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## ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK POLICY

**Policy Custodian:** Deputy Head (Academic)

**Approving Body:** MTS Senior Leadership Team

**Approved:** June 2024

*(This policy does not apply to Merchant Taylors' Prep.)*

### **Rationale**

Effective assessment and feedback is one of the most important agents for improving pupil attainment. It should help pupils improve their academic understanding and skills, and thus their attainment.

Our main principles for assessment and feedback are as follows:

- To allow pupils to develop a clear understanding of how they are progressing and what steps they can undertake to develop further.
- To provide clear evidence for teachers of how well pupils have learned so that their teaching can be adjusted accordingly.
- To provide parents with the relevant information about their son's progress and enable them to effectively support the school in maximising their son's progress.
- To monitor and record pupil progress.

### **Principles of Assessment and Feedback**

Assessment and feedback are not limited to written work. At Merchant Taylors' departments are supported in making a professional judgement to determine the type of assessment and feedback that is appropriate for the context of their subject. Assessment utilises a variety of techniques and is part of the day-to-day work of teachers. Teachers' feedback is contextualised by the current needs of each pupil and helps pupils to act upon the feedback. Marking is not the end of learning; feedback on written work should aim to continue that learning. This can be done either by comments-only marking or by encouraging pupils to respond to the feedback by correcting their work or attempting additional questions. To aid pupils in reflecting on their work, both peer and self-assessment are viewed as valued tools in the teacher's assessment toolkit.

In the classroom, assessment may take many forms. It might be a conversation with a pupil, or group of pupils, after an exercise has been completed or work has been returned. It might be a discussion on a piece of work that a pupil, or group of pupils, is engaged in in the classroom. It might be a quick check of how effectively pupils have understood a topic by use of a simple traffic-light system or mini-whiteboards. Pupils are frequently assessed on their written work – both that produced in lessons and for homework. Assessment of the individual progress of pupils is achieved through a range of criteria, be it their learning in the classroom, their contributions to the pastoral life of the school, their performances in sports, the arts or in super-curricular involvement. Many of these assessments are informal and add to our judgements on the holistic development of the pupil. If departments do not feel it would help the learning process, they need not provide pupils with a graded piece of work every week, or every cycle. Instead, time can be taken to ascertain how best to set and assess work which will achieve the rationale above.

In order to promote effective learning, staff should always:

- Have an understanding of their pupils' starting point in their learning.
- Agree and share marking criteria with pupils.
- Offer feedback which refers to those specified criteria.
- Ensure that the work of all pupils in a group receives similar attention.
- Provide feedback which offers clear targets on how pupils can improve on their next piece of work.
- Allocate time in lessons or at home, to review and reflect on comments, in order to action them effectively.

### **Departmental Assessment & Feedback Policies (DAFPs)**

All departments should have DAFPs which reflect the specific, individual needs of their department. These should augment, but not conflict with, the general principles of and reasons for feedback as outlined above. The following provides departments with guidance in the construction of DAFPs:

- DAFPs should be included in the departmental policies folder and discussed with the Senior Deputy Head (Academic).
- DAFPs should be communicated and readily available to pupils in a pupil-friendly form.
- DAFPs should set clear guidelines about how often pupils in each year should be set work.
- DAFPs should set clear guidelines as to the type, frequency, extent of feedback and form of marking pupils can expect to receive.
- DAFPs should go some way to outline how different marking techniques can best be fitted to the different sorts of tasks pupils might be asked to complete.
- DAFPs should outline clearly how teachers should record marks, comments or grades relating to pupil performance in written work.
- DAFPs should state that teachers in the Department should make use of the data they have accrued in order to report on pupils – in both whole-school grading and whole-school reporting.
- DAFPs should include guidance on how teachers may best make use of the school's procedures for rewards and sanctions.
- DAFPs may include a requirement that, when appropriate, work produced by pupils in the run-up to external examinations should be assessed using the specific marking criteria and assessment objectives for that examination.

Deputy Head (Academic)  
June 2024