

ECS Feedback and Assessment Policy (Secondary) 2022-23

(Updated June 2022; due for review June 2023)



This policy outlines responsibilities of **all Secondary teachers** in terms of *minimum* expectations for the assessment of students' work and associated feedback. Marking and providing feedback in line with this school policy is a core professional responsibility.

The policy is constructed around recommendations from:

- "A marked improvement? A review of the evidence on written marking" (Education Endowment Foundation, 2016)
- "Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking" (The Independent Teacher Workload Review Group, 2016)
- The Edmonton County Heads of Faculty team

1. Rationale

- Assessment, marking and feedback are a vital part of the learning and teaching process, and also serves the function of checking that work set has been completed.
- In order for students to make progress they must have regular feedback on how well they are doing, how they are progressing towards targets and what they need to do to improve further.
- Assessment, marking and feedback are for the benefit of students and must be in a format which is most useful to them.
- Parents expect to see their child's work marked regularly by teachers and be informed of how their child can make progress.

2. Principles

To make progress, students need to receive feedback which is:

- Timely – the work should still be relatively fresh in students' minds when they get feedback
- Informative – feedback should consist of constructive comments and provide guidance to students on how to make further progress
- Regular – students should be familiar with the routine of getting, and acting upon feedback;
- Planned – teachers should provide opportunities in lessons for students to reflect on and act upon any feedback.

Heads of Faculty and subject leaders need to be given a degree of freedom to construct a policy that works for their subject/s (although this must, of course, comply with this whole-school policy). For example, Heads of Faculty have the flexibility to decide which methods of assessment are most appropriate and most effective for their subject area/s and whether to focus feedback on classwork, homework or both.

3. Types of assessment and feedback

It is expected that both teachers and students will regularly undertake a range of assessment activities, which correspond to the learning activities of students. These are detailed below in Table 1.

Written / typed feedback should:

- Be predominately encouraging and constructive
- Be diagnostic, with clear guidance for students on how to make further progress
- Relate to lesson objectives and learning outcomes
- Challenge students to think for themselves
- Provide further tasks, or 'next steps' to extend / challenge / develop further learning.

It is important that students act on feedback to make it as meaningful as possible:

- A '**Reflect and perfect**' response requires students to respond to teacher feedback and demonstrate that they understand how to make progress and take action.
- 'Reflect and perfect' should lead to the student actively engaging with the teacher feedback and developing their piece of work as directed.
- After each piece of written diagnostic feedback undertaken by the teacher, adequate time should be allocated in lesson or for independent study for students to respond meaningfully to feedback.
- Student responses should be reflective and show progress. Simple answers to questions (e.g. 'Yes, sir / miss', or 'ok') are not meaningful, appropriate or acceptable.

Note that there is no need for 'triple' marking – teachers should check that students have responded to their written feedback, but no further written comment is required.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies, such as targeted questioning, mini-whiteboard activities and low-stakes testing should be used throughout lessons to assess the progress of students, identify misconceptions and guide future teaching (possibly within that lesson).

High quality verbal feedback is recognised as an important way of providing feedback to students. Best practice is where students are encouraged to record verbal feedback. This is particularly important in work that is developed over a longer period.

All teachers of all subjects are responsible for the development of literacy, numeracy and the marking of SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar); see Section 6.

Self and peer assessment, when linked to clear, specific success criteria allow students to develop a greater understanding of assessment criteria, *but should be used sparingly* – students are not experts and their feedback is not always a good substitute for teachers' feedback and assessment.

Marks (i.e. percentages or similar) should only be used for tests and exams and pieces of work where a quantitative element is a meaningful metric (i.e. a spelling test), *but these should always be accompanied by constructive, diagnostic feedback*.

Progress trackers / ladders should be provided to students for each unit of work so that it is clear to students what is expected at each Step or Grade – see Appendix 1.

