



LOUGHBOROUGH High School

Policy Title: Assessment and Homework Policy

Approved By: The LHS Board

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Point of Contact (Reviewer): Dr Sean Reid

LHS assessment, homework and feedback policy 2023 – 2024

The below has been written to provide guidance to the assessment, homework and feedback philosophies of Loughborough High School. This is an overarching document to inform and explain school practice: it is not a blunt school policy, as subjects will assess in different ways and in different years. Our departments think carefully and enact the assessment, homework and feedback practices best suited to their subject and the given year groups in question within the spirit and guidance of this framework.

All of the points offered below are not exhaustive, but provide some guidance to the types of ways in which we assess pupil progress. This policy serves to outline the significant thought, research and professional consideration that goes into our approach to assessment, homework and feedback in all ways.

Assessment

Assessment at Loughborough High takes many forms, including:

- Written work (in a variety of ways but including reading and comprehension activities, creative writing and past exam questions to provide a few examples)
- Non-written work (including drawing, design production and experiments for example)
- Performance work (in music, art and PE for example)
- Group and presentation work
- Research tasks and delivery

The above can and do of course overlap. Work can be assessed in a variety of forums: in class; in homework; in assessments in class; in exams. The work can be a singular, isolated test of learning or a cumulative journey across time.

Assessment at Loughborough High is intended to be meaningful, interesting, challenging and exciting. It informs progress and areas for future consideration. It is not and should not be considered a negative. Improvement is incremental, does not simply rise in a straight upwards line and there will be times when an assessment does not go as a student might have hoped. Resilience to learn from assessment experience is crucial not just for school, but for life. Wherever possible we aim to give students one week's notice ahead of any major topic tests or assessments.

Grading of assessments

In all of our reporting processes we aim to be evidenced, honest and fair in our judgements.

Years 7 - 9

For Years 7 – 9, pieces are assessed and reported on cumulatively in reports where attainment and effort grades are offered, as follows:

Attainment	Effort
5 = excellent 4 = very good 3 = good 2 = satisfactory 1 = unsatisfactory	E = Excellent VG = very good G = good RI = requires improvement U = unsatisfactory

This above numbering allows us to begin introducing pupils to the assessment numeration of GCSE work, to allow a picture of attainment progress through a student's time at the school. Departments will assess attainment leading to these reporting points in a number of ways, including on the 5-1 scale, raw marks, percentages and indeed in other ways. This will all build cumulatively into a 5-1 grading in reports. Year 9

Science summer exams are graded on the 6-1 scale, reflecting the completion of the first year of IGCSE Science study that is undertaken in Year 9.

We also seek to recognise and reward effort. Effort should be a combination of attitudes to learning (behaviour, punctuality etc.), contributions in class as well as assessed pieces. It is not intended here to become too prescriptive, but it would seem reasonable for a student to be doing well in all these aspects of effort to be given an Excellent overall. The student who maybe is well behaved and attentive in class and produces lovely assessed work but maybe doesn't offer as much verbally might be given a Very Good for effort, in comparison.

Years 10 and 11

For Years 10 and 11, we grade on the GCSE attainment scales of 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

In Year 10, grades are capped at a 7 until the summer exams to manage pupil expectation and set realistic parameters of attainment for the first full year of GCSE study. From the Year 10 summer exams onwards the maximum grade available increases to 8. Grade 9s and the full 9-1 scale are awarded from the Year 11 mocks onwards in all subjects. Effort grades are also awarded as above for Years 7 – 9 where appropriate.

We try to be evidence-based in all we do. However, for some subjects some professional discretion is afforded when awarding grades, recognising the different trajectories and development points of subjects.

Thursday afternoon enrichment options are reported slightly differently due to their reduced contact time. A brief summary is provided below for HPQ, Sports Leaders, Additional Maths and GCSE short course Music. CCF is not academically reported as an activity.

- Year 10 attainment and effort grades in January: GCSE short course