

Weatherhead High School

A high performing academy providing excellence for all

Assessment Policy

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| Document Owner | AHT, Curriculum |
| Committee | Curriculum |
| Frequency of Review | Annually |
| Date of last review | Summer 2023 |
| Date of next review | Summer 2024 |

Assessment Policy 2023-24

Introduction

Assessment is a measure of a student's individual and relative performance and is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to ensure that the progress of all students is tracked and progress and attainment are clearly identified. The results of assessment are used to inform/improve our curriculum planning, target setting, track progress and make timely intervention. Assessment is used to encourage students, keep them and their parents informed and to help students, regardless of starting point, make the progress expected of them.

Assessment at Weatherhead:

Gives reliable information about how each student in the school is performing.

- a. We have meaningful tracking of students against end of key stage expectations.
- b. We use this tracking of students to take action relating to students who are falling behind, and those who are excelling.
- c. We communicate student assessment data and our intervention actions to parents clearly and regularly.
- d. We provide information which is transferrable and easily understood, and covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment.

Helps drive improvement for students and teachers

- a. Assessment is closely linked to improving the quality of teaching.
- b. Almost all assessment is used formatively (focussing on specific and tangible improvements) to support students to make progress and close gaps in skills and knowledge.
- c. Students and their parents act on this advice to make learning gains.
- d. Assessment is used as a tool to spot and address students' misconceptions.
- e. We produce recordable measures which can demonstrate comparison against our expected standards and reflect progress over time.

Make sure the school is keeping up with external best practice and innovation

- a. Our approach to assessment has been created in consultation with those delivering best practice.
- b. Our policy and practices will be subject to annual quality assurance to ensure they are always at the forefront of developments in assessment.
- c. This policy will be reviewed in light of this quality assurance.

Start of Term

Teacher questioning, high level teacher-student discussion and focused assessments which target specific components of knowledge or skills precisely are likely to be more effective than summative assessments and will reveal useful information about students' gaps, misconceptions and insecure knowledge so that effective learning support can be put in place in the classroom. For example, the marks students achieve on a past paper that covers a wide range of content will not allow teachers to easily infer what the precise knowledge gaps are. A low-stakes test or quiz focused on the salient aspects of a specific topic, will quickly inform a teacher if the student has learnt it and how well.

Effective Assessment

There are two linked aspects of assessment that should be consistently applied across curriculum areas. These are outlined below

| Type | Key Features | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher Assessment Formative During Lessons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning outcomes and success criteria are made explicit so that the students know not only what they are intended to learn, but also how they will demonstrate their achievement. ● Learning outcomes and success criteria are revisited during the course of the lesson through targeted questioning and mini-plenaries. ● Self-assessment can be used. Peer assessment cannot be used because group work or sharing of books should not take place. ● Use of low stakes quizzes. ● Use of homework and knowledge organisers to assess students' knowledge, understanding and progress. ● Students receive oral feedback and/or quality written feedback on their work. ● Feedback causes a cognitive response. Students respond to it to make more progress, using a purple pen. ● Quality dialogue between student and teacher should develop learning. ● Students are given time to reflect on their learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informs student feedback and adjustments to teaching. ● Give direct information about a student's knowledge in relation to the aspects of the curriculum being assessed and be integral to the process of assigning a predicted grade in KS4/5. ● Provide a basis for decisions about further learning needs – i.e. be formative and diagnostic in recognising positive achievement and initiate appropriate help/guidance. ● Aid lesson planning. ● Help teachers assess students' knowledge and skills gaps and assess what students do and do not know and what they can and cannot do |

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| <p>Formal Tests/ Exams</p> <p>Summative</p> <p>Half termly/ Termly/ End of Year</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A broader view of progress is provided across a subject for teacher and learner. ● National and school standards (levels or grades, depending on Key Stage) are used in the classroom. ● Grades are given for KS4/5 but only after targeted feedback and the 'delay the grade' principle is applied. ● Any summative tests are used in a formative manner. ● There is time for student reflection on tests, internal exams and units of work. ● Internal or external (depending on key stage) tests or tasks are taken by students. ● Achievement is reported to students, parents/carers and (if appropriate) the next teacher. ● Students (where appropriate) receive formal recognition for their achievements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students complete feedforward work after formal tests and internal exams. This form of review will help students to learn from their mistakes. |
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In terms of teaching and learning and the accuracy of assessment, teachers must know:

