



Secondary Approach to Assessment

Parent Guide

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What are the core principles of assessment for CAT secondary academies?


- **Accurate tracking** and **robust Assessment approaches** ensure students are prepared and motivated to perform above national expectations
- A climate of reward and competition encourages students to **exceed their own aspirational Targets** through a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses
- Effective strategies employed to overcome students' barriers to learning and improve current attainment
- Supportive **personalised** and **diagnostic feedback** is used to improve future outcomes
- Opportunities sought to **work together** and to share key ingredients of outstanding work to overcome areas of difficulty
- **Supportive advice** and **guidance** provides students with the confidence to learn new skills and knowledge to reach their goals

How do we grade students in Y7-11?

The Government abolished Key Stage 3 Levels (previously used in Year 7-8) in 2014 mainly due to the fact that many people, including parents and students didn't really understand the meaning of them. This (together with the changes to GCSE grades from letters to numbers) meant that schools and academies were free to create their own assessment approach in KS3. The CAT, along with all schools and academies in the local authority decided to use the new GCSE 1-9 Grades from Y7-11, where each grade can be divided into 3 sub grades. See example below:-

Grade	Sub grade	Sub grade meaning
3	3.2	Lower grade 3
	3.5	Middle grade 3
	3.8	Higher grade 3

The new 1-9 grading system can be broadly compared to GCSE grades and KS3 levels, as shown in the CAT converter below. Broadly speaking, a Grade 4 is equivalent to a C-/C, whereas a Grade 5 is equivalent to a B-/C+. A Grade 9 is equivalent A*/A*+. A Grade 5 in English and Maths is expected to be one of the requirements for students to achieve if they want to study higher level qualifications (e.g 'A' Levels/BTECs) after leaving the academy.

New GCSE Dec. Number	New Stage Descriptor	New GCSE Number	Old GCSE Grade	Old NC Level	Average Student at end of Year:-				
0.01 - 0.09		0	U	P LEVEL	2				
0.2	Academy Ready Emerging			1			3		
0.5	Academy Ready Developing			2C	2A				
0.8	Academy Ready Secure			3C	5				
				3B			3A		
ACADEMY READY									
1.2	Level 1 Emerging	1	G	4C	6		C		
1.5	Level 1 Developing			4B					
1.8	Level 1 Secure		F	4A					
2.2	Level 2 Emerging	2	E-	5C	7			O	
2.5	Level 2 Developing		E	5B					
2.8	Level 2 Secure		E+	5A	8				
3.2	Level 3 Emerging	3	D-	6C		9			N
3.5	Level 3 Developing		D	6B					
3.8	Level 3 Secure		D+	6A					
4.2	Level 4 Emerging	4	C-	7C	10	V			
4.5	Level 4 Developing			C					
4.8	Level 4 Secure		5	C+	7A		11		
5.2	Level 5 Emerging	B-		8C					
5.5	Level 5 Developing								
5.8	Level 5 Secure	6	B	8B			R		
6.2	Level 6 Emerging			B+				8A	
6.5	Level 6 Developing								
6.8	Level 6 Secure	7	A-		T				
7.2	Level 7 Emerging							A	
7.5	Level 7 Developing								
7.8	Level 7 Secure	8	A+			E			
8.2	Level 8 Emerging							A*-	
8.5	Level 8 Developing								
8.8	Level 8 Secure	9	A*					R	
9.2	Level 9 Emerging								A*+
9.5	Level 9 Developing								
9.8	Level 9 Secure								

New GCSE courses using the 1-9 grading system are currently being phased in by the examining bodies. See the following table to see when each subject will follow the new system:-

Examination Year (Year students will be in Y11 in May/June)	Subjects that will use the 1-9 Grading system
2016	None. All subjects will still be graded A*-G
2017	1-9 Grades in English (Literature and Language) & Maths All other subjects will follow the A*-G established courses
2018	1-9 Grades in English & Maths, plus art and design, biology, chemistry, computer science, dance, double science, drama, food preparation and nutrition, geography, history, modern foreign languages, music, physical education, physics, religious studies
2019	1-9 Grades in all the above subjects as well as business, design and technology, electronics, engineering, film studies, media studies psychology, sociology and statistics

How do teachers assess work over a term and how does this affect their termly grade on 'Go4Schools'?

The CAT secondary academies use 'Go4Schools' to record assessment information. Parents can access this online at any time. Two main sources of assessment are recorded using Go4Schools:-

- **Formative assessments** – marked work from a variety of evidence such as extended writing, short assessment tasks and topic tests. This gives the teacher vital information for planning lessons and intervention, especially where students have not achieved at their target level.
- **Summative assessments** – Larger tests that periodically (usually termly) assess the progress of students. These marks form the 'Current Grade' for each student. These are often called Spiral Assessments as they test new knowledge and understanding over a term, as well as previously taught knowledge and understanding.

