

Understanding Progress 8 and Attainment 8

Getting to grips with the new measures

The introduction of Progress 8 and Attainment 8

Progress 8 was introduced in 2016 for all schools with the intention of ensuring students are studying a broad and balanced curriculum, inclusive of Ebacc subjects. It was introduced to help shift the focus from borderline C/D pupils and put emphasis on students' progress, to ensure that every student receives the same amount of attention from teachers and are pushed to achieve their full potential.

What is Progress 8?

Progress 8 is the new accountability measure that will determine students' progress across 8 subjects. This is a value added measure whereby students' results will be compared to students who had the same prior attainment score at KS2. The end results will be used to determine the success of secondary schools based on students' academic achievement relevant to each pupil's ability. This means that student progress will no longer be based on whether or not students are able to achieve a C grade or above, as not all students start at the same point. Instead, it will focus on the progress a child makes throughout their time in secondary school.

Progress 8 has been introduced alongside another accountability measure, Attainment 8, which will measure an individual student's progress. This is the performance score on which a school's Progress 8 score will be determined. In order to fully understand Progress 8, knowledge of Attainment 8 is necessary.

What is Attainment 8?

The Attainment 8 score is the average measure of an individual student's progress across their 8 best performing subjects which fall into three buckets; if these 8 best subjects do not fall into the three designated buckets for 'English & Maths', 'Ebacc' or 'Other' subjects, the score will not be counted.

| New Grading Structure | Old Grading Structure |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 9 | A* |
| 8 | A |
| 7 | |
| 6 | B |
| 5 | C |
| 4 | |
| 3 | D |
| 2 | E |
| 1 | F |
| | G |
| U | U |

In order to calculate Attainment 8, the traditional GCSE grades will be translated into numbers, where a grade 8 will represent the A/A* boundary, a 1 will represent a G and 4 will indicate a pass, the same as that of a C grade. A 9 has been introduced to recognise truly outstanding work, fewer of these will be awarded than A*'s historically.

As of 2019, the vast majority of students' attainment 8 points will be graded numerically with no conversions needed, unlike 2017 and 2018 results, due to most subjects having been moved over to the new grading scale. However the full reform of subjects won't be fully implemented until Summer 2020.

The three buckets in which subjects will fall are as follows:

Bucket 1: English and Maths

These slots will be filled by English and Maths. The score for Maths will be double weighted, whereas the English score will only be double weighted if both English Literature and English Language are taken. The highest scoring English mark will then take the double weighted space in Bucket 1, whilst the remaining English score can be used in the third bucket, but only if it is of a higher score than other subjects in this bucket. This is the only bucket in which scores are double weighted.

Bucket 2: Ebacc subjects

Bucket 2 will be filled by a student's three highest performing grades from the Ebacc subjects, which are as follows:

- Separate Sciences
- Core & Additional Sciences
- Computer Science
- History
- Geography
- Languages

Bucket 3: Other subjects

The final bucket will be filled by the three 'Other' subjects in which students have received their highest grades. These can include the remaining English subject (dependent on whether both English Literature and Language were taken, although the score will not be double weighted), and lower graded Ebacc subjects. Slots can also be filled by 'Other' GCSEs or approved academic, arts or vocational qualifications by the DfE. It must be noted that this bucket again takes the highest scoring grades out of all of these subjects. For example, if a student did take English Literature and Language as well as Media Studies, and their grade for Media Studies is higher than the remaining English grade, this will be counted.

It is not mandatory for students to fill all three buckets or to take 8 qualifications, however, if a slot in any bucket is not filled, students will receive a score of 0.

Attainment 8:

Everything you need to know



The Attainment 8 score is the average measure of an individual student's progress across their 8 best performing subjects taken at GCSE level. A student's Attainment 8 score is then used to help calculate a school's overall Progress 8 score.

