

## Target grades

### 1. How have you set the target grades for my child?

At the beginning of Year 10 we create our target grades for students taking KS4 qualifications using a national company, called FFT (with links to the Fischer Family Trust) to give us a starting point. This company analyse the exam results of pupils from the previous year's Year 11 cohort nationally and compare them with the pupils' levels of ability (in English and Maths) upon entry to secondary school, as well as looking at their gender and month of birth. Thus, we can see what the most common G.C.S.E. grade was for a pupil who entered secondary school with particular KS2 results and these key characteristics.

Next, we input these grades into our data analysis software, Sisra Analytics, this allows us to compare grades with approx. 250,000 other students in schools nationally and the grades that they were awarded in the most recent exam series. Using this data, we are able to check that the FFT grade originally set is suitable for each individual and also ensures that the all students are **at least** targeted to make **positive progress** in each subject. On occasion this has meant increasing the target grade, we want all students to have aspirational target grades for all of their subjects so that they strive for the best possible outcome they are capable of. In summary, the target grades set for your child should be considered challenging but achievable by the majority of pupils.

### 2. But my child is new to the school or didn't sit KS2 tests - how have you set the target grades for him/her?

We ask the English and Maths Departments to carry out initial assessments of your child's abilities in these two subjects, early on upon entry. From these, and after consultation with Subject Leaders of the other subjects, we set appropriate target grades.

### 3. Will these target grades ever change?

Possibly, yes, although probably not by too much. Each November, FFT and Sisra update all of their information based upon the most recent cohort who have just sat the exams that summer. It will make sense, therefore, for us to review our pupils' targets in light of the new information.

### 4. Why do some subjects not have numbered grades?

Some pupils are studying BTEC subjects (or similar). These are usually graded as follows: Distinction\*, Distinction, Merit, Level 2 Pass, Level 1 Pass, U.

### 5. What are the new numbered grades equivalent to?

The chart below shows the broad equivalences of the new and old grades and the additional information supplied by the Department for Education and Ofqual.

### 6. What is the difference between a 'Strong Pass' and a 'Standard Pass'?

For the academic years 2019/20, pupils were able to achieve a grade 4 (a 'standard pass') to avoid resitting these two subjects. This currently remains the case. However, whilst we expect that students who are currently in Year 10 will avoid the need to re-sit these two subjects if they achieve a grade 4, within a few years they will be competing in the employment market with future cohorts who will likely have achieved a grade 5. Indeed, it may be the case that certain colleges/universities/employers may choose to only accept young adults with a grade 5 or above. As a result, we would encourage all students to aim to achieve at least a grade 5 in these two critical subjects.

### 7. Why are some target grades missing?

Grading new GCSEs from 2017

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

Once the target grades have been published, the only subject that should be missing a target grade is Core P.E., since pupils do not sit a formal examination in this subject.

### 8. Why do my child's Science targets appear as two grades?

Previously, those pupils who did not sit Triple Science (the large majority of the Year group), studied Core Science in Year 10 and a second G.C.S.E., Additional Science, in Year 11. The new G.C.S.E. Science syllabus means that there is a single qualification, studied over the course of the two years. However, this is known as a 'double award' and counts as **two** G.C.S.E.s.

Here are some examples of what the Target grades could appear as, for those pupils not studying Triple Science:

- 4/5 Equivalent to a pupil having one grade 4 target and one grade 5 target, so this is similar to target grades of 4+ and 5-
- 5/5 Equivalent to a pupil having two grade 5 targets
- 5/6 Equivalent to a pupil having one grade 5 target and one grade 6 target, so this is similar to target grades of 5+ and 6-

### 9. How does the assessment system work in Year 11?

*The system for use with across Year 7 – 11 is based upon student flight paths. These flight paths have been designed by each subject and are linked directly to students KS2 results in English and Maths. For each KS2 scaled score bracket, the flight path is designed to demonstrate the expected progress made over the 5 years leading up to KS4 Exams in Year 11 in that subject.*

