



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Assessment Policy

November 2021

Principles

The School believes that all assessment, recording and reporting should be underpinned by the following principles:

- Clarity
- Consistency
- Pertinence
- Realism
- Regularity
- Alignment with the national pattern of examinations

The person with specific responsibilities for assessment, recording and reporting is Mr M.E. Lax – Deputy Head

Aims

It is expected that:

<i>for Teachers</i>	<i>for Students</i>	<i>for Parents and carers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking and monitoring should both assess completed work and inform future programmes of teaching and learning, according to the needs of individual students. • Teachers will set and mark work regularly. All work will be <i>monitored</i> (to check that it has been completed to a satisfactory standard; some pieces of work will be selected for more detailed and rigorous <i>marking</i> in accordance with the department's assessment policy. • This document is the responsibility of the Head of Department and should provide clarity on the nature and timing of assessment for staff, students and parents • Regular assessment should be formative and clearly in line with the departmental expectations • Marking will include positive statements about what has been achieved, constructive comments and suggested targets for improvement • HoDs will organise departmental tests to ensure consistency • Work may be annotated using symbols which have been agreed either at a whole school or departmental level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will use information given by the teacher to assess their own performance and to formulate clear targets about what they need to do to make appropriate progress • Students will tailor their work to meet assessment objectives described by the teacher, and will develop an awareness of the standards required to achieve appropriate levels and grades. • Students will be involved in the assessment of their own, and their peers' work; they should have opportunities to write and talk about what they have done and how they can improve (both for selected routine assignments and on reports). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and carers will receive communication about their child's attainment, progress and potential via reports and parents' evenings • Parents and carers are positively encouraged to be involved in their child's education by attending parents' evenings and reading reports published via the SIMS "ParentApp", accessing their child's exercise books and MS Teams account, reading the weekly digest of MS Teams "assignments" and by contacting the relevant Year Tutor if they have any concerns • Parents and carers should be actively aware of their child's STAR estimates and be engaged in discussion with

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of literacy in students’ work is recognised and assessed • Appropriate time will be given to complete tasks for assessment, especially when set for remote learning, for example via MS Teams, as it is recognised that students may be facing different home circumstances and may not always have timely access to the necessary technology. • Likewise, work will be returned to students as soon as possible (within a working fortnight). • Teachers will encourage students to critically evaluate their own and others’ work; opportunities for self and peer assessment will be included in the programme of routine work. • Teachers will inform students of assessment criteria • Teachers will assess students’ performance under test conditions, not only in the summer and mock exams, but also on a regular basis throughout the year, again in conjunction with the departmental policy • Teachers may also make use of student self-marking tools for formative assessment, especially via online platforms such as MS Forms, Seneca, Quizlet etc, in order to complement teacher assessment. The School values these modes of assessment as low-stakes regular testing can embed learning over time. • Teachers will be aware of students’ prior attainment and potential by noting their estimated grades using STAR • Teachers should be aware of other considerations in relation to their students (SEN, Pupil Premium, Gifted and Talented, literary support) and use differentiation (including stretch and challenge) where appropriate • Teachers will award attainment grades at the appropriate times of year and should have evidence recorded to support their judgments – either electronic or paper-based). • Teachers will report students’ progress to parents via termly attainment and Attitude to Learning Grades, a written pastoral report and at a parents’ evening. • For students who have been identified as needing extra literacy support, this will mainly be provided by the English department, but it is important that all staff are aware of these students and plan for them accordingly. The English department support may be in the form of extra-curricular groups, withdrawal intervention or in-class support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be actively aware of their STAR estimates and be clear about ways of improving performance to be able to achieve these • Students will make every effort to act on feedback in order secure learning, whether it is provided individually, to the whole-class or in a peer-assessment activity, or delivered verbally, in writing, or via an online platform used by the teacher for assessment 	<p>them on ways to improve/maintain their performance</p> <p>N.B. If students or parents have any questions or concerns about arrangements for marking, assessment, recording and reporting, they should contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant Head of Year • The relevant Head of Department • The Deputy Headmaster in charge of curriculum • The Headmaster <p><i>Students and parents should also note that there is a separate policy regarding appeals against coursework marks that are deemed to be unfair. That policy deals with enquiries about external examination results.</i></p>
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Appendix 1 - Roles and responsibilities in report writing:

