Isca Academy

Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy

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Assessment

This Assessment Policy sets out the key principles behind our approach to assessment at Key Stage three and Key Stage four.

The purpose of assessment is to:

- Identify what students know and what they need to learn
- Inform planning (school/class/cohort/group/individual), target setting and to provide performance information for parents and governors
- Measure individual student and group progress
- Evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and associated interventions

How assessment will be used:

- Formative assessment; to inform teaching in order to meet the learning needs of all students
- To give constructive feedback to students in a range of ways that enables them to have an active role in identifying their own learning needs and more importantly, how to make progress
- To inform parents/carers of their child's progress
- To rigorously monitor and evaluate students' progress on an individual, group and whole school basis, using this information to plan for improvement

At Isca Academy assessment will:

- Include effective formative and summative assessment opportunities that provide robust evidence of learning
- Incorporate clear assessment points that provide evidence of the progress of students in their learning
- Be carried out accurately, competently and confidently and include processes of moderation, standardisation and benchmarking. Whilst assessment practices might differ between subjects due to subject-specific requirements, the measured outcomes will all be robust and accurate
- Provide feedback on learning that is clear to the student and informs them of what they have done well and also what they need to improve, so that they can move on in their learning
- Provide data to inform lesson planning in order to ensure that each student is provided with appropriate learning activities that include opportunities for challenge in their learning
- Provide clear information to parents about the progress of their child
- Provide data to Governors and Academy leaders so that necessary interventions and training can be introduced for staff to support improvement in teaching and learning and ultimately student progress

Each department is required to write its own assessment policy/plan and this may differ from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. This will allow subjects to set out a clear assessment plan that satisfies the demands of the curriculum in terms of skill development and knowledge acquisition which is specific to their subject area.

How we assess in Key Stage 3 (Years 7 & 8)

Assessment takes place through the following mechanisms:

- Pre-tests/post-tests
- End of unit formal assessments
- On-going assessment of skills and the application of knowledge in lessons

Assessments are quality assured through internal moderation informing predictions every student. The assessment will indicate if they are *Above*, *Expected* or *Below* their target grade.

How we assess in Key Stage 4 (Years 9-11)

Assessment takes place through the following mechanisms:

- Pre-tests/post-tests
- End of unit formal assessments
- Mock examinations
- On-going assessment of skills and the application of knowledge in lessons

Robust quality assurance/moderation of assessment takes place to ensure that work is benchmarked to a consistently high standard and therefore predicted grades are as accurate as they can be.

Reporting to parents

Assessment data will be reported to parents three times a year, through termly reports and once a year at parents' evening. Reports to parents will include:

- Details of progress against targets in all subjects
- Effort, behaviour and homework using a RAG rating
- Tutor comments on general academic progress
- Arrangements for discussing the report with the student's teacher(s)
- The student's attendance record, which includes:
  - The total number of possible attendances, and the total number of unauthorised absences expressed as a percentage of the total possible attendances

Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all students, including those with additional needs or disabilities. Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of students' needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all students. Our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to students starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of students' learning difficulties.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all students
- Holding school leaders to account for improving performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in all subjects
- Analysing student progress and attainment, including individual students and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors on all key aspects of student progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over time

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy as well as subject specific policies in-line with the teachers' standards

Marking & Feedback Guidelines

Rationale:

Effective feedback is the process of the teacher diagnosing where learners are in relation to where they need to be, this can be derived from one of or a combination of the following; curriculum defined success criteria, factual information and learning objectives, and then using pedagogical strategies to outline how to get there. Formative assessment concentrates on learning as it is taking place, with an explicit focus on bringing about rapid and sustained improvements in learning gains. These guidelines focus on the written element of assessment for learning. Summative assessments such as tests/mock examinations and controlled assessments are marked separately.

Objective:

Feedback guidelines bring a consistent approach to ensure students reach or exceed their potential. A large proportion of feedback will take place as students are working to complete sections of, or whole pieces of work to demonstrate their learning. Much of this is verbal and does not require evidencing. Diagnostic written feedback requires students to have undertaken a piece of work that enables them to demonstrate their learning. This feedback cannot be undertaken effectively solely from simple questions or short tasks in isolation.

