



**St. Francis' College**  
**Senior Marking and Assessment Policy**

## **Introduction**

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Senior School which includes Key Stages 3-5.

St. Francis' College is an independent selective, day and boarding school of pupils between the ages of 3 and 18 years.

## **Rationale**

Assessment is formative, diagnostic, summative and evaluative, and is an integral part of all teaching and learning activities. It serves several purposes. **The first priority is to promote a pupil's learning.** Regular marking and feedback help students to make progress, to identify areas of weakness, to take ownership of their learning and to take pride in their work. Other forms of assessment (such as questioning, peer-assessment and self-assessment) also have a vital role in promoting a varied and meaningful learning experience for pupils. Assessment provides a way for class teachers to make judgements about attainment, to monitor progress and to be accountable for that progress. The recording and reporting of a pupil's progress is a statutory duty for all teachers.

## **Aims**

The aims of all assessments are:

- to enable pupils to be actively involved in their own learning; to be able to judge the success of their work, take responsibility for their own progress and set and understand targets for improvement
- to enable pupils and teachers to identify achievements and plan for future progress
- to give pupils the opportunity to learn to assess themselves
- to motivate pupils to further effort by praising current achievements
- to enable staff to extend their use of assessment data to inform teaching and learning
- to build a more open relationship between pupil and teacher where pupils are not afraid to take risks in their learning and where teachers provide constructive feedback

## **Practices**

The above aims will be achieved through the following practices:

- effective planning: teachers must ensure that every task is meaningful and stimulating
- sharing learning objectives: pupils should recognise what they are learning and why
- shared success criteria: pupils should understand the criteria and be able to identify the steps needed to complete a task
- effective questioning: by using more open-ended questions, giving more thinking time and using pair-work and group-work, teachers can help pupils to feel more confident when putting forward new ideas, explaining their reasons and exploring their understanding
- self-assessment: teachers should allow pupils time to reflect on what they have learned and to make explicit the links between what they have learned and the success criteria
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## Framework for Assessment and Marking

These are guidelines for Senior School assessment, marking and recording. All Departments should have a policy for marking and assessment which is specific to that Department but which has been designed using this framework.

### **1. Types of Assessment to be used**

- a. Baseline assessment gives a standard against which to assess progress. Baseline data is available on the Staff area of the school network and on iSAMs (the school management information system). It is also emailed to all staff at the beginning of each academic year. Baseline test results should be recorded by the class teacher in their mark book, and regularly referred to when making formal or informal assessments.
- b. Formative assessment shows students what they do well, what they need to improve and how. Formative assessment is ongoing and can take the form of marked work, class questioning, feedback during lessons, peer-assessment, self-assessment or written feedback and targets.
- c. Summative assessment is used at the end of a topic, module, year or course. Marked work, tests and examinations allow students and teachers to monitor progress and to recognise if performance is in line with potential.

### **2. Uses of Assessment**

- a. Promoting good outcomes for pupils: regular marked work and feedback are an essential part of the learning process
- b. Planning: assessments are used to provide assistance with development planning at teacher, subject and College level
- c. Target setting: formal and informal assessment help when setting pupil targets
- d. Monitoring: assessments contribute to monitoring progress and identifying areas where existing strategies for learning work particularly well or where new strategies may be required
- e. Decision-making: assessment data is used as a criterion when sorting students into sets, deciding on examination entry levels, and identifying More Able students or those with Individual Needs

### **3. Marking**

All members of staff have the experience and expertise to recognise an acceptable standard of work based on the ability of the pupils in their class. Teachers must ensure that they have high expectations and that the quality, quantity and presentation of work meets these expectations, which should be matched to the individual pupil, and realistic in terms of that pupil's abilities.

The marking of a pupil's work in all subjects should be regarded as a regular means of communication with pupils about their individual progress. This communication needs to be in a form which is comprehensible and clearly understood by the individual pupil. Feedback on progress should inform the next step in a pupil's learning. Marking also has a motivational role in teaching; by marking a pupil's work, teachers demonstrate to pupils that their efforts are valued.

When marking work, teachers should take account of whether a student has Individual Needs or English as an Additional language, tailoring their comments to suit that student's abilities, where appropriate. Marking is also an opportunity to provide a stimulus for further thought to our More Able students.

If a grade, mark or level is included as part of the marking, pupils must clearly understand what it implies, by a set of guidelines given to pupils at the beginning of the course or when a piece of work is set. Not all work needs to receive a grade; research indicates that when a comment and grade are given, pupils do not always take comments on board.

