

The GCSE grading system

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above

Supporting your child through their GCSEs

27th September 2023

Results

Subject information

Pillars of success



2023 Exam Results Overview

- Average grade in qualifications in year 11 = 4.9
- 77% of all grades 4+
- 21% of all grades 7+
- Grade 4 +:
 - English 85%
 - Maths 80%
 - Science 75%

Key people

- Tutor
- Head of Year 10 – Mrs Love
- Head of English – Miss R O'Connor
- Head of Maths – Mrs Cole
- Head of Science – Mr C Campbell
- Deputy Head Teacher (data) – Mr S Woodhouse
- Deputy Head Teacher (inclusion) – Mr A Kennedy
- Careers Lead – Mr Cooper
- Careers Advisor – Kate Allen

GCSE English: Edexcel

- All students will complete **GCSE English Language** and follow one of two possible specifications. Both routes are assessed 9-1 and carry equal weighting with further and higher education establishments. The difference is seen in the formatting of tasks and the style of texts.
- All students will complete the **Spoken Language Endorsement** regardless of which route they follow for English Language. The format and assessment criteria is identical.
- All students will complete **GCSE English Literature**.
- **There is no tiered entry for GCSE English.**

GCSE English Language: Edexcel (1st Generation)

Paper 1: 19th Century Fiction and Imaginative Writing (40% - 64 Marks)

- Students examine an extract from an unseen 19th Century novel, such as “The Woman in White” by Wilkie Collins or “Crime and Punishment” by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.
- SECTION A: They must respond to a range of tasks that are based on the skills of inference, analysis, and evaluation (24/64).
- SECTION B: They then produce an extended creative response to prompts or images and will be judged on their ability to structure and craft with language in varied ways with sophistication and accuracy (40/64).

Paper 2: 20th and 21st Century Non-fiction and Transactional Writing (60% - 96 Marks)

- Students examine two 20th and 21st century non-fiction texts across a range of forms such as, letters, articles, obituaries, websites or diary entries.
- SECTION A: They must respond to two texts using skills of inference, analysis, evaluation, comparison and the synthesis of information (56/96).
- SECTION B: They then produce an extended transactional response to one of two tasks that takes its themes from the Section A texts. Much like Paper 1, students will be judged on their ability to structure and craft language in varied ways with sophistication and accuracy but with additional focus on writing for a specific audience and purpose (40/96).

GCSE English Language: Edexcel (2nd Generation)

Paper 1: Non-Fiction Texts (50% - 80 Marks)

- Students examine a range of function, non-fiction 19th Century texts and develop their analytical and evaluative reading skills as well as their transactional writing skills for a variety of forms, purposes and audiences.
- **SECTION A:** Students will respond to a range short and open response questions on two thematically linked, unseen non-fiction extracts (40/80).
- **SECTION B:** They then have a choice of two transactional writing tasks that require an extended response from students, thematically linked to the texts in Section A. Accuracy, sophistry and variety with spelling, punctuation and grammar is assessed in this task.

Paper 2: Contemporary Texts (50% - 80 Marks)

- Students examine two 20th and 21st century prose fiction and literary non-fiction.
- **SECTION A:** Students will respond to a range short and open response questions on two thematically linked unseen fiction and literary non-fiction extracts (40/80).
- **SECTION B:** They then produce an extended imaginative response to one of two tasks that takes its themes from the Section A texts. Much like Paper 1, students will be judged on their ability to structure and craft language in varied ways with sophistication and accuracy.

GCSE English Language: Edexcel

Spoken Language Endorsement:

- All students are required to complete the Spoken Language Endorsement (SLE). This is common across all GCSE exam boards and, without it, students will not be able to certificate.
- The **SLE does not carry any weight toward the overall qualification.**
- Students research, plan and deliver a short (4-5 minutes) presentation on an appropriate, and mutually agreed, topic.
- They must answer questions posed by a small audience at the end of their presentation.
- Students be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction for their efforts.
- Students are judged on their ability to speak with clarity, order and sophistication. They will also be judged on the depth and challenge of their responses to questions posed.

GCSE English Language: Top Tips

- **Read widely** – the more familiar you can become with the complex grammatical structures and overly wordy styles of 19th texts the better off you will be... writers typically got paid by the word and published weekly so it was in their best interest to be verbose!
- Don't stop at the end of the 19th century – read as many non-fiction texts, in as many different styles, genres and forms, as you can. This means going beyond the internet – visit the non-fiction section of the library – and read newspapers, magazines, journals, biographies, reports...the list is endless.
- Expand your vocabulary - the greater range of ways in which you are able to describe, explore, detail and shape what is thought, felt and imagined, the better your responses will be.
- Walking Talking Mocks – use the videos stored in the student drive to learn the key skills for each question and the process by which you should approach each one.
- Past Papers and model answers – complete and re-write past question papers wherever available (there are lots on the shared area). Use the model responses (WAGOLL) to identify areas for development in your own responses and then re-write them for improvements.
- Get to know the criteria – the more familiar you are with expectations the more able you will be to effectively review your own responses and adjust your responses accordingly.
- Talk to your teachers – English is a subject all about words; use them 😊 Share your thoughts, your concerns and your achievements in our lessons so we know how to help you and can personalise your lessons as best we can.

GCSE English Literature: Edexcel

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Post 1914 Literature (50% - 80 Marks)

- Students focus on “Romeo and Juliet”.
- They answer one extract-based task and a second task that focuses on a thematic from the play as a whole. They will also be expected to comment on the relationship between the play and the context in which it was written (40/80).
- Students also study a work of Post 1914 literature; we study “An Inspector Calls” by J B Priestley. Students will be given a choice of two tasks that are based on key elements of plot, theme and character. They examine such elements as well as making links to the context in which the play was set, written and performed. Students will also be awarded a mark for the quality of the written communication (40/80).

Paper 2: 19th Century Novel and Poetry since 1789 (50% - 80 Marks)

- Students study a 19th Century novel from a prescribed list; we study either “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde” by Robert Louis Stevenson or “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens.
- Much like the Shakespeare task on Paper 1, students complete a two part task: one with an extract and one that examines the whole text. However, students are not expected to comment on the context of the novel (40/80).
- Students work in their Edexcel Poetry Anthology to analyse one of three clusters of poems; we focus on the “Belonging” cluster which features work from poets such as Benjamin Zephaniah, Emily Bronte, and William Wordsworth. In the exam students are given one of the poems studied and asked to compare it to one of the other poems studied (20/80).
- Finally, students be given two unseen poems and are asked to compare how a specific element, usually content based or thematic idea, can be evidenced (20/80).

Both exams are closed book – students will not have full copies of the set texts with them in the exams.

GCSE English Literature: Top Tips

- Read the set texts – it is absolutely crucial that you know every aspects of the texts we study because the task could be on anything. It's not enough to know the main events – you must know it all!
- Quotations – although the Literature exams are closed book, you will still be required to reference them closely, which means you need to know lots of quotes. Start building your quotation banks now. Write them on post its, spare rolls of wall paper (NOT the actual wall!) or a paper tablecloth and surround yourself with words!
- “Super Quotes” – not all quotes are created equal. Some are multi purpose and considered higher tariff because they allow you to comment on character AND theme AND setting AND context...they won't be enough on their own but focusing on these to begin with is an efficient use of revision time.
- As with English Language...**use the WAGOLL's**, get to know the criteria, talk to your teachers and take very detailed notes.
- **Attend the revision sessions** recommended to you...if we invite you, it's because we want to help you ☐

GCSE Mathematics

AQA (8300)

Paper 1: non-calculator	+	Paper 2: calculator	+	Paper 3: calculator
What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed		What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed		What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes80 marksnon-calculator33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment		How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes80 markscalculator allowed33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment		How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes80 markscalculator allowed33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
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Foundation examines grades 1 -5

Higher examines grades 4 -9 and assumes grades 1 – 3 as prior knowledge

Weightings of topics vary depending on tier of entry

Topic Area	Foundation Tier (%)	Higher Tier (%)
Number	25	15
Algebra	20	30
Ratio	25	20
Geometry	15	20
Probability and statistics (combined)	15	15

- The most successful approach to Maths is:
 - * ensure you have a revision guide which you are using
 - * practice little and often
 - * work on the things you know you can't do
 - * stay positive – ask for help when needed
 - * bring all equipment to every lesson which includes a calculator, compass, 30cm ruler and a protractor

Useful resources in Maths:

- Students have access to MathsWatch which they should be using regularly. They can choose any topic they want to improve their understanding on by watching the associated videos and answering questions.
- PiXL Maths App, tracks individuals areas of strength and weakness and addresses the weakness (free through school)
- CorbettMaths website – free revision videos with corresponding worksheets and examination questions

GCSE Science

At Prince William all students follow the OCR GCSE Science courses.

Some students are following the Triple Science route and will gain separate GCSE grades (1-9) for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Most students are following the GCSE Combined Science route. This course covers material from Biology, Chemistry and Physics but will result in two Science GCSEs grades (1,1 to 9,9) which come from the average performance across all the GCSE Science exams.

