
Queen Elizabeth's School

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING POLICY

Rationale

Assessment for Learning at Queen Elizabeth's School involves both staff and pupils in order to ensure that the achievement of all pupils is maximised. Through assessment for learning, we enable boys to know the level or grade they are working at and also their target level or grade, and provide feedback to enable them to close the gap between the two levels of achievement. The ultimate purpose of assessment for learning is to create self-regulated learners who will leave the School with an optimum set of examination results and who are able and confident to continue learning throughout their lives. 'Assessment for learning' is more than just 'assessment of learning', as it consists of a range of analytic tools which are used at different stages of the teaching and learning process to maximise pupils' understanding of course content and their outcomes. This is achieved by:

- Setting minimum target levels or grades and predicting future performance;
- Tracking pupil progress against targets;
- Diagnosing specific strengths and difficulties or weaknesses by providing information on what each pupil knows, understands and can do, and providing specific feedback to allow pupils to address and rectify the identified difficulties or weaknesses;
- Identifying specific achievement and allowing for its recognition and reward;
- Ensuring that intervention is focused on individual needs;
- Evaluating the curriculum, teaching and learning styles;
- Increasing pupil motivation and encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and progress.

1. Forms of assessment

Assessment takes three forms; diagnostic, formative and summative:

- **Diagnostic assessment:** This occurs at the beginning of a unit of study. At Queen Elizabeth's, Year 7 pupils are tested using MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) tests, a widely used assessment system used by secondary schools, early in the Autumn Term. In addition, each subject area sets its own baseline test. The results of these tests are used to set targets against which individual progress can be monitored towards KS3. Baseline testing also informs curriculum planning in Year 7 to inform differentiation of input. Key Stage 3 outcomes are used in conjunction with the MidYIS test results to set individual targets for GCSE outcomes. Pupil progress towards Advanced Level examinations is monitored against ALIS (Advanced Level Information System, a monitoring and assessment system for Sixth Form pupils), which is used, along with internal assessments, to set appropriately challenging individual pupil targets for A2 outcomes. Diagnostic assessment also allows for those requiring intervention to be identified and appropriate learning support to be put in place.
- **Formative assessment:** This occurs during a unit of study. Teachers make use of their observations, classroom discussion and analysis of each individual pupil's work, including homework and tests, on a day to day basis. They adopt teaching strategies and set learning objectives to meet the needs of all pupils and thereby raise their achievement.

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- **Summative assessment:** This occurs at the end of a unit of study, or at a significant point along its course, to determine the level of understanding a pupil has achieved. It is our policy to test pupils regularly and to use the results to assist in the setting process. Departments set regular tests, roughly every half term. There are also end of year examinations for Years 7-10 in June each year, for Year 11 mock GCSE examinations in December/January, and for Years 12-13 mock AS and A-level examinations after Easter. Departments have a clear statement regarding testing on the Academic Departments area of eQE.

2. Marking procedures

Marking clearly indicates to pupils and parents the level, GCSE, AS or A-level grade at which the pupil is working. Written comments accompany work that is formally marked indicating precisely what is good about what has been achieved so far, what needs to be achieved and specific advice on how to secure higher levels of achievement - identifying the next-steps. All feedback is linked to clear learning objectives and/or success criteria, and is given quickly so that pupils remember the context. Teachers are also asked to be attentive to spelling, punctuation and grammar when marking, with guidance given as to how they should comment on it.

At Queen Elizabeth's, we believe that pupils must be active participants in the feedback process, rather than passive recipients of it. Feedback needs to be given in a way which opens a dialogue. Active student response to teacher feedback is most likely when that feedback is diagnostic, when students are told clearly what response is expected, when they are given time to complete the response during a lesson or by an agreed deadline, and when there is a check to ensure they have done it and/or progress has been made.

Department marking and feedback policies for each key stage (pre-GCSE, GCSE and A-level) are available via eQE and indicate precisely what is to be assessed, with what frequency, the type of assessment to be undertaken, and how the teacher should encourage and ensure active pupil response to the feedback. Similarly, specific marking schemes and criteria for assessment are agreed within Departments. Standardisation procedures, which may include moderation sampling and cross-marking, exist within Departments to ensure consistency. Quality assurance checks carried out by Heads of Subject make reference to these policies.

