



THOMAS ALLEYNE'S HIGH SCHOOL

Feedback and Assessment Policy November 2023

Approved/reviewed by	
Learning and Standards Committee November 2023	
Date of next review	November 2024

Thomas Alleyne's High School – Assessment Policy

Policy Principles

This policy is a core component of the drive to raise educational standards at Thomas Alleyne's High School at all Key Stages, and to bring greater consistency to the quality of Teaching and Learning for all of our students.

Students have a right to know and understand at all points in the course what progress they are making against established criteria and against their own target grades. It should be clear to them at all stages in their followed courses what they need to do to improve their achievement.

Students should experience a wide range of effective assessment strategies which support learning and ensure good progress is made regardless of their ability or prior knowledge and attainment in the subject. Teachers have a responsibility to follow schemes of learning which contain a variety of assessment strategies and styles.

Assessment has a range of purposes, all of which are important. It needs to help students to improve (formative assessment); it needs to inform teachers, parents and students about progress made (summative assessment). It also needs to inform teachers about their teaching; the results of assessment to feed into teachers' planning for future learning.

The following documents have supported the policy amendments:

'Teacher Feedback to Improve Learning' Guidance Report – EEF 2021

'Retrieval Practice' – Kate Jones 2020

'The Craft of Assessment' – Michael Chiles 2020

'Walkthrus' – Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli - 2020

Policy Aims

1. To implement a policy that reflects recent evidence-based research from the Education Endowment Foundation published in June 2021.

[Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](#)

2. To provide clear guidelines on the school's approach to assessment

3. To establish a coherent approach to assessment across all departments, ensuring teaching is high-quality, laying the foundations for effective feedback

4. To provide effective examples of feedback with a focus on moving learning forward.

5. To provide a system which is clear to students, staff and parents.

What is teacher feedback?

The Education Endowment Foundation defines feedback as "information given by a teacher to pupil(s) about their performance that aims to improve learning." When giving this information, teachers have a range of decisions to make, and can provide feedback in a variety of different ways. The main role of feedback is to improve the learner not the work. Aspects of effective feedback will:

- focus on different content;
- be delivered in different methods;
- be directed to different people;
- be delivered at different times.

Foundations for Feedback.

Teachers at Thomas Alleyne's will deliver high quality lessons and set learning intentions (which feedback will aim towards); and assess learning gaps (which feedback will address).

Effective teaching will:

- build on pupils' prior knowledge and experience;
- avoid overloading pupils' working memory by breaking down complex material into smaller steps;
- encourage the retention of learning by using repetition, practice, and retrieval of critical knowledge and skills;
- deliver a carefully-sequenced curriculum which teaches essential concepts, knowledge, skills, and principles;
- use powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, comparisons, and demonstrations;
- highlight common misconceptions and prepare strategies to counter them;
- plan effective lessons, making good use of modelling, explanations, and scaffolds to support learning;
- adapt teaching in a responsive way to support struggling and excelling learners while maintaining high expectations for all (Early Career Framework).

Learning Gaps will be assessed through formative assessment and retrieval practice; these will include evidence - informed strategies, often low-stakes, that teachers utilise to support their learners to make progress. CPD time will be used to share best practice throughout each academic year.

Assessment for Learning Strategies may include:

- 'No hands up questions' (cold-calling)
- Wait time
- All student response questions -e.g. whiteboards, Kahoot
- Hinge questions
- Entrance / Exit tickets
- Think, pair, share
- Spot the mistake
- True / False statements
- Feedback – verbal and written
- Peer and self-assessment.

Moving Learning Forward

At Thomas Alleyne's teachers will move learning forward by giving specific targets and actions that support progress. Some assessment of learning tends will be summative and carried out periodically e.g. at the end of a unit or year or key stage. The teacher undertakes this kind of assessment to judge how well a student is performing in terms of grades and marks.

