



Marking Policy

The Joseph Rowntree School – April 2013

The key rationale for high quality marking is straightforward:

- It is impossible to plan effective lessons without proper consideration of the current ability of the class being taught. Weaknesses in assessment take away any precision – it means that very little of your lesson is deliberate and focused on what the students need.
- It is essential that students know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. It is important that they have this information in time to be able to use it effectively.
- We must ensure assessment is frequent enough - and accurate enough – to inform intervention and tracking of students in school to ensure all learners meet their potential.

Consequently, marking must be regular, accurate, and of high quality.

This policy draws a key distinction formative and summative assessment, defined as follows:

Summative assessment is often the final assignment in a scheme of work –the last piece of work that a student will complete in a unit.

Formative assessment is any marking that takes place before the final assessment. It may be levelled (or have approximate level comments like – “to get this to a 6 you need to”) but it is not the final assessment – it is a chance to give students *targets that they will then apply to their final assessment.*

Expectations for Teachers:

To ensure marking is **regular**, as a basic expectation, teachers will:

- Issue summative assessments that will receive a level or grade on a regular and agreed schedule. For subjects that are have less than two taught periods a week, this should be *at least* once per term. For subjects that have two or more taught periods a week, this should be *at least* once per half term.
- Ensure that **all** summative assignments are preceded by formative assessment. This should be peer or self marked with the quality of marking checked by the teacher. This means that even Controlled Assessments can have some formative marking as most exam boards state that students are permitted to check each other’s work – it is only close marking by teachers that is disallowed. It is essential that students are taught exactly what to mark for – so highlighting where key terminology is used accurately, for example, in a scientific evaluation or underlining persuasive devices in a piece of non-fiction writing. Comments from the teacher should be brief, moderating student marking and highlighting key areas to be developed in preparation for the formative assessment. Where formative assessment takes place over a number of smaller pieces of work – for example, in an exercise book over a number of small tasks – there must be a clear comment that draws common threads together.
- COW time (Check Our Work time) will ideally be used after each formative assessment but must be given to students prior to attempting their final, summative assessment.

- The results of summative marking at Key Stage 4 and 5 should be logged on a central department marksheet in good time.

To ensure marking is **accurate**, teachers will:

- Ensure that levelled and graded work is assessed to the criteria, making it clear for students – and subsequently for department moderation - why a grade or level has been awarded.

To ensure marking is of high **quality**, teachers will:

- Mark with a personal tone following the school's requirement to balance targets with praise. There are a number of mnemonics that can be adopted – either the “2 Stars and a Wish” or a “Tick and Target” model work well. In every formative and summative assessment, at least one strength should be identified. This should specifically relate to level or grade criteria, avoiding vague praise. At least one target should also be chosen to clarify what was missing that prevented the next grade being awarded.
- In summative assessment, tick and target comments should link where possible to whether targets set during formative assessment were met.
- To cover our whole-school literacy aims, all marking will also feature a “Lit Bit” – a short statement that identifies a literacy target.

Expectations for Middle and Senior Leaders

In addition to exemplifying best practice, to ensure marking is **regular**, leaders will:

- Ensure that the central mark sheet for each subject area is checked periodically to identify where classes or students have missed key summative assessments.
- Work scrutiny and book checks during drop-ins will identify the frequency of formative assessment. A standard record form for work scrutiny is included alongside this policy.

In addition to exemplifying best practice, to ensure marking is **accurate**, leaders will:

- Analyse assessment information to identify trends that might signal inaccuracies in marking.
- Ensure regular department moderation takes place in calendared meetings throughout the year with all teachers work sampled. Annotated libraries of exemplars at each level are made accessible in each department office or via the intranet for easy access by staff.
- Work scrutiny carried out within departments will need to have a focus on moderate marking accuracy as it will not usually be possible to check this during drop-in observations.

In addition to exemplifying best practice, to ensure marking is of **high quality**, leaders will:

- Use work scrutiny and pupil voice to highlight general concerns and strengths across the school and departments.
- Place assessment at the centre of lesson observation judgements, working on the basis that, as stated in our rationale: **it is impossible to plan effective lessons without proper consideration of the current ability of the class being taught.**