Concern: Consistently displays an approach that lacks ambition. They show a lack of integrity which leads to disruption and a lack of consideration. They do not demonstrate versatility or endurance and need prompting to engage and to work collaboratively. Their work rarely meets expectations.

Where a teacher has indicated that a student's approach to learning is not at least 'Good' they will also have given a reason. This should help parents to identify areas to work on with their sons and daughters. The school will use this information to identify and support underachieving students. One of five reasons will be given:

- **Home Learning** The standard of home learning does not meet expectations and/or has not been completed on regular occasions, which is impeding progress.
- **Behaviour** The student displays behaviour which is detrimental to their own and/or the progress and learning of others.
- **Organisation** The student lacks the necessary levels of organisation and/or has failed to bring the required equipment to the lesson on regular occasions, which is impeding their progress.
- **Effort & Concentration** The student does not make the required level of effort and/or contribution to the lesson, which is impeding their progress.
- **Attendance** The student's progress is being impaired by low attendance (below 90% of lessons) and/or poor punctuality.