

2015

Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy



FUTURES
Community College

Review Framework

The policy should be reviewed every three years

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Overall the purpose of assessment is to improve standards, not merely to measure them (Ofsted 1998)

The quality of assessment has a significant impact on attitudes to learning and on attainment in schools by stimulating and challenging students to work hard and by encouraging teachers to focus on how to improve the learning of individual students (Ofsted: Good assessment in secondary schools 2003).

Assessment is the range of activities through which we come to know about the abilities and achievements of our students and the extent of the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have developed. It is the vehicle by which we can advise students (and others) of their progress, their targets and how to close any gap that might exist. It is an integral part of effective learning and teaching.

This policy, which sets out the rationale for assessment arrangements at Futures Community College, is based on consideration of statutory responsibilities placed on schools, current practice and evidence from research that is commonly accepted. This policy applies across all Key Stages taught within the school.

1. Rationale

By “assessment”, we mean the formal and informal judgements made by teachers and students about the standard of work, and where appropriate, measured against nationally agreed criteria. **Assessment should be diagnostic and can be formative, to inform teaching and learning, as well as summative, to award a level or grade of attainment to a student.** We believe that this Feedback and Assessment policy will enable us to assess students’ knowledge, aptitudes, understanding and skills in a coherent and consistent way. This will inform students, parents and teachers and facilitate higher achievement. Feedback is an integral part of teaching for learning which relates to all aspects of students’ work.

Work undertaken by students deserves feedback in order to enable them to know and understand the progress they are making and how they can continue to improve. It will also inform subject staff as to where there are gaps in students’ knowledge and understanding.

2. Principles

- Students' assessment of their own progress and attainment is a central function in the learning process.
- We believe that the marking of students’ work develops their progress and attainment.
- The focus of written feedback is to give students a clear understanding of how well they have gained knowledge, concepts and skills and then explain what needs to be done to extend their learning.
- Time will be built into lessons for students to reflect on and respond to teacher marking and feedback.

3. Broad Goals

The main purpose of this policy is:

- To inform planning and teaching
- To monitor progress in learning
- To provide meaningful feedback to students to offer advice on how to improve, support their learning and raise attainment
- To inform parents of their children’s progress
- To ensure consistent, regular and appropriate assessment practices across the school
- To raise expectations in teachers, students and parents of what can be achieved
- To enable students to identify both their strengths and areas for development, from which learning goals can be set

- To enable staff to reward good learning and achievement with Starfish points
- To ensure a consistent approach, an agreed framework and high expectations of teaching staff in relation to assessment and feedback
- To develop aspiration within students
- To ensure students are aware of their predicted grades and through assessment and feedback they understand how they can improve and achieve
- To meet statutory requirements.

4. Outcomes and implementation

The outcomes expected from this policy are:

- Teachers will set challenging work at the appropriate level for each individual
- Parents will be able to monitor their child's work, thus allowing them to actively support both their child[ren] and the College
- Feedback will be consistent across the College and understood by staff, students and parents
- Feedback will be completed on a regular basis. Where written work is set, there will be evidence of this being assessed
- Records of marking, feedback and assessment will be kept by each subject teacher
- Feedback will be explicit, student friendly and in line with this policy. Areas of strength and areas for development will be identified in order that students can progress
- Key or target pieces of work will be assessed in line with the National Curriculum (KS3) or given a BTEC / GCSE grade (KS4). This will happen at the end of each unit/activity/block. The minimum number will be six key/target pieces. In effect this is assumed to be at least one every half term
- Heads of Department will complete a book scrutiny and sample students' work and teachers' records each half-term to ensure that feedback is being provided regularly and appropriately as by the school policy - report findings to the line manager
- The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the results of the work scrutiny and produce a half termly report to identify strengths and areas for development
- Assessed/graded exemplar work will be displayed in each teaching area and used as a teaching aid.
- That the opportunity for dialogue will exist, ensuring students have the opportunity to acknowledge feedback. Where this is written, there should be evidence that student response is monitored and that teachers have acted upon it
- Homework will be assessed and students will receive feedback from the classroom teacher; it is expected teachers will inform students a date to expect feedback.

