

OMAGH ACADEMY ASSESSMENT POLICY (AUGUST 2012)

1. Rationale

Assessment is the general term used to describe the process of identifying the performance and progress of pupils. It is an integral part of learning and teaching, and is most effective when used to provide opportunities for pupils to review and evaluate their work in order to plan personal learning targets. The implementation of this assessment policy should also provide information to support the on-going evaluation and review of teaching and learning strategies within departments.

2. Purpose

2.1 Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

- Takes place during day-to-day practice in the course of on-going teaching and learning;
- Assesses current achievements to support the planning of the next steps;
- Enables pupils to take an active role in the learning process and the setting of short-term targets.

2.2 Summative Assessment

- Takes place after the learning, focuses on pupils' overall achievements and is used to provide quantitative information on progress to pupils, teachers and parents;
- May be used formatively to support planning and to set medium or long-term targets.

2.3 Building Confidence

- It is important that assessment is geared towards developing pupils' confidence and acknowledging achievement, as well as highlighting areas for improvement;
- Assessment tasks should therefore provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills across the full range of ability, from the weakest to the most able.

3. Formative Assessment

The key elements of on-going formative assessment used by teachers will include:

- Sharing learning intentions with pupils;
- Ensuring that success criteria are understood in advance;
- Providing constructive feedback in the form of oral and written comments;
- Effective questioning;
- Appropriate use of peer and self-assessment.

Departments implement these elements within day-to-day classroom practice.

4. Summative Assessment

The main stages for Summative Assessment are as follows:

- Years 8 to 10 - progress reports based on continuous monitoring and End-of-Year Examinations in June
- Years 11 – progress reports based on continuous monitoring, Mid-Year Examinations in December and End-of-Year Examinations in June;
- Year 10 pupils are given teacher-assessed levels in Communication and Use of Mathematics;
- Year 12 – Mock Examinations in January and GCSE Examinations in May/June;
- Years 13 & 14 – External Modules in January and May/June. Those not sitting external modules in a subject will sit an internal examination (Year 13 in January, Year 14 in February);
- The results of internal examinations are included in a report to parents;
- There is an annual parent-teacher meeting for each year group, at which summative assessments may be discussed;
- Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that pupils are aware of the assessment criteria for internal examinations and that agreed common mark schemes are in place.

5. Continuous Monitoring of Pupil Progress

- Will include on-going monitoring of progress through oral questioning and the evaluation of pupils' class-work and homework;
- Will include a summative element (a percentage) based on the results of a number of major pieces of work (assessment tasks), done over a set time defined by the School (normally this will be approximately a six to eight week period) and marked by the teacher;
- These assessment tasks may include tests, class-work, homework, coursework/controlled or other assessment appropriate to the subject;
- Classes within a year should carry out assessment tasks at approximately the same time;
- Where feasible the same task should be used with different classes, but some variation may be necessary to ensure the reliability of the results;
- Assessment tasks should normally be marked according to a scheme agreed within the department so that there is a common standard across different classes. For assessments

where a common scheme is inappropriate due to the nature of the task, this should be explained in the department's policy on continuous monitoring;

- Pupils should be made aware of the assessment criteria in advance (i.e. the knowledge, understanding and skills to be assessed);
- Where appropriate, outcomes and mark schemes should be discussed with pupils to promote improved learning;
- As a general guide for Years 8 to 12, assessment tasks should include at least one test done under controlled conditions;
- As a general guide for Years 13 and 14, at least 2 assessment tasks should be tests done under controlled conditions;
- However, it is recognized that it is inappropriate to be overly prescriptive about continuous monitoring and that there needs to be flexibility for subjects carrying out a significant amount of coursework/controlled assessment/practical work. Each department will therefore draw up a short Policy on Continuous Monitoring to indicate the approach to be taken with each year group and setting out the number and type of assessment tasks to be carried out.
- Copies of task specifications and mark schemes should be held centrally within the department;
- Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that appropriate tasks are planned in advance and common mark schemes are in place;
- A scheme for collating the results of continuous monitoring will be developed in order to track pupil progress and support the target setting process. Ideally this will involve the recording of marks on-line to simplify the administration required and may include grades for effort.

6. **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

- The Head of Department is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy. Departmental members should assist with this process;
- The ultimate responsibility for monitoring, evaluation and review will rest with the Senior Management Team.

Reference

Further details on Assessment for Learning are available at:

http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/key_stage_3/assessment/assessment_for_learning/