

St James' Catholic High School
A Specialist Humanities College

Assessment & Marking Policy

1. All assessment procedures should be integrated into schemes of work and be realistic, meaningful, attainable and consistent.
2. All faculties must have their own Assessment Policy contained within their departmental handbook.
3. Equally, each faculty is different and so it is unrealistic to impose a uniform assessment policy. **However, it is expected that each faculty should follow the common principles of assessment outlined below:**

What is the purpose of assessment?

Assessment should:

- review pupil/student performance
- involve agreed benchmarking
- lead to enhanced learning and attainment
- provide feedback
- measure pupil progress
- enable a review of teaching methods and learning objectives
- involve formal and informal methods
- include dialogue

Assessment techniques include:

- dialogue with pupils/students within the lesson
- marking a pupil's work
- target setting
- self assessment
- peer assessment
- informing pupils/students of assessment criteria
- diagnostic tests
- differentiation
- monitoring by CMT and Heads of Faculty

Assessment is a means of identifying:

- our expectations for individual pupils
- improvement on prior attainment
- whether all classes perform to their potential
- comparative performance between subjects and other schools
- how to analyse, review and respond
- appropriate schemes of work
- appropriate evidence for target setting

Assessment involves both formative and summative methods.

Formative Assessment is the ongoing communication between teachers and pupils which gives specific guidance and outlines areas for improvement.

Summative Assessment records the overall achievement of a pupil over time. Its methods are supported by testing and also by synthesising a range of formative assessments.

What should be marked and how?

Marking is the responsibility of individual teachers who should follow procedures laid down by faculties and/or Heads of Department. Within individual departments there should be common practices for the marking of pupils' work.

As a minimum requirement, the following should apply in all Key Stages:

1. Assessment criteria are given to all pupils or students and are clearly evident in books or folders.
2. To ensure that pupils know how to improve, all books should have target levels clearly displayed.
3. **At least** two pieces of detailed formative assessment by the teacher with appropriate grades or levels should be undertaken each 10 weeks in line with the school's reporting policy, except for those subjects with less curriculum time (eg. one lesson per week), and where two pieces of assessment may not be possible in 10 weeks (PE, Music, Art, Drama).
4. In addition to these formative assessments, books should be regularly reviewed and checked for quality of work, presentation and key content.
5. To assist in coming to a quarterly judgement on Attitude to Learning, some work is to be given an ATL score.
6. All homework should be set in line with the school's Homework Policy, and should be checked and recorded by the class teacher.

Key Stage 3

- All pupils' written and practical work should be marked regularly.
- Levels, appropriate to National Curriculum requirements, should be awarded wherever possible either for individual pieces of work or for an amalgamation of several pieces.
- The frequency with which levels are awarded will vary according to subject requirements.
- With each level awarded, all children should be provided with guidance, either written or verbal, on what they have to do in order to reach the next level.
- Written comments and targets (or pre-prepared photocopied comments) on pupils' work should be used wherever possible.
- A dual marking system can exist alongside the system of levels if the nature of the material being tested lends itself to this treatment, provided children understand precisely how marks and grades equate with levels.
- Examinations will be marked as percentages. Pupils should be told how these percentages equate to National Curriculum levels and

whether a particular examination performance will contribute towards the final level they will receive at the end of Key Stage 3.

Key Stage 4

- A similar system to that outlined above will be employed using GCSE grades instead of National Curriculum levels.
- Controlled assessment criteria should be shared and regularly reviewed with pupils
- All pupils should be given feedback on their performance using GCSE grades at least once every half term.
- Examinations will be marked as percentages. Pupils should be told how these percentages equate to GCSE grades and whether a particular examination performance will contribute towards the final level they will receive at the end of Key Stage 4.
- Work for non-GCSE or GCSE equivalent courses should be marked using criteria, at similar intervals to other KS4 courses.

Pupil involvement in assessment

- Peer and self assessment should be used as much as possible to encourage familiarisation with success criteria.
- Pupil-friendly displays with level information and how to improve should be evident within departments.
- AFL should be routinely incorporated within schemes of work eg. in discussing what makes a good assessment; pupil comments and grading of exemplar work
- Progress and understanding should be regularly checked throughout the lesson to ensure all groups of learners are making progress.

What makes outstanding feedback?

Outstanding pupil progress comes from outstanding teacher feedback to pupils. Feedback should:

- Be clear and in pupil-friendly language.
- Be positive wherever possible and praise what has been achieved
- Provide a target for improvement wherever possible
- Use NC or GCSE criteria where appropriate.
- Be acted upon (and checked).
- Be a regular and normal part of the lesson – the dialogue between teacher and pupils should enable all to make progress.

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Quality assurance and standardisation are intended to:

- raise performance
- monitor pupil performance
- ensure equality of treatment for all pupils/students
- clarify expectations
- ensure the highest possible quality of practice with regard to both teaching and assessing.

Individual teachers are responsible for:

- Utilising the full range of assessment methods in their subject and predicting performance outcomes
- Maintaining an assessment record on every pupil, according to department policy
- Using SIMS to set target levels and to track pupil progress

Heads of Faculty are responsible for moderation processes. It is part of their role both to co-ordinate and to oversee standardisation procedures within their department.

Standardisation involves:

- following a QA calendar that rigorously and regularly monitors the assessment of work
- ensuring that there are consistent standard for assessing pupils' work
- setting these standards against fixed criteria
- keeping portfolios of exemplar work for reference purposes when making judgements.

All major assessment should be subject to regular moderation which, depending on the Key Stage of the pupils involved, should make reference to:

- National Curriculum Levels
- GCSE Grade descriptors

Heads of Faculty are also responsible for:

- Regular auditing of marking and assessment as part of their QA procedures
- Work sampling of classes and sets in each year group during the academic year
- Reviewing pupil performance
- Supporting and guiding individual teacher assessment
- Amending schemes of work in light of pupil performance and feedback

CMT are responsible for supporting Heads of Faculty in the implementation of assessment standardisation and quality assurance.

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