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National School Categorisation System

Guidance document for schools, local authorities and regional consortia

Guidance

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National School Categorisation System

Guidance document for schools, local authorities and regional consortia

Audience

Primary schools; middle schools; secondary schools; special schools; governing bodies of maintained schools; local authorities; diocesan authorities; regional consortia; challenge advisers; Estyn; teaching unions; national bodies with an interest in education; and members of the public.

Overview

This guidance document for schools, local authorities and regional consortia explains in detail the steps of the National School Categorisation System – outcome indicators; self-evaluation and capacity to self-improve in relation to leadership and learning and teaching; and categorisation and level of support, challenge and intervention.

Action required

Challenge advisers are required to fully understand the framework for evaluating current school performance and the capacity to improve performance in the future so that they can apply the framework when evaluating schools.

Further information

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Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at gov.wales/schoolcategorisation

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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Introduction

The National School Categorisation System was introduced in September 2014. The system, which covers both primary schools and secondary schools, brought together the Programme for Government commitment to introduce a primary school banding system and built on the improvements achieved by secondary school banding. Both secondary school banding and the commitment to introduce primary school banding were superseded by the National School Categorisation System.

Robert Hill's report *The future delivery of education services in Wales* (2013) noted that regional consortia should achieve a common understanding of how to apply a four-level categorisation to measure schools' performance. As part of the agreed National Model for Regional Working, Welsh Government, local government, regional consortia and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) have worked together to ensure a national approach to the categorisation of schools.

This system has a clear focus on the quality of leadership, learning and teaching in our schools.

The system evaluates and assesses schools and places them in a support category using the following information:

- a range of quantitative outcome indicators
- robust self-evaluation by the school of its capacity to improve in relation to leadership and learning and teaching
- assessment of the school's self-evaluation by challenge advisers in the regional consortia, agreed with the local authority.

After the outcome indicators and self-evaluation information have been analysed a draft support category is agreed in discussion with the school. This category is moderated by the local authority and a regional moderation board to ensure consistency. There is also a national verification process involving a Quality and Standardisation group (QSG) which includes representatives from the four regional consortia and the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW). Representatives from Welsh Government and workforce unions attend in an observer capacity.

In February 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Education announced a fundamental review of our education accountability system, and set out a vision of a new system that is fair, coherent, proportionate, transparent and based on our shared values for education in Wales.
Ensuring coherence was a key finding in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) rapid policy assessment The Welsh Education Reform Journey (2017).

While recognising our important progress towards a long-term vision for education in Wales, it made a number of recommendations aimed at supporting us on our journey of continuing improvement. One of the report's recommendations was the need for Wales to move towards a new system of assessment, evaluation and accountability that aligns with the new curriculum. By removing the calculation of a standards group based on school performance data (step one) altogether, we have taken a step towards this.

Regional consortia will continue to look at schools' data, including that which was previously part of step one, and it will continue to be used to form the starting point of discussions within the school, and with their challenge adviser, about their capacity to improve in relation to leadership, learning and teaching.

The following terminology is used to describe the outcomes of each step of the categorisation process.

Step one: Outcome indicators – no standards group will be published for 2018/19.

Step two: The outcome will be a judgement about a school's improvement capacity (A–D).

Step three: This will lead to a support category for each school (green, yellow, amber, red).

This guidance document for schools, local authorities and regional consortia explains in detail the three steps of the National School Categorisation System – outcome indicators; self-evaluation and capacity to self-improve in relation to leadership and learning and teaching; and overall support category 2018/19. A guidance document for parents/carers is available separately and schools are encouraged to make parents/carers aware of this guide aimed at them specifically and to include it on any school website

Step one: Outcome indicators

Regional consortia will continue to look at schools' outcome indicators to inform step two discussions around the school's self-evaluation and their capacity to improve in relation to leadership, learning and teaching.

Changes that affect the outcome indicators available for 2018–19:

Since 31 July 2018 the Welsh Government has stopped routinely publishing teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Tests data at a school, local authority and consortia level. This data is no longer included in the School Comparative Reports and All Wales Core Data Sets.

These changes apply to the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in all primary and secondary schools maintained by Welsh local authorities. As a result of these changes, the Welsh Government will no longer provide outcome indicators to inform primary school categorisation from this year onward.

Schools, governing bodies and local authorities will continue to have access to their own data alongside national level data to evaluate how they are performing and to inform their planning.

Primary schools

No outcome indicators will be published by the Welsh Government for primary schools due to the changes highlighted above. Schools will continue to have access to their own data alongside national level data to inform their discussions with Challenge Advisers as part of step two of the categorisation process. The outcome indicators that we would expect schools to use are in line with those that the Welsh Government have provided in previous years.

They are as follows:

The outcome indicators for primary schools are measured against four groups of data, based on teacher assessment and attendance data:

- Overall achievement
- First language
- Mathematics
- Attendance.

For the Foundation Phase, the outcome indicators used relate to performance in language and mathematics at the expected outcome (Foundation Phase Outcome 5) or above, and one outcome higher than the expected outcome (Foundation Phase Outcome 6) or above.

For Key Stage 2 the outcome indicators used relate to performance in language and mathematics at the expected level (National Curriculum Level 4) or above and one level higher than the expected level (National Curriculum Level 5) or above.

