

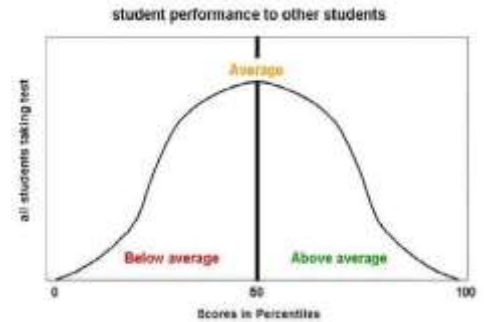
Understanding your child's Report Card

Dear Parents,

Over recent years, parents, students and teachers across Queensland are gradually becoming more familiar with a process for reporting in all schools. The use of a more consistent 5-point scale has been one of the significant developments in our latest **Report Cards** in Queensland.

An **important point** that deserves clarification is that the current 5-point scale **for achievement** we now use has some subtle differences to the old use of the scale. Now, when we see a "Satisfactory" on our child's report card, it means *something a little different* to what it used to mean on our own report cards, many years ago.

In the past, the 5-point achievement scale used a "Bell Curve" distribution system. That meant that a small group of top students in the class got an "Very High", the next group got a "High", and the majority of the class were given a "Satisfactory" and so on until the whole class was represented in accomplishment by a distribution from "Very High" to "Support Required". This meant that it was harder to get a "Very High" for achievement in a school filled with academic students and easier to get one in a school with less academic students. This system is not fair when you look at many schools together.



The new system schools are using refer to attainment standards called "*benchmarks of achievement*" or "*criteria*." So what makes a "Very High", "High", "Satisfactory" etc. is predetermined by a scale of achievement on a device called a "Guide to Making Judgment" (GTMJ). Any student, who shows evidence of meeting a particular level, deserves that benchmark grade. These GTMJ's are also a very important teaching tool for the teacher and students. It is vital these sheets are discussed and taught in detail to the students during the early stages of the Unit of Study so that all terminology and concepts are understood.

This is what you could consider the new difference for a "Satisfactory" really means:

- A "**Satisfactory**" no longer means that the student is simply in the middle of the class. It means that the student has met the criteria for a learner to be at the appropriate age level.
- A "**Satisfactory**" means that the student is doing everything required at their year level at school.
- The best description is to say that a "Satisfactory" means that the student's academic development is exactly where it needs to be. ***That means attaining a "Satisfactory" for Achievement means you are ON TARGET for your age level!***

With all of this in mind, we must accept that it may be harder to get a "Very High" or "High" than it used to be. These grades are no longer awarded simply to the top students in the class. They are only given to students who show that they are independently capable of working beyond the criteria required for their year level.

So what does all the information above mean?

- Many parents are likely to see more "Satisfactory" grades on their child's report cards.
- A "**Very High**" for **Effort** and a "**Satisfactory**" for **Achievement** indicates that your child is "On Target" for their age.
(*This grade should be celebrated with students because it means they have worked hard to be where they need to be.*)
- The "**Effort**" grades are also really important because they are a reflection of how, in the teacher's opinion, the student is working consistently in class in that learning area (English, Maths, Science etc).

If you have any queries, please make time to see your child's teacher.