

SCHOOL POLICY ON ASSESSMENT

Emphasis is placed on continuous assessment in all subjects. The school's assessment policy aims to provide guidelines for teachers to:

1. record and monitor students' level of attainment for each subject in the eight level National Curriculum scale in Years 8 and 9, the letter grades A*, A, B, C, D, E, F, G at GCSE, the letter grades A, B, C, D, E and N at Advanced level, and Pass, Merit and Distinction at GNVQ;
2. support students' achievements through the development of a clear, coherent, and whole-school marking policy;
3. help students to agree clear and realistic targets in terms of what new skills need to be achieved in order to progress to the next National Curriculum, GCSE, GNVQ, or Advanced Level.

The Record of Achievement will comprise the following components:

A. A programme of study (subject statement) for each subject

This will need to be written in clear and readable English, rather than National Curriculum jargon.

B. Accountability Targets

Accountability targets are based purely on statistical evidence. They are derived by comparing a particular 'input' measure of previous achievement with a national database of 'output' scores. The accountability target takes no account of the student's personal qualities or individual circumstances. It is the measure by which value-added comparisons may be made. A result that is higher than the accountability target means that a student is performing better at Denbigh than the national average for students with similar prior attainment.

Input measures that we use are:

- * Key Stage 2 test scores in English, Mathematics, and Science;
- * Cognitive ability (CAT) tests taken by students at the start of Year 8;
- * Key Stage 3 test scores in English, Mathematics and Science;
- * the YELLIS tests taken by students in Year 10;
- * GCSE results as processed by the ALIS system in Year 12.

Targets will be set at three specific stages:

- (i) at the beginning of Year 8, for attainment at the end of Key Stage 3. This will be based on CAT scores and prior attainment at Key Stage 2;
- (ii) at the beginning of Year 10, for attainment at GCSE at the end of Year 11 - this will be based on Key Stage 3 SAT results and Yellis tests;
- (iii) at the beginning of Year 12, for attainment at Advanced Level at the end of Year 13 – this will be based on GCSE point score.

Subject Teachers will also set "professional" targets based on their personal knowledge of

the student. Students, following consultation with their parents, will set their own targets which will be recorded in diaries.

C. Attainment throughout the year - Homework

Each half term, a grade will be awarded for homeworks completed on time:

- A = consistently meets expectations
- B = usually meets expectations
- C = often does not meet expectations
- D = rarely meets expectations.

D. Effort and Behaviour

Each half-term grades will be given, as follows:

- A = consistently meets expectations
- B = usually meets expectations
- C = often does not meet expectations
- D = rarely meets expectations.

E. Attainment throughout the year - classwork

Each term teachers will measure the grade that students are currently working at, and this will be set against the accountability target.

Merits awarded – Years 10 and 11 only.

Form tutors will record the following, also on a termly basis:

- Organisational skills)
- Behaviour) A - D
- Contribution to tutor group)
- Credits to date)

F. End of Year National Curriculum Level

Students in Years 8, 10 and 12 will receive an end of year measure of the grade they are working at set against the minimum expectation target.

In Year 8 the average attainment is likely to be Level 5. In Modern Languages this may be lower because many students will only begin a study of a Modern Language in Year 7. The majority of the students that come to Denbigh are at Level 4 or above at the end of Year 6, and we therefore need to have high expectations of our students.

Students in Year 8 will receive a National Curriculum level of attainment in each subject. They will also receive a level descriptor for the National Curriculum level achieved. This descriptor will give clear information on skills acquired and knowledge gained as well as a clear indication of what the student must do to proceed to the next level.

As well as the above, Year 9 students will also receive the results of National Curriculum SAT levels in English, Mathematics, and Science.

In Year 9 the expected level of attainment is 5/6.

THERE WILL BE NO OTHER FORM OF GRADING.

G. Form Tutor statement

This will comprise a detailed account of each student's:

- (i) personal and social development over the year;
- (ii) academic development over the year;
- (iii) contribution to the life of the school;
- (iv) targets for improvement;

Information on attendance, punctuality, and unauthorised absences will also be provided.

Marking Policy

In Years 8 and 9 attainment throughout the year will be shown as National Curriculum levels. At GCSE and A level it will be shown as letter grades. At GNVQ it will be shown as pass, merit or distinction.

Significant pieces of work, such as assignments and tests will be marked according to the subject-specific criteria which inform the overall levels. An indication of level will be placed on the work, with specific advice relating to what the student will need to do in order to reach the next level.

Departmental guidelines on assessment will define which pieces of work are to be regarded as “significant”, when assessment is to take place, and what skills are to be assessed. Departmental schemes of work should also clearly indicate what assessment is to take place.

For less significant pieces of work the form of marking will be defined in the department guidelines and may include the following:

- written comments designed to encourage students, make them aware of attainment, and how to improve on weak points;
- an indication of whether work is above target, on target, or below target;
- “motivational stickers” – e.g. special comments/stamps;
- a tick – reserved for short pieces of work;
- 6/10 e.g. for spelling test.

At Key Stage 3 departmental guidelines should also refer to standardisation material in order to ensure that there is consistency between teachers in defining what skills and knowledge are appropriate for the acquisition of each National Curriculum level of achievement. This should take the form of portfolios of evidence for each National Curriculum level, which will act as guidance for both teachers and students.

Review

The Deputy Headteacher responsible for curriculum and assessment will regularly review practice to ensure that the school's Assessment Policy is followed by all subject departments.

Heads of Department should regularly review departmental practices to ensure that assessment is criterion-referenced and that marking policy gives clear and constructive feedback to students.

NJS/JF.Wnjs/July 2001.