



Department
for Education

Progress 8 early opt- in

Terms and conditions for schools

June 2014

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Introduction

The Department for Education is offering secondary schools the opportunity to opt in to the new accountability system, based upon the Progress 8 measure one year early, in 2015. This new measure is designed to encourage schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum at key stages 3 and 4, and reward schools for the teaching of all their pupils well. By opting in early to Progress 8 schools can benefit earlier from this fairer way of being held to account.

The new measure will be based on pupils' progress measured across eight subjects: English; mathematics; three other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages); and three further subjects, which can be from the range of EBacc subjects, or can be any other approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualification.

Progress 8 will be introduced for all secondary schools in 2016 (based on 2016 exam results, with the Progress 8 score showing in performance tables published in early 2017). From 2016, the floor standard will be based on schools' results on the Progress 8 measure.

Schools that want to get a head start on preparing for the introduction of the new accountability system can do so by opting in to Progress 8 in 2015. The following sections of this document set out the elements of the new Progress 8 measure which schools can opt in to, and the timing and mechanism for doing so.

Elements of the opt-in

By opting in to the new accountability system, based upon the Progress 8 measure, for exams taken in 2015 schools are agreeing to:

- a floor standard based on Progress 8;
- data in performance tables (to be published in early 2016) that will reflect the new Progress 8 measures;
- Ofsted taking Progress 8 opt-in status in to account during school inspections.

Floor standards based on Progress 8

Schools opting in to Progress 8 a year early agree to be subject to new floor standards based on Progress 8. Under the new measure a school will be below the floor standard if their Progress 8 score is below -0.5^1 , unless the confidence interval² suggests that the school's underlying performance may not be below average. If a school's performance falls below this floor standard, then the school may come under scrutiny through inspection. An opt-in school could therefore be above the floor if it made sufficiently good progress on this measure even where it did not achieve 40% 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent), including English and mathematics (the current headline performance measure). Conversely an opt-in school could be below the floor if it did not make sufficiently good progress on this measure even where it did achieve 40% 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent), including English and mathematics.

Data in performance tables

Schools opting in to Progress 8 a year early agree to have Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores based on 2015 exam data published in the school performance tables (in early 2016). The current performance measures in the tables will continue to be published for all schools so that parents can make comparisons between all schools, regardless of whether they have opted in or not. In addition, for opt-in schools we propose to publish:

- Attainment 8 and Progress 8 (with confidence intervals) as the headline measures;

¹ A Progress 8 score of -0.5 indicates that the average achievement of a school's pupils is half a grade worse per subject than other pupils with the same prior attainment. Further details of the floor standard based on Progress 8 can be found in *Progress 8 measure in 2016: Technical guide for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools*, available at GOV.uk

² Information about how confidence intervals will be calculated is described in Annex B of *Progress 8 measure in 2016: Technical guide for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools*, available at GOV.uk

- a breakdown of the four constituent elements of the new measure: English, mathematics, other EBacc qualifications, other qualifications (split to show vocational and non-vocational);
- disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged breakdown on the four elements above.

To help schools prepare for the change to an accountability system based on the Progress 8 measure we will share 2014 shadow data with all secondary schools in early 2015. This shadow data will show how a school would have performed against the Progress 8 measure for exams taken in 2014. This data will be shared directly with schools but not published in performance tables. Schools that are undecided about opting in will be able to use this data to help inform their decision on whether to do so.

Ofsted inspections

Ofsted factor in the individual circumstances of all schools when inspecting, and this will remain the case for Progress 8 opt-in schools. Inspectors will be fully briefed on the opt-in process. When considering the 2015 results, inspectors will be aware of the school's opt-in status. In all inspections, they will continue to make professional judgements based on a broad range of data and all other evidence gathered.

Additional information

Information and technical guidance on Progress 8

Further information on Progress 8, including detailed information on the method of calculating the Progress 8 score and the approved qualifications for the measure can be found on GOV.uk.

Timing

Schools will be able to opt in to the new Progress 8 measure from 23 June 2014 until 30 June 2015.

Authority to opt in

Headteachers/ principals should be aware of the details of the Progress 8 measure and must secure agreement of their governing body or academy trust before opting in to Progress 8 and the associated elements of the opt-in outlined above. The opt-in website asks headteachers/principals to confirm that these steps have been taken in addition to asking for agreement to the terms and conditions.

New schools

For converter academies a previous agreement to opt-in will transfer to the academy automatically and no further action will be required. For sponsored academies and any other type of new school this will not be the case, and the new administration will need to opt-in via the website.

Queries on Progress 8 opt-in

If you have queries about opting in to the Progress 8 accountability measure you can send them to Progress8.Correspondence@education.gsi.gov.uk.



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