Roles and responsibilities


Subject teacher	Award Attainment and ATL grades according to the assessment policy and in line with department guidance. Meet stated deadlines.
Head of Department	Oversee and standardise the completion of Attainment & ATL grades within the department to deadlines; ensure continuity of approach in assessment contributing to those grades. Intervene on a department / teaching group level, post-grades, where appropriate and report on data and intervention to SLT line manager.
Pastoral Comment: FT /GT & HoY as arranged	Look closely at the cohort grades and intervene for those with significant under-achievement or ATL concerns. Celebrate high achievement. When writing pastoral reports, give an overview of the attainment & ATL grades related to STAR estimated grades. Reflect the contribution of the student to the form and in extracurricular activities, showing knowledge of the individual. Make the report unique. Report on cohort performance to SLT
DMH / MEL	Oversee the technical set up of SIMS and liaise with all staff in making improvements to the system. Troubleshoot issues related to pastoral report quality and monitor consistency of Attainment & ATL grades. Ensure the timely release of reports to parents via the SIMS ParentApp.
RJL	Sign all reports and provide a hand written comment on some reports as required. Ensure that all reports are portraying the ethos and aspirations of the school. Establish a celebratory occasion for outstanding attainment, achievement or improvement in conjunction with HoY. Liaise with MEL in relation to making amendments to the reporting system.

Appendix 2 – Estimated STAR grades and attainment grades

	Estimated STAR grades	Attainment grades
Key Stages 3/4 (Years 7-11)	<p>These are calculated using three separate pieces of data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Results from Key Stage 2 examinations taken in Year 6 (not available in Sep 2020 or Sep 2021) 2. Midyis test results from Year 7 (used for Years 7-9), Yellis test results from Year 10 (used for Year 10 & 11) 3. Predictive data from Fischer Family Trust (an educational charity) based on prior attainment <p>Each of the above pieces of data assesses students’ capabilities and generates predictions as to their likely performance at GCSE, assuming they continue to work at the same level, in the different subjects that they study. Our estimated grades are an average of the three pieces of data, where possible. These grades give an indication of the level that students should be working at in their various subjects.</p> <p>In Years 7-11 these estimates will be on the 9-1 scale, dependant on what the student would be awarded in that subject by the end of KS4</p> <p>Attainment grades will provide an indication as to whether students are above their estimated grade, working at the correct level, or working below their estimated grade (under-achievement).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summative attainment grades are collated at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms and are also used to indicate performance in the end of year examinations. • The grades will be on the 9-1 scale, dependant on what the student would be awarded in that subject by the end of KS4 • The bottom of an “old” A grade is aligned to the bottom of a level 7, with the bottom of an “old” C grade aligned to the bottom of a level 4 • The top 20% of those being awarded a level 7 or above nationally will be awarded a level 9 • Any grade below grade 6 is below what would be expected of a typical student in a grammar school • Subject teachers should award the grade which, in their professional judgment, best reflects the likely outcome at GCSE if the student continues to work in the way that they have during the term in question. In awarding the grade, the teacher will bear in mind the performance of the department at GCSE over recent years: the number of each grade awarded across a cohort should be broadly in line with the actual results achieved at GCSE. • The Year 7 and 8 end-of-year grades shall be made up from a series of formal assessments throughout the year, not from an end-of-year exam. Details of how these are made up should be found in each departmental Curriculum Pathway document • It is the Head of Department’s responsibility to moderate the award of grades so that there is consistency between the different members of the department.
Key Stage 5 (Years 12/13)	<p>Estimated grades for sixth form students are worked out based on their average point score at GCSE using the ALIS system through CEM (Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at the University of Durham)</p> <p>These grades give an indication, based on national data, as to what grades students are most likely to achieve at A Level in each different subject area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grades used follow the pattern of A Level: A*-U. • Subject teachers should award the grade which, in their professional judgment, best reflects the likely outcome at A Level if the student continues to work in the way that he has during the term in question • It is the Head of Department’s responsibility to moderate the award of grades so that there is consistency between the different members of the department.