Students on either route can apply to study any A-level Science course

The GCSE exams

All students will sit 6 GCSE science exams in the summer; 2 in Biology, 2 in Chemistry and 2 in Physics.

For the Triple Science groups, each exam will be 1 hour 45 minutes long to examine the additional content covered in Triple Science.

For the Combined Science groups, each exam will be 1 hour 10 minutes long.

Practical work in Science

There is no longer any GCSE coursework or ISAs which make up any part of the overall GCSE assessment. The final grade is purely based upon performance in the summer GCSE exams.

The course does contain 22 required practical activities. These are experiments that students are expected to complete during lesson time. Each exam will contain questions which test understanding of these experiments which could be anything from planning experiments, processing and analysing data or drawing appropriate conclusions.

Making the most of your time in KS4

Ensure you bring the correct equipment to each lesson, particularly the correct exercise book and your own scientific calculator.

Address weaknesses, or anything you don't understand, as they arise. All the Science teachers are happy to go through tricky concepts again at lunchtime or after school – don't be afraid to ask!

Try to attend every lesson. If you are absent be proactive and ask your teacher what you have missed; it could have been a required practical activity which you will need to do at some point.

Revising at home

If students wish to purchase a GCSE revision guide; we recommend the CPG revision guide. Encourage students to bring this to lessons as well as using it to aid your revision at home.

Look at the OCR specification and either download or print a copy for the course you are following. This is a list of everything you will need to know for your GCSE exam. A good tip is to tick off each topic as you revise it.

Revise the required practical activities as well as the content covered in each lesson. The exam board is required to include questions on these experiments.

Revise for your mock exams. Every year the students who work hard in preparing for their mock exams will ultimately make the most progress.

Central pillars to success

- Establish plans for September 2025 as early as possible.
- Begin revision now.
- Work hard in class.
- Complete all homework.
- Ensure that your focus is increasingly on success at GCSE.
- Attend school.



Next Step

- By law, all students need to be in education, employment (with training) or an apprenticeship until they are 18.
- Start thinking and researching now for your child's continuing education post 16.
- PWS 6th Form – a broadening range of qualifications.
- Use of Unifrog during Skills for Life lessons.
- Exposure to local opportunities in assembly.
- Careers 1-2-1 sessions with Kate Allen conducted during the summer term.



WOW DAY

2024 JUNE

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

World of Work Day – 20th June 2024

All students expected to find and participate in a work shadow placement

This can be with parents, grandparents, family members or friends – anyone that you are happy for your child to spend a day in the workplace with

Parental and Employer Consent forms will need to be completed

Gives students an idea of the workplace and a chance to see what the adults in their lives spend the day doing!

Any questions about this event please contact
Kate.Allen@pws.emat.uk



Tutor groups

- Year 11 students are placed in tutor groups based on the subject that they need the most help with and taught that subject in tutor time.
- These are taught by leading members of the departments.
- Students move between tutor groups during the year dependent on their needs.

Revision – things to try

- Revision must be ACTIVE.
- Try –
 - Mind mapping
 - Summarising
 - Internet resources/Apps – [senecalearning.com](https://www.senecalearning.com)
 - Coloured cards
 - Post-its
 - Teaching the cat/your parent/sibling
 - Revision books - CGP
 - Past paper practice
- Think about a rewards structure.



There are 190 days in a school year

Missing school means missing out!

If your child is at school for 190 days out of 190, that's 100% attendance.
Your child has a good chance of doing well at school.

If your child is at school for 180 days out of 190, that's 95% attendance. The child will achieve 1/2 a grade less in every subject they take at GCSE.

If your child is at school for 169 days out of 190, that's 89% attendance. Your child has been off for 21 days, and will achieve a full grade less in every subject at GCSE.

If your child is at school for 161 days out of 190, that's 85% attendance.
Your child has been off for 29 days, nearly 6 school weeks.

If your child is at school for 150 days out of 190, that's 79% attendance.
Your child has been off school for 40 days.

If your child is at school for 143 days out of 190,
that's 75% attendance.

Your child has missed more than 9 school weeks.

**Is your child
missing out?**

As the exams approach

- Reduce other commitments like work or hobbies – but keep enough to maintain good mental health.
- Ensure that attendance is good. Medical appointments need to be outside school time (as far as possible) and please do not take holidays during term time.
- Plan quality time off and be aware of stress levels.

- Students should work increasingly in silence with no electronic distractions.

Parent View

If you would like to share your positive experiences with Ofsted, please follow the QR link and let them know why you think Prince William School is an excellent school



Good luck!