5. Record-Keeping/Student Progress Data

All staff have access to the SIMS mark sheets for their allocated classes, these mark sheets will include all information regarding SEND, PPI, and Most Able.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the mark sheet entries are kept up to date to allow for the half termly data pull which will include the following:

- All assessments which have been carried out in the half term in line with the department policy
- An accurate current grade which is calculated automatically from the assessment grades entered
- A professional prediction for the end of the year, this should take into account the current grade allow with the historical progress of the student.

6. Formal, Regular Assessment

- All teachers will be responsible for the continuous assessment of all students in line with the department assessment and feedback policy which is reflected in the mark sheets
- Formal assessments will be signposted in schemes of learning
- Formal assessments will cover all attainment targets appropriate to the subject/unit of work
- The College will provide opportunities for formal summative examinations once a year for selected subjects, year groups or groups of students.

7. Self and Peer Assessment

- All teachers will provide regular opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment for the students they teach
- Self-assessment and peer assessment will be signposted within schemes of learning.

8. Strategies

The College has non-negotiable expectations in relation to students receiving feedback **across a period of learning**; therefore colleagues should expect to have their student's books/work/assessments checked during learning walks [formal and informal], formal and informal observations, as part of a work-scrutiny or by the Head of Department, Senior Leadership, LA School Improvement Partners and visiting HMI or Ofsted Inspectors.

The **non-negotiable** expectations for student feedback are as follows:

- **EGPS** – student work has been checked and guidance provided; use of the College Marking Symbols; (English, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling)
- **Formative** – where comments clearly state what the student needs to do in order to improve
- **Response** – the student has responded to the teacher's feedback and the improvement is consistent
- **Level/Grade [where appropriate]** – the student is aware of how each piece of work is directly contributing to their progress or lack of progress
- **Pride & Presentation** – the student displays an awareness of the College's expectations in relation to presentation, with teacher guidance.

Types of assessment and feedback:

The College encourages teaching and support colleagues to provide feedback to students on a regular basis. The expectation is that feedback is formative and gives **clear, specific guidance to an individual student on how they have been successful and on how to improve.**

Work that has been diagnostically marked, in **green** pen, with a feedback commentary by the class teacher of what the student has demonstrated well and what could be improved; typically using the acronym **WWW/EBI/DIRT [What went well/even better if/Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time]** or **PATHS [Positive, Attainment, Target, How, Student response]**.

Feedback is an essential part of the teacher's task of planning and delivering effective lessons. **Where students' work is reviewed regularly teachers are better informed and can tailor lessons for future classes and/or individuals.** Best practice and research suggest that students benefit from a varied approach to feedback styles.

This feedback may also take the form of some or all of the strategies listed below:

- A specific piece of work is diagnostically marked with feedback that forms part of a range of work within the student's exercise book; the student would have been informed that this piece would receive such feedback
- Verbal feedback given by the teacher or LSA – noted with the use of the 'verbal feedback given' stamp or a **V** in the margin. The student is encouraged to make a note of the specific feedback next to the stamp; teacher and/or LSA initial to confirm
- Work has been marked with feedback for literacy using the Marking symbols
- Work has received peer marking, which we recognise is a valuable tool for students to understand how to improve – the class teacher will need to verify that the feedback given was accurate [this can be completed by the teacher at a later date and a comment/initial as confirmation]
- By the use of symbol marking – where students are provided with individual feedback through the use of symbols which relate to specific feedback; the student will be required to note the specific feedback and what they need to do to improve and then act upon this
- Work can be reviewed by self-assessment, against criteria such as GCSE criteria; the classroom teacher will add a comment and initial to acknowledge the students own assessment of their progress.

9. Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (D.I.R.T.)

The college believes that students should respond to feedback and have the opportunity to make the necessary improvements following on from any period of feedback from the class teacher. There is an expectation that students will be provided DIRT time on a frequent basis as part of the agreed scheme of work.