- Where students have gaps in knowledge and skills as a result of the school closure.
- How to address gaps without students feeling that they are 'behind' in their learning.
- How assessment is used to modify teaching so that students achieve the expected standards by the end of the year or Key Stage, and address any gaps in learning.
- How to draw on a range of evidence as to what students know, understand and can do in the different aspects of subjects and how this is used to ensure that all students are making progress despite the school closure.
- How to make consistent judgements and the importance of collaboration with colleagues as a means of standardisation.
- Students' strengths and misconceptions are identified and acted on by teachers during lessons and when marking and used to plan future lessons, remedy what students are struggling with and deepen the knowledge and understanding of the most able.
- How to assess progress if students are completing work using online platforms at home and how to give effective feedback to students who have completed work remotely.

Assessment Overview 2023 - 24

| | Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
|----------------|--|---|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Year 7 | Midyis (Prior to starting) Literacy tests | End of Term Tests | | End of Term Tests | | End of Year Exams |
| Year 8 | | End of Term Tests | Skills Tests | End of Term Tests | | End of Year Exams |
| Year 9 | | End of Term Tests | | End of Term Tests | | End of Year Exams |
| Year 10 | | End of Term Tests | Half Term Tests | End of Term Tests | | Mid Course Exams |
| Year 11 | Half Term Tests | Mock Exams | Resit Mock Exams | English & Maths Mock 2 | GCSE/BTEC External Exams | GCSE/BTEC External Exams |
| Year 12 | Half Term Tests | End of Term Tests GCSE Resits | Half Term Tests | End of Term Tests (including Year 12 BTEC Mocks) | External Exams | External Exams Mid Course Exams |
| Year 13 | Half Term Tests | End of Term Tests BTEC Mock Exams GCSE Resits | BTEC Exams Mock Exams | End of Term Tests | Alevel/BTEC External Exams | Alevel/BTEC External Exams |

Assessment Rationale

End of Term Tests and End of Year Exams (internal)

This assessment will be **cumulative and revisited**, based on the following testing model:

- Autumn Term – The first term’s work
- Spring Term – The first and second term’s work
- Summer Term – the whole year’s work.

*In the Summer Term, students will take an end of year exam.

- **KS3:** students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will take end of term tests and end of year exams in English, mathematics, science, geography, history, MFL and computing. All assessments will be differentiated according to the ability band of students. The tests and exams must enable students to demonstrate their understanding, knowledge and skills and not simply test the information students do not know.
- Tests are marked by staff with a numerical score (students should be encouraged to work out a percentage score themselves if appropriate) but feedback is given first through formative feedback – “delay the grade” is our mantra.

- This style of assessment required securing a suitable level of understanding before moving onto the next topic. This is a challenge for some students, departments need to determine the cut off at which they accept students who do not do a resit / undertake intervention.
- End of year exams (Y7, 8, 9, 10 & 12) should transition with the student and form the basis of planning for the first part of the new school year.
- Results from this type of assessment should:
 - Give direct information about a student's knowledge in relation to the aspects of the curriculum being assessed and be integral to the process of assigning a predicted grade in KS4/5.
 - Provide a basis for decisions about further learning needs – i.e. be formative and diagnostic in recognising positive achievement and initiate appropriate help/guidance and intervention at the beginning of the academic year.

Mid-Course Exams (Years 10 & 12)

- Mid-course exams are taken by Y10 and 12 in formal examination conditions in the sports hall.
- Students, staff and parents learn how much progress is being made at the mid-way point of GCSE, A Level and BTEC courses.
- The 'delay the grade' principle applies and students receive their results during a 'mock results day', which replicates the way external results are issued on the results days in August, after they have completed feed forward exercises to learn from their mistakes.
- The data is used by teachers and department areas to inform planning and organise relevant intervention for the next academic year.

