



ASSESSMENT  
GUIDE FOR  
PARENTS

# INTRODUCTION

This document has been devised to help you to understand assessment practices used at Lutterworth High School (LHS) and how to support your child's learning and progress. We hope that you find it useful.

## ASSESSMENT CHANGES

There has been a rapid change to the Curriculum and Assessment structure in both Primary and Secondary schools over recent years. In 2013, The Education Secretary announced proposals for a significant reform of all GCSE qualifications. Soon after this announcement, the Government published curriculum content for the new GCSE's in English, English Literature and Mathematics. These new qualifications were taught in schools in England for the first time from Sept 2015. During 2014 and 2015, the government published details of the new curriculum content for most of the other GCSE subjects. These new GCSE qualifications are now being taught across England. So that the results from the "new" reformed GCSE's can be differentiated from the "old" style GCSE's, the old grading system (A\* to G) has been replaced with a number scale (from 9 to 1).

In addition to this and as part of the reforms to the National Curriculum, in September 2014 the government also abolished the use of National Curriculum levels. Schools now develop their own independent assessment frameworks in order to demonstrate and monitor student progress as they move through the key stages.

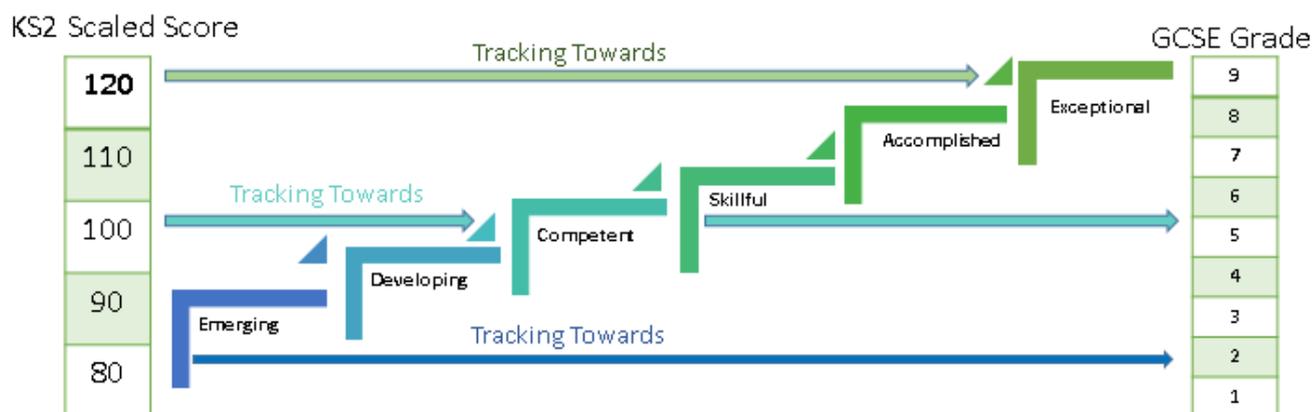
## WHAT THESE CHANGES MEAN FOR STUDENTS AT LUTTERWORTH HIGH SCHOOL

We have introduced a new assessment system throughout the school. We hope that this new system will provide students and parents with a much clearer overview of progress in each subject as students move through KS3 into KS4. We set individual targets for students that are based on their prior attainment at primary school. These targets are challenging and aspirational but set achievable expectations that should motivate and inspire students to make strong and sustained progress.

Our 'tracking towards' approach, gives students, teachers and parents a direct comparison to show if, based on their current effort and attainment, students are 'on track' to achieve their target grade. If they are 'tracking towards' their target grade, we would consider them to be 'on track' to fulfil their potential.

Diagram 1 shows how the 'tracking towards' model works. A student that has reached the age expected standard at primary school will have a 'scaled score of 100. Those students who achieved a score higher than 100 have exceeded this expectation, and those with a score below will be offered extra support in the transition to secondary school to accelerate their progress in Maths and/ or English.

Diagram 1



Making progress at Lutterworth High School

A student starting LHS with a scaled score of 100, would be expected to achieve at least a 'competent' understanding of the learning objectives in year 7, and 8. As they progress through their studies, the learning objectives get progressively more challenging so it should be expected that they maintain, or improve this assessment. The 'tracking towards' grade for this student should be expected to be around a grade 5 depending upon the students aptitude for that particular subject.

