



Understanding the grading structures at Key Stage 4

GCSE Grading Structure

In 2017 the traditional GCSE A*-G grading structure was replaced by a new nine-point (9-1) grading system for English and Mathematics. This grading structure is now applied to all subjects studied by our current students. This change affected all secondary schools nationally from 2018.

GCSE grades explained:

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| Grade 9 | the highest grade to be achieved; about half of number of pupils who previously would have achieved A*s |
| Grade 8 | the rest of those pupils who previously would have achieved A* but did not qualify for a 9 |
| Grade 7 | equivalent to an A grade |
| Grade 6 | equivalent to a top of a B grade |
| Grade 5 | international benchmark, showing performance equalling that of pupils getting top-grade passes in high performing countries in international league tables. Equivalent to the top of a C grade to a low B grade (Strong Pass) |
| Grade 4 | equivalent to the bottom of a C grade (Standard Pass) |
| Grade 3 | equivalent to a D grade |
| Grade 2 | equivalent to an E grade |
| Grade 1 | equivalent to grade F/G grade |

BTEC Grading Structure

We offer a selection of BTEC courses as well as traditional GCSEs. BTECs are work related qualifications providing a more practical, real-world approach to learning alongside a key theoretical background. Pupils' complete units of work which are internally assessed and verified. The courses also complete an external exam component. How the various components of the course are weighted is dependent on the course. Teachers will be able to provide more information as well as some further clarification being available on the Option Choices link. Students are graded with a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

The BTEC grades explained:

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|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| D2* | Distinction Star Level 2 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 8.5 |
| D2 | Distinction Level 2 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 7 |
| M2 | Merit Level 2 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 5.5 |
| P2 | Pass Level 2 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 4 |
| D1 | Distinction Level 1 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 3 |
| M1 | Merit Level 1 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 2 |
| P1 | Pass Level 1 | equivalent to a GCSE grade 1.75 |