

Key Stage 3 Assessment at Acle Academy

Why is assessment important?

Assessment plays a fundamental role in learning. It helps students and teachers identify what has been learnt, the skills that have been mastered and what needs to improve. Most importantly, it guides and supports students through the next steps of their learning. High-quality assessment can have a very positive impact on students' learning and progress.

How will my child be assessed?

At Acle Academy, teaching schemes have been developed based on an analysis of the national curriculum content and the identification of GCSE knowledge and understanding. Each department are using assessment grids that have been designed to ensure that students have the key knowledge and understanding to be successful at Key Stage 4 (KS4).

What are the changes at Key Stage 3?

The Academy has moved away from providing numerical grades at KS3 and will instead use a colour coding system to indicate progress towards their individual targets. The reason for the change is due to the instability of the new reformed GCSEs. With the reformed GCSEs in their infancy and national grade boundaries changing annually it makes it increasingly difficult to provide an accurate GCSE outcome especially at KS3. Instead, the academy will use a colour code system that relates to how a student is performing in relation to their target.

The table below explains the colour coding system.

Description	Working Above the Expected Standard	Working at the Expected Standard	Working Towards the Expected Standard	Working Below the Expected Standard
Relation to Target	Above Target	On Target	Below Target	Significantly Below Target

The colour coding also now changes in relation to each tracking point to take into consideration the time of year and how much time has passed. For example as the targets are 'end of year' targets, we would not expect the majority of students to be on or above this until the end of the year. At the start of the academic year, it is acceptable that students may be some way off this target and so the colour coding changes accordingly. It does this by using fine grades to form an 'acceptable threshold', which changes as the academic year progresses. So for example if a student is working at their end of year target by the final tracking point the colour will show as 'yellow'. However, they will also show as 'yellow' at Tracking 1 if they are within the acceptable threshold of their target, which is more generous at tracking 1. As the academic year progresses the thresholds get narrower as students should be working towards their target.

Will I see any grades at KS3?

Although no overall numerical grades will be published at each tracking point, subjects may still use their assessment grids in class or when marking particular units or assessed

work. This means that students may still receive information of what level a particular piece of work is at and feedback about how to improve on it. Teachers may also relay this information to students, parents and carers particularly in year 9 with the importance of choosing the right options.

However the key focus at KS3 should be on how to improve and making sure they have the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding to be successful at KS4 rather than focusing on numerical grades.

What is my child's starting point?

The academy uses Key Stage 2 (KS2) prior attainment as the starting point for each student. This is based on how each student performed in English and maths at KS2 and forms the starting point for progress at Acle Academy.

Regardless of a student's starting point it is expected that every student make the same rate of progress and this can be explained using a flight-path, an example of which can be found on the Acle Academy website.

The rate of progress may differ for each department, as progress is not often linear. For example in some subjects progress may seem to plateau at KS3 due to the subject being new and students learning the fundamentals before progress then accelerates at KS4. This is common in subjects such as MFL.

How are the targets set?

The academy sets each student an end of KS4 target based on estimates from ALPS, which is a national benchmarking tool for schools. This takes into consideration how students with the same prior attainment have performed nationally. Students are then set an end of year target by tracking back from their ALPS estimate.

We use these estimates together with regular assessments to monitor progress throughout KS3 and KS4. We aim to provide appropriate intervention for students who fall below their expected progress.

What reports will I get?

There are 4 tracking points throughout the year where the data is collected and the information will be shared with parents electronically via the SIMS Parent App. Details of how to access this are provided with this letter.

The report will include a summary (using the colour coding system) showing how your child is currently progressing against their end of year target.

The tracking sheet will also include their latest attendance figure, any House points (positive) they have earned as well as any behaviour points (negative) they have received. This data is also available live via the Class Charts app.

What is an Attitude to Learning grade?

As well as receiving a monitoring grade, students will also get an Attitude to Learning (ATL) grade that will indicate how hard they are working and highlight if there are any causes for concern. The new ATL range is on a 4-point system with 4 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

Teachers will use a 'best fit' approach when assigning an ATL. This means that for certain aspects students may sit in several different boxes. For example a student may be a grade 4 (Outstanding) in one area but a 3 (Requires improvement) in another. It is at each teachers' discretion which ATL best suits the individual student.

The table on the next page explains in more detail what the new 4-point ATL grades mean.

<p>ATL 4</p> <p><i>'Always'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are always eager to learn You are always enthusiastic and committed You always produce work and homework of an excellent personal standard Your contribution to lessons is always excellent You are always mature, independent and keen to improve You always respond in detail to guidance and feedback You are always positive and open-minded You are always conscientious and diligent You always use your initiative and take responsibility for your own learning You always seek opportunities to proactively extend your studies You are always highly motivated and show consistent determination You never give up even when faced with difficult challenges You are always considerate of your teacher and classmates
<p>ATL 3</p> <p><i>'Mostly'</i></p> <p><i>'Frequent'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are always ready to learn You frequently produce work of a very good standard You mostly complete work independently to a good personal standard You are often enthusiastic You make frequent relevant contributions to lessons You respond well to guidance You are mature, independent and usually keen to improve You are usually positive and open-minded You mostly enjoy challenge and don't give up easily You may sometimes rely upon a teacher to direct reflection and development
<p>ATL 2</p> <p><i>'not enough'</i></p> <p><i>'sometimes'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are usually ready to learn You make some contributions to lessons You may sometimes lack maturity or independence You usually respond to guidance from your teachers You are usually respectful and considerate of others You are usually positive but may sometimes give up too easily You may sometimes be slow to start tasks and do not actively seek support if challenged You may lack the determination to redraft and improve your work You may sometimes only complete work to the minimum requirements
<p>ATL 1</p> <p><i>'often not'</i></p> <p><i>'limited'</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are often distracted which affects your readiness to learn Your work and homework is often inadequate Your homework is often not good enough or not completed Your contribution to lessons can be limited or not appropriate You respond to guidance only briefly or not at all You show limited willingness to improve Your attitude to learning can often be too negative You often give up too easily Your engagement in feedback is limited

Attitude to Learning Grades

Marking and feedback

Students will undertake formative assessments that show what they have done well and highlight areas they still need to work on. Students are given appropriate feedback via the academy's 'Feedback4' marking policy. This involves:

- Highlighting what has gone well
- A target to work on
- A next step activity to develop students' knowledge or skill
- A literacy aspect to work on where applicable

Some examples of this can be found below.

★+ Jake, your notes are of an exceptional quality. You are hugely detailed and it is clear that your understanding of the novel, and its characters, is developing beautifully.

? From now on, if you see a theme emerging at a point in a chapter you could make a note of this in the margin (ie. nature vs nurture).

? How is Golding presenting the theme of nature vs nurture?

He is steadily showing the transition between nature and nurture through many means. A prominent example is the boys' innocence being replaced by savagery. Another example is the island beginning pure and untouched, and after the plane crash and the fire it is forever changed.

📖 Could you use a thesaurus to look up three new words to describe Jake?

Oppressive, obstinate and condescending.

I would give myself a grade 4-5 grade because I included 3 quotations and a basic explanation ✓

+ Your answer is currently on a Grade 4+.
You start to make several great points and you select evidence well.

T Your explanations need to be clearer.

👉 Explain (as simply as you can) why Romeo says "Juliet is the sun." Give me 2 different reasons for this metaphor:

→ The sun is always there like Juliet is for Romeo ✓
The sun is out of reach, which is how Juliet makes Romeo feel.

I love this
second idea - I
guess she's out of
reach because she's
a Capulet...



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