Feedback is also provided to pupils about the effort they have put into their work. This aspect of the feedback is important to demonstrate that resilience is valued by, for example, providing positive feedback for a student who has worked hard to overcome challenges even though the content of the work may contain some errors. Feeding back to pupils about their effort also helps to develop the characteristics of a good learner alongside ability. The effort grade descriptors consider the extent to which the pupil has -

- Spent an appropriate amount of time on the work
- Responded to previous feedback to improve the overall quality of their work or an aspect of their work
- Made good use of the resources available to them to complete the work
- Engaged with the guidance or success criteria that were provided for the task
- Presented / communicated information with clarity (for the reader and also for their own revision purposes)

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- Persevered in response to challenge or challenged himself by exploring extension work
- Demonstrated pride in their work

For years 7-9 the effort grades are used consistently across all departments and for all assessed pieces of work (excluding tests). For years 10-11 the effort grades are used but it is recognised that it may not be appropriate to provide an effort grade for all pieces of work; the grades are used as appropriate in each Department. For years 12-13 the effort grades are not used but teachers' comments include reference to effort.

3. Peer and self-assessment

In addition to teacher assessment, peer and self-assessment are useful ways of enhancing formative assessment. When they are used, success criteria are shared with pupils and less emphasis is placed on being right and more on understanding. Pupils are taught the skills of collaboration and co-operation and encouraged to explain their judgements in peer groups. There are planned opportunities for each pupil to reflect on his own performance in each subject, recording assessment outcomes in his diary in Years 7-9 and in the bespoke Departmental assessment tracking documentation in Years 10-13.

4. Recording

All teachers maintain a mark book and this contains information on each individual pupil in their classes, including targets for the year/key stage and special educational needs and disability (SEND) information. Regular internal School test results, internal examination marks and end of year interim levels and grades are held centrally. Marks are recorded by pupils in their homework diaries or in Departmental assessment tracking documents so that they have a record of their progress and parents are kept informed. Estimated grades and results for public examinations are recorded centrally. The process is co-ordinated by the Business Administration office.

5. Tracking of pupil progress against targets

Teachers monitor pupil progress during lessons through questioning and observation of pupil work and through the marking of assessment tasks. In addition, centrally held records are used to monitor pupil progress towards target levels/grades. The results of tests, mock exams and formal assessments (e.g. controlled assessment tasks) that are held centrally are colour coded to reflect the level of progress towards target levels/grades, as follows:

- G = Green, meaning that the pupil is making good progress and is on track to achieve at least his target level or grade;
- A = Amber, meaning that the pupil is making some progress but is not quite on track to achieve his target level or grade;
- R = Red, meaning that the pupil is not making sufficient progress to be on track to achieve his target level or grade.

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One of the above colours is generated for each pupil for each subject to reflect current progress in that subject and this is used by teachers, Heads of Subject, form tutors and Heads of Year to monitor pupil progression, differentiate teaching and feedback and to plan intervention strategies.

6. Intervention

Reviews of progress indicate the extent to which a pupil is on track to achieve his target minimum level/grade by the end of the year using the Green/Amber/Red colour coding. If a boy is coded Red in any subject, the teacher of that subject writes an additional profile to outline how the pupil can get back on-track. This profile sets out the intervention measures that have been/will be put in place by the School and the actions for improvement that should be followed by the pupil. This intervention provides the pupil with access to the support required to get back on-track. Heads of Subject and ultimately Senior Managers are responsible for monitoring such intervention and measuring the outcomes.

Form Tutors and Year Heads intervene, in addition to Departments, when there is a pattern of underachievement or failure to meet expectations across a range of subject areas. For example, Year Heads invite the parents of those boys who fail the progress review in multiple subjects to attend an additional consultation meeting with the relevant Form Tutor.

7. Reporting to parents

At the start of the academic year, each boy's parents receive a letter outlining his academic targets for the year in each subject. Parents of students in Years 7-10 receive three progress reports, one at the end of each term. Parents of students in Years 11-13 receive one review of progress and one full profile. All parents are invited to attend a consultation evening once during year, and some are invited to attend an additional consultation evening with the relevant Form Tutor if a pattern of underachievement has been identified.

8. Setting

The criteria for and timings of setting and re-setting is a Departmental matter which is stated clearly on the Academic Department pages on eQE. Re-setting takes place at least bi-annually and parents are informed of changes. Setting is based on objective assessments. Subjective impressions of attitude and character are not a basis for setting and invite contention.

9. Monitoring and evaluation of assessment systems

The Assessment for Learning Policy is monitored through pupil achievement, classroom observation, Departmental reports to Senior Managers and regular work checks carried out by Senior Staff and Subject Heads.

This Policy is kept under review at regular intervals in accordance with best practice.

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*LINKED
POLICIES*

- Governors' Statement of Education*
 - Home-School Agreement*
 - Homework Policy*
 - School's Mission Statement*
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Approved by the Governing Body on 1 November 2018

Signed

B.R. Martin, Chairman of the Governing Body