Outcome indicators

There are six outcome indicators in total for primary schools, which are made up of the following categories.

Overall achievement

- Percentage of learners achieving the Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) at the end of the Foundation Phase and the core subject indicator (CSI) at the end of Key Stage 2.

Language

- Percentage of learners achieving the expected outcome or above in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills (English or Welsh) at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level or above in English or Welsh first language at the end of Key Stage 2 (where a learner has been assessed in both English and Welsh first language at the end of Key Stage 2, the highest of the two is counted).
- Percentage of learners achieving the expected outcome plus one or above in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills (English or Welsh) at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level plus one or above in English or Welsh first language at the end of Key Stage 2 (where a learner has been assessed in both English and Welsh first language at the end of Key Stage 2, the highest of the two is counted).

Mathematics

- Percentage of learners achieving the expected outcome or above in Mathematical Development at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level or above in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Percentage of learners achieving the expected outcome plus one or above in Mathematical Development at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level plus one or above in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

Attendance

- Percentage of half-day sessions attended.

Secondary schools

There are no changes to the calculation of outcome indicators for secondary schools this year. However, amendments were made in 2017 in line with the changes recommended by the *Independent Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (2012). These changes are as follows.

Cap on non-GCSEs to threshold measures

From 2017, a maximum of two vocational (non-GCSE) qualifications count towards all threshold measures, depending on size of the qualification (i.e. no more than 40 per cent of the threshold).

The cap on threshold measures applies to the Level 2 inclusive and 5A*–A only. It does not apply to the capped points score.

Literature qualifications in threshold measures

Literature qualifications no longer count towards the literacy elements in the Level 2 inclusive and the points score, but can still count in the non-subject specific elements.

The data that previously informed step one of categorisation will not be used to calculate a standards group for secondary schools. Instead, it will be used to inform discussions as part of step two of the process – the self-evaluation of the school's capacity to improve.

The outcome indicators used to inform discussions for secondary schools are measured against four groups of data, based on examination results and attendance data, as follows:

- Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics.
- Capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics.
- 5+ A*– A, or equivalent.
- Attendance.

Two of these outcome indicators have been developed and calculated specifically for inclusion in the National School Categorisation System – the capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics, and 5+ A*–A or equivalent. These indicators are summarised below.

- Capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics – this is calculated in a similar way to the existing capped points score, except that i) it is capped at a volume of eight GCSE equivalent qualifications, and ii) a learner's best result in English language or Welsh first language and their best result in mathematics (mathematics or mathematics – numeracy) are automatically included, plus the remaining best six qualifications. The remaining best six can include any of the English/Welsh or mathematics qualifications that have not been counted as the learner's best in those subjects. If a learner does not have a qualification in English/Welsh or mathematics then they score zero points for that qualification within the calculation of the points score.
- 5+ A*–A or equivalent – this is similar to the Level 2 threshold measure, but to achieve this indicator a learner must achieve at least five GCSE grades A*–A or equivalent. For non-GCSE qualifications, we calculate an equivalence based on the value of an A grade at GCSE.

Annex A (see page 17) provides a more detailed description of how both indicators are calculated.

More information on Key Stage 4 performance measures can be found on the Welsh Government website at beta.gov.wales/school-performance-measurement-contribution-values-qualifications

Outcome indicators

There are 14 outcome indicators in total for secondary schools which are divided into the following four groups.

Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics

- Overall performance during the previous three years.
- Performance of learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM learners) during the previous three years.
- Relative progress (based on overall performance).
- Performance set against FSM level of the school.

Capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics

- Overall performance during the previous three years.
- eFSM learners' performance during the previous three years.
- Relative progress (based on overall performance).
- Performance set against FSM level of the school.

5+ A*–A or equivalent

- Overall performance during the previous three years.
- eFSM learners' performance during the previous three years.
- Relative progress (based on overall performance).
- Performance set against FSM level of the school.

Attendance

- Current absence set against FSM level of the school.
- Persistent absentees set against FSM level of the school. Persistent absentees are learners who were absent for at least 20 per cent of the mode number of half-day sessions that schools were open to learners (which does not include INSET days).

How the outcome indicators are calculated

For each indicator (except the absence indicator) we calculate a three-year weighted average by adding together the number of learners achieving the outcome over the most recent three years and dividing by the total number of learners over the most recent three years to calculate a percentage.

The data for each individual year is weighted so that the current year is given a weighting of 3, the previous year a weighting of 2 and the year before that a weighting of 1. This can be seen in the following example.

It should be noted that:

- for 2015 step one data, the cohort used in calculations was 'learners aged 15-years-old at the start of the academic year'
- for 2016, 2017 and 2018 step one data, the cohort used for information purposes is 'the whole Year 11 cohort'.

This change is consistent with the recommendations made by the *Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (2012) which is available at

beta.gov.wales/review-qualifications-14-19-year-olds-final-report-and-recommendations and is applied consistently to all Key Stage 4 outcome indicators for 2016 onwards. We will not be applying this retrospectively to previous years' data in order to preserve the robustness of the historical data that has been agreed with schools.

