

The basic-point score

From 2016, for every grade that a student achieves at GCSE, they will be awarded a set number of points.

- In 2016, the A*-G grading system will be in place. Students will get eight points for an A*, down to one point for a G (an A would be worth seven points, a B would be six points and so on).
- In 2017 and 2018, the 1-9 grading system will be phased in. Those qualifications on the new system will receive a point

score equivalent to the numerical grade (so a grade 5 would be awarded five points). For those on the old system, an A* will be worth eight-and-a-half points, an A will be worth seven, a B five-and-a-half, a C four, a D three, an E two, an F one-and-a-half and a G one.

- In 2019, all GCSEs will use the 1-9 grade scale and points will be equivalent to the grade awarded.

How does Progress 8 work?

A quick guide for schools from **tes**

The Attainment 8 score

Not all subject scores will count towards a student's Attainment 8 score, and schools cannot choose the subjects that should count. Instead, a student's highest scores from three 'baskets' of government-selected subjects are added together to give the final Attainment 8 score.

Basket 1

English and maths



A student's scores in English and maths count as double, although in English this is only the case if students take GCSEs in English language and English literature. For 2016, a combined qualification will get double points; if the two separate papers are taken, the highest grade counts.

Basket 2

EBacc subjects



A student's three highest scores in the EBacc subjects.

Basket 3

EBacc subjects or approved qualifications



A student's three highest scores from EBacc subjects not already used, or qualifications from a government list*.

No qualifications outside of the EBacc subjects or approved list count. Non-EBacc subjects from the approved list for basket three cannot be used in basket two.

If a student has not taken enough EBacc subjects to fill basket two, then they receive a score of zero for each "vacant" place. For basket three, if the student does not have enough qualifications to fill the three places, vacant places will again score zero.

The total points scored across the three baskets, including double weighting for English and maths, gives you the Attainment 8 score.

The Progress 8 score

The process of calculating an individual's Progress 8 score is as follows:

- Students that achieved the same results at key stage 2 are grouped together and their Attainment 8 scores are averaged. This gives an estimated Attainment 8 score for this group.
- Each student then has the estimated Attainment 8 score subtracted from their individual Attainment 8 score.
- The resultant number is divided by 10 (the number of subjects that went in to the Attainment 8 score – eight subjects, but maths and English count twice). This gives each individual student's Progress 8 Score.

- To calculate the school Progress 8 score, the individual score of every student in the year group is added together and then divided by the total number of pupils.

Progress 8 score

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Individual student Attainment 8 score

minus estimated Attainment 8 score

divided by 10

Complications

Skewed results

Some schools' Progress 8 scores are more likely than others to be a fair reflection of their performance. For instance, if a school has a particularly small cohort, the performance of a small number of pupils could skew its result. So each school's Progress 8 score is given a "confidence interval" that indicates how statistically significant the result is.

Discounting

The Department for Education has guarded against schools boosting their performance-table scores by entering pupils for two or more qualifications with overlapping content, for which they would only need to take one course of study. Qualifications are given a "discount code" based on the subject area they cover. Similar qualifications are given the same discount code, and a school cannot use two qualifications with the same discount code towards a pupil's Attainment 8 score, even if they are in different baskets. Discount codes can be found at bit.ly/Progress8DiscountCodes

KS2 results

For pupils in Years 7 to 11, Progress 8 scores will be calculated by converting their test marks in key stage 2 Sats (in English and maths for the current Year 11, then reading and maths for subsequent Year 11 cohorts) into a "fine point score". This fine level is generated as follows: the raw scores from tests at KS2 are converted to a point score in reading and maths (conversion tables are available in the RAISE library). These point scores for reading and maths are combined to create an average point score (APS).

The average fine point score across the two subjects will be divided by six and rounded to one decimal place, to give an "average fine level".

The complication comes with the scrapping of levels. The current calculation is based on levels, which were used for the last time in 2015 and have now been replaced with a "scaled score" system. The DfE has not yet set out how these pupils' KS2 results will be converted to "fine level scores" for Progress 8 calculations, but it is expected to do so once it has analysed this year's KS2 test results.

Case studies

Anna's Progress 8 score

Anna has an Attainment 8 score of 63. Her estimated Attainment 8 score is 68. So her Progress 8 score is -0.5 (63 minus 68, divided by 10). This means that she has scored, on average, half a grade lower per subject than other pupils with the same KS2 scores.

Billy's Progress 8 score

Billy has an Attainment 8 score of 38. His estimated Attainment 8 score is 35. His Progress 8 score is +0.3 (38 minus 35, divided by 10). This means that he has performed better than those who achieved the same results as he did at KS2.

*For a list of the approved non-EBacc qualifications, see bit.ly/Basket3 and bit.ly/Pro8vocations