*As explained above the flight path 'end point' or KS4 Target Grade, has been designed to match the average national expected grade that has been historically achieved with students in the same KS2 grade bracket in each individual subject. For example, if a child has a KS2 scaled score of 4.5, our data software, **Sisra Analytics** indicates what grade nationally students with a 4.5 score achieved in each of their subjects. These are the grades that we would use as a target grade at the end of Year 11 for that student.*

In Year 11, after the latest exam season, some target grades may be tweaked to reflect progress that has been nationally achieved by students in the same subject with the same KS2 data. However, due to the 2020 CAGs, this will not be the case for the 2020-21 cohort of year 11's, their target grades will remain the same and match the national progress on 2019 exam season students. Throughout Year 11 students will complete a range of assessments that will enable us to track the progress that they are making towards their end of Year 11 target.

### 10. Common Assessments (CA) are used in Year 11 and are these used to track progress?

Throughout the year, students will complete 'common assessments' (CA's). These are internally moderated and graded using the GCSE grading criteria on the most relevant specification. The assessments have been designed to enable students to demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge of the latest topic and be awarded a grade in that area of work. It is important to understand that is a reflection on smaller topics and parts of the course and does not equate to a full GCSE grade, it acts as an indicator to show where a student is 'working at' in a particular area of the subject.

The CA grades are internally stored and when a Tracking Point window opens, the most recent CA grade is used for the report. That grade is also compared against the staggered target grades on the subject's **flight path**, this will ensure that the grade is not being compared to the end of KS4 target grade. (If a student was in the first half term of Year 10, we wouldn't be expecting them to be working at their end of year 11 target, so we compare that grade with the Year 10 Autumn target grade) – providing everyone with a clearer picture of progress for that individual at that time of the year.

**In Year 11- 2020 these will consist of the following:**

Common Assessment	Date	Detail
'In Class' Assessment	Sept / Oct	In class test designed to cover the Year 10 content and some relative Year 11 questions. Aimed to establish what students have retained over lockdown and since the beginning of the course in Year 10
Mock Exam Grade	Nov/Dec	A full rehearsal of examinations, aimed to establish how students will perform in the exam element of each of the courses. Mock Exams designed to cover 50%+ of the course content to give an accurate reflection of result.
Common Assessment	Feb	Internal Assessments to establish any further concerns and consequently any intervention needed prior to the end of the course.
Predicted Grades & Revised Predicted Grade	TP2 & TP3	These will be produced using Teacher professional judgements, based on the latest data available, this is the grade that a teacher believed that a student could get, if they continued to work as they are working.  The revised predicted grade after 3 months of lessons and a common assessment piece in class.

### Tracking Point 1 Specific –

#### **11. What is the 'In class' assessment grade?**

On return to school since lockdown it was important to evidence what knowledge students had retained since starting their KS4 courses in Year 10. The 'In Class' assessments were designed to test **only** the knowledge covered in each subject since the start of Year 10 (including over lockdown). The grade **does not** give an indication of a **full GCSE award**. This allows teachers to identify which areas of the course they need to focus on with each student.

In some cases, particularly coursework based subjects, the grade will reflect only a small proportion of work completed within the assessment window. Students have been given their grades and will be aware of what they have been tested on and what the grade reflects in all subjects.

#### **12. What does 'WT' grade mean?**

This indicates that the student has not yet reached grade 1 in that particular subject with the content that was tested. It stands for 'Working Towards' grade 1.

#### **13. What if there is no 'In class' assessment grade on my child's report?**

This would mean that your child was not present when the 'In Class' assessment was taking place and they still have not managed to sit the full assessment in the required time.

#### **14. Why are there 3 grades in for French?**

Students in French took 3 separate in class assessments, these grades are displayed in the following order Listening, Reading and Writing.

### 15. What do the progress comments mean? (Applicable to TP2 and TP3 only)

Fine grading  
example diagram:

A comment of '**Above**' is populated by the teacher if the most recent common assessment piece is graded at a grade above where a student should be at that time.

A comment of '**On**' is populated by the teacher if the most recent common assessment piece is graded at a grade that is the same grade as the grade on their flight path at that time.

