



QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL WAKEFIELD

Assessment & Marking Policy

Document Control

Document Owners & Contact Persons:

Mark Fitzsimons, Director of Studies

Angela Eggleston, Director of Studies

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QEGS ASSESSMENT & MARKING POLICY

1 Rationale

Our approach to assessment at QEGS is founded on educational research of educationalists (such as Hattie, Dweck, Rosenshine, Claxton) which stresses the importance of regular, formative feedback in scaffolding boys' learning. These are some of the key concepts which underpin the school's thinking:

- a. "Feedback is among the most common features of successful teaching and learning."
- b. "Feedback aims to reduce the gap between where the student is and where he is meant to be – that is, between prior or current achievement and the success criteria."
- c. "The aim is to provide feedback that is "just in time", "just for me", "just for where I am in my learning process" and "just what I need to help me move forward".
- d. Well devised assessment supports learning.

2 Principles

The school operates a twin-track approach which encourages departments to formulate their own, bespoke policy whilst ensuring a number of (whole school) "golden threads" are prominent. These are as follows:

- a. Boys should receive **regular** feedback on their work in the form of oral and written comments. This might be on written work in books or on digital work in their Google Classroom and in Firefly. The way in which we assess must allow each boy to show what he knows, understands and can do. Equally, we must prepare boys for the rigours of public examinations (e.g. understanding how the assessment objectives and level marking works at GCSE and A Level). Feedback on Firefly is visible to parents and allows the triangulation of support between home and school.
- b. There should be a **variety** of assessment methods, ranging from grades and percentages (e.g. end of topic tests) to more detailed commentaries (e.g. advice on coursework drafts). Departments should develop their assessments in light of training on Rosenshine's Principles and ensure assessments are used for learning. Retrieval practice is becoming embedded.
- c. Whilst there is always the need to provide "transactive" advice (i.e. insisting that they get into good habits regarding their work – organisation of books and folders, spelling and grammar etc), this should be complemented by **formative** written guidance about how to improve, especially as they move through the school. We need to encourage them to become increasingly independent in their learning and to have the desire to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses (metacognition).
- d. Teachers should have regard for the boys' individual capabilities. Where possible, feedback needs to be **differentiated** (i.e. tailored to the individual student), especially for more substantial pieces of work. Marking should encourage boys who struggle and seek to stretch the most able by challenging them to aim even higher or investigate further. This is reflected in our "traffic light" reporting system which measures attainment relative to an individual boy's benchmark grade. We use CEM data (Midyis/Yellis/ALIS) at KS3, KS4 and 5. Boys go 'Green' when they attain their benchmark. They are encouraged to go 'Blue' and beat it!
- e. Heads of Department should ensure that there is **consistency** of approach within their team and that they are generating enough assessment data to properly inform the reporting system.
- f. Our boys thrive on the boost of getting a good mark but we place great emphasis on a "growth mindset". No intellectual ability is fixed and, within certain parameters, all students can develop academically, change, grow and make additional progress. To this end, effort should be acknowledged, either through the particular approach of departmental marking policies or through our "merit" system on Firefly and praise phone calls and/or postcards home. Oral and written feedback should therefore recognise both **attainment** and **reward effort**, where possible.

3 Departmental Approaches

- a. Departments should devise assessment protocols which “fit” their schemes of work and pedagogy. In other words, they should choose the style of assessment which best matches each piece of work (homeworks, practical tasks, extended projects, group tasks, artefacts, summative tests etc.) By their very nature, this will vary across different parts of the curriculum (i.e. there may well be more of an emphasis on regular oral feedback in the creative arts as opposed to more written essay advice in the humanities).
- b. Faculties play an important role in sharing best practice within like-minded departments and there will be common features between subject clusters (e.g. vocab tests in Languages and self/peer-assessment in the Sciences).
- c. Department assessment policies are published in their handbooks and student-friendly versions are often shared with boys (e.g. grading criteria inside the front cover of exercise books).

4 Quality Assurance (Work Scrutiny)

In a system which allows a degree of autonomy for departments, there needs to be a robust way of monitoring standards of marking and assessment across the school. This is managed primarily by (key stage) termly work scrutinies which scrutinise significant samples of the boys’ work. These are undertaken by HoDs with support from HoFs & SLT. We believe that QA should be a collaborative and a learning experience for all, not something that is ‘done’ to a department. These are supplemented by further work scrutiny and pupil interviews during Departmental Reviews.

The following criteria are used:

1. Organisation of work
2. Building on previous learning. Depth and breadth of coverage
3. Knowledge and Skills
4. Understanding Practice and Student Voice
5. Observation - where applicable.

Following the work scrutiny, HoDs discuss the findings in their SLT Link meetings and where necessary, strategies are devised if any issues have arisen. Where significant improvements are needed, the Headmaster/SLT would normally meet the HoD and identify an appropriate strategy for improvement.

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