Mock Exams (Year 11 & 13)

- Mock examinations are taken by Year 11 and 13 in the sports hall for non-practical subjects.
- The 'delay the grade' principle applies and students complete feed forward exercises to learn from their mistakes.
- The Senior Leadership Team holds 1-2-1s with Y11 to discuss the mock results, identify actions and advise on post-16 course choices.
- Students are given the opportunity to re-take mock examinations to improve their grade.
- In the spring term, Year 11 will take a second mock examination in the EBacc subjects.
- Year 13 are given the opportunity to take a second mock as part of their curriculum lesson time in the classroom.

Year 8 Skills Test

- In the Spring Term, Year 8 students take a skills test in English, Maths, History and Geography.
- Students learn and memorise key skills pertinent to the four subject areas.
- The learning should enhance students' attributes as they move into Year 9.

Student Tracking

Teachers must ensure that students complete the Assessment page in student planner, which enables assessment scores to be tracked, monitored and communicated to parents/carers.

The formal assessments are included in department schemes of work and planning schedules.

Teacher Assessments

Teacher assessment is a vital part of our assessment processes. Teacher assessment should be based on a range of information, not just student performance on summative tests. Teachers should use their professional judgement when making teacher assessments.

The Role of Teachers

Every member of staff with responsibility for teaching students is accountable for the progress of those students and for the accuracy of the assessment data provided throughout the academic year. Every member of the teaching staff contributes to the achievement of whole school targets.

Assessment data provided by teaching staff is used in a variety of different ways, and presented at planned points during the academic year, as outlined in the Assessment Calendar: in Progress Updates and Reports to parents; and to Curriculum Coordinators and SLT for tracking, monitoring and intervention purposes.

All teachers should ensure that:

- a. They have the following data in their teacher planners: KS2 prior attainment and banding data; Disadvantaged data (HAD, MAD & LAD), CLA (Children Looked After), SEND and medical information.
- b. They have target levels (KS3) and grades (KS4 &5) for all their teaching groups in their teacher planners and students know their target and it is written in the front of their exercise book.
- c. Students complete Department tracking sheets in exercise books on a regular basis, if used by the Department
- d. They regularly update students regarding the progress they are making towards their achieving their targets (see Communication with Students section).
- e. Lessons are planned around knowledge and skills required by students to make expected progress, indicated on the WHS Progression Flight Path.

- f. Work is adapted to address the needs of students (most able, less able, disadvantaged students, SEND students etc.)
- g. After each termly (or half termly test for 6th Form), mock examinations or end of year tests, the 'delay the grade' principle is applied and students complete feed forward activities, which enables students to learn from their mistakes and develop subject mastery.
- h. They monitor the performance of the students in their teaching groups and put the appropriate intervention in place at the earliest opportunity to ensure that those students whose performance is below expectation are helped to make the requisite progress.
- i. Data is inputted by 9 a.m. on the input day to ensure data can be used effectively and in a timely manner to inform tracking, monitoring and intervention at every level.
- j. After every assessment (KS3 & 4), students add test scores to the tracking sheet in the student planner.

The Role of Curriculum Coordinators

Curriculum Coordinators should ensure that:

- a. All members of their Department use assessment data to inform planning and intervention.
- b. Through Curriculum Quality Assurance, monitor the regularity and effectiveness of marking in their Department, as well as evaluating the quality of teachers' oral and written feedback being given to students.
- c. The type and amount of homework being set is in line with School policy.
- d. Members of the Department are given a relevant assessment criterion that enables teachers to accurately assess student performance.
- e. Assessments are in line with National standards for their subjects (for KS3: skills and content must be mapped back from new GCSE course content).
- f. Robust internal moderation of assessments takes place, to ensure consistency of approach and accurate assessment judgements are made by all members of the Department.
- g. Review with members of the Department the performance of their teaching groups and the progress of individual students against targets, using SISRA (for KS3&4) and ALPS Connect for KS5 classes, after each data entry point.
- h. Use assessment data, on SISRA and ALPS Connect, to identify underachieving students within classes and across year groups and monitor and oversee teacher or Department interventions.
- i. Assessment data has been analysed and actions planned for prior to SLT mentoring and tracker meetings.
- j. If required, amend assessments, SOW and planning schedules in response to data in order to build on success and improve where shortcomings are found.
- k. Complete examination analysis to account for the performance of students in external examinations in their subject areas, taking into account performance against targets, closing the disadvantaged gap and National statistics.

