



KING WILLIAM'S COLLEGE

King William's College Assessment Policy

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ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. Background

The assessment policy is devised and developed by the deputy head academic, in conjunction with the IB co-ordinator. Heads of faculty are responsible for implementing the policy within faculties, for monitoring subject teachers in their assessment practice, and for supporting the assessment policy review cycle by sharing information about the efficacy of the policy in use. Heads of faculty and subject leads should also ensure that robust methods of standardisation are in place prior to grades being awarded in internal exams or published in tests.

Assessment serves a wide range of purposes which enable the review, planning and improvement of teaching and learning and benefits students, teachers and parents alike. It forms an integral part of the teaching and learning process and, as such, is an essential component of the educational provision at King William's College.

The benefits of effective, frequent assessment are many and varied:

For students:

- It ensures that they are able to understand their current levels of achievement, knowledge, understanding and skill
- It allows them to identify what they need to do in order to improve

For parents:

- It keeps them informed about their children's achievement and progress and how these may be maximised

For teachers:

- It enables them to tailor their approach to teaching to the needs of individual pupils
- It informs Form Tutors, Year Heads and Boarding staff of the progress of their charges
- It enables Heads of Department to have overview of the progress made within their subjects

For SLT and the Governing Body:

- It aids in the review of teaching and learning and the educational provision within the school
- It can help to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the students

2. Forms of Assessment

Broadly speaking any form of assessment falls into one of two categories: formative (in order to aid students in developing their knowledge, understanding and skill) and summative (assessing their acquired knowledge, understanding and skill).

Assessment may take many forms: formal and informal, written and oral.

In addition to assessment from teacher to student, both self-assessment and peer-assessment are powerful tools which can be employed to good effect.

3. Prep

Prep (homework) plays a vital part in the structure of the College's strategy for pupils' academic development. It provides opportunities for students to consolidate and extend the material covered in lessons.

From Year 7 (Lower 4) to Year 11 (Upper 5), set periods of Prep for each subject are prescribed in the weekly timetable.

- In Year 7 (Lower 4) and Year 8 (Upper 4), prep should take around 20 minutes per piece; in Year 9 (Lower 5), each prep should take around 30 minutes.
- In Year 10 (Middle 5) and Year 11 (Upper 5), prep tasks should take around 40 minutes each. It is expected that these prescribed prep times represent a minimum study requirement; successful preparation for IGCSE and GCSE examinations and coursework will require additional study.
- In the Sixth Form there is no prescribed prep timetable. It is expected that IB candidates should organise their time effectively to cover the written preparation and reading required in their respective subjects, with a target of 2-3 hours per night as a guide.

Prep is set on Firefly by all teachers, who may also ask pupils to write it down in exercisebooks/folders. Parents can view prep on the Firefly platform.

4. Marking

It is the responsibility of each department to form its own marking guidelines with regard to grading and corrections. These should be made clear to the members of the department and the pupils.

Marking should be carried out on a regular basis; work should be marked promptly and returned to the pupils and a record of the marks or grades awarded should be kept by the teacher.

The purpose of marking work is to check on the progress being made by each child and to provide useful feedback on the work they are producing. Work should have constructive criticism and helpful remarks written on it where appropriate.

5. Reporting to Parents

There is a reporting schedule published each year which ensures that parents receive frequent feedback on their child's progress. This reporting schedule includes assessment grades, written reports, internal examinations and Parents' Evenings.

In addition, the Form Tutor acts as the first point of contact should parents wish to request further information on their child's current progress at any time.

6. Assessment Grades

Assessments consist of a number and a letter grade. An assessment grade should not be based on a single piece of work but should reflect the quality of work carried out during the period of assessment.

Prior to assessment grades being entered into isams, standardisation and discussion about the award of grades should happen in subject meetings. Standardisation will take different forms in different subjects, but will include practices such as sampling essays, ranking, swapping papers with a partner teacher and double-checking the addition of marks in multi-mark papers.

The number refers to the standard of the pupil's work during the period of assessment and may, for example, be based on class tests, prep, and contribution to lessons.

For the Sixth Form, the number (achievement grade) is on the IB 1-7 scale where 7 is outstandingly good and 1 extremely weak.

