



# **The Thomas Adams School**

## **Policy Statement**

# **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

**Valid from September 2018**

*Version 3.0 – August 2018*

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The primary principle of assessment is that it should be fit for the purpose intended. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and lies at the heart of promoting pupils' education. It should provide information that is clear, reliable and free from bias (*The commission on assessment without levels (CoAwL) – final report*).
- 1.2 The CoAwL believe that National Curriculum levels had a profoundly negative impact on teaching – they had been viewed as thresholds and teaching had become focused on getting pupils across the next threshold, instead of ensuring that they were secure in the knowledge and understanding defined in the programmes of study. Depth and breadth of understanding had sometimes been sacrificed in favour of pace. Levels also used a 'best fit' model, which meant that a pupil could have serious gaps in their knowledge and understanding, but still be placed within the level. Progress became synonymous with moving on to the next level, but progress can involve developing deeper or wider understanding, not just moving on to work of greater difficulty. Sometimes progress is simply about consolidation. (CoAwL)
- 1.3 By removing the system of National Curriculum levels, schools were left free to create their own assessment models. At Thomas Adams, we spent more than a year considering a variety of models, before deciding upon our approach.
- 1.4 This policy covers assessment throughout Key Stages 3 – 5. References are made to 'pupil' during the documentation, but are equally applicable to the Key Stage 5 'student'.
- 1.5 We are coming towards the end of a period of significant change – as well as the removal of NC levels, G.C.S.E.s and A-Level subjects are being reformed over a period of some years, AS-Levels are being de-coupled from A-Levels and there is a new G.C.S.E. grading structure being phased in. This policy will be updated each autumn to take account of the changes, until such time as everything has settled down.

## 2. Types of assessment

- 2.1 There are three main forms of assessment that are used at Thomas Adams/Adams College:
1. In-school **formative assessment** – used by teachers to evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day basis and to tailor their teaching accordingly
  2. In-school **summative assessment** – enabling schools to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of a teaching period
  3. Nationally-standardised summative assessment – used by the Government to hold schools to account (KS2 tests, GCSEs, BTECs, A-levels etc.)

Further information on formative and summative assessment can be found in the appendix, at the end of this policy.

- 2.2 In addition to this assessment policy, please refer to the whole school marking policy, which details the arrangements for marking classwork and homework.

### **3. Attitude to Learning (A2L) scores**

3.1 Thomas Adams School and Adams College believe that a child's attitude to learning is a key indicator of his/her attitude to school/college, work and likely future progress. This is especially important in a child's early years of secondary school, where parents will be keen to know that their child is making progress, behaving in lessons and completing classwork and homework to the very best of his/her ability, regardless of any attainment data.

3.2 At each Tracking Point (TP), subject teachers report on either three or four A2L scores per pupil, depending upon the Year group that they are in:

Years 7 and 8:	Effort in lessons, Behaviour, Homework
Years 9 – 11:	Effort in lessons, Behaviour, Homework, Contribution
Years 12 and 13:	Approach to Learning, Contribution and Homework

3.3 Subject teachers rate each pupil on a 1 (highest) to 4 (lowest) scale on each A2L. A score of '2' is the expected aim for every pupil in every subject. Any score of '1' should be considered exceptional. A score of '3' indicate some area of concern, whilst a score of '4' is used to indicate a significant area of concern.

3.4 The full set of descriptors for the A2L scores is provided in the appendix. Two of the Homework descriptors were amended for September 2017 onwards. Following consultation with staff, we also replaced the previous 'Independent Learning' category (for Years 12 and 13), with 'Approach to Learning', with effect from September 2018.

### **4. Assessment in Years 7 – 9**

4.1 Following the Government's removal of National Curriculum levels, schools were instructed to develop their own assessment systems. In Years 7 and 8, we developed a system based upon "Age Related Expectations" (A.R.E.s) and started using this in September 2016. Following a review of this new system in the summer of 2017, we then decided to adopt the same model in Year 9 from September 2017, for all subjects except English, Maths and Science. The next review will take place in the summer of 2019, in order that we have had a two-year period of stability.

4.2 For assessment in English, Maths and Science in Year 9 – please see section 5.

4.3 Each Department has produced a list of statements about what content pupils need to know and what skills they should be able to show by the end of each year, if, ultimately, they are on track to achieving good passes (grade 5s) at G.C.S.E.