The Role of Year Leaders

Year Leaders should ensure that they:

- a. Monitor the progress of students in their year group, using SISRA (KS3&4) and ALPS Connect KS5, identifying those whose level of performance is lower than expected, and act on this information by working with Pastoral Support workers and the KS4 Academic Support worker to provide appropriate intervention.
- b. Use the School attendance procedures, and liaise with parents, if attendance is affecting progress.

The Role of Form Tutors

Form Tutors should:

- a. Engage in regular discussions with students about the progress they are making across the curriculum.
- b. After tests and Progress Update data has been shared with students, have individual form tutor 1-2-1s to discuss progress, set general targets (these could be linked to attendance) and ensure subject progress tracker is completed in the student planner.

Reporting Progress to Parents

Progress Updates

KS5:

Issued in November, parents are given a projected grade for the end of the A Level course based on current progress and performance. The student's ITR (initial target range is included), as well as the first half term test result and effort grade. Attendance and punctuality data is also included.

Students will complete the targets discussed and agreed with subject teachers during 1-2-1 interviews.

KS4:

Issued in November, parents are given a projected grade for the end of the GCSE course based on current progress and performance. Parents are given an effort grade from each subject teacher and attendance and punctuality data is also included.

KS3:

Issued in October, parents are given a current effort grade based on the students' work so far.

Issued in January, parents are given a current progress level, progress indicator and effort grade, attendance data and target level for the end of the academic year.

Subject teachers make a judgement about current progress based on end of term 1 test scores, the class and homework produced throughout Term 1.

Progress Levels are reported as being 'Secure' (S) or 'Working Towards' (WT)

Secure = A student is achieving the majority of criteria for a Weatherhead level and/or working comfortably within the level.

Working Towards = A student is not achieving the criteria for a Weatherhead level. She could be working just within or below the level.

Or

A student is achieving all of the criteria for a Weatherhead level and making good progress towards achieving the next level.

Reports

Reports for Years 11 and 13 are issued in the Spring term. Years 10 and 12 receive reports during the first half term of the Summer term and KS3 reports are issued at the end of the Summer term, in July. Years 7 and 8 need to be awarded an end of year level (WT or S). Years 9 need to be assigned a flat end of Key Stage Level.

Attainment and progress are reported in the same way as the Progress Update with an emphasis on targets and strategies for improvement. Effort grades, summary comments and attendance and punctuality data are also included. For Year 9 only, students only receive targets and strategies if they have opted to take the subject at GCSE.

All teachers should ensure that:

- a. They adhere to the guidelines and requirements for report writing and inputting progress update data.
- b. Should adhere to all report and data deadlines published in the Assessment Calendar.

Curriculum Coordinators should ensure that:

- a. All members of their Department follow school policy regarding report writing and data input, this includes adhering to deadlines.
- b. Through the Curriculum checking policy, high quality reports are produced by the Department.

Effort Grade Key for Progress Updates and Reports

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| A | Well done on your excellent work so far this year. You have shown high levels of enthusiasm and dedication. |
| B | Well done on your good work so far this year. You should continue to show this level of effort and commitment. |
| C | You have made some progress this year but you need to work hard to address your targets to improve and reach your potential. |
| D | You are not making expected progress and must work hard to address your targets and improve your levels of effort and commitment. |

Summary comments for Reports (please refer to the effort grade you have given the student in order to select the appropriate comment)

| | |
|----------|--|
| A | 'Well done on an outstanding year's work, so far!' or 'Well done on an excellent year's work, so far!' |
| B | 'Well done on a good year's work, so far!' |
| C | 'You have made some progress this year, but you need to address the targets above to further improve.' |
| D | 'You have not made expected progress and you need to work hard to address the targets above.' |

Effort Grades

KS3 students are issued with effort grades for all their subjects in the Autumn Term.

Parents' Evening

Parents of Year 7 are invited to a Form Tutor Meeting in the Autumn term and parent information evenings will take place in the Autumn Term for KS5, KS4 and Year 8 and 9 parents. Subject Parent Evenings' will take place for each year group in the Spring term.

Discussing Progress with Students

Teachers

Year 11 and 13 students will have subject 1-2-1 interviews with their teachers in September to review the mid-course exams and set targets for the term ahead. Year 12 and 13 students will have subject 1-2-1 interviews with their teachers in November to discuss the NPG and half term test 1 results. Students note targets and actions agreed with subject teachers during the interviews.

