



**St Peter & St Paul**  
Catholic Voluntary Academy  
*Pro Petro Paulo Patria*

**Assessment Without Levels, new GCSEs  
and reformed A Levels**



## Introduction

There is much change going on in education, including a new National Curriculum, new tougher GCSEs and also new style A levels. Most of this is happening over the next few years and your son/daughter will experience all these changes.

## Key Stage 3 (Years 7 & 8)

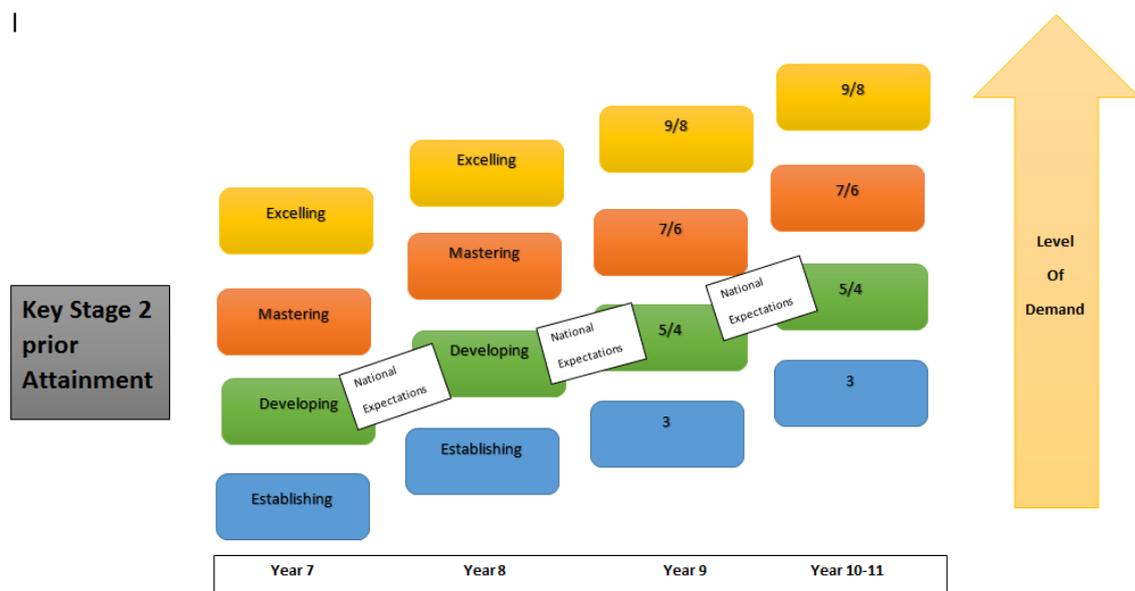
The new National Curriculum has a greater focus on knowledge development, along with the opportunity to study the 'big ideas' of a subject in greater depth. Another key change is the removal of National Curriculum Assessment Levels to measure progress at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Schools are now able to devise their own systems to measure student progress in subjects.

St Peter and St Paul Academy has developed an assessment system based around **learning outcomes**. These learning outcomes are linked directly to our Schemes of Work which have been written from the new National Curriculum and with the new reformed GCSE specifications in mind.

From September 2016, we will measure student progress against what is expected of them to know, understand and do at different ages when compared to all students nationally, (age-related expectations). If they are working well above age-related expectations, then they are working in the **Excelling** stage. If a student is working above age-related expectations then we say they are working at the **Mastering** stage. If a student is working close to the age-related expectation then they are working in the **Developing** stage. If a student is not yet working at the age-related expectation then they are working in the **Establishing** stage.

Subject Leaders have created age related learning outcome grids. These grids describe the outcomes which students would need to demonstrate on a piece of work or task to be assessed in one of the four Pathways: Establishing, Developing, Mastering, Excelling.

The learning outcome grids make assessment simpler and clearly communicate next steps for students. Students are assessed against the learning outcomes at least twice each half term. The style of assessment is varied and relevant to the individual subject.



## Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10, 11)

As you are probably aware the government has announced radical changes to the structure and assessment of GCSEs. We are moving away from the familiar system of A\*-G grades to a new system of grading with numbers from 9 - 1. In addition to the changes to the structure of GCSE that will be considered as 'good pass' from a C to a new grade 5.

Other changes include:

- a structure where all assessment happens at the end of the course and content is not divided into modules
- exams as the default method of assessment, except where they cannot provide valid assessment of the skills required

These reformed GCSEs will be more demanding and require higher levels of literacy and numeracy to access the top grades.

The curriculum at St Peter and St Paul Academy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it reflects these changes and prepares our students for the new style examinations and their future pathways.

