Assessment Policy
2020/21

Signature: 

Head teacher

Approval Date: July 2020
Review Date: June 2021
West Somerset College
Assessment Policy 2020/21

Rationale
We believe in seeking academic excellence for all our students, within the context of a caring and mutually supportive partnership between the school and its community. This policy will assist the school in realising this vision by guiding practice that will ensure that:

- The learning experience of the students is appropriate for their individual needs and abilities
- Staff are provided with opportunities to share good practice and to plan, deliver and evaluate the learning experience in the classroom.
- All students reach aspirational targets

Our assessment procedures support teaching and learning by developing motivated, engaged and successful learners. Assessment is used to celebrate success and provides guidance to students on how to improve, maximising the school’s potential for raising standards.

Aims
To use assessment as a tool for measuring achievement and progression; for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses from which targets can be set to raise achievement and close any gaps in knowledge:

- Staff should conduct regular and appropriate assessments in line with the school’s assessment, the national curriculum, GCSE, GCE and other qualification assessment criteria
- Assessment should inform students, staff and parents of levels of achievement and progression
- Assessment should be diagnostic, recognising progression and underachievement, and offer constructive advice on how to improve through specific individual targets
- Formative assessment will be developed through assessment for learning strategies
- Students should be made aware of the assessment criteria and reflect upon the learning process through self-assessment and peer-assessment
- Assessment should be systematically built into programmes of study, schemes of work and the broader curriculum

Introduction
Assessment is a term which encompasses a wide range of activities, formal and informal, summative and formative. A range of different assessment methods will be used by teachers at different times. For much of the time this will involve written work but portfolios, practical work, oral work and team work will also be used when appropriate. Methods of testing will also vary from individual pieces of work to projects, units or modules of work.

Formative and Summative Assessment
The school believes that the use of both summative and formative assessment are characteristic of good practice and form part of the assessment culture.

Formative assessment can be informal - e.g. questioning; feedback; peer assessment; self-assessment or formal - e.g. analysis of tests, timed essays, exams and target setting.
Summative assessment can also be informal - e.g. homework essays; coursework; portfolios; oral presentations; teacher assessment or formal - e.g. tests, exams, essays or tasks in controlled conditions.

The school believes in the embedding of assessment for learning within the teaching and learning of all subjects throughout the school. This is formally reflected in the short, medium and long term learning plans of all departments and Key Stages. Effective assessment at West Somerset College includes the following characteristics:

i) Promotion of Learning
- identifies what students know, understand and can do
- enables consistent monitoring of student progress
- identifies individual learning strengths and weaknesses
- encourages progression in learning

ii) Informs Teaching
- assists lesson planning
- informs review of content and skills
- promotes a variety of teaching strategies
- enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress
- encourages self-reflection

iii) Is both formative and summative
- promotes a shared learning culture
- provides clear and regular feedback
- diagnoses learning difficulties
- measures student performance
- clear and shared targets for student progress
- promotes differentiation
- provides effective and progressive student records
- informs regular reporting to parents

iv) Uses appropriate and diverse strategies
- is both formal and informal
- tests a range of skills
- encourages effective and standardised feedback in line with the school’s feedback policy

v) Recognises student progress and achievement
- encourages motivation and promotes a commitment to learning
- creates opportunities independence/autonomy in learning
- develops self-esteem and social development
- rewards progress, effort and achievement
Formal assessment methods:
The school believes that the use of both summative and formative assessment are characteristic of good practice and form part of the assessment culture. The most effective assessment strategies that includes all the characteristics of good assessment are:

Daily recap quizzing – cumulative content retrieval practice at the start of all lessons. Students receive instant feedback as the quizzes are marked, corrected and improved by the pupils themselves. The teacher uses a range of whole class feedback strategies to inform them of what is learned and what is still required to be taught.

Knowledge quizzes – low stakes, common and cumulative quizzes. Questions are on content covered to date with a focus on the current topic. Students receive instant feedback as they mark, correct and improve the work themselves. The teacher uses a range of whole class feedback strategies to inform them of what is learned and what is still required to be taught.

Knowledge exams – regular tests that cover content introduced from Year 9. Students receive instant feedback as they mark, correct and improve the work themselves. Teachers record diagnostic assessment information centrally to monitor students understanding and inform future planning to allow for any gaps in knowledge to be addressed. The summative scores of these exams are collated and used to inform DAPs which are reported to parents/carers.

Application tasks – development of skills and application of content (such as extended writing pieces or drawing tasks) undertaken during a deliberate practice session. The work is assessed and feedback is given to the whole class through feedback sessions, where common errors are identified and addressed. Teachers record diagnostic assessment information to monitor students’ attainment.

Assessment and reporting

- **Years 9:** All students will have been assigned a target grade based on the GCSE grading system of 1-9, with 9 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. All subjects will use a variety of formal assessment methods to track the progress each student. These assessments will be complete fortnightly and will generate a set of PLCs (Personal Learning Checklists) for each student in each subject. This will identify the specific strengths and weaknesses in their subject knowledge. Using the PLCs teacher will then be able to report on the progress of each student using these terms:

  - **Excelling** – student knowledge is on track to exceed their target grade.
  - **Above** – student knowledge is on track to at least achieve but likely to exceed their target grade.
  - **Expected** – student knowledge is on track to achieve their target grade.
  - **Below** – student knowledge is on track to achieve but possibly fall below their target grade.
  - **Well below** – student knowledge is on track to achieve a grade lower than their target grade.

