



Archdiocese of
Birmingham

St Thomas More Catholic Academy

St Thomas More
Catholic Academy
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Assessment and Feedback Policy

Date of Policy:	July 2025
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Publish:

Internal / website

Policy Objectives

- To provide clear guidelines on the STMCA's approach to assessment and feedback
- To establish a coherent approach to assessment and feedback
- To provide a system that is clear to students, staff, parents and other stakeholders
- To ensure assessment effectively impacts on the progress and long-term learning of students
- To ensure assessment and feedback practice is efficient for staff, ensuring workload is manageable.

Introduction

Students' conversations and assessed work provide the clearest, and most accessible, evidence of progress over time; as well as the expectations of the teacher and academy.

It is vital that students' books and folders are seen as more than just a record of work completed but demonstrate the progress a student has made in their understanding and skills. It will also demonstrate how the student has been supported to overcome barriers, challenged and developed by the teacher, through the work set and feedback given.

The academy goal is that our students make excellent and sustained progress, that they are able to know more and remember more. Teachers need to teach and assess students' understanding and retrieval of essential knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary on an **ongoing basis**. This will ensure the student and the teacher understand their curriculum areas of strengths and areas for improvement at any given time.

We also need to guarantee that a students' progress is regularly assessed in a variety of ways. To make sure work is assessed regularly we need to have a system that is fair and consistent across curriculum areas, departments and the whole academy.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) produced a report in 2021 offering guidance on *Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning*; in prioritising three key principles over methods of delivery. Research shows that feedback is one of the most powerful strategies to improve learning. The key principles are:

1. Lay the foundations for effective feedback
2. Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward
3. Plan for how pupils receive and use feedback

The assessment and feedback policy has been updated in response to the report and three key principles set out above.

Assessment

A well-planned and purposeful assessment opportunity will:

- Provide an opportunity for students to retrieve and apply essential curriculum knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary
- Reveal what students are thinking
- Give meaningful feedback to students
- Support curriculum intent and implementation adaptations

At STMCA we will use assessment in the following ways:

Assessment for Learning <i>Regular throughout each lesson</i>		Deeply Marked Piece <i>Minimum of every 6-10 lessons to assess effectively in line with the curriculum sequence.</i>
<p>An umbrella term which refers to any of the below strategies: a means of gauging a students' knowledge, understanding and effort.</p> <p>All assessment for learning activities should have purpose and meaning so that students can know more and remember more.</p>		<p>A substantial piece of work which is used as a diagnostic tool. It is an indication of students' understanding of an aspect of the curriculum and receives teacher defined WWW and EBI and is marked for literacy.</p> <p>This also includes Curriculum Assessment and Mock examinations.</p>
Targeted Questioning	Curriculum review and retrieval	
<p>Every lesson is expected to have (appendix 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher on feet circulating Whiteboards out and used every lesson No shouting out accepted Thinking time for all Pose, pause, pounce, bounce Student responses in full sentences <p>This would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling excellence and providing clear learning intentions Using self and peer review Teacher providing whole class feedback 	<p>This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quizzes based on knowledge organisers for each SOL – to assess current learning Quizzes to revisit prior learning and SOL which overlap with current SOL Nuanced multiple choice for teacher to assess current learning Retrieval activities such as challenge grids 	<p>This would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of a product – essay, piece of writing, presentation, performance, completed practical piece etc The deeply marked pieces may be scaffolded to facilitate an accurate diagnosis of student knowledge and understanding Mock examinations/Curriculum assessments – these must not be scaffolded Re-drafting to be expected here to achieve quality Students will have the opportunity to 'action' feedback to support their progress (see DIRT).
<p>← Feedback will be provided in response to all forms of assessment →</p>		

Curriculum Planning

Each department will have a clear and detailed curriculum sequence alongside detailed schemes of learning. These plans will indicate how assessment is being used in lessons to provide feedback to teachers and students.

The curriculum plans will indicate the following:

- Essential knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary required to be assessed throughout the year by all staff
- Key assessment for learning questions to challenge all learners regularly each lesson
- The title/focus of any review/retrieval quizzes to revisit essential curriculum areas
- Details of the deeply marked piece of work used consistently across a department to assess students and provide written feedback from the teacher.
- Details of DIRT tasks pre-prepared which address common misconceptions made by students for this subject or task
- Any Curriculum Assessments such as exam questions/titles/papers, used to provide data as part of the assessment, data analysis and reporting cycle.