- Following on from any period of feedback from the teacher students should have the opportunity to use/**act upon** the feedback given by the teacher to improve their learning and to support their progress. They should also be given time to **reflect upon** any given aspect of their learning following the teacher's feedback and their improvement time.
- There is an expectation that student will be provided DIRT on a frequent basis as part of an agreed scheme of learning.
- DIRT must be built into the planning of any lesson immediately following any feedback.
- To ensure that DIRT is used effectively teachers should:
 - plan close the gap activities for individuals, small groups or a whole class that addresses a particular area of need that has been identified in the feedback
 - DIRT can take the form of a starter activity lasting a few minutes or be a fuller, lengthier opportunity dependent on the activity, the subject or the key stage
 - A close the gap activity for improvement and the following reflection during DIRT should allow students to make progress between where they are now and where they are aiming for.

10. Framework for Assessment and Feedback

- Standard pieces of classwork/homework should be marked and receive diagnostic feedback, identifying strengths and next steps
- Assessed/graded pieces of work should be marked diagnostically and have a step [KS3] or grade [KS4]
- Students should have demonstrated to the teacher they have acted upon the advice provided through marked work or assessment feedback.

11. Frequency of Feedback:

The College believes that students make progress and motivation is enhanced when they can see that their class teacher has looked at their work and given regular feedback. The College recognises the importance of:

Standards of presentation and levels of pride in students' work and that young people are increasingly motivated towards higher standards where teachers regularly look at and acknowledge their classwork. As such the frequency of feedback is as follows:

- In English, Maths and Science students are to receive feedback* on classwork each week and °focused feedback every two weeks
- Humanities, D&T, the Arts, ICT and PE students should expect their work to receive feedback* every two weeks and °focused feedback every four weeks

*Feedback [as outlined in Types of Feedback] may vary each time between verbal, peer, teacher or fully focused, assessed and diagnostically assessed class work however it should be regular, consistent, diagnostic, formative in its nature, written and has been acted upon by the student. This can include formal assessments and / or tests.

°Focused Feedback is teacher-only diagnostic assessment.

Exemplar Starting Comments

- *This answer is good because.....*
- *You conclusion would be even better if.....*
- *Your next step(s) is/are (a comment about HOW to improve their work)*
- *I like this piece of work because.....*
- *You clearly understand.....because you have shown/used/identified..... etc.*
- *Capital letters at the start of every sentence*

Teacher's aide memoire in relation to feedback:

- **MOTIVE?** Why mark? Who are you marking for? What's the potential value it will add to both learner and teacher?
- **SELECTIVE?** Be clear to the students which pieces you will mark. Using criteria? For a particular purpose?
- **FORMATIVE?** Comments to move forward? Written or verbal feedback (both noted in the books), Use praise to motivate
- **EFFECTIVE?** Is it to be acted on immediately? Have you provided enough time for action? Teacher follow up / builds in time to explain feedback to students?
- **REFLECTIVE?** Student can articulate strengths / areas to develop? Student understands expectations?
- Students can rise to a challenge. Students are aware that you have taken the time to look at their work / acknowledge their effort? Is the lesson worth putting effort into if the teacher never looks?

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will monitor and evaluate our work by:

- Senior Leadership Team monitoring of assessment and feedback on a half-termly basis
- Head of department monitoring of assessment and feedback on a half-termly basis
- Head of Department monitoring of record-keeping and planning
- Head of Department ensuring all lessons are taught from an agreed scheme of work

- Head of Department ensuring that formal and informal assessment opportunities that cover all attainment targets are written into schemes of work and unit plans
- The Senior Leadership Team, through the line management structure, monitoring assessment in schemes of learning
- A continuing programme of lesson observation and structured feedback by observers
- Regular meetings with Head of Department and their Leadership Link throughout the academic year.

All teachers will be supported by:

- The availability of prior attainment for individual students
- Guidance and support for teachers to facilitate self and peer assessment by students
- The assembly of a standardised portfolio of assessed work containing benchmark evidence of each attainment target at each level/grade within subjects and/or departments
- The opportunity to take part in at least one department meeting per year focused on the standardisation of assessments internally and against national standards
- Receiving the collated and analysed end of key stage outcome/prediction data for all students in their subject to inform planning based on up to date data collections.

Subject Leaders must ensure that:

- The above expectations are met by each teacher in their subject area and area of responsibility
- There is consistency in quality of marking, feedback and assessment
- There is consistency in the quality of frequency of marking and tasks
- That tasks set and student feedback matches individual differentiation
- They feedback to their subject teams on issues of: quality, good practice, how the quality of marking could be further developed and individualised.

