Founded in 1888

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School
A parental guide to Key Stage 3 Assessment without Levels

Key Stage 3 Assessment

The principles behind our approach are as follows:

- It is important to let students and parents/carers know the progress being made, relative to students' starting points from the end of KS2.
- There should be no limit to what students think they can achieve – their aspirations should be high.
- The progress of all students, from all starting points, should be celebrated.
- The approach will support the home-school partnership to better understand where the focus on improvement lies.

How do we assess students?

When students come to secondary school, we routinely make use of their KS2 Maths level and KS2 English (reading) level to determine their starting point from which to measure their progress. Alongside this our school looks at the results from the Cognitive Ability Tests, which highlight strengths and areas for development. Nationally, there is a strong correlation between this data and how students perform at GCSE, as shown in the table below:

Prior ability (KS2 Level)	GCSE (New)	GCSE (Legacy)
[Significantly] More than 100	9-8	A*
More than 100	7-6	A-B
At or close to 100	5-4	B-C
Less than 100	3-1	D-G

Teachers use this information in their planning, teaching and assessment. When planning their lessons, teachers think about the topic the class will be learning, by breaking it down into four thresholds:

Threshold	Description	Should achieve
Excellence	Aimed at students with KS2 scaled scores significantly more than 100	9-8 at GCSE
Secure	Aimed at students with KS2 scaled scores more than 100	7-6 at GCSE
Developing	Aimed at students with KS2 scaled scores at or close to 100	5-4 at GCSE
Foundation	Aimed at students with KS2 scaled scores less than 100	3-1 at GCSE

Teachers will use the information they have about the starting point of each student, to help each student move up through the thresholds – with the aspiration being that all students will aim towards excellence.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

When making judgments on students' progress, teachers will use a variety of pieces of work. This may take the form of a test, an assessed piece of writing or other piece of work. At each assessment point, subject teachers will determine which of the four thresholds the student is currently performing within.

Current Threshold	**Expected GCSE outcome based on current performance**
Excellence	9-8
Secure	7-6
Developing	5-4
Foundation	3-1

The current threshold in each subject is compared to the KS2 starting point to give an indication of progress.

Much to celebrate	MTC
On track	OT
Opportunity to maximise potential	MP

'Much to celebrate' or 'On track' do not necessarily mean that a student will achieve a top GCSE grade. The **Current Threshold** gives an indication of likely outcome at GCSE as described above.

Finally, teachers will make a judgement about students' Engagement and Home Learning.

Engagement

1. Outstanding - fully engaged, excellent commitment, participates and contributes in lessons, excellent effort and behaviour.
2. Positive - engaged, very good commitment and effort with very good behaviour, mostly participates and contributes in lessons.
3. Needs to improve - usually focused and committed, sometimes participates and contributes, misses some opportunities to be more fully engaged and sometimes distracted.
4. Unacceptable - variable/lacking focus and commitment, easily distracted, poor participation and contribution.

Home Learning

1. Outstanding - homework is always completed, presented on time and to a standard that represents the student's best efforts
2. Positive - homework is mostly completed, presented on time and usually to a standard that represents the student's best efforts
3. Needs to improve - homework is not consistently presented on time and of a satisfactory standard
4. Unacceptable - homework completion, presenting on time or standard is poor

Target and Current Threshold

See above for definitions of the four thresholds

Example Year 7 & 8 Report

Key Stage 2

(starting point)

Forename Surname **Form**

KS2 Maths Scaled Score 120	**KS2 GPVS Scaled Score** 119	**KS2 Reading Scaled Score** 118