## STUDENTS IN YEARS 7, 8 AND 9

The removal of national curriculum levels, and the streamlining of the content in the KS3 curriculum has enabled us to take an exciting new approach to our assessment. We focus on the individual progress of a student against a set of key learning objectives. Once mastered, these learning objectives will provide the student with a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and understanding before beginning their GCSE study. Assessment of a student's performance against these learning objectives is done using a scaled bank of statements. Teachers record this information and reports are created that provide a detailed assessment of the students' performance against each of the learning objectives. This clearly shows the elements that students have understood or achieved well in, and those where a targeted improvement could be made.

Once a term we calculate an average performance across all the learning objectives covered. This enables us to calculate a 'tracking towards' grade based on the 1 to 9 GCSE scale. This snapshot is used as an indicator to track if, overall, the student is making good progress in each of their subjects. This information is shared with parents in the form of a termly report.

Once a year, the publication of the report is followed by a parents evening where appointments can be made with all subject teachers to discuss the detail of where a student is performing well, and where they could make improvements.

# STUDENTS IN YEAR 10 AND 11

Students in year 10 and 11 are following the new style GCSE qualifications. This will mean that when they leave Lutterworth High School, all their qualifications will be graded on the new 9 to 1 scale. We offer a limited number of BTEC qualifications that are graded from Pass to Distinction. Individual subject target grades are reviewed in year 10, using information from their performance in KS3 and knowledge of the whole child to ensure that their targets remain challenging, but achievable. Each term, students will be assessed against the GCSE criteria for each of their subjects and teachers will report a grade that reflects their current performance in formative assessments. The grade they are 'tracking towards' at the end of their GCSE study will also be reported. If this 'tracking towards' grade is in line with their target grade, we would consider them to be 'on track' to fulfil their potential.

Year 10 students will sit a series of formal internal exams towards the end of the summer term. This will be their first experience of full examination style assessment and the outcomes will be reported to parents and used to inform year 11 study.

In year 11, students sit Pre Public Exams (PPE's) in November and again in March. Teachers will use this to report a predicted grade that represents the most likely attainment at the end of their GCSE study. If this predicted grade is in line with their target grade, we would consider them to be 'on track' to fulfil their potential.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHY IS ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT?

Assessment plays a fundamental role in learning: it helps students and teachers to identify what has been learnt, the skills that have been mastered and what needs to improve further. Most importantly, it guides and supports students with the next steps in their learning. High-quality, timely assessment can have a very positive impact on students' learning and progress.

## WHAT KINDS OF ASSESSMENT ARE THERE?

Two main forms of assessment are used to monitor the progress of students at LHS. These are called summative and formative assessment:-

Summative assessment provides a judgement about how students have achieved in a particular test or assignment. Assessment outcomes are awarded a grade and usually take place at the end of a unit of study. At LHS we ensure the quality of our judgements by comparing and standardising the assessments of individual teachers with other teachers in our school, and whenever possible, other schools and colleges nationally. During year 10 and 11, staff make extensive use of summative assessment materials from the exam boards that ensures the judgements made at LHS, are in line with the national standards.

Formative assessment involves teachers using a variety of methods to diagnose specific areas to improve, and support students in doing so. Formative dialogue is comment-based and occurs throughout the learning cycle. The style and type of feedback used will depend on its purpose and the nature of the subject. In practical subjects, the majority of the feedback might be verbal, with teachers providing students with instant, live feedback through coaching and conversation. In other more essay-based subjects, feedback will take the form of regular written comments. Peer and self-assessment will also be used to help students become familiar with success criteria and be able to evaluate and recognise accurate and effective learning outcomes.

## HOW IS ASSESSMENT INFORMATION RECORDED, AND HOW DO STUDENTS KNOW HOW TO IMPROVE?

It is vital, that after an assessment has taken place, feedback is given to the student that enables them to improve. At Lutterworth High School, we use a system called FAR, Feedback, Action, Response to give incisive information to the student that will enable them to improve their work.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHAT IS F.A.R FEEDBACK?

