

KINGSBRIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Assessment & Marking Policy

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I. Principles

This policy is intended to support and secure high quality, reliable and consistent assessment of students learning outcomes. Assessment is a key feature of good teaching and learning; this policy should be read in conjunction with our Teaching & Learning Policy.

Kingsbridge Community College prioritises the continuous development of exceptional teaching and learning. A key aspect of our teaching is the embedding of assessment practices throughout all key stages in order to guide and support all learners in accessing a suitably broad and deep curriculum experience, gaining rich opportunities to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of contexts and challenges.

'The primary principle of assessment is that it should be fit for the purpose intended.

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and lies at the heart of promoting pupils' education.

It should provide information which is clear, reliable and free from bias.'

Final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels – Sept 2015

Using the principles and processes of assessment we aim to:

- Recognise the achievements of students and identify any areas for development
- Inform students of their progress and next steps.
- Guide planning, teaching, additional support, curriculum and resource development.
- Inform parents/carers and the wider community of student achievement.
- Provide the Principal, Governors and ESW Trust members with information that allows them to make judgements about the effectiveness of the College.
- Provide information to ensure continuity when a student changes teaching group, year group or school.
- Comply with statutory requirements.

Teacher assessment is based on a broad range of activities in a variety of contexts. It may therefore involve examination preparation, long and short tasks, written and practical work and work done both at home and in College as appropriate. Assessment is the teachers' judgement of students' progress and achievement based on evidence. Refining of judgements will be carried out on a continuous basis, within subject staff ensuring a process of internal moderation and standardisation wherever possible, involving the use of common assessment criteria, shared marking or the pairing of teachers to compare work.

Our assessment procedures are also grounded in the principles of dialogue; explicit communication between students and teaching staff and between students in peer review. Students have a key role in the assessment process. By involving students actively in the assessment of their own work and that of others we can help them to understand more readily what they need to do to improve.

Wherever possible students are given the success criteria by which a piece of work will be marked and information about how to produce their best answers, prior to completing the task. Exemplars of good and ineffective work are used to highlight their key features. Peer assessment also helps students in their understanding of assessment criteria, and what they need to do to improve their work.

2. Key Definitions

- “Attainment” is what a student is achieving at a particular point in time.
- “Progress” is the improvement a student has demonstrated over a given period.
- “Formative assessment” is where the assessment of a student’s attainment and/or progress directly shapes and impacts on the teaching, learning and support provided – an on-going process of adapting practice to take account of what has worked/been achieved so far.
- “Summative assessment” is the overall assessments of a student’s attainment and/or progress typically at the end of a project, topic, term or year.

3. Key Stage 3 Assessment Principles

In June 2013, the DfE published a document for schools on “**Assessing without Levels**”, in which it was explained that the old system of Levels at Key Stage 3 would be abolished and not replaced. The report said the following:

“We believe this system is complicated and difficult to understand, especially for parents. It also encourages teachers to focus on a pupil’s current level, rather than consider more broadly what the pupil can actually do. Prescribing a single detailed approach to assessment does not fit with the curriculum freedoms we are giving schools. The new programmes of study set out what should be taught by the end of each key stage. We will give schools the freedom to develop a curriculum which is relevant to their pupils and enables them to meet these expectations.”

We agree with the viewpoint of the DfE that levels were distracting from learning and the feedback we wished students to act upon. We have developed our own system taken from a model developed by Dylan Wiliams which aligns itself to the following principles:

- A focus on the provision of high quality, timely and effective feedback rather than relying on the awarding of levels or grades.
- Ensuring that the tracking of individual student progress is relative to their starting point and not simply tracking their attainment.
- Developing a focus on attitudes to learning, ensuring that its assessment is explicit and important.
- Providing a breadth of assessment opportunities across Year 7 and 8, ensuring that this prepares students for the challenging demands of the reformed GCSE and A Level courses.

