



WHICKHAM SCHOOL

**Sixth Form Progression
2025-2026**

Policy Review

Last reviewed	By who	Next review
January 2022	S Tumelty	Discretionary
July 2024	L Gainford	July 2025
June 2025	L Gainford	July 2026

It is important to note that the aim of this policy is to support students in achieving their full academic potential by obtaining a set of qualifications which will enable them to progress to Higher Education, Employment or obtain an Apprenticeship.

The majority of students successfully complete their Year 12 and Year 13 courses and progress automatically between Year 12 and Year 13.

Year 12 to Year 13

Students are required (except in exceptional circumstances) to progress onto a study programme of over 580 hours in Year 13. This involves the study of the equivalent of 3 A-level courses in Year 13. For students who are studying the equivalent of 4 A-Level courses in Year 12 this will usually involve deciding which 3 they wish to pursue to completion during Year 13. However, this is reviewed on a student-by-student basis.

Students usually carry on their BTEC courses unless there is significant evidence that they will not be able to complete the examined elements of the qualification. This may be the case where students have failed any externally assessed units in Year 12. Alternatively, there may be evidence that they have fallen significantly behind with coursework units, despite staff support and intervention.

Students are able to carry on any examined course in which they have obtained a graded outcome (not 'unclassified'). Students attaining a grade E or lower will undertake a resit assessment. The school will support any student who does not meet these criteria in investigating alternative curriculum options, which will allow them to progress successfully into Year 13. There are a small number of students who may be suited to a 3-year Post 16 provision, but this will be bespoke to each student and only offered if appropriate.

Situations where a student is not able to progress from Year 12 to Year 13:

- Where they are unable to carry on with courses which would provide a suitable programme of study for them of over 580 hours and where no suitable alternative curriculum can be found.
- Where they have refused to complete one or more compulsory elements of the course (for example, not submitting all the coursework required or refusing to take any examination).

- Where the student has an attendance of less than 90% with no evidence of medical or related conditions.
- Where students have failed the Year 12 resit.

Where a student has not met the criteria to progress into Year 13, it may be appropriate for them to restart Year 12 in the following circumstances:

- An alternative curriculum is available, which is likely to lead to a more successful outcome. Due to the way in which sixth form study is funded, it is not usually possible to repeat more than one course, meaning that the majority of the study programme will be in new subjects or courses.
- Where the student has shown a consistently positive attitude to their studies and is prepared for the challenge of returning to study outside of their peer group. Such students are likely to have had high levels of attendance (other than for medical absence), excellent punctuality, and high levels of engagement as evidenced through our school reporting systems.

Year 13 to Year 14

The vast majority of students in the sixth form complete their studies at the end of Year 13 before moving on to University, Further Education, Employment, or elsewhere.

For a very small number of students, perhaps because of extended medical absence, personal circumstances, or a significantly poorer than expected performance, it can be appropriate to return to Sixth Form for a Year 14. The Head of Sixth Form will make the decision as to whether a student can carry out Year 14.

The school only accepts students into Year 14, where they have been enrolled for the duration of Year 13 at Whickham School.

The school looks at each case individually using the following general principles:

- The student must not be aged 19 before the start of the academic year in which they would study.
- The student must return to study the equivalent of at least 580 hours – this would usually mean studying the equivalent of 3 A-level courses.
- Due to the nature of the funding system, funding is usually only provided for new courses. Students wishing to re-take previous courses will be required to fund their own resources and examination fees.
- The student must show a consistently positive attitude to their studies and be prepared for the challenge of returning to study outside of their peer group. Such students are likely to have had high levels of attendance (other than for medical absence), excellent punctuality, and high levels of engagement as evidenced through our school reporting systems.
- Where a student performed poorly in Year 13, there must be a clear reason why it would be expected that their performance would improve if they returned.

Parents who are unhappy with a decision have the right to appeal.

In the first instance, appeals should be made in writing to the Headteacher within 10 school days of the original decision. The Headteacher will arrange to discuss the appeal (usually within 10 school days). Any parent who is still unhappy with the outcome after meeting with the Headteacher has the right of appeal to The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The appeal must be made in writing within 10 school days.