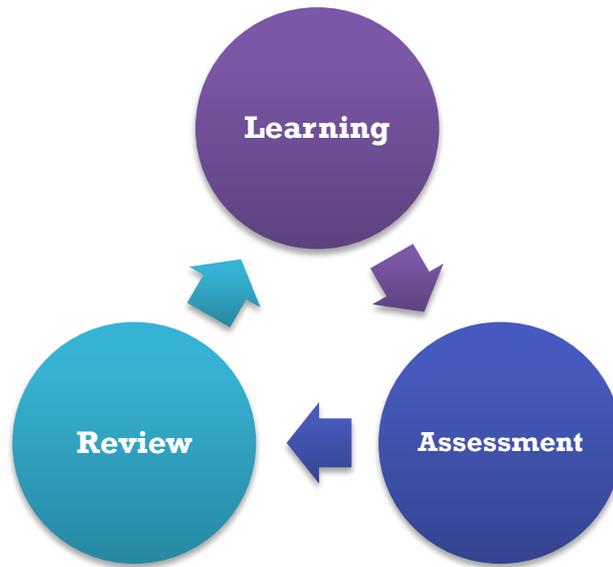


Assessment at Ark Academy



At Ark Academy, assessing students learning is a **corner stone of every lesson** and of **every unit of work** or **fertile question**. The assessment cycle '**LEARNING / ASSESSMENT / REVIEW**' exemplifies the fact that learning and assessment are a constant process.

On a day to day level, the assessment cycle involves **checking how students are doing** with each new concept / idea or skill introduced. If a teacher finds out a student hasn't 'got it', they'll review how they taught it. They might go back approach the learning in a different way in or give students more practise or a different way of consolidating their learning. The assessment cycle happens on a larger scale each term with more formal assessments. The results of these assessments are reported home to parents.

We use assessment data at Ark Academy to improve **what's happening in the classroom**; to help **teachers understand** where their students are and where they need to be; to **motivate** students and allow them to **make progress** and finally to **inform parents** and assist them in **supporting their child's education**.

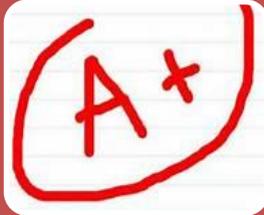


Key Terms relating to Assessment



Assessments

- Assessments are tests that students take at certain points during the academic year which indicate their performance in each subject.
- Assessments are cumulative, meaning the knowledge and skills required increases over time. Formative assessments take place in lesson to assess on an ongoing basis.



Summative assessments

- At the end of every term and at the end of the year for years 7,8,9 and 10, students sit summative assessments.
- These are tests that each Head of Department designs, planning backwards from the requirements of national exams and testing knowledge and skills learnt up to that point in the year or key stage (as appropriate).



External assessments

External assessments are normally national exams. For secondary students these include GCSEs which are taken in year 11, AS exams taken in year 12 and A-Levels which are taken in year 13.



Baseline

- The grade each student begins a Key Stage on, usually converted from their **Primary School** attainment in English and maths
- The Key Stage 4 baseline represents where each student finished the end of year 9 in each subject.
- A student who **maintains their baseline grade** every year is **making progress in line with their age group**



'Working At' grade

- A student's **most recent grade** from a **summative assessment** e.g. their autumn 2 exam
- This is the grade that is reported home to parents termly and is shared with students during review week.



Target grade

- The grade each student is expected to achieve by the end of the academic year or the end of the key stage is communicated through each student's target
- Target grades represent what a student could achieve if they **above** nationally expected progress throughout secondary school

Why do we assess formally?

Internal assessments run on a regular cycle at Ark Academy. These assessments are **key points** in each term.

- They give teachers a clear picture of the progress their students have made, informing their forward planning.
- They motivate students, helping them to understand what they have learnt and what they still need to cover.
- They teach students revision skills and exam techniques, in preparation for GCSE, A-Level and University exams.
- They are the end-point for the different units students are studying in their subjects, providing status and importance to the work that leads up to them and drawing ideas and concepts studied through the half term together.
- They provide the content for the reports the academy sends to parents at the end of each term.

When do we assess?

The **parent calendar** details when the next half terms assessments will be. This is sent home each half term by the Principal. The **key assessment points** for the year ahead are detailed below:

2017-18 Summative Assessment dates		
AUTUMN	Wednesday 22 nd November – Friday 1 st December	✓ Y12 autumn term exams (in exam hall)
	Thursday 23 rd November – Thursday 7 th December	✓ Y7, 8, 9 & 10 autumn term exams (in lesson) ✓ Y11 & Y13 mock 1 exams (in exam hall)
SPRING	Monday 5 th – Thursday 15 th March	✓ Y7, 8, 9 & 10 spring term exams (in lesson)
	Thursday 1 st – Thursday 15 th March	✓ Y12 (official) mock exams (in exam hall) ✓ Y11 & Y13 mock 2 exams (in exam hall)
SUMMER	Monday 14 th May (approx.)	✓ Y11 GCSE 2018 examinations exams start ✓ Y12 AS 2018 examinations exams start
	Monday 4 th June (approx.)	✓ Y13 A2 2018 examinations exams start
	Monday 18 th June – Wednesday 4 th July	✓ Y7, 8, 9 & 10 End of Year Assessments for all subjects (exam hall)

