

Year 12 & 13 – FAQs – Parent Reports 2020

Target grades

1. How have you set the target grades for my child?

At the beginning of Year 12 we create our target grades for students taking Key Stage 5 (KS5) qualifications using a national company, called FFT (with links to the Fischer Family Trust) to give us a starting point. This company analyse the exam results of pupils from the previous year's Year 13 cohort nationally and compare them with the pupils' levels of ability (in Key Stage 4 [KS4] qualifications) upon entry to sixth form, as well as looking at their gender and month of birth.

Next, we input these grades into our data analysis software - Sisra Analytics; this allows us to compare grades with approx. 250,000 other students in schools nationally and the grades that they were awarded in the most recent exam series. Using this data, we are able to check that the FFT grade originally set is suitable for each individual and also ensures that the all students are **at least** targeted to make **positive value added** in each subject. Occasionally, this has meant increasing the target grade, we want all students to have aspirational target grades for all of their subjects so that they strive for the best possible outcome they are capable of. In summary, the target grades set for your child should be considered challenging but achievable for the majority of pupils.

2. Will these target grades ever change?

Possibly, yes, although probably not by too much. Each November, FFT and Sisra update all of their information based upon the most recent cohort who have just sat the exams that summer. It will make sense, therefore, for us to review our pupils' targets in light of the new information. *(We will not be doing this for the 2021 cohort, this is because results were not validated by exam boards and were Centre Assessed Grades - we will use 2019 results data for fairness and accuracy with targets)*

3. Why do some subjects not have lettered grades?

Some pupils are studying BTEC subjects (or similar). These are usually graded as follows: Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Level 2 Pass, Level 1 Pass, U.

4. How does the assessment system work?

The system for use with Years 12 & 13 is based upon KS5 student flight paths. These flight paths have been designed by each subject and are linked directly to students Target Grade. **The flight paths indicate roughly what progress each subject expects to see over the course of the two years and when they expect to see it. Each subjects flight path is unique and links to prior attainment and course structure.**

A typical flight path could look like the one below.

Baseline	Year 12 Term 1	Year 12 Term 2	Year 12 Term 3	Year 13 Term 1	Year 13 Term 2	Year 13 Term 3	KS5 Exams
A*+	B+	B+	A	A	A*	A*+	A*
A*=	B=	B=	A	A	A	A*	A*
A*-	B-	B-	B+	B+	A	A*-	A*
A+	B-	B-	B=	B=	B+	A+	A
A=	C+	C+	B-	B-	B=	A	A
A-	C=	C=	B-	B-	B-	A-	A
B+	C=	C=	C+	C+	B-	B+	B
B=	C-	C-	C=	C=	C+	B	B
B-	D+	D+	C=	C=	C=	B-	B
C+	D	D	C-	C-	C=	C+	C
C=	D-	D-	D+	C-	C-	C	C
C-	E+	E+	D	D	D+	C-	C
D+	E+	E+	D-	D-	D	D+	D
D=	E+	E+	E+	E+	D-	D	D
D-	E=	E=	E+	E+	D-	D-	D
E+	E-	E-	E=	E=	E=	E+	E
E=	E-	E-	E=	E=	E=	E=	E
E-	E-	E-	E-	E-	E-	E-	E

The flight path 'end point' is the KS5 Target Grade, this has been designed to match the average national expected grade that has been historically achieved with students with the same KS4 Prior Attainment score. For example, if a child has a KS4 Prior Attainment score of a 4.5, our data software, **Sisra Analytics** indicates what grade nationally students with a 4.5 score achieved in each of their subjects. These are the grades that we would use as a target grade at the end of Year 13 for that student. This ensures that all students have Target Grades that, if achieved, will put them 'in line with' or 'above' the national expectation.

Students are then assessed throughout the course with a number of appropriately designed Common Assessments to enable their teachers to track their progress.

5. What is a Common Assessment (CA) and how are these used to track progress?

Throughout the year, students will complete 'common assessments' (CAs). These are internally moderated and graded using the A Level / BTEC Level 3 grading criteria on the most relevant specification. The assessments have been designed to enable students to demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge of the latest topic and to be awarded a grade in that area of work. It is important to understand this is a **reflection on smaller topics** and parts of the course and does not equate to a full A level or BTEC grade, it acts as an indicator to show where a student is 'working at' in a particular area of the subject.

