Assessment and Feedback Policy

World Class Assessment and Feedback

World class assessment and feedback must operate symbiotically with responsive teaching and quality assurance to ensure effective implementation and maximised impact.

What is feedback, and what purpose does it have?

Feedback is an interaction between teacher and student which acknowledges a student's work, checks progress against success criteria, and informs actions for both students and teachers to improve outcomes. Effective feedback should empower our students to take responsibility for improving their knowledge and skillset and engage them in their learning to enable them to excel every day and make world class progress.

Feedback and marking are not the same. Marking is identifiable as a teacher's written feedback or gradings on a student's work and is only one form of feedback. Feedback can also include (but is not exclusive to) the following forms: oral feedback, peer marking, self assessment, self-reflections, teacher and student working 1:1, modelling, observation, discussion, assessment for learning, curriculum reshaping, reports.

What is our approach to feedback?

World class feedback strikes a careful balance between having a consistent, centralised approach, embedding consistently high standards and trusting teachers to respond directly to the needs of their students and circumstances.

We expect to see feedback given in every lesson, in at least one format. We trust in our teachers to plan lessons which respond to student need and maximise opportunities for progress through a variety of feedback forms on a regular basis. The quality of feedback will be evidenced by how well a student is able to tackle subsequent work and respond to the feedback. QA of books will be a key indicator for the impact of feedback.

NB. Feedback should be purposeful and powerful and so will not revolve around a mechanised whole school timetable but will respond to student and subject need; as such, adjustments to requirements will be made where necessary, and in the best interests of the students. Student outcomes and progress will be used as a further indicator of the quality of feedback within lessons.

How will assessment and feedback work symbiotically?

Formal formative assessments have been strategically planned into curriculums to ensure misconceptions, gaps in knowledge or skill, or misunderstandings can be identified at tactical moments within a scheme so that curriculums remain responsive, and students capitalise on precursory feedback to improve outcomes. We expect at least one per scheme/unit of learning.

Each formal formative assessment will be an opportunity for teachers to aggregate outcomes and produce a whole class feedback form which identifies areas of general success and specific targets and/or clear actions for development. Curriculums have been planned to ensure students have suitable lesson time to respond to feedback formally and practise making rapid progress but it should also be evident in books that students are continually responding to feedback in all subsequent work.

Furthermore, these assessment forms should be exploited as moments for reflections on pedagogy and curriculum content and should inform changes or modifications to the curriculum by teachers and leaders.

Additionally, summative assessment and feedback opportunities are planned at appropriate end points in each subject area to generate quantitative data. (This will usually be at the of each topic/unit but where subjects complete multiple topics/units per half term, this may be half termly instead or, where topics extend over a more significant period, may be termly.) Both summative and formal formative assessments will be embedded consistently within subject areas to enable leaders to monitor progress and routinely quality assure teaching and learning within their departments.

There must be a minimum of two assessments per half term; the format of which is dependent upon the length of units/topics and the careful balance of workload for staff against benefits for the pupils. Summative assessments must feature once per term as a minimum and must test cumulative knowledge or skill. We recommend one per half term.

In order to ensure students take responsibility for their own learning, and are resilient in their work, there should be habitual routines for self-assessment. Students should be taught and encouraged to check their own work by understanding the success criteria and making conscious improvements so they complete work to the highest standard. Self-assessment should occur every lesson.

What are the expectations around marking as a form of feedback in written subjects?

Staff mark in red pen. Students mark and/or respond in green pen and this is commonly referred to as the Progress Pen. Written marking is only relevant for written subjects with exercise books.

Marking has one core purpose – to advance student progress and outcomes. As such, marking is most impactful when it is immediate and actionable. For this reason, the academy's preferred marking approach is 'live marking'; it happens in the moment, in the classroom, and students respond in green pen instantaneously. We would expect to see this every lesson. Each pupil should have received live marking at least once in every eight lessons.

Careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors as a result of misunderstanding. Careless mistakes should be identified as incorrect and students should assume responsibility for correcting these independently. Misconceptions or errors / gaps in knowledge and understanding should be addressed by providing prompts or questions which lead students to improve holistically against the success criteria.

What are the expectations around marking as a form of feedback in practical subjects?

In place of written marking episodes, practical subjects should regularly 'mark' performance. Students should receive oral 'reviews' which identify areas of success/progress and clear, specific, actionable targets. Teachers should keep up-to-date records of student performance and progress against knowledge and/or skill in their performance.

Teachers and leaders are expected to design comprehensive trackers that detail success criteria at specific and granular levels and to record whether this: hasn't been observed, has been observed or is routinely observed within a students' performance. Trackers should be updated as frequently as is reasonable in each subject area and at least once in every eight lessons.

The quality of feedback in this form will be evident in the regular updating of the trackers and more so in students' ability to recall and vocalise their most recent feedback and current targets for improvement.