Attainment 8 Points

As of 2019, the vast majority of GCSE subjects have been reformed into numerical grades, as per Ofqual's new grading system. This table shows how the old GSE grades compare to the new structure:

| New Grading Structure | Old Grading Structure |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 9 | A* |
| 8 | A |
| 7 | A |
| 6 | B |
| 5 | B |
| 4 | C |
| 4 | C |
| 3 | D |
| 3 | D |
| 2 | E |
| 2 | E |
| 1 | F |
| 1 | F |
| 1 | G |
| U | U |

Attainment 8 Buckets

The subjects that are used to calculate a student's Attainment 8 score must fall into the following three buckets:

Bucket 1

English and Maths

Maths & English are the only subjects where scores are doubled. Maths is always doubled, however English is only doubled if both Lit and Lang are taken.

Bucket 2

EBacc subjects

A student's three highest scoring Ebacc subjects will fill this bucket.

Bucket 3

Open group

Three highest scoring DfE approved or remaining English & Ebacc subjects.



Where will this be used?

In order to find out a student's individual Attainment 8 score, the grades from the three buckets are added together and then divided by 10 (regardless of whether or not all slots are filled with a grade) - this will then tell us the Attainment 8 score. Grades are divided by 10 to reflect the 8 subjects taken - Maths and English count as 2 slots due to their double weighting.

It is a pupil's Progress 8 score that will be published in performance tables and will replace the current system of pupils being expected to make 3 'levels' of progress from KS2 to KS3. In order to calculate a student's individual Progress 8 score, a student's estimated Attainment 8 score (the average Attainment 8 score for all pupils with the same prior Attainment score at KS2) is subtracted from a student's actual Attainment 8 score (the score achieved based on their GCSE results) and divided by 10.

In order to calculate a school's Progress 8 score, the mean average of all pupils' Progress 8 scores is calculated. Meaning that all pupils' Progress 8 scores are added together then divided by the number of pupils in the year group; this total is then rounded to 2 decimal places.

What does this mean?

The new Progress 8 score for schools will now be the only measure used for floor standards. If a school's overall Progress 8 score is below -0.5 the school will fall below the new floor standard. As a result, this will trigger a visit from Ofsted and the school will be flagged as failing, as the -0.5 indicates that the school's average attainment for pupils is half a grade lower than the national average.

Calculating a student's Attainment 8 score

Amy's GCSE results:

| Subject | Attainment 8 Score |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| English Language | 7 |
| English Literature | 7 |
| Double Science | 6 |
| Maths | 6 |
| French | 5 |
| Humanities | 7 |
| History | 7 |
| Media | 9 |
| RE | 4 |

| Bucket 1 | Score | Bucket 2 | Score | Bucket 3 | Score |
|------------------|-------|----------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| English Language | 14 | Science | 6 | Media | 9 |
| Maths | 12 | History | 7 | Humanities | 7 |
| | | French | 5 | English Literature | 7 |

Total Score: 67

Attainment 8 Score = Total score divided by 10

$67/10 = 6.7$

Calculating a student's Progress 8 score

*Please note that a **student's** Progress 8 score is calculated in order to determine a **school's** Progress 8 score.

Actual Attainment 8 score minus estimated Attainment 8 score divided by 10

Amy's Progress 8 score:

Actual Attainment 8 score = 67

Estimated Attainment 8 score = 59.95

Progress 8 score = $(67 - 59.95)/10 = 0.71$ (rounded to 2 decimal places)

Calculating a school's Progress 8 score

The mean average of all students' Progress 8 scores:

| Pupil Number | Pupil Name | Pupil Progress 8 Score |
|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Amy | +0.71 |
| 2 | Michelle | -0.32 |
| ... | ... | ... |
| 136 | Sally | +0.2 |
| | Sum: | 28.5 |

The total of all pupil's Progress 8 scores divided by number of students:

$28.5/136 = +0.21$ (to two decimal places)

Changes made to Progress 8 and Attainment 8 since implementation

Following on from the feedback received from schools regarding the overwhelmingly disproportionate effect a small number of extremely negative progress scores can have on a school's average Progress 8 score, the DfE have introduced a measure that will take these scores into consideration.

There is now a limit put in place as to how negative a pupil's progress score can be, the pupils will still have a negative Progress 8 score, but to limit the disproportionate impact this can have on a school's score a threshold has been introduced.