Assessment type:	Appropriate for these learning activities:	Feedback given:	What happens next?
Teacher written / typed diagnostic feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides individual diagnostic feedback Refers to learning objectives / learning outcomes / success criteria / mark schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework tasks Exercises of questions; written tasks Drafts and completed projects / extended pieces of writing Drafts and final versions of artwork / design products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWW (at least 2) EBI (at least 1), such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> corrections improvements a 'next steps' task an extension task Stickers or stamps used for common phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher plans lesson time for students for to respond to the written feedback, ideally at the start of a lesson. Progress Trackers updated by students
Teacher marking of tests, assessments and exams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides individual diagnostic feedback Refers to assessment criteria / mark schemes Analysis via a Smith Proforma for key assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of unit assessments / tests PPEs / End-of-year exams Past-papers for revision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors / misconceptions addressed and explained, possibly with exemplars Areas for development recorded on standardised front covers ECS Step / GCSE grade / AS/A Level grade awarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress trackers updated by students Analysis of tests (including Smith Proformas), informs future lesson planning, including additional teaching on identified common areas of difficulty
Teacher verbal feedback and 'live marking': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides individual diagnostic feedback orally OR basic written feedback Refers to learning objectives / learning outcomes / success criteria / mark schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classwork activities Ongoing feedback for extended pieces of practical work Discussing common misconceptions / issues Short presentations and performances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWW EBI such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> corrections improvements a 'next steps' task Where appropriate, students can record verbal feedback in books / folders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students respond to verbal feedback / live marking during the lesson.
Low stakes testing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a variety of formative assessment opportunities in lessons. Non-threatening tests that are designed by the class teacher Opportunity for immediate teacher feedback and student corrections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do Now tasks Starter activities Plenaries Shortened exam questions Labelling of diagrams Vocabulary tests Key terminology retrieval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher verbal feedback WWW and EBI Teacher may have designed the low-stakes test as a short/mini exam question/s – students may get a numerical mark. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence gathered informs future lesson planning - low-stakes tests are a good interleaving technique Students can re-do the tests to help track progress
Online marking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided by teacher or automatically generated by online learning platform Provides individual diagnostic feedback May refer to learning objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework tasks Exercises of questions; written tasks Practice tests Revision / consolidation exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWW / EBI (provided by teacher or automatically generated by online learning platform) leads to one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> further reading / podcast a 'next steps' task an extension task re-testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students respond via online learning platform Evidence gathered informs future lesson planning Diagnostic profile of students' understanding built up by online learning platform
Afl: teacher assessment of students' progress in class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted questioning – ensure students explain their answers; stick to the 'no hands up' policy Using mini whiteboards, traffic-light cards, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do Now tasks Starter activities Classwork activities Plenary activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher may make notes to refer to later, either to inform future planning or to alter the plan for the current lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence gathered informs future lesson planning
Student self-assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of work against shared criteria / learning objectives / exam board mark schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written classwork tasks Sets of short classwork questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should annotate work with "SA" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher may check quality of self-assessment when they take in books / folders
Student peer-assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of work against shared criteria / learning objectives / exam board mark schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written classwork tasks Sets of short classwork questions Short presentations and performances Short 1-to-10-style tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should annotate with "PA" WWW and EBI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher plans lesson time for students for to respond to written feedback, including doing corrections Teachers may check quality of peer-assessment when they take in books / folders

Table 1: Types of assessment and feedback

4. Frequency of teacher written / typed diagnostic feedback

Whilst verbal feedback, self-assessment and peer assessment are all important, it is constructive, *diagnostic* written feedback that can be referred to again at a later date which should provide the core of feedback to students.