We believe that reflection is at the heart of all effective teaching and learning. Teaching must be sufficiently flexible, rigorous and personalised to facilitate the strengths and needs of individual students. Opportunities for reflection must be explicitly provided for students to enable them to understand what is required to make progress. To this end we use a system of F.A.R. Feedback (Feedback –written and/or oral commentary on the work produced – Action: students are provided with specific actions or ‘next steps’ which, if completed, will ensure improvement leading to further success; Response\_ students are expected to revisit the work to incorporate the specific action or ‘next steps’ suggested as their individual action point). This is completed during dedicated ‘reflection ‘ time built into schemes of work which enables students to complete revisions in the classroom during which time one-to-one discussions with their teacher will deepen their understanding of how to improve and make progress.

## HOW AND WHEN WILL MY CHILD BE ASSESSED?

Each department has their own key assessed pieces of work in their schemes of learning for each year group. Key summative outcomes are marked with a grade and are used to inform the assessment reports that are published termly to parents. There will be at least one key assessment per half term for all subjects. Alongside these assessed pieces of work, teachers will carry out ongoing assessments as appropriate to the subject and give students regular formative FAR feedback to help them to improve.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD HASN'T ACHIEVED THE EXPECTED STANDARD AT PRIMARY SCHOOL (A SCALED SCORE OF BELOW 100)?

If your son or daughter transfers to secondary school with a scaled score below 100, they will be offered additional catch up lessons in Maths or English as appropriate. Very early in year 7 we will make an assessment that will enable us to target specific interventions matched to your child's specific needs. We will measure the impact of these interventions and students will continue to be tracked and supported through their journey to GCSE.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS 'ON TRACK'?

We consider your child to be ‘on track’ if they are ‘tracking towards’ their target grade.

If the tracking towards grade is one grade below the target grade we would not identify this as an immediate cause for concern because our targets are designed to be challenging and aspirational. We would monitor these students and continue to push and support them to aspire to achieve their target.

If the tracking towards grade in one or two subjects is more than two grades below the target grade we would be concerned that an improvement would need to be made. Teachers would consider suitable interventions and additional support would be offered within that subject.

If a student is underperforming across all their subjects then concerns would be raised by the progress leader. An investigation into factors that are affecting the lack of progress would be carried out and a coordinated approach to interventions would be implemented. If appropriate, a review of their target grades may be considered.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE PROGRESS MY CHILD IS MAKING?

The grades on your child's report should be considered in conjunction with a wide range of other information as they provide a very simplified snapshot of their achievements, much like the headline in a newspaper. If you are concerned about the grade your son or daughter is 'tracking towards', talk to them and seek to understand if they have just covered a tricky topic, or if there are any other factors that might have led to the lack of recent progress. It is also useful to have a look in their books. Has the quality of work deteriorated? Is your son or daughter acting on the feedback given to improve their work and is homework being completed?

In addition, it is important to remember the progress a student makes is never linear. That is, their progress speeds up and slows down depending upon a huge range of other external factors. It is right to be concerned if, over a sustained period of time a student's grades drop, if they remain a long way from their target or if they have a significant period of absence that means learning would have been disrupted. If this occurs, it would be picked up in the monitoring carried out by the progress leader for your son/ daughter's year group. The school might contact you to discuss why the progress of your son or daughter might have stalled and seek to understand any other factors that might be inhibiting their progress. You can also contact your son or daughter's tutor or progress leader to discuss your concerns. You can be assured that the school will be as concerned to get your son or daughter back 'on track' as you are.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD IF THEY ARE NOT 'TRACKING TOWARDS' THEIR TARGET GRADES?

If you identify a subject that your son or daughter is not tracking towards or predicted to achieve their target grade in then understanding what they need to do to improve will be very important in supporting their progress. Parents evening appointments are an excellent opportunity to ask these questions and develop your understanding of what needs to be done to support your son or daughter. Providing structured time at home away from distractions and space to study quietly make a real difference to a student's progress. Access to text books, internet based study support resources such as GCSE POD or BBC learning can also make a huge difference.

Research also shows that students who have a healthy balanced diet, get enough sleep and whom exercise regularly are more resilient and achieve better at school. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/nbu.12254/full>)

## HOW WILL MY CHILD BE GRADED?

In Year 9, 10 and 11, students will be graded on the 1-9 scale.

In Year 7 and 8 students are graded using the descriptors on their understanding of the learning objectives. (Emerging to Exceptional).