For Years 7 to 11 (the Fourth and Fifth Forms), the achievement grade will be reported on a 0-9 scale. This reflects national changes in the GCSE and IGCSE grading. The table in the Appendix indicates roughly how these assessments align with the former 1-7 grading and the A*-G GCSE levels.

It should be noted that Level 9 is expected to be awarded only for students who demonstrate an exceptional performance. Those students would be right at the very top end of the A* banding on the old GCSE grades and so we only anticipate awarding very small numbers of these grades during each examination/assessment session.

The letter grade indicates a pupil's attitude to learning:

- A – Exceptional
- B - Good
- C - Room for Improvement
- D - Cause for Concern

Our expectation is that our students demonstrate a good attitude to learning.

When awarding grades, teachers should ask themselves *“what’s my reason for not giving a ‘good’ (B) grade?”*

They should think carefully about what their reasons are for moving up to Exceptional (A) or down to Room for Improvement (C).

If Room for Improvement (C) is given, then tutors should already be aware (via conduct notes on iSAMS etc.)

If we are at the stage of Cause for Concern (D) then this shouldn't be the first time parents are hearing about it.

Assessment grades are collated by the Head of Academic Assessment and then published to Heads of Year and all teaching staff to allow for further analysis.

In addition, average achievement and effort grades are calculated for each student which allows for progress to be tracked. The Head of Academic Assessment generates tracking spreadsheets and graphs for year groups and individual students. These also track in relation to students' baseline testing and internal examination results.

Assessments are accompanied by short comments from the form tutor.

Assessments may also support decisions to offer students ESOL provision, or drop a language, as outlined in the Languages policy, or may trigger learning support interventions, as outlined in the Learning Support policy.

7. Reports

Reports provide more detailed feedback on students' progress and achievements throughout the term. Reports should offer an objective assessment of a student's progress as well as constructive feedback and encouragement.

Subject teachers write comments highlighting successes and areas for development. In addition, all students receive a report from their Form Tutor and Head of Year and either the Principal or one of the two Deputy Heads. Boarders will also receive a report from their Housemaster or Housemistress.

8. Internal Examinations

There are two periods of internal school examinations which allow students to gain experience of sitting examinations in a formal setting as well as increasing their familiarity with exam-style questions and developing their revision strategies and exam technique.

- In January, the Year 11 (Upper Fifth) and Year 13 (Upper Sixth) sit mock examinations for their (I)GCSE and IB respectively.
- In June, all students sit internal examinations, with the exception of the Upper Fifth and the Upper Sixth who sit their external examinations during the summer term.

For the Sixth Form, grades are reported on the IB 1-7 scale where 7 is outstandingly good and 1 extremely weak.

For Years 7 – 11 (Fourth and Fifth Forms), grades are reported on the 0-9 scale.

The marking of internal examinations should be standardised in subject meetings before grades are awarded.

Internal examinations may also support decisions to offer students ESOL provision, or drop a language, as outlined in the Languages policy, or may trigger learning support interventions, as outlined in the Learning Support policy.

9. Parents' Evenings

A Parents' Evening for each age group is scheduled at an appropriate time in the academic year. These take place in the spring term for parents of those year groups who sit internal examinations in January.

The Upper Sixth Parents' Evening takes place at the start of the Overseas Parents' Weekend and parents of overseas students in any year group are also invited to attend on that evening.

The Lower Sixth have an additional Parents' Evening after the June internal examinations which also allows for an opportunity to discuss the university application process.

All Parents' Evenings operate on an appointment system and are primarily academic discussions between teachers and parents. All students in the Fifth and Sixth Form are encouraged to attend along with their parents. Should parents wish to discuss matters in greater depth, they may contact teachers after the Parents' Evening (or indeed at any point during the year) to arrange a time for further discussion.

10. IB Internal Assessment and GCSE Coursework/Controlled Assessment

Any Internal Assessment, Coursework or Controlled Assessment is governed by IBO (International Baccalaureate), JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications), CAIE, and exam board regulations which teachers must follow very closely.

If a teacher suspects malpractice, they should refer to the school's Academic Honesty Policy for guidance.

The deadlines for such work are spread as widely as possible during the academic year to help pupils to manage their workload. Sixth Form students are issued with a schedule of IA deadlines.

