

Assessment Policy 2016

Monitoring

| By | Review Period | Method |
|--------------------|---------------|---------|
| Progress Committee | Annual | Meeting |

Ownership: Deputy Principal

Revision History

| Review | Changes | Next Review Date |
|---------------|---|------------------|
| November 2015 | Replacement of reporting, assessment and assessment for learning policy | November 2016 |
| January 2016 | Added paragraph on homework | |

Purpose of the Policy

Effective assessment links good teaching to good learning. It is important that the assessment arrangements in the College are well-designed and reliable, with assessment practice in classrooms, departments and at whole College level of the highest possible quality.

When describing assessment, it is useful to describe formative assessment and summative assessment, so the policy is divided in this way. The term 'formative assessment' describes the processes and activities designed to help students take the next steps with their learning. 'Summative assessment' refers to the marks, levels or grades that indicate the attainment of a student at the time of the assessment.

St Joseph's Vision and Values and how this policy support this

Our College Vision statement states that:

"Our Catholic College seeks to be a community in which all are valued, where the life and the relationships of the College are permeated by Gospel values and in which the individual is seen as unique, with infinite potential for growth towards wholeness. The College, in active partnership with home, parish and the wider community, endeavours to prepare all its members for a future in which they will be able to make a positive contribution and take up the challenge of their faith."

This policy supports the vision by ensuring that there is a fair and equitable assessment and reporting process for our students which assists their preparation for life after College.

Aims

This policy describes well-designed and effective assessment that will:

- help all students learn effectively and reach the highest levels of attainment possible for them at each stage of their education,
- enable teachers to plan activities for students so that they all experience a high degree of stretch and challenge as they learn,
- enable teachers to monitor the progress of all their students effectively within each lesson, in a particular topic or module of work, and over the course of the school year,
- ensure that all departments have reliable information about each student's attainment level and the progress they are making as they move through the College,
- provide accessible, regular and reliable information for parents about the progress of their children in the College,
- ensure that senior leaders and governors can analyse robust and wide-ranging data for each year group in the college, knowing that the data is a very reliable predictor of attainment in external exams and assessments.

Formative Assessment

Effectively planned teaching and learning takes into account what students need to achieve, where students currently are with their learning, and how to move them on from one to the other.

In the College, strategies for clarifying what students need to achieve are:

- Providing an overview of each course, module or topic as appropriate so that students are aware of the structure and content of the courses they follow and how they will be assessed.
- The use of clear learning objectives for lessons, differentiated as appropriate. In the majority of lessons, teachers will clearly explain the learning objectives. On the occasions when the teacher does not feel learning objectives are appropriate, there will be a clear rationale for this.
- Ensuring that students know what 'success' in a particular piece of work or lesson looks like. This may be done by, for example, analysing exemplars of completed work, model answers or using markschemes for peer and self-assessment.

Appropriate strategies for establishing where students currently are with their learning are a key feature of all lessons, and which particular strategies are used in their lessons are determined by each teacher. Strategies commonly used are:

- Using the red, amber and green planner pages to indicate how progress is being made with a particular task,
- Effective questioning – this may involve 'whole class response' so the teacher can see how effective the learning is, directed questioning, 'basketball' questioning and other techniques.
- The teacher working directly with small groups and individuals as tasks are being completed.

A key strategy for moving students on in their learning is feedback provided by marking. The agreed format is to use 'HTI' (how to improve) comments.

For subjects that have three or more lessons per week, the College expectation is that at least one piece of work suitable for marking and feedback, whether classwork or homework, will be completed every timetable cycle (two weeks).

For subjects that have two or fewer lessons per week, the College expectation is that at least one piece of work suitable for feedback will be completed in the time span covered by six lessons.

For all subjects: When work is collected from students for marking, it will be marked for subject specific purposes with HTI comments, and for literacy using the agreed convention shown in Appendix 1. Work will be marked and returned to students within one complete timetable cycle (two weeks).

