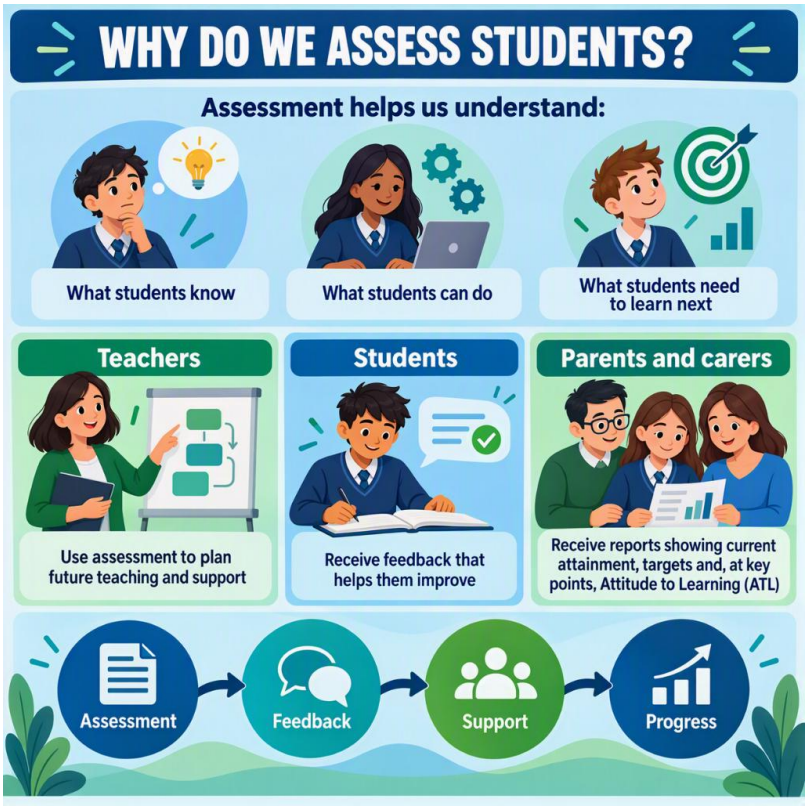
Pershore High School

Parent Guide to Assessment

2026–27



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1. When are students formally assessed?

There are two main assessment points (AP1 and AP2) during the year. The type and timing depend on the year group.

Year	Assessment Point 1	Assessment Point 2
7–9	Class-based / holistic assessment 14–22 Jan 2027	Class-based / holistic assessment 7–18 Jun 2027
10	Class-based / holistic assessment 14–22 Jan 2027	Mock exams 26 Apr–7 May 2027
11	Mock exams 9–19 Nov 2026	Core mock exams 8–11 Mar 2027
12	Class-based / holistic assessment 14–22 Jan 2027	Mock exams 4–7 May 2027
13	Mock exams 9–11 Nov 2026	Mock exams 8–11 Mar 2027

In addition, Years 7–9 complete reading assessments during the first two weeks of September

2. What types of assessment are used?

Class-based / holistic assessments

These give a broad picture of learning. They may include different question types, such as short answers, definitions, multiple-choice questions and longer written responses. They assess knowledge and skills already taught.

Mock examinations

Mock exams give older students experience of formal examination conditions and help teachers judge how securely students can apply their learning across a larger part of the course. At KS3 we try to give students some experience of sitting some of their core (English, Maths, Science) assessments in the exam hall subject to availability.

3. How are targets set?

Targets are intended to be ambitious but realistic. The school uses FFT Aspire information (FFT20), including prior attainment, as a starting point. Teachers may adjust a target where their knowledge of the student provides a clear reason to do so. If prior attainment information is unavailable, teachers set an appropriately ambitious target.

FFT20 helps us answer: “Given this student's starting point, what would an ambitious outcome look like if they were making progress comparable with students in high-performing schools?”

4. Understanding grades and progress

At Pershore High School we award students at each assessment point an age-related grade.

An age-related grade shows the standard a student is working at when the report is produced. It reflects the knowledge and skills expected at that point in their education.

Important: a grade staying the same does not mean that a student has stopped making progress. The curriculum becomes more demanding each year, so maintaining the same age-related standard can represent good, expected progress.