4. Subject Assessment Principles

All subject areas must have a clear understanding of what their students should know, understand and be able to do by the end of each unit of work, scheme of learning, year and by the end of the Key Stage.

Students Key Stage 2 data and/or prior attainment is used to organise students into broad bands of ability known as **Routes**. This information identifies a students’ starting point and possible trajectory however should never anchor them to any one group, or limit the progress they are able to make. From this, subjects are able to measure a student’s relative progress throughout the year. Each banded group (Route) in the cohort will make progress that is relative to their starting point. There are three stages of progress:

- **Exceptional** Progress (EP)
- **Good** Progress (GP)
- **Minimal** Progress (MP)

Subjects are required to make good use of summative assessment points wherever possible throughout Key Stage 3, devised to test the knowledge, skills and understanding of students against key performance descriptors aligned to each Route. This can take the form of end of year assessments, short, end of topic tests, extended written assessment tasks or practical activities.

5. Reporting Assessment, Achievement, Attainment And Progress

Student reports are generated through the College's SuccessTracker system. Teachers are required to enter appropriate assessment grades within a pre-defined data drop timescale according to the KCC Assessment Calendar (Appendix 1).

At Key Stages 4 and 5 these reports consist of a predicted GCSE or A level grade and an attitude to learning grade. At Key Stage 3, teachers provide information regarding exceptional, good or minimal progress on routes to GCSE grades.

6. Monitoring Progress and Raising Standards Meetings

SuccessTracker reports are used to track progress and to put in place support mechanisms where required. After each SuccessTracker, analysis of predicted and attitudes to learning grades must be carried out by the data team and Year Leaders. Each class teacher must reflect on the progress students have made and note specific interventions to be put into place for key students and those making less than expected progress.

The Subject Leader is required to discuss these with individual teachers to provide any monitoring or support needed. The Link Leadership Team member meets with the Team Leader after each data drop to provide necessary whole school monitoring and support.

Raising Standards Group meetings are held after each data drop to consider students in each year group who have support and curriculum needs across a number of subjects and to put in place necessary intervention measures. The two Assistant Principals identified as Raising Standards Leaders for KS4 and KS5 each meet with every Subject Leader in order to discuss progress, issues and actions for all students at either Key Stage. The RSL and Subject Leader have a specific focus on gaps in progress for all groups; specific actions are identified, implemented and monitored.

7. Reporting Keys Stage 3 Progress and Attitude to Learning

Progress measures are reported at 3 data entry points during the year directly to parents, alongside an assessment of their attitudes to learning within each subject. This report provides a snapshot and is intended to sit alongside a larger strategy to improve which ensures that we are focused on helping students learn best and not simply measuring their progress.

A report written by the tutor is sent home in the Summer term. This report gives parents general information about progress and students contribution to wider college activities. Attendance/absence details are sent to parents with this report.

8. Reporting Key stage 4 Progress, Attainment and Attitudes to Learning

Progress measures related to target grades are reported at 3 data entry points during the year directly to parents, alongside an Attitude to Learning grade. GCSE attainment will be awarded a 9-1 grade, which has replaced the old A* to G letter grades system. Attainment at KS4 will be consistently reported by all subjects. The grade (9-1) inputted into Progresso will be based on the predicted final grade related to current performance, proportionate to the course completed. This number will be accompanied by the letters A, B or C which denote how secure the predicted grade is. A=High, B=Middle, C=Low. For example, a student who is considered to be just below Grade 6 will be predicted

a grade of 5A, a student just above Grade 5 will have a prediction of 6C. This will be an indication of a likely grade to students and parents/carers.

As in Key Stage 3, tutor reports for Years 9, 10 and 11 are sent home in the Summer term, giving general information about progress and students contribution to wider college activities. Key Stage 4 Attendance/absence details are included in this report.

