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# NCBIS Assessment, Data and Reporting

Secondary School 2023-2025

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## 1. Introduction and Aims

At NCBIS, we believe that assessment is not an 'event', it is not just a test at the end of a unit but rather a continuous process, a dialogue between the teacher and student that provides students with the tools to address their weakness and encourages them to assume responsibility for their own learning. Each interaction we have with students provides 'data' that can be used to improve teaching, planning, curriculum design and inform feedback that supports student learning. However, we recognise that progress in learning is not linear; therefore, practises such as spacing and retrieval practice is used to ensure that the curriculum is constantly revisited and assessed appropriately. The aforementioned is part of our commitment to the belief that: **The curriculum is the progression model** (Counsell, 2018).

The policy that follows:

- Will provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment.
- Outline our approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents.
- Outline how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated.

The policy should also be read in conjunction with the Feedback, Reflection and Marking Policy.

### 1.1 Aims

The following aims underpin our approach to assessment:

- All forms of assessment should be used to improve teaching and learning.
- Assessment informs planning and the delivery of the curriculum.
- Assessments assess the knowledge and skills that have been taught.
- Assessment provides information for target setting for individuals, groups and cohorts.
- Where possible, we operate a feedback approach, as research has shown that tailored feedback improves student outcomes more when no grade/level is attached to the student's work.
- Testing should be rigorous and reliable if used.
- Assessment helps a child to recognise the next steps in their learning.
- Provides reliable information to parents about how their child is doing.
- Assessment data is used as part of self, year group/department and whole school evaluation.
- Assessment practice is reviewed to ensure that NCBIS is keeping up with international best practice.
- The ethos of High Performance Learning is used as the overarching philosophy.

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment. At NCBIS we operate a feedback approach; however,

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when we do report grades, most specifically on report cards, we use a word system based on age related expectations (KS3), 9-1 system (KS4) and A\*-G or 7-1 (KS5).

### **3. Principles of Assessment**

At NCBIS, we assess both formatively and summatively. What follows is an outline of our understanding of both formative and summative assessment.

#### **3.1 Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is the use of day-to-day, often informal, assessments to explore students' understanding. It enables the teacher to decide how best to help students develop that understanding. Any assessment can be used formatively and it's important to distinguish between the process of formative assessment and the actual assessments used by teachers. Making this distinction is crucial because a common misinterpretation of formative assessment is that a series of summative assessments constitutes formative assessment. This is very much not the case; what makes an assessment formative is what the teacher does with the information it generates. Unless the result of the assessment is used to change something in the teaching or learning, there is nothing formative taking place. It should be noted that assessments can often be used for both formative and summative purposes.

***'Formative and summative are not labels for different types or forms of assessment but describe how assessments are used. For example, a task or activity is not formative unless the information it provides is actually used to progress learning.'***

In Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam's study *Inside the Black Box*, they explain assessment is only formative when it is an integral part of the learning and teaching process, and the assessment evidence is used to modify teaching to meet the needs of students and improve learning. Since the publication of *Inside the Black Box*, considerable attention has been given to formative assessment in educational research. John Hattie, Professor of Education and Director of the Melbourne Education Research Institute, is one of the most well-known proponents of evidence-based education and formative assessment. Hattie's extensive meta-analysis of educational research was published as *Visible Learning* in 2008. In *Visible Learning*, he identifies which educational interventions are worth using in terms of their effect size. The research shows that approaches associated with formative assessment are among the techniques that have the largest effect size; they make the most difference to student outcomes.

##### **3.1.1 Formative Assessment in Practice**

The following are concepts and pedagogical techniques associated with formative assessment.

- Setting and sharing learning intentions and success criteria that match with the current readiness of students.
  - Pitching activities at a degree of demand that stretch and challenges students that adheres to Rosenshine's Principles of success rate.
  - Effective questioning to check for understanding and to distribute requests for responses evenly among the class.
  - Providing feedback that has a genuinely formative function by giving details of how to make further progress.
  - Helping students to reflect on and take ownership of their learning.
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### 3.1.2 Formative Assessment: Assessment for Learning

Formative assessment is often referred to synonymously with Assessment for Learning (AfL). However, AfL refers specifically to the collection of approaches and techniques associated with the practice of formative assessment. AfL involves the feedback loop of teachers gathering evidence about students' learning by:

- Observing
- Listening
- Questioning
- Discussing
- Reviewing their work in progress.

Assessment for Learning takes place during day-to-day classroom practice and while students are engaged in learning. It also gives students an active role in the assessment process. Students work with the teacher to determine what is being learned and to identify the next steps. Both parties then use the feedback to improve the learning. The feedback includes information on: how the students are learning; their progress; the nature of their understanding; and the difficulties they are having.

### 3.2 Summative Assessment

Summative assessment usually takes place after students have completed units of work or modules at the end of each term and/or year. The information it gives indicates progress and achievement usually in percentage terms alongside feedback. Summative assessment is the more formal summing-up of a students' progress. This information can then be provided to parents or used for certification as part of a formal examination course.

Summative assessment gives students, parents and teachers valuable information about a student's overall performance at a specific point in their learning. It provides information about their progress in: subject knowledge; understanding; and skills and capabilities. A grade or percentage can indicate a student's rank in the class, year group or performance in a qualification such as an IGCSE. However, without additional information this grade is of little value in improving the student's learning and will remain only a record of a point in time. The key to improving learning is for teachers to share with students what these grades or numbers mean in terms of what the student has demonstrated they can do and **what the next steps to improve their learning will be**, which is why NCBIS places an emphasis on feedback. Therefore, to be genuinely worthwhile, it is helpful to the student if summative assessments are also interpreted formatively before moving on.

#### 3.2.1 Use of summative assessment

Subject teachers and school managers can use the outcomes of summative assessments for a range of purposes, including:

- Benchmarking
  - Monitoring progress
  - Target setting
  - Placing students in subject classes; and
  - To help students make informed decisions about subject option choices.
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### 3.2.2 Summative assessment in practice

To be effective, quality summative assessment should:

- Take account of all the objectives or outcomes of the curriculum taught to that date.
- Be used to indicate a student's progress at the end of a period of learning, for example a unit of work or a module.
- Take account of formative assessments throughout the year.
- Be formative in its own right, giving teachers insights into what students have and have not learned, enabling them to adapt their practices and feedback on what students did or did not do well.

Research suggests that teachers should make greater use of summative assessment to support learning by:

- Giving students opportunities to review their work before the assessment.
- To familiarise themselves with the type of assessment set.
- To identify areas where understanding is not secure.
- Involve students in the development of the assessments and the setting of assessment criteria to help develop their understanding of the assessment.
- Focus on areas for improvement.
- Involve students in marking and discussing their assessment performance, including the use of peer and self-evaluation.
- Also include quality feedback that focuses on the student's performance and areas of improvement.

## 4. Moderation

Moderation is a one part of our approach to assessment at NCBIS. Moderation should take place two times per year, as outlined on the Academic Calendar; however, in reality, it will take place much more often during professional conversations with our colleagues.

## 5. External Baselines and benchmarks

At NCBIS, external baselines are done at the beginning or end of each academic year. The data is analysed by SLT and by year groups/departments with the aim of improving teaching and learning to meet the individual needs of our students. They are as follows:

- GL Cat4 tests for Year 7, Year 10 and Year 12
- GL Progress Tests for Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10.
- GL NGRT for all Secondary Year Groups.

## 6. Assessment Schedule and Reporting

At NCBIS, we believe that assessment is an ongoing progress, and we **do not advocate 'testing' for the purpose of reports**. Consequently, the assessment calendar outlines specific times for the 5 data collections we have each year rather than the times of specific assessments, bar the end of year exams that take place in May/June each academic year. This is to place an emphasis on the use of data with each period of data collection. The data points are followed by a analysis review, culminating in pupil progress meetings three times per year.

At NCBIS we value the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with parents and offer an open-door policy for parents to book meetings. Parent Teacher Conferences (PTCs) are two times per year for each year group, with a further third targeted PTC for each year focussing on selected students. The PTCs are evenly spaced out throughout the year and can be found in the Academic Calendar

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## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

The senior leadership and middle leadership are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to.
- Monitoring standards within each subject.
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups.
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement.

### Middle Leadership Only

- Reporting to SLT on all key aspects of pupil progress and attainment, including current standards and trends over previous years.

### Teachers

Teachers are responsible for following the assessment procedures outlined in this policy.

## **8. Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed every year by the senior leadership and middle leadership. All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Senior leadership will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through:

- Lesson observations
- Book looks
- Pupil progress meetings
- Lesson walkthroughs
- Moderation

## **9. Recommended Grades for Sixth Form**

If a student fails to achieve a grade 6 in their chosen subjects at GCSE/IGCSE, and the student wants to continue studying at A Level/IB, the school reserves the right to remove their academic figures from the final published school results. During this process, senior leaders will meet students and parents and explain this outcome.

If a student fails to achieve a passing grade of a grade 4 in English and/or maths, and the student continues studying at NCBIS, the school will commit to supporting that student for a retake of the exam in the next academic year.

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