These predictions will then be reported to parents along with copies of their son/daughter’s PLCs at three points throughout the academic year. In addition all students will also complete a comprehensive formal examination that will assess all aspects of the knowledge they should have gained in Year 9. The outcomes of this will be shared with parents at one of the three points previously mentioned.
• **Years 10:** Students’ work is assessed using the grading criteria that matches the course that they are studying. GCSE courses are marked using a numerical system that ranges from a maximum of 9 through to 1. Anything less than a 1 is ungraded. Vocational (BTEC and technical awards) courses are marked using the 4 tier marking system that goes from Pass, up through Merit and Distinction to Distinction*. All subjects in 10 will conduct summative assessments throughout the academic year. These assessments will be complete fortnightly and will generate a set of PLCs (Personal Learning Checklists) for each student in each subject. This will identify the specific strengths and weaknesses in their subject knowledge. Using the PLCs teacher will then be able to report on the progress of each student using these terms:

   - **Excelling** – student knowledge is on track to exceed their target grade.
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   - **Well below** – student knowledge is on track to achieve a grade lower than their target grade.

These worded predictions will then be reported to parents along with copies of their son/daughter’s PLCs at the first two data points in the academic year. In addition, all students will also complete a formal mock examination in all subjects (taking place at the end of June) and will consist of the students completing a set of past examination papers for each subject. Student results will be assessed against official mark schemes and graded using previously published national grade boundaries. Students will then be predicted a grade based on their performance which is shared with parents/carers. For each mock examination a QLA (Question Level Analysis) will be create which will help identify each students’ strengths and weaknesses.

• **Year 11:** Students’ work continues to be assessed using the grading criteria that matches the course that they are studying. GCSE courses are marked using a numerical system that ranges from a maximum of 9 through to 1. Anything less than a 1 is ungraded. Vocational (BTEC and technical awards) courses are marked using the 4 tier marking system that goes from Pass, up through Merit and Distinction to Distinction*. These grades will be a prediction of where the teacher believes that they will be at the end of Year 11. Students will sit internal summative tests at least three times a year (usually within the fortnight before each DAP) including at least one mock examination (usually in December of that academic year). Assessments are Year 11 are usually sets of past examination papers that are graded against the corresponding national grade boundaries. After each mock examination a QLA (Question Level Analysis) will be create which will help identify each students’ strengths and weaknesses. The DAP report shares the students test scores (%), average score for the year group, the average score for the class, the best mark in the year and the predicted grade with parents and student at each of the data points.

**Post 16**

• **Year 12:** All students will be assigned a target grade based on their performance at GCSE. Their target grade will be dependent on the course they are studying. GCE courses are marked using a letter system that ranges from a maximum of A*, down through A and B until the minimum pass of an E is reached. Anything less than an E is a fail, and noted as a U grade. BTEC courses are marked using the 4 tier marking system that goes from Pass, up through Merit and Distinction to Distinction*. The student target grade will reflect one of these grades. All subjects will use a variety of formal assessment methods to track the progress each student. These assessments
will be complete fortnightly and will generate a set of PLCs (Personal Learning Checklists) for each student in each subject. This will identify the specific strengths and weaknesses in their subject knowledge. Using the PLCs teacher will then be able to report on the progress of each student using these terms:

**Excelling** – student knowledge is on track to exceed their target grade.
**Above** – student knowledge is on track to at least achieve but likely to exceed their target grade.
**Expected** – student knowledge is on track to achieve their target grade.
**Below** – student knowledge is on track to achieve but possibly fall below their target grade.
**Well below** – student knowledge is on track to achieve a grade lower than their target grade.

These worded predictions will then be reported to parents along with copies of their son/daughter’s PLCs at the first two data points in the academic year. In addition, all students will also complete a formal mock examination in all subjects that will assess all aspects of the knowledge they should have gained in Year 12 (usually in late June). The outcomes of these mock examinations will form a grade prediction that will be shared with parents in the third and final data point of the year. This final predicted grade will be a prediction of where the teacher believes that the student will be at the end of Year 13.

**Year 13**: Students’ work continues to be assessed using the grading criteria that matches the course that they are studying. GCE courses are marked using a letter system that ranges from a maximum of A*, down through A and B until the minimum pass of an E is reached. Anything less than an E is a fail, and noted as a U grade. BTEC courses are marked using the 4 tier marking system that goes from Pass, up through Merit and Distinction to Distinction*. At each data point teachers will make predictions of where the teacher believes that they will be at the end of Year 13. Students will sit internal summative tests at least three times a year (usually within the fortnight before each DAP) including a mock examination (usually in January for Year 13).

### Reporting Type Overview

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<th>Year 9</th>
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### Vocational Course

For all vocational courses requiring an IV, there will be a lead IV identified and time will be dedicated and recorded on the school calendar for the process to be completed. Each course will have an assessment plan detailing all of the aspects required and this will be monitored by the Quality Nominee. All vocational course will also have an assessment timeline that clearly identifies important dates including (but not limited to) IV dates, QN dates, EQA dates, unit completion dates and course completion dates.