Why is written feedback so important?

Motivation – students are more likely *to engage* with our expectation to make improvements if marking is regular and formative.

Assessment for Learning – students know how to make improvements and are given the appropriate time to do so. This is then revisited to check understanding.

Regular feedback to inform teachers, students and parents of learning gains and diagnose misconceptions

Knowledge and understanding can be checked and corrected by the teacher.

Independent learning – comments by the teacher in the form of questions can promote research and self-regulation of learning.

Needs of individuals – all students are challenged appropriately as teachers mark and guide students according to ability.

Gains in learning are accelerated through correcting faulty interpretations of ideas and misconceptions. Followed up by checking progress after students have received dedicated time to improve their work.

Diagnose **+** Response **+** Follow up **=** Progress
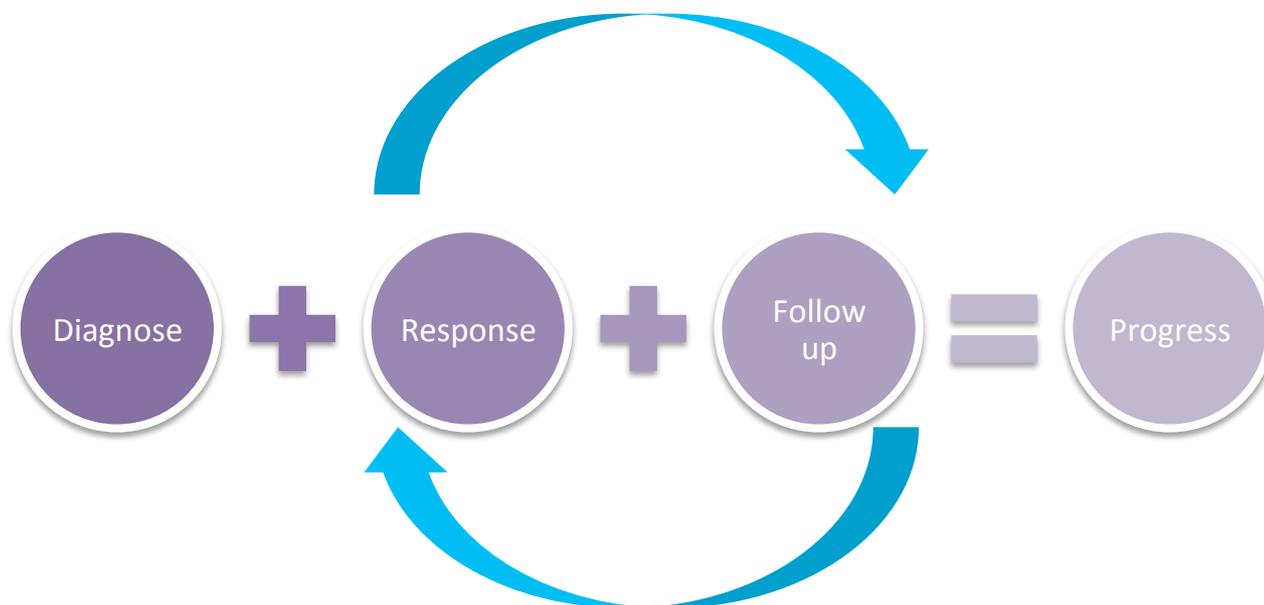
Expectations:

1. **What should be marked?**

Written pieces of work that contribute to evidencing learning should be marked with diagnostic developmental instructions or questions where appropriate to ensure students are secure in their understanding.

