Assessment Policy

September 2024

Ratified by the Trustee: 30 August 2024
Signed by the Trustee: 30 August 2024

To be reviewed: 01 September 2027

Introduction

In 2020, the assessment structure was reviewed based on (a) data, (b) assessment resources and (c) descriptors. Where Ks3 and year 9 were involved, data was inconsistent, and further investigation revealed a poor structure in assessments. As such, the decision was taken by SLT to review students in terms of ability and to seek external, accredited, approved and validated provisions to assess baselines for year 7s and graded skills for 8-10. Data for year 11 is accepted where GCSE is concerned, as the criteria depend on the GCSE/iGCSE code and exam board. The decision was further pressed upon due to the 'study gap' left by the Covid-related closure.

Furthermore, in 2023, the establishment of progress and attainment became essential to distinguish assessment-based attainment from progress made in learning.

Progress: In its most reductive definition, DUIHS identifies 'progress' as an increase or understanding of knowledge of a given topic in each subject; the coding (Progress Code or PC) below discretionally applies and is only indicative of predictability where attainment is concerned.

	Progress Code	Description (during each half-term)	Other language (…expectations)	GCSE ratings (if applicable)
	Developing	***Adequate***: Made a reasonable level of progress	Emerging	Predictions: 4+
	Approaching	***Targets met***: Made good levels of progress	Achieving	Predictions: 5+
	Secure	***Ambitious***: went above expected levels of progress	Excelling	Predictions: 6+
	Advanced	***Outstanding***: highly strong points of progress	Surpassing	Predictions: 7+

It should be noted that our school does not operate on negative judgment. Where a student falls below the 'developing' marker, an early review initiates, which involves validating the judgement. If necessary, it is followed by early intervention led by the SEN team to determine how to swiftly return the student to the minimal course of progression.

Attainment: Most relevant in year 9 fundamentally and years 10 and 11 formally, attainment refers to a GCSE-specific determination of students' abilities based primarily on mock examinations and other forms of summative assessment.

The school maintains progress data for all students for analysis and reporting purposes and attainment data for GCSE analysis and prediction.

Data retention, usage and analysis:

1. **The Floor System (introduced in 2023)**
   DUIHS recognises age-based aptitudes, including physiological and emotional development, as factors impacting progress and attainment. Review and correlation of progress and attainment data (particularly upon returning to normality in GCSE systems after the Covid-based TAG systems) revealed an underestimation of forecasts, with students often attaining higher GCSE grades than predicted in their earliest years of secondary education. For example, the 2023-24 cohort achieved outstanding bouts of progress in %%%, where the forecast demonstrates %%% and the prediction expected %%%. Therefore, although the school maintains a progressive course of study (see Curriculum policy), with the curriculum plan being a 4–5-year course for each subject, the school recognises each year of learning as a new *level* or 'Floor', with increased demand, thresholds and maturities.

2. **Baselines / Starting points (revisited 2024)**
   Separate from the admissions judgement (see Admissions policy), all students are subject to a topic-based, easily measurable, baseline/starting-point assessment at the beginning of the academic year. This assessment occurs within the first two weeks of school opening and is designed to measure raw ability and understanding. It involves an evaluation synthesised of future topics (see Curriculum policy), yet-to-be-learned to create a benchmark for each of the six learning sections (half-terms) across the year. Each academic year, a student will be assigned a PC, which will be used to compare their progress over the year.

3. **GCSE   Target   Grades**
   With changing specifications and climates around education ever-developing, the GCSE targets are under constant review, aligning with national averages with as much relevance as possible. According to the most relevant analyses, expected progress is based upon three levels from years 7 to 11, which only indicates satisfactory progress. More able students are expected to make 3.5 levels of progress, and higher-ability students are expected to make 4. The table below demonstrates the measurement of expected GCSE outcomes using the BASELINE PC to make predictions based on the aforementioned description of higher-to-lower-ability students. Mock checkpoints, in-between, offer a salient transition from *Progress Code* to *Attainment Data*, resulting in a 'GCSE Forecast' – a calculated prediction based on the procedure above, offering an understanding of the expected GCSE outcome for a student.

