

Dear All

This document hopes to offer you a little more detail about the grading system Gordon's School has adopted in Years 7 to 9 now that Key Stage 3 National Curriculum Levels are no longer in use.

With these Levels now unavailable as a measure of student progress and attainment, the School has had to adopt its own system of grading. In order to offer students a clear journey from Year 7 to 11, we decided to base this system on the new GCSE 9-1 grading structure, with staff awarding 'actual' GCSE grades to students across all year groups.

Inevitably for students at Key Stage 3, these grades will begin at the lowest end of the GCSE spectrum, therefore, we have incorporated an additional + and – either side of the grades to allow for more accurate positioning of student performance; for example, a student may achieve a -3, 3 or 3+.

Those students targeted to achieve lower GCSE grades, such as 2, 3 or 4, may well begin Year 7 attaining below 0 on this scale, making slower progress over time, and may experience prolonged periods with seemingly little progress. However, please be reassured that any concerns regarding individual students and their progress will be communicated to parents in a timely fashion.

In order to offer further context to the grades that students will receive over the course of Key Stage 3, individual Departments have chosen to place their subject within one of three 'flightpaths' which will enable them to explain the progression of student attainment from the beginning of Key Stage 3, until the end of Key Stage 4. Irrespective of the flightpath Departments have chosen, students within every subject will still be targeted to reach grades in the top 10% nationally at the end of Year 11, with typically just over 50% of students doing so.

The three flightpaths are as follows:

1. Linear
2. Shallow
3. Irregular

Please see the attached information sheet for a more detailed explanation of each of flightpath.

The following is a list clarifying which flightpath Departments have placed themselves in:

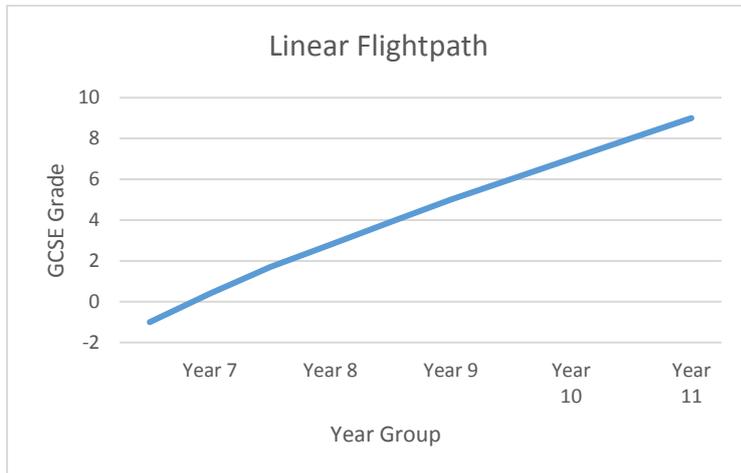
- **Linear:** Art, Drama, English, Geography, History, ICT, Maths, Music, RE, Science
- **Shallow:** MFL (German, Spanish and French)
- **Irregular:** Rotational subjects – PE, Technology (Food, Graphics, and Resistant Materials)

Should you have any questions regarding specific subjects and their chosen flightpath, please contact the Head of Department in the first instance. For more general queries about individual student performance across the curriculum, please contact the Head of House.

Miss J. Pierce
Assistant Head Curriculum

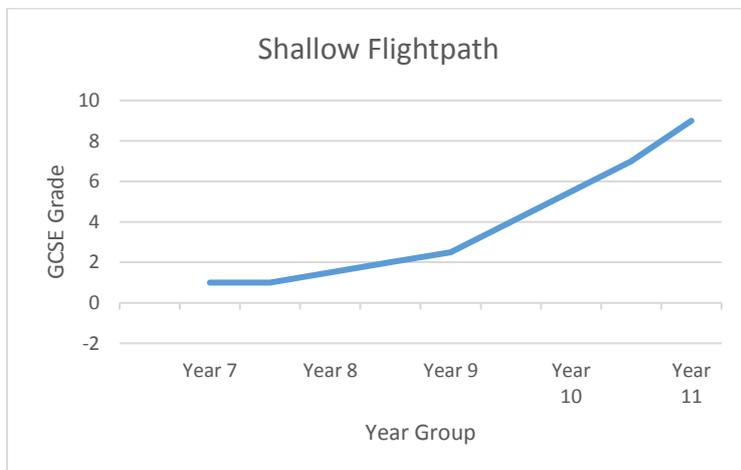
Linear

Departments who have identified their subject as following a 'linear' progression model have done so because students generally make steady and regular progress across time within their subject. This means that students will advance in their understanding and ability at a regular pace and increase their attainment incrementally across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 towards their final target grade. This steady progress, therefore, enables students to reach their challenging GCSE target grades.



Shallow

Departments who have identified their subject as following a 'shallow' progression model have done so because students typically make slow upwards progress in the early stages of studying these subjects at secondary school level. Subjects in this category would expect students to continue along a very shallow upward trajectory until they reach the end of Year 8, at which point student progress makes a more steady and incremental progression towards Key Stage 4. As a result of this development in student performance at the end of KS3, these subjects are still able to meet the challenging GCSE target grades our students are set at the same level as subjects in other flightpaths.



Irregular

Departments who have identified their subject as following an 'irregular' progression model have done so because, in these subjects, students may achieve differently on different topics or modules across the Key Stage 3 curriculum. This means that a student may, for example, attain a GCSE Level 3 on one topic in Year 7, followed by a Level 1 and then Level 2. This variability may continue across the student's three-year journey until they reach the end of Year 9. However, this irregularity settles down as students enter KS4 and does not prevent these Departments from enabling students to reach their challenging GCSE target grades at the same level as they would in other flightpaths.

