



# Audenshaw School

## Changes to GCSE Grading

**November 2016 Update**

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# Changes to assessment in years 10 and 11

As you are probably aware, the government has recently announced radical changes to the structure and assessment of GCSEs. Due to this, we are moving away from the familiar system of A\*-G grades to a new system of grading with numbers from 1-9. The government is also raising the expectation of the standard of GCSE that will be considered as a 'good pass', this will now be a grade 5 instead of a C.

These changes will have implications for target setting in schools. Our students have been informed of the changes through assemblies and this message will be reinforced in both lessons and form time. Consequently, the school is well advanced in it's preparations for the new GCSE grading system and has already began rolling out the new student targets. This booklet is intended to explain what the new grades mean so that you can better understand the changes we've made to your son's target grades on their progress reports.



## Which subjects are affected?

Due to the number of different GCSEs that are being updated, not all subjects will be moving to the new 1-9 system at the same time. It is quite possible that your son will have a mix of letter and number grades when they receive their assessments this year.

This is the same nationally and your son will not be disadvantaged by this in any way.

Year Group	GCSEs to be graded 1-9
Current Year 11	Maths, English Language, English Literature
Current Year 10	As year 11 plus:  Art & Design, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, ICT Science core and additional, Geography, History, French, Spanish, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Religious Studies, Photography.  (We also have subjects graded, Pass, Merit, Distinction & Distinction star in V-Cert Engineering, V-Cert Catering and The Certificate in Personal finance)
Current Year 9 and below	As year 10 plus:  Business Studies and Design & Technology



**Exams in reformed English language, English literature and maths GCSEs will be taken for the first time in 2017. These will be graded from 9 to 1, instead of A\* to G.**



Statistical predictions will be used in 2017 to ensure there is alignment between the new and current grading structures, such that:

- 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 a grade A and above
- broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 1 and above as currently achieve a grade G and above

All other grade boundaries will be set arithmetically, as now. For example, the boundaries at grades 5 and 6 will be set based on the difference in marks between grades 4 and 7; grade 5 will be set at one third of the difference in marks, and grade 6 at two thirds the difference in marks.

The government's definition of a 'good pass' will be set at grade 5 for reformed GCSEs. A grade 4 will continue to be a level 2 achievement. The Department for Education does not expect employers, colleges or universities to raise the bar to a grade 5 if a grade 4 would meet their requirements.

The new grading structure will be applied to other GCSE subjects in 2018 and 2019.

# What do the new numbers mean?

Because the content in the new GCSEs is so different, there is no simple and direct way to convert between the old GCSE A\*-G grades and the new number grades.

However, to ensure that the new system is fair to those students taking the new exams, the government has fixed the percentages of students gaining particular grades against the old system.

So, for example, the same proportion of students who gained an 'A' and above in the old GCSEs, will now gain a grade 7 and above in the new GCSEs. However, this does not mean that a grade 7 is equal to an A grade as the content is so different.

I have included two explanation sheets from OFQUAL on which provides further information concerning the proportions of students that receive each grade compared with the old system



# Grading new GCSEs from 2017

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

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

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

# Challenge & Support

For some of our younger students, being assessed on a 1-9 scale does create an element of challenge. The new criteria sets a high standard, and a minority of students in year 7 may not be working at a GCSE grade 1. To support these students, we have added a 'working towards' grade to the scale (W). In this way, we can still accurately measure progress for each individual child.

You will find our flightpath model on the next page for reference, but your son's progress is not going to be in a straight line and so we use the flightpath as a guide when identifying students that may need additional support.



# 1-9 FLIGHTPATH