So as to manage teacher workload, the required frequency of **written / typed diagnostic feedback** in a particular subject depends on the frequency of lessons in that subject, as outlined in Table 2. *This includes written diagnostic feedback for formal half-termly tests, assessments and exams, as set out in the assessment plan for each subject.*

	2 lessons per fortnight	4 lessons per fortnight	5-6 lessons per fortnight	7-8 lessons per fortnight	8-10 lessons per fortnight
KS3	Ar, Dr, Dt, Fd, It, Mu, Tx	Gg, Hi, Rl, Fr	En, Ma, Sc		
KS4		Bi, Ch, Ph, Rl	Options	En, Ma	Sc
KS5		Ws	En, Ma GCSEs		Level 3 courses Level 2 BTECs
	Once per half-term	2 x per half-term	3 x per half-term	3 x per half-term	4 x per half-term

Table 2: Required frequencies of teacher written / typed diagnostic feedback

5. Pen colours used for marking books

The expectations above require a clear dialogue between a teacher and a student to be evident in a student's book / folder. To ensure that this is clear, the following pen colours should be used:

- **Black pen:** students' classwork and homework, although a pencil should be used for diagrams
- **Purple pen:** teachers' written feedback
- **Green pen:** students' self-assessment, peer-assessment and responses to teachers' written assessment
- **Red pen:** for Leadership Team only when annotating books during book sampling process (see p6)

There is flexibility here for faculties to introduce additional colours, as long as the above is adhered to for the sake of consistency across the school.

6. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) and marking codes

All teachers of all subjects should be responsible for the marking of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Although it should not be expected that any teacher corrects every word of a student's work, teachers should be prepared to tackle commonly misspelt words and key words / terminology relevant to their subject.

Teachers of all subjects should follow a consistent code system when marking (see Table 3 below), although faculties have the freedom to add subject-specific codes if relevant.

All teachers have a responsibility for improving the numeracy skills of students, and ensuring that agreed methods of calculation and graphical presentation are used correctly. Please refer to the school's **Numeracy across the Curriculum** Policy for further details.

Location	Symbol	Explanation
In the margin	P	Capital letter or punctuation error – letter or punctuation circled
	Sp	Spelling – word will be underlined
	?	Confusing or does not sound right – phrase will be underlined
	i	Illegible/careless handwriting
Added onto work	^	Missing word(s)
	//	New paragraph required
	 	Two words, not one
At the end of a piece of work	VF	Verbal feedback given by teacher
	SA	Work / task was Self Assessed
	PA	Work / task was Peer Assessed

Table 3: Agreed marking codes

7. Parents' Evenings and markbooks

It is a requirement that, for each Parent's Evening, relevant class sets of books / folders should be marked up-to-date, and be discussed as part of the conversation with parents and students.

All teachers should have a markbook containing information about each of their classes, which

- can either be electronic (eg an Excel spreadsheet) or of the traditional paper-based variety
- should be referred to at Parents' Evenings as part of the conversation with parents and students
- should be available for viewing by the Head of Faculty and/or Head of Subject for monitoring purposes

SIMS marksheets are used to track student progress via the Data Window cycle and are not a substitute for teacher markbooks, unless the faculty has created bespoke marksheets for this purpose in consultation with the school’s Data Manager. The contents of teacher markbooks are summarised in Table 4 below:

Minimum requirements	Additional, best practice
<p>Prior data (available from SIMS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step / Grade attained at the end of the previous academic year / Key Stage (in a related subject if reqd.); • Target Steps / Grades and Challenge Steps / Grades; • Relevant SEN information • Able, Gifted & Talented information • Reading age <p>Current data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment / test / exam marks and grades • Working at Steps / Grades, Predicted Steps / Grades and Effort grades for each Data Window • Homework marks / grades (if appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAG-rating of students’ understanding / competence against key assessment objectives • A record of issues regarding equipment / exercise books, etc.

Table 4: Requirements for teacher markbooks

8. Expectations regarding the presentation and organisation of students’ books / folders

It is important that students are taught how to present the work to a high standard and to organise their work in a manner which supports assessment and revision. Therefore, it is expected that staff will address any work that does not meet the following basic expectations:

Covers:

- Name, subject, subject teacher, tutor group should be written clearly on book / folder covers
- Target Step / Grade and Challenge Step / Grade should be written clearly on book / folder covers
- Book / folder covers should be clean and free from marks or graffiti

Tracking progress:

- A progress tracker / ladder should be stuck inside the cover of the book / folder
- The progress tracker / ladder should be completed up-to-date by the student and checked by their teacher

Students’ classwork and homework:

