BEDFORD SCHOOL

Assessment and Feedback Policy (Upper School)

Policy number	US011 / ISI 02a
Applies to	Upper School
Endorsed by	Head Master
Responsibility	Deputy Head (Academic)
Date reviewed	January 2026

Next review	January 2027

Introduction

Assessment and feedback are vital elements in the planning and development of learning within the School. Continued monitoring of the progress of each pupil is essential. It is important that the teacher knows which skills have been acquired and what concepts have been understood. The outcome of any assessment should help each pupil to raise his level of attainment. It should support teachers to reflect on the efficacy of their teaching, and adjust their future teaching in direct response. This policy outlines the purpose and management of assessment within the School. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff.

The School's senior academic leadership team undertake regular reviews of the approach to assessment and reporting. Reviews are informed by feedback from teachers, pupils and families. The School's approach to teacher feedback is also regularly reviewed. Senior leaders are proactive in supporting teachers to engage with and reflect upon recent educational research. There is regular training time to develop teachers' use of assessment and feedback throughout the school year, in a combination of whole-school training led by senior leaders and other colleagues with appropriate expertise, and subject-specific training led by Heads of Department. Heads of Department receive regular training on how best to evaluate the use of feedback in their areas; this training includes opportunities to undertake work review jointly with other academic leaders. Senior leaders work closely with counterparts in the Prep School and where appropriate offer training jointly with prep colleagues; for example, a joint Prep and Upper Heads of Department meeting in January 2023 focused on leading effective work review.

This policy summarises the guidance given to teachers about how to use feedback in training delivered in the last academic year. Much of our training was developed in direct response to regular cycles of work review, in which Heads of Department and senior leaders evaluate teachers' use of feedback, identify strengths, and consider how to develop it further. The findings of work review are triangulated with regular cycles of lesson observation (which include opportunities to reflect upon teachers' use of in-lesson assessment) and pupil voice (in which, amongst other topics, pupils have opportunities to share their views about the efficacy and utility of the feedback that they receive from their teachers). The school developed new models of work review, lesson observation and pupil voice activities in the summer term 2023, inspired in part by the publication of a revised inspection framework by the Independent School Inspectorate; these new models are now being embedded and refined over the course of the 2023-24 academic year.

We recommend the following resources to any teacher at Bedford keen to develop their understanding of the educational research that underpins the School's approach:

Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning: summary report by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021)

Responsive Teaching: Cognitive Science and Formative Assessment in Practice by Harry Fletcher-Wood

For academic leaders:

Making Good Progress: the future of Assessment for Learning by Daisy Christodoulou

Aims of assessment and feedback

- To identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in learning and then communicate these to them in a way that is both motivating and enabling. We must raise boys' expectations by demonstrating that their day-to-day work matters to us.
- To highlight any gaps in understanding / technique which need attention and then provide specific feedback at appropriate intervals in the classroom and in written feedback.
- To relate the assessment to the learning objectives identified in the departmental scheme of work. In this way the students ought to know *why* and *how* they are being assessed.
- To communicate clearly the assessment criteria set out by examination boards for those students who are preparing for public examinations.
- To identify those with special educational needs / pupils who are giving cause for concern / those who have made significant achievements.
- To help teachers and departments review and refine their planning.
- To provide feedback to parents, Tutors and Housemasters.
- To track a student's progress through the School.

Reporting arrangements in the Upper School

- Parents receive at least one Full Report each year, which includes detailed comments from subject teachers, Tutor and Housemaster on the pupil's academic progress.
- Pupils in Fourth, Remove and Lower Sixth receive two parents' evenings each year; pupils in Fifth and Upper Sixth (who have study leave in the second half of the Summer term) receive one parents' evening each year.
- More regular Grade Cards provide parents with feedback on pupils' learning behaviours and attainment.
- The school has developed a set of Learning Behaviours which it seeks to encourage in pupils. Pupils are encouraged to use these learning behaviours to reflect on their approach to learning; they write a self-report for each Full Report that is published and reflect on their progress in Academic Tutorials with their Tutor each time teachers submit grades. Pupils

Learning Behaviours

Most	You demonstrate the vast majority of the **desired learning behaviours** unprompted, and most of the time
Many	You demonstrate the majority of the **desired learning behaviours** to a good level and lots of the time, especially when prompted
Some	You are demonstrating the **core learning behaviours** and some of the **desired learning behaviours** some of the time, or when prompted
Insufficient	You are not yet meeting the **core learning behaviours**.

receive one of four Learning Behaviour grades in Grade Cards and Full Reports, as per the table below).

