

## Marking & Assessment Policy (Incorporating Teaching and Learning Policy)

This document, which applies to the whole College inclusive of boarding, is publicly available on the College website and, upon request, a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the College Office.

This policy applies equally to day and boarding provision and ensures that marking, assessment and teaching practices are fair, transparent, consistent and supportive of student progress.

**Scope:** All who work, volunteer or supply services to our College have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal College hours, including activities away from College. All new employees and volunteers are required to state that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy and its procedural documents and confirm this by signing the Policies Register.

All assessment and marking practices must be conducted in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and must not disadvantage students on the basis of protected characteristics. Reasonable adjustments must be made where required to ensure equitable access to assessment.

**Legal Status:** Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

This policy also operates in accordance with current JCQ regulations, Teachers' Standards, safeguarding guidance, and data protection legislation including GDPR. Assessment data is treated as confidential and stored securely.

**Monitoring and Review:** These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Principal, who will undertake a full annual review, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

The impact of assessment practices will also be evaluated through lesson observations, work scrutiny, moderation exercises, value-added analysis and feedback from students and parents.

Reviewed: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027

Signed

David Game  
Founder

John Dalton  
Principal

This policy should be read in conjunction with Work Scrutiny Policy, SEND Policy and Numeracy and Literacy Policy. It should also be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, Academic Integrity Policy and Data Protection Policy.

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to support College improvement and the raising of standards in achievement and attainment for all our students. It is also required to achieve consistency in marking across subjects and provide teachers with good practice, suitable for a modern tutorial college.

This policy intends to:

- Provide guidelines for the implementation of the policy
- Make transparent the procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating assessment practices
- Define clear responsibilities in relation to assessment
- Provide clear definitions and purposes for different types of assessment
- Highlight the critical importance of correct and improving literacy and numeracy at every possible engagement with students and encouraging them in the process to make rapid progress

## Fundamental Principles of Assessment

All assessment should:

- Enable individual pupils to make progress in their learning
- Enable pupils to understand clearly how they can improve
- Be underpinned by confidence that every child can improve, irrespective of their background
- Help all pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and are able to do
- Include reliable judgments about how learners are performing, related where appropriate to national standards
- Involve both teachers and pupils in reviewing and reflecting upon assessment information
- Provide feedback that leads to pupils recognising the 'next steps' in their learning and how to work towards achieving these
- Enable teachers to plan more effectively
- Provide information that helps teachers to evaluate their work, and set appropriate targets for individual pupils
- Enable parents, where appropriate, to be involved in their child's progress
- Highlight spelling, grammar and syntactical issues, as well as numeracy, accuracy and the correct use of units

It is also recognised that the core curriculum is also connected to the support and area-based curricula. Integration of PSHE, RSE and SMSC and BV into all aspects of teaching is critical for the successful delivery of any progress curriculum.

Technically there are six types of assessments:

1. Diagnostic assessments
2. Formative assessments
3. Summative assessments
4. Ipsative assessments
5. Norm-referenced assessments
6. Criterion-referenced assessments

Given the nature of the courses at the College, alongside baseline assessments, the College has a particular focus on formative and summative assessment, but other types of assessment may also be useful and relevant depending on the subject.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Teachers are responsible for carrying out summative and formative assessments with individual pupils, small groups and whole classes, depending on the context. Where appropriate, these outcomes will be shared with pupils as part of an ongoing dialogue with pupils about their learning progress. The outcomes of summative assessments are reported to the Senior Leadership Team. These outcomes will be shared with Parents at Parents' Evenings and in the pupils' reports.

### **The Principal and the Heads of GCSE and Sixth Form are responsible for ensuring that:**

- Each class teacher understands the needs of their individual students and tracks the performance of students and is aware of their baseline target grade
- Staff provide students with a copy of the correct specification and set, mark and return relevant homework in a reasonable timeframe
- Teachers are aware of what is preferred in terms of marking and that students should not be discouraged by comments left by their teachers
- Teachers keep records of students' test grades and highlight strengths and weaknesses in individual student's performance over the academic year
- Summative assessment tasks are planned in each term and that the data is collated centrally
- Teachers' Standards are adhered to at all times and standards in core subjects are maintained
- Vulnerable students and those with SEN issues are making progress and that teachers should have high expectations of such students
- All staff are familiar with the Assessment Policy, practice and guidance for their particular subject

### **The Principal is responsible for:**

Holding teachers to account for the progress of individual pupils towards end of year targets; profiles of individual students are formed and in addition to the baseline grade from ALIS or YELLIS, staff are expected to predict a final grade, which is looked at against the actual final grade. It is important to note that as part of teacher's induction and the INSET day, teachers are reminded that how they assess and mark students' work really matters and while they are right to highlight errors and misunderstandings, they must do so in a manner that is not overly harsh or negative.

