ALDENHAM
SCHOOL

ACADEMIC PROGRESSION POLICY

Reviewed by Assistant Head (Student Progress)

October 2024

Introduction

At Aldenham, we are focussed on ensuring that all students make academic progress. We believe that all elements of academic learning should be directed towards this goal.

The Progression Policy comprises 3 areas which underpin academic progress. These are:

1. Assessment & Marking
2. Feedback
3. Monitoring & Intervention

These three strands all encourage the Aldenham Attributes: aspiration, courage, co-operation, curiosity, independence and respect are all required inside and outside the classroom if a student is to progress academically.

1. <u>Assessment & Marking Policy</u>

1.1 General rationale

The assessment process at Aldenham has been shaped by the need to provide an assessment system which:

- allows students to develop and maintain a desire to learn.
- prepares students suitably for the content, format and experience of formal external exams.
- meets the key competencies of the Teaching Standards which require that teachers regularly set work which is assessed, marked, recorded and returned to students. This applies to work done inside and outside the classroom.
- has the flexibility to work with digital devices and "blended" learning.
- has a framework which is unambiguous to students, parents and staff.
- retains appropriate subject specific autonomy.

The School has an over-arching set of guiding standards regarding academic assessment and marking. During the 2022-23 academic year, with the introduction of Surface devices and blended learning, departments have developed new department assessment grids which ensure that assessments are conducted in line with this.

Assessment is a continual process which cannot always be tracked. Teachers use their professional skills to assess students' progress, skills and knowledge every lesson; not all of this is formally recorded. Our policy reflects this with interleaving tiers of assessments which provide feedback to students in sufficient quantities to maximise student progress.

Assessment at KS3 may focus on the knowledge and skills that support the development and progress of the student as they approach the years with courses leading to formal qualifications. In KS4 and KS5, assessments will normally be informed by the standards of work necessary for achieving particular grades in the relevant formal qualifications.

1.2 Assessment Tiering

All classwork and prep tasks are categorised into tiers of assessment which interleave into one assessment journey. Each piece of work will have different elements and foci which will combine to allow for student progress throughout the year.

Tier	Name	Type
1	Public exams	Summative
2	Formal internal exams	Summative / formative
3	Unit / chapter / section tests	Summative / formative
4	Regular assessed works	Formative
5	Work checks	Neutral

1.3 Tiers 2-4

Assessments within Tiers 2-4 are pieces of work, whether done in class or for prep, for which the student will be provided with individualised, recorded feedback. Tier 2 and Tier 3 assessments must be conducted as hand-written assessments on paper to reflect the nature of external exams (with access arrangements as appropriate). Teachers will provide targeted formative feedback in line with the School's feedback requirements (Section 2). These tasks will often, however, also be summative assessments and inform the teachers of student progress. These assessments may cover anything relevant to the progress of the student for that subject, be it skills, content or other learning attitudes. Each subject schedules an agreed number of pieces of assessment (inclusive of Tier 1) per number of lessons, according to the following *minimum* ratios. Departments may decide to include more assessments than this.

- KS3 - 1 per 6 to 8 lessons *minimum*[1]
- KS4 - 1 per 7 to 9 lessons *minimum*
- KS5 - 1 per 7 to 9 lessons *minimum*

The specific distribution and nature of assessments between the tiers is decided by each department and confirmed by Deputy Head (Academic)/Assistant Head (Student Progress) [DHA/AHSP]. The exact work required for Tier 4 assessments can vary for each teacher at individual assessment points provided that the correct procedure for structure and feedback is followed.

1.4 Recording of assessments

- Tier 2 and 3 assessments must all be recorded within department markbooks or spreadsheets to track student progress over time in a suitable format that can be easily supplied to the DHA/AHSP upon request.
- Tier 2 assessments will also be recorded via iSAMs for communication to parents/guardians.
- It is not always necessary to provide marks or grades for Tier 4 assessments to students.
- Tier 4 assessments must be recorded when completed, but these may be recorded in individual teacher markbooks or as Teams Assignment, which can be accessed as a Team's Grades. Heads of Departments should perform regular checks to ensure that these are being done correctly in line with the department policy.
- Any assessments beyond those explicitly outlined in the department assessment policies do not need to be recorded in a centralised markbook.

---

[1] For Drama at KS3, there is no requirement for written feedback in addition to the grades and reports done throughout the year This is as it is a purely practical subject at this stage and thus we consider instant, consistent verbal feedback to be sufficient and appropriate. For KS4 and KS5, written feedback must be given in line with the policy for the written element of the course. Therefore there is no expectation of more than 40% of a fully examined course's feedback structure.

