



## Information on the GCSE 1-9 system and Progress 8 Measure.

In 2017 Year 11 the government introduced the new GCSE 1-9 scale and this scale is now well understood by both students and teachers. Many people, parents and employers included, are however more familiar with the old A\*-G grades and this document is intended to explain how the two scales are related. We also attempt to explain how schools are now judged using the Progress 8 measure.

The table below is a Department of Education chart which shows how the 9-1 grading system equates with the old system of A\*-G grades.

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

**GOOD PASS (DfE)**  
5 and above = top of C and above

**AWARDING**  
4 and above = bottom of C and above

There are some key points that need to be pointed out:

- Essentially a grade 4 is the equivalent of a C grade – the number of pupils who gained a C or above on the old system generally equated to the number who gained a 4 and above on the new system in its first year of use – essentially this ensured that standards were maintained in the key transition years of 2017 and 2018.
- A good pass is however now defined as grade 5 or above.
- A grade A is the same as grade 7
- The top grade A\* is now split into two grades – 8 and 9 – the grade 9 is essentially a high A\* grade.
- Grade 1 is equivalent to a G grade

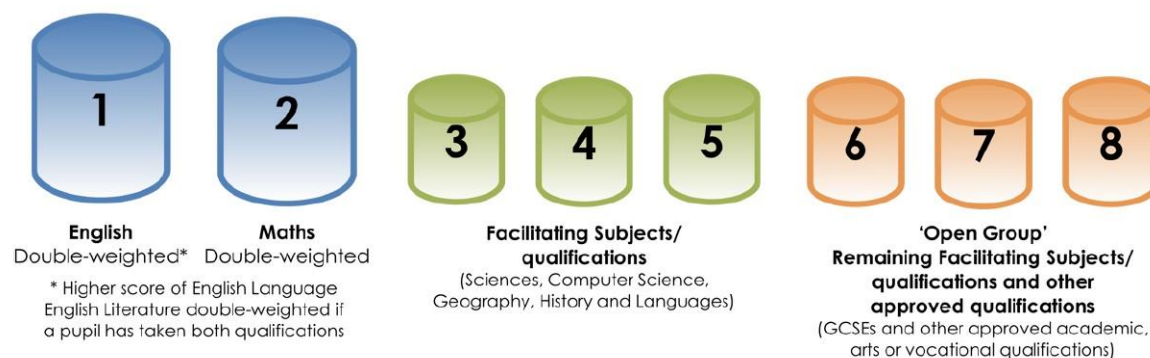
The move to defining Grade 5 as a good pass is an interesting one. Schools are now judged on how many pupils gain a Grade 5 in both English and Maths. Most schools however also publish the number of students gaining Grade 4 and above in these subjects so comparisons with previous years can be made.

## Progress Measure Progress 8 and Subject Targets

Schools are now primarily judged on how much progress pupils make across the subjects that they take and not on the number of pupils who gain a certain type of grade. This measure is called Progress 8 and has now been around for a few years. It is however difficult to understand due to the technical nature of the method in which it is calculated. Nonetheless the description below is however an attempt to explain how it is calculated.

Progress 8 attempts to measure the amount of progress that a school makes across eight key subjects from pupils starting points as defined at the end of Year 6 – i.e. from Key Stage 2 to the end of GCSE.

The Key subjects are shown here:



The average grade achieved in these 8 subjects is calculated for a pupil and this is then compared to the average grade achieved of all pupils who achieved an identical score in the Key Stage 2 tests back in Year 6. If the difference is say 1.0 then the pupil has made 1 grade more progress across the eight subjects than average. If the difference is 0.5, then half a grade more progress has been made or a grade more progress in 4 subjects. (Do note that both English and Maths are double weighted in this averaging process to reflect their importance and so the average is actually over 10 grades rather than just 8 grades.)

The Progress 8 scores for all pupils in the school are then averaged and the school is awarded this average as their Progress 8. Our progress 8 score has always been positive showing that pupils at St Benedict's make more progress than students of the same ability at most other schools. Our average over the last five years is about **0.5** and this puts us among the top 10% of schools. It is essentially saying that here



students make about half a grade more progress than average in all their subjects or a whole grade of progress more in about 4 out of every 8 subjects. The measure is a complex one and is not really designed for parents or pupils but for school leaders and others wanting to judge the performance of a school.

Nonetheless the concept of being a grade above average, on average grade, or being a grade below average is an easy one to grasp so we have based our targets on this concept. This has been adopted by the school as a means of setting aspirational targets for most of our pupils. Essentially the school sets a target that shows the grade needed to make average progress and the grade needed to be one grade above average. This latter is then used by most subjects to set their subject target grade. In some cases, the average progress grade is selected but in general we would aim for the higher one.

We hope this information helps you understand both the 1-9 grades that are being used in GCSE reports and gives you an idea of how our targets are based on our students essentially trying to achieve a grade that simply represents, for them, above average progress.

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