Homework

At the start of each academic year, the College will produce a homework timetable for each year group. All subjects will set homework tasks for students as indicated by the homework timetable, and the timetable will be available to parents so they know what to look for when they check their child's planner.

The purpose of a particular homework task is one or more of:

- To prompt students to independently prepare for the next lesson or topic, with suitable scaffolding supporting the independent work,
- To consolidate learning and indicate to the teacher the progress made with a particular topic,
- To read and research an area of interest linked to a subject,
- To revise and prepare for exams and tests.

Homework time is not being best used if it is for completion or continuation of classwork, although it can of course be directly linked, such as a practical write-up or an analysis / evaluation of work done during the day.

All departments include a number collaboratively planned homework tasks in their schemes of work – this helps to ensure that there is a variety of homework tasks through each module of work and that the tasks can be suitably differentiated and resourced. Collaboratively planning the homework also reduces the burden on individual staff, helps to ensure consistency and quality, and promotes homework as a central part of the learning in each subject rather than a 'bolt-on' designed by each individual teacher.

Summative Assessment

Accurate summative assessment is important so that:

- Suitably ambitious course targets can be given to each student and their parents. Reliable 'working at' information can also be provided, so students are fully informed of their current attainment and possible future attainment.
- Teachers have a reliable picture of the attainment of their students, enabling them to plan lessons with an appropriate degree of challenge.
- Departments have a picture of the progress over time made by individual students and groups of students that enables accurate target setting and prediction of outcomes, as well as enabling appropriate intervention to be put in place for individuals that fall behind.
- The College is able to accurately predict the attainment outcomes of all year groups, and is able to analyse the progress of sub-groups in each cohort as they progress through the school.

Processes in summative assessment - target setting

The purpose of setting subject targets for students are:

- To inspire and motivate all students to achieve their best,
- To provide a comparison to the 'working at' level or grades collected, enabling students, parents, teachers, subject departments and senior leaders to identify individuals or groups who are falling behind.

Targets set for students indicate the level or grade that the student would achieve with a very high, but not impossibly high rate of progress. Targets are based on prior attainment data and professional judgement - if a student worked exceptionally well in all lessons, completed all homework tasks to the highest possible standard, had a very high attendance rate, and revised as thoroughly as possible, what grade would be achieved?

The procedure for target setting is that in September each year, the data and assessment team produce GCSE or BTEC grades for year 10 to aim for at the end of year 11, and target 'A' level or BTEC grades for year 12 to work towards.

- For year 10: Target grades that are produced by the data and assessment team are based on attainment in year 6. English grades are based on the English attainment level, maths are based on the maths attainment level, and all other subjects will have target based on the average attainment in English and maths. The proposed targets are distributed to Heads of Department and adjustments are made to take account of attainment and progress in years 7, 8 and 9.
- For year 12: The target grades produced by the data and assessment team are based on GCSE outcomes and ALIS predictions. As for year 10, the proposed targets are distributed to Heads of Departments for appropriate adjustments to be made.

All adjustments to GCSE and A level target grades will be discussed with line managers.

From September 2016, a GCSE target will be set for year 7 students instead of a level target for the end of year 9. This will be expressed as a number, with 9 as the highest possible outcome. The targets initially produced by the data and assessment team will be based on the scaled scores attained in the tests taken in year 6, with the maths target based on the maths score, the English target based on the average of the reading and spelling, punctuation and grammar scores, and the targets produced for all other subjects based on the average of all three. In addition to this information, all subjects will carry out 'baseline' assessments. Individual subject targets will then be set for all subjects taken in year 7 by the time of the first progress review to parents. These will be based on the indicated targets produced by the data and assessment team and on the assessments carried out in term 1 of year 7.