- Attainment grades should give parents and pupils a broad indication of what current assessment evidence and professional judgement suggests is the most likely grade a pupil will achieve at the end of the course.

- Heads of Department ensure that teachers of the same subject and the same year group take a consistent, data-informed approach to the awarding of attainment grades, using multiple pieces of evidence. Where assessment involves an element of subjective judgement (for example, when marking essays and other extended questions, or pieces of art, design, music

or drama) Heads of Department ensure moderation of teachers' work within the department to ensure a consistent standard is applied.

- Attainment grades are linked to the relevant exam specification in Remove, Fifth Form, Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth. Pupils in Fourth Form receive A*-E attainment grades to avoid too premature a preoccupation with GCSE outcomes.
- The first Grade Card issued in October half term in the Remove and Fourth Form, where pupils are at an early stage of new Fourth Form and GCSE courses, does not include an attainment grade; the risk of an attainment grade painting a misleading picture at this early stage of the course is high.
- Each year group has one set of formal examinations in a year. In all year groups, pupils receive a Full Report as they approach the major set of examinations for their year group and a Parents' Evening shortly after the formal examinations to provide feedback and to discuss next steps with parents.
- Teachers must have due regard to the requirements of non-examined assessment in the courses they teach, and must ensure that their reporting to parents does not infringe examination board regulations (for example, by sharing precise feedback on a pupil's coursework in a way that flouts regulations for completion of non-examined assessment).
- The school has developed bespoke data tracking systems to help teachers, Heads of Department, tutors and Housemasters to track pupils' progress and intervene to support as appropriate when they are concerned that pupils are not making the progress that they should. All pupils complete a MIDYIS and YELLIS baseline test from the University of Cambridge's Centre of Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) on entry to the school in Fourth, Remove and Fifth; all pupils complete an ALIS baseline test at the start of Sixth Form. The benchmark grades produced by CEM from these tests, standardised for independent sector schools, are used to support the tracking of pupils' progress. Heads of Department receive regular training on the best use of CEM data to track and analyse pupil progress. Each teacher is provided with an analysis of each of their classes, which includes a summary of CEM baseline data, including a benchmark grade for the relevant subject, identification of any pupils who are SEND or EAL (with more detailed information about pupils' individual needs available in the school's Edukey system) and identification of pupils formally identified as more able than their peers (see More Able policy for further information).
- Individual teachers are expected to adapt their teaching in response to assessment. Departments track pupils' progress departmental and tutor tracking of pupils, in order to further ensure pupils' progress and ensure that provision is modified according to assessment data, Academic Year Heads regularly monitor and review pupils' progress (in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Academic) and Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning)), alongsider the Head of Academic Support where appropriate, and implement relevant specific support strategies, in line with our SEND/EAL/More Able policies.

Attainment descriptors used for Fourth Form Reports

Attainment Descriptors

Please note that Attainment Grades are awarded on the basis of the current term's work; they are not necessarily indicative of expected attainment in an exam situation, which takes into account more than one term's work.

A+	Outstanding attainment	• Demonstrates excellent knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a complete command of the subject bar perhaps the odd minor issue • Flair is evident
A	Very good attainment	• Demonstrates very good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a very thorough command of the general principles of the subject but lacks full command of detail
B	Good attainment	• Demonstrates good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a good grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but some topics need improvement or command of detail needs development
C	Some weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but several topics need improvement and there is a lack of command of detail
D/E	Significant weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates very limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of some of the general principles of the subject, but many topics need improvement and there is little accuracy in detail

Attainment descriptors in Remove and Fifth Form

Attainment Descriptors (Fifth Form)

Please note that Attainment Grades are awarded on the basis of the current term's work; they are not necessarily indicative of expected attainment in an exam situation, which takes into account more than one term's work.

8 or 9	Outstanding attainment	• Demonstrates excellent knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a complete command of the subject bar perhaps the odd minor issue • Flair is evident • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to an A* (or 9/8) at GCSE. Grade 9's are typically not awarded until Fifth Form.
7	Very good attainment	• Demonstrates very good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a very thorough command of the general principles of the subject but lacks full command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a good A (or 7) at GCSE.
6	Good attainment	• Demonstrates good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a good grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but some topics need improvement or command of detail needs development • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a B (or 6) at GCSE.
5	Some weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but several topics need improvement and there is a lack of command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a C (or 4/5) at GCSE.
4 & Below	Significant weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates very limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of some of the general principles of the subject, but many topics need improvement and there is little accuracy in detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a D (or 3) or below at GCSE.

