



Meadowhead School Academy Trust

Assessment Policy 2022 – 2023

**This is a policy of Meadowhead School Academy Trust.
Meadowhead School is a Foundation School
and a member of the
Meadowhead Community Learning Trust**

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Approved by: | The Governing Body | Date: January 2023 |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Last reviewed on: | October 2022 |
|--------------------------|--------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Next review due by: | October 2023 |
|----------------------------|--------------|

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Staff Responsible: | Chris Heggs |
|---------------------------|-------------|

1. Rationale

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning at Meadowhead. As a school, we use assessment as a way of establishing, developing and adapting schemes of learning providing information to enable teachers to plan more effectively.

The assessment cycle in its entirety is evaluated to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that it is an effective system that works for our school and our curriculum.

The core purpose of assessment at Meadowhead is to maximise progress, supporting all students to achieve the best outcomes and fulfil their potential.

We follow an assessment cycle which uses both in-school formative and summative assessment to offer all students the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do across the curriculum.

We focus on developing the depth of understanding of the whole curriculum through high quality teaching and a range of in-class formative assessment practices by providing our students with regular high-quality feedback in lessons.

We also use quality summative assessment to test long term retention of knowledge and provide further evidence of students' strengths and areas for development allowing them to become independent, reflective learners.

2. Purpose of Assessment

As stated by the DfE 'There is no 'one-size fits all' system for assessment. The best forms of in-school formative and summative assessment will be tailored to the school's own curriculum and the needs of the students, parents and staff.

At Meadowhead we place a greater emphasis on formative assessment to provide live information in the classroom and find that this is the most effective way of measuring learning. We use summative assessment, which covers breadth and depth to test long-term retention and make valid inferences about student achievement as a whole. We prepare students for the increased challenge and rigour of the new GCSE's and replicate their linear format, equipping students with the skills to be successful. Our students respond well to feedback whether used as part of formative or summative assessments, we do not focus on a grade but always on how to improve and secure further progress.

Our different forms of assessment serve different purposes for different individuals as outlined below:

Students:

- To serve as a tool which will encourage and motivate students to learn.
- To assist students in setting goals for themselves to develop learning strategies.
- To build positive self-esteem and encourage students to strive for their personal best.
- To inform students about, and to enable them to monitor, their current level of skill/knowledge mastery and towards 'next steps'.
- To empower students to be independent, self-reliant and self-critical learners.
- To demystify assessment practices, grading and marking so that the criteria are transparent and fair.

Teachers:

- To determine previous learning to decide appropriate level of teaching.
- To identify students' specific academic strengths and areas of growth so that the teacher can design appropriate activities and objectives within the lesson.
- To provide feedback for students to improve their performance and achieve their targets.
- To implement appropriate intervention strategies.
- To measure the success of the teaching and the curriculum.
- To ensure consistency and reliability of assessment and marking between teachers.
- To give information about the progress being made by children and groups.

Parents/Carers

- To give information about the progress being made by their child.
- To help the parent fully understand the strengths, weaknesses, progress, achievements and learning style of their child and hence give appropriate support and encouragement.

Middle and Senior Leaders/ Governors/ Ofsted

- To establish a knowledge base to work with teachers for the development of curriculum and the development of schemes of work.
- To plan effective staff-development programs.
- To identify students for intervention activities.
- To provide information for the school's appraisal process.
- To generate information which will be used to guide the development of future School Development Plans.
- To monitor attainment and progress of individual learners and groups of learners.

3. Assessment in Practice

The following principles have been agreed with middle leaders:

- Formative assessment will be part of unit and lesson planning, linked to defined criteria and be part of the schemes of work.
- A range of summative assessments will be part of the schemes of work and used to inform whole school data entry.
- A variety of assessment methods will be used to accommodate learning styles, differing abilities, special educational needs, the development of the whole child and to encourage higher thinking skills.
- Assessments will provide evidence to evaluate student performance, teaching strategies and the curriculum.
- Assessments will include student self-assessment, teacher assessment, external moderation and peer assessment.
- Assessment of students' attitudes, behaviour and effort are distinct from the assessment of knowledge, concepts and skills.
- Assessment should link judgements about attainment to evidence and provide a basis for dialogue between students, teachers, and parents.
- Assessment outcomes will be compared to NME grades in order to contextualise grades and levels, and therefore make them meaningful to students and parents.

- Summative assessments will be moderated in order to ensure consistency and reliability.

4. In-School Formative Assessment

Dylan William defines formative assessment, or Assessment for Learning (AfL) as using 'evidence of student learning to adapt teaching and learning, or instruction, to meet student needs.'