How do I access Go4Schools?



Go4Schools can be accessed via the website www.go4schools.com. Here you will need to:-

- Click the 'Parent' icon at the top right
- If you haven't used the system before, enter your email into the 'First-time User' section
- Click 'Please send me a password'

A password will be sent to your email which you can use to securely access GO4Schools.

What does the Current Level/Grade mean?

The current grade is calculated using assessment information entered by teaching staff in each subject area. End of term assessments are the main source of evidence for a student's current grade, but teachers may use other marked work at times.

How does the academy set targets?

The Academy Target uses data from the government to begin the target setting process. This tells us the average grade a student is likely to achieve in each subject area. A small amount of challenge is then added to make the Academy Target challenging, but realistic to reach.

Go4Schools will display the 'Term Academy Target' and 'End of KS4 Academy Target'. The calculated 'Current' grade/level will be compared (using colour coding) against the **Academy termly target** during each term 'snapshot'. The Academy term target, is the target students will need to hit by the end of the term if they are to make the expected progress towards their final end of Y11 Academy Target.

Colour coding

Performance compared to students of a similar ability nationally:-	
	Well above
	Above
	Similar
	Below

Example - English

	KS2 Primary School average in English & Maths	Y11 National Average Grade	Y11 Academy Target
Student A	3c (low level 3) or around a score of 70 from 2016	2.5	3.5
Student B	3b (middle level 3) or around a score of 80 from 2016	3.5	4.5

How does my child know how they are doing in all of their subjects?

Three times a year we will send home a report which indicates how well your child is achieving against their Academy Target. One of these reports will be a detailed report including written comments from subject teachers, form tutors and SLT (usually near the end of the academic year). Furthermore, if you have internet access, you may view your child's progress at anytime using www.go4schools.com, since it is continually updated by staff. However main updates happen termly as the current grade is heavily influenced by scores from end of term tests.

Please remember that the Academy Target is higher than the national average grade for your child (see earlier section on target setting). A typical report example is shown below:-

Subject	Academy Target	Spring Term Academy Target	Current
BTEC HSC	Level 2 Merit	W/T L2	Level 2 Merit
English Language	5.8	3.8	3.2
English Literature	5.8	3.8	3.8
Food	5.8	3.8	4.2
History	5.8	3.8	3.2
IT	5.8	3.8	4.2
Maths	5.8	3.8	3.5
Science Combined	5.8	3.8	6.2
Spanish	5.8	3.2	4.2
Attendance Information		Target Information	
Percentage attendance: 99.10%		Above target:	
Attendance: 220		On target:	
Authorised absences: 2		Below target:	
Unauthorised absences: 0		Well below target:	
Possible sessions: 222			

Performance compared to students of a similar ability nationally:-	
Well above	
Above	
Similar	
Below	

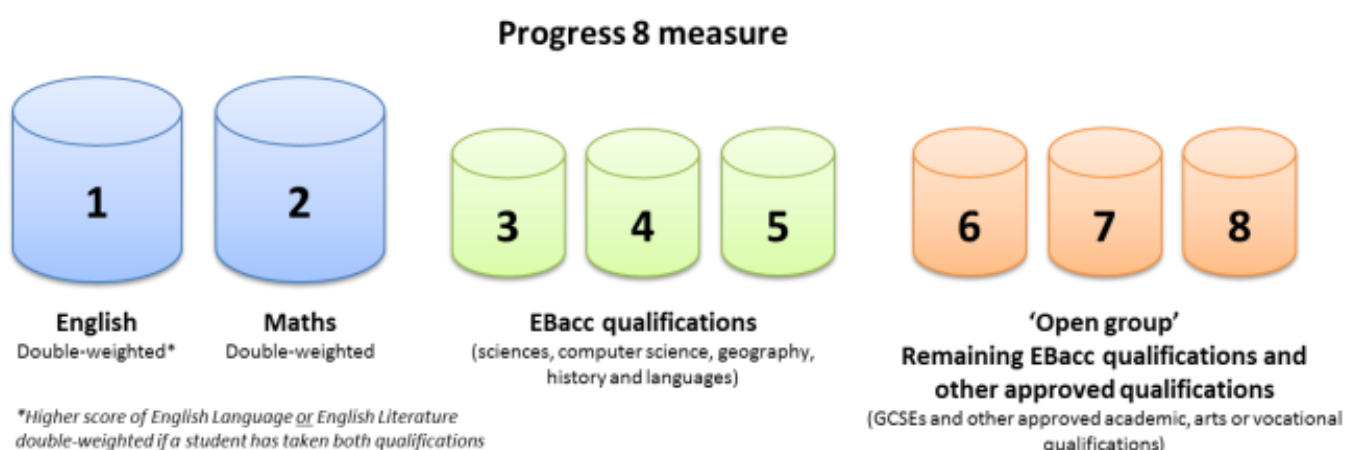
The Current grades on the right hand side of the table and the colours are a good starting point, since the colours show you how well they are currently performing compared to their Academy term target, in the column to the left. The above student is considered to be performing very well, as he/she has a few subjects which are well above target (purple), some subjects that are on target (green), and others that are slightly below target are at or around national average expectation for the child in question (amber). None of the subjects are below national average (red), and therefore there is no cause for concern in any subject.

The Academy Target in the second column shows parents the target which has been set for the end of Y11, as a guide to their child's ultimate goal.

What is Progress 8 & Attainment 8?

Up to and including 2016, Academies and schools were measured on how many GCSEs they achieve at A*-C including English and Mathematics. From 2016 onwards all students and Academies are measured on how much **progress** they make in eight subjects from when they start in Year 7 to when they complete their exams at the end of Year 11. This is known as Progress 8.

Progress 8 is designed to encourage all students to study a broad and balanced curriculum, something which our CAT secondary academies already aim to do for each student. The new measure will be based on students' progress measured across eight subjects. For each student the 8 subjects must be a combination from the diagram below:



The Progress 8 score will always be calculated by averaging the best 10 grades (the eight qualifications with English and Mathematics counting double). This is then compared to students across the UK who achieved the same KS2 scores (Primary school test results). A score of '0' signifies that a student has performed in line with that of their peers of the same ability, whereas a score of -1 suggests they have performed one grade worse on average across the 8 subjects. You can find your child's Progress 8 score on www.go4schools.com, as shown below.

Student A example – Student 'A' is a Year 10 student

Measure	Y10 Summer term Progress 8 Academy Target	Y10 Summer term Current Progress 8 score	End Y11 National Average	End Y11 Academy Progress 8 Target
Progress 8 Score	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	+1.0
Attainment 8 score	4.5	4.6	4.5	5.5

With the example above you can see that the Current Progress 8 score is -0.3, which is around a third of a grade below where he/she needs to be by the end of Y11. This is good progress, as there is every likelihood they will get to 0.0 by the end of Y11. You can also see an 'Attainment 8' score. This shows the average grade across 8 key subjects. An attainment 8 grade of 5.0 suggests they are achieving a grade 5 (equivalent to C+/B-) on average across the 8 key subjects. If you click on the Progress 8 or Attainment 8 values in Go4Schools it will provide you with more information, such as which subjects your son/daughter is achieving better in, and vice versa, as well as the subjects which are used for the Progress 8 measure.

Please be aware that your child's Progress 8 will be available from Y9 onwards, and will ideally improve as they reach Y11. If a child achieves a Progress 8 score of 0.0 by the end of Y11 they have achieved in line with students of similar ability nationally. Please use the guide below to see expected Progress 8 thresholds at each term from Y9-11.

	Progress 8 tolerance (1=1 FULL GRADE)								
	Y9 Autumn	Y9 Spring	Y9 Summer	Y10 Autumn	Y10 Spring	Y10 Summer	Y11 Autumn	Y11 Spring	Y11 Summer
Good	-1.2	-1.0	-0.9	-0.7	-0.5	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0

When can I come to the academy to discuss my child's progress in each subject area?

You are welcome at any time; should you have any concerns please call the academy to arrange a meeting with your child's form tutor or head of year in the first instance. Formal Parent Evenings take place once a year, where all subject teachers, form tutors and Head of Year are available to speak to. A letter will be sent home to invite you to the evening around 2 weeks prior. Appointments do not need to be booked in advance, so you can arrive on the evening and visit staff in any order you wish.

There is also an additional Y7 Parent Evening in the first half term in the Autumn term which provides an opportunity for parents to meet form tutors. This is an opportunity to discuss any welfare/pastoral issues and support pupil transition to secondary education.

What if my child is underachieving in a subject?

We believe that successful intervention is key to correcting under-achievement quickly. Subject teachers will support students in lesson in a variety of ways including providing extra support or resources, as well as out of lesson support. If a student is well below target on Go4Schools (red), the teacher must inform the academy of what their 'next step' in learning is, so that the subject area can plan how to support the student in making up lost ground. There are also 'Achievement weeks' each term, where subject teachers and form tutors work with students who are underachieving, whilst other students are given the opportunity to further their learning.