Processes in summative assessment – 'working at' levels or grades

Heads of Department must ensure that reliable marks, levels or grades are produced for each student. In order to ensure that the information collected is as reliable as possible, Heads of Department must ensure that it is:

- Moderated across the different groups taught, with common markschemes in use by all teachers administering the work. Cross-moderation, with teachers regularly checking that they agree on the standard of completed assessments should take place.
- Matched to external assessment. Materials and guidance from exam boards and other appropriate sources (such as reliable commercially produced assessment materials) must be used to ensure that internally marked assessments are as accurate as possible.

Departments must ensure that the 'working at' grades or levels for each student are put in to the College's central data system (currently 'schoolbase') by the dates shown on the school calendar. At each data collection point, Heads of Department and line managers:

- identify students who are underachieving and arrange for appropriate intervention,
- analyse the progress of different teaching groups and sub-groups of students.

In addition to grade collection, information about progress, attitude to work, behaviour and homework for inclusion on progress reviews to parents. The first two of these are also included on annual reports to parents. The descriptors for these are shown in Appendix 2.

For Year 7 from September 2016, attainment data will be collected from departments as a point on the standard APS scale. Progress data for each student will also be collected directly from departments and reported to parents according to the scale:

- P5 – Progress significantly below expected
- P4 – Progress below expected
- P3 – Progress in line with GCSE target set
- P2 – Progress above expected
- P1 – Progress significantly above expected.

Appendix 1
Literacy Assessment Key

| Abbreviation Key | Literacy Definition |
|------------------|---|
| sp | spelling mistake |
| sp x 3 | spelling mistake to be corrected three times in the back of exercise book |
| p. or punc. | punctuation mistake e.g. comma, full stop, speech |
| apost. | incorrect usage or omission of apostrophe |
| cap. | Incorrect usage or omission of capital letters |
| // | new paragraph required |
| // n.l | new line required |
| ^ | something is missing; place symbol in body of text |
| ? | this is confusing; please clarify |
| gr. | grammar error; sentence structure |
| ✓ | good point or word |
| ✓✓ | very good/excellent point |

Here are the symbols that your class teachers will use when marking your written work. It is important that you review your work once it has been marked to learn from the comments your teacher has made. Subject specific key words and literacy advice can be found in the subject areas on Moodle.

Appendix 2
Descriptors for progress, attitude to work, behaviour and
quality of homework judgements

Progress

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Excellent | Has shown improving working at grades in every test and assessed piece of work. |
| Good | Has shown improving working at grades in most tests and assessed pieces of work. |
| Variable | Some assessed pieces of work indicate progress, but this is not consistent. |
| Poor | Most assessed pieces of work show no progress or progress below expectation. |

Attitude to Work

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Excellent | Actively participates in and contributes to all lessons, completing all work set to a suitably high standard. Always brings the necessary books and equipment to every lesson and is ready to start work. |
| Good | Regularly makes a positive contribution to lessons and usually completes all work set to a high standard. Brings the necessary books and equipment to almost every lesson and is ready to start work. |
| Variable | Sometimes forgets books or equipment and is not always ready to start work. Regularly misses opportunities to contribute to lessons and does not always complete work to the best of their ability. |
| Poor | Makes limited or no particular effort to participate in lessons and does not complete classwork or homework to an appropriately high standard. Repeatedly does not have the necessary books and equipment for the lesson and so is not ready to learn. |

Behaviour

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Excellent | Behaviour is exemplary, with a positive and constructive attitude clearly evident at all times. |
| Good | Always cooperative and polite, usually makes a positive contribution to lessons. |
| Variable | Usually follows instructions in lessons and cooperates positively, but has not met College expectations of behaviour on all occasions. |
| Poor | Has regularly failed to meet behaviour expectations in lessons. |

Quality of Homework

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Excellent | Homework always completed on time, exceeding expectations on occasion. |
| Good | Homework always completed on time to a suitably high standard. |
| Variable | Some pieces of homework have not been up to the expected standard or have not been handed in on time, but expectations are usually met. |
| Poor | Homework is regularly not handed in on time, or is not often completely to the expected standard. |