



WHICKHAM SCHOOL

**Sixth Form Progression
2026-2027**

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
June 2026	L Gainford	July 2027

It is important to note that this policy aims to support students in achieving their full academic potential by obtaining a set of qualifications that will enable them to progress to Higher Education, employment or an apprenticeship.

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

Progression from Year 12 into Year 13

Students are required (except in exceptional circumstances) to progress onto a study programme of over 580 hours in Year 13. This involves studying 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 continue 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 attaining a grade E or lower in end of Year 12 exams will undertake a resit assessment before the end of Year 12. In exceptional circumstances where this has not been possible due to medical reasons, resits must take place at the start of Year 13.

Students can carry on any examined course in which they have obtained a graded outcome (not 'unclassified'). The school will support any student who does not meet these criteria and investigate alternative curriculum options to 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 not completed one or more compulsory elements of the course. Examples include not submitting all the coursework required or not completing end of year examinations or resits.
- Where students have failed a Year 12 resit in a subject.
- Where the student has attendance of less than 90% with no evidence of medical or related conditions.

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 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 a high level of attendance (other than for medical absence), excellent punctuality, and a high level of engagement.

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 complete a Year 14.

The school only accepts students into Year 14 if 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 a high level of attendance (other than for medical absence), excellent punctuality, and a high level of engagement.
- 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.