

Assessment for Learning Policy

Policy Review

The responsibility of reviewing and maintaining this policy is Craig Dembicki (Managing Director). This policy will be reviewed annually.

Start date of policy: **19th February 2015**

Last review date: **2nd August 2021**

Date of next review: **1st August 20212**

Signed

Date: 2nd August 2021



Purpose

Our goal at Education 1st is to motivate and engage young people in learning. We encourage our students to be creative, imaginative and active. Research has shown that Assessment for Learning can improve both students' motivation and capacity to learn. Consequently the strategies used within this policy can have a considerable impact on raising achievement and accelerating progress.

What is Assessment for Learning?

Assessment **for** learning is not the same as assessment **of** learning.

Assessment **for** learning is **formative** and takes place all the time in the classroom.

AfL has been defined as 'the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where their learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there' (Assessment Reform Group 2002)

AfL gets straight to the heart of good teaching by:

- helping teachers help students to take the next steps in their learning
- helping students to help each other to take the next steps in their learning
- helping students themselves to take the next steps in their learning

What is Assessment of Learning?

Assessment **of** learning tends to be **summative** and is carried out periodically e.g. at the end of a unit or year or key stage. The teacher undertakes this kind of assessment to judge how well a student is performing.

Research Findings

Our policy is based on key pieces of research.

Inside the Black Box 1998 is an influential pamphlet that summarises the main findings of nine years of international research. Produced by Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam the document is well known and widely used and acts as a touchstone for many professionals in the field of assessment.

Assessment for Learning: Beyond the Black Box 1999 by the Assessment Reform Group follows up the work of Black and Wiliam. It emphasises that good Assessment for Learning:

- is an essential component of teaching and learning
- involves sharing learning objectives with students
- aims to help students to know and to recognise the standards they are aiming for
- involves students in self assessment
- provides feedback which leads students recognising their next steps and how to take them
- involves both teacher and students reviewing and reflecting on assessment information

Related Policies:

Attitude to Learning

Marking

Questioning

- Asking exploratory (not closed) questioning leads to richer learning. (See Bloom's taxonomy)
- Giving wait time for students to think and expecting everyone to contribute to the discussion

Feedback to Students

- The purpose of feedback (written and verbal) is to help the student to make further progress, to boost confidence and self-esteem as learners
- Reflecting together on achievement of the Learning Objective at the end of each lesson so the student has immediate feedback on how they have done.
- Giving targeted feedback so that the focus of the learning becomes the effort needed to improve, not the ego of the student concerned – evidence shows that this is particularly effective with weaker learners.
- Making the feedback formative - "next you need to..."
- Building opportunities into lesson planning for students to act on feedback. Feedback is useless unless acted on.

Peer Discussions

- Build students' own confidence in their own work
- Encourage students to voice their answers within a group situation
- Reflect on what has gone well and what needs to improve
- For students to build confidence in themselves as learners

The Formative Use of Testing

- Revision for tests should be planned through a review of the learning i.e. what were the aims of the learning that were undertaken?
- Through using assessments such as mock exams, teachers can get students to reflect on their exam technique and answers.

Assessment for Learning in Lessons - Teachers'Toolkit

Key characteristics of AFL Philosophy/Principles	Ideas & good practice
<p><u>Sharing learning objectives with students</u></p> <p>All learners need to understand what they are being asked to learn and more importantly, why.</p> <p>Good feedback depends on the above.</p> <p>All students need to understand the big picture.</p> <p>Understanding how a particular activity fits into long term aims is important in connecting learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning objectives written on board at beginning of lesson and shared. ● Provide a lesson title in the form of a question. ● Make links with previous/future topics. ● Link learning objectives to end of unit/progress tests. ● Students could provide lesson objectives to promote ownership of objectives. ● Use past work to demonstrate to students the standard of work expected. ● Teacher modelling/ICT modelling/visual modelling to demonstrate objective. ● Students identify key words in the learning objective. ● Return to learning objectives in the plenary. ● Celebrate progress with verbal feedback, stickers, individual and classroom rewards

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<p><u>Questioning</u></p> <p>Developing students' capacity for thinking and independent learning can be promoted through asking more open ended questions.</p> <p>Wait time has to be increased to allow students to think about the question and make a considered response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SOW should be question led. ● Involving students at the start of the lesson through open and closed question starters. ● Different types of questioning i.e. open, closed, higher order, Blooms taxonomy ● Explicit teaching of how to ask questions. ● Ground rules on listening to peers. ● Encouraging everyone to engage with the question e.g. use 'no hands up'. ● Give students short discussion time in before discussing as a whole group if appropriate. ● Questions about new material at the beginning of a course/lesson to encourage a community of enquiry. ● A token/object governs who can answer the questions. ● Students asked to extend the answers of their peers. ● Give students an answer, they think what the question was. ● Questions on post-it notes or mini white boards. ● Aim to include every child through peer questioning. ● Students ask questions about each other's work. ● Mini quiz/questioning games. ● Ask students at the end of the session what they have learnt during the day

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<p><u>Formative use of summative tests</u></p> <p>Summative tests and assessments should be a positive part of the learning process and used as a snapshot of student progress, not to dominate the assessment picture.</p> <p>Summative tests can be marked using AfL principles.</p> <p>Active involvement of students in the test process can help students see that they can be the beneficiaries rather than the victims of testing.</p> <p>Students should be engaged in a reflective review of the work they have done to enable them to plan their next steps effectively.</p> <p>Students should be encouraged to apply criteria to help them understand how their work might be improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On an individual basis students will discuss a topic with their teacher for revision. ● Students set and mark own questions or practical activities. ● Students ‘unpick’ model answer. ● Students rewrite a particular section to improve a specific criteria. ● Recap past assessments allowing students to fully realise how many skills they have learned. ● Blank piece of paper write down/design a poster of all you know about a topic. ● Short snappy tests to assess shortfalls in learning and identify areas for revision. ● Examine/discuss public examination criteria. ● Use pre mocks, mocks and coursework drafts as key work for the formative use of summative assessment. ● Identify with the student their age related results and expectations, to encourage and guide students to make progress ● Student IEP’s are used as a tool to support students with different forms of testing

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<p><u>Providing feedback which leads students to recognise their next steps and how to take them:</u></p> <p>Good feedback involves good planning. Unless activities are designed to enable good feedback, it is highly unlikely that good feedback can take place.</p> <p>Research shows that the greatest gains were made by students who received comment only marking.</p> <p>Where comments and grades are given, students in the main ignore the comments.</p> <p>Students need to be informed of what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve.</p> <p>Feedback that focuses on what needs to be done can encourage all to believe that they can improve.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the assessment grid to indicate what the student has learnt in relation to the objective, something they have done well, a specific next step for improvement ● Written comments explain how the student is making progress over time ● Give the student time to respond to/act upon the written feedback ● Give frequent oral feedback during the lesson ● Show examples of previous work and what contributes to a good piece of work ● Focussing marking on a single feature which has been made explicit to the students in advance ● Using colour to highlight what student has done well/needs to improve on ● Use rewards system as incentives for students to produce good work

New Staff

- AFL is part of the induction of new teaching staff in the alternative provision.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is crucial we monitor the quality of feedback and marking.

Our strategies will include;

- Sampling of work
- Classroom observations
- Student Voice
- Audits carried out through external agencies e.g. education consultant, HMI and OFSTED.