

Grade cards – FAQ 2019



In this document, you will find answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about grade cards.

Note that you can find further detail in the presentation document entitled “Assessment Presentation Oct 2019”, which can be found on the parents page of our website www.boa-academy.co.uk.

What is a target grade?

These are the grades that we (the teachers and students) are aiming to beat.

The target setting process allows us to identify challenging, highly personalised targets for our learners. Essentially, we first look at how students with similar starting points have performed in the past, nationally. We then add stretch and challenge to the target based on feedback from teachers during the first term and your child’s score in our baseline tests.

We do not change the targets once they have been set, except in extremely rare circumstances.

What is a predicted grade?

The prediction is the grade the teacher believes the student will achieve at the end of the course based on the rate of progress they have made so far.

At each grade card data point the teacher will have an expectation of how much progress your child should have made in order to go on to achieve his/her target grade.

In the weeks before each grade card is released your child’s teachers are working to assess their progress in a number of ways. For example, they may review topic test results, mock results, the quality of homework, the quality of class work, the student’s engagement in the classroom, the student’s ability to answer questions, and the quality of any assessment work submitted.

The teacher is then asked to compare this measurement of progress to their expectations, and make a prediction.

What the predictions tell you:

- **If the prediction matches the target grade then the student is making progress as we expect.**
- **If the prediction exceeds the target grade then the student is making much better progress than we had planned** (this should be celebrated).
- **If the prediction is lower than the target grade then the student is not currently making the progress we had planned.** Where this is the case we put action into place to get the student back onto flight-path as soon as possible. This can involve either adapting and reviewing teaching practice or arranging personalised intervention(s) for the learner.

What is a work ethic grade?

Work ethic measures the learner’s attitude to learning both in and outside of the classroom. Essentially, it identifies whether a student is meeting our expectations or not.

For example it is not uncommon for a student to be making poor progress because they do not have the expected work ethic. It is also important to recognise that sometimes if a student is making poor progress it may *not* be because of a poor work ethic. Either way it is important that we celebrate learners with an excellent work ethic and identify where work ethic can be improved because this is an element within the students’ control that can affect their outcome.

There are two work ethic grades. Work Ethic refers to a student’s approach within the classroom. Work Ethic Independent Study refers to the student’s approach to homework or self-study periods in BOA. It is possible for a student to have an Excellent work ethic with in the classroom but unacceptable when asked to complete homework.

These are the general definitions for work ethic:

Unacceptable (U)	Requires Improvement (RI)	Good (G)	Excellent (E)
Unprepared for lessons, lacking focus, approach to work is poor, incomplete or missing work.	Not fully prepared for lessons, inattentive at times, limits level of effort applied to work, leaves work incomplete at times.	Well prepared for lessons, attentive, works well in all lessons, all homework is completed to an expected standard.	Fully prepared for all lessons, always attentive, works to the best of their ability in all lessons, all work is well presented, all homework is completed on time and to a high standard.

How can I tell if my child is doing well?

Generally speaking if a student’s predictions match or exceed their targets and their work ethic in all their subjects is good or better then you can be assured they are doing well.

If a student’s work ethic grades are all good or better, and a fraction of their predictions are one grade below target, there is little cause for concern as some variation is to be expected from grade card to grade card, especially toward the start of a course.

If work ethic grades are “requires improvement” or “unacceptable”, and/or if the predictions are consistently well below target, then there is cause for concern and we will be taking action to support the student.

How can I find out more about my child’s progress?

Grade cards provide basic progress information, but at key intervals you will also receive full reports and be invited to open evenings (see the question below). Beyond this you are always welcome to contact us for further information. We prefer it if you direct enquiries to your child’s head of house, who has the holistic overview of the young person, who will forward the enquiry to the appropriate member of staff, and can ensure you are responded to promptly.

How often will I receive a grade card or report?

We collect data on student progress every half-term. However we don’t always feed back this information to you as a grade-card. Please use the table below as a guide:

	Half Term 1	Half Term 2	Half Term 3	Half Term 4	Half Term 5	Half Term 6
Year 10	Settling in Evening	Letter explaining targets and group changes Grade Card	Grade Card	Grade Card Parents’ Evening	Grade Card	Full Report
Year 11	Grade Card	Parents’ Evening Mock Results	Full Report Grade Card Parents’ Evening	Grade Card	None (Exam Season)	None (Exam Season)

Year 12	Settling in Evening	Grade Card	Grade Card	Grade Card Parents' Evening	Grade Card	Full Report
Year 13	Grade Card	Parents' Evening Grade Card	Full Report Grade Card	Grade Card	None (Exam Season)	None (Exam Season)

How are students grouped for Core Subjects (Maths, English and Science) in year 10?

For timetabling purposes, we evenly divide our students into three bands (A, B and C) for English, Maths and Science. Each band has two or three groups within it for core subjects.

For the start of year 10 we group the students within these bands based on the prior attainment information we have from you and on their English and Maths baseline progress test scores (taken before the academic year began).

Then at the start of the second half term, after our teachers have had time to assess learners more thoroughly, we set the targets. See "What is a target grade?" on page 1.

As a result of the target setting process we adjust the teaching groups for the core subjects (Maths, Science, English). The adjustments ensure students are taught in classes with peers who have similar targets, enabling teachers to plan the most efficient and effective lessons possible with a view to maximise student success.

What should I do if I suspect the information on the grade card is incorrect?

Please contact reports@boa-academy.co.uk and we will query and resolve the issue for you.

What should I do if I have not received a grade card when I expected one?

Please contact reports@boa-academy.co.uk and we will query and resolve the issue for you.

What should I do if I have other concerns or queries?

Please contact reports@boa-academy.co.uk and we will query and resolve the issue for you.

Please explain the grading systems for the GCSEs, A-Levels and Btec qualifications?

The tables below detail the grading systems used for the qualifications we run. The grade at the top of each table is the best grade. Most of our GCSEs are now on the new 1-9 framework. Note that GCSE Combined Science Trilogy is worth two GCSEs E.g 5,4.

New GCSE	Old GCSE
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	
3	D
2	E

Level 2 BTEC (2019)
D*
D
M
P
L1P

A-Level
A*
A
B
C
D
E
U

Level 3 BTEC
D*D*D*
D*D*D
D*DD
DDD
DDM
DMM
MMM
MMP

1	F
	G
U	U

MPP
PPP

Please explain the grading GCSE Combined Science Qualification?

Combined Science is a double award GCSE which consequently scores 2 grades. These can only be a single grade apart eg 65 The standard pass grade is a 44 and the strong pass is 55

Why do the number of BTEC units completed not always increase with every grade card?

The new BTEC qualification encourages students to build skills in the first year of the course which are then used to complete units in the second year. While some units are completed in the first year the focus of the course is in acquiring the skills required for use in the second year.