Appendix 3 – Attitude to Learning grades

Attitude to Learning Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor	
A	I ALWAYS display the following qualities in lessons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation; being motivated, focused and organised in my learning inside and outside the classroom. • Active engagement; listening and contributing in discussion and showing interest in my learning. • Aspiration; by responding to teacher and pupil feedback to improve my work and aim high. • <u>In addition</u> I regularly go 'above and beyond' in my learning showing independent learning skills and love of learning. 	INDEPENDENT PROACTIVE 
B	I ALWAYS display the following qualities in lessons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation; being motivated, focused and organised in my learning inside and outside the classroom. • Active engagement; listening and contributing in discussion and showing interest in my learning. • Aspiration; by responding to teacher and pupil feedback to improve my work and aim high. 	
C	I USUALLY display the following qualities in lessons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation; being motivated, focused and organised in my learning inside and outside the classroom. • Active engagement; listening and contributing in discussion and showing interest in my learning. • Aspiration; by responding to teacher and pupil feedback to improve my work and aim high. 	
D	I RARELY display the following qualities in lessons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation; being motivated, focused and organised in my learning inside and outside the classroom. • Active engagement; listening and contributing in discussion and showing interest in my learning. • Aspiration; by responding to teacher and pupil feedback to improve my work and aim high. 	

Appendix 4 - The reporting year 2021-22 at a glance:

The reporting year 2021-22:

Year group	Parents' evening	Attainment and ATL grades to DMH	Att and ATL grades issued	Pastoral Reports Due to HM	Written Pastoral Reports Issued	Other
7	Thu 10 Mar	Mon 15 Nov, Mon 21 Mar, Mon 20 Jun	By Fri 3 Dec By Thu 7 Apr NA	NA NA Wed 29 Jun	NA NA By Fri 8 Jul	Academic Reviews Mon 6 Dec (details to be confirmed)
8	Thu 24 Mar	Mon 29 Nov, Mon 21 Mar, Mon 27 Jun	NA By Thu 7 Apr By Fri 8 Jul	Wed 8 Dec NA NA	By Fri 17 Dec NA NA	
9	Thu 17 Feb	Mon 29 Nov, Mon 21 Mar, Mon 20 Jun	By Fri 17 Dec By Thu 7 Apr NA	NA NA Wed 29 Jun	NA NA By Fri 8 Jul	Exams Mon 6 - Fri 10 Jun
10	Thu 13 Jan	Mon 29 Nov, Mon 21 Mar, Fri 10 Jun	By Fri 17 Dec By Fri 1 Apr NA	NA NA Fri 17 Jun	NA NA By Fri 24 Jun	Exams Mon 9 - Fri 13 May (no results released before 6 Jun)
11	Thu 7 Oct	Tue 7 Dec (mocks) Mon 21 Mar	By Fri 17 Dec NA	NA Wed 30 Mar	NA By Thu 7 Apr	Mock exams Mon 15-Wed 24 Nov; (no results released before 7 Dec) Academic reviews w/c Mon 10 Jan
12	Thu 2 Dec	Mon 8 Nov, Mon 14 Mar, Fri 10 Jun	By Fri 19 Nov NA Wed 22 Jun	NA Wed 23 Mar NA	NA Fri 1 Apr NA	Y12 exams Mon 16-Fri 27 May; Y12 Results Day Wed 22 Jun (no results released before 22 Jun) Y12 UCAS Day Friday 1 Jul UCAS subject briefings due Fri 8 Jul
13	Thu 14 Oct	Mon 29 Nov, Mon 7 Feb	By Fri 17 Dec NA	NA Wed 16 Feb	NA Fri 4 Mar	Y13 Mock exams Mon 17 – Fri 21 Jan

