



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT (ACADEMIC) POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2026

INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the School's approach to the academic assessment of student progress, and the reporting of that progress, to parents and students.

The key underlying principles are openness, equity and timeliness. The process is intended to avoid the delayed communication of any significant issues so that parent meetings and reports do not contain unwelcome surprises. Parents (and indeed students) should feel able, at any time, to contact the relevant academic teacher about any concerns affecting progress. Likewise, staff will speak with a student and contact parents, if necessary, when they do not feel it is appropriate to delay a discussion until the next formal meeting or report.

It is the intention of The Royal Ballet School to assess progress based on clear criteria and with due regard to performance in class and in prep (homework) as well as in formal assessments (exams/tests).

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment of a student's academic progress, is ongoing. It takes place in class and in prep on a daily and weekly basis. This is known as formative assessment and is about the continuous process of a teacher providing feedback to a student on what is going well, and what requires further work. At certain points in the School year this formative assessment is underpinned by a summative assessment, or what might be called a 'test' or 'exam' in academics, or a 'quantifiable' record of the standard of a student's work at that point in time, perhaps in the form of a written report.

Academically the key summative assessment points, (whether external, such as (I)GCSEs, or internal) are spread throughout the year although the main examinations tend to be in the summer term. For the Degree, which forms the core of the academic programme at Upper School, there are regular assessment deadlines. Students choosing examination subjects on the non-degree/enrichment programme will have regular assessments provided by and marked by their online providers. EPQ student assessments are ongoing.

Academically, students are taught by following Schemes of Work that facilitate progress and enable students to meet the relevant assessment requirements throughout their education. The standard of work in each year will become more demanding. For example, the work undertaken in Year 9 will be more challenging than that in Year 8. Some years will have a bigger 'step-up' in standard than others. An example of this which might be familiar to all would be a student who works very hard and does really well to get a level 5 pass at GCSE Maths but who would still not meet the desired requirement for studying Maths at A Level. To be successful at A Level Maths a student would usually need at least a level 7, (or better), pass at GCSE.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

The academic assessment process is based on the regular measurement of Attainment, (the achievement of appropriate academic standards at each stage of a student's education), and Effort (the focus, determination and level of independent study given to the completion of academic tasks).

In both cases the grades awarded will be a combined measurement of ongoing work in both class and prep (homework). After the internal exams in the summer the % mark or grade equivalent obtained by the student in each subject will also usually be given. All students are allocated an Academic Tutor who will monitor their progress on a regular basis and support a student with reviewing their individual progress once a term.

It is important to remember that even when Effort grades are high a student may still not achieve the top grade for attainment. Although high levels of effort will generally improve attainment grades, and although good teaching will also help enable students to do better than they might otherwise, still, not every student will be able to get to get a top attainment grade. We aim to ensure that every student secures the best possible grade that they can, to reflect their hard work and the high quality of teaching provided.

When a student joins the School in Years 8 to 10 we undertake a form of baseline testing. Current Years 8, 9 & 10 take the GLA tests. The GLA tests are nationally standardised tests, (for which there is no need to prepare), that provide an indication of likely GCSE outcomes based on a student's ability at that point in time. Schools use this baseline data to measure what is called 'Value Added'. When GCSE results are published, these are compared to the GLA predictions and the Value Added calculated by GLA. The result is standardised across the national cohort. For many years, the Value Added at GCSE for The Royal Ballet School has shown that the majority of students do significantly better than a student of similar ability would have done at another, similar School. Where necessary, students joining the School will also undertake additional literacy screening to ensure that we can provide the appropriate support on an ongoing basis where needed.

All academic assessment and teaching will take account of any specific learning needs of a student. Please advise us of any concerns that you may have or any previous assessment of learning needs so that we may make appropriate provision to support your son or daughter. If we observe any concerns in this regard we will speak to parents in order to assess any future need for additional support, access arrangements for exams and so on. Parents, and students, are encouraged to speak with their Academic Tutor, their Head of Year or indeed any teacher about any academic matter of concern. Staff are always happy to help.

All students at The Royal Ballet School are highly talented and they are offered a place at the School purely based on their ability and potential in classical ballet. Some of our students also have very high academic ability in some or all subjects, and other students may find conventional academic study a challenge. Academically, therefore, we are truly an all-ability School. All academic departments are experienced at teaching across this all-ability spectrum with suitable provision being made for both the least and most academically able in each subject. Highly able and gifted students will be stretched in the classroom and those less so, will be supported in making the best possible progress.

GRADE EXPECTATIONS

Effort

Grade	Code	Descriptor
Outstanding	O	A student who applies a consistently high level of energy and effort to all tasks both in class and in prep, regardless of outcome. The student frequently and consistently demonstrates their own initiative and is able to offer their own solutions to any learning barriers that they might face.
Good	G	A student who applies themselves well in the majority of class and prep learning tasks, completing the majority of them to the best of their ability and taking into account any learning needs.
Requires Improvement	R	A student who can work well and completes tasks in class and in prep to the expected standard. However, greater consistency in application, concentration and/or organisation is required.
Concern	C	A student who does not show sufficient commitment in the subject which has an impact on their own learning and possibly that of their peers. They may give up easily, and lack the discipline to complete all tasks.

Attainment (KS3-Years 8/9)

Grade	Code	Descriptor
Exceeding	E	The student consistently exceeds the level of knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age at The Royal Ballet School.
Meeting	M	The student consistently reaches the level of knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age at The Royal Ballet School.
Approaching	A	The student is closely approaching the level of knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age at The Royal Ballet School.
Working Towards	W	The student continues to work towards the level of knowledge skills and understanding expected for their age at The Royal Ballet School.

Academic departments produce a bespoke set of descriptors which outline the expected knowledge, skills and understanding that a typical student at The Royal Ballet School is expected to achieve by the end of that year. Attainment grades recorded during the year are relevant to what has been studied in the previous reporting period, and should not be read as the student being assessed on all elements of the department descriptors. A full set of all department descriptors are sent to parents at report time.

Attainment (KS4-Years 10/11)

Level	Grade Descriptor
9	A student consistently achieves an outstanding standard of work, in class and prep, if applicable.
8	A student consistently achieves an excellent standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
7	A student routinely achieves a very good standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
6	A student routinely achieves a good standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
5	A student regularly achieves a satisfactory standard of work in class and prep, if applicable.
4	A student occasionally achieves a satisfactory standard of work but there may be some limitations in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
3	A student is rarely achieving a satisfactory standard of work in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
2	A student is very rarely achieving a satisfactory standard of work in class or prep, if applicable, or both.
1	A student's level of achievement in class or prep, if applicable, or both, is unsatisfactory.

Although the numbering of these grades is broadly linked to the GCSE 9-point grading structure, in the context of a School report they should not be read as a predictor of an eventual GCSE grade. The grades awarded in a report reflect attainment in the previous reporting period: they are not a prediction of what might be achieved in the future. In the summer term, grades will reflect attainment and effort over the WHOLE academic year.

A student may have done particularly well in an English topic in the Spring Term of Year 10 that will earn them a Grade 7, but when considering their overall attainment in the subject by the end of Year 11, they may expect to achieve a Grade 6 in the final examination. Conversely, a student in Year 11 may achieve only a Grade 4 in the October report, but still be capable of a Grade 8 in the summer, if the right amount of effort is put in.

In the Autumn Term of Year 11, all students will be issued with Current Anticipated Grades based on the evidence of attainment and effort up to that point. This might be a split grade (e.g. 6/7). After the GCSE mocks in January of Year 11, the students will be given a target grade in addition to the grade that they have achieved in the mock examination. These grades are used for references provided to other Schools. It is, therefore, vital that students understand the importance of revising and preparing thoroughly for these mock examinations.

The cycle of Subject, Academic Tutor, peri music and House reports is outlined in the table overleaf:

ACADEMIC REPORT TIMINGS AND PARENT MEETINGS

	October	November	December	February	Easter	June	July
Year 8	Short Report	<i>Parent Meeting</i>		Short Report			Full report
Year 9			Short Report		<i>Parent Meeting</i> Short Report		Full Report
Year 10			Short Report	<i>Parent Meeting</i>	Short Report		Full Report
Year 11	Short Report		<i>Parent Meeting</i>	Full Report		Valedictory Report	
1st Year (Yr12)			Short Report <i>Parent Meeting</i>		Full Report	Short report	
2nd Year (Yr13)			Short Report <i>Parent Meeting</i>		Full Report		

Full Report – Attainment & Effort grades, Subject, Academic Tutor & House comments.

Short Report - Attainment & Effort grades for each subject, optional Subject comments, short Academic Tutor & House comments.

Full and Short Reports will both include Instrumental/Voice reports.

Valedictory Report – Academic Tutor, House Comments & Academic & Pastoral Principal's remarks only.

Reports will not be written for the PE and Healthy Performer Programmes as these are co-curricular activities. Studies in Religion will only report in the spring and summer term