

Academic Assessment Policy

This policy has been written for...	All staff and students at West Heath School
Copies of this policy may be obtained from...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School web site - http://www.westheathschool.com It is available as a hard copy on request from the school office Hard copies for reference are filed in the staff room
This policy links with the following policies	This policy should be read in conjunction with the Ethics Policy
Participants and consultees in the formulation of this policy were...	The Principal, senior leadership team, student services committee and the trustees of the School. A representative group of students were invited to make comments and suggestions.
Edition, Review frequency and dates	This is edition 4, released March 2017 This policy will be reviewed every year It is due for review March 2018
Relevant statutory guidance, circulars, legislation & other sources of information are...	
The Lead Member of staff is	Vice Principal Teaching & Learning
Definitions and key terms used in this policy...	
The Rationale and Purpose of this policy	<p>Assessment is integral to effective teaching and learning and must focus on helping students to learn. Its purpose is to inform students, parents and teachers about progress. Effective assessment must strike at the heart of raising achievement and is a key factor in challenging underachievement</p> <p>Marking is an essential part of planning, assessment, teaching and learning. Responding to students' work through constructive comment acknowledges achievement, promotes positive attitudes and behaviour and leads to an improvement in standards.</p>
Appendices	This policy has no appendices
Copying	No school policy is ever written in isolation. Acknowledgement of sources of advice and significant influence in the development and recording of policies at the West Heath School are noted on the front page. We request that any schools or organisations incorporating large sections of this policy without alteration should make similar appropriate acknowledgement.

The Aim of this policy..

- To monitor the progress of the students
- To determine the understanding of the students
- To access grade/mark/comment corresponding to the standard of the work
- To correct inaccuracies in the work
- To comment on the presentation skills of the work
- To encourage improvement
- To assess competence of particular skills

The Aims of Assessment

At West Heath School we use assessment both to identify the achievement of our students and to inform the ways to further support the students' learning. Assessment is a vital aspect, one which must be used to both inform students in what they need to do to move on, but also to inform the teachers in the planning of both individuals and groups of students.

Research shows improving learning through assessment depends on five key features:

- Effective feedback to students;
- Active involvement of students in their own learning;
- Adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment;
- A recognition of the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self esteem of students, both of which are crucial influences on learning; and

The need for students to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) is a prominent tool in making sure that our assessment raises the standards of our students. New students entering the school from Induction are provided with a passport that highlights their assessment levels through a variety of assessments.

The most important function of assessment is to assist learning. Assessment which does this is commonly referred to as 'Assessment for Learning'. A review of research by Paul Black and Dylan Williams has shown that assessment, carried out in certain ways, can raise the achievement of all students and particularly lower-achieving students. Moreover, the raising of standards is achieved by students developing the skills and attitudes which enable them to take responsibility for their own learning and enable them to become lifelong learners.

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Assessment should

- inform students on how they can improve

- celebrate a wide range of student achievement closely linked to planning and delivery of lessons
- tracking student progress and targets
- involve students in short and long term targets
- aid teachers plan effective learning
- meet legal reporting requirements

Types of Assessment

There are many types of assessment, both formal and informal. Teachers continually assess student performance through a variety of methods. Formative and summative assessment strategies are implemented throughout the school, fully embedded into the schemes of work.

Our assessment strategies are consistent within the school and based at the centre of student learning. Students are encouraged to both take part in self and peer assessment strategies. Departments are expected to keep a record for key pieces of work and for regular tests, in line with national criteria.

We record student assessment 3 times per year at Key Stages 3 and 4. Sixth Form students' progress is tracked via the system in place at their place of study

Principles of Assessment

Formative assessment is used to:

- Identify a base line and potential levels of achievement

- Identify students' strengths and areas for reinforcement and development
- Inform regular dialogues between teacher and learner about progress

Provide teachers with information on which to base their long and short term lesson planning for individuals and groups of students

Summative assessment is used to inform:

- All necessary stakeholders of student progress three times per year
- Decisions about progression between Key Stages and into further and higher education
- Curriculum planning across the school
- School self-evaluation and performance management
- Plan and implement intervention strategies
- Provide teachers with information on which to base their long and short term lesson planning for individuals and groups of students

Both formative and summative assessment allow:

- Comparison between a student's current and previous levels of achievement
- Comparison between one student and another
- Comparison between the achievement of the student and groups of students across subjects
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the curriculum

Marking & Assessment

Effective marking communicates progress made and guidance designed to allow a student to progress in their learning.