Example 1
Learners achieving the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4

	2016	2017	2018	Weighted total (2016–18)
Year 11 Learners	100	110	90	
Achieving Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics	50	55	50	
Weights	**1**	**2**	**3**	
Weighted learners	100 x 1 = 100	110 x 2 = 220	90 x 3 = 270	100 + 220 + 270 = 590
Weighted achievement	50 x 1 = 50	55 x 2 = 110	50 x 3 = 150	50 + 110 + 150 = 310

Percentage achieving Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics 2016–18 = (310 ÷ 590) x 100 = **52.5 per cent**

Data for absence is based on a single year only.

Calculating measures set against FSM (residuals).

To calculate a residual we first plot the weighted averages from above for all schools against their level of FSM eligibility (the level of FSM is a three-year average, in the same way as that for primary schools). This allows us to then plot a line that describes the relationship between a school's results and its level of FSM eligibility. Historically, there is a negative relationship between FSM and performance – as the level of FSM eligibility increases, the level of achievement decreases.

A school's residual is then calculated as being the percentage point difference (or actual point's difference when looking at the capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics) between their actual results and their 'expected' results, as shown by the line of best fit. If their results for a particular measure are better than expected, they have a positive residual, and if they are poorer than expected they have a negative residual. Further information on the methodology can be found online in this statistical bulletin at gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-free-school-meals/?lang=en

The following worked example explains the process.

Example 2
Take the following three schools' results, regarding the percentage of learners achieving the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics.

School	FSM%	Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics	'Expected' Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics	Residual
A	34.3	36.8	31.2	36.8 – 31.2 = 5.6
B	20.1	68.2	58.2	10.0
C	12.0	57.9	60.4	-2.5

As you can see in the table above, the lower the percentage of learners within the school eligible for FSM, the higher their 'expected' results. Therefore, even though School A's actual results are lower than that of School C, their residual is higher because we have taken into account their higher levels of FSM eligibility. School C has a negative residual because they did not achieve the results we would expect given their level of FSM.

Calculating progress measures

Progress measures are calculated using the overall performance results for each of the last four years (the higher the score the better). We use four years here instead of three (as is the case for the other measures) so that we can calculate year-on-year changes at three different points in time.

We have designed the progress measure to achieve the following.

- Schools that make positive progress year-on-year achieve a higher score than those who do not.
- Schools that make positive progress from a high base score higher than schools that make positive progress but from a lower base. For example, a school progressing from 50 per cent to 55 per cent achieves a higher score than a school progressing from30 per cent to 35 per cent even though both improvements are of the same size.
- Schools with a high level of performance whose performance falls achieve a higher score than a school with a lower level of performance that also falls. For example, a school falling from 70 per cent to 65 per cent gets a higher score than a school that falls from 50 per cent to 45 per cent, even though both falls are of the same size.
- Schools whose performance consistently deteriorates year-on-year achieve lower scores.

Annex A (see page 17) provides a more detailed description of how the progress measures are calculated.

New and amalgamated schools

For new and amalgamated schools, any available outcome indicators will be used to inform discussions as part of step two of the process – the self-evaluation of the school's capacity to improve.

Middle schools or schools catering for learners aged 3 to 16/18

The outcome indicators that previously informed step one of categorisation will not be used to calculate standards groups for school's 3–11 or 11–16/18 provision. Instead, it will be used to inform discussions as part of step two of the process – the self-evaluation of the school's capacity to improve. The data will continue to be used separately, relating to provision for learners aged 3 to 11 and then again to relate to provision for learners aged 11 to 16/18.

In line with current arrangements, only one judgement will be made about the school's improvement capacity and only one relating to its support category.

Nursery, special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs)

The current system will continue – standards groups are not published for these schools. The outcomes of steps two and three will not be published on My Local School for nursery and pupil referral units (PRUs). However, outcomes will be published for special schools in line with current arrangements.

Step two: Self-evaluation and capacity to self-improve in relation to leadership and learning and teaching

Step two consists of a judgement (A–D) based on the school's capacity to self-improve.

Schools where the judgement is A show the greatest capacity to self-improve along with the ability to support other schools. Those where the judgement is D require the most support.

The process of coming to a judgement on the school's capacity to bring about improvement begins with the school's self-evaluation. This is discussed by the regional consortium's challenge adviser with the school's leaders and governors. The judgement should reflect the considered view of the headteacher, governors and the challenge adviser and be supported by evidence. Learners' performance and the judgement about the capacity to improve should be closely aligned.

This judgement indicates the degree of confidence in the school's capacity to drive forward its own improvement. As such, it is a key element in the decision about the level of support the school will require at step three. The national system is intended to strengthen schools' capacity to bring about their own improvement and to contribute to system-wide change.

Framework for self-evaluation and capacity to self-improve

To ensure consistency of approach both within and across regional consortia, a framework has been developed for challenge advisers to guide the judgment on a school's capacity to improve. The framework employs criteria to inform judgments about leadership and the quality of learning and teaching, has regard for the Estyn inspection framework and is used to inform head teachers' performance management. The framework for step two is the same for both primary and secondary schools. Regional consortia may choose to add relevant information, for example from that provided by the local authority, to take proper account of any relevant risk factors. However, the key drivers will be the use of the leadership and learning and teaching criteria.