Assessment in Practice

Teachers should monitor student understanding and progress through questioning, discussion and observation. In addition, students' work should be assessed frequently and regularly so that students receive feedback on their strengths, weaknesses, attainment and the next steps that need to be taken to secure improvement (or for the improvement of future work in the case of BTEC assignments rather than re-drafting, to ensure compliance with exam board requirements). This is known as SWANS (Strengths, weaknesses and next steps). It may be appropriate, on occasion, to use 'time efficient' approaches to feedback effectively. This may include:

- Coded marking
- Live marking
- Whole-class feedback
- Verbal feedback

- Skill focussed feedback.

When students respond to teachers' marking in the form of completing next steps, they will use a green pen.

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for producing a document that sets out how the whole school policy will be applied in their department (whilst also considering exam board guidance for BTEC subjects on permissible feedback). All Curriculum Leaders will need to consider the DfE workload guidance.

A teacher should only write in a pupil's book if it is going to impact on progress.

The more immediate the feedback the greater the impact. All subject areas will identify in their area policy a bare minimum standard in terms of regularity of feedback, taking into consideration the frequency of lessons, and the nature of the subject i.e. practical/theory based.

Other than a tick for completion a teacher should only write in books if...

- they are pointing out a good attribute that a pupil must continue to use ie strength
- they are pointing out a literacy error
- they are pointing out an area for development (this can be highlighted in the text) as weakness
- The work will conclude with a GCSE/A-level or BTEC style mark (where appropriate) and a tangible **next step** to move learning on.

Where verbal feedback is given teachers should only record the feedback if it will reinforce the implementation of the next step, not purely for the benefit of book looks.

Curriculum Leaders must ensure:

- departmental assessment policy establishes clear practices, both formative and summative which ensure that assessment of knowledge, skills and competence is fully integrated into each Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 course, to ensure that it becomes part of the continuous process of learning so that students make rapid and sustained progress
- that exam style questions are used for all year groups as part of homework routinely for all subjects (this could also be coursework development where relevant e.g. BTEC units), and that this should include elements of 'spiral learning' to develop retrieval practice and/or build on prior skills
- that in addition to on-going in-class assessment for learning, at least 4 common assessments (excluding calendared trial exams) for the year group are completed throughout the academic year. These will be timed assessments, delivered in class time, consisting of exam style questions (covering a range of assessment objectives) and/or timed pieces that assess the external assessment objectives for the course. These will be used to formulate estimated grades, which will be entered into SIMS and used to inform any set changes, where appropriate. Assessments will be delivered at the discretion of subject leaders, at an appropriate point in the curriculum sequence for each subject, but will take place throughout the year at timely intervals to provide up to date assessment data for reports.
- effective moderation of a sample of mocks (this can be a full mock paper if desired or focus on a specific question or skill) is completed using validity moderation across the department, which is shared with their line manager and the teaching and learning lead to inform any professional development needs
- that a wide range and variety of assessment methods and practices, appropriate to purpose, are built into schemes of learning and lesson plans
- assessment accurately reflects student attainment and achievement, so that marks awarded, and written statements made in the form of strengths, weaknesses and next steps accurately reflects progress towards clearly defined levels of achievement, assessment criteria or examination grades. Where areas of weakness are identified teachers must indicate clearly how progress can be made
- all work is assessed in line with individual student target grades which are predictions made based on prior attainment

- departmental practice allows students to identify personal strengths and abilities and build upon them through personal reflection, developing their self-regulation and meta-cognition
- that the expectation for regularity of feedback in books and from assessments in the department is clearly laid out.

Presentation of Work

- Students must be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work:
- The covers and inside of student books and folders must not be defaced with graffiti or doodling
- Student handwriting must be completed in blue or black ink, or where next steps work is completed, green ink
- All work must be dated
- All dates and titles must be underlined using a ruler
- Handouts and worksheets should be stuck inside exercise books or filed correctly in a folder

Quality Assurance and Professional Development

Monitoring of students' work in all Year groups will take three forms:

1. SLT will conduct work scrutiny in line management with a Head of Department, using data to identify books
2. SLT will conduct focussed work scrutinies with outcomes recorded electronically on the school's chosen evaluation system.
3. Heads of Department will conduct work scrutiny each half term as part of the Line Management Narrative process. Outcomes will be recorded on recorded electronically on the school's chosen evaluation system.