This information will be appropriately broken down for students to access regularly throughout the learning sequence. At the start of a new learning sequence, students will be provided with a knowledge note on yellow paper that will include the essential curriculum broken into:

- Key vocabulary
- Key knowledge
- Key aims

Please see the individual subject Assessment and Feedback Frameworks for an outline of what to expect in each subject knowledge note for more information. An example of the framework is attached as an appendix.

Deeply Marked Work

A Deeply Marked Assessment is an extended piece of work that should provide detailed feedback at least every 6-10 lessons by the teacher. The extended piece of work will:

- Be specified within the SOL and meet the requirements of the curriculum intent.
- Be self, peer or teacher assessed dependent on the elements of the curriculum being assessed.
- Be used as evidence to inform your future class teaching and learning, curriculum plans and individual student improvements (additional home learning or interventions etc).
- Have formal feedback which uses 'What went well' (WWW) and 'Even better if' (EBI).
- Be followed up by meaningful DIRT (see section below) which should be completed in green pen.
- Feedback with a clear impact and relate to the national curriculum / SOL.
- Have meaningful DIRT where there is a task or response to feedback which students can demonstrate that they are **applying** their new learning. Thus, completed to accelerate progress and develop students' knowledge.
- Be marked for literacy, using codes applied consistently in line with the literacy non-negotiables.

Please see the individual subject Assessment and Feedback Frameworks for an outline of assessment expectations in a deeply marked piece of work. An example of the framework is attached as an appendix.

We do not display target stickers on books. Students will be able to articulate how they are making progress and how they need to improve to be successful in their different curriculum areas. Subject Leaders may direct their departments to give feedback more frequently depending on the needs of the subject, to ensure students have feedback from deep marking at least every 6-8 lessons.

Teachers are leaders of their own classes, so may need to create additional deeply marked assessment work or deeply mark appropriate class work to ensure the progress of their students can be accelerated.

Curriculum Assessments and Mock Examinations

Curriculum Assessments are a calendared and un-scaffolded assessment which assesses a broad section of the curriculum. Curriculum assessments should:

- Be based on a broad range of assessment objectives
- Be marked according to a mark scheme or exam specification
- Receive a grade to inform data points in KS4 and KS5
- Receive a percentage score to inform data points in KS3

Data points are used for internal analysis and reporting to key stakeholders such as parents. Curriculum Assessments can be used to inform curriculum adaptations as well as future teaching and learning planning through calendared 'Prepare to Teach' evenings.

Vocational Qualifications

Teachers of vocational qualifications should adhere to the school policy and maximise the opportunities for feedback to be provided to students in exam-based units. However, for coursework units this should be marked within the parameters set within exam board marking requirements.

Where detailed individual WWW/EBI feedback is not viable on coursework units, verbal feedback and general class feedback should be used each lesson in response to ongoing assessment. The format of the general class feedback should be consistent across the department, using WWW/EBI and teaching of key areas for improvement ahead of students continuing coursework completion.

Effective Feedback

The foundation for effective feedback takes place before a student is assessed, through high quality teacher instruction and adaptive teaching (EEF Key Principle One). This includes:

- Building on prior knowledge and experiences of students
- Avoiding overloading the working memory – break delivery into smaller steps
- Encouraging the retention of learning – retrieval from the long-term memory
- Delivering a well sequenced curriculum – including essential knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary
- Using powerful analogies, dual coding (for example imagery), comparisons and demonstrations
- Planning to encounter and overcome misconceptions
- Planning effective lessons with good modelling and scaffolds to support all learners to access the curriculum
- Adapting teaching in response to struggling or excelling learners
- Providing learners with tools and strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate the quality of their work and their learning

To provide students to support to plan, monitor and evaluate the quality of their assessed work, teachers should consider what we ask students to do before a final 'product' is submitted. This should include the following:





- Retrieval of key knowledge, concepts, skills or vocabulary by the student – teachers will need to provide opportunities to do this ahead of the piece or work by incorporating into the curriculum intent or task itself
- Expectation of proof reading and editing by the student - so teachers need to specifically plan this activity into lessons and provide resources such as dictionaries
- Using success criteria – a 'pre-flight checklist' to complete before work is submitted
- Self-assessment – students highlighting parts of their work they are proud of and that has met the success criteria provided
- Do not accept substandard work – to create a culture of high challenge and communicate clearly we will not accept work that has not had maximum effort applied to it. A 're draft' deadline could be provided for such work.

