

What do all the numbers mean?



A quick reference guide to the new GCSE grades for Stratford upon Avon School Students, Parents & Carers...

Numbers not grades



- Up until now GCSEs have always had grades represented by letters
- New GCSEs are being phased in nationally over the next three years; these use numbers instead of letters
- The first year group to see numbered grades will be the 2016/17 Year 11 for their Maths and English GCSEs
- The 2016/17 Year 10 will do a majority of numbered GCSEs, but some of the lettered grades will remain
- The first year group that will receive numbered grades for all their GCSEs is the 2016/17 Year 9.

How do the new and old GCSE grades compare?



- There are more grades in the numbered system so there is no direct conversion, and the Government have not defined a clear conversion
- The table on the right indicates a rough comparison between the new and old grades.

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

What do the teacher target grades mean?



- Teacher target grades visible on MCAS are set at a level that represents progress at or above the national average rate for secondary schools
 - When students meet their targets at the end of each year then they are making progress that is at least in line with national expectations based on their own prior ability
 - When students exceed their targets at the end of each year then they are making exceptional progress
 - If a student is still behind their target at the end of a school year then their progress is below national expectations, however there is usually scope to recover this in future years.

What do + and – mean?



- Progress within a year or within a headline grade can sometimes be a subtle thing
- To help make progress within a grade visible we will use “–” and “+” as fine grades to indicate how secure the students are at that grade, note though that this is done within school only and the real GCSE grades will be whole grades only
- The table below contains an explanation of what the fine grades mean.

Fine grade	Example	Description
Plus (+)	5+	Completely secure at the grade shown. At times works at the grade above.
Whole grade	5	Completely secure in the grade shown. Rarely works beyond this.
Minus (-)	5-	Insecure at the grade shown. At times works at the grade below.

How do students know if they are on track?



- Targets each year will be shared with students in class, and with parents & carers via MCAS
- Students complete a number of graded assessments during the school year
- Following all assessment students receive feedback on their grade, their strengths, and how to improve for next time
- Their average grade across these assessments will be shared with students and kept up to date on MCAS
- By comparing their current average grade with their target students, parents and carers can decide if they are on track

How often are targets reviewed?



- We review and set targets at the start of each academic year
 - This allows stability and clarity for staff and students throughout a given year
 - When a student exceeds their target in an earlier year we would aim to raise their target for the following year in order to make sure their exceptional progress continues
 - If a student has missed a target in earlier years we aim to set targets to help them catch back up to progress in line with national expectations for them.

Parent's Frequently Asked Questions:



- Which subjects retain lettered GCSE grades for students in Year 10?
 - Sociology, and the D&T based subjects
- How do I know what skills my child needs to improve on in the year?
 - Following each assessed piece of work, and PPEs the students will be given feedback by their subject teacher. This will usually be on a yellow sheet that is stuck into their exercise book, and which will identify key aspects to improve.
 - In between times we welcome contact from parents direct to tutors and subject teachers.