



Marking, Assessment and Homework Policy

Responsible: Anne Roberts

Status: Non Statutory

Date reviewed: Spring 2021

Next review Date: Spring 2022 *(yearly review by SLT)*

Approaches to marking need to be flexible to meet the needs of our students. As with planning, one size does not fit all and a range of strategies may be needed across groups. However, the frequency of marking is not negotiable and all work should be marked within the maximum of two weeks. All sections of this policy apply to students in KS3 and KS4, except where specifically noted otherwise.

Students' work

All students should be provided with an exercise book or folder for each subject. Work and worksheets should be dated (and stuck into the book). The exercise book/folder should be used as a log of practical work as well as a record of written work. It is helpful to be able to see at a glance how many lessons the student has attended and what they did. This could be shown through:

- classwork logs/ topic lists that detail attendance and tasks
- Photographs of student work and participation
- Comments from staff outlining contribution where there is no evidence

Leaving blank pages for missing work can overwhelm students when they return after an absence. Better to keep a copy of missing tasks and ask the student to select one when they return.

At the front of the book or in the inside cover, some students may have a record of their baseline assessment/current level and the grade they are working towards. This could include the skills they have already achieved and the skills needed for the next level. Lists of skills expressed as 'I CAN' statements can help students to evaluate their own progress. Asking students to RAG the topics covered can provide the teacher with immediate feedback on student confidence.

Classroom set up

Students' books should be stored in class sets so that they can be easily located.

A full selection of writing pens, pencils, colouring pens/pencils, rulers, rubbers and glue sticks should be readily available to students in all lessons. Scissors should be kept locked away in the teachers' desk or filing cabinet and brought out when required.

Marking

Marking should be diagnostic, sharing with students what they have achieved and what they need to do next, encouraging students to play an active role. Targets can be set and referred to in the next assignment. Try to find more to praise than to correct. There may be times when low self esteem can make it hard for students to take any criticism on board.

References to exam specifications can be helpful in KS4, and feedback which includes grades should be used for some students. However, for others with very low grades this might not be appropriate as it could be detrimental to motivation. They invariably know that their predicted grades are low and it might not be within their current capacity to change them (due to SEMH needs, life circumstances). In some cases, being forced to confront their

predicted grades has a significantly negative impact on their resilience, self-worth and mental health.

Where there are many inaccuracies in a student's writing teachers should not mark every one. Pick frequent errors and focus on a couple. It is often most effective to discuss corrections with the student, and focus on one issue: for example full stops/capital letter, paragraphing, punctuation. If there are frequent misspelt words, pick a maximum of three and focus on basic vocab and key words for your subject. Write the correct version at the end or in the margin. See if they can address them in the next piece of work and remind them to check feedback when they start a new task.

To reward focus stickers are popular, as are phone calls/texts/postcards home to share achievements with parents/carers.

Assessment points

Baseline assessment

On arrival students complete a baseline assessment in every subject. Assessments will either be completed as part of the induction programme or else completed during lesson time in the first two weeks.

This assessment provides the baseline against which the student's progress at Malden Oaks will be measured. It is therefore important that it is thorough and informative.

Subject assessment – KS4

It may be appropriate to set a whole GCSE paper as a baseline assessment. This might be the case in Maths where setting a whole paper could be helpful in revealing specific topic areas that the student needs to focus on. However for some subject areas it will be necessary to create a tailor made paper. For example it would not be appropriate to set an assessment on the Russian revolution in history if the student had only ever studied the rise of Nazi Germany. The baseline assessment will also include a conversation with the student about what they have previously studied, their own ideas about their strengths and areas for improvement. After reviewing the information provided on the referral form, the subject teacher may well wish to communicate with the student's previous mainstream teacher to gather further information. The information gleaned from the subject baseline assessment should be recorded on the SIMS.

Literacy assessments – KS4

As part of the induction programme, every new student completes a CAT screening and Literacy assessments, and the results will be used to identify whether they need further assessment for access arrangements or individual support. Our Specialist Literacy teacher is able to assess for additional time in examinations.

The results of these tests will be recorded on student marksheets and should be recorded on review notes and discussed with students and parents. Wherever possible access arrangements should be used in classroom and test settings.

KS3 Induction Assessment

All KS3 students have a minimum of 5 1:1 induction sessions. The purpose of these sessions is for students to get to know key members of staff ahead of joining their class and for staff to better understand the needs of the student. As such, part of the induction process involves students taking CATS assessments, a reading assessment and a spelling assessment. The information gleaned from these assessments serves to act as a baseline, which should be entered onto student marksheets. Progress will be tracked through reviews.

LEARN assessment– all students

Mainstream schools provide a baseline of the student's attitudes to learning as part of the referral form using the LEARN assessment, and the student's subsequent improvements can be measured against this.

Mock exams

During Mock exams, which take place in January, a formal timetable is issued and specific exams rooms are used, rather than subject lessons and rooms.

Homework

For many students homework has previously been a source of conflict at school and/or home. At Malden Oaks we do not operate a formal homework timetable as our philosophy is based on students taking responsibility for their own progress and learning.

To this end, all subject teachers will suggest ways in which students may extend their learning and will promptly mark all work that is done at home, and set further work as appropriate. Extended tasks may include research, reading, working through a revision workbook, bringing in resources or finishing off a piece of work (particularly if missed through absence).

All students should be made aware that there are ways in which they can accelerate their progress by working outside of school hours and should be encouraged to do so, as appropriate to their readiness to learn. There is a Home Learning section on our website where all students can access a comprehensive range of learning resources from remote platforms such as SAM learning and the Oaks Academy. At the same time we recognise that students who do concentrate and focus at a high level during the six lessons a day in school, will be participating and learning at a greater level (in their small group of 5 – 6 students) than in a mainstream class of 25 – 30. They may therefore cover a far greater content during the school day and be encouraged to pursue other interests once the school day is finished. The most beneficial use of after school time would be to engage in physical activity and sport. This is something that all staff, but particularly tutors, should encourage and help to facilitate.

APPENDIX 1

Baseline assessment summary

Name:

Year group:

Date:

Subject:

Teacher:

Assessment used:

Grade:

Access arrangements used e.g. reader, scribe, extra time:

Strengths identified through assessment

Gaps in knowledge/skills identified through assessment

Targets (for student)