- All work should be dated
- All work should have a title and/or learning objectives written clearly, underlined
- All homework should be completed in a location in exercise books or folders agreed by each faculty
- All homework should be indicated as such with **“Homework”** or **“HW”**
- Students’ work should be written in black pen
- Handwriting should be of a high standard
- Diagrams and tables should be drawn with a pencil and a ruler
- Worksheets should be stuck in books or stored in an organised manner in a folder

See Appendix 2 for exemplars.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of the quality of assessment and feedback will be undertaken by middle and senior leaders:

Middle Leaders:

- Learning Walks may include looking at some student books/folders to identify good practice in assessment and feedback which can be shared. Any concerns identified will be shared with individual teachers.
- Faculty self-evaluation processes should include termly 'book looks'. It is recommended that HoFs / subject leaders include 'spot checks' in addition to samples being requested.
- Sharing good practice in assessment and feedback as 'show and tell' activities in Faculty meetings should be encouraged
- Student voice surveys/interviews will be used by HoFs / subject leaders to review and evaluate the impact of this policy on students.
- Quality of assessment and feedback is part of the evidence-base used by middle leaders and senior leaders when conducting lesson observations – see Ofsted-style criteria in Table 5 below.

Senior Leaders:

- Sampling of books / folders by the Leadership Team will be carried out on a published schedule – see 'Monitoring Policy and SOP'
 - Sampling may be whole-class sets of books; staff will be notified that they need to bring an identified set of books to a particular senior leader
 - Sampling may be all the books belonging to a small number of selected students; Student Managers will be responsible for collecting the books for each student
 - In some cases, additional books may be requested to clarify issues raised in the initial sampling process.
 - Praise-worthy practice and any concerns identified will be shared with individual teachers and their HoF
 - Senior staff will aim to arrange for the return of books within 2 working days.
- The questions asked when judging books are:
 - Is work marked regularly?
 - Is Homework distinct and set regularly?
 - Is SPaG corrected?
 - Is feedback developmental?
 - Does the student respond to teacher feedback / do corrections?
 - Are books clean and free from marks and graffiti?
 - Are Target Grades clearly recorded on the book/folder?
- A more detailed book-look is part of the Faculty Review process, conducted by the Leadership Team, which operates on a 3-year cycle.

- Book-looks are an important part of the evidence-base for the yearly Teaching & Learning Reviews. These are led by an Ofsted-trained consultant and undertaken by the Leadership Team and a small team of senior leaders from other local schools.
- Quality of assessment and feedback is part of the evidence-base used by senior leaders when conducting lesson observations; see traffic-light criteria in Table 5 below.

Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher comments are particularly focused and diagnostic revealing excellent subject knowledge • There is a very good level of response to personalised comments from teachers • There is some subsequent response from teachers • Self-assessment: students are actively involved in setting targets for improvement • SPaG and numeracy issues are addressed to a consistently high standard • A range of AfL strategies are used throughout lessons, referencing learning outcomes, assessing the progress and understanding of students identifying and addressing misconceptions, informing teaching approach and providing feedback to students • Presentation standards are addressed and as a result improve considerably over time
Developing good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students are set relevant, accurate targets on a regular basis; assessment and feedback are regular and up-to-date • Students revisit and respond to previous learning through written, post-task questions • Self-assessment is regular: Students know what they are good at and how to improve • SPaG and numeracy issues are usually addressed consistently • Some AfL strategies are used throughout lessons, assessing the progress and understanding of student, identifying and addressing misconceptions, informing teaching approach • Presentation standards are addressed
Emerging practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and feedback are regular and up-to-date, with some targets, but students do not respond to these • There is little or no evidence of self-assessment • SPaG and numeracy issues not usually addressed • Some AfL strategies are used in parts of lessons, assessing the progress and understanding of students • Presentation standards are not usually addressed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and feedback are not regular and is not up-to-date • No relevant targets are set • No evidence of responses to teacher feedback • The teacher's handwriting is not easy to read • Work is marked incorrectly • SPaG and numeracy issues are not addressed • Presentation standards are not properly addressed

Table 5: *Criteria for judging assessment and feedback*