Baseline / Year Starting Point	Mock Checkpoints Expected (year 10/11)	GCSE Forecast	Target Grade	Ambitious Target
Developing	3	4	5	6
Approaching	4	5	6	7
Secure	5	6	7	8
Advanced	6+	7+	8+	9

4. **Data Collection**

Data is collected twice a term in the form of a PC for all year groups 7-11. Each grade impacts the forecast, which is made by subject teachers through the moderation of summative and formative assessments.

5. Accuracy of GCSE Forecasts

Staff must use progress charts to accurately forecast what a student will achieve by the end of KS4. These progress charts are agreed upon within departments to show what the progress journey for each child should look like if they are to be on track to achieve their target grade.

Initiated with the PC grading from years 7-9, which will determine a student's end-point of Ks3, combined with a baseline assessment (see point 2) in year 10 at the beginning of the year, the following table identifies the forecasted journey, specifically for GCSE (year 10 and 11). To illustrate, a student ending their Ks3 journey in year 9, concluding with a high 'secure', and proving it further with an emerging '6' in Autumn, year 10 (10 AU), is forecasted to conclude the GCSE in question with a '7':

	10 AU	10 AU	10SP	10SP	10SM	10SM	11 AU	11 AU	11SP	11SP
Advanced	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9
	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	8
	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7
Secure	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	7
	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6
Approaching	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6
	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
Developing	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
Early Intervention	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

6. Assessments

At DUIHS, students undertake six assessments a year for each subject: two in each half-term – a mid-term (MT) and an end-of-term assessment (EOT). The mid-term evaluation is discretionally assigned, with practitioners issuing a summative assessment according to a chosen standard. Assessments should be accumulative, based on topics and knowledge addressed over preceding weeks in the academic year and quantitative. The ideal assessment will be gradient, hosting different levels of assessment: knowledge-based, e.g. multiple-choice questions and inclusive tasks, e.g. comprehension and problem-solving. End-of-term assessments are formal, requiring subtle mimicry of GCSE-orientated standards and procedures. Except in subjects that require practical application, such as PE, EOTs must be word/paper-based.

Progress-based data (PC), particularly for Ks3, must be moderated, appreciating that assessments involve more stress and uncertainty than in the more regular formative assessments. We recognise that assessments add a layer of complexity that guided lessons may avoid. Thus, PC must be moderated for appropriate reporting of a pupil's performance and the right to well-being. Whilst collected data will reflect assessment-based performance, the overall grade, submitted towards PC collection, will consolidate class-based aptitudes and performance, students' work and formal assessments.

Where GCSE mock examinations are concerned, given the increased maturity of the students and the upcoming pressures of actual regulated examinations, students' training for such mental preparation

will begin at least a year before the scheduled GCSE. This means moderation will be a subordinate priority, unlike PCs, which affirm as close to reality as possible with forecast grades. Practitioners will utilise board-assigned thresholds, boundaries and marking criteria to determine students' progress and attainment. Whilst PC data will still be utilised to map student progression, it will be aided with Forecast Grades for actual prediction.

7. Data Usage

Complete data will be accessible to school staff members, and pupil-specific data will be accessible to relevant parents/guardians and the pupils regarding whom each data concerns. The data will be analysed to devise plans and interventions for pupils. Such interventions will involve parental involvement, recommendations for tuition, in-school boosters, holiday schools (winter/summer), learning profile constructions, and all other manners of evaluative practice. Teachers will have access to and will be expected to use data to plan strategies and, where necessary, supplement the subject/lesson planning process.

8. External Examinations

For external examinations, JCQ guidelines will be followed. In the event of changes or upgrades, the Darul Uloom contingency plan will be followed (see Exams policy).