In coming to a judgement about the school's capacity to self-improve, school leaders and challenge advisers must consider the extent to which a school has:

- the capacity and capability to lead and bring about improvement and implement plans
- need for external support
- a successful track record in managing change, addressing underperformance and responding to recommendations from inspection and from the regional consortium
- a clear vision, priorities, plans and challenging targets for improvement
- appropriate systems to review progress, monitor and evaluate areas for improvement and take effective action to remedy them
- learning and teaching of high quality learning and teaching strategies which have a positive impact on improving standards
- effective systems for tracking learners' progress and for targeting support effectively.

Leadership and learning and teaching

Challenge advisers use agreed criteria when making a judgment about a school's leadership and learning and teaching. The criteria for leadership and learning and teaching should be used as part of an evidence-based approach to making a judgment about the school's capacity to improve that fits the current position most closely.

The framework and criteria relating to leadership and the quality of learning and teaching can be found at Annex B (see page 27).

We have also asked challenge advisers to take into account the following additional national priority areas when coming to a judgement on step two:

- within school variation
- school-to-school working
- improving teaching performance
- the use and impact of early entry of GCSE exams
- Key Stage 5 provision and outcomes.

The Quality and Standardisation Group issued an addendum to their categorisation guidance in 2017 to reflect this, and training has been provided to all challenge advisers across Wales to ensure consistency in evaluating how well schools are meeting national priorities.

The relationship between step one and step two

As step one is no longer published, the national school categorisation matrix previously used in identifying a school's support category will no longer be used. Regional consortia will look at schools' outcome indicators to inform step two discussions and as part of this, an evaluative commentary on the school's performance will be completed.

Challenge advisers should continue to be assured that all school leaders use their performance data robustly and effectively. This includes governors, headteachers, middle leaders and subject leaders. There must be evidence of the effective and timely use of accurate data at individual learner, class, group, cohort, subject and whole-school level including careful consideration of additional learning needs (ALN) and eFSM learners.

Step three: Overall support category

Overview

The outcome of informed discussions using outcome indicators and step two will be used to determine the school's support category (step three of the process). The final categorisation will be based on a colour-coding system, this will be discussed with the school and agreed with the local authority.

The categorisation colour indicates the level of support a school requires – green, yellow, amber or red (with the schools in the green category needing the least support and those in the red category needing the most intensive support). Each school will receive a tailored programme of support, challenge and intervention based on this category.

The support category along with the outcomes for step two will be published annually on the My Local School website (mylocalschool.gov.wales).

The level of support available for each category is as follows.

Green support category
A school in this category will receive up to 4 days of support.

Yellow support category
A school in this category will receive up to 10 days of support.

Amber support category
A school in this category will receive up to 15 days of support.

Red support category
A school in this category will receive up to 25 days of support.

Each challenge adviser will determine the nature of the bespoke support package to be provided to each school according to need which may result in the allocation of additional support days. This additional support could be delivered by a range of providers.

Moderation and verification of categorisation outcomes

A process of regional moderation and national verification is applied to ensure consistency in the implementation of the National School Categorisation System across Wales. Regional moderation is undertaken by the local authority and a regional moderation board to ensure consistency. The national verification process is run by the Quality and Standardisation Group, which is made up of representatives from the four regional consortia and the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW). Representatives from Welsh Government and workforce unions attend in an observer capacity. Further information about the regional moderation and national verification process is provided in the following paragraphs

Regional standardisation and moderation process

Principles
The regional standardisation and moderation processes will:

- secure consistent implementation of the national categorisation system across all four regional consortia and their respective local authorities so that all stakeholders have confidence in the procedures and their outcomes
- be fair, rigorous, open and transparent;
- identify and share best practice
- provide feedback and recommendations to refine and improve the process in future years.

Regional Moderation Board (RMB)
The Managing Director in each of the four consortia will nominate a senior officer to act as Regional Lead Moderator (RLM). The RLM will attend all moderation meetings and represent the region on the National Quality and Standardisation Group.

A RMB will be established within each consortium to undertake the moderation process.

The RMB will:

- comprise of the senior leaders in the consortium overseeing the work with each local authority, a representative Director/Chief Education Officer from within the region and Headteacher representation from primary, secondary and special schools
- ensure that all members of the board have the appropriate skills and knowledge and are suitably prepared
- determine the number of moderation meetings it intends to hold and whether the meetings are to be held in each of the constituent local authorities or at consortium level.

Procedure
The outcomes of the categorisation process for all schools should be completed before the first moderation meeting.

The RMB will consider a 5% or a minimum of 30 schools (whichever is greater) from across the Consortium to include:

- schools that represent each of the four judgements about improvement capacity

- schools that represent each of the four support categories.

And in addition to the above the RMB will also consider:

- any schools that have submitted an F1 Disagreement (appeal) Form.

Timing
Challenge advisers should agree a provisional step two and step three category by the beginning of December for all schools. Any F1 Disagreement Form must be submitted at least two weeks before the regional moderation. The regional moderation process will be completed by the end of the Autumn term.

The national verification process should be completed in January.

The national verification process

This process will be undertaken by the Quality and Standardisation Group. This group will:

- be chaired and organised by a Director of Education/Chief Education Officer as nominated by ADEW
- comprise the Chair and the four nominated regional Lead Moderators, a representative from Welsh Government and Trade Union representatives (as observers)
- meet over a two-day period to allow sufficient time to scrutinise the 5% sample or minimum of 30 schools selected by each region
- sample the outcomes of the regional moderation process to verify its consistency, quality and rigour
- provide written feedback and recommendations to each region.

