Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policies

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Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.
'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

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Assessment Policy

Introduction:

An assessment is a tool for making inferences about learning. The College believes that informative assessments – including assessments *of* (summative) and *for* (formative) learning – are central to the learning process. Assessment is a continuous, regular and thorough process. Key opportunities for assessment are set out in schemes of work. Teachers use information from those assessments to create learning intentions that ensure that all students can make good progress. Teachers are encouraged to use a range of assessments to meet the needs of their students.

Assessment informs the targets set to students. References to those targets are included in termly reports to parents and form the basis of discussions with key stakeholders. Assessments also present teachers with an opportunity to identify additional support needs. If a learning need is identified through assessment, teachers should complete the *Referral to Academic Learning Support* form, which is available through the Special Educational Needs Department (SEND) section of the staff Dashboard. Additional details can also be found in the SEND Policy.

Aims and Objectives:

Our approach to assessment and feedback is based on ensuring all key stakeholders know the answers to four key questions:

- How well is this student, or group of students, doing?
- How do we know?
- Is it good enough?
- What next?

Our assessment policy follows the Alpha Plus Group's *'Gold Standard Principles for Assessment'*:

1. All students are capable of learning, and high expectations should apply to all students, as much to those with SEN and disabilities as to other students

2. Good assessment is good teaching

3. Assessment should help students learn

4. Good teachers ask searching and targeted questions

5. Good teaching assesses the whole class all the time

6. Students enjoy assessment

7. Students need learning aims and success criteria

8. Students need to be self-assessors and peer-assessors

9. Feedback needs to intelligible to students

10. Subjects differ: assessment should be consistent, not uniform

11. No assessment is perfectly reliable

12. Better assessment is not the same as more assessment

13. Assess what you value

14. The curriculum should drive the approach to assessment.

Formal Assessments:

Initial Assessments (including ALIS/YELLIS):
All students will have an initial test in their chosen subjects within the first half term. Students will also undertake an ALIS or YELLIS test to indicate their baseline ability record, which will then be used to determine their value-added score, which will be available on SIMS and Canvas. This data will be reviewed by subject teachers, Heads of Department (HoD) throughout the academic year.

A-Level/GCSE Assessment:

Every course will include the following assessments in an academic year:

- Formative Assessments (in-class/outside of class)
- Homework
- Milestones
- Mock/Progression Exams

Formative assessment and homework grades should be recorded on Canvas. Milestones, progression exams and mock exams will be recorded on SIMS.

Formative Assessments:
Formative assessments are set at the teacher's discretion and can take many different forms. These can be set both in lessons and outside of lessons. Where appropriate, teachers should record formative assessment using the Canvas grade book so that teachers, students and HoDs can track student progress over time. There is no requirement for use the feedback pro forma for formative assessments but if this is a substantial piece of work, teachers may want to consider this.

Homework:
Subjects should aim to set homework at least once a week with one substantial piece of assessed homework being set at least once every two weeks. All homework should be set as an assignment on Canvas. There is no requirement to use the feedback pro forma for homework tasks.

Milestones:
Students will undertake a termly milestone test. The milestone test should be a formal assessment that specifically refers to marking criteria, such as a past examination paper. This is used to determine student progress and to set targets in student reports. These tests should be based around exam level assessment and must be marked to exam board standards. This is to provide the student with an opportunity to sit the exam.

Mock Exams/Progression Exams:
All Year 10 and Year 12 students will sit a mock exam or progression exam at the end of the academic year. Heads of Department are responsible for setting the exam papers. The HoD should produce an analysis of the results in their subjects.

BTEC & IFP Assessment:

BTEC Assignments:
Each course provides students with a mix of project-based assessments which typically involve employer links, as well as written tests and online assessments and examinations. There are separate policies that cover BTEC protocols and these are overseen by the Head of Programme.

IFP Exams:
IFP students have three public exams sessions (including the June resits): one in early January and the other in June. The Head of Programme is responsible for organising the writing of the exam papers and ensure compliance with the board requirements.

Student Submission and Dialogue:

Upon submission of work, teachers should encourage students to consider the following questions before they receive feedback:

- Did you complete this work to the best of your ability?
- Did you ask for help if you needed it?
- Did you use your previous targets to help you improve?
- Did you proofread your work to check for errors?

This may form a basis for the feedback dialogue.

After students have received feedback and targets from their teacher, it is expected that they will provide a comment in response. Here are some questions to guide the dialogue that you have with students after they receive feedback:

- If you had to do this assignment again, what would you do differently?
- Were you surprised by any of the feedback?
- Are there any additional resources that you could have used to help you improve?
- How are you organising your time?
- Are you clear on what you need to do to improve?

Comments should be visible through the COMMENTS section on Canvas.

Marking and Feedback Policy

"Feedback aims to reduce the gap between where the student 'is' and where he or she is 'meant to be' – that is, between prior achievement and the success criteria."

Hattie, J (2014)

Introduction:

Marking is a form of assessment and feedback. The school believes that written feedback, including marking, should be positive and encouraging. The aim of marking is to identify the strengths and areas of development for each student against the learning objective being studied. The student should be able to clearly identify the areas that they need to focus on. Marking allows both teachers and students to praise and confirm effort to achieve the success criteria, to identify areas to improve and to promote a growth mindset.

The purpose of feedback is to reduce the discrepancies between current understanding and performance and a desired goal. Feedback aligns the efforts of both student and teacher towards a common goal. This should be linked directly to an achievable outcome. Feedback is not only written but extends to verbal feedback as well. Much of the feedback teachers give is verbal and this should promote a growth mindset through a focus on effort, persistence and deliberate practice. Feedback can also come from sources other than the teachers, such as peers, and this is encouraged.

Aims and Objectives:

Assess what you value; value what you assess.

