



Codsall Community High School

Assessment, data and targets policy

Introduction

Assessments and the data derived from them are key to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students and the learning needs that must be addressed by teachers, students and parents to enable learners to improve.

Assessment includes formal test-style activities such as post-unit tests, milestones, end of year tests and mocks (summative assessment) but it also includes daily assessment activity conducted by teachers to gauge students' understanding of lesson content and homework (formative assessment). Data is used by teachers and leaders to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of classes, subjects, faculties and the whole school. When evaluating assessment results, teachers and leaders use comparison of attainment data with statistical models giving estimates of students' likely attainment based on their prior outcomes in order to classify progress as 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'.

By setting appropriate targets that are agreed and well-understood by teachers, students and parents, it is possible to challenge all learners to achieve their very best and to ensure they have the qualifications they need to progress to the next stage of learning, training or employment.

Definitions

Throughout this policy, the following definitions will be used:

- **Currently working at (CWA):** the grade the student would be awarded at a given point in time for a GCSE, BTEC or A-level course based on their knowledge of the whole course's content and assessment requirements and their performance in assessments.
- **On track for (OTF):** a prediction of the grade the student is likely to attain at the end of a course if they continue to perform at the same level and with the same attitude to learning.
- **Estimate:** a prediction of a student's likely attainment at the end of a course using nationally-derived data about the performance of students with similar prior attainment, usually derived from the median progress made by students of similar ability using a statistical model.
- **Target:** an ambitious end of course grade to challenge and motivate learners agreed between student and teacher.
- **DIRT:** Directed improvement and reflection time, used after a piece of work for students to reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses and to complete follow-on work to address any misconceptions, gaps in knowledge or under-achievement.

Target-setting

Research tells us that target-setting can lead to student motivation and higher academic achievement but simply 'stating' a target does not automatically benefit students; targets are most effective when students understand the reasons behind target grades being set at a particular level and these are linked to a rationale – usually addressing the student's ambitions for the next steps of their learning, training or employment.

The school will engage learners in the process of setting targets for their courses through consultation with their teachers. Staff will use statistical models of similar students' likely progress to inform an initial target grade and through discussion with the student, will agree an ambitious target, based on preferences for future training courses, their likely entry requirements and the student's interests and ability. Target grades and the reasons for them (the "rationale") will be recorded and shared with parents; they will also be reproduced on students' termly reviews in year 9 to remind students and parents of their end targets and the reasons for this.

Reviewing progress

Summative assessment data in the form of milestones will be collected periodically – usually each term – and used to produce reviews which will be shared with students and parents. Students will be given the opportunity to engage in a process of reviewing their progress toward their targets after each set of review grades are published. This will take place during tutor time under the guidance of form tutors. Students will be given the opportunity to identify subjects in which they are making good progress and subjects where their progress needs to improve and will be supported in making an action plan to drive achievement.

Assessment: fundamental types

There are three fundamental types of assessment that are used at Codsall Community High School.

1. **Assessment *of* learning:** this consists of using assessment to identify students' strengths, weaknesses and current attainment. This is used by teachers to make judgements about students' progress, about adaptations to the curriculum and to advise parents.
2. **Assessment *for* learning:** this is used by teachers to assess understanding at the point of learning – most often in the form of in-class assessment such as mini-white boards or questioning. This can include assessment of students' prior knowledge and adaptation of lessons can include changing lesson foci, re-phrasing explanations of new learning or planning future lessons to improve the quality of learning and depth of understanding for all students.
3. **Assessment *as* learning:** this is a developmental process in which teachers use assessment material to teach students to become reflective learners. Through engaging with teacher-planned assessment, learners are taught to understand assessment objectives, question foci and response techniques as well as to use assessment to identify their own strengths, weaknesses and the extent to which they have secured the new knowledge that has been taught; they are taught to form links between new and prior knowledge and this accelerates the rate at which knowledge is acquired and the depth of understanding. This improved metacognition ultimately empowers learners to take control of their own learning and accelerate their progress as they start to form learning goals and measure their own progress toward them.

Assessment processes

This section outlines the processes that will be used to monitor and promote students' learning, and to reach judgements about students' grades.

Using assessment before teaching a unit: Pre-assessment

- Before teaching a new unit of work teachers may carry out a pre-assessment to establish students' previous learning within a topic. This will establish their knowledge (prior and any gaps), skills (existing and degree of fluency) and understanding (conceptions and misconceptions).
- Where used, pre-assessments are carried out before starting to teach a unit to give time for planning. Students mark pre-assessment and this is reviewed by teachers to adjust their teaching plans and by students so they know which areas to focus on.

Using assessment during teaching a unit: Day to day assessment

- Teachers select the lesson objectives from schemes of work to cover over a series of lessons and share these with students. Teachers demonstrate application of the success criteria through direct teaching, using models and anti-models. Students are given regular opportunities to assess themselves and each other against the success criteria using models, quizzes, knowledge organisers, retrieval activities, mark schemes or answer banks. Teachers ask questions and circulate during lessons to provide verbal feedback at the point of learning. Where teachers see errors, misconceptions or areas for improvement they let students know, who record the feedback they receive and use it to improve their work.
- Effective questioning involves all students (e.g. mini whiteboards) rather than just some (e.g. hands up) and elicits robust evidence of learning (e.g. can they answer an exam question) rather than being superficial (e.g. put your thumbs up if you understand).
- Day to day assessment is used by teachers to pick up gaps in learning so they can adapt their teaching and by students so they can adjust the focus of their learning within their lessons.
- Students are taught to use the day-to-day assessment in lessons as a learning activity by forming links between new learning and prior learning. This is achieved by teachers making explicit reference to prior learning, linking it to

new learning and encouraging students to do the same – such as by using Knowledge Organisers – to develop a critical analysis of their own depth of understanding. Such use of formative assessment moves learning forward, promoting good progress and outcomes.