Feedback is "Information given to students about their performance that aims to improve learning" or move learning on.

The EEF toolkit suggests high quality feedback when used regularly and timely can have an impact of +5 months for written feedback and +7 months for oral feedback.

Effective feedback should be appropriately timed that focuses on moving learning forward (EEF Key Principle Two). Feedback will:

- Indicate to students their strengths, misconceptions and any areas they need to develop, in regards to:
 - Task
 - Subject
 - Self-regulation
- Avoid personal feedback such as praise that distracts the learner from the learning itself to self-esteem.

Feedback more likely to move learning forward			Less likely
Task  <p><i>Feedback focused on improving a specific piece of work or specific type of task. It can comment on whether an answer is correct or incorrect, can give a grade, and will offer specific advice on how to improve learning.</i></p>	Subject  <p><i>Feedback targets the underlying processes in a task, which are used across a subject. The feedback can, therefore, be applied in other subject tasks.</i></p>	Self-regulation strategies  <p><i>Feedback is focused on the learner's own self-regulation. It is usually provided as prompts and cues—and aims to improve the learner's own ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.</i></p>	Personal  <p><i>About the person. It may imply that pupils have an innate ability (or lack of) and is often very general and lacking in information.</i></p>

(EEF Feedback Guidance Report, 2021 - Page 22)

- Timely – based on consideration of the assessment task, student and class needs as whether to provide instant or delayed feedback (research shows similar impact)
- Result in more work for students than it does for teachers
- Should have impact – so provide hints/clues but make the students 'work for the answer'
- Written feedback should be given sparingly so it is meaningful and students do not become dependent on the teacher.

Receiving Effective Feedback

Students need to be engaged with the effective feedback provided by their teachers. It may not be the case that one feedback model in a teacher's classroom has the desired impact. There are many factors that influence a student's use of feedback, including; motivation and desire for feedback, self-confidence, trust in the teacher and their working memory.

Planning to overcome these barriers when providing feedback supports students to overcome the potential issues they may have. Some examples may include:

- Discussing the purpose of the feedback
- Modelling the use of the feedback
- Providing clear, concise and focussed feedback (sometimes less is more)
- Ensure students have understood their feedback

Students will be informed about the importance of closing the feedback loop to ensure they support their own learning, to make progress by knowing and remembering more over time.

Student Feedback Activities

Only when the feedback loop can be closed will pupil learning progress. To close the feedback loop students will provide feedback activities during "Directed Improvement and Reflection Time" (DIRT).

Effective DIRT will be carefully considered to include appropriate tasks and time to allow students to:

- Reflect critically on their strengths and weaknesses – and to begin to address them
- Develop techniques to consolidate understanding or to stretch themselves further
- To craft and improve skills so that feedback **is put into practice**
- Receive class guidance on general class weaknesses
- Specific guidance which is bespoke to students' needs

No DIRT means no learning gaps are closed; and the feedback provided has not had an impact.

DIRT activities may include corrections and literacy corrections but needs to be more substantial than this alone. Students need to have the opportunity to apply their new learning. To ensure DIRT activities are effective, they should be well constructed to give students' a variety of ways to reflect, develop and improve. It is expected a teacher will direct students by providing an 'action' (DIRT task) as part of written feedback. The teacher must also plan sufficient time for this task to be completed, in green pen, by the student.

To minimise teacher workload, DIRT activities may include 'actions' that are planned before an assessment has been completed. Each 'action' is a different type of activity which can easily be added to/adapted by the teacher to make a DIRT task bespoke. Examples of these actions being made bespoke to students needs are detailed below:

- Redraft this piece of work / this paragraph/ this graph...by doing X, adding Y, correcting Z...
- Revise this piece of work: this time make sure you include X, you measure Y, you state Z correctly....
- Use your corrections to now apply this learning to another question
- Improve your use of future tense/dialogue markers/fronted adverbials/connectives – by re-writing these 20 statements adding the appropriate phrase, punctuation...

- Based on what I'm seeing, you need more practice responding to questions like this...
- You still don't know all the facts: go and learn them using your KO; prepare for a mini re-test on...
- For wider depth on this topic please read ----- and record your findings.
- You have got X number of questions correct, can you identify any errors and now correct using...
- I think it would be better if two of your paragraphs were reversed. Find out which ones.
- Look at the provided list of common errors and edit your work.

We encourage the use of self or peer assessment to mark and give feedback on DIRT activities, removing the need for teacher double marking.