For example, a Year 8 student working at "Thinking" is demonstrating that standard against the more demanding Year 8 curriculum, not simply repeating Year 7 work.



5. How Key Stage 3 grades work

In Years 7–9, reports use four broad descriptors. They show how securely a student is meeting the age-related expectations of the curriculum they are currently studying.

Descriptor	Broad meaning	Link to FFT20 GCSE Grade
Mastering	Very secure understanding and application of age-related learning.	Grade 7 – 9
Thinking	Secure understanding and able to apply learning confidently.	Grade 5 – 6
Knowing	Developing secure knowledge of the age-related curriculum.	Grade 3 - 4
Developing	Still developing important knowledge and skills for the age-related curriculum.	Grade 1 – 2

6. How Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 grades work

In Years 10–13, students receive grades appropriate to their qualification, for example GCSE, A level or vocational grades. A grade represents the age related level at which the student is performing at that assessment point. It should be viewed alongside the student's target and their progress through increasingly challenging course content.

Key Stage 4 Grades

Broad level	Single GCSE	Double / Combined GCSE examples	Typical vocational grade
Level 2 Exceptional pass	9	9–9	Level 2 Distinction*
Level 2 Very high pass	8	9–8 / 8–8	
Level 2 High pass	7	8–7 / 7–7	Level 2 Distinction
Level 2 Very strong pass	6	7–6 / 6–6	Level 2 Merit
Level 2 Strong pass	5	6–5 / 5–5	
Level 2 Standard pass	4	5–4 / 4–4	Level 2 Pass
Level 1 Pass	3	4–3 / 3–3	Level 1 Distinction
Level 1 Mid pass	2	3–2 / 2–2	Level 1 Merit
Level 1 Low pass	1	2–1 / 1–1	Level 1 Pass
Unclassified	U	U–U	Unclassified

Key Stage 5 Grades

Broad level	A-level grade	Extended Certificate equivalent	A-level UCAS points
Exceptional achievement	A*	Distinction* (D*)	56
Outstanding achievement	A	Distinction (D)	48
Very high achievement	B		40
High achievement	C	Merit (M)	32
Secure achievement	D		24
Minimum pass standard	E	Pass (P)	16

7. Attitude to Learning (ATL)

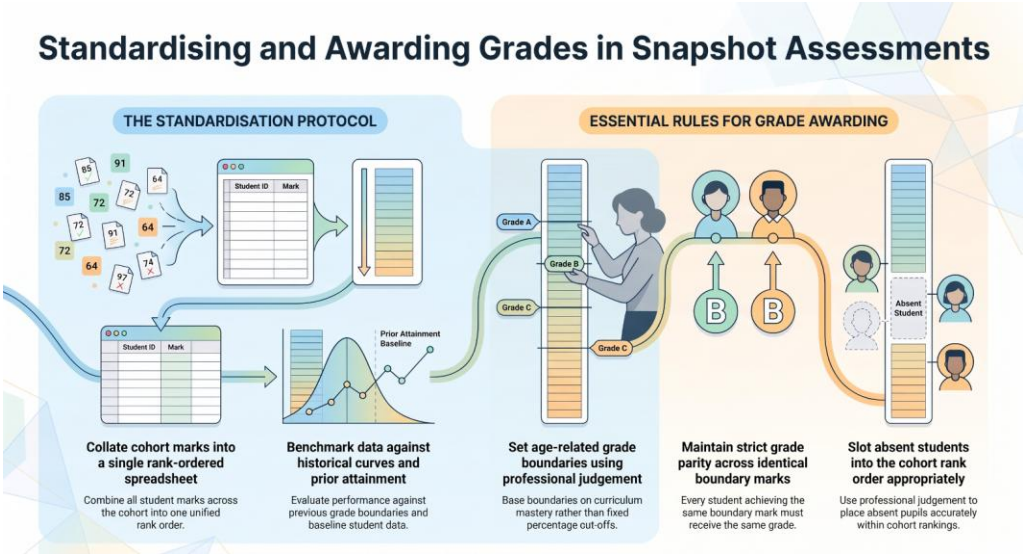
ATL gives parents an indication of a student's approach to learning. It uses a four-point scale linked to Learning@Pershore.