Progress 8:

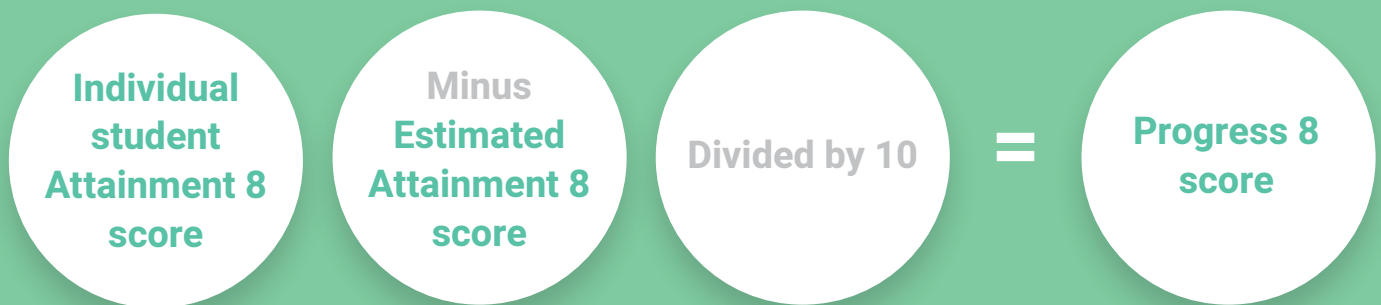
Everything you need
to know



Progress 8 is the new accountability measure that will determine students' progress across 8 subjects. The end results will be used to determine the success of secondary schools based on students' academic achievement relevant to each pupil's ability.

Calculating a Student's Score

A pupil's Progress 8 score will be published in performance tables. In order to calculate a student's Progress 8 score their estimated Attainment 8 score is subtracted from their actual Attainment 8 score and divided by 10.



Calculating a School's Score

The Progress 8 score for schools will now be the only measure used for floor standards. In order to calculate a school's Progress 8 score, the mean average of all pupils' scores is calculated.

| Pupil Number | Pupil Name | Pupil Progress 8 Score |
|--------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Amy | +0.71 |
| 2 | Bobby | -0.32 |
| 3 | Charlie | +0.22 |
| ... | ... | ... |
| 136 | Sally | +0.2 |
| | Total | 28.5 |

The total of all pupil's Progress 8 scores is divided by the number of students to calculate the school's Progress 8 score.

$$\frac{28.5 \text{ Total Pupil Score}}{136 \text{ Number of students}} = +0.21 \text{ School's Progress 8 score}$$

Pros and Cons:

Attainment 8 and Progress 8



Pros

All students are pushed to their full potential

By measuring a school's overall attainment for all pupils, focus is shifted from the number of students achieving a C grade and above. This means that all students should receive equal attention and be pushed to their full potential as opposed to the focus being on the C/D borderline students.

All subjects receive the same amount of attention

As results are no longer broken down by specific subjects and instead attainment is measured over a combination of 8, equal attention will be given to all subjects students are studying as all grades achieved could add to a student's overall Attainment 8 score.

Students are encouraged to study a broad curriculum

Due to the fact that all slots in Buckets 2 and 3 (Ebacc subjects and 'Other' subjects) have to be filled, students at GCSE level will be encouraged to study a wider variety of subjects, because if not all slots are filled from the buckets, a score of 0 will be awarded for that slot.

Cons

Creative subjects aren't given enough attention

Not enough emphasis is put on creative subjects in the new structure. At first glance it appears as though the 'Other' slot caters for these subjects, however when you find out that these slots can be filled by Ebacc subjects and English it undermines the importance of the creative subjects.

Students' individual learning needs aren't accounted for

There are concerns that Progress 8 scores don't take into account the variety of students in a school such as those who are SEN, EAL, PP or those that are in areas of deprivation.

Extra pressure on high achievers at KS2

Students who achieved a high attainment score at KS2 could be under a lot of pressure to increase their Attainment 8 score at GCSE despite performing at the higher end of the scale, as they would have to work at getting the very top grades to ensure they have a positive Progress 8 score.

** The threat of outliers was previously a con to the new accountability measures but provisions introduced in 2018 mean steps have been taken to counteract this concern.*