Please see the individual subject Assessment and Feedback Frameworks for an outline of how and when feedback will be given, as well as details on how and when the feedback will be actioned by students and followed up once completed. An example of the framework is attached as an appendix.

Literacy

Literacy is fundamental for success in school and beyond. Young people who leave school without literacy skills are held back every stage of their lives.

Professor Sir Kevan Collins

Disciplinary Literacy

Literacy in secondary schools is the key to academic success across the curriculum and should not simply be seen as a basket of general skills. Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum. It recognises that literacy skills are both general and subject specific, emphasising the value of supporting teachers of every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively.

General Literacy

The following symbols should be used when marking any written work:

Symbol Meaning:

Sp Correct your spelling three times. (These should also be highlighted)

P Add or change a punctuation mark or capital letter.

Gr (Grammar) Edit your sentence so that it reads correctly.

// Use paragraphs correctly.

? Unclear meaning.

Student Book/Folder Expectations

From September 2023, all students will be encouraged to take their books or folders home to support independence, for additional practice, retrieval of essential knowledge and revision. Each book or folder will be easily identified as the cover will have the students' full name, subject name and teacher's name.

For each new sequence of learning, a student book or folder will have:

- A knowledge note at the start of the sequence (identifiable to students as will be on yellow paper)
- A date and title underlined for each lesson
- Clear presentation of teacher modelling, detailed note taking and practice work
- Self or peer assessment in green pen to provide regular feedback
- Teacher live marking in red pen and responses to teacher verbal feedback to provide regular feedback
- Deeply marked pieces of work assessed by students and teachers, with WWW/EBI and DIRT

As part of effective classroom routines, staff will circulate the classroom to support students to present class work in a way that it can be used again for retrieval support or revision. To encourage ownership and organisation of class work, students will self or peer assess against the checklist below to improve their presentation over time.



Top 10 Book Presentation Checklist

1	Write in black or blue pen	
2	Use pencil and rulers for drawing	
3	All dates and titles are underlined with a ruler	
4	Examples and notes are clearly labelled for future independent study	
5	Capital letters and punctuation used correctly	
6	Self-assessment, peer assessment and DIRT completed in green pen	
7	Spelling practised where applicable	
8	All loose pages glued in or attached using treasury tags	
9	Leave a line and rule off after your previous piece of work	
10	Target sticker up to date on front of book	
You now have time to improve the presentation of your book.		
From this point on I commit to:		

Monitoring Quality Assurance

At departmental level it is the role of the Subject Leader to monitor the quality and consistency of assessment and feedback within their team. This will be planned in the department Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER) schedule. Subject leaders may monitor the quality and consistency through a variety of strategies including:

- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Work scrutinies
- Student voice

- Staff voice
- Assessment mark books
- Raising Achievement Plans (RAPs)

Subject leaders will seek to improve the quality of assessment and feedback across the department.

Senior leaders will monitor the quality and consistency of assessment and feedback across the school. This will be planned in the school Quality Assurance schedule. Senior leaders may monitor the quality and consistency through a variety of strategies including:

- Supporting the subject leaders MER schedule
- Line management meetings
- Student enquiries - student level work scrutinies and interviews
- Assessment enquiries – department and/or year level work scrutinies and interviews
- Department reviews
- Curriculum and assessment sampling
- Data analysis and RAPs

Appendix 1

Assessment & Feedback Framework - {Insert Department Name}

Expectations in Student Books/Booklets

- Start of sequence of learning (approximately 6-10 lessons) – knowledge note on yellow paper with:
 - Key vocabulary including definitions
 - Key knowledge (dates, facts, formulae...)
 - Key aims (assessment objectives, enquiry questions....)
- Date/title underlined
- Examples/note taking
- Practise
- Self/peer assessment/redrafting/reflections in green pen
- Teach live marking where possible in red pen
- Deeply marked pieces of work
- Curriculum Assessments

Policy: The foundation for effective feedback takes place before a student is assessed, through high quality teacher instruction and adaptive teaching (EEF Key Principle One). This includes:

- *Building on prior knowledge and experiences of students*
- *Avoiding overloading the working memory – break delivery into smaller steps*
- *Encouraging the retention of learning – retrieval from the long-term memory*
- *Delivering a well sequenced curriculum – including essential knowledge, concepts, skills and vocabulary*
- *Using powerful analogies, dual coding (for example imagery), comparisons and demonstrations*
- *Planning to encounter and overcome misconceptions*
- *Planning effective lessons with good modelling and scaffolds to support all learners to access the curriculum*
- *Adapting teaching in response to struggling or excelling learners*
- *Providing learners with tools and strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate the quality of their work and their learning*