The nature of marking will vary from Department to Department. In some subjects, a written comment at the end of a student's work is the most appropriate form of marking. The comment should contain praise for successful aspects of the work and suggestions for ways in which a student could improve. These comments should form a dialogue between student and teacher so that, in later assignments, it can clearly be seen where suggestions have resulted in a higher-level outcome. Responses should wherever possible be constructive, acknowledging what has been achieved as well as highlighting areas for improvement. A general comment, such as 'well done' or 'good work', is not sufficiently helpful.

In other subjects (often those with a technical, skill-based element), work is corrected rather than commented upon. In these subjects, students should be able to see from the teacher's corrections where the error occurred and how to avoid it in the future. A comment which explains why the original thought-process was at fault is useful in helping a student to learn from her mistake. Alternatively, a discussion can take place in class with the pupil or pupils concerned. Correcting every mistake can be disheartening, so it might often be better to focus on particular aspects of the work at different times. Pupils will need to be aware which aspects are being made a focus.

With the increasing availability of new technology staff and pupils may prefer to set, hand in and mark work electronically. All communications with pupils should be via a College email account or through the VLE. Whichever method is used, the principles of good quality assessment apply.

#### **4. Assessment of Homework**

Each Department should develop subject-specific guidelines on the assessment of homework, which should include the following areas:

- a. How regularly homework is set, taking account of the homework timetable.
- b. How frequently homework is marked. As a guide, class teachers should collect in and mark all books at least once, for every two homeworks set. So, for example, if one homework is set each week, books should be taken in at least once a fortnight. If two homeworks are set each week, books should be taken in and marked at least once a week. When books are not taken in, teachers should adopt alternative assessment methods such as asking students to mark each others' work or present their research to the class.
- c. A clearly defined timescale within which work will be marked and returned.
- d. How the objectives of the task will be clearly stated to pupils.
- e. How the use of constructive comments - oral and written - will identify what is done well and why, with targets for improvement and guidelines on how to achieve them.
- f. A clear definition of abbreviations used when marking work, taking into account common abbreviations used across the curriculum. Departments should make these available to students at the beginning of the course.

#### **5. Tests and Other Summative Assessments**

Each Department should specify when and how regular summative assessments will be made, moderated and recorded.

#### **6. School Examinations:**

Each Department will develop its own subject-specific guidelines for examinations. The following points should be borne in mind:

- a. Examinations are set during the Summer Term for all students in Years 7 – 10 and 12. Year 12 Summer examinations are used as the basis for predicting university grades. Year 11 and 13 students sit mock examinations in January.
- b. Requirements for examinations will be requested in advance and a timetable produced by the Deputy Head Academic. Examinations which require a separate room (such as listening examinations) should be specified in advance.

- c. Examination results will be used to create a colour-coded spreadsheet, where overperformance compared to baseline data is highlighted in green and underperformance is highlighted in red. This spreadsheet enables staff to identify under- and overperforming students who may otherwise be missed.

## **7. Monitoring:**

The following methods should be used regularly within departments (as well as across the whole College) to ensure consistency and a high standard of assessment:

- a. Regular review of Schemes of Work for clarity of learning outcomes, progression and differentiation
- b. Regular sampling of pupils' work to look at student outcomes and standards of marking
- c. Observation of lessons according to agreed criteria (both as part of the performance management cycle and through peer observation)
- d. Analysis of assessment data

## **8. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department

- a. to ensure that the Department has an effective policy on marking and assessment which is fully understood by Department members, and which is reviewed on a regular, annual basis
- b. to ensure that the Department's policy fits with this Framework
- c. to ensure the implementation of the Department's policy and to ensure that marking is regular and formative
- d. to establish a centralised system for recording and preserving marks and assessment levels awarded by the individual teachers within the department
- e. to ensure regular standardisation of agreed assessment procedures so that meaningful grades or levels are recorded and communicated to pupils.
- f. to work with SLT to ensure high standards are maintained

It is the responsibility of all classroom teachers

- a. to ensure that all classwork and homework is marked regularly according to the Department's policy
- b. to keep a record of marks and levels achieved in accordance with the agreed procedures within the Department
- c. to explain the marking and assessment grading system to the pupils
- d. to ensure that assessment information informs further curriculum planning.

## Related Documents and Policies.

- Staff handbook
- Individual Needs policy
- More Able policy
- EAL policy
- Homework policy
- Curriculum policy

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