



A Guide to Qualifications

GCSE

One type of qualification are GCSEs, a General Certificate of Secondary Education. GCSEs have an examination, or a number of examinations, at the end of the course, and some GCSEs include a non-examined assessment or coursework. Many of these qualifications have no coursework element at all.

The grades students will be awarded are numbered 1 to 9. A grade 9 is the top grade and 1 is the lowest grade. These numbers have replaced grades A* to G. The old grade C is roughly equivalent to a grade 4, with a grade 5 being somewhere between a high C and a low B. Grade 9s are awarded to the top 3% of students across the country in each subject, each year.

Vocational

Vocational qualifications, such as BTECs mean that the knowledge and skills developed within these courses relates to the world of work. These courses include coursework and an exam. The grades students will be awarded are as follows:

Level 1 Pass – equivalent of GCSE grade 2/3

Pass – equivalent of GCSE grade 4

Merit – equivalent of GCSE grade 5/6

Distinction – equivalent of GCSE grade 7/8

Distinction* - equivalent of GCSE grade