



Curriculum and examination changes

Exams and the curriculum are changing. From September **2015** we will be teaching the new GCSE English language, English literature and mathematics courses. From 2016, all other GCSEs will be updated and taught.

Pupils in our current Y9 – those sitting GCSE exams in 2017, will have no Controlled Assessment in English for example and all examinations will be terminal exams i.e. sat at the end of a two year course – not modular chunks as they go along. Progress will be measured under new GCSE scores of 1 to 9 and overall progress measured under the new Attainment 8 system.

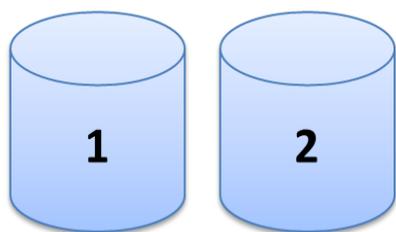


Progress 8 is a measure of the relative distance travelled from entering Y7 with a KS2 test score – to leaving Y11 with an average score taken across the 8 main subjects – measured against all other pupils. Therefore a pupil's progress is measured based on his or her individual journey through school and against his/her own starting point. A less able pupil on entry to Y7 can achieve a high progress 8 score if at the end of Y11 he/she has performed better in all subject by half a grade, compared to others who were at the same starting point in Y7.

The government wishes pupils to take high value qualifications as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, with a particular emphasis on securing an academic core.

The curriculum choices will be grouped into three 'baskets'. The first being English and maths qualifications; the second – Ebacc subjects including French and humanities; the final being made up of all other GCSE and vocational qualifications that still count in the performance measures. Please see diagram below.

Progress 8 measure

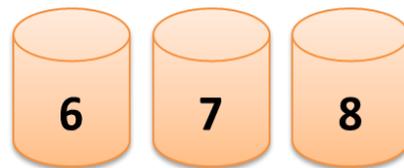


1
English
Double-weighted*

2
Maths
Double-weighted



3 4 5
EBacc qualifications
(sciences, computer science, geography,
history and languages)



6 7 8
'Open group'
**Remaining EBacc qualifications and
other approved qualifications**
(GCSEs and other approved academic, arts or vocational
qualifications)

**Higher score of English Language or English Literature
double-weighted if a student has taken both qualifications*

| Basket | Slot | Subject | Detail | Weighting |
|--------|------|---------|---|-----------|
| 1 | 1 | English | Compulsory | X 2 |
| | 2 | Maths | | |
| 2 | 3 | EBacc 1 | EBacc subjects | X 1 |
| | 4 | EBacc 2 | | |
| | 5 | EBacc 3 | | |
| 3 | 6 | Other 1 | Approved vocational, further EBacc subjects, other GCSE subjects | X 1 |
| | 7 | Other 2 | | |
| | 8 | Other 3 | | |



GCSE grade changes

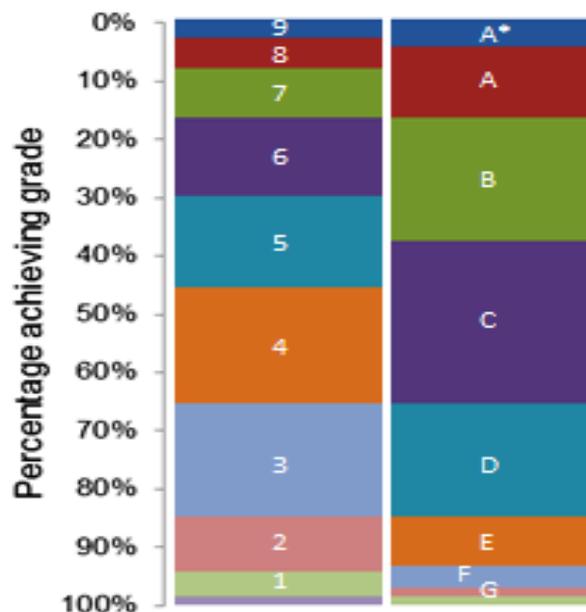
Grades as we know them are changing. With the new progress and attainment 8 changes, we are also moving away from the eight GCSE grades ranging from A*-G to a nine point scale – 1 being the lowest and 9 being the highest.

The diagram below shows the link to the present system. A C grade will be equivalent to a new score of 4 or 5 and a B grade will be somewhere from a top 5 to a 6. The key for this new change is that even though a 4 on the new system is at the same level as a previous C – it is now classed as a weaker C and employers and colleges will be asking for a score of 5 as a minimum in English and maths to class as a 'good' pass. This is raising the standards at GCSE levels and making exams more rigorous.



The diagram below shows as an example what the new grades will look like in English and what percentage of students will be expected to achieve at those levels.

ENGLISH



The new score of 9 will be the very top A* grade and less than 5% of students are anticipated to achieve this. Around 65% of students are expected to reach the new grade 4 (equivalent of the current A*-C), but notice that only around 45% of pupils are expected to be within the scores of 9 to 5 – making good passes at GCSE level.

Our methods of assessment will be changing at De Lacy to account for these new changes. A separate statement from the SPTA can be found on the academy website showing our intentions to move forwards as a trust – working to a common assessment policy.

C Pritchard

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