

Responsive Teaching Policy

Rationale

When we mark, review or look at students' work, we are identifying what they need to improve or learn next. This informs our feedback to students because we tell them what they need to do next as well as how to do it. It also informs our planning because it tells us what we need to do next. This is responsive teaching. This policy is written with the aim of ensuring that the act of feeding back to students is effective in all our classrooms.

Why 'Responsive Teaching'?

Harry Reis reviewed the development of 'relationship science', and defined responsiveness as the feeling that we are interacting with someone who is: "cognizant of, sensitive to, and behaviourally supportive of the self (2007, p.9)". This maps fairly clearly to responsive teaching:

- "Cognizant of" – aware of how students are: what have they understood? Where are they stuck? What do they need?
- "Sensitive to" – caring about how students are doing; accepting that missteps and misconceptions are inevitable in learning and that it is our duty as teachers to help students beyond them
- "Behaviourally supportive" – taking steps to support students: adapting teaching to meet their needs.

We believe that, for assessment and feedback to be accurate, useful and effective, this 'responsiveness' is key. Our everyday practice should focus on developing responsive learning environments and relationships and all feedback, in whatever form it is provided, should reflect this cognizance, sensitivity and support.

If we are to be truly responsive then we need to accept the variations that exist in students' learning in different classrooms and in different subjects across the college. This document will serve as a foundation, setting our expectations and intentions for feedback, so that different subject areas can then use this to develop the most effective processes in their departments. Where the underpinning responsiveness of these processes is non-negotiable, the forms that feedback and assessment will take will be numerous and varied, dependent on the most effective pedagogical practices of the subject.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to determine the most effective responsive teaching strategies and to describe these in department planning. This is likely to be in Schemes of Learning. It is, further, the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that approaches to responsive teaching across their team are consistent and effective, and that subject CPD supports the development of teachers' practice.

A Guide to Effective and Ineffective Feedback

	is effective when	is ineffective when
Written comments/book marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precise instructions are given, showing students exactly what needs to be improved and how to do this • Marginal comments are used to direct student focus precisely • Clear annotation is used to show where there are particular areas of strength (for future reference) or areas for improvement • Used to effectively support progress beyond a brief improvement task • Impact on student outcomes justifies the teacher input and does not create unnecessary workload. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vague or generalised statements are given, referencing whole responses rather than specific parts of it • It takes the form of end-of-work comments that require further verbal explanation in order for students to use them • Tokenistic ebi comments are used to generate improvement tasks but have little impact beyond this task • It creates an unjustifiable amount of work for teachers as the time spent writing comments does not lead to any real progress for students.
Highlighted/ticked cover sheets/ success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to document outcomes in summative assessments to provide an overview of what students can and can't do • Used in combination with more precise feedback that identifies areas for improvement and instructs students how to make this progress more explicitly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used at the end of work as formative assessment but highlighted sections do not clearly identify where and how work needs to be improved • It offers generic improvement tasks that may not be the most appropriate for that student at that time but instead offers a 'ball-park' approach.

<p>Verbal feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It enables students to improve their work 'live' • It gives precise instructions showing students exactly what needs to be improved and how to do this • It is used as part of a physical explanation such as modelling or demonstration to 'walk and talk' students through strengths and areas for improvement • It is used effectively for both individuals and groups of students • Used as an integral part of teaching and learning, responding to needs as they arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a tokenistic recording of feedback using stamps or written record that serves no purpose other than to evidence feedback being given • In the form of imprecise comments or vague instructions that illicit responses showing little, if any, progress • Used as a time-saving process rather than the most effective form of feedback for students; quality of education must be the priority.
<p>Whole-class feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment of students' work is used to inform precise, focused planning that best supports student progress • Opportunities are taken to model the improvements students need to make in a collaborative and supported way • Students are supported in effectively self-identifying areas for improvement • Feedback is as useful and effective as it would be if given on an individual basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to replace individual, generalised 'summary' comments with the same quality of comments but on a bigger scale therefore becoming even more generalised • Excessive documentation completed to evidence feedback; the evidence should be visible in students' work • Students require individual input in order to use the whole-class input well, therefore creating unnecessary duplication of workload.
<p>Cross-sectional marking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to precisely target a sub-group of students in order to identify areas of focus for planning so that their needs can be met • Used as a time-efficient tool to inform whole-class planning • Used in combination with other feedback processes to ensure the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in an unfocused way to gauge general performance • Used as the only method of assessment and feedback • Only used to target the same group of students, except in cases where other effective feedback processes are used alongside.

	needs of all students are met.	
<p style="text-align: center;">Number/grade marking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in summative assessments to gauge an accurate understanding of student performance • Used in the context of a mark scheme so that students can be precisely directed in order to improve the awarded grade or number • Used to inform precise planning that supports students in making progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not understand how to move forward from the number given • Numbers are used out of context and scale and cannot be understood as a step in a journey.

Some important questions for departments to consider...

1. At what stages in the process of learning do I we need to give feedback?
2. Which types of feedback will be most effective in ensuring students make good progress? Is this different at different stages of learning?
3. Do we plan opportunities for students to improve work for themselves, before it is completed and/or after it has been assessed?
4. Do I provide clear 'success criteria', in all key stages, against which students' work is assessed and feedback given? Do I model the process of thinking, planning and writing to ensure students are able to meet this criteria?
5. Is feedback precise and useful? Do students' responses to feedback evidence **genuine improvement** with regard the learning objective/assessment criteria?
6. Do students' books evidence **progress over time**? How?
7. Do students' books evidence marking and feedback as part of a **formative to summative** process?








Marking for Literacy

Students should proof-read their work, focusing on the accuracy of basic literacy skills. These include (but are not limited to):

- * capital letters and accurate use of punctuation
- * paragraphing
- * correct spellings and subject specific terminology
- * clear and accurate expression

Teachers, in all subjects, must also mark for literacy, using the same codes. Students should edit and improve their work in response to these codes.

Symbols

	=New paragraph needed
	=Punctuation needs adding or missing
	=Misplaced punctuation
	=Missing capital letter
	=Misplaced capital letter
	=Wrong word (But correctly spelt)
	=Incorrect spelling