



Testbourne Community School

Assessment and Reporting at Testbourne Community School



Information for Parents

Achievement • Excellence • Integrity

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. TCS Key Stage 3 Assessment Model.....	4
3. TCS Key Stage 4 Assessment Model.....	5
4. GCSE and Level 1/2 Vocational Award Grading.....	6
5. Rationale for TCS Assessment Model.....	8
6. TCS Reporting Model.....	9
7. Comments and Further Reading.....	12

Introduction

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are committed to ensuring that our teaching and assessment models reflect evidence-based research to enable our students to achieve their very best. Our assessment and reporting model draws on research and best practice from a range of different sources – please see page 12 for further reading if you are interested.

In summary, we have reflected upon and evaluated both our method of assessing student progress and the format and frequency with which we share this information with parents and carers. Our aim has been to ensure that parents and carers receive timely and useful information regarding their child's progress while minimising the administrative burden of data entry on our teachers so that they can focus on providing quality learning experiences for your child. In line with the recommendations of the report of the Teacher Workforce Advisory Group 'Making Data Work,' we have reflected upon the *purpose, precision, proportionality and processes* concerned when gathering and disseminating assessment and reporting data.ⁱ

Our key stage 3 model of assessment is based on students' mastery of the curriculum content according to age-related expectations (ARE). If students are working below ARE, they fall within the 'Emerging' band; if students are meeting ARE, they fall within the 'Secure' band and if students are exceeding ARE they are working within the 'Advanced' band. This is very similar to the 'working at', 'working towards' and 'working at greater depth' statements that parents and carers will already be familiar with at key stage 1 and 2.

This assessment model extends from key stage 3 to the first assessment point of key stage 4 – this is reported to parents and carers in Year 10 Progress Report 1, but the Emerging, Secure, Advanced banding will be applied to mastery of the content and skills required within each GCSE or level 1/2 vocational qualification. As students progress from year 10 into 11, we then report GCSE or Level 1/2 vocational qualification grades in each progress report. For more information, please see page 5.

Parents and carers will receive information regarding their child's progress at three key points in the year. Please see page 9 for further information.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any feedback on our assessment or reporting model – you can do this at any time during the school year by emailing admin@testbourne.school.

Yours faithfully,



Dr Richard Wilson
Assistant Headteacher

TCS Key Stage 3 Assessment Model

Student progress is assessed holistically across key stage 3, considering a range of evidence such as end of topic/term assessments, in-class tests, class work, homework and verbal contributions. Assessment is based on mastery of the national curriculum content according to age-related expectations (ARE). This is similar to the method of assessment at key stage 1 and 2.

Although predicting GCSE success based on key stage 3 assessment would be impossible as students progress at different rates, it would be reasonable to infer that a student who is consistently working within the Secure band at key stage 3 may achieve within the range of grade 4-6 at GCSE, a student consistently working within the Advanced band may achieve within the range of grade 7-9 and a student working within the Emerging band may achieve within the range of grade 1-3. However, we are very clear that this is based on a broad generalisation rather than an indicator of individual student success.

Mastery of curriculum	Assessment Band	Estimated GCSE performance
Working above age-related expectations	Advanced	Grade 7-9
Working at age-related expectations	Secure	Grade 4-6
Working towards age-related expectations	Emerging	Grade 1-3

TCS Key Stage 4 Assessment Model

Year 10

Student progress in year 10 will be assessed according to a holistic judgement of students' mastery of the curriculum against age-related expectations. The key difference between this model and that of key stage 3 is that mastery will be based on the knowledge and skills required within the GCSE or Level 1/2 vocational qualification specifications for each subject.

Predicting GCSE success at such an early stage, particularly when students have only just started their GCSE courses, would be impossible. However, it would be reasonable to infer that a student who is consistently working within the Secure band in year 10 may achieve within the range of grade 4-6 at GCSE, a student consistently working within the Advanced band may achieve within the range of grade 7-9 and a student working within the Emerging band may achieve within the range of grade 1-3. However, we are very clear that this is based on a broad generalisation rather than an indicator of individual student success.