9. Reporting Key Stage 5 Progress, Attainment and Attitudes to Learning

In Year 13 there are 3 data entry points where progress measures are reported alongside an assessment of a student's attitude to learning in that subject. There is also a January Pre Public Exam (PPE) in Year 13 where just an attainment grade is reported. In Year 12 there are 4 data entry points where progress and attitude to learning grades are reported. In addition, Year 12 students will have a PPE attainment grade reported in January and for their End of Year 12 examinations (which take place in May).

Progress grades are reported as the grade that a student is expected to achieve at the end of the course if they follow the same trajectory. This means, that for an A Level subject, a student will receive a letter grade (A Levels are grades from A* to E) whereas in vocational subjects, students are awarded one of the following grades: Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Pass. The number will be accompanied by the number 1, 2 or 3 which denote how secure the predicted grade is: 1 = High, 2 = Middle, 3 = Low. For example, a student who is considered to be just below an A grade in an A Level subject will be predicted a B1 grade whereas a student who is only just above a B grade will have a prediction B3.

As in Key Stages 3 and 4, tutor reports for Year 12 and Year 13 students are sent home in the Summer term and give an overview of the progress that a student has made throughout the year both academically and personally, as well as their contribution to the wider college community.

10. Quality Assurance of Assessment

Subject Leaders undertake the scrutiny of students work and sampling of teacher assessment and feedback within their subject in accordance with the whole College self-evaluation cycle and calendar of Team Leader responsibilities as outlined within the Middle Leader Handbook. Leadership Team work sampling will also take place throughout the year; one vehicle for this is the LT / Subject Leader Line Management meeting which takes place once every two weeks. As part of any formal lesson observation for Appraisal purposes and within the College's Departmental Quality Assurance Review processes, teacher and student feedback will also be reviewed.

Departmental Quality Assurance Reviews and Link Leadership conversations also focus on quality and frequency of marking, in conjunction with conversations with students. Setting and marking of Home Learning is monitored through the Home Learning review system.

11. Feedback

Over time, written marking has become disproportionately valued compared to other forms of feedback to students. We encourage all our teachers to have a balanced approach and use a range of approaches to secure further student progress via the right form of feedback.

Good feedback has these features:

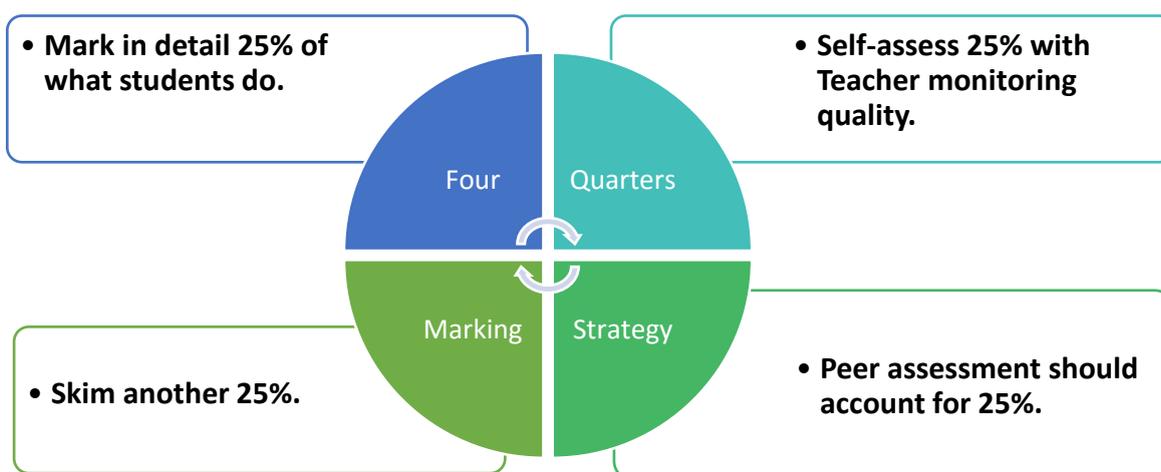
- It is supportive and positive in identifying specific WWW's (what went well)
- It is a personal learning conversation with the student.
- It is given promptly: the original work is still in the student's mind.
- It sets specific targets, including Literacy &/ Numeracy when appropriate.