## **Monitoring, Moderation and Evaluation**

The leadership team will take overall responsibility for ensuring the assessment policy is put into practice in the school. Policy and practice will be reviewed regularly with staff. A list of students that are cause for concern, either in terms of academic progress, behaviour or poor attitude, will be developed by late October of each academic year. This list will be compiled through a review of test results, HWK feedback, personal tutors' reports, and general feedback from individual teachers. Another list of exceptionally able and gifted students will also be produced. To ensure that teachers follow the guidelines of the assessment policy, HWK will be reviewed during lesson observations and collected at random by the academic coordinator. Teachers who are not following the guidelines will be spoken with and asked to comply and improve as part of their overall performance assessment.

### **Baseline assessment such as Alis and Yellis is also used at the College to try and build up a picture of a student's academic potential.**

#### **Formative Assessment**

The purpose of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need working on
- help staff recognise where students are struggling and address problems immediately

### Formal homework and feedback:

For marking to be successful it has to take place in the context of mutual trust and respect. Students must feel that their teachers are there to guide, coach and support them, not just be critical of errors.

- When marking GCSE or A level work, assessment criteria are clearly provided in detailed mark schemes provided by the Boards, which all tutors have access to; teachers should provide mark schemes wherever possible, to their students to highlight how correct answers are formulated
- Teachers must emphasise the importance of definitions, and precise explanations of technical terms, and in the appropriate subject encourage students to make their own glossary of terms or buy a recommended dictionary e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, Geography, Mathematics, Politics, etc.
- Teachers are expected to provide some form of homework to students every lesson, except where a significant piece of work may already be worked on i.e. a practical write up or piece of coursework. It is unacceptable practice to simply not set and mark suitable homework.
- The College will encourage staff to set HWK from past papers or based on some aspect of the official exam. Where a staff member wants to make up their own HWK, then it is important that they do not give students the wrong impression about what to expect in the final examination. For example, offering multiple choice questions is a good way to see who has learnt a topic, but if students will never face a multiple-choice question in their final exam or end of term test, then this can be problematic.
- It is generally not acceptable to provide reading as a passive form of homework and the College expects tutors to provide specific pieces of work that challenge students
- Teachers must ensure that students try and follow good practice and operate under conditions that prevail in examinations, i.e. students should not excessively cross out or use Tippex. It is also important for students to realise when a calculator can be used, etc. Teachers are responsible for communicating this to their students under the guidance of the Examinations Officer.
- The College also expects teachers to “cut and paste” in terms of questions. It is sometimes necessary to put elements of two different questions or sections of a syllabus together if it enhances the learning of a particular topic
- The College will from time to time inspect HWK either through the personal tutor system or through direct teacher/student observation; sample or marked work may also be requested by the Heads of GCSE and A level.
- The College expects tutors to focus on literacy and numeracy to ensure that effective communication is achieved by students in their subjects; please note the numeracy and literacy policy that is incorporated into the SEND Policy. It is vital that staff ensure students are aware of the importance of reviewing their students’ literacy and numeracy skills.
- All students should have their access arrangements for examinations mirrored during mock tests. For example, a student that is allowed 25% extra in a real examination, should be allowed the same extra time in key tests

The following is a summary of recommended practice and guidelines:

Teachers should:

1. Make ticks and comments/annotations ideally in red or green ink; it is not helpful to use a range of colours as this can confuse and demotivate students
2. Return marked work within a week of receipt of the work
3. Be clear and careful in their language – it is important to strike a sensible balance between pointing out errors and equally motivating the student to make progress.
4. Cast their comments in terms of what remedial action can be taken – e.g. pointing out how material might have been effectively organised or structured (essay based) or how a sentence might be structured to better answer a specific question
5. Provide feedback at the end of a piece of work that is constructive and highlight two or three areas that the student needs to address
6. Make comments that are concise, legible and constructive, preferably guiding the student in the right direction. Rather than just stating something to be incorrect, teachers should concisely point out the right answer and show the working out where relevant.
7. It is recommended to engage in peer-to-peer marking (preferably without student’s names attached, but coded), so that students can start to think like examiners’ and understand how marking works.
8. Be prepared to spend some time with a student to elaborate on a comment during or after a class
9. Refrain from just writing “NO” without any explanation of why an answer may be wrong
10. Provide verbal feedback about comments made on HWK and test papers, further expanding on comments, as well as