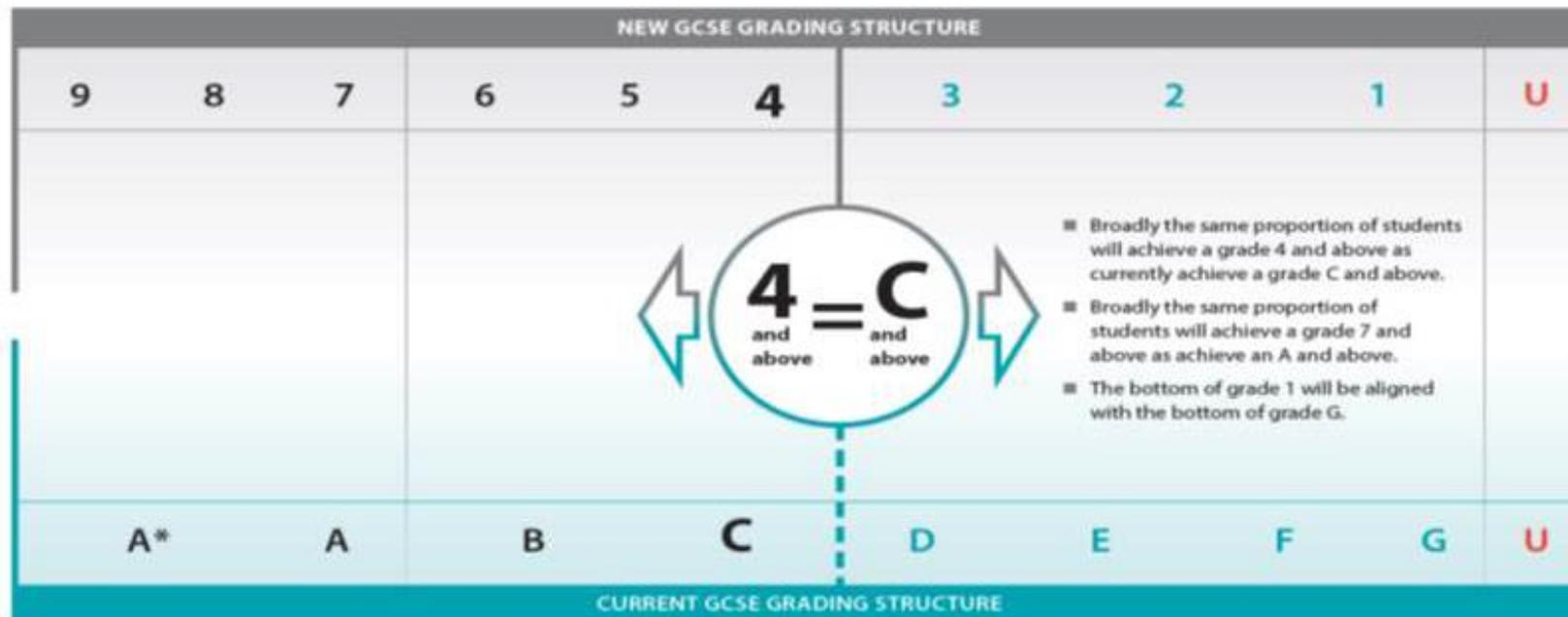
Students awarded GCSEs in 2017 and 2018 will receive a mixture of 9-1 and A\*-G grades.

	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
<b>From September 2016</b>	New GCSEs in most subjects using the 9-1 grading system.  BTEC grades unchanged Distinction* to Pass at either Level 1 or Level 2	New GCSEs in RE, English, Mathematics, sciences, History, Geography, French, Spanish, Sport, Drama, Music, Art and Food Technology using the 9-1 grading system.  Other GCSEs use A*-G and BTEC grades Distinction* to Pass at either Level 1 or Level 2	New GCSEs in English and Mathematics using the 9-1 grading system.  Other GCSEs use A*-G and BTEC grades Distinction* to Pass at either Level 1 or Level 2

Because the content in the new GCSEs is so different there is no simple and direct way to convert between the old GCSE A\*-G grades and the new number grades. However, to ensure that the new system is fair to those students taking the new exams the government has fixed the percentages of students gaining particular grades against the old system, for example, the same proportion of students that gained a 'C' and above in the old GCSEs will now gain a grade 4 and above in the new GCSEs. However, this does not mean that a grade 4 is equal to a C grade as the content is so different. (see diagram on next page)

The assessing of student progress as well as Progress Reports will incorporate the new grading system as it becomes appropriate.

# Grading the New GCSEs in 2017



## Sixth Form

The government has also been reforming A Levels, and although the grading (and therefore the way we report progress to parents) is not changing, there are new style A Level specifications and changes to the BTEC specifications and assessment structure.

	Year 12	Year 13
<b>From September 2016</b>	<p>Combination of new and old style A Levels: New A Levels in RE, biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, English Literature, history and art. These are assessed at the end of 2 years (June 2018). AS Levels are stand-alone and do not contribute to A Levels</p> <p>A Levels in Mathematics and Politics still follow AS and A2 Levels.</p> <p>New style BTEC qualifications in Applied Science</p> <p>BTEC IT is a 2 year course to complete June 2018</p>	<p>Combination of new and old style A Levels: New A Levels in biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, English Literature, history and art. These are assessed at the end of 2 years (June 2017).</p> <p>A Levels in Mathematics, Politics and RE still follow AS and A2 Levels.</p> <p>BTECs unchanged</p>
<b>From September 2017</b>	<p>All new style A Levels: RE, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, English Literature, History, Politics, Drama and Art.</p> <p>These are assessed at the end of 2 years (June 2019).</p> <p>AS Levels are stand-alone and do not contribute to A Levels</p> <p>New style BTEC qualifications</p>	<p>Combination of new and old style A Levels: New A Levels in biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, English Literature, history and art. These are assessed at the end of 2 years (June 2018).</p> <p>A Levels in Mathematics and Politics still follow AS and A2 Levels.</p> <p>New style BTEC qualifications in Applied Science</p> <p>BTEC IT is a 2 year course started Sept 2016 to complete June 2018</p>