Avoid	Ensure
Marking every single page of work (unless of course you are annotating key pieces of coursework etc.. where it may be appropriate) Avoid 'tick and flick', well done, good work and generic think comments	You mark key aspects of work that will accelerate progress for <u>all</u> students. This may differ from student to student and in frequency across year groups. Consider if your feedback is summative or formative
Evidencing verbal feedback in books/electronic books (date stamp, students writing a transcript of the conversation etc…) it's a waste of everybody's time so STOP!	You exploit various approaches to feedback; peer to peer, verbal, written, use of new technologies such as video and audio capture – variation is key.
Pointless and unnecessary dialogue; don't write anything you could have verbally expressed for the sake of it	You mark in-line with the department policy and school feedback guidelines and plan for students to rework/redraft key pieces of work
Writing extensive feedback on every piece of work, or work that will not improve and secure progress in learning	Marking has impact. Provide diagnostic feedback to stretch and challenge the learner(s) leading to student progress
Superficial DIRT for the sake of it and discourage simple student acknowledgement of your marking such as; "thanks" or "I understand" – ask yourself, What does this achieve?	You plan for DIRT where it will have high impact upon student progress as a result of your feedback. This is the opportunity for students to rework/redraft work to secure progress. Remember the time allocated isn't a 'one size fits all' it will probably be different from student to student and from subject to subject.

2. **Is there a particular way in which work should work be marked?**

There is no particular or preferred style of marking students work. Quite simply, it is imperative that all students receive regular developmental feedback that accelerates learning gains, this can take the form of both verbal and written diagnostic feedback. The focus should concentrate on managing students misconceptions, link to relevant success criteria and be structured to allow students the opportunity to correct and improve the work. Written comments should identify where improvements need to be made. Students need to receive instructions or questions based upon the teacher's diagnosis of the work that when completed by the student will improve their progress. There is no requirement to write grades and levels on the students' work as it progresses, teachers should use professional judgement about this.

3. **Frequency**
The Isca feedback promise:

- Include praise and development points
- Be regular and when needed
- Be written in green pen
- Encourage students to respond and make progress
- Develop literacy skills

Students will:

- Date, title and underline work
- Write in blue or black pen
- Respond to teacher feedback
- NOT doodle or graffiti work – if this happens student will be required to redo this piece of work

Marking for Literacy:

Teachers should pay attention to the marking for literacy expectations related to SPaG. Throughout the section of work that is marked, use the following notation to highlight spelling, punctuation and grammar. The marking may require additional explanation as well as:

SP	Spelling mistake to correct
P	Insert correct punctuation
~	Sentence doesn't make sense due to grammatical error – correct
//	Insert new paragraph
C	Capital letter mistake to correct

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

- Mark work regularly according to Department/subject expectations
- Advise students on how to improve work. Key questions or statements are given, not lengthy targets
- Allow students to improve their work and remark it when done. (We call this dedicated improvement and reflection time)
- Insist on high standards of presentation and care with all work (draft and final)
- Use fine diagnostic methods to correct faulty interpretations and misconceptions
- Share good practice with feedback strategies
- Co-operate with ALT and HoD by providing when asked a sample of marking
- Recognise and reward effort and progress

Head of Department

- Must ensure that this policy is developed and adapted to suit the curriculum model across both key stages. This must be understood by all members of their team
- Must uphold the policy by complying fully with the expectations and modelling the practice expected of their team
- Must participate in work scrutiny as part of their ongoing self-evaluation and subject demands

Teaching Assistants

- To read through the comments written by teachers in order to guide any students with additional needs, so that they can improve their work
- To use the notation consistently and in accordance with the whole school approach referred to above
- Advise teachers on strategies for students with additional needs

Students

- Put the best effort into their work at <u>all</u> times
- Read comments written by teachers and respond positively to the instructions to improve their work
- When advised, self-assess work using the criteria provided
- Peer assesses work fairly and responsibly, giving strengths and next steps
- Catch up on work after a period of absence to ensure it is all completed to the deadlines set
- Keep standards of presentation of work high and take pride in all work undertaken
- Take responsibility to ask for guidance if tasks set are unclear

Parents/Carers

- Read through the comments written by staff regularly
- Support teachers by checking that students are organising their work and completing tasks that are set
- Check that students are packing the correct equipment, books and work for every day of the week.

Work Impact Assessment

These guidelines have been written with consideration given to teacher workload and wellbeing. Marking has been reduced by allowing departments to interpret their own guidelines from this master document, whilst still maintaining high standards of student progress. We have achieved this by not over-prescribing how teachers should mark, but instead switching the emphasis to marking for impact using professional judgement alongside guidance linked to diagnostic approaches, comments on work are limited to key questions/statements therefore reducing the need for lengthy target setting comments.