Mastery of GCSE content and skills covered so far	Assessment Band	Estimated GCSE performance
Working above age-related expectations	Advanced	Grade 7-9
Working at age-related expectations	Secure	Grade 4-6
Working towards age-related expectations	Emerging	Grade 1-3

Year 10 into 11

Once our students have completed their Year 10 mock exams, which take place during the summer term of Year 10, our reporting of student progress transfers from mastery bands to predicted GCSE or Level 1/2 vocational qualification grades, as this will be the first point at which we will have sufficient evidence to form accurate predictions for students. We continue to report in this way across Year 11 Progress Reports 1 and 2, with predicted grades provided to Year 11 students and their parents & carers in both the Autumn and Spring terms.

GCSE and Level 1/2 Vocational Award Grading

GCSE subjects are graded using a numerical grading system, from 9-1, with 9 being the highest, and 1 being the lowest. In Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, and the Sciences, students are entered for either higher or foundation tier – Heads of Department, and their staff, will recommend the tier of entry that would be most appropriate for your child based upon the evidence collated across their studies. At higher tier, students can achieve grades 9-4; at foundation tier, students can achieve grades 5-1. In all other GCSE subjects, there is no tier of entry, so students can achieve grades 9-1.

The Department for Education considers a standard pass at GCSE as a grade 4, whilst a grade 5 is a strong pass.

Please note that GCSE Combined Science is a double award – it is worth two GCSEs and is graded on a 17-point scale, from 9-9 to 1-1. A standard pass in GCSE Combined Science is therefore considered as a grade 4-4, with a strong pass a grade 5-5.

For those unfamiliar with the current GCSE grading scale, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) has produced a comparison of the current grading scale to the old letter-based grading scale, which is shown below. The current grading scale was designed so that there are comparable points with the old grading scale at key grades. The bottom of a grade 7 is comparable to the bottom of the old grade A, the bottom of grade 4 is comparable to the bottom of the old grade C, and the bottom of grade 1 is comparable to the bottom of the old grade G.

Current grading scale	Old grading scale
9	A*
8	
7	
6	B
5	
4	
3	D
2	
1	
U	U

Figure 1 – Comparison of current GCSE grading scale to old GCSE grading scale (Ofqual).

At TCS, our Engineering or Health & Social Care subjects are Level 1/2 vocational awards, with a 'Level 2 Pass' equivalent to a GCSE-level standard pass (grade 4). These qualifications are not graded from 9-1, as per GCSEs, but instead use a system indicating whether a student has met the requirements of Level 1 or 2 in the qualification at pass, merit, distinction or distinction star level. The tables below shows the Level 1/2 vocational grades that can be awarded and the performance points awarded for each grade – for comparison purposes, each grade at GCSE is worth the same number of performance points (i.e. a grade 4 is worth 4 points, a grade 5 is worth 5 points, and so on).

Engineering at TCS is taught using the Eduqas Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Engineering (Technical Award) specification, with grades and performance points awarded as per the table below.

Level 1/2 Vocational Award (Technical Award) Grade	Points
Level 2 Distinction*	8.50
Level 2 Distinction	7.00
Level 2 Merit	5.50
Level 2 Pass	4.00
Level 1 Distinction*	3.00
Level 1 Distinction	2.00
Level 1 Merit	1.50
Level 1 Pass	1.00

Health & Social Care at TCS is taught using the Level 1/2 Cambridge Nationals specification, with grades and performance points awarded as per the table below.