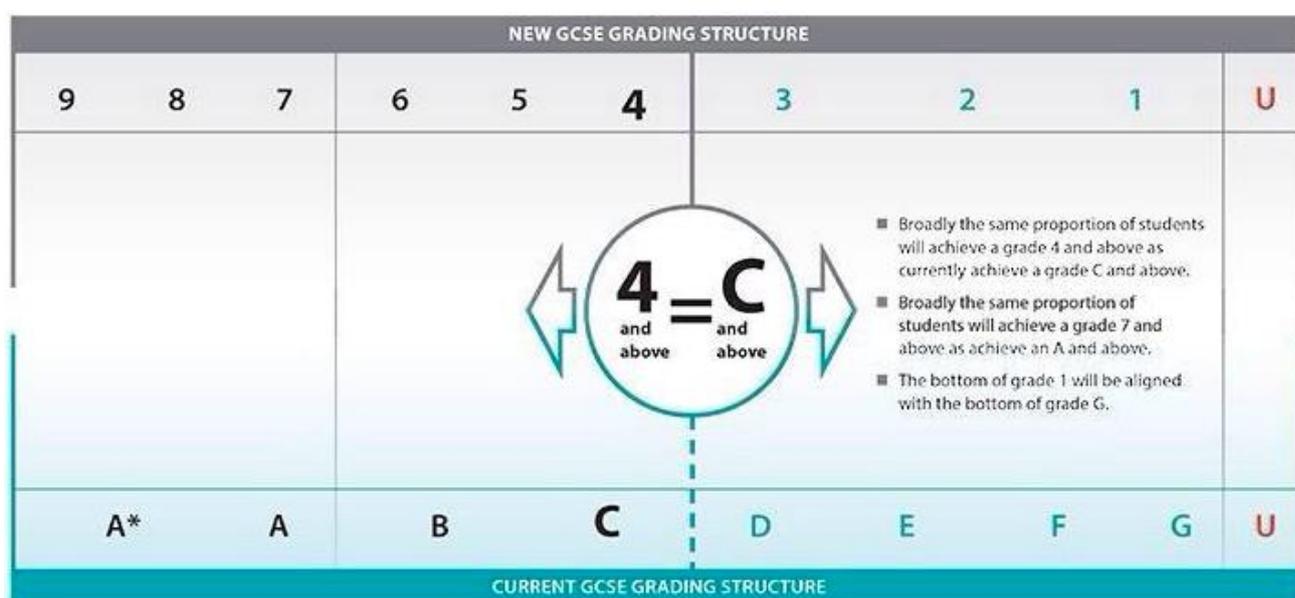
How do we grade in Key Stage 3 and 4?

Last year saw the introduction of a **new national grading system for GCSEs** from **grade 9 to 1**, which we now use to grade all students from year 7 to year 11.

What are the key features of the new national grading system?

- The new national grading system is from 9 (the highest grade) to 1 (the lowest grade)
- A **strong** pass in a GCSE subject is grade 5 - roughly equivalent to the old C1 / B grade
- A pass is grade 4 - roughly equivalent to the old C2 or C3 grade

The Ofqual diagram below demonstrates the equivalencies with the old A* - G system:



How are students graded in Key Stage 3?

Students will be awarded an **age related grade** during Key Stage 3. This means their grade sums up their attainment in year 7, 8 or 9 material and compares their performance to that of a **typical student** in that year. Their grade also indicates the grade **they have the potential to achieve** in Key Stage 4, based on the progress they are making in secondary school.

How are students graded in Key Stage 4?

Students will be awarded an **age related grade** in year 10, to sum up their attainment in year 10 material and compares their performance to that of a typical student.

In year 11, they will be at the point where they are practicing actual GCSE exams, and their grade gives a very realistic indication of how they are progressing through GCSE content. In year 11, teachers also make clear predictions about how students will do in their GCSE considering their work ethic and current performance. Current attainment and predictions are shared with parents termly.

What are the benchmarks that determine expected progress and attainment?

Students' Key Stage 2 (Primary) results are converted into a **baseline grade** from 9 to 1 using approximate nationally projected attainment from levels in Key Stage 2 to GCSE grades. This baseline grade indicates the minimum grade each student is expected to achieve in every assessment. **Achieving their baseline grade** throughout the year or indeed the key stage, **indicates they are making good progress.**

Students are also set a **stretch target** over their five years I secondary school – to surpass their baseline. Achieving a grade above their baseline indicates a student is making **above national average progress.**

We encourage every student to for a grade 5 or higher in every subject in their GCSEs. As a result, some students who attained a low score in Primary school will be set regular stretch targets to push them towards this goal.

Controlled assessments – Key Stage 4 GCSE only

Controlled assessment was introduced by the government as part of nearly all GCSEs but has been reduced to a key number of practical subjects for the year ahead.

Controlled assessment tasks are set by each individual exam board and are reviewed and changed on a regular basis. High, medium or low levels of control are set for each of the controlled assessment stages – task setting, task taking and task marking. For each stage, the level of control should ensure reliability and authenticity, and make assessments more manageable for students. Due to the varying level of control, the length of time spent in class and indeed whether controlled assessments happen in classrooms or not, varies from subject to subject.

Next year, students will complete controlled assessments in year 10 & 11

- *Art*
- *Performing Arts*
- *Drama*
- *Physical Education*
- *Food Preparation & nutrition*
- *Graphic Design*
- *Resistant Materials*
- *Textiles*
- *Media Studies*
- *Business*

How do we report to parents?

It is our duty to regularly update you on how your children are performing in their different subjects. Three times a year the academy will report to parents on their child's assessment results. These reports are designed to be as simple and clear as possible.

Each report includes:

- **Baseline grade** for the key stage
- Current / most recent assessment grade ("**Working at**")
- The **target** for each subject (see below for more detail on how targets are set)
- Each student's attendance data
- Each student's reading age
- Each student's current positive and negative **behaviour** events summary