The Leadership Team are expected to ensure that:

- There is a whole school programme to monitor the implementation, use and review of the Feedback and Assessment policy.
- Book scrutinies are incorporated as part of the learning walks (at least once every two weeks).
- Marking practice is scrutinised as a specific item in all QA practices across the school.
- They evaluate the implementation of the policy and provide diagnostic feedback on how formative marking across the school could be further developed.

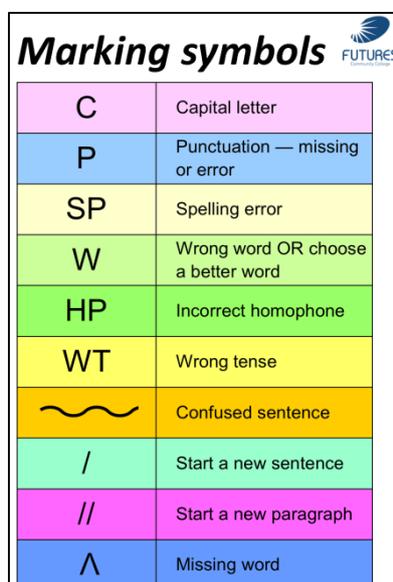
APPENDIX 1: MARKING SYMBOLS

All classrooms have a set of Literacy Toolkits with resources to improve students’ use of grammar and literary techniques such as connectives and how to construct their written work.

As per the literacy policy, teachers will use the following common marking symbols to aid students’ written work:

Symbol:	Meaning:	Action:
/	Start a new sentence	Student to correct/redraft using correct sentence structure
//	Start a new paragraph	Student to correct/redraft using correct paragraphing
SP	Spelling error	Student to write the correct spelling of the word out 3 times
C	Use a capital letter here	Student to include the amendment when redrafting
P	Punctuation — missing or error	Student to identify what punctuation mark is incorrect or missing and amend
W	Wrong word OR choose a better word	Student to edit word choice when redrafting writing
HP	Incorrect use of homophone	Student to amend the work inserting the correct homophone
WT	Incorrect use of tense	Student to amend the work using the correct tense
	Underlining denotes unclear sentence or passage	Student to write this section out again making their point clearer for their reader.
^	Omission of word/words	Student to put in the suggested word if shown or think and insert the correct word if not shown

- By using a common system of marking, students will recognise the common symbols and will clearly know how and where to improve their own work.
- Marking symbol stickers must be visible in all students’ exercise books or folders so that they are easy to use and refer to.
- Marking symbol posters must be displayed in all classrooms so that they can be a point of reference during teaching and learning.



Marking symbols 

C	Capital letter
P	Punctuation — missing or error
SP	Spelling error
W	Wrong word OR choose a better word
HP	Incorrect homophone
WT	Wrong tense
	Confused sentence
/	Start a new sentence
//	Start a new paragraph
^	Missing word

APPENDIX 2: PRESENTATION OF STUDENT WORK

The College believes high expectations of standards of presentation in students' work increase pride and ultimately progress. As such the College is prescriptive in relation to the presentation of work and layout.

Presentation of written work

1. All student work should be completed in a **black** or **blue** pen
2. The title of all pieces should be written at the top of the page on the left [not in the margin]
3. The date the piece was completed should be written at the top of the page on the right
4. Both title and date should be underlined using a ruler
5. Titles should use appropriate capitalisation
6. All work should begin to the immediate right of the margin and students should write to the end of each line
7. Work should be divided into clear paragraphs
8. Students should leave one line only between paragraphs, or indent
9. Drawings, maps graphs and diagrams should be completed in pencil
10. Peer and self-assessment marking should be completed in red ink and signed and dated by the peer assessor
11. Coloured pencils only are to be used in exercise books; no felt-tip pens
12. Incorrect work should be crossed out with a single ruled line
13. Poorly presented work should be redrafted and resubmitted.

Application of rules

These rules are expected to be applied across all subject areas. However, it is expected that different curriculum areas may also have specific requirements that will be detailed in Departmental policies.