



Changes to Education: New KS3 Assessment Measures

Information for Parents

Introduction

Over the last 2 years the Government have introduced the most significant and wide scale changes to curriculum and assessment across schools in England and Wales that we have experienced in recent history. This includes changes to key stage 2 assessment, complete curriculum reform at A Level and a move to a 9 to 1 and 'Progress 8' grading system at GCSE (see our [Information for Parents: Progress 8](#) guide under KS4 Assessment).

At key stage 3 (years 7, 8 and 9) the changes have been no less substantial. Since 1988 all students have been assessed against the skills set down within the National Curriculum framework, with students being assigned a teacher-assessed National Curriculum Level which many parents will recognise as a "4a", "4b" or "4c" (for example) in each of their subjects. From September 2016 the Government withdrew National Curriculum levels at key stage 3 and gave autonomy to schools to establish their own systems for assessing the progress students make.

What does this mean for students at Penistone Grammar School?

From September 2016 all students across every year group will follow a GCSE Flightpath which will take them from year 7, right through to year 11.

We believe this will:

- Provide a simple, easy to understand system for students and parents that remains constant throughout the duration of a student's secondary education.
- Give a clear indication of the progress being made towards developing the required key skills and knowledge which are essential for success at key stage 4.
- Reinforce the high expectations we hold for all our students.
- Place the emphasis on excellent effort as being the key to success.
- Provide consistent principles for assessment across all subjects.
- Provide a mechanism for rewarding progress relative to starting point and not just attainment.

What does this look like?

When students join us in year 7 they will be placed on a flightpath determined (in most cases) by the scores they achieve in their end of year 6 assessments as detailed below:

English Flightpath

Mathematics Flightpath

Most other subjects (inc Science)

Art, Drama, Music & PE

Key Stage 2 English score

Key Stage 2 Maths score

Average of KS2 English and Maths scores

Baseline score assessed in half-term 1 of Y7

The flightpath will provide an indicator of what the journey between years 7 and 11 may look like if the student is on track to achieve the minimum expectation of **good progress** (see green line in the example flightpath below).

We have introduced additional terminology to ensure students and parents can see the progress being made within grades as well as between grades:

- Developing (D)** Indicates that the student is just within the grade
- Secure (S)** Points towards the student being securely within the grade
- Mastered (M)** Demonstrates that the student is at the top of the grade

Example Flightpath:



In real terms students very rarely stay strictly on this progress flightpath and are likely to deviate (as per the purple dotted line in the example above). It is essential therefore to focus on the **effort** students apply in each of their subjects; only by securing **excellent (5)** or **good (4)** levels of effort will students give themselves the best possible opportunity for success in their learning.

When reviewing progress against the flightpath it is essential that it is used as an indicator for good progress only. As with everything we do at Penistone, our students will be encouraged to **aim high** and to fulfil their potential (which is often above the flightpath indicators and beyond what they believe possible).

How do the new 9 to 1 grades compare to the legacy A* to G grades?

Although there is no direct comparison between the new and legacy grading structures, as a school, we believe it is beneficial to draw broad comparisons as indicated below:

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

It is important to note that a **Good Pass** (previously a C grade) has been defined as a Grade 5 under the new grading system.

Where can I get more information?

Further information about the changes to assessment is available from:

- Our website: <http://www.penistone-gs.uk/Pages/Changes-to-Assessment.aspx>.
- By contacting Mr P Crook (Associate Principal) via email at enquiries@penistone-gs.uk.
- By talking to your son and/or daughter about the presentations and information shared in assemblies
- Further details about our expectations for effort are detailed within your child's planner.