



# WCAT

Understanding my grades

Key Stage 4

[www.wcatrust.org](http://www.wcatrust.org)

### Why has my report changed?

Recent times have represented some major reforms in education policy and to the testing and subsequent qualifications that students can achieve. These changes include, amongst others, re-written, more rigorous GCSE and other qualifications, an incremental move away from letter grades from A\*-G to numeric grades from 9-1, a removal of national curriculum level statements at key stages 1-3 and the introduction of new testing and scoring at the end of primary education. The academies within Wakefield City Academies Trust felt this was a good opportunity to revisit how we assess and report on the progress of our students to ensure that we can aspire for highly competitive outcomes. Staff within the academy and across the trust have worked together to review our approaches and put in place systems that we believe keep us ahead of other institutions and give our students the best chances to fulfil their potential.

*In Summary:*

-New GCSE grades and course.

-Removal of NC levels.

### Why are some grades numbers and other grades letters?

The timetable for change has meant that some GCSE courses were reformed earlier than others. Reformed GCSEs will obtain grades from 9-1 (with 9 being the highest), these will include English language and literature as well as Mathematics for 2017. The following year the majority of GCSEs will have been reformed. Unreformed GCSEs continue on an A\*-G grading scale. A good pass, as described as the standard requested for many college courses remains at a C for unreformed GCSE courses, a pass or higher for other level 2 courses and will be a grade 5 for reformed GCSEs. The equivalent standard for a grade C on the new reformed GCSE is a 4. The result of this is that it is harder for students to obtain a good pass on the new courses. The approximate standard for a grade 5 would have been a very strong grade C or grade B.

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

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

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

We feel it is important to report the grade in the form that the qualification will be accredited therefore currently grades will take the form of a mixture of 9-1, A\*-G, Level2 Pass/Merit/Distinction and/or Level 1 Pass/Merit/Distinction. The grade shown on the report will represent the grade that the academy currently feels is **the most likely outcome for the end of the course**.

*In Summary:*

*-2017 Maths, English language and English Literature graded 1-9*

*-2018 Most GCSE courses graded 1-9*

*-A 'good pass' will change from a C to 5 (which is a higher standard)*

*-The reported grade represents the most likely course outcome at this point in time.*

### **How are my targets set?**

As part of the review of the process we also felt it important to review the systems by which we attribute targets for students. All targets now consider the prior attainment of the individual student and cannot fall below the average national performance compared to similar starting points. We use information collated and shared by the Fisher Family Trust to inform the potential outcomes for each student should they follow a specific course. This is done by looking at the historic performance of student with similar scores and making benchmark grade predictions based on the most common outcomes in successful schools. We use this information along with our own assessment information and professional knowledge to ensure that targets are aspirational yet realistic.

This does not mean that a student cannot surpass their target benchmark grade. The grade is based on the most likely outcome should they perform well but is not a limit to what they can achieve. All benchmarks carry additional information such as the likelihood of exceeding the grade. We would urge all students to set personal targets of looking where they feel they can surpass the target grade and prove that they are performing far better than most other similar students perform nationally.

*In Summary:*

*-All targets consider prior attainment, are set using standard methodology across all WCAT secondary academies and are to ensure outcomes are aspirational.*

*-Students can go beyond targets and this should be recognised and celebrated.*

### **How are the behaviour, effort and homework grades set?**

For simplicity of understanding we will bring the grading of other attributes aside from attainment in line with the new numeric grading system (9-1). A grade will be given for the behaviour (how well they adhere to academy behaviour policies and the standards expected), effort, and homework (all work conducted outside of the allocated curriculum time). There is a strong correlation between these three factors and the likelihood of a student to achieve successful outcomes. The grade will be a number between 9 and 1 (with 9 being the best) and will be decided by the class teacher at each reporting period. The grades are checked and verified by the member of staff in charge of leading the specific curriculum area. The key to the grades will be visible on the report and range from 9 (excellent) to 1 (unacceptable), grade 5 is considered average. Additional information regarding the guidance of how a teacher arrives at a judgement for these is available from the academy.

*In Summary:*

*-Behaviour, effort and homework are reported on 9-1 grades with 9 being the highest, 5 average and 1 the lowest.*