

FAQs – Key Stage 4 Learning Cycle Review



Q: What is a 'learning cycle?'

A: The school calendar is based around 5 learning cycles (which last 7 weeks each). During each learning cycle 1 formal learning assignment will be completed per subject.

Q: What is a 'learning assignment?'

A: Key assessments that take place once per learning cycle. Teachers give students written feedback to help them improve and students also write a comment evaluating their performance in the assignment. Learning assignments are not usually tests but they do focus on some of the key areas of work covered in the learning cycle.

Q: What does 'attitude to learning' cover?

A: This tells you about your child's effort with work (including home work), organisation and any issues relating to behaviour. Aspects that impact learning have been grouped together in this way to keep the learning cycle review simple.

Q: What is a 'national target grade?'

A: These targets are produced by agencies outside of school. They look at the national picture of what children with similar KS3 SATs results went on to achieve at GCSE level. This information is then used to set a target grade that a child should be aiming for in a good school like King James's! This is not a maximum – some students will exceed their targets.

Q: What is a teacher forecast?

A: It is the grade that the subject teacher thinks your child will achieve at the end of Key Stage 4.

Q: How often will my child get a learning cycle review?

A: Learning cycle reviews will come home once every 7 weeks – at the end of each learning cycle. During this period of time feedback will have been added to the learning logs at the front of students' exercise books. This means that both students and parents receive feedback very soon after key pieces of work.

Q: Are there any written comments?!

A: Written comments to help students improve their understanding are recorded on 'learning logs' at the front of all subject exercise books/files. We've set things up this way so students can refer to helpful feedback in class (instead of on reviews located at home).

The summer term learning cycle review will contain a written comment from form tutors.

Q: What's with the colours?!

A: To make it immediately clear how your child is progressing teachers have used a traffic light scheme to indicate whether they think your child is on track to meet their end of Key Stage target grade.

▲ Green	On track to meet or exceed target grade.
↑ Orange	Almost meeting target grade.
▼ Red	Making less progress than expected.

Q: How concerned should I be about some orange on the review?

A: We are using the traffic light system to indicate potential problems while we can still do something about them. In the first instance discuss the situation with your child. If there seems to be a recurring issue it may be appropriate to contact the relevant teacher directly or make a note for discussion at parents' evening. Remember, we do set challenging targets at KJS!

Q: Why is there a double grade for some subjects?

A: Some students take subjects that count for more than one qualification (e.g. Asdan, Travel & Tourism, Hospitality & Catering). Students are awarded two identical grades for these subjects.

Q: How can I help my child?

A: Parents obviously play a pivotal role in the achievements of their children at school (and in life generally!). Simple ways to place value on your child's education include: checking their planner, talking about what is happening at school and attending parents' evenings. More specifically we would ask you to help maximise the value of the comments in the learning logs by discussing them with your child.

www.king-james.co.uk is a mine of useful links and resources – encourage your child to get the most out of it. As a specialist Technology College pioneering e-learning will continue to be a priority for us! Watch this space.

For further information you may wish to view a copy of the KJS marking policy on the school website (www.king-james.co.uk → 'Parents' → 'Policies').