

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING AT JFS

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are attainment levels for Key Stage 3?

At Key Stage 3 student attainment is reported in terms of national curriculum levels from 1 to 8 such that, for example, level 4 is higher than level 3. Each level is sub-divided into 3 categories:

- a = close to next level
- b = working solidly at level
- c = just arrived at level

Each level given represents more than a simple mark in a test. It is a measure of the range of competencies achieved from a range specified by the Government and as such, provides an indication of the range of skills that a child is displaying. Further information of topics studied in each subject can be found on the JFS website.

Descriptors of the different levels for each subject can be found on the Curriculum and Qualifications page of the DfE website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary>

2. What are National Curriculum grades for GCSEs and A level?

For 'old specification' GCSEs and A Levels, attainment is reported as an alphabetical grade:

- GCSE: A* - G and U
- AS: A - E and U
- A2: A* - E and U

At GCSE, a C grade is considered a pass.

At A2, students are awarded an A* if they achieve 90%+ in their A2 year.

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

For 'new' specification students will no longer be awarded a grade from A* to G and instead a numbered scale will be used, from **9** (the highest grade) to **1**. This applies for English (Year 10) and Maths (Year 9 and 10) in 2015-16 and for all other subjects from September 2016.

For further information on new GCSE grading, please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/setting-standards-for-new-gcses-in-2017>

The approach will mean:

- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above
- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as currently achieve an A and above
- For each examination, the top 20 per cent of those who get grade 7 or above will get a grade 9 – the very highest performers
- The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G
- Grade 5 will be positioned in the top third of the marks for a current Grade C and bottom third of the marks for a current Grade B. This will mean it will be of greater demand than the present grade C.

3. What progress should my child be making?

Years 7-9. Students are expected to make two thirds of a level progress per academic year and two levels progress throughout Key Stage 3. For example, a student entering with a level 3c in Year 7 would be expected to achieve 5c by the end of Year 9; or, a student entering with a level 5a in Year 7 would be expected to achieve 7a by the end of Year 9.

Years 10-11. Students who enter with an average Key Stage 2 (English and Maths) of:

- level 3 are expected to achieve at least a D at GCSE;
- level 4 are expected to achieve at least a C grade; and,
- level 5 are expected to achieve at least a B.

Progress is not necessarily linear. Each term students will study different skills and material. The nature of the assessment may be different too. For example tests, special tasks and routine monitoring of classwork and homework may all be used to judge a student's level of attainment. It is not unusual or worrisome for a student to be assessed, say, at 5b in one term and 5c in the next.

4. How does JFS know at which level my child should be working?

Schools are provided with data from a number of sources. These, complemented by classroom practice, help us build an understanding of a student's expected progress. In addition to Key Stage 2 scores students also complete an independent test in the Autumn term of Year 7 which returns an English and Maths national curriculum level. We also have access to data from Fischer Family Trust (FFT) and Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs) which complement the rich data we have about each student.

5. What is FFT and how does JFS use the data?

The Fischer Family Trust (FFT) is an independent charity, which uses national datasets provided by the Department for Education to help schools make effective use of data to raise individual student attainment. FFT produces estimates of student outcomes to inform schools' planning and target setting processes. These estimates take into account individual students' prior attainment and estimate what might happen if each student makes progress that is in line with that made by similar students in similar schools in previous years.

6. What are CATs and how does JFS use the data?

The Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) measure the three principal areas of reasoning - verbal, non-verbal and quantitative - as well as an element of spatial ability, allowing the school to test the full range within an entire class or year. JFS uses this data to help allocate students to tutor groups on entry to the school and as part of a range of data used when populating class lists.

7. What if my child appears to be underperforming?

Although we know that parents take a great deal of interest in the Termly Progress letter, it is not always necessary to telephone the school. Students should be able to articulate how they are doing in their lessons and what they need to do to improve.

The School carefully analyses the termly data produced from the Summative Assessment Project. The data is shared with all staff members and students who are underperforming are identified in order to explore a variety of support mechanisms. These mechanisms will be addressed according to individual needs. This may mean that a student is put on report – to their tutor, Director of Studies, or Subject Leader. If this is the case, this will be indicated in the progress record.

8. What if my child already makes expected progress?

Where students are already making expected progress we will set revised targets. There is a measure for more than expected progress and we expect many of our students to achieve at this level.