*David Game College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential*

motivating and encouraging the student

11. Make students aware of the marking criteria and what is expected from a 2-mark question, as opposed to a 5-mark question
12. Highlight the role and use of official marking schemes; providing examiners' comments on full papers is also recommended so that students can learn common errors and misconceptions
13. Highlight spelling errors and important syntactical or grammatical errors, especially where these could result in the misinterpretation of an answer. Teachers should highlight the incorrect usage of words, technical words (including spelling) and the use of units. Where appropriate, highlight the incorrect use of register in the exposition of ideas, syntactical and grammatical errors as well as the inappropriate vocabulary. Some students use slang or imprecise terms when explaining things or use three words when one will suffice, so it is useful for teachers to nudge students in the right direction in terms of providing a more cogent and structured piece of work
14. Where possible, provide different levels of homework depending on class abilities. For example, it is perfectly acceptable to provide a gifted and talented student with three additional, more challenging pieces of work
15. Highlight to students of mathematics and science the importance of correct expressions in decimal and standard form, powers, exponential, and logarithmic expressions
16. Explain the meaning of command words, such as the difference between "explain" and "describe", or how to tackle questions that start with "discuss" or "comment upon"
17. Avoid generalised comments such as "Keep up the good work" or "Good", "Satisfactory" or "Could do Better" – as these are not deemed helpful and comments should be more specific, concisely explaining what is in error or contention and comments should be specific and direct the student towards the correct answer
18. Highlight deficiencies in a student's work and what is needed for a full answer
19. Be mindful of plagiarism and subtly verbally challenge students on the source or origin of a piece of work if they clearly feel that it has been copied; where plagiarism is found, a strict and firm response should be GIVEN
20. Remind students to correctly reference their work
21. Use simple notation for common errors: sp (spelling), p (punctuation error), gr (grammatical or syntactical error) and ensure that students understand the import and meaning of these notations
22. For those with significant spelling problems or who may be dyslexic, it is important to highlight spelling errors in work, but to limit these to about 10 so as not to totally dishearten the student

### **Summative assessment**

The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. A good example is an end-of-term mock or important test or completion of some specific area of coursework. It is important for teachers to moderate work of another teacher to ensure that marking of any coursework has been fair and the mark scheme consistency and correctly adhered to. Summative assessment will take the form of:

- results over the academic year – tests should normally be set every two to three weeks in most subjects and are an important source of progress monitoring.
- AS results: at the end of the first year of A levels, some students may decide to sit the AS examination.
- Practical work: Art, photography and the sciences usually have some form of practical assessment in the form of a portfolio, lab book or specific piece of practical work. Such work is important in that it helps demonstrate how a student learns and acquires skills and capabilities over time.
- Principal's review of every student by interview with individual staff before each Parent's Evening

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**

David Game College places emphasis on the notion that teaching and learning processes are as significant as curriculum content in determining student progress and achievement. The purpose of this policy is to express the general principles that should inform good teaching and learning in order to improve continuously the learning and achievement of students. Although good teaching and good learning are inextricably linked, this policy does separate them in order to distinguish between teaching, which is directly under the control of teachers, and learning, which the college promotes but which is done by the students. Ofsted has introduced the concept of "Deep Dives", which is a useful way in which teachers can think more deeply about aspects of the curriculum that they develop and deliver based on 3 areas: intent, implementation and impact.

### Some general questions

- Explanation of the best sequence to teach a specification – what is the logic and pedagogic benefits of connecting specific parts of a specification or following a specific sequence/pathway? How is it explained in your Scheme of Work (SoW)
- What do you want your students to achieve from the specification?
- What resources do you need to teach the subject?
- How are you preparing students for the next stage of their education – what skills are you developing?
- How do you adjust your teaching for differential learning and those students with SEN issues or a specific EHC plan?