	Engagement	Home Learning	Target Threshold	Current Threshold	Current Progress	Teacher
Art	2	2	Excellence	Developing	**MP**	TGL
Computing	2	2	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	KAI
Drama	2	n/a	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	JFD
English	2	2	Excellence	Excellence	**MTC**	JJN
Geography	2	2	Excellence	Excellence	**MTC**	MTG
History	1	2	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	PDN
Mathematics	1	2	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	JMN
Music	3	2	Excellence	Excellence	**MTC**	CRT
Physical Education	1	n/a	Excellence	Developing	**MP**	KKZ
Religious Studies	2	1	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	CMU
Science	2	2	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	TSA
Spanish	2	1	Secure	Developing	**MP**	JRS
Technology	2	2	Excellence	Secure	**OT**	CRY

MTC	Much to celebrate
OT	On track
MP	Opportunity to maximise potential

Progress in relation to each individual student's starting point

Engagement and Home Learning scores

	Expected GCSE outcome based on current performance
Excellence	9-8
Secure	7-6
Developing	5-4
Foundation	3-1

Example Year 9 Report

Expected GCSE outcome based on Key Stage 2 starting point

Expected GCSE outcome based on current work

Key Stage 2 (starting point)

Forename Surname

Form

KS2 Maths Scaled Score 120	**KS2 GPVS Scaled Score** 119	**KS2 Reading Scaled Score** 118

	Engagement	Home Learning	Target Threshold	Current Threshold	Current Progress	Teacher
Art	2	2	9-8	5-4	**MP**	TGL
Computing	2	2	9-8	7-6	**OT**	KAI
Drama	2	n/a	9-8	7-6	**OT**	JFD
English	2	2	9-8	9-8	**MTC**	JJN
Geography	2	2	9-8	9-8	**MTC**	MTG
History	1	2	9-8	7-6	**OT**	PDN
Mathematics	1	2	9-8	7-6	**OT**	JMN
Music	3	2	9-8	9-8	**MTC**	CRT
Physical Education	1	n/a	9-8	5-4	**MP**	KKZ
Religious Studies	2	1	9-8	7-6	**OT**	CMU
Science	2	2	9-8	7-6	**OT**	TSA
Spanish	2	1	7-6	5-4	**MP**	JRS
Technology	2	2	9-8	7-6	**OT**	CRY

MTC	Much to celebrate
OT	On track
MP	Opportunity to maximise potential

Engagement and Home Learning scores

Progress in relation to each individual student's starting point

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **My daughter achieved a scaled score above 100 in Maths at KS2 and in her first data report Maths is 'Opportunity to maximise potential'. Why is she underachieving?**
   There is a very strong link between teacher expectations of what students can achieve and then how they achieve. With this in mind, when we reviewed our KS3 curriculum, we raised the bar of expectation across the whole of KS3 as we wanted to stretch and challenge all students. This is in line with the new GCSE specifications that include the new grade 9 at the top end, more rigour and the removal of coursework in some subjects. Students with a high starting point at KS2, will then be assessed relative to this when they join us – so the criteria in the secure and excellence threshold will be deliberately challenging. As a result, you should not be alarmed that your daughter is not yet making expected progress in the first term. What is important is how she responds to the feedback given to her by her teachers and that she continues to progress.

2. **When my daughter gets her data report and there is 'Opportunity to maximise potential' in some subjects, it's not very motivational is it?**
   We want to be honest with our assessment of students. For students to move on with their learning they need to know their areas for improvement, so they can address them. It would be unfair to give students a false impression of their performance, as that would not flag up to them what they need to do to improve their progress.

3. **My daughter has 1s and 2s for Engagement and Home Learning, but still has 'Opportunity to maximise potential' in some subjects. Why is this?**
   For most students, there should be a correlation between Engagement and their progress i.e. if these are all strong (graded 1 or 2) we would expect them to be making at least expected progress. However, there may be exceptions to this. For example, a student with a high KS2 starting point in English and Maths may be making good progress in some subjects, but less than expected progress in others. This may be particularly so for practical subjects for example.

If you have any queries/questions about your daughter's progress within a subject, please do not hesitate to contact their subject teacher. If your queries are more general i.e. across a number of subjects, please contact your daughter's Head of Year.