Cambridge Nationals Level 1/2 Grade	Points
Level 2 Distinction*	8.50
Level 2 Distinction	7.00
Level 2 Merit	5.50
Level 2 Pass	4.00
Level 1 Distinction	3.00
Level 1 Merit	2.00
Level 1 Pass	1.25

Rationale for TCS Assessment Model

We report mastery bands relating to age-related expectations for our students across key stage three and into early key stage 4 for a several reasons:

- Student progress is not linear.ⁱⁱ Students make progress at different rates so accurately predicting end of year 11 GCSE outcomes in key stage 3 is impossible. It also has a risk of either demotivating students or inviting a false sense of security.
- Even after students have started their GCSE or Level 1/2 vocational award courses and begin to complete assessments based on past exam questions, evidence both nationallyⁱⁱⁱ and within TCS^{iv} indicates a poor correlation between predicted grades and actual overall attainment in the final qualification. Therefore, we will refrain from predicting GCSE or equivalent grades until after the year 10 mock exams, which mimic the final examination process as closely as possible.
- GCSE examinations assess students' performance on a single day. While the hope is that this corresponds with students' knowledge and understanding of the content, in reality this can be skewed by students' ability to tactically fit their answers within a prescriptive mark scheme and answer structure. This tactical answering has a place but is unhelpful when it comes to assessing students' deep understanding of content, which should be the primary aim at key stage 3. Further, current educational theory confirms that the longer students and teachers focus on mastery of content and embedding knowledge into long-term memory, the better.^v
- Focusing on attainment at key stage 3 in terms of predicted GCSE outcomes suggests that the purpose of gaining knowledge and understanding is to gain external accreditation. At TCS we are passionate in our mission to nurture a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge. Motivation to learn must be intrinsic rather than extrinsic.
- We want our assessment model to reflect the learning qualities that we hold dear, promote 'proper' learning in terms of students developing knowledge, skills and understanding for the long term, being able to apply their skills and knowledge and not simply memorising a series of unlinked facts.

TCS Reporting Model

We will be sharing information regarding your child's progress on three distinct occasions throughout the academic year. These occasions are designed to provide you with feedback about your child and their progress in each of their subjects. There is no intention that a parents' evening is used to discuss a report. Should you have any questions about a report, you should direct them to your child's subject teacher in the first instance – the easiest way to do this is to email your enquiry to admin@testbourne.school.

- 1) Parent Consultation Evening (PCE) – this is a virtual evening event which enables parents and carers to meet their child's teachers and discuss subject-specific areas of strength and development. Guidance on how to book appointments is sent in advance of booking opening.
- 2) Progress Report – Summary – this is a short report detailing attendance, assessment information (mastery band or predicted grade) and attitude to learning (ATL).
- 3) Progress Report – Comments – this is a more detailed report containing assessment information, attitude to learning (ATL) and comments relating to specific areas of strength and areas for development.

We have carefully considered the dates of each reporting point to ensure that parents and carers receive timely and useful information. Year 7 students have an additional report at the start of the year (a settling report) and Year 11 students have an additional Parent Consultation Evening, following their spring term mock exams.

The reporting calendar for 2024-25 is as follows:

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	Progress Report 1 – Settling report		Progress Report 2 – Summary: ATL & mastery band		Progress Report 3 – Comments: ATL, mastery band, comments	Parent Consultation Evening
Year 8		Progress Report 1 – Summary: ATL & mastery band	Parent Consultation Evening			Progress Report 2 – Comments: ATL, mastery band, comments
Year 9		Progress Report 1 – Summary: ATL & mastery band	Progress Report 2 – Comments: ATL, mastery band, comments	Parent Consultation Evening		
Year 10		Progress Report 1 – Summary: ATL & mastery band		Parent Consultation Evening		Progress Report 2 – Comments: ATL, grades, comments
Year 11		Progress Report 1 – Summary: ATL, mock & predicted grades Parent Consultation Evening		Progress Report 2 – Summary: ATL, mock & predicted grades Parent Consultation Evening		

In addition to Parent Consultation Evenings and Progress Reports, there are further opportunities to engage with TCS and find out more about your child's education throughout the year. Examples include:


- Information Evenings – year-group or theme-specific evenings to provide key information for parents and carers.
- Meet the Tutor Evening – an opportunity to meet your child's tutor at the start of the academic year.