The aim of formative assessment is to evaluate students' knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day basis and to tailor teaching accordingly. Effective formative assessment incorporates a range of strategies where feedback is provided by the teacher or opportunities for peer and self-assessment are used to encourage students to take responsibility for their own achievement and progress.

At Meadowhead we adopt a consistent, whole school approach to formative feedback, using a deliberate silent practice method to secure underpinning knowledge to ensure that students are comfortable and confident with the content being learnt. Teachers are expected to regularly test students with effective question and answer during lessons and quick re-cap quizzing. We do not ask teachers to record or grade any formative assessment, but we do ask that regular whole class feedback is provided and that students respond to this.

5. In-School Summative Assessment

Summative assessment, or Assessment of Learning (AoL) enables teachers to evaluate how much a student has learned at the end of a unit of work or topic.

An effective in-school summative assessment is one that provides schools with information they can use to monitor and support students' progress, attainment and wider outcomes.

At Meadowhead we follow an assessment cycle where in-school summative assessment is completed 2 times per year at Key Stage 3 (Year 7, 8, 9) and in Year 11, and 3 times per year in Year 10.

These are high quality assessments that are set using the following conditions:

- At least 45 minutes long
- Must reflect schemes of learning.
- Must be completed in the designated assessment week at the time issued.
- Subject leaders must provide SLT with the assessment titles/ tasks well ahead of the assessment week so that Q.A. can take place.
- Must be clearly labelled for future reference.
- Teachers must provide high quality, subject specific written feedback to all students focusing on what has gone well and how answers can be improved.
- Students must be given a high-quality feedback episode to allow them to respond to feedback and improve and adapt their work.
- Students should be shown examples of excellent work using WAGOLL when improving work. This could be using student work under visualiser.
- Students should not respond generically, and poor improvements must be challenged and rectified.
- Students can be given a mark and percentage but **should not** be given a GCSE grade 9 -1.
- If it is departmental policy to use tracking sheets, they must be filled in.

6. Key Stage 3 Assessment Weeks

6.1 Principle

The principle is that by having set times in the year where students experience a window of 'intense' assessment, they will build up resilience and good practice in preparation for Year 11 and the demands of GCSE examinations.

6.2 Organisation

At Key stage 3, all students will have an assessment week in term 2 and an assessment week in term 3. All EBacc subjects will hold an assessment at the time specified on the assessment week Timetable. **Assessments must take place when specified so that students receive a balanced assessment week and do not have too many assessments on one day.** Non – EBacc subjects may also hold assessments this week but do not have to. It might be an opportunity to assess students ahead of the reporting point under examination conditions?

Please be aware of the EBacc assessment calendar when choosing your lessons.

- The assessments will take place in a classroom environment.
- They should replicate the real exam experience as closely as is possible.
- Staff should build up to the assessments in the weeks running up to the assessment, encouraging students to revise and prepare as they would for their GCSE examinations.
- Heads of year will publicise the assessment week through morning briefings and assemblies to increase the profile and importance.
- Parents have been informed of the weeks that the assessments will take place and will be able to see the more refined plans via the school website.
- Please ensure that you adhere to the TT for your assessments.

The 6 core and EBacc subjects (English, Maths, Science, History, Languages, and Geography) are evenly distributed across the week. This means that on four days students have one assessment each day, and on the fifth day, they have two assessments. Where possible, the assessments have been timetabled so that each subject is taken by all students on the same day for all 3 thirds of the year (X, Y and Z) to minimise the likelihood of students discussing with their friends what the contents of the assessment are. E.g. English assessment for Year 8 is on a Wednesday for X (Period 1), Y (Period 5) and Z (Period 2).

7. Year 7 Lunchtime Issues

Where possible, period 4 is not used for assessments due to the split lunchtime (4b between 4a and 4c). Unfortunately, there are some subjects that are only taught during period 4. Where that is the case, assessments will have to be taken across the lunch period. It is recommended that staff separate the assessments into two halves either side of the lunch break.

8. Moderation and Feedback

After each assessment week, there is a moderation and marking week highlighted on the school assessment calendar. This time should be used by faculties to ensure there is consistency across teachers when marking and feeding back to students.

9. Input Deadline

The week after the moderation/ marking week is an input deadline. Faculties will need to use what they have assessed in the assessment week to influence the MLG that is inputted at the reporting point. A MLG does not have to be based solely on the performance in the recent assessment week.