- It gives specific advice on how to reach targets EBIs (even better if).
- It demands a response and or action(s) from a student.

12. Forms of Feedback

Marking

The quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality. The quality of the feedback, however given, will be seen in how a student is able to tackle subsequent work. Other forms of feedback can be as valuable as written marking, for example self-assessment, peer assessment, group or whole-class feedback and comparative judgement. It will be the professional judgement of the teacher on which form of feedback will be most likely to secure student progress. Guidance from the leading expert on assessment, Professor Dylan Wiliam, recommends a balanced diet that he calls ‘four-quarters marking’.



Within its guidance to support inspection, published in 2017 and updated in April 2018, Ofsted highlighted the importance of marking as one aspect of feedback & assessment:

“Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to pupils, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of pupils in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning.”

Myth Busting - Ofsted 2016

Within the executive summary of the EEF Marking Review conducted in 2016, “A Marked Improvement”, marking was recognised as the central role in teacher’s work, providing important feedback and identification of misunderstanding. However, marking was also identified as a key aspect of teacher workload by the 2016 Independent Teacher Workload Review into marking:

“Our starting point is that marking – providing written feedback on pupils’ work – has become disproportionately valued by schools and has become unnecessarily burdensome for teachers. There are a number of reasons for this, including the impact of Government policy, what has been promoted by Ofsted, and decisions taken by school leaders and teachers. This is not to say that all marking should be eliminated, but that it must be proportionate.”

“Eliminating unnecessary workload around Marking” Independent Teacher Workload Group 2016

In devising this policy, Kingsbridge Community College has taken account of the work of both the Independent Workload Group report and the research conducted by Oxford University and the Education Endowment Foundation.

Effective marking is an interaction between teacher and student: a process of acknowledging students' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and students need to do next, with the primary aim of driving student progress. All our students should be able to answer two questions about their learning:

- What am I doing well in this subject?
- What do I need to do to improve my work in this subject?

At KCC, we believe that the 3 principles of effective marking are that it should be:

- **Meaningful:** marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the student and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.
- **Manageable:** marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to the overall workload of teachers.
- **Motivating:** Marking should help to motivate students to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their students, this can become a disincentive for students to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

Wherever possible, teachers should emphasise the importance of their comments on students' work, allowing students time to reflect upon and interpret these comments in their own words. The Purple Pen of Progress or equivalent (with digital or practical outcomes), should be used by students to identify and correct errors and also work on targets set by teachers, themselves or their peers.

Departmental Handbooks includes guidance on frequency and format of marking; this is subject-specific and appropriate to the frequency of lessons taught and format of outcomes. Digital portfolios, practical outcomes and extended writing tasks demand differing assessment feedback and learning conversations and actions.

All teachers are given CPD guidance on efficient marking and assessment which has maximum impact without creating undue workload demands. This includes:

- Whole class learning reviews which highlight common success, common errors and a range of targets for improvement; students are guided into identifying targets from a very focused and appropriate menu.
- Peer and self-review and templates which focus on question analysis and involve rigorous reference to mark-schemes.
- Writing less as a teacher but facilitating more student interaction with learning, metacognition and focused improvement.

13. Questioning

Teachers should make judgements about how well students understand topics by making use of effective questioning. Probing questions, followed by sufficient time for students to reflect before answering can highlight misconceptions and enable teachers to judge the depth of students' understanding. Interleaving allows for regular phased recall and application of understanding over time.

The impact of questioning was highlighted within the EEF's recent research into metacognition, "Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning" (2017).

"Teachers asking challenging questions—guiding pupils with oral feedback, prompting dialogue, and scaffolding productive 'exploratory' talk where appropriate—is an ideal way to share and develop effective learning."

Questions are among the most powerful formative assessment tools teachers have and adopting best practices will significantly enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers should therefore use a range of approaches including questioning frameworks linked to Bloom's Taxonomy:

- Knowledge - 'Can you remember...?'
- Comprehension - 'Tell me how this works...'
- *Application* - 'Where else have you seen this pattern?' _
- Analysis - 'Explain to me what is happening here?'
- Synthesis - 'What conclusions can you draw from this?'
- Evaluation - 'Can you measure how effective this is?'

14. Dialogic Teaching

Teachers should make use of dialogic teaching (Alexander 2017) to stimulate and extend students thinking and develop their learning and understanding. Dialogic teaching uses skilled questions to extend thinking where answers to teachers' questions are built on rather than merely received. Dialogue allows a teacher to respond to students' answers and if necessary re-orientate them. Oral exchanges chain together, with feedback from questions leading thinking forward allowing students' answers to be extended.

15. Written feedback – Setting Targets

It is vital that teachers ensure that students have opportunities to digest and act upon the targets they have been set. Teachers bear in mind the research by Black and William which states that where a grade and a comment are given on a piece of work, students tend to focus on the grade and ignore the comment.

Marking proformas are to be used to focus on **What Went Well** and focused **Even Better If** targets for improvement, including **Literacy and or numeracy** whenever appropriate.

Where teachers feel that students will benefit from a grade on the work, they are to use the route related KS3 Progress stages, Attitudes to Learning Grade descriptors (Appendix 2) and/or a GCSE /A Level grade as appropriate.

Good written feedback has these features:

- It is supportive and positive in identifying specific WWWs (what went well)
- It is a personal learning conversation with the student
- It is given promptly: the original work is still in the student's mind
- It sets specific targets, including Literacy &/ Numeracy when appropriate
- It gives specific advice on how to reach targets EBIs (even better if)
- It demands a response and or action(s) from a student

Following feedback and marking, teachers should record sufficient detail in mark books, planners or digital equivalents in order to track and monitor progress and inform subsequent planning and supportive interventions. To support effective communication and enable intervention and dialogue, positive progress and concerns must be shared with the student, relevant staff and parents in a timely manner.

Attitudes to learning Grade Descriptors

AtL 1 – You are an outstanding student; you meet all deadlines and you consistently put in your very best effort. You demonstrate very effective independent learning skills and participate fully in class activities with others. Your Home Learning is consistently excellent. You clearly respond to feedback. Your focus on learning and progress is an example to others.

AtL 2 – You are a student who is positive in class and contributes to a good classroom ethos. You work well during class activities, your Home Learning is good and you almost always meet deadlines. You have a positive approach to learning and feedback; you are continuing to develop independent learning skills.

AtL 3 – You sometimes produce good work, but frequently only complete the minimum required. Your effort with classroom activities, Home Learning and your response to feedback is not yet consistent. There is plenty of room for improvement if you are going to achieve your full potential.

AtL 4 – You occasionally produce good work or verbal contributions, but frequently cause serious concern. You have not yet tried to meet your targets for improvement. Your actions in the classroom disrupt learning for others. Your effort in class, with Home Learning, in response to feedback and your attitude to learning must improve significantly.

Appendix 2

Yearly Guidance:

Calendar for Successtracker Reporting: 2018-19

Successtracker 1	
Available online	Wednesday 7 th November 2018
Staff deadline for completion	Wednesday 14 th November 2018
Start of results analysis	Thursday 15 th November 2018
Results analysis complete – reports to parents	Monday 19 th November 2018
Successtracker 2	
Available online	Wednesday 6 th March 2019
Staff deadline for completion	Wednesday 13 th March 2019
Start of results analysis	Thursday 14 th March 2019
Results analysis complete – report to parents	Wednesday 20 th March 2019
Successtracker 3	
Available online	Wednesday 12 th June 2019
Staff deadline for completion	Wednesday 19 th June 2019
Start of results analysis	Thursday 20 th June 2019
Results analysis complete – report to parents	Wednesday 26 th June 2019