- Open mornings for existing parents – existing parents can book to join us for one of open mornings to tour the school and observe the school in action.
- SLT surgeries – book an appointment with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to learn more about what the school does and discuss any topics of concern.

Sample Progress Report – Summary:

This report provides attendance, assessment information (mastery band) and attitude to learning (ATL) for each subject.


Below is a sample page from a summary report for a Year 7 student.

 Testbourne Community School		
Year 7 - Progress Report 2 - January 2024 A N Other 7~1 Attendance at School: 98.5%		
Recognition Points to 12th January 2024	37	
Subject (Teacher)	Mastery Band	Attitude to Learning
Art (Mrs Horner)	Secure	Exceptional
Computing (Mr Threlfall)	Advanced	Exceptional
Drama (Mr Carrington)	Advanced	Exceptional
English (Mr Warren)	Advanced	Exceptional
French (Miss Matthews)	Advanced	Exceptional
Geography (Mrs Knab)	Advanced	Exceptional
History (Mrs Harrison)	Secure	Exceptional
Maths (Mr Roll)	Advanced	Consistently Good
Music (Mrs Middleton)	Advanced	Exceptional
PE (Mrs Chewins)	Secure	Consistently Good
PD (Mr A. Watkins)		Exceptional
RE (Mr Juddery)	Secure	Exceptional

Sample Progress Report – Comments:

This report provides attendance, assessment information (mastery band or predicted grade), attitude to learning (ATL), and comments relating to specific areas of strength and areas for development for each subject.

Below is a sample page from a full comment report for a Year 7 student.

 Testbourne Community School				
Year 7 - Progress Report 3 - May 2024				
A N Other - 7-1				
Attendance at School: 97.3%				
Recognition Points to 17 th May 2024			71	
Subject (Teacher)	Assessment Band at Prog Rpt 2	Assessment Band at Prog Rpt 3	Attitude to Learning	Comments
Art (Mr John)	Secure	Secure	Exceptional	Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Draws with some accuracy.- Uses colour in an experimental manner.- Uses a good range of mark-making techniques. Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Draw from primary sources to improve your observational skills- Learn to press lighter with your pencil for a more confident drawing style.- Try to use more keywords in writing tasks, to develop artistic language.
Drama (Miss Parry)	Advanced	Advanced	Exceptional	Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- They are committed and focussed; often taking a lead role, suggesting creative and imaginative ideas- They can make thoughtful insights, identifying strengths and suggesting improvements- They can create a role/character that displays a range of moods and emotions Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- They should try to be more adventurous when devising; failing doesn't matter if you learn from it- They should try and watch live (or streamed) performances to expand their theatrical appreciation

Comments and further reading

If you have any questions about our assessment and reporting model, please get in touch by emailing admin@testbourne.school.

Further Reading

ⁱ The Report of the Teacher Workload Advisory Group, *Making Data Work*, November 2018, advises schools to review their administrative and data entry practices according to *purpose, precision, proportionality and processes*

ⁱⁱ See article from FFT Education Datalab, 'Why measuring pupil progress involves more than drawing a straight line', March 2015: <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2015/03/why-measuring-pupil-progress-involves-more-than-taking-a-straight-line/>

ⁱⁱⁱ See the Report of the Teacher Workload Advisory Group, *Making Data Work*, November 2018 for further explanation and evidence.

^{iv} We have analysed TCS internal data to calculate the correlation between predicted grades and final GCSE grades. As expected, it is clear that there is a stronger correlation between predictions and final grades as the students approach the final exams, whereas predictions made before year 11 are far less accurate.

^v See Daisy Christodolou's book 'Making Good Progress? The Future of Assessment for Learning' (2017) and Peps McCrea's book 'Memorable Teaching' (2017) for further discussion on assessment in the classroom.