A comment of '**Near**' is populated by the teacher if the most recent common assessment piece is graded at a grade 'up to 3' fine grades below where a student should be at that time. For example, if in Common Assessment Piece 1, a student demonstrates working at a grade 3+ and their flight path suggests that they should be working at a grade 4+, then that student is 3 sub grades below where they should be in that subject.

5
5-
4+
4
4-
3+
3
3-
2+
2
2-
1+

A comment of '**Below**' is populated by the teacher if the most recent common assessment piece is graded at a grade 'more than 3' sub levels below where a student should be at that time. For example, if in Common Assessment Piece 1, a student demonstrates working at a grade 3+ and their flight path suggests that they should be working at a grade 5, then that student is 4 sub grades below where they should be in that subject.

### A2L - The 'Learning Expectations'

#### 16. What are the learning expectations?

The new 'Attitude to Learning' expectations are a list of 10 expectations that we believe are fair for all students to be following whilst a member of Thomas Adams School. The expectations should act as a guide of minimum standards. If any of these are not met, then the student will be reported as an NY by the teacher. The teacher will highlight which standard it is, it could be more than one, so informed and useful discussions can be had at home. This data will also enable head of years to be able to focus intervention and behaviour strategies to groups of individuals appropriately.

The list of 10 'learning expectations' are as follows, *with an addition of 'Remote Learning' for 2020 academic year in the event of any partial remote learning due to the current Covid-19 pandemic.*

#### **Learning Expectations:**

- 1.Be on time to all lessons.
- 2.Be ready to learn, wearing correct uniform, equipped for the lesson, and not chewing.
- 3.Act upon feedback and advice.
- 4.Respond to questions and contribute in lesson.
- 5.Complete all lesson tasks with focus, effort, and high standards of presentation.
- 6.Never disrupt the learning of others.
- 7.Complete all homework.
- 8.Respect everyone and everything within the school community.
- 9.Attend compulsory support lessons. *\*not reported whilst covid measures are in place.*
- 10.Remote learning tasks completed to a good standard and on time. *\*only reported on when in partial school closures due to covid measures.*

### 17. Why are the A2L codes so important?

A2L scores should help you to closely pinpoint where any issues may be occurring. They should be regarded as a key indicator of your child's attitude to school, work and likely future progress. These will usually be the first columns that we look at when mentoring pupils, before any reference is made to targets.

### 18. What do the codes mean?

The 3 codes that staff will use to show how they feel about your child's attitude to learning in their subject. Students should always be aiming to get an 'ME' code on their report. If a child receives an 'NY', the report will also highlight which of the learning expectations the teacher thinks needs to be worked on using an 'X'. This should provide parents with a substantial amount of information to have informed useful discussions at home. **If there is an ME or EE A2L for the subject, the expectation columns should remain blank as there are no areas of concern.**

A2L Key	EE	Exceeding Expectations	You are exceeding our learning expectations in the lessons.
	ME	Meeting Expectations	You are meeting all of our learning expectations.
	NY	Not yet Meeting Expectations	You are not yet meeting all of our learning expectations.

### 19. My child has got 'NY' in all of their subjects, should I be concerned?

You are right to be concerned, but the idea behind the 'NY' code is that it suggests that the students is 'Not Yet' meeting the expectations in the classroom. What is more important is **where the 'X's are for each subject area**. This should enable you to establish where there are common areas of concern from each of your child's teachers and where you are able to support your child to move forward positively. Staff have been directed to input an NY even if it is just one of the 10 learning expectations **not yet** being met. The aim of this is to ensure that students are aware of the high expectations that we have set in school and encourage them to be meeting or exceeding.

### 20. What are the consequences of getting an NY on the report?

The first port of call will be the head of year, they will have access to the reports and can discuss any NY codes proactively with your child during form time. If a student has a consistent NY for a certain learning expectation then there will be some interventions in place to support them to improve, this could range from organisational support, to behavioural conversations and encouragement to act on feedback. The report has been designed to be as informative as possible to all those concerned. This way your child should feel supported and encouraged to move forward positively. Conversations at home around the 'Learning Expectations' would also prove really useful at this stage.

If you have any further questions regarding the KS4 reports, that I have not covered here then please feel free to contact me directly at [rsw@thomasadams.net](mailto:rsw@thomasadams.net) .



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