### Teaching

The College will endeavour to ensure that teaching will:

- a. enable students to acquire new knowledge, increase understanding and develop skills
- b. encourage students to apply intellectual, physical or creative effort, to show interest in their work, and to think and learn for themselves
- c. be well planned with effective teaching methods, suitable activities and efficient time management
- d. show a good understanding of prior attainments, different learning styles, aptitudes and needs of the students with lessons that are planned accordingly
- e. demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
- f. utilise classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range effectively
- g. regard assessment as an integral and valuable element of the learning process, and demonstrate a framework is in place to assess students' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from such assessment to diagnose difficulties and plan teaching so that students can progress
- h. encourage students to behave responsibly
- i. result in students' rapid learning

In order that good practice is supported, the College will:

- a. ensure that teaching can take place within an ordered environment
- b. ensure that heads of departments fulfil their role in improving teaching
- c. ensure that a system is in place to develop teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching, through continuous professional development
- d. ensure that a system is in place to spread good practice
- e. ensure that the organisation of the college day and year support good teaching
- f. ensure that other college policies, systems and resources support this policy
- g. monitor the effectiveness of teaching
- h. intervene where teaching falls below the standard expected and developed an individual learning plan

Heads of Departments will:

- a. provide schemes of work and recommendations for approaches to teaching
- b. organise teaching materials, resources, the timetable for the subject and deployment of staff to best effect
- c. monitor and evaluate teaching in the subject by analysis of value-added data, lesson observation and scrutiny of students' work
- d. ensure that good practice is shared
- e. use the staff development policy to ensure that teachers in their departments continuously update their subject knowledge and teaching skills
- f. intervene where teaching falls below the standard required

Subject Tutors will:

- a. update their subject knowledge and their knowledge of examination requirements regularly
- b. update their knowledge of pedagogy
- c. update their personal mastery of the technology available to support teaching
- d. create the appropriate climate for learning within their classroom
- e. ensure that lessons have pace and shape, take into account the abilities, aptitudes, learning styles and personalities of students in each class, give opportunities for differentiation and for interactive work, work with ICT/E-learning, use group

*David Game College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential*

- work and individual study
- f. share ideas with colleagues on how to improve teaching
- g. liaise with teachers who are giving additional support to students e.g. EFL
- h. ensure that they use formal and informal methods for assessment regularly in order to give effective feedback to students and parents, diagnose difficulties and plan teaching
- i. monitor students' attainment against predicted performance

### **Learning**

The College will endeavour to:

- a. promote the view that learning should be experienced as something which is enjoyable, engaging, rewarding and confidence building;
- b. ensure that the learning of students is systematically supported, guided and encouraged so that they become effective learners who understand how they learn, possess a range of effective study techniques and take responsibility for their own learning.

To create the optimum conditions for learning, the College will:

- a. create a climate within the college and individual classroom that is orderly, confidence enhancing, challenging and characterised by mutual respect between teachers and students
- b. show a commitment to high aspirations to be shared by teachers, students and parents
- c. show awareness of the different learning styles of students
- d. make effective and prompt assessment of progress and ensuring that marking and feedback, whether verbal and informal or written and formal, encourages students, is related to understood criteria and shows students clearly what to do to improve
- e. monitor students' attainment against predicted performance and achievement throughout the college by subject
- f. encourage students to develop their own study skills and to become independent learners
- g. keep parents fully informed on the curriculum and their child's progress and provide them with easy ways to communicate concerns, interest or question
- h. ensure that teachers are fully aware of the prior attainments, aptitudes and needs of all students
- i. ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and review their training needs
- j. provide the technology and resources to allow students and their teachers to optimise learning

Heads of Departments will:

- a. inspire students' interest in the subject by promoting it in every way
- b. help their staff to understand different learning styles and incorporate this knowledge into schemes of work and lesson planning; ensure that all staff are competent to teach their subject
- c. monitor the attitudes and achievements of students and develop strategies for improvement
- d. devise materials to assist students to meet coursework and examination requirements
- e. clarify mark schemes and methods of recording and assessment so that students are fully aware of criteria used for judging attainment and are given clear guidance on how to improve
- f. ensure that PSHE, SMSC, RSE and BV are all properly integrated into the teaching process and impact on the core curriculum

Subject Tutors will:

- a. demonstrate high aspirations for students and make high demands of them;
- b. plan lessons that are accessible to all students, take into account different learning styles and which appeal to students' interests in order to create confidence in, enthusiasm for and commitment to learning;
- c. assist students to develop skills of organisation and a willingness to persevere when work is challenging;
- d. report back to students on their progress in ways that celebrate success and show clearly how improvement can be made;
- e. monitor and evaluate the commitment and enthusiasm of students and modify teaching approaches accordingly;
- f. keep up-to-date with appropriate learning and teaching strategies and techniques in their subjects;
- g. help students to identify their own learning styles and take responsibility for their own learning.

*David Game College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential*