AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Objectives
This policy provides the school's written guidance on assessment and feedback which will:
- Provide a framework on which departmental assessment policies can be based
- Provide guidance on the nature of assessment and feedback
- Provide guidance on the monitoring of the effectiveness of assessment and feedback
- Ensure that assessment and feedback is consistent both throughout and across departments

The outcomes of successful assessment and feedback
All forms of assessment and feedback should aim to:
- Support and motivate students so as to have a positive impact on their learning
- Support students in understanding the expected progression and standards within each subject
- Give students a clear idea of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve, within a lesson, topic area or towards their target grade
- Provide staff with important information on the progress of the students

Assessment activities
Assessment refers to a range of approaches aimed at evaluating students' understanding and progress, all of which provide valuable opportunities to provide diagnostic feedback to students which supports their learning. Assessment may be formative (provide opportunities to develop the learning of students) or summative (provide information to staff, students and parents on the effectiveness of learning). Whilst summative assessment is undoubtedly useful, it should be recognised that on its own such assessment is too late to impact students' learning and as such there must be opportunities for formative assessment and related feedback prior to any summative assessment. Helpful assessment activities include (but are not restricted to):

- Marking of written work by the teacher focused on how each student can improve accompanied by written feedback. This includes tests / exams where marks or grades might also be given to the student
- Student self assessment
- Student peer assessment
- The use of challenging and thought provoking questions
- "Hands down" approach to questioning
- Allowing time for students to think through the answers to questions
- Allowing time for students to reflect on any feedback they have received
- Observation of student activities
- Observation of presentations by the students
- Sharing of marking criteria with students

Further, more in depth suggestions are provided in Appendix A

Assessment activities which are likely to produce ineffective feedback include:
- Marking tests or written work with a mark or grade only, without further analysis
- Marking with general comments only such as "good" or being over-critical in assessment
- Solely directing questions towards those with their hands up
- Over-use of closed questions

Assessment and feedback to students

Assessment of students will take place regularly in order to ensure that effective learning is taking place. This will include students' <u>written</u> work (whether completed at home or in class) where feedback should be provided within a reasonable time. Whilst it is recognised that some feedback requires additional time, prompt return of feedback will be more highly valued by students – where a delay of more than a week is inevitable, students should be given a date for the likely return of work. It is important that the minimum expectations for all staff and students are made clear to ensure consistency across the school, whilst also enabling departmental autonomy, such that assessment and feedback in individual subjects suits the needs of their students:

- **All students will receive at least one piece of high quality written feedback each half term* – this is likely to be more frequent in core subjects or in higher Key Stages**. This feedback should be diagnostic in that it should inform the students about how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Evidence of this feedback will take a variety of forms, but there must be an opportunity for the students to provide evidence of acting upon the feedback so as to progress their learning.

    *: it is recognised that in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a short half term where a subject sees a class only once a fortnight), this may not be possible

- Whilst summative assessments can be used to give important feedback, earlier formative assessment should be carried out such that the resultant feedback can be used to develop learning prior to such assessments e.g. allowing redrafting of work
- At Key Stages 3 and 4, student notes should be checked for quality and organisation in order to identify any issues. Resultant feedback in such cases may be cursory and simply recognise the completion of notes.
- Literacy and numeracy should be a key focus in assessing students' work across all subjects.
- Some marking may be carried out by students themselves or by peers as this can further inform students of their progress as well as aiding collaboration.
- Not all learning needs to be marked.

Common marking expectations

In order to ensure consistency across the school when written work is assessed, the following marking standards are provided. In developing their own policies, departments should include the whole school marking standards, but may also develop their own more extensive standards as appropriate.

Sp	Spelling error
P	Punctuation error
Gr	Grammatical error
//	Paragraph needed
C	Capital letter needed
Exp	Poor literary expression
N	Numeracy error
*	See note later on
✓✓	Particularly good aspects of writing/learning
WWW	What Went Well
EBI	Even Better If

These marking standards can be found in student planners and may be copied for students to stick in their books (copy in Appendix B)

Student response to feedback
In order to be effective, feedback must be acted upon by the student – there must therefore be an opportunity for students to have time to absorb, process and act on any feedback given. Suggestions for how this can be managed include giving students time to:

- Highlight strengths and one area for improvement based on teacher annotation
- Annotate work based on teacher comment
- Self or peer mark work prior to the teacher and give one area for improvement
- Write a comment on how to improve themselves in an area which has been gone over in class
- Complete a correction where the teacher has given a hint in the feedback
- Make own corrections where the teacher has identified a need
- Fully read and engage with the feedback comments
- Record areas for improvement / teacher or peer feedback on department sheets, books or planners

Further, more in depth ideas are given in Appendix A

Monitoring of assessment and feedback
All Departments should have a Departmental Assessment Policy which outlines how staff within that department should assess work and feedback to students. This policy sets out the minimum expectations for such assessment and feedback, but each department will interpret such concepts in a way that suits the requirements of their subject and the needs of their students.

Monitoring of assessment and feedback is the responsibility of the Head of Department with the support of the SLT link and evidence of such monitoring will be included in Departmental Self-Evaluation. (Further details can be found in the guidelines for Departmental Self-Evaluation)

Activities which can be used to monitor assessment and to ensure consistency include (but are not restricted to):

- Colleagues working collaboratively and sharing their experience
- Periodic moderation meetings with key or standardised assessments
- Evaluation of teacher assessment and feedback during lesson observations or "butterfly walks"
- Having an annual departmental focus area to allow for more targeted evaluation of assessment and feedback

Examinations
- Departments may run end of year internal examinations in Years 7-9, and there will be end of year exams in Year10 as well as "mock" terminal examinations part way through Years 11, 12 and 13.
- GCSE examinations take place mostly at the end of Year 11, though there may also be exams at the end of Year 10. Assessed GCSE coursework / controlled assessments are completed throughout Years 10 and 11.
- AS and A2 modules take place in the summer of Year 12 and 13, and coursework may take place in both years.

Reporting to parents
- Teaching staff will report on student progress at an annual parents' consultation evening and also in more informal one to one meetings should it be necessary
- Teaching staff report on progress, attitude to learning in class and homework in December and March, and this assessment is published to students and parents.

- A full report is sent out once a year in July for Years 7-10, and in March (replacing the assessment) in Years 11-13. For each subject this report contains the end of year target as well as grades in progress, attitude to learning and homework which act as the review of the year. It will also include a written suggestion of future learning targets and where necessary there may also be a short additional written review of the year.

Progress grades
- In Key Stages 4 and 5, these are tied to the standards of the final GCSE, AS or A2 examination, and a grade A for example should be interpreted as progress which if continued throughout the course, is of external grade A standard.
- In Key Stage 3 GCSE grades are used to assess student progress against an end of year target. The target is produced based on a combination of pre-testing and teacher judgment and each department provides specific learning criteria for each grade at each year.
- Attitude to learning and homework grades are included on all reports.
- Students also assess their own progress and other achievements on their annual report, as does the Head of House, the Tutor, and (if necessary) the Head of Year and the Head of Section.

Tracking student progress
- Following each termly assessment, an analysis of overall progress, attitude to learning and homework will be used as a focus for discussion between student and tutor/pastoral leader.
- In addition an analysis of progress by subject / teaching group will allow appropriate intervention at a departmental level as well as recognition of outstanding progress
- In all year-groups, the focus will be on achieving the targets at the end of the academic year, though in Key Stage 3 and Years 10 and 12, these end-of-year targets are stepping stones to the final grade at the end of GCSE or A level
- In addition to formal academic targets students also set themselves personal targets involving issues such as contributing positively in and beyond lessons, becoming efficient and organized, developing good relationships with others, getting involved in extra-curricular activities (such as House or School competitions) etc. These should also be discussed periodically with the Tutor

This policy will be reviewed every three years (next review summer term 2018)

APPENDIX A: Suggested strategies for effective feedback to students

To be effective, feedback to students should have a positive impact on student learning, but should also avoid increasing staff workload.

Section 1 includes a number of suggested strategies which have both student learning and staff workload in mind

Section 2 includes a number of practices best avoided as they have minimal impact on student learning whilst potentially increasing staff workload.

Section 1

The following gives strategies which have been found to be effective in feeding back to students. It is worth aiming to vary the form of feedback given rather than looking to employ all of the strategies below. Individual teaching staff or staff in different subjects will obviously find some strategies more helpful than others.