Attainment descriptors used for Lower and Upper Sixth

Attainment Descriptors (IB)

Please note that Attainment Grades are awarded on the basis of the current term's work; they are not necessarily indicative of expected attainment in an exam situation, which takes into account more than one term's work.

7	Outstanding attainment	• Demonstrates excellent knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a complete command of the subject bar perhaps the odd minor issue • Flair is evident • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a 7 at IB
6	Very good attainment	• Demonstrates very good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a very thorough command of the general principles of the subject but lacks full command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a 6 at IB
5	Good attainment	• Demonstrates good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a good grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but some topics need improvement or command of detail needs development • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a 5 at IB
4	Some weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but several topics need improvement and there is a lack of command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a 4 at IB
3/2/1	Significant weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates very limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of some of the general principles of the subject, but many topics need improvement and there is little accuracy in detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a 3 or below at IB

Attainment Descriptors (A Level)

Please note that Attainment Grades are awarded on the basis of the current term's work; they are not necessarily indicative of expected attainment in an exam situation, which takes into account more than one term's work.

A+	Outstanding attainment	• Demonstrates excellent knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a complete command of the subject bar perhaps the odd minor issue • Flair is evident • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to an A* at A Level
A	Very good attainment	• Demonstrates very good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a very thorough command of the general principles of the subject but lacks full command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to an A at A Level
B	Good attainment	• Demonstrates good knowledge, understanding and skills for a boy at this level • Has a good grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but some topics need improvement or command of detail needs development • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a B at A Level
C	Some weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of most of the general principles of the subject, but several topics need improvement and there is a lack of command of detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would lead to a C A Level
D/E	Significant weaknesses in attainment	• Demonstrates very limited knowledge, understanding and skills • Has a grasp of some of the general principles of the subject, but many topics need improvement and there is little accuracy in detail • The level of attainment that, if continued, would be likely to lead to a D or below at A Level

Department Assessment and Feedback Policies

The school recognises that the best way to assess pupils' progress and to provide feedback varies significantly by subject. Each department therefore has its own departmental **assessment and feedback** policy which outlines clear expectations for staff and pupils and explains how the

department enacts the principles outlined in this whole-school feedback policy and works with the rhythms of the whole-school assessment calendar.

The prompt questions below provide Heads of Department with guidance about what this policy should cover; it may be, however, that it's more efficient to provide a clear answer to some of these questions in other documentation (for example, it may be more efficient to indicate how grades are awarded in a year group in the scheme of work itself, than in a separate policy document).

Assessment

1. Is there a clear, consistent procedure for deciding grades that are reported to parents across the department? For example, do all teachers of a year group (e.g. Fourth Form) follow a clear, consistent procedure for deciding achievement grades?
2. Is there clear direction about when assessments should take place, that takes into account the needs of the curriculum/exam specification and the reporting routines of the school?
3. Is there clear direction about how teachers should mark assessments?
4. Where assessments introduce a level of subjective judgement on the part of the marker, does documentation make clear how assessments are moderated to ensure consistency?

Feedback

1. Does the feedback policy clearly state how frequently work should be marked?
2. Does the feedback policy indicate what teachers should mark and how often? Does the policy communicate realistic expectations about how teachers should approach their marking?
3. Does the policy indicate/provide advice about how the teacher should facilitate pupils engagement with marking? (Are there particular departmental routines teachers should use?)
4. What strategies have the department developed to help teachers manage their marking workload to ensure timely feedback to pupils (for example, is there clear direction about what to mark and when? Is this co-ordinated to avoid unnecessary pinch points?)

Departmental assessment and feedback policies should be reviewed annually and discussed regularly in departmental meetings. All teachers in the department are encouraged to support their Head of Department in the evaluation and development of their team's approach to assessment and feedback. The policy should contain any common assessment criteria (mark schemes) for the different year groups which must be applied consistently across the department: staff and pupils need to know what the criteria are; pupils need to know what the feedback on their learning means. The policy should also contain a statement on the setting of prep, including how often preps should be set for each year group or course, what type of prep should be set (different from one subject to the next) and how long they should occupy the pupil in each year group or course (see the whole school Prep policy for further details).