The CA grades are internally stored and when a Tracking Point window opens, the most recent CA grade is used for the report. That grade is also compared against the staggered target grades on the subject's **flight path**, this will ensure that the grade is not being compared to the end of KS5 target grade. *(Using the flight path example above, if a student with a target grade of a B, had reached Year 12 Term 3 and had a CA grade of a C= then they are 'On' target to get the B at the end of the course – we would compare the CA grade with the relevant part of the flight path)* – providing everyone with a clearer picture of progress for that student at that time of the year. This will also enable teachers to highlight students that are not making the expected progress for the subject and intervene appropriately.

Attitude to Learning Expectations (A2L)

6. What are the learning expectations?

The 'Attitude to Learning' expectations are a list of 6 expectations that we believe are fair for all students to be following whilst in Thomas Adams Sixth Form. The expectations should act as a set of minimum standards that we expect all of our students to be following. If any of these are not met, the student will be reported as an NY (Not yet) by the teacher at a tracking point. The teacher will also highlight which of the expectations needing more focus. Please note that this could be more than one. This, we hope, can allow informed and purposeful discussions at home to support the students to achieve their best. This data will also enable Mrs Squire and Mr Allen to be able to focus intervention and have appropriate conversations with individuals.

Learning Expectations:

1. Engagement in class discussion/debate of course content in an attempt to understand key topics.
2. Ability to work independently to undertake wider reading and research of key topics.
3. Working collaboratively with peers on project-based work.
4. Timely submission of independent learning tasks and coursework to a good standard, showing evidence of engagement in the course.
5. Following and acting upon staff feedback in order to amend marked work, in line with exam board specifications.
6. Engagement with ongoing consolidation and revision of course content.

7. Why are the A2L scores so important at home?

A2L scores should help you to closely pinpoint where any issues may be occurring with your child whilst they are in Sixth Form. These will usually be the first columns that we look at when mentoring students before any reference is made to targets, as experience tells us that attitude to learning is key in progress and achievement in Sixth Form.

8. What do the codes mean?

There are three codes that staff will use to indicate your child's attitude to learning in their subject. Students should always be aiming to get at least an 'ME' (meeting expectations) code on their report for each subject.

As suggested above, if a child receives an 'NY', the report will also highlight which of the learning expectations the teacher thinks needs to be worked on by displaying an 'X' in the relevant column(s). This should provide parents with a substantial amount of information to have informed discussions at home.

A2L Key	EE	Exceeding Expectations	You are exceeding our learning expectations in the lessons.
	ME	Meeting Expectations	You are meeting all of our learning expectations.
	NY	Not yet Meeting Expectations	You are not yet meeting all of our learning expectations.

9. My child has got 'NY' in all of their subjects, should I be concerned?

You are right to be concerned, but remember, the 'NY' code is that it suggests that the student is 'Not Yet' meeting an expectation(s) in the classroom. What is more important is where the 'X's are for each subject. This should enable you to establish whether there are common areas of concern from each of your child's teachers and help you support your child to move forward positively. Staff have been directed to input an NY **even** if it is just one of the 6 learning expectations not yet being met. The aim of this is to ensure that students are aware of the high expectations that we have set in school and encourage them to be meeting or exceeding. (Of which many of our students already do, consistently.)

10. What are the consequences of getting an NY on the report?

The first port of call will be Mrs Squire or Mr Allen, they will have access to the reports and can discuss any NY codes proactively with your child during the day. If a student has a consistent NY for a certain learning expectation then there will be some interventions in place to support them to improve, this could range from organisational support, to behavioural conversations and encouragement to act upon feedback. The report has been designed to be as informative as possible to all those concerned. This way your child should feel supported and encouraged to move forward positively. Conversations at home around the 'Learning Expectations' would also prove really useful at this stage.

If you have any further questions regarding the KS5 reports, that I have not covered here then please do feel free to contact me directly at rsw@thomasadams.net



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