Heads of department and senior leaders will quality assure marking and feedback, and provide appropriate support.

The focus of work scrutiny will be to look at how the pupil is making progress. It will not focus on how much the teacher writes. It will be purely on the impact this has had on pupil progress. The actual practice of a pupil improving their work is more important than how much the teacher writes.

1. In the first term the HOD/senior leader(s) will prioritise staff and or subject areas needing support (based on previous book looks or progress data) and agree next steps.
2. Staff who demonstrate good practice in feedback and marking will only require a 'light touch'/informal check in future.

Other opportunities to share good practice related to feedback will be built into the calendar, but each HOD will timetable these when it is appropriate for their department.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/feedback-and-marking-reducing-teacher-workload>

Where it is necessary to grade work, for example on tests and mocks, grading will reflect relevant exam specification criteria and students will be given an exam board grade relevant to the subject area.

Target grades should be used in summative assessments so that a comparison between the target grade and the grade achieved by a student in their work can be made.

Individual student progress, differences from targets as well as residuals for all students in all subjects is available to staff via SISRA and should be accessed regularly for tracking and monitoring purposes at all Key Stages.

Data will be provided to Curriculum Leaders and Line Managers as matrix tables for easy identification of students at risk of not making the expected progress. The matrices will be used for line management narratives.

Curriculum Leaders, Line Managers and the Head of Sixth Form for KS5 must analyse the data derived from each reporting cycle via SISRA and/or the supplied subject matrix assessment grids for all Year group assessments so that students in danger of underachieving can be quickly identified and appropriate and rapid intervention strategies are put in place.

Reporting Progress and Effort and Estimated Grades

Progress is reported according to the assessment schedule and grades will be entered into SIMS to create reports for parents/carers.

Effort and estimated attainment grades will be used on student reports. The attainment grade will be an estimated exam grade that reflects likely final levels of attainment and the effort grade will be taken from the four-point scale outlined below:

- Excellent
- Good
- Requires Improvement
- Poor

If a student is performing below their target grade, or they have an effort grade of requires improvement/poor, then teachers must provide a written comment to explain why this is the case. The comment should be written in a constructive manner to support the student in making progress towards achieving their target grade. In addition, the qualitative statement should be utilized to provide information to parents/carers so they can actively support their child/ren in their academic journey at Thomas Alleyne's.

Post-16 Reports and UCAS:

- Post-16 reports are used to feedback on current student attainment against their individual target grades, as determined from the tracking data used by classroom teachers. They are also used to give a predicted grade based on the student continuing to achieve at the current reported levels.
- If a student is performing below their target grade, then teachers must provide a written comment to explain why this is the case. The comment should be written in a constructive manner to support the student in making progress towards achieving their target grade. In addition, the qualitative statement should be utilised to provide information to parents/carers so they can actively support their child/ren in their academic journey within the Sixth Form at Thomas Alleyne's.
- In the Autumn term of year 13 staff are required to write UCAS references and supply predicted grades via UniFrog. Such information provides the Sixth form Team with the information necessary to complete UCAS references (for university applications) and other references should they be required.
- UCAS references are completed for all students regardless of whether they intend to apply to university or not. UCAS references and predicted grades are open documents which are routinely shared with students and should therefore be written in an honest, but constructive manner.

Target Grades

Students will receive a target grade in all of their subjects

At Key Stage Three and Four, the target grade will be an exam grade based on Fischer Family Trust Aspire top 5% criteria, this is known as FFT5.

At Key Stage 5, the target grade for A-Level subjects is generated via Fischer Family Trust (FFT) which uses KS4 prior attainment to calculate a target grade for each student in each of their individual A-level subjects. In line with KS4, targets are set at an aspirational FFT 5. FFT does not calculate target grades for Applied General subjects (BTECs) these grades are calculated using DfE transition matrices, which also uses KS4 prior attainment via an average point score.

These grades are also set to be aspirational and broadly in line with FFT 5. If post-16 students achieve their target grade(s), they will be performing within the top 5% nationally.