For Music at KS3, written feedback is to be provided once a term, in addition to the grades and reports done throughout the year. This is as it is a majority practical subject at this stage and thus we consider instant, consistent verbal feedback to be sufficient and appropriate. For KS4 and KS5, as 30% of the course is a practical performance element, written feedback must be given for in line with the policy for 70% of the stated ratio.

- Feedback does not need to be recorded in a markbook by the teacher, but must be in a form which is recorded and accessible to students at any time (for example via Teams Assignments or in Class Notebooks).
- The DHA/AHSP will carry out an assessment scrutiny at scheduled intervals for each department throughout the academic year.

1.5 Work checking

The process of "work checking" is perhaps the most fundamental element of student progress and happens almost every lesson. The specific nature and format of this varies according to subject.

This applies to many traditional forms of work, such as note taking, independent reading, wider reading, starter quizzes, self-/peer-assessed work, skills practice. Each department will outline in their department policy the most common and important forms of work checking which occur, as well as how they are assessed.

Work checking constitutes a large part of teachers' understanding of individual student academic performance. It will be the basis of valuable contributions to discussions concerning high-performing and underperforming students and whether parents/guardians should be contacted.

1.6 Prep

At Aldenham School, work done outside the classroom is called "prep" (short for "preparation"). Work done independently of teacher supervision should act as a support to help students progress and improve between assessment points.

There is no expectation that prep is marked unless it constitutes an assessment point. Student completion of prep will, however, be assessed in a manner befitting Tier 5 Work Checks.

Prep is set at KS3 and KS4 according to the prep timetable. This is a guideline for teachers; for various, legitimate reasons, it occasionally may not be academically suitable for a teacher to set a prep. In this event, students are encouraged to conduct independent consolidation of the material studied, or ask their teacher for extension work. At KS5 prep is set according to teacher discretion.

2. <u>Feedback Policy</u>

All feedback for Tier 2-4 assessments must meet the requirements outlined below.

Feedback on assessed work (Tiers 2-4) must:

- be communicated clearly to students
- be recorded for/by the students
- be easily accessible to students
- clearly state the required action from the student
- provide the opportunity for students to respond orally or in writing, as appropriate
- be such that, if a student were to act upon it, they would progress academically from their current position, even if they appear to have mastered the skills/content required by that specific assessment

The form of feedback is fluid with increased options due to devices, online education applications and blended learning. With the introduction of Class Notebooks, voice notes may be used to provide feedback instead of a written comment. While whole class feedback or generic feedback should not always be used, there are occasions when this is either required or best practice. The format of feedback depends on the class, as well as the different skills, content or learning attitudes being focussed on during that assessment. At Aldenham, we trust the professional expertise of our departments and teachers to use the most effective and suitable form of feedback for each assessment. The DHA/AHSP perform regular checks to ensure that feedback is being provided adequately by all teachers. Throughout the year, feedback methods and best practice is regularly shared, reviewed and discussed.

The feedback process at Aldenham is enhanced by the inclusion of written reports and parents' evenings. These are scheduled to allow for comprehensive, focussed and documented formative and summative feedback to students and parents at key points throughout the year.

3. Academic Monitoring & Intervention Policy

3.1 Introduction

Monitoring student academic performance only boosts the academic progression of students if the information is acted upon. The School's approach to academic intervention has two strands:

1. Learning behaviours of students (Attitude to Learning Grade Intervention)
2. Academic achievement of students (Academic Grade Intervention)

3.2 Attitude to Learning Grade Intervention

Attitude to Learning grade intervention occurs at most grading periods except those following internal exams. The DHA/AHSP will highlight students with average AtL grades of concern (a judgement based on experience and cohort patterns) to their HSM/tutor. The Attitude to Learning Intervention flow-chart (appendix 3) is used to determine the most appropriate course of action for the student. HSMs can also nominate students for consideration if they have specific concerns about academic or in class behavioural performance.

3.3 Academic Grade Intervention

Level 1: Light touch

Departments independently monitor the academic progress of their students using relevant baseline and internal assessment data. If a student consistently falls at least two or more grades below their MidYIS/ALIS predicted grade, departments should initiate intervention. Strategies are agreed with the students by the relevant teachers, who should also provide the DHA/AHL/AHSP, HSM and tutor with an outline of these strategies.

Level 2: Exam grade intervention

After formal internal exam sessions, exam grades are primarily compared to baseline derived predictions (MidYIS/ALIS):

- If an individual subject grade is two or more grades below their baseline prediction, then strategies will be agreed with the students by the relevant teachers. In Years 8 to 13 these strategies will be explicitly communicated in the post-exam report so that they are unambiguous, recorded and easily accessible to all stakeholders, including parents/guardians. In Year 7, any appropriate strategies will be communicated to parents at the parents' evening in the last week of the year.
- Should a student's average grade for all subjects fall two or more grades below their average baseline prediction, intervention will be put into place by the DHA/AHSP, who will meet with the individual student to determine an individualized intervention strategy, alongside input from relevant subject teachers. Involvement in this program will be formally communicated to parents/guardians.

Appendices

1: Baseline Testing

As well as assessing students through our academic programme, students undergo a baseline testing at various stages throughout the School (MidYIS: Years 7 and 9; ALIS: Year 12). This information is used as part of the process of identifying students' overall academic ability, identifying possible special educational needs, constructing formal academic targets and indicating possible areas of strength and weakness with overall ability indicators. Formal baseline data is also used in calculating value added data, and assists in our intervention programme, outlined above.
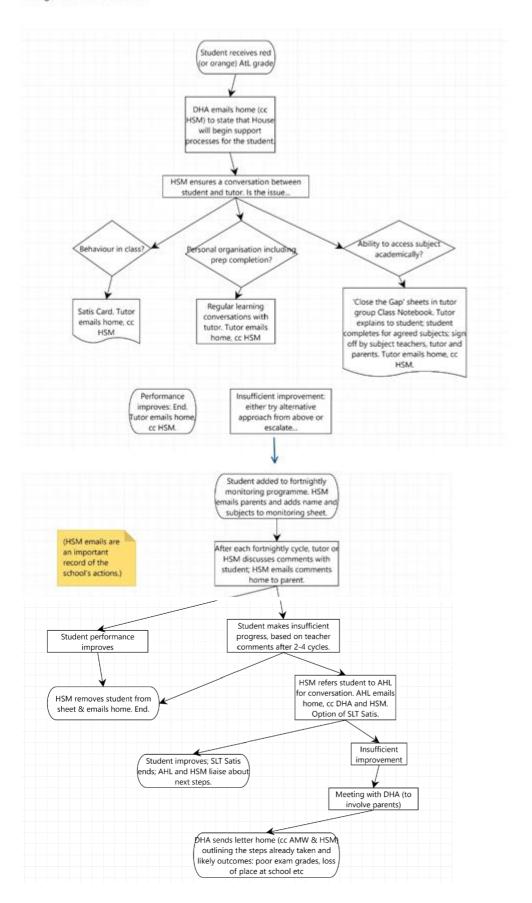
2: Staff Concerns

Should it be brought to the Head of Department's attention that a member of the department has not been providing adequate feedback they should:

- Advise the staff member of the concern
- Ask to see the work and the records for that class
- Consider observing lessons with that class.

Should the concerns prove to be well founded, a clear statement of the remedial action to be taken with specified due dates should be written out and agreed by both parties and this record kept.

3: AtL Intervention Flow-Chart

Orange and red flowchart

```
                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ Student receives red │
                        │ (or orange) AtL grade│
                        └─────────────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ DHA emails home (cc  │
                        │ HSM) to state that   │
                        │ House will begin     │
                        │ support processes    │
                        │ for the student.     │
                        └─────────────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                        ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                        │ HSM ensures a conversation       │
                        │ between student and tutor.       │
                        │ Is the issue...                  │
                        └─────────────────────────────────┘
```

Behaviour in class? → Satis Card. Tutor emails home, cc HSM

Personal organisation including prep completion? → Regular learning conversations with tutor. Tutor emails home, cc HSM

Ability to access subject academically? → 'Close the Gap' sheets in tutor group Class Notebook. Tutor explains to student; student completes for agreed subjects; sign off by subject teachers, tutor and parents. Tutor emails home, cc HSM.

Performance improves: End. Tutor emails home, cc HSM.

Insufficient improvement: either try alternative approach from above or escalate...

↓

Student added to fortnightly monitoring programme. HSM emails parents and adds name and subjects to monitoring sheet.

(HSM emails are an important record of the school's actions.)

After each fortnightly cycle, tutor or HSM discusses comments with student; HSM emails comments home to parent.

Student performance improves → HSM removes student from sheet & emails home. End.

Student makes insufficient progress, based on teacher comments after 2-4 cycles.

HSM refers student to AHL for conversation. AHL emails home, cc DHA and HSM. Option of SLT Satis.

Student improves; SLT Satis ends; AHL and HSM liaise about next steps.

Insufficient improvement

Meeting with DHA (to involve parents)

DHA sends letter home (cc AMW & HSM) outlining the steps already taken and likely outcomes: poor exam grades, loss of place at school etc

Aldenham School: Close the Gap Sheet

Name	Subject

Diagnosis (The **knowledge** and/or **skills** I need to reach my personal target grade)

Therapy (**When**, **where** and **how** I will secure the knowledge and/or skills)

Testing (**How** and **when** I will show that I have secured the knowledge and/or skills)

Student_____ Subject teacher_____ Form tutor _____
Parent_____