ATL	Meaning
4	Major Strength
3	Strength
2	Scope for Development
1	Priority for Development

Homework and independent learning form part of the overall picture when teachers consider ATL. If a student is regularly not completing homework, their ATL cannot be higher than a 2.

8. How are assessments marked and graded fairly?

Teachers use agreed mark schemes and work together to check that standards are applied consistently. Grades are based on the quality of students' work and appropriate assessment information rather than a single fixed percentage such as "70% always equals a particular grade".



9. How else is my child assessed?

How is my child assessed during lessons?

Helping every child make progress



1 In lessons – formative assessment

Your child is assessed continually as part of everyday teaching. This is known as **formative assessment**. Its purpose is to help teachers understand what students have learned and decide what should happen next.



How do teachers check understanding?

Teachers use a range of strategies to check what students know and understand, including:

- Questioning and class discussion
- Mini-whiteboards
- Quizzes and retrieval activities
- Written or practical activities
- Paired discussion
- Observation while students are working
- Exit questions or short tasks

How do teachers respond?

If a teacher identifies an error, gap or misconception, they can:

- Revisit or adapt an explanation
- Model another example
- Provide additional guided practice
- Adjust scaffolding or support
- Increase the level of challenge
- Give purposeful feedback
- Allow time for students to correct and improve their work

2 Learning Checkpoints

In addition to the regular assessment that takes place in lessons, students complete **Learning Checkpoints** at key points during the year. These are designed to check how securely students have understood and retained the knowledge and skills taught over a period of learning.

Learning Checkpoints may include:

- Written assessments
- Practical tasks
- Extended pieces of work
- Presentations
- Other subject-specific activities

3 How are the outcomes used?

Teachers use the results of Learning Checkpoints to:

- identify strengths and areas for development
- highlight misconceptions or gaps in learning
- adapt future teaching and learning activities
- provide targeted support or challenge where needed
- monitor progress over time

4 Feedback and next steps

Students receive feedback on their performance and, where appropriate, opportunities to revisit and improve their work.

Learning Checkpoints are an important part of the assessment cycle because they help teaching continue to respond to students' needs.

Learning Checkpoints are not designed to catch students out. Their purpose is to help students, teachers and parents understand how learning is progressing and what support may be needed next.

Check → Identify → Respond → Improve
A cycle that helps every child make progress.

10. Reports and parents' evenings: key dates

The dates below are the parent-facing reporting and consultation dates in the 2026–27 assessment calendar.

Year	Reports to parents	Parents' evening
7	Target & reading: w/b 2 Nov 2026 AP1: w/b 8 Feb 2027 AP2: w/b 5 Jul 2027	29 Apr 2027
8	Target & reading: w/b 2 Nov 2026 AP1: w/b 8 Feb 2027 AP2: w/b 5 Jul 2027	13 Apr 2027
9	Target & reading: w/b 2 Nov 2026 AP1: w/b 8 Feb 2027 AP2: w/b 5 Jul 2027	11 Mar 2027
10	Target & ATL: w/b 2 Nov 2026 AP1 & ATL: 9 Feb 2027 AP2 & ATL: w/b 24 May 2027	11 Feb 2027
11	AP1 & ATL: 10 Dec 2026 AP2: w/b 22 Mar 2027	10 Dec 2026 • mock results & parents' evening
12	Target & ATL: w/b 2 Nov 2026 AP1 & ATL: 9 Feb 2027 AP2 & ATL: w/b 24 May 2027	3 Dec 2026 24 Mar 2027 • online
13	AP1 & ATL: 2 Dec 2026 AP2: w/b 22 Mar 2027	3 Dec 2026 24 Mar 2027 • online

11. Reading your child's report

When you receive a report, look at the information together rather than focusing on one grade in isolation:

- Age-related grade or current grade: the standard your child is working at now.
- Target: an ambitious longer-term goal based on prior attainment and teacher knowledge.
- ATL: how positively and consistently your child is approaching learning, where reported.
- Change over time: remember that maintaining an age-related grade shows meaningful progress as the curriculum becomes harder.

12. How parents can help

- Talk to your child about what they have learned and what they found difficult.
- Encourage regular homework, revision and independent study habits.
- Use reports and parents' evenings to discuss strengths, priorities and practical next steps.
- Contact the school if you need clarification about an assessment, grade, target or report.