For teachers
- It provides opportunities to give praise and encouragement and show that we value our students' efforts and work.
- It informs students what they need to do to improve.
- It shows teachers how effective their teaching has been and informs planning.
- It generates data, which can be scrutinised, and provides a record of progress.

For students
- It allows them to understand their strengths and weaknesses and identify steps to improve.
- It encourages students to take ownership of their work and increase autonomy.
- It fosters a culture of resilience and determination so that students can track their own progress over time.

Marking:

- There should be a consistent approach to marking adopted within each subject and the approach should be explained to the students in the first week of term.
- Annotations on student work should be clear and refer directly to Assessment Objectives (AOs) and, ideally, these will be signposted in the margins of the work
- Marks should be available on our learning management system (LMS), Canvas and these can be recorded as raw marks, percentages or complete/complete. BTEC courses may wish to use Pass, Merit and Distinction.

Heads of Department should check regularly that all subject teachers are marking to the same standard. Marking and feedback is also reviewed through Learning Scans, which is part of our annual quality assurance process.

Feedback:

- Written feedback should use the WWW (what went well) and EBI (even better if) structure that offers praise and clearly identifies areas for development. This includes feedback given using the comments section of Canvas, and feedback using the pro forma
- All teachers should use the feedback pro forma for milestones, mock exams and progression exams
- Teachers should refer to the relevant marking criteria and/or assessment outcomes (AO) from the specification, particularly for summative assessments
- Where possible, feedback for summative assessments should be given within one week
- Teachers should provide students with no more than three targets that clearly set out what they need to do to improve
- Students should respond to feedback through dialogue and a short, written statement, as included on the feedback pro forma

All feedback and, where possible, student work should be stored on Canvas so that teachers and students can review this periodically to ensure that targets are being met. If work is unable to be stored on Canvas, this must be made available to staff during learning scans and learning visits. It is expected that all students will keep a organised folder for each of their subjects, either physically or digitally, that contains copies of all of their assessed work in chronological order.

Differentiation:

Generally, all students in the class should be working to the same assessment objectives, particularly as the examination approaches. However, you should bear in mind the **ability range** in your class and you may wish, in the early stages of the course, to establish **specific assessment objectives** for specific students- e.g. EAL students, those with special learning difficulties and exceptionally able students.

Teachers must use the SEND register, which is accessed through the SEND section of the Staff Dashboard, to ensure they are aware of the additional needs within their student group. The Special Educational Needs Department can also provide additional support to teachers in helping them to work with students with additional needs. Additional details can be found in the SEND Policy, which can be found on the Policy Portal.

Lateness:

Students must submit work on time. If a student submits work late, then the teacher should follow the instructions set out in the college Behaviour Policy, which can be found on the Policy Portal.

Learning Scans:

Subject teachers should ensure that students keep their marked work in well-organised physical or digital files and should check these regularly. Student work will be reviewed periodically as part of our annual quality assurance processes. This is particularly important during Learning Visits and Scans.

Coursework (including NEAs) for A Level:

Many of the problems associated with coursework can be avoided if you do the following:

1. Provide students with a **Coursework Information Sheet** which gives full details of the exam board requirements, the assessment objectives, the number of words, the deadline, and the clearest possible details of the assignment you have set them. Show copies of this information sheet to parents at the parents' evening. Insist that students constantly refer to this. In some subjects, the setting of individual or personalised tasks helps to reduce collusion and can engage students more personally with their work.

2. Then, you must ensure the students read and understand Notice *for candidates' coursework and portfolios,* the Joint Council for Qualifications document that outlines candidate's coursework responsibilities: www.jcq.org.uk.

3. Require students to produce a **Coursework Schedule** which identifies the dates by which they will have completed each stage or draft of the project. Let their personal tutor know immediately if they are late with the work.

4. Encourage students to make the fullest use of the college's resources in producing the work. Require students to acknowledge all their sources correctly at the end of their work and in as much detail as possible.

5. Make it clear to students that deadlines are non-negotiable and that work will not be accepted after the deadline you have given them. Publicise your interim and final deadlines on your classroom walls and ensure that they are in your schemes of work. **Do not accept** work that is produced after your final departmental deadline which subject teachers should agree with the Vice Principal at the beginning of the academic year. Give the names of students who are late with coursework to the relevant DOS and the Vice Principal and on no account accept the coursework without consulting with them.

6. If you suspect plagiarism, please follow instructions as described below in Academic Integrity.

7. Make sure that you, yourself, are also thoroughly familiar with the fine detail of the coursework regulations. It is possible for students to fail a coursework option as a result of teacher error.

Coursework for BTEC Qualifications:

Where possible, BTEC teachers should adhere to the coursework for A-Level guidelines. There are some specific criteria that relate to BTEC internal assessments and these are as follows:

1. Students should be provided with a **BTEC Assignment Brief**. The assignment brief should include the assessment objectives, scenario, tasks, deadlines, resources and marking criteria. Every assignment brief should be reviewed and signed by the lead internal verifier for each BTEC course.

2. If an extended deadline is required, students are able to apply to the Lead Internal Verifier (IV) by completing the 'Application for Coursework deadline extension' form. This should be completed at least three working days in advance of the final deadline, where possible.

3. Students may resubmit an assignment submission but again the student should apply in writing to the lead internal verifier. Resubmissions must be submitted 15 working days after the initial feedback date.

4. If a student achieves a U grade they may be allowed to retake a unit. If a student retakes an assignment they can only achieve a maximum of a **Pass grade.** A new assignment brief must be written and IV'd when a retake is actioned.

5. Parents/guardians will be informed of any failing grades, if a student does not record a pass or above.

For BTEC external and controlled assessments, students must adhere to the examination policies and procedures.