After each data input and test, subject teachers should give high quality feedback, following the delay the grade principle and ensure that students note test results on the tracker page in the student planner.

Form Tutors

Year 10 and 11 Form Tutors issue the November Progress Update to students. This will give students the opportunity to discuss their feelings and concerns about their learning and progress.

Year 12 and 13 Form Tutors will conduct 1-2-1 interviews with their subjects after they have had subject 1-2-1 interviews. This will allow tutors to offer the necessary academic and pastoral support, preparing students as they move into Higher Education or employment.

All Form Tutors are expected to discuss the progress students are making after test data, Progress Updates and Reports are published. Tutors should ensure that the tracking document is completed in the student planner and provide students with academic and pastoral support. Attendance, punctuality and BFL should be addressed during discussions about progress.

Student Tracking

The school has defined a series of tracking groups that will be monitored by key personnel after data entry points.

Overall monitoring of student performance is conducted by the DHT – Standards and AHT – Assessment in conjunction with key staff.

| Tracking Group | Key Staff |
|--|--|
| Disadvantaged Students (HAD, MAD, LAD | DHT (Curriculum & Standards) and AHT |
| Ability bands, progress and progress towards key stage targets | DHT (Curriculum & Standards) and AHT |
| FSM and Ever 6 Students | DHT (Curriculum & Standards) and AHT |
| Black, Ethnic Minority Students | DHT (Curriculum & Standards and AHT (Aspiration and Achievement) |
| CLA SEND | Designated Teacher SEND Director |
| Most Able Cohort | Most Able Coordinator |
| Students below expected standard on entry to Year 7 | KS3 Leads in English and Maths/Head of Maths and Head of English |
| Inward Mobility Students | Year Leaders |

Key Stage 3 Weatherhead Levels

Weatherhead levels have been designed by the Department to enable all students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure that they make the best possible progress from KS2 to KS4. The levels have been mapped out by using KS4 criterion and working back from GCSE to ensure that key skills and knowledge is developed throughout KS3.

Teachers should use Departmental Weatherhead levels when assessing the progress of their students.

Level descriptors should be used to inform teacher planning, allowing teachers to plan differentiated class and homework tasks that stretch and challenge all students.

When marking, staff should use level descriptors to set challenging question targets to extend learning and develop subject mastery.

Teachers should not use levels in a summative way at the end of a piece of work or assessment.

Key Stage 4:

Year 11 receive 9-1 grades in all GCSE subjects.

For Level 2 Child Development, grades A*-D will be awarded. BTEC Technical qualifications: Business, IT Media and Health and Social Care will be awarded a Distinction * - Pass grade. Level 2 Technical Award in Hospitality will be awarded a Distinction* - Pass grade.

Key Stage 5:

Level 3 A Level courses are awarded A Level grades A*-E.

Level 3 BTEC courses are awarded BTEC grades: Distinction * - Pass (Business, IT, Media, HSC (single and double), Applied Science and Sport.

Students studying the DCE course (Diploma in Childcare and Education) receive 3 grades A*-E

Students following the one year pathway achieve a Level 2 BTEC qualifications in Business and Media (Distinction *- Pass)

Baseline Assessment and Numerical Target Setting

Students at Weatherhead are formally tested on entry using the University of Durham MidYIS methodology. The results of the analysis are used in combination with entry level from KS2 and qualitative information from the transition process, to group students into 4 broad ability bands and subsequently, teaching groups.

All curriculum areas are encouraged to develop baseline testing in their department to give all staff a feel for ability on entry.

Presently, our target setting system involves concentrating on our students' prior attainment, applying this to national rates of progression (for girls) and calculating a projected outcome for KS3 and 4. This process will remain at KS5, using ALPs target setting principles.

Aspirational target setting is critical if students are to achieve the outcomes of which they are capable. We use a model of a long term target setting process which is underpinned by a process of 'flightpaths for progression' at KS3 that prepare students for high-levels of performance at KS4. *The aim of our target setting is to improve on current performance using all information available to the school, whilst remaining mindful of the given cohort's ability and seeks to remove gaps in attainment for disadvantaged students.*

The diagram on the next page explains the approach

Progression Flightpath

