

# SCALBY SCHOOL

## Marking Policy

### HISTORY OF DOCUMENT

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Further information and good practice can be found on the internet ... in particular the work of Paul Black and Dylan Williams (<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/education/staff/pblack.html>).

This policy mainly applies to the marking of classwork and homework. Marking of extended coursework pieces may vary from subject to subject, depending on the nature of the subject and the exam board.

### Why mark students' work?

"...the most important step the teacher can take is to improve the student's confidence in his/her own capacity". (Bullock Report 1976)

Quantitative evidence suggests that, through good strategies for formative assessment, improvement in attainment equivalent to an average of two grades at GCSE can be achieved.

### For them

Students need to feel they have 'got it right' and to get feedback from us when that is the case. They will then need guidance as to how to develop further. When they have worked hard they need to be praised if they are not to become de-motivated.

When they have not 'got it right' they need to know how to improve next time. Our marking should point them in the right direction and help set targets. Our marking allows them to get a real sense of improvement and of making progress.

### For us

We need students' response (their talking and writing) to help us judge what they have learned and how effectively we have taught.

Marking and responding to students' work is an essential part of the process of planning for future learning for whole classes and for individuals and groups.

### For a wider audience

#### (i) Parents

They use our marks and our comments to gain insight into their son's/daughter's learning and to work with us to motivate students to improve their learning.

#### (ii) Our colleagues

We need to share the outcomes of our marking to help us review the progress of individuals (eg for Praising Stars© standardising) or whole groups; and to evaluate our courses.

## **How should we mark students' work?**

### **Positively**

We all learn better when our efforts are recognised and praised.

With increasing knowledge of what counts as good learning for individual students (our prior attainment data helps us with this). The most effective feedback demonstrates the teacher's knowledge of his/her students' abilities and backgrounds.

### **Punctually**

Students' work should be marked and returned as punctually as possible. Feedback which is delayed loses its impact.

### **Explicitly**

When we set work, we should explain (and ask students to record) what a good piece of work will contain or demonstrate. Our marking should reflect those criteria.

If pupils are to be effective learners, they need to be able to evaluate their progress against criteria they understand.

### **Interactively**

Some of our marking will be 'talking marking' (often the best way), but it will be important to encourage students to use their planners to note main points and targets from these discussions. Subsequent marking will give feedback on how well the student has developed learning skills or mastery of content.

## **What kinds of feedback should we give?**

Students need reliable and regular feedback.

### **Grading**

Teachers can, if they feel it is appropriate, give effort and attainment grades on students' work. Effort grades should be in line with Praising Stars grades (E1, E2 etc) and attainment grades should be either a mark to indicate accuracy or a NC level / GCSE grade / AS-A2 grade / Vocational grade. However . . . .

Research has shown that pupils who are given only written or spoken comments on how they can improve their work and are not given marks or grades make greater learning gains than pupils either given marks/grades only or a combination of both marks and comments (which is possibly the most widely used form of feedback in our education system).

Having said that, to enable students to judge progress, it is recommended that teachers 'grade' key tasks or assignments with or a NC level / GCSE grade / Vocational grade at regular intervals in the academic year. The frequency of this 'grading' will vary from subject to subject, but should take place a minimum of once per term in line with the Praising Stars process.

### **Comments**

Where possible these should be phrased positively and relate to the purposes for which the work was done, ie further research, consolidation, note making, skill development etc.

## **Formative feedback (in line with the principles of assessment for learning)**

One of the most important issues for our students to understand is how they improve their performance. In particular, from their current position what do they need to do to achieve a better

'grade'. The main strategies that can be applied to a particular piece of work to help the students achieve this are:

- Comments to indicate what has been done particularly well in a piece of work and so encouraging the students to keep doing them
- Correcting students' work/providing exemplar 'answers'
- Providing quality intervention in the form of improvement targets.

Most useful feedback focuses on either subject knowledge (learning targets) or some basic key skills common to most, if not all, subjects (attitudinal targets). Our feedback comments need to address these, indicating where and how students can improve.

So that students can easily identify their targets, teachers should use a 'T' to indicate a target for improvement. Teachers should encourage students to copy these targets into the subject pages of their planner - and plan time in lessons for this to happen.

The following lists are examples of improvement targets :

#### Literacy

- Avoid slang terms in formal writing
- Use descriptive vocabulary
- Help your reader to imagine the place or thing you are writing about
- Write a sentence to explain who is reading your work and why
- Put your ideas in a logical order
- Plan out carefully what you are going to write before you start
- Check spelling of words you are unsure about
- Contribute to discussion once per lesson
- Prepare your presentation thoroughly
- Make sure you use quotes or examples to support your analysis/arguments

#### Numeracy

- Always show workings
- Always include units in table headings and calculations
- Remember to put labels and scales on graphs
- Try to draw a line of best fit
- Try to pick a scale on your graph which is easy to use
- Try to estimate your answer, and use it to check your calculations
- Try to think if your answer is sensible

#### Physical

- Try to stay in role
- Make sure you work in a safe way
- Think how to use your body to suggest character

#### Attitudinal

- Make sure you meet deadlines
- Always bring the correct equipment to lessons
- Record your homework in your planner
- Begin your homework well in advance
- Add these spellings to your own list and learn them
- Share tasks within your group
- Keep focused on your work
- Listen carefully to others' ideas
- Help other people to understand what they are doing

- Ask for help when you need it
- Take the lead in our next group activity
- Face the front and listen to instructions

#### Presentation

- Stick in any loose sheets
- Use a ruler and pencil for diagrams
- Underline your headings
- Check you have used the correct format for your piece of work

See Department guidelines for subject specific learning targets

A culture of success should be promoted where every student can make achievements by building on their previous performance, rather than being compared to others.

### **Frequency of marking**

Diagnostic marking, containing formative feedback should take place in proportion to the number of periods a subject has per week. This frequency should be such that one piece of work is marked diagnostically for at least every 5 hours of lesson time (approximately). This frequency will depend on the subject and on other marking commitments, as per the assessment calendar for a particular year group (for example Year 11 Mocks). See subject specific guidelines on frequency of diagnostic marking. For example:

- In Maths (with 3 periods per week) the teacher should diagnostically mark a piece of work every two weeks;
- In Art at KS3 (with 1 period per week) the teacher should diagnostically mark a piece of work every half term in line with Praising Stars®; and
- In History at KS4 (with 5 periods per week) the teacher should diagnostically mark a piece of work every week.

When diagnostic marking is not due, but when work needs to be marked/checked (eg when a homework has been set), various strategies can be employed eg

- Pupil/peer marking
- Teacher calling out answers
- Teacher checking work has been done and ticking to indicate that it has been seen

[Choosing tasks carefully can facilitate this process]

### **What records should be kept?**

Teachers should either follow departmental policy or choose their own system for recording, subject to the following minimum requirements :

- homework set, how long it should take and relevant dates for handing in
- homework handed in late – this to monitor late/incomplete work
- grade given
- which students have had individual ‘talking marking’ feedback – this to ensure we do spread our time equitably
- sanctions used for incomplete or late work.
- Topic areas for development/extension/revisiting

### **Monitoring**

Formal book reviews will be used to monitor the application of the marking policy. These will be undertaken by SLT and HODs.

One of the main outcomes of these reviews will be the opportunity for sharing good marking practice across the school.

Heads of Department are also encouraged to hold termly informal 'sharing good practice' sessions within department meeting time to promote aspects of good marking within their subject. Each term could focus on marking in a different Key Stage.