Internal Assessment/Coursework is internally moderated within departments to ensure standardisation of the assessment of students' work. Teachers who are new to the school, or to the specific GCSE/IB courses, are given guidance from their subject leads, Heads of Faculty (and, where appropriate, the IB Co-ordinator) as to how to interpret the assessment criteria.

11. Baseline Testing and Target Setting

The school uses baseline tests offered by CEM (the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring) which provide valuable information about students' aptitude and potential and also allow for informed target setting to take place.

Students sit the following computer-based adaptive tests:

- Year 7 (Lower Fourth) – MidYIS
- Year 10 (Middle Fifth) – YELLIS
- Year 12 (Lower Sixth) - ALIS

12. Marking and assessment in the Sixth Form

All departments are expected to assess with reference to the relevant Diploma Programme assessment criteria. These should be shared with students and examined in detail to ensure that all students (and teachers) have a full understanding of the criteria for each of their subjects.

Work completed in and out of lessons (classwork, tests, and prep) should, as far as possible and appropriate, be marked according to the relevant subject criteria/assessment levels. Marks are awarded on the 1-7 grading system for all internal assessment and examination grades and departments are encouraged to reflect this as far as possible within their routine formative assessment.

As per the reporting schedule, Lower Sixth students sit internal, formal, summative examinations in June, and the Upper Sixth sit their internal mock examinations in January. These examinations comprise questions drawn from Diploma Programme papers and are assessed according to the relevant

markschemes.

The assessment grades referred to above, which are communicated to both students and their parents, provide an additional opportunity to summatively assess the work achieved during a particular term/half term and should not simply reflect achievement in one single task (a test, for example).

Formative assessment happens on a regular basis through in class tasks and testing and through prep. Feedback should be prompt and meaningful, making reference to assessment criteria and enabling students to know what they need to do in order to make further progress. Students are encouraged to reflect on their achievement and on strategies for improvement; this occurs both at an individual subject level, and more globally through discussions with tutors and the Head of Sixth Form.

APPENDIX: Grading System

Assessments consist of a number and a letter grade:

- The number corresponds to achievement (1-7 for Sixth Form and 0-9 for Fourth and Fifth Form)
- The letter (A-D) reflects the pupil's attitude to learning

Fourth/Fifth Form:

| A*-G (I)GCSE Grading | 9-1 (I)GCSE and KWC Grading |
|----------------------------|---|
| A* | 9 |
| | 8 |
| A | 7 |
| B | 6 |
| | 5 |
| C | 4 |
| | 3 |
| E | 2 |
| F | |
| G | 1 |

Achievement:

Level 9 should be used with caution and only awarded to a very small number of students.

Our highest achieving Lower 4 students should have Level 8/9 grades open to them in exactly the same way as the Upper Fifth. There are no caps on the levels that can be achieved in each year group.

Whilst it is clearly very difficult to predict GCSE outcomes at the age of 11, the grades should roughly correspond to what we'd expect to see. So we should be thinking along the lines of "a student of this ability who is currently working to their potential is likely to go on to achieve X at GCSE"

A very top student in Lower 4 should be on a Level 9 as should a top student in Upper 5. Equally, a Lower 4 student who is likely to just about achieve a C equivalent at GCSE, should be on a Level 4, as should an Upper 5 student who is achieving low C grades in their most recent past papers.

Equally, for the Sixth Form, we should expect a student who maintains a constant level of performance, relative to their ability, to maintain consistent achievement grades throughout their time in the Sixth Form and these should ideally end up being similar to their final IB results.

Attitude to Learning:

- A - Exceptional
- B - Good
- C - Room for Improvement
- D - Cause for Concern

Our expectation is that our students demonstrate a good attitude to learning.

When awarding grades, ask yourself "what's my reason for not giving a 'good' (B) grade?"

This means we're likely to see a large number of B grades.

Think carefully about what your reasons are for moving up to Exceptional (A) or down to Room for Improvement (C).

We shouldn't be seeing an entire class full of students with A grades unless they genuinely are all demonstrating a truly exceptional attitude to learning.

If Room for Improvement (C) is given, then tutors should really already be aware (via conduct notes on iSAMS etc.).

If we are at the stage of Cause for Concern (D) then this shouldn't be the first time parents are hearing about it. That doesn't mean that this grade should never be awarded though – if there genuinely is a real concern, then it needs to be flagged up.