Deeply Marked Pieces of Work		Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT)		
<p>A substantial piece of work which is used as a diagnostic tool. It is an indication of students' understanding of an aspect of the curriculum and receives teacher defined WWW and EBI and is marked for literacy.</p> <p><i>Minimum of every 6-10 lessons to assess effectively in line with the curriculum sequence.</i></p>		<p>Only when the feedback loop can be closed will pupil learning progress. To close the feedback loop students will provide feedback activities during "Directed Improvement and Reflection Time" (DIRT).</p> <p>No DIRT means no learning gaps are closed; and the feedback provided has not had an impact.</p>		
Planned in the curriculum intent to include opportunities for:	Who assesses to give feedback?	When is feedback given to reflect on?	How does improvement close the feedback loop?	How is the impact of the improvement checked?
Key vocabulary to be assessed for spelling and understanding	Self/peer assessed during class marking in green pen	Instant verbal feedback providing answers	Followed up through starters, home learning and/or retrieval quizzes	Instant verbal feedback providing answers
Retrieval of essential knowledge such as quotes, formulae, dates....	Self/peer assessed during class marking in green pen	Instant verbal feedback providing answers	Followed up through starters, home learning and/or retrieval quizzes	Instant verbal feedback providing answers
Lower order thinking skills such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Calculations Balancing Equations Describe Questions 	Self/peer assessed during class marking in green pen	Instant verbal feedback supported with model answers/prompts	Followed up through starters, home learning and/or retrieval quizzes	Instant verbal feedback providing answers
Higher order thinking skills such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application Questions Extended Responses Reasoning Explain/Evaluate Essays 	Teacher assessed and marked using WWW/EBI which will be handwritten / typed / highlighted by staff	"Timely" feedback at the next available opportunity after teacher has marked	Whole class EBI: Whole class reteach / Class DIRT*	Instant verbal feedback supported with model answers/prompts AND/OR Future assessment opportunity assesses the skill again
			Individual EBI: Personalised DIRT activity where appropriate	

Curriculum Assessments and Mock Examinations will be completed under exam conditions on paper. This will only be assessed by teachers and will follow the same framework as “higher order thinking skills”. This is the only form of assessment which will receive a grading.

Policy: To provide students to support to plan, monitor and evaluate the quality of their assessed work, teachers should consider what we ask students to do before a final 'product' is submitted.

This should include the following:

- Retrieval of key knowledge, concepts, skills or vocabulary by the student – teachers will need to provide opportunities to do this ahead of the piece or work by incorporating into the curriculum intent or task itself
- Expectation of proof reading and editing by the student - so teachers need to specifically plan this activity into lessons and provide resources such as dictionaries
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- Do not accept substandard work – to create a culture of high challenge and communicate clearly we will not accept work that has not had maximum effort applied to it. A 're draft' deadline could be provided for such work.

Policy: Effective feedback should be appropriately timed that focuses on moving learning forward (EEF Key Principle Two). Feedback will:

Indicate to students their strengths, misconceptions and any areas they need to develop, in regards to:

- Task
- Subject
- Self-regulation

Only when the feedback loop can be closed will pupil learning progress. To close the feedback loop students will provide feedback activities during "Directed Improvement and Reflection Time" (DIRT).

Effective DIRT will be carefully considered to include appropriate tasks and time to allow students to:

- Reflect critically on their strengths and weaknesses – and to begin to address them
- Develop techniques to consolidate understanding or to stretch themselves further
- To craft and improve skills so that feedback **is put into practice**
- Receive class guidance on general class weaknesses
- Specific guidance which is bespoke to students' needs

No DIRT means no learning gaps are closed; and the feedback provided has not had an impact.

Appendix 2



Expectations

1. Whiteboards to be out on desks at all times and used every lesson
2. Teacher on feet circulating the room for the whole lesson unless: doing the register, using the visualiser/ modelling, sitting with students to support their learning
3. Target questions to students *"Know your students"* No shouting out accepted.
Don't say the student's name before you ask the question – or others will opt out! Give thinking time for all students. Don't give immediate feedback – pose, pause, pounce, bounce
4. Oracy - insist on full sentences and clarity when students respond