4.4 At each TP (data capture tracking point), subject teachers assess pupils at working in one of five categories:

Significantly Above A.R.E.s

Above A.R.E.s

On A.R.E.s

Approaching A.R.E.s

Working Towards A.R.E.s

4.5 Pupils who are working 'On' A.R.E.s are making steady progress towards achieving the majority of the A.R.E. statements by the end of the year. Pupils who are working 'Significantly Above' or 'Above' A.R.E.s are already demonstrating a greater depth of understanding of the work being taught. Those in the 'Approaching' category are likely to be achieving, or on the way to achieving, some, but not all statements. Those in the 'Working Towards' category are not likely to be meeting many of the A.R.E.s at present, but we recognise that they still may be working to the very best of their ability.

4.6 As an early indicator of possible G.C.S.E. attainment, we expect the five A.R.E. categories to suggest that pupils are heading for the following G.C.S.E. grades:

Significantly Above	=	Grades 8 and 9
Above	=	Grades 6 and 7
On	=	Grade 5
Approaching	=	Grade 4
Working Towards	=	Grades 1, 2 and 3

4.7 KS2 SATs changed in 2016, with National Curriculum levels replaced by new, scaled scores. Pupils arrive in Year 7 with a scaled score for Maths and two scaled scores for English. The scaled scores range from 80 to 120, with a score of 100 considered the expected standard that a child should be at upon entering secondary school.

4.8 We use pupils' KS2 results to determine the A.R.E. category that we expect them to be in at the end of each of Years 7 – 9, effectively setting these as targets for the year. These categories may be different from subject to subject, depending upon their links with English and Maths. By making this target information clear to pupils, parents and teachers, we will be able to decide if pupils are working below, on or above the expected standard for someone with their prior ability.

4.9 For a pupil to be classified as 'working above A.R.E.' they should be demonstrating a greater **depth** of understanding, that indicates that they will be able to go on to access the higher material and show ability to deal with the more challenging styles of questions that the new G.C.S.E. syllabuses include. For someone to be deemed 'significantly above', teachers will need to have evidence that the pupil can **consistently demonstrate a deeper understanding** of the material that has been covered. It is, of course, possible for Departments to design/use assessments that would evidence this deeper understanding. If a pupil achieves 90% on a formal test that has been specifically designed with this in mind, then this could demonstrate 'significantly above A.R.E.' on this one assessment. For example, to achieve this score, all the key skills must obviously be correct, and, in addition, they will have successfully answered additional questions that demonstrate this deeper understanding, or answer the same questions as everyone else but in a way that shows this greater understanding through their specific responses.

4.10 Through in-class questioning and other formative assessment, the teacher also builds up other evidence of the depth of a pupil's understanding. If the teacher has a few of these different assessments (written tests and teacher assessments of classwork/homework/verbal contributions), all with the same result, then the evidence is clearly there that this pupil is working 'significantly above A.R.E.s'. Categorising pupils as 'above' A.R.E.s is done in much the same way.

4.11 There are three TPs per pupil, per year. On the first occasion, subject teachers give pupils A2L scores only, since this is carried out early in the Autumn Term. For the second tracking point, teachers give the A.R.E. category that the pupil is currently working in, together with his/her A2L scores. At TP3, written comments are also given, using Departmentally-generated comment banks.

## 5. Assessment in Years 10 and 11 (and English/Maths/Science for Year 9)

5.1 All pupils who start Years 9, 10 and 11 from September 2018 onwards will be sitting reformed G.C.S.E. qualifications and will receive numbered grades (9 – 1) in all subjects.

5.2 The table in the appendix compares the previous G.C.S.E. lettered grades with the new G.C.S.E. numbered grades. This is provided for information purposes, as all stakeholders are still coming to terms with the new grading structure.

5.3 From September 2017 onwards, we set G.C.S.E. targets at the start of Year 9 for English, Maths and Science, and for all other subjects from Year 10 onwards. These are generated from reference to FFT Aspire 20 estimates (aiming for the top 20%).

5.4 Where pupils do not have KS2 scores, FFT estimates are not available. We will use 'best fit' target setting, based upon initial assessments of pupils' English and Maths ability upon entry to Thomas Adams.

5.5 For subjects for which FFT do not provide estimates, we will use 'best fit' target setting, looking at the targets that the pupils have in their other subjects.

5.6 Targets will be reviewed annually, when the FFT estimates are revised, based upon the latest G.C.S.E. cohort's results.

5.7 These 'external targets' will be entered into Go4Schools. Should subject teachers, in consultation with their Subject Leaders, feel that they wish to raise the targets higher, this is possible and these are entered as 'teacher targets' on Go4Schools. The targets which are made visible to pupils and parents are these 'teacher targets', unless they do not exist, in which case they default to the 'external targets'. It is possible, upon each review, to reduce the 'teacher targets' back to the level of the 'external targets' if assessment data and further knowledge of the pupil suggests that this is more sensible. No targets are lowered beyond the 'external targets' set by the school.

5.8 The reason for allowing subject teachers to raise targets further, is echoed by an OFSTED report on the progress of more able children: "Often, targets set for the most able students were too low, which reflected the low ambitions for these students. Targets did not consistently reflect how quickly the most able students can make progress." (*OFSTED: The most able students: an update on progress since June 2013*) Equally, of course, the targets for some lower or middle ability pupils may also not reflect the child's potential, so could be another reason for raising them.

5.9 There are four TPs per pupil for those in Year 11. At TP1, teachers will give an initial **prediction** of G.C.S.E. grades, together with four A2L scores and a **current** grade – as a measure of what grade they think the pupil would likely achieve, were he/she to sit the full exam on that day. Due to the introduction of new G.C.S.E. syllabuses, we accept that this data will be rather unreliable at first, but will improve over time. The need for strong, formative assessment has been highlighted to subject teachers, in order to aid them in making their decisions at each TP. TP3 includes a written comment. TP4 is an 'exit poll' prediction and is for internal use only – this is not sent to parents.

5.10 There are three TPs per pupil for those in Year 10. At TP1, A2L scores only are provided, since this is very early in a pupil's G.C.S.E. course. From TP2 onwards, subject teachers give the current G.C.S.E. grade (*see section 5.9*). Subject teachers also give the four A2L scores for each pupil. At TP2, written comments are also given.

5.11 For Year 9 pupils in English, Maths and Science, we follow the same process explained in section 4.11. However, instead of A.R.E. grades, teachers give current G.C.S.E. grades. These will, undoubtedly, be considerably lower than target grades at this early stage.

## 6. Assessment in Years 12 and 13

6.1 Since September 2017, A Level targets have been set using the FFT Aspire 20 estimates. Whilst the college currently achieves grades in line with, or just below, national averages for the most part, it is felt that targets should be aspirational, which is why Aspire 50 is not used. In addition, this brings the target setting process in line with the main school. Targets are reviewed when the FFT estimates are revised, based upon the latest G.C.S.E. cohort's results.

6.2 For the 2018-19 Year 12 cohort, targets will be set once FFT estimates are available. If these are likely to be delayed beyond the end of November 2018, we will generate some internal targets to be used in the meantime, based on average G.C.S.E. scores.

6.3 For students for whom we have no FFT information, targets are set by 'best fit' target setting, looking at the student's prior achievement at G.C.S.E. or equivalent and matching them to similar students.

6.4 For pupils who are in Year 12 during the academic year 2018-19, there are five TPs. TP1 is for recording an assessment grade, following the transition tests. TP2 is for a grade from the interim tests (sat in December) and A2L scores. TP3 will primarily be for written comments and A2L scores. TP4 will be for A2L scores, a grade from the Year 12 exams and a **predicted** A2 grade. These will be reviewed and amended where necessary, following in-class end-of-year tests (for TP5).

6.5 For pupils who are in Year 13 during the academic year 2018-19, there are four TPs. TP1 is in early September and is for an initial UCAS-enabling **predicted** A2 grade. TP2 will be for A2L scores and for a realistic predicted grade, aiding conversations for the Consultation Evening. TP3 follows a set of mock exams – this will provide a current and predicted grade, as well as A2L scores and written comments. TP4 is an 'exit poll' prediction and is for internal use only – this is not sent to parents.

## 7. Assessment schedule and using Go4Schools

7.1 The current schedule for TPs is as shown below. Each Year group receives one written comment per subject, as well as a Consultation Evening.

	Term 1 First half	Term 1 Second half	Term 2 First half	Term 2 Second half	Term 3 First half	Term 3 Second half
Year 13		TP2 + Consultation Evening		Targeted Consultation Evening	TP4	
Year 12	TP1		TP2 + Consultation Evening	TP3	TP4	TP5 + Targeted Consultation Evening
Year 11	TP1 + Targeted Consultation Evening	TP2	Consultation Evening	TP3	TP4	
Year 10	TP1	Targeted Consultation Evening	TP2	Consultation Evening		TP3
Year 9		TP1 + Targeted Consultation Evening	TP2 + Consultation Evening		TP3	
Year 8	TP1	Consultation Evening	TP2	Targeted Consultation Evening		TP3
Year 7		TP1	TP2 + Targeted Consultation Evening	Consultation Evening		TP3

7.2 TPs usually open on a Tuesday and are due for completion by subject teachers by the following Tuesday (or a fortnight later when written comments are required). Subject teachers are expected to meet all deadlines. All deadlines are shown on the school calendar, included in the instructions sent out to staff at each TP and reminders are issued in staff briefings, displayed on the staffroom noticeboards and given via emails from Go4Schools and the Assistant Headteacher (Data).

