



# Policy Statement

## Assessment

### Introduction

Dereham Sixth Form College provides shared post 16 education for Neatherd and Northgate High Schools and is the designated sixth form for Litcham High School. We also welcome students from many other high schools in the area. Our students represent a range of abilities and will come to the college with different degrees of prior attainment and knowledge.

### Policy Principles

Students have a right to know and understand at all points in the course what progress they are making against established criteria and against their own Target Grades (see below). It should be clear to them at all stages in the course what they need to do in order to improve their achievement. In the course of their teaching and learning they should experience a wide range of effective assessment strategies which support learning and ensure good progress is made regardless of their ability or prior knowledge and attainment in the subject. Teachers have a duty to follow schemes of work which contain a variety of assessment strategies and styles.

### Aims

- To ensure that each department has a written assessment policy which is included in the departmental scheme of work and is used by all staff. This policy must establish clear practices, both formative and summative, which:
  - Ensure that assessment of knowledge, skills and competence is fully integrated into the teaching programmes and is part of the continuous process of learning so that students make regular and rapid progress in their learning
  - Ensure that a wide range and variety of assessment methods and practices, appropriate to purpose, are built into schemes of work and lesson plans
  - Accurately reflect student attainment and achievement and that marks given and statements made reflect progress towards clearly defined levels of achievement or examination grades.
  - Are clearly linked Target Grades and Forecast Grades
  - Allow students to identify personal strengths and abilities, and build upon them
  - Identify areas of weakness and show clearly how progress can be made
- All departments must also:
  - Ensures that students are given, or have access to, the assessment objectives and grade bands appropriate to subject and level
  - Ensure that Progress Review Grades are properly negotiated between staff and students, recognising achievement and identifying targets for the future
  - Ensure that staff enter at least three grades per term, for each student that they teach, into the electronic management system
- Tutors must ensure that review and discussion of a student's recorded assessments is an integral part of their half termly individual tutorials and that concerns about progress are passed on to the Year Head where appropriate

## Key Terms

For the purposes of this policy the following terms need to be understood:

**Target Grade:** this grade is generated through the ALPS system used by many post-16 establishments. On the basis of a database of all grades achieved in all subjects across the country over many years, it uses the students' average GCSE grade to work out the grade they are statistically most likely to achieve at A Level. It then works out what grade would put that student into the top 20% of the country wide cohort and sets that as a Target Grade. These grades are therefore very aspirational and would represent excellent progress should the student achieve them.

**Average Grade:** this grade is generated by the grades achieved and entered onto the electronic management system by the teachers during the term. It gives an indication of the progress a student is making towards their Target Grade.

**Forecast Grade:** this grade is given by the teacher during the Progress Review process which takes place on three occasions during the academic year and represents the grade the student is most likely to achieve if they continue working at their current level. It will be based on the grades they have been achieving up to that point in the year and the progress that they can reasonably be expected to make in the time remaining.

**Progress Reviews:** Progress Reviews are the process by which teachers provide a snapshot of student attainment, achievement and attitude to learning at key points during their time in the sixth form. In both Year 12 and Year 13 Progress Reviews are undertaken in October, February and April. These are agreed in discussion with students and are reported back to parents.

## Implementation of Assessment Policy Principles

### 1. Assessment of work and record keeping

- All teachers and tutors keep detailed records for each student including Target Grades, past subject grades, where appropriate, and on-going assessment grades throughout the course.
- Students are set regular assignments which are assessed according to the principles set out above and following Department policies, schemes of work and assessment calendars
- All staff undertake at least three formal assessments per term according to the schemes of work and assessment calendars agreed by the department, which are entered into the electronic management system and used to generate termly average grades
- Heads of Subject and Heads of Department use this tracking data to effectively monitor the progress of students studying within their department
- Tutors use this tracking data during their individual tutorials with their tutees in order to monitor progress and set realistic interim targets.

### 2. Progress Reviews

- Progress Reviews report on current student attainment against Target Grades, as determined from the tracking data already on the electronic management system, and give a Forecast Grade based on the student continuing to achieve at current levels. Students are also be given grades (1-4) for Motivation and Commitment, Meeting Deadlines, Folder Organisation and attendance figures for each subject. These grades form the basis of a one to one interview with the students where progress against targets can be discussed.
- Staff are required to enter this data on the electronic management system
- Timing of Student Screening:

Autumn Term Progress Reviews – October

Spring Term Progress Reviews – February

Summer Term Progress Reviews - April

- Information from Progress Reviews is available for use by tutors and reported to parents. It forms an integral part of interim target setting for individual students with their tutors
- Progress Review results for all students in all subjects is available to staff through the Assessment Module on the electronic management system
- Head of Department and Heads of Year scrutinise Progress Reviews carefully so that students in danger of underachieving can be quickly identified and intervention strategies put in place.

### **3 Internal and External Examinations**

- Internal examinations take place in December of Year 12 and Year 13. These examinations are summative, examining students on all content covered so far on the course and mimicking as closely as possible the style of the examination. Results of these examinations are reported to parents in the February Progress Reviews and any concerns are picked up and acted upon.
- Currently there are no internal examinations in the summer term since all students are undertaking AS and A2 public examinations. This will change in May/June 2016 when students taking linear A levels will sit an interim internal examination to assess progress on the first year of the course. (please refer to Policy Statement on the Introduction of Linear A Levels for further information)

### **4 Reports**

- Detailed subject reports are sent to parents at the end of the first year of study
- Reports include a summary of all Progress Review data and results of internal examinations as well as a more substantial written report on the students' achievements and progress in the subject to date. They also include clear targets for further development and improvement within that subject.
- Staff are required to write these reports using the electronic management system
- These reports provide tutors with the information necessary to complete UCAS references (for university applications ) and other references.
- UCAS reports are completed for all students regardless of whether or not they intend to apply to university. These are open references, are shared with the students and are available on request from the college.

## **Response to changes to the structure of A level courses from modular to linear - September 2015 to June 2018**

A Level courses are under-going a major re-structuring which is being phased in over a 3 year period beginning September 2015. The key areas of reform are:

- Decoupling of AS and A2 qualifications
- Assessment structure and methodology
- Subject content
- The range of subjects available

Please refer to our **Policy Statement on the Introduction of Linear A Levels** which sets out how we intend to respond to these changes and how this impacts upon Assessment

Other Relevant Policies:	Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Equalities Scheme, Gifted and Talented
Reviewed:	June 2015
Reviewed by:	Phyllis O'Grady
Role:	Director

College policies are written in consultation with staff, governors and students and are regularly read and reviewed by all three groups.