The sample will include:

- schools that represent each of the four judgements about improvement capacity
- schools that represent each of the four support categories
- all F1s.

Timing
The National Verification process is completed in January 2019.

Annex A: Stages in the methodology for calculating secondary school outcome indicators

This annex provides further detail on how some of the outcome indicators for secondary schools are calculated, including the calculation of the capped points score including English/Welsh first language and mathematics, 5+ A*–A or equivalent and the progress measures.

Calculation of outcome indicators for secondary schools

There were three changes introduced in 2017 which arose from the *Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (2012) and remain in place for 2018. These affect the Level 2 inclusive and the capped points score measures used to inform discussions.

1. English or Welsh literature do not count in the mandatory parts of the Level 2 inclusive or capped points score
2. Only the new WJEC specifications in English, Welsh first language and mathematics will be counted in all measures. Equivalent qualifications from other boards will not count.
3. There is a cap of 40 per cent on the contribution of vocational qualifications towards the Level 2 inclusive and 5A*–A so to get the Level 2 inclusive a learner has to have at least three GCSE grades A*–C. The minimum in the past was two GCSE grades A*–C. This does not affect the point scores.

In addition, the minimum standard for those eligible for free school meals (eFSM) for the Level 2 inclusive is being increased to 34 per cent in line with previous communications.

To find out more information on which qualifications can contribute towards these measures their values in terms of performance measurement then please visit the Qualifications in Wales website at https://www.qiw.wales/

Capped points score including English/Welsh and mathematics

The capped points score for 15-year-olds includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales. A learner's best result in English language or Welsh language and their best result in mathematics is included, plus the other best six qualifications to make a total of eight.

Learners who do not achieve a pass in these subjects receive a score of zero for that subject.

Stage one

Qualifications are compared to the size of a GCSE to determine a volume indicator (i.e. how many GCSEs a qualification is worth). For example, a vocational double award GCSE is twice the size of a GCSE so would have a volume indicator of 2, a short course GCSE would be 0.5.

Learner results

Qualification	Grade	Volume indicator	Total points
GCSE English Language	E	1	28
GCSE Welsh Language	C	1	40
GCSE Mathematics	A*	1	58
GCSE short course	A	0.5	26
Vocational double award GCSE	BB	2	92
Level 2 Certificate in Vehicle Fitting Operations	Pass	5	230
Total		**10.5**	**474**

Stage two

The best qualification in English/Welsh and their best qualification in mathematics is identified and taken out of the calculation temporarily. In this example the grade A* in mathematics and grade C in Welsh Language (highlighted in green above) are taken out. This leaves the following qualifications.

Learner results

Qualification	Grade	Volume indicator	Total points
GCSE English Language	E	1	28
GCSE short course	A	0.5	26
Vocational double award GCSE	BB	2	92
Level 2 Certificate in Vehicle Fitting Operations	Pass	5	230
Total		**8.5**	**376**

Stage three

For the remaining qualifications, the total points for each qualification is divided by the volume indicator to produce a standardised points score. For example, a vocational double award GCSE at grade BB has 92 points. To calculate the standardised points score, we would divide 92 points by the vocational double award GCSE volume indicator of 2 (i.e. 92 divided by 2 = 46). The standardised points score is 46.

Qualifications are then sorted in descending order based on their standardised point scores.

Learner results in descending order

Qualification	Grade	Volume indicator	Total points	Standardised points
GCSE short course	A	0.5	26	52
Level 2 Certificate in Vehicle Fitting Operations	Pass	5	230	46
Vocational double award GCSE	BB	2	92	46
GCSE English Language	E	1	28	28
Total		**8.5**	**376**	**172**

Stage four

Once qualifications are ranked, the volume indicators should be summed until a cap of **six** is reached (it is six and not eight because we have temporarily removed the best qualifications in English/Welsh and mathematics). The total points for qualifications included in the cap should then be summed to produce the capped points score.

Note that the process allows for fractions of qualifications to be included in the cap should a particular qualification extend beyond the cap.

Learner results capped at six

Qualification	Grade	Volume indicator	Cumulative volume	Total points
GCSE short course	A	0.5	0.5	26
Level 2 Certificate in Vehicle Fitting Operations	Pass	5	0.5 + 5 = 5.5	230
Vocational double award GCSE	BB	2	5.5 + 2 = 7.5	25% of 92 = 23*
GCSE English Language	E	1	7.5 + 1 = 8.5	
Total (capped)		**8.5**		**279**

*Only an additional 0.5 is needed to reach the cap of 6 (i.e. 25 per cent of this qualification is required as the volume indicator is 2). Therefore only 25 per cent of the points for that qualification will be included in the capped points score.

The capped points score based on the best six becomes 279 (26 + 230 + 23).

We now add in the points for the best English/Welsh and mathematics qualification to get the total capped points score for the learner. In this example the total is 279 + 58 + 40 = 377.

5+ A*–A or equivalent

This is similar to the Level 2 threshold measure, but to achieve this indicator a learner must achieve at least five GCSE grades A*–A or equivalent. For non-GCSE qualifications, we calculate an equivalence based on 52 points (the value of an A grade at GCSE). So, for example, a vocational qualification worth 208 points would be counted as equivalent to four A grades at GCSE.

The key data items in calculating this item are the Level 2 threshold contribution (as listed on the Database of Approved Qualifications in Wales (DAQW)) and the points for the qualification.

Learner results

Qualification	Grade	Level 2 threshold contribution	Total points
GCSE	A*	20	58
GCSE	E	20	28
GCSE	A	20	52
GCSE short course	A	10	26
GCSE short course	A*	10	29
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	40	104
Entry level qualification	E1	0	10
BTEC	Pass	80	160
Total		**200**	

To calculate this indicator we split the qualifications into three groups.

Group 1: For qualifications where the Level 2 threshold contribution is greater than or equal to 20

Stage 1a

Divide the Level 2 threshold contribution for that qualification by 20 in order to calculate the GCSE equivalence of each qualification.

		(a)	(b) = (a) ÷ 20
Qualification	**Grade**	**Level 2 threshold contribution**	**GCSE Equivalence**
GCSE	A*	20	1
GCSE	E	20	1
GCSE	A	20	1
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	40	2
BTEC	Pass	80	4

Stage 1b

Divide the points for each qualification by the GCSE equivalence calculated in stage 1a, to calculate a GCSE points equivalence.

		(b)	(c)	(d) = (c) ÷ (b)
Qualification	**Grade**	**GCSE equivalence**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**
GCSE	A*	1	58	58
GCSE	E	1	28	28
GCSE	A	1	52	52
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	2	104	52
BTEC	Pass	4	160	40

Stage 1c

Divide the GCSE points equivalence by 52 (the value of a grade A at GCSE) to calculate a points equivalence in A*–A terms.

		(b)	(c)	(d)	(e) = (d) ÷ 52
Qualification	**Grade**	**GCSE equivalence**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**	**GCSE A*–A points equivalence**
GCSE	A*	1	58	58	1.1
GCSE	E	1	28	28	0.5
GCSE	A	1	52	52	1
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	2	104	52	1
BTEC	Pass	4	160	40	0.8

Stage 1d

Round the result of stage 1c (the GCSE A*–A points equivalence) down to the **nearest whole number**. This ensures that qualifications worth less than a grade A cannot count towards this measure. In our example, we would not want the grade E at GCSE to count 0.5 towards the overall indicator.

		(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f) = (e) rounded down to nearest whole number
Qualification	**Grade**	**GCSE equivalence**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**	**GCSE A*–A points equivalence**	
GCSE	A*	1	58	58	1.1	1
GCSE	E	1	28	28	0.5	0
GCSE	A	1	52	52	1	1
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	2	104	52	1	1
BTEC	Pass	4	160	40	0.8	0

Stage 1e

Multiply the result of stage 1d (column f) by the GCSE equivalence (column b) to calculate the contribution of each qualification to the 5+ A*–A or equivalent indicator.

		(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g) = (f) x (b)
Qualification	**Grade**	**GCSE equivalence**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**	**GCSE A*–A points equivalence**		**5+ A*–A Contribution**
GCSE	A*	1	58	58	1.1	1	1
GCSE	E	1	28	28	0.5	0	0
GCSE	A	1	52	52	1	1	1
Vocational double award GCSE	AA	2	104	52	1	1	2
BTEC	Pass	4	160	40	0.8	0	0
Total							**4**

From this stage of the calculation, the learner has achieved the equivalent of four GCSE grades A*–A.

Group 2: All qualifications where the Level 2 threshold contribution is greater than 0 but less than 20

Qualification	Grade	Level 2 threshold contribution	Total points
GCSE short course	A	10	26
GCSE short course	A*	10	29
Total		**20**	

This group of qualifications needs to be treated differently to ensure that grades A*–A at GCSE short course can contribute to the 5+ A*–A or equivalent indicator.

Stage 2a

Divide the points for the qualification by 52 (the value of a grade A at GCSE) to calculate a GCSE points equivalence for each qualification.

			(a)	(b) = (a) ÷ 52
Qualification	**Grade**	**Level 2 threshold contribution**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**
GCSE short course	A	10	26	0.5
GCSE short course	A*	10	29	0.6

Stage 2b

The result of stage 2a will be a fraction between 0 and 1. If the fraction is greater than or equal to 0.5, set to 0.5. Otherwise, set to 0.

			(a)	(b) = (a) ÷ 52	(c)
Qualification	**Grade**	**Level 2 threshold contribution**	**Total points**	**GCSE points equivalence**	**5+ A*–A or equivalent contribution**
GCSE short course	A	10	26	0.5	0.5
GCSE short course	A*	10	29	0.6	0.5
Total					**1**

Group 3: All qualifications where the Level 2 threshold contribution is equal to 0

For all such qualifications, set the 5+ A*–A or equivalent contribution equivalence to 0.

Qualification	Grade	Level 2 threshold contribution	Total points	5+ A*–A or equivalent contribution
Entry level qualification	E1	0	10	0
Total				**0**

Calculating the 5+ A*–A or equivalent indicator

Once the above three stages have been completed, we sum the 5+ A*–A or equivalent contribution from each stage. If the result of this calculation is 5 or more, then the learner will have achieved 5+ A*–A or equivalent. In our example, Stage 1 = 4, Stage 2 = 1 and Stage 3 = 0 for a total of 5, so this learner has achieved the indicator.

Progress measures

Take the following schools' results for the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Year	School A	School B
2015	50	25
2016	55	22
2017	52	29
2018	60	30

Stage 1: Calculate year-on-year differences for each school

Year	School A	School B
2015–16	55 – 50 = 5	22 – 25 = -3
2016–17	52 – 55 = -3	29 – 22 = 7
2017–18	60 – 52 = 8	30 – 29 = 1

Stage 2: Calculate an adjustment factor

The progress made year-on-year in stage 1 is adjusted to reflect how far away the school is from the maximum possible score (100 per cent in this example for Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh first language and mathematics) and whether the progress made has been positive or negative.

If a school makes positive progress then the adjustment factor is calculated as follows.

X2018 ÷ 100 (where 2018 denotes the last year in the calculation)

The closer the school is to the maximum score of 100, the higher the adjustment factor will be (as in School A). Conversely, the closer the school is to 0, the lower the adjustment factor will be (as in School B).

If a school makes negative progress then the adjustment factor is as follows.

(100 – X2018) ÷ 100

Schools who make negative progress but from a high base (as in School A) will get a lower adjustment factor than schools who make negative progress from a lower base (as in School B). This ensures that performance that deteriorates from a high base is not overly penalised.

Applying these adjustment factors to each of the progress scores calculated in stage 1 gives the following.

Year	School A			School B		
	Raw performance in last year	Progress	Adjustment	Raw Performance in last year	Progress	Adjustment
2015–16	55	5	= (55 ÷ 100) = 0.55	22	-3	= (100 – 22) ÷ 100 = 0.78
2016–17	52	-3	= (100 – 52) ÷ 100 = 0.48	29	7	= 29 ÷ 100 = 0.29
2017–18	60	8	= (60 ÷ 100) = 0.6	30	1	= 30 ÷ 100 = 0.3

Stage 3: Calculate a score for every year

The progress score is then multiplied by the adjustment factor to calculate an overall score for the year that represents the progress made in that year. Summing these scores gives the overall progress score for the school over the whole period 2015 to 2018.

Year	School A			School B		
	Progress	Adjustment	Score	Progress	Adjustment	Score
2015–16	5	0.55	2.75	-3	0.78	-2.34
2016–17	-3	0.48	-1.44	7	0.29	2.03
2017–18	8	0.6	4.8	1	0.3	0.3
Total			**6.11**			**-0.01**

Annex B: Criteria concerning leadership and learning and teaching to support the judgement about improvement capacity

Improvement capacity A
• Leaders and staff have developed a shared vision and there is a very clear strategy that has improved outcomes for nearly all learners. • Leaders demonstrate a very strong capacity to plan and implement change and sustain improvement successfully in nearly all respects. They engage all staff and other partners very effectively in the change process. • Self-evaluation is accurate, robust, systematic and well established. Self-evaluation is highly effective in contributing to improving standards, learning and teaching. • Leaders and staff are highly effective in their analysis and use of the available performance data and evidence about the quality of learning and teaching and pupils' work to identify strengths and set improvement priorities. • Leaders and staff have a relentless focus on raising standards. Targets reflect high expectations for the future achievement of all pupils and these are met consistently. • The school has a very good track record in raising the achievement of nearly all pupils, including vulnerable learners, over at least a three-year period. • Improvement planning at all levels is highly effective in addressing the areas in need of most improvement. Action, including the use of resources, has led to sustained improvement in outcomes in key indicators for nearly all pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups. • The school has a very strong track record in implementing successfully national and local priorities to improve standards and the quality of learning and teaching. • Leaders and staff work very successfully with schools and other partners to enhance significantly their own and others' capacity to bring about improvement. • Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are highly effective in supporting and challenging the school's performance. • Leaders and staff have well-defined roles and responsibilities, and exhibit high professional standards. • The school's leaders and governors give a high priority to developing the workforce: performance management and professional development are highly successful in improving pupils' progress, classroom practice and dealing with underperformance. • The quality of teaching across the school and the impact on nearly all pupils' learning and progress is consistently good and often excellent. • All staff have a shared understanding of the characteristics of excellent and good teaching and demonstrate these in classroom practice.

Improvement capacity A
(continued) • Processes to lead, identify, validate and share effective practice achieve continuous improvement in the quality of learning and teaching across the school as a whole. • Processes to track pupils' progress, identify needs and provide support are robust and effective in nearly all cases. • Teacher assessment is consistent and accurate.

Improvement capacity B
• Leaders and staff have a shared vision and a clear strategy that has improved outcomes for most learners. • Leaders plan and implement change and sustain improvement successfully in most respects. They enable staff and other partners to participate well in the change process. • Self-evaluation is accurate, regular and thorough in most areas. Self-evaluation makes a strong contribution to improving standards and to learning and teaching. • Most leaders and staff analyse and use performance data, evidence about the quality of learning and teaching pupils' work effectively to identify strengths and improvement priorities. • Leaders and staff have a clear emphasis on raising standards. Through its targets the school has high expectations for the future achievement of its pupils. • The school has a good track record in raising the achievement of most pupils, including vulnerable learners, over at least a three-year period. • Leaders and staff are clear about the priorities that need to be addressed in the school's improvement plan. Action, and the use of resources, are effective in securing improvement in key indicators for most pupils, including for pupils eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups. • The school gives good attention to national and local priorities and in general implements these effectively to improve standards and the quality of learning and teaching. • Leaders and staff take advantage of opportunities to work with schools and other partners. Collaboration is developing well and makes an important contribution to capacity building and improvement. • Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Their work to support and challenge the school's performance is strong. • The roles and responsibilities of leaders and staff are defined and communicated clearly, and professional standards are met successfully in the main.

Improvement capacity B
(continued) • The school's leaders and governors make good provision for developing the workforce. Performance management and professional development are largely successful in improving pupils' progress, classroom practice and in dealing with underperformance. • Most of the teaching and its impact on most pupils' learning and progress is consistently good. • Most staff have a shared understanding of the characteristics of excellent and good teaching and demonstrate these in classroom practice. • Strategies to identify and share effective practice are generally successful in improving learning and teaching across the school as a whole. • Processes to track pupils' progress, identify needs and provide support are robust and effective in most cases. • Teacher assessment is consistent and accurate in the main. •

Improvement capacity C
• The school's leaders have established a vision and strategic objectives. However, there are inconsistencies in how these are shared and understood and their impact on the outcomes learners achieve. • Leaders manage change successfully in some areas. In other areas change is not embedded successfully and so does not lead to sustained improvement. The change process does not always engage staff and other partners sufficiently. • Self-evaluation is effective in some areas but not in others. The contribution of self-evaluation to improving standards, learning and teaching is inconsistent. • The analysis and use of performance data and evidence about the quality of learning and teaching and pupils' work by leaders and staff is not always used well enough to inform strengths and improvement priorities. • Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the need to improve outcomes but targets and expectations for pupils' future achievement are not always challenging enough. • The school's track record in raising pupils' achievement, including that of vulnerable learners, is inconsistent over a three-year period. • Leaders and staff make suitable links between the outcomes of self-evaluation and improvement priorities in a few areas. Planning and the use of resources have impact in some areas but not in others, such as the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups. • The school's leaders take account of national and local priorities but planning does not always have sufficient impact on standards and learning and teaching. • Leaders and staff participate in school improvement activity with schools and other partners but the impact of collaboration on standards and provision is inconsistent. • Governors support the school. They receive relevant information but require support to be fully effective in how they challenge the school to make improvements. • The roles and responsibilities of leaders and staff are defined clearly for the most part but there are inconsistencies in the extent to which professional standards are met and accountability exercised in practice. • The school's leaders and governors do not always make a strong enough link between performance management, professional development and achievement of the school's priorities. The impact on improving pupils' progress, classroom practice and dealing with underperformance varies. • Systems to lead and improve learning and teaching are not fully developed. Variations in the quality of teaching limit pupils' learning and progress in a few areas.

Improvement capacity C
(continued) • The characteristics of good and excellent teaching are well defined but applied inconsistently in classroom practice. • The identification and sharing of effective practice is not yet systematic enough and its impact on improving learning and teaching across the school as a whole is inconsistent. • Processes to track pupils' progress and identify needs lack in rigour in some areas, and support does not always have sufficient impact on the progress pupils make. • There are some inconsistencies in the reliability and accuracy of teacher assessment.

Improvement capacity D
• Work to establish an agreed vision is underdeveloped. As a result there is a lack of clarity in the school's strategic direction and in how this is understood, and insufficient impact on improving learners' outcomes. • Leaders do not demonstrate sufficient capacity to plan and implement change successfully. Management of the change process does not engage staff and other stakeholders effectively. • Self-evaluation lacks rigour and breadth. It makes a limited contribution to improving standards and learning and teaching. • There are wide variations in how leaders and staff analyse and use performance data and evidence about the quality of learning and teaching and pupils' work and limited impact on securing improvement. • There is an acknowledgement of the need to improve outcomes but targets and expectations for pupils' future achievement are too low. Leaders are not always open to challenge or to taking the action required as a result. • The school does not have a strong track record in raising pupils' achievement, including that of vulnerable learners over a three-year period. • Planning lacks detail and does not address clearly enough the specific aspects that require improvement. The pace of improvement is often too slow. Implementation, including the use of resources, has insufficient impact on improving pupils' outcomes in key areas, such as on the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and other vulnerable groups. There is an over-reliance on external support. • Although account is taken of national and local priorities planning to improve standards, learning and teaching is of too variable a quality and has limited impact. • Leaders and staff have limited involvement in worthwhile collaborative activity with schools and other partners and the capacity to benefit from partnership working is underdeveloped. • Whilst governors are supportive of the school as a body they do not have sufficient capacity to challenge the school to make the improvements necessary. • The requirements of roles and responsibilities are not defined clearly enough. The school's leaders do not hold staff to account effectively and there are wide inconsistencies in the extent to which professional standards are met and accountability fulfilled. • Leaders and governors' processes for performance management and professional development have limited impact on improving pupils' progress, classroom practice and in dealing with underperformance. • Work to lead and improve learning and teaching is not planned and implemented effectively. There are significant variations in the quality of teaching that limit pupils' learning and progress in key areas.

Improvement capacity D
(continued) • There is little shared understanding of the characteristics of excellent and good teaching which is reflected in classroom practice. • Good practice is not identified effectively or used to improve teaching across the school as a whole. • Processes to track pupils' progress and identify needs is of variable quality and support has limited impact on the progress pupils make. • There are significant inconsistencies in the reliability and accuracy of teacher assessment.