Assessment and Feedback Policy

This policy was approved and ratified by

Wadebridge School in September 2024

This policy and its contents are made available to all Wadebridge School Staff and observed by all Trustees

Author	Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review	Published to Website
Sion Williams	V3	Wadebridge School Senior Leadership Team	September 2024	September 2024	September 2026	No

Preamble

This policy has been developed by the Assessment Group in response to the major changes that have taken place to the national examination systems (new KS2 tests, the demise of NC levels at KS3 and the introduction of new GCSE specifications and grading systems). Whilst developing this policy the Assessment Group have gathered opinions from each curriculum area within the school and taken heed of two reports produced by the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group published in March 2016

- Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking
- Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with data management.

Assessment

Teaching and learning are inherently interactive and assessment forms an integral part of the process. Teachers need to need to know about their pupils' progress and assessment provides a mechanism for meaningful interaction between teacher and learner: a way for teachers to acknowledge pupils' work, check their understanding and progress and, thereby, make decisions about what the teacher and the learner need to do next. The primary aim of any assessment is to facilitate pupil progress.

Assessment can take many forms including, but not limited to:

- teachers asking pupils questions
- pupils reviewing their own work – self-assessment
- pupils checking each other's work – peer assessment
- teachers marking pupils' work

For assessment to be effective in moving pupils forward in their learning then it should be accompanied by some form of feedback that the learners then respond to. This can take many forms:

- oral feedback to individual learners
- small group or whole class activities planned by the teacher
- written feedback in response

The school uses the new GCSE grades 9 -1, other than in some vocational subjects which use a Pass, Merit, Distinction system. These grades may be sub-divided into three bands 1, 2, 3 to denote where the piece of work falls within the grade boundaries. Although teachers may comment on things like presentation or effort, no grades should be given for this.

Exams

Each curriculum area will have key assessment points identified within Schemes of Learning, these will include a range of different levels of formality from low stakes quizzes, brief end of topic tests, summative exams at key points covering all work studied to date and exams sat by the whole by the whole cohort in the exam hall. Given that all qualifications awarded to learners at the end of Year 11 have a significant proportion of the overall assessment through exams, we prepare students for this in a graduated manner. Years 7 and 8 do not sit formal exams as a whole year group; Year 9 have a series of exams in the Summer Term; the Year 10 exams are scheduled at the start of the Spring Term; Year 11 have two trial exams, one in the second half of the Autumn Term and the final trial exams take place in the second half of the Spring Term. The marking and grading of these exams then then help inform staff and students of current performance which then helps inform judgements about progress in the progress reports.

Marking

The report from the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group on eliminating unnecessary workload around marking warns that

Marking has evolved into an unhelpful burden for teachers when the time it takes is not repaid in positive impact on pupils' progress. This is frequently because it is serving a different purpose such as demonstrating teacher performance … Too often it is the marking itself which is being monitored and commented on by leaders rather than pupil outcomes and progress as a result of quality feedback.

The consequence of this skewed dominance of written feedback means that teachers have less time to focus on the most important aspect of their job – teaching pupils.

*In summary we recommend that marking should be **meaningful, manageable** and **motivating**.*

To make marking **meaningful** teachers will provide feedback on selected pieces of work that is directly related to the learning objectives for the piece of work in question and will include identifying strategies that advance pupil progress and outcomes. Learners are required to respond to this feedback in Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time either in class or as homework. Each curriculum area has developed its own DIRT policy and practice in line with the whole school assessment and feedback policy.

To ensure that marking is **manageable** each curriculum area will ensure that marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback. It must be acknowledged that time spent marking does not always correlate with successful pupil outcomes and when carried out ineffectively can constitute a waste of teacher time. There is no expectation for every piece of pupils' work to be marked.

To make marking **motivating** it is important to acknowledge the effort a pupil has put into producing a piece of work and to celebrate the progress they have made but it must be remembered that there are many ways to do this without giving extensive written comments. Accepting work that pupils have not checked sufficiently detracts from pupils' responsibility for their own learning and they should be encouraged to check their own understanding of the success criteria so that work is completed to the highest standard before it is submitted for marking.

It is important to note that it is the quality not the quantity of marking that matters in helping learners progress and that when judgements are made about teaching and learning excessive and ineffective marking does not represent good practice.

Target setting

Student outcomes are measured in terms of progress from their KS2 baselines and in order to help facilitate progress students are set individual subject Minimum Expected Grades in Year 7 and targets in Year 9 that both relate to the end of KS4. These MEGs and targets are set based on KS2 average scores in English and Maths and are informed by teachers' professional judgements and data from sources such as FFT Aspire, Progress 8 tables. As students make progress these targets may be adjusted upwards to ensure learners are appropriately challenged, however the MEG against which progress is measured cannot change.

It should be stressed that a subject's or a teacher's performance should **never** be judged by considering how many students reach their target; teacher performance **is** evaluated on how much progress students make from their differing starting points.

Progress Reports

It is acknowledged that pupils make progress at different rates in different areas of the curriculum. Individual subjects assess pupils' performance according to its own assessment framework. The school will collect information on pupils' performance twice a year in KS3 (years 7 and 8) and three times a year in KS4 (years 9, 10 and 11) and communicate this to parents in the form of a Progress Report. The exact timings of the publication of these Progress Reports are set on the school calendar. Each data capture requires teachers to enter information directly into the relevant marksheet in SIMS. This information includes:

- Minimum Expected Grades are set in Year 7
- Target grades are set in Year 9
- Progress – is the pupil meeting the teacher's expectations with reference to MEG?
- Attitude to Learning
- Commendations for independent learning
- A teacher comment consisting of two bullet points (limited to 70 characters each) indicating strategies that will lead to the pupil making further progress.