Appendix 5:

An update to our Assessment Policy in light of the coronavirus pandemic

It is clear that Queen Mary's Grammar School and the wider education system has been operating in 'extraordinary times' since March 2020. Two national lockdowns mandated school closure to all but a few students from March to July 2020 and again from January to March 2021. Additional local restrictions placed upon the school, as part of wider Walsall mitigating measures, on November-December 2020 and since October 2021 have also led to a set of circumstances in which learning and support for our students has had to be organised very differently.

For all students, whether in school or not, the formal curriculum was effectively dis-applied during the periods of school closure and formal education as understood in ordinary times ceased. This had an effect upon curriculum assessment, in its broadest term. The School made significant efforts to mitigate the impacts of past and potential future school closure through a number of approaches. It is to be acknowledged that, in embracing remote learning during the school closure period, there were lessons to be learned and we have now embedded a more "blended" learning approach for the future.

Some of the school's further considerations in adopting a proportionate approach on assessment and reporting will consider the educational benefits of high-quality assessment and feedback, alongside the exceptional circumstances under which all staff and students have found themselves working, including restrictions placed upon the movement of staff in classrooms due to the need for social distancing. An approach that is fair and manageable approach for staff, and meaningful and equitable for students includes the following:

- The main focus will be on formative assessment and providing feedback to students. The purpose of this assessment will be to inform the development of future learning resources and curriculum pathways. The key guiding principle is that only assessment that is useful to students and their teachers should be undertaken.
- Departments will have autonomy over the curriculum content, delivery and assessment methods that are deemed most appropriate for the restrictions at the time. This will include a range of delivery and assessment methods from face-to-face lessons, blended learning, to totally online provision according to the relevant restrictions at the time
- Assessment methods may include a wide range of approaches from traditional classroom-based assessments, where possible, to "low-stakes" online quizzes and tests to practice papers to be completed "offline" under timed conditions.
- Teachers' professional judgements will guide the approaches to assessment adopted in respect of any future blended or remote learning. Feedback should be possible using MS Teams but will be guided by the teacher's evaluation of the learning needs of students and the nature of the activity being undertaken.
- In establishing an online remote learning system in MS Teams (but also including a number of other widely-available online platforms), teachers will not be required to attempt to reproduce in written form the verbal feedback that students would be given during typical classroom teaching, on the occasion of future school closure.

- Teachers may also make use of student self-marking tools for formative assessment, especially via online platforms such as MS Forms, Seneca, Quizlet etc, in order to complement teacher assessment. The School values these modes of assessment as low-stakes regular testing can embed learning over time.
- Assessment in at GCSE and A Level will take account of any changes to the examined materials, as set out by OFQUAL Arrangements and implemented by exam boards. Staff will ensure that they keep up-to-date with any changes announced in their own subjects.
- Alternative arrangements in case of cancellation of formal external examinations, as occurred in Summer 2020 and 2021, will be put place. Likewise, if internal assessments such as mock or Summer exams are cancelled (subject to amendment for any local or national restrictions at the time).

Teachers and leaders at Queen Mary's Grammar School have always had high expectations of themselves and of the students for whom they are normally responsible. The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak will not undermine our core professional principles. Assessment, as a part of this core purpose must still help teachers secure high-quality educational experiences for students and to provide useful information that supports effective teaching. However, the circumstances that the outbreak has created mean that these high standards must, for the time being, be pursued in the face of entirely unprecedented challenges, both for students and teachers. This assessment policy recognises those pressures.