Marking is primarily based around teacher comments and a series of marking codes to ensure that marking is consistent around the school. Students are encouraged to respond to teacher feedback.

Departments assess work regularly and decide how grades/marks/comments are standardised and attributed. Marking should be consistent within each department so that students are aware of the criteria used.

Each Department is free to collect any amount of useful data it wishes to from subject teachers. The data that they choose to collect should allow teachers and subject leaders to interrogate the data in such a way that they can understand the attainment target/subject skills trends of progress in their department.

Each teacher is accountable for entry of accurate and timely assessment into the required system. This data is collected in the Winter, Spring and Summer

Terms. Deadlines are issues. Curriculum Leads are accountable to VP if standards of data entry are not maintained.

Marking & Assessment Aims

For students,

- To inform them of their progress and motivate them to improve their performance;
- To help them identify the criteria by which their future progress can be measured;
- To develop their ability to accept criticism and praise in order that they can reflect more effectively on what they have learned;
- To equip them with the skills of constructive self-criticism so that they can become effective independent learners.

For teachers,

- To inform them of the progress that students are making;
- To diagnose individual learning needs;
- To evaluate the impact of the teaching on students' knowledge, understanding and skills;
- To become reflexive practitioners;
- To reinforce expectations and students' sense of purpose.

How work is annotated

- Teachers should indicate to students what a task is going to be marked for – relating to Learning Objectives of unit or lesson and assessment criteria of task.
- Marking is not about correcting. Teachers highlight errors: students correct them.
- Correction time needs to be built in to class and where applicable, homework routines.
- Teachers should not mark every spelling and punctuation error.
- There is, however, a set of baseline literacy expectations that all staff need to mark for. These are full stops and capital letters, the 100 basic spellings, and paragraphs.
- Teachers should also mark subject-specific spelling errors (key words or target vocabulary).
- When whole-school literacy targets are set, teachers should mark in support of those.

Quality of Written Feedback

Teachers vary the range of feedback given in order to maximise the potential for students' engagement and progression-

- Useful assessment marking in the middle of tasks
- Engaging maintenance marking
- Quick marking that can still engage
- Maintenance marking

Marking should influence our planning for a particular class. As such marking must take place at least every two weeks for core subjects and every three weeks for other subjects.

Peer and self assessment should be a regular part of the marking process.

Teachers should make the most of opportunities to maintenance mark student's work books or folders as they go along - every time we speak to a student in class for example.

Marking is one part of our assessment for learning strategy that goes along with other strategies, such as verbal assessment and instant marking in the middle of tasks – verbally or in writing.

To encourage a dialogue between teacher-student-teacher, there are AFL stickers which can be used if the department choose. These provide a structure/method for a comment from the teacher and a chance for the student to respond.

Departmental Marking Policy

Each department should establish a Marking Policy which reflects the needs of the individual subject, but which does not conflict with the School's overall policy.

Persons with particular responsibilities

The policy will be evaluated by: Curriculum Leaders regularly inspecting a sample of exercise books or folder-work and reporting back their findings to their line manager and to members of staff concerned.

Learning Director Sixth Form to undertake Learning Walks and scrutiny of work books in college settings.

Sixth Form, KS4 & KS3 Learning Directors will inspect samples of exercise books or folder-work and reporting back their findings to Teaching & Learning VP, Curriculum Leaders and to members of staff concerned.

Other Participants & Stakeholders

Students
Staff
Parents

Monitoring & Evaluation

SLT
Student Services Committee
Trustees