10. The 7–Week Assessment Cycle (In School Summative)

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Revision/ Preparation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular formative assessment in every lesson throughout the cycle should test knowledge in preparation for summative assessment ○ Teachers ensure students have the relevant revision materials and strategies to prepare for assessment ○ No homework to be set during this week |
| 2 | Assessment Week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessments completed by students in line with expectations |
| 3 | Moderation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Moderation and data entry to take place in line with School calendar ○ Allocation of department time to moderate the assessments ○ Moderation should identify and address any differences in judgements between individual teachers to ensure that the mark given is fair, valid and reliable and that marking of assessments is consistent across all cohorts. ○ Evidence of the moderation activities should be recorded by the curriculum leader and retained for future reference and discussion with SLT link. |
| 4 | Marking & Feedback (Data Entry) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers should mark assessments in line with expectations ○ Feedback lesson to be completed across week 3/4 ○ Staff use SIMS to enter RP data |
| 5 | Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teaching staff use the data from the assessment in SIMS and subject progress Indicator in SISRA Analytics to identify underperformance in assessment and adapt teaching to close the knowledge gaps identified |
| 6 | Department Action Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department improvement plan updated based on assessment data and findings in teaching and learning report ○ Actions agreed at department level |
| 7 | SLT Link Leader Data Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of Department action plan with SLT link |

11. Assessment and SEND

High aspirations and expectations should apply equally to students with SEN and disabilities as to all other students. Assessment methods may need to be adapted for some students with SEN and disabilities, for example by using adapting the use of questioning to give students enough time to respond, using visual stimuli and alternative means of communication. SEND students will use feedback from all assessments to help them develop greater independence and confidence.

12. Helpful advice for assessment week

12.1 General

Assessments should be conducted in silent, exam conditions.

Assessments should be in line with GCSE expectations in order to train students for the rigours of 9 – 1 GCSEs.

Adequate time should be given to students to allow them to prepare and revise for their assessments. This is also useful in equipping students with vital revision techniques needed for their GCSEs.

12.2 Use of TAs

TAs should not be dismissed from lessons during assessments.

Liaison with the TA/ SEND faculty should take place well in advance by the teacher to ensure availability/ separate room etc

TAs can be used to scribe and read for our weakest students (i.e. poor handwriting, low reading age) – it is likely this dispensation will apply by Y11.

For lower ability groups, it is good practice to read each question to students before they answer it. This could be in small groups with a TA whilst the rest of the group continues working in a mixed ability Y7 for example.

12.2 Teacher expectations

Staff should regularly circulate to ensure all students are making progress with their assessment.

It is still reasonable to give hints and tips during the assessment to allow a student to give it a go. This may include highlighting key words, decoding a question or helping a student plan an answer. This should be taken in to account when mapping progress/grading.

Whilst circulating, staff could mark smaller questions to give students increased confidence as they work, minimising the workload moving forward (LA groups only).

Staff could identify vulnerable learners and provide one-to-one verbal feedback on the questions they have attempted up to that point. This will point students in the right direction as they move through their assessment.

For lower ability groups, it can be beneficial to read through each question as a class, setting a timer for each one. This can support students in understanding how long they should spend on each question.

Small groups away from the main class can support and motivate. This is an access arrangement some learners will receive for GCSEs. Learning Support may be used to accommodate this but arrangements should be made in advance of the assessment.

Individual students may need an isolated, quiet space for the assessment. Planning for this is good practice as some students sit alone for their GCSE exams if they need to.

13. Key Stage 4 Assessment

13.1 Year 10

Students complete assessment weeks in the first and second terms of the academic year.

These are class – based and fit into the normal school lesson timetable.

For the third term, students complete mock examinations.

These take place towards the end of the school year and utilise the main sports hall and other venues across the school.

Students are issued with an examination timetable and are expected to follow as closely as possible the rules and regulations of the actual GCSE examinations.

13.2 Year 11

All students follow a personalised examination TT during late November/ early December.

The first two weeks focus mainly on the core and EBacc GCSE subjects, with the third week concentrating on practical subjects such as art and food preparation as well as language speaking tests.

Students are examined using GCSE past papers and all work is marked and moderated in line with GCSE examiners reports and mark schemes.

Students receive feedback from their class teachers following the Christmas holiday.

There is a second set of mock examinations scheduled to take place late February/ early March.

In some instances, these are used to refine tiers of entry and suitability for courses i.e. triple science students may be considered for combined science.

14. Key Stage 5 Assessment

14.1 Year 12 and Year 13

Year 13 undertake an assessment week towards the end of the first half term.

Year 12 undertake assessment weeks in the second half term and the sixth half term.

All students follow a personalised examination TT during late January/ early February.

Students who underperform in the Year 12 mocks are placed on subject action plans and are required to re-sit their mocks 7 weeks later.

If students do not improve during this period, there may be need to be adjustments to their subjects studied.

Students who underperform in the Year 13 mocks are placed on subject action plans and are required to re-sit their mocks 9 weeks later.

If students do not achieve the minimum acceptable score, their entries on courses may be amended.

There are two scheduled assessment weeks for year 12 that take place in half term 2 and half term 6 respectively.