1. Use codes rather than comments to feed back to students. Often feedback for a class will involve 5 or 6 different comments and these can be provided in code form after which the code can be shared with students who can write the feedback out in full.
2. Use a stamp or codes where the final space is left blank for the students to write their response to feedback. E.g. teacher completes "www" and "ebi" and leaves "I need to" for student to complete
3. When using "www", use a comment which is directly linked to the success criteria, rather than something which is too general. This gives the student a clearer idea as to what has been done well which can then be applied to future pieces of work
4. When using "ebi", write a comment that requires a student response. E.g. "State 3 long term and 3 short term response to flooding" is better than "You need to know long term and short term responses to flooding". Such comments can be provided using a code rather than writing them out several times (see suggestion 1)
5. Use "DIRT" (Directed Improvement and Reflection Time) at the start of a lesson to allow time for an adequate response to feedback. Without such time, any feedback is likely to be forgotten. Such time could be used for answering a question, redrawing a graph, redrafting a piece of work etc Aim to include this in a lesson every few weeks.
6. Use a "Verbal Feedback Given" stamp or code and have the students write down the feedback themselves
7. Give time in lessons for students to proof read and edit their own work before submitting it, so that the teacher is effectively marking the second draft
8. Use clear success criteria for self, peer or teacher assessment. Feedback is then recognized instantly as those criteria which have not been met. It is especially important that success criteria be very clear for self and peer assessment tasks, as students are not experts (different from peer or self-marking where an answer is clearly right or wrong). One possible use of success criteria is FAIL (first attempt in learning) and SAIL (second attempt in learning). Here, the idea is that a student completes a piece of work without success criteria (FAIL). The work is then swapped and peer assessed using provided success criteria with the peer giving feedback on how the work could be improved. The students then completes the work (SAIL) and resubmits for further peer or teacher assessment.

9. Use "triple impact marking". E.g. a student self-assesses their own piece of work against success criteria before handing it in. The teacher comments on the self-assessment of the student and then sets a follow up task which the student completes. Peer assessment can be brought in as part of the process as an alternative.
10. Do not assess sub-standard work, but give a deadline for work of an improved standard to be submitted
11. Write feedback sideways in the book so that students have to turn their books around in order to read it – it is then easy to spot students are not taking note of feedback
12. Copy work before assessing it. A blank copy of the work can then be supplied to students who can self-assess prior to the teacher assessed copy being returned. A comparison will allow students to reflect on the feedback and acts as useful training for future peer or self-assessment.
13. Use "live marking": write feedback in their books during a lesson while they are working
14. Use summative assessment for a formative purpose. This can be done by using question analysis so that students are made very aware of which sections of the topic show where further work is needed. This is only effective, however, if the formative aspect is followed up – students should record the feedback and tasks related to the area(s) where development is needed given and followed up.
15. Use of "RAG rating" by students to indicate their level of confidence in the success criteria (can be done using coloured card / faces etc). This is frequently used but often not followed up – it is essential to consider before students assess themselves, what action will be taken. This can be a quick way of recording a mark, as well as allowing targeting tasks / resources specifically to where students feel they need support.
16. Consider withholding grades to encourage students to listen and act on feedback given
17. Assess peer or self-assessment rather than remarking the work itself

Section 2

The following gives practices that are generally best avoided.

1. Do not provide extensive or unnecessary written dialogue between teacher and student as evidence of redrafting and reflecting on feedback
2. Do not get bogged down in unnecessary detail e.g. it does not matter what colour pen is used to assess work
3. Do not mark work that is copied down in class, including any worksheets that have been provided
4. Do not feel that every page of work in a book should be marked. Consider avoiding flick and tick and instead leave it blank
5. Do not remark work that has already been marked in class
6. Do not assume that a particular frequency or quantity of work should be provided

APPENDIX C: Copy of the AGS Marking Standards

Sp	Spelling error
P	Punctuation error
Gr	Grammatical error
//	Paragraph needed
C	Capital letter needed
Exp	Poor literary expression
N	Numeracy error
*	See note later on
✓✓	Particularly good aspects of writing/learning
WWW	What Went Well
EBI	Even Better If