7.3 Following the completion of TP data, there will usually be a 48-hour 'checking window' for Subject Leaders to check the input from the teachers in their Department. Once this window is closed, there are not expected to be any further changes to the data, in order to allow processing to begin.



7.4 The schedule for internal and mock examinations is as follows:

Year 13 -	Test in October, Mocks in January
Year 12 -	Tests in September and December, Exams April and June
Year 11 -	Mocks in November/December
Year 10 -	Exams in April/May
Year 9 -	Exams in April
Year 8 -	Exams in May
Year 7 -	Exams in June

Individual subjects will set their own assessment tests as and when they deem necessary.

See the 'Departmental Assessment Information' booklet for further details.

7.5 All tracking data is entered via Go4Schools. In addition, Go4Schools is used to store the results of all key assessments in each Department. Some Departments also use the system to track and record classwork and homework marks too, but there is currently no obligation to do so.

7.6 Parental access to Go4Schools is now available, for all parents to view reports (and to download/print them if desired). Pupil access to Go4Schools will be opened up on a rolling programme during the 2018-19 academic year.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Formative assessment**

Formative assessment can range from probing questions put to pupils as they think something through, quick recap questions at the opening of a lesson, scrutiny of the classwork or homework of pupils, through to formal tests.

When using formative assessment, teachers need to consider the following:

- What will this assessment tell me about pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic, concept or skill?
- How will I communicate the information I gain from this assessment to pupils in a way that helps them to understand what they need to do to improve?
- How will I ensure pupils understand the purpose of this assessment and can apply it to their own learning?
- How will I ensure my approaches to assessment are inclusive of all abilities?
- How will I use the information I gain from this assessment to inform my planning for future lessons? How could I improve, adapt or target my teaching as a result?
- What follow-up action should I take to plug gaps in knowledge and understanding or to support progression where learning is secure?
- Is it necessary to record the information gained from this assessment? And if so, how can this be done most efficiently?

## **Summative assessment**

When using summative assessments, we need to consider:

- Who will use the information provided by this assessment?
- Will it give them the information they need for their purposes?
- How will it be used to support broader progress, attainment and outcomes for the pupils?
- How should the assessment outcomes be communicated to pupils to ensure they have the right impact and contribute to pupils' understanding of how they can make further progress?
- How should the assessment outcomes be communicated to parents to ensure they understand what the outcomes tell them about their child's attainment, progress and improvement needs?
- How should the assessment outcomes be recorded to allow the school to monitor and demonstrate progress, attainment and wider outcomes?

## **A2L descriptors**

For pupils in Years 7 – 11:

### **Effort in lessons**

1. Always demonstrates maximum effort in lessons
2. Works hard in lessons
3. Effort is variable
4. Effort is unsatisfactory in many lessons

### **Behaviour**

1. Outstanding, faultless behaviour in every lesson
2. Very good behaviour in the majority of lessons
3. Behaviour is variable, lacking focus at times
4. Poor behaviour in many lessons, including regular low level disruption

### **Homework**

1. Completed to an extremely high standard and all handed in on time
2. Completed to a high standard and no more than one late homework
3. Room for improvement at times and/or more than one late homework
4. Significant room for improvement and/or regularly late homework

### **Contribution (*Years 9 to 11 only*)**

1. Offers valuable contributions regularly
2. Contributes at times
3. Rarely contributes
4. Very reluctant to contribute

For pupils in Years 12 and 13:

### Approach to Learning

1. Excellent approach to learning
2. Good approach to learning
3. Variable approach to learning
4. Approach to learning requires significant improvement

### Contribution

1. Offers valuable contributions regularly
2. Contributes at times
3. Rarely contributes
4. Very reluctant to contribute

### Homework

1. Completed to an extremely high standard and all handed in on time
2. Completed to a high standard and no more than one late homework
3. Room for improvement at times and/or more than one late homework
4. Significant room for improvement and/or regularly late homework

### Table of conversions

#### Grading new GCSEs from 2017

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
⑤ <b>STRONG PASS</b>	
④ <b>STANDARD PASS</b>	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U