



GCSE Grading is changing from 2017

Frequently Asked Questions for Students

1. Can I compare my grade in a reformed GCSE to my grade in an unreformed GCSE?

The new 9-1 grade scale is not directly equivalent to the current scale. However, there are three grade comparison points:

- The bottom of grade 7 is equivalent to the bottom of grade A.
- The bottom of grade 4 is equivalent to the bottom of grade C.
- The bottom of grade 1 is equivalent to the bottom of grade G.

While the two grading scales are not directly comparable, what we can say is that a grade 4 is broadly equivalent to a low to medium grade C, the threshold for a level 2 qualification. A grade 5 is broadly equivalent to a high C to low B. Also, fewer students are expected to get a grade 9 than previously got an A*.

2. What does it mean to get a grade 4 in English and Maths this year?

A grade 4 means you have achieved a standard equivalent to a level 2 qualification which should facilitate progression to level 3 study. The government views this as a credible achievement and one that should be valued as a passport to future study and employment. You will not need to resit your English and Maths if you have achieved a grade 4.

3. What will I need to progress to A level study?

This will vary according to different subjects and different institutions but schools and colleges are likely to ask for similar grades to pursue a particular subject at A level (eg 4 and above if currently C and above; 5 to 6 and above if currently B; 7 if currently A).

4. What will universities ask for?

Entry criteria to different universities will vary as they are able to set their own criteria. We expect that most universities will ask for a 4 where they would have required a C and most will ask for an 8 where they might previously have asked for an A* at GCSE.

5. Do I need a 4 or 5 in English literature or language and maths if I want to become a teacher?

If you want to train to teach, you will need to demonstrate:

- a standard equivalent to a GCSE grade C / grade 4 in mathematics and English to teach at secondary level
- a standard equivalent to a GCSE grade C / grade 4 in mathematics, English and a science subject to teach at primary level.