SOLIHULL

Assessment Policy

Senior School

Senior School: Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning)
Reviewer: Director of Assessment and Digital Strategy
Last Reviewed: March 2026

Version 6

Senior School

The School Assessment Policy identifies the importance of Assessment for Learning in classroom practice. Each department is required to apply the principles laid out below within their own departmental policy.

1. Introduction

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that pupils can make strong progress. Assessment and marking in schools allows this in three ways:

- As a means of helping teachers plan what pupils should learn next
- As a way of recording pupils' achievements as marks, levels or grades
- To give useful feedback on the next steps a pupil should take

2. Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning should form a central part of a department's work and it is central to the teaching and learning process.

Assessment for learning is the continuous feedback process which provides evidence for planning pupils' future learning.

Assessment for learning should:

- Be central to the teaching and learning process
- Set goals for pupils to aim for
- Provide clear feedback on *how* to achieve the goals
- Emphasise that every pupil can improve

Assessment for learning contributes to pupil success when:

- Teaching is adjusted in response to the results of assessment
- It is recognised that assessment influences pupil self-esteem and motivation
- Pupils understand how to improve and are aware of the next steps they need to take

Feedback is most effective when:

- Targets or goals are clear, practical, provide appropriate stretch and are achievable
- Feedback is not simply correction, but instead draws a pupil's attention to the next step they need to take
- The feedback is part of an ongoing dialogue between pupil and teacher
- Pupils interact with feedback to develop their skills
- Pupils have the skills and confidence to ask for help and the atmosphere of the classroom encourages this

When marking:

Assessment should be thoughtful:

Teachers should consider the purpose of the assessment. Is it to allow teachers to plan effectively, to get summative information on the attainment of pupils and/or to allow feedback that helps pupils make progress? Teachers need to balance these three needs and regularly use assessment and appropriate approaches to achieve these aims. Appropriate approaches might include a balance of – peer assessment, in class feedback and coaching, questioning, self-assessed tasks, teacher assessed tasks, tests, oral feedback and other relevant strategies.

Assessment to allow progress should be useful:

- Feedback should be **targeted** (most pupils can only focus on improving 1-3 things at a time and staff should ensure that marking allows pupils to clearly identify the next skill they should build)
- **Build on previous work** - It should allow a building of progress from previous work (consider asking pupils to write their target at the top of work they hand in so that you can mark against it)
- **Actions** - It should require pupils to engage with feedback (pupils should promptly engage with targets either through corrections or practising an appropriate skill)

3. Reporting of Attainment

Grades form one part of the pattern of reporting on pupils' progress, alongside Parents' Evenings and Reports. Pupils are awarded effort and attainment grades on a half termly basis.

Effort Grades are awarded for three aspects of school life:

- Engagement in lessons (classwork and behaviour)
- Homework (effort and deadlines)
- Organisation (punctuality and equipment)

The scale used is as follows:

- Outstanding
- Very Good
- Good
- Weaknesses
- Concern

The following descriptors are used by teaching staff when awarding these grades:

	Engagement in Lessons	**Homework**	**Organisation**
Outstanding	Consistently excellent engagement in lessons. Exceptional concentration. Always looking to extend their learning.	Homework is of a consistently high standard. All deadlines are met. Extra initiative is taken in responding to certain tasks.	Absolutely no lapses in organisation and preparedness. Unfailingly punctual. Sufficiently charged laptop in all lessons.
Very good	Very good level of engagement. High levels of focus. Positive attitude to all tasks set.	Homework is always very well done. All deadlines are met. Homework reflects the best use of the available time.	Prepared for every lesson with all books and equipment in place. Unfailingly punctual.
Good	Concentration levels help progress. Lesson time productively used. Good attitude, working hard.	Nearly all homework is well done. Some pieces require further development to respond fully to the task. Deadlines are very rarely missed.	Well prepared for most lessons with the correct books and equipment. Punctual on almost all occasions.
Weaknesses	Reminders are needed to focus on tasks set. Whilst good concentration is exhibited in some lessons, levels are not consistent	Whilst some pieces are effectively completed, others are underprepared. Use of time misjudged.	Books and equipment are forgotten on several occasions. Arrival times at lessons feature unnecessary lateness.
Concern	Regular lack of concentration has a negative impact on learning. There is a reluctance to engage positively in given tasks.	Homework is regularly inadequate. Many deadlines are missed.	Consistent unpreparedness for lessons and regular lateness threatens progress

Lower School Attainment Grades

All students in the Lower School receive attainment grades according to the following scale:

- Outstanding
- Very Good
- Good
- Weaknesses
- Concern

The following descriptors are used by teaching staff when awarding these grades:

Outstanding	Excellent work reflecting profound levels of understanding and thorough, thoughtful responses to each given task. High levels of consistent attainment shown. Some pieces also reflect pupils choosing to extend their own learning.
Very Good	Very good work reflecting strong levels of understanding and thorough, thoughtful responses to each given task. High levels of attainment.
Good	Good work which demonstrates a sound understanding of the content of a course. Some pieces could be further developed to make greater progress.
Weaknesses	Whilst work can demonstrate sound understanding, there are clear gaps in knowledge and its application.
Concern	This grade registers that a pupil's work does not meet the required standard and action is required for appropriate progress to be made.

Middle School Attainment Grades
Middle School pupils are awarded attainment grades using the 9-1 GCSE scale.

Sixth Form Attainment Grades
Sixth Form pupils are awarded attainment grades using the A Level A*-U scale.

The timing and frequency of grades varies to suit the needs of different year groups and is coordinated with the timings of Parents' Evenings and Reports. Dates are shared with staff via the 'Assessment and Reporting Calendar' at the beginning of each academic year. Grades are uploaded on the portal (parents and students have access to these).

Reports

Reports must be written for every pupil taught. If more than one member of staff teaches a pupil

in a subject, each member of staff will write a report. Timing of reports is related to internal assessments and Parents' Evenings. The plan for the year can be found on the portal.

4. Tracking and integrating data

Baseline tests are taken by pupils at the start of Thirds (MidYIS), Lower Fifth (CAT-4) and Lower Sixth (Alis). This data is used to enable tracking on the ALPS platform for GCSE and A Level ensuring pupil process is monitored and each department's Value Added data is reported in annually following external results.

Departments should use baseline data, Learning Support recommendations and the AGT list to inform their planning and assessment strategies.

Heads of Department should use assessment data, together with tracking data, to be aware of the levels of progress of pupils and classes. They should use this data to take appropriate action to ensure the good progress of all pupils.

Assessment data is filed centrally in the Senior School's Assessment team.

5. Departmental Contribution to the Overall Policy and Practice

Departments need to construct an Assessment Policy that reflects the guidelines in the whole school policy and takes account of the following:

- A minimum frequency and a style of assessment are specified for the department
- The frequency of assessment is such that at any given time both the pupil and teacher are fully aware of the current level of attainment
- Pupils receive regular encouraging and constructive feedback
- Arrangements for the monitoring of assessment by the HOD is in place with aims of:
    - Ensuring work is being assessed and feedback is appropriate and prompt
    - Standards are consistent across the department
    - Good practice is shared