- Note – There is no requirement for teachers to provide written feedback to students during lessons, but students should mark their work at the point of learning and use the feedback to improve.

Using assessment after learning a unit: Post-test

- At the end of a unit of work teachers carry out a post-test to establish students' learning of the topic and the progress they have made since the pre-assessment.
- Teachers mark post-tests and grade students' work on the 1 to 9, A* to E or PMDD* scale. They use the results to adapt the unit of work if improvements are identified so it is more effective when it is used by other groups of students in the future.
- Students are given time in class to reflect on the results of their post-test and to record strengths (WWWs – which are the improvements they have made since the pre-assessment) and what they still need to do to get better (EBIs).
- All students engage in DIRT to address weaknesses identified in their tests and to complete follow-on work to either maintain outstanding progress or to ensure they are back on-track to making good progress.
- Students are taught to use the results from a unit assessment and the DIRT process to identify knowledge gaps that may still exist, or aspects of knowledge that may need re-visiting as they approach future milestone points.

Using assessment to evaluate a term or year of learning: Milestones

- Students have their work formally assessed before a calendared grade collection point, which typically occurs every term.
- Students are taught how to use formal assessment material (such as past exam questions or BTEC assessment criteria) to prepare for milestone tests, and appropriate homework is set so that all students are able to practise using sample assessment as learning and part of the wider revision process.

- Milestones use up to date externally set test items (where available), which are questions taken from a previous, specimen or sample GCSE, BTEC or A level papers.
- Milestones cover all the learning from units of work that students have studied up to that point on a course and not just recent work. Milestones may include questions the student has not yet studied; the purpose of which is to provide an accurate assessment of the student's current understanding of the course as a whole and to award an accurate 'currently working at' grade.
- Teachers will use the relevant exam board grade boundaries to award a currently working at grade, using appropriate proportional scaling where exam papers have been adapted, reduced in size or combined from multiple exam series to make a milestone test of an appropriate length.
- Milestones use a range of assessment methods and the correct balance between test and controlled assessment marks to give an accurate picture of performance.
- Students who are new to a Key Stage (i.e. in Years 9 or 12) can be provided with prompts or scaffolding to enable them to complete examination questions successfully. Milestone assessments are checked by Lead Teachers before use.
- Students receive detailed written feedback from their teacher after a milestone assessment with a currently working at grade (CWA), on track for grade (OTF), strengths (WWWs) and areas for improvement (EBIs).
- Students are given dedicated improvement and reflection time (DIRT) in lessons or for homework to make improvements following a milestone assessment, which should be sufficient for them to demonstrate they are on track to reach their target following a milestone.
- Together with the outcome of previous unit assessments, students are taught to reflect on aspects of knowledge which need to be developed for their next assessment (as identified by the milestone). Students are supported in lessons to develop their own action plan to adapt their practice and improve for the future; this is reinforced through the 'action planning' in tutor time that follows publication of termly progress reviews, whereby students take control of their learning by identifying SMART targets to work toward under the guidance of form tutors.
- The accuracy of CWA and OTF grades are checked through faculty moderation and work sampling. The overall pitch of OTF grades is also checked by the Assistant Headteacher: Data. Where grades appear higher or lower than they should be, grades are checked by Lead Teachers and SLT to either amend the

grades or to understand the reasons why grades are different to those seen in the past.

- Teachers, Development Teachers and Lead Teachers examine strengths and weaknesses from milestones and use these to adapt units of work and their medium-term plan so they are more effective in the future using Visible Learning methodology.
- The quality of milestones is evaluated by Lead Teachers looking at the assessments completed by students, the adaptations teachers have made to their units of work and using statistical measures of reliability and validity. They are improved by replacing ineffective test items, providing training in test construction and through moderation.

Data

Assessment results and OTF data are collated using the SIMS software package and are then uploaded to the SISRA data analysis software. Assessment, estimate and target data are made available to all teaching staff so that they can better understand the progress of the students in their care and can intervene to arrest declining performance amongst groups of students where it is identified, through the "*Know Your Class*" feature of SIMS. By default, access to SISRA software and associated training is made available to middle and senior leaders; such access and training is also available to other teaching staff where they have expressed a desire to participate.

Summary reports covering the progress of whole year groups as well as individual courses are collated by the Assistant Headteacher: Data and shared with Lead Teachers as well as other pertinent data such as the outcomes of student surveys. These summaries are published as soon as possible after each data collection point.

Work-place impact assessment

As part of responsible leadership, policy changes are assessed to evaluate their likely impact on staff workload and this is taken into consideration along with the positive impact on teaching and learning

In previous iterations of this policy, potential workload issues were identified and mitigations put in place by allocating training time for staff and lesson time to conduct target-setting discussions with year 9 and 12 students.

This version of the policy introduces the concept of "Assessment as learning", which requires further staff training to ensure successful implementation. To offset the risk

of an increase in work load by asking teachers to do additional reading or training during their working weeks, time has been explicitly allocated as part of the INSET days in September 2022 and Thursday staff training sessions to develop teachers' competence using "Assessment as learning" in a staged fashion. Time to make adaptations to subject curricula that may come from implementing "Assessment as learning" in lessons are included in weekly Thursday department time that follows training throughout the academic year and any extra time staff may spend in adapting lessons or resources will be offset by the increase in students' understanding and motivation and the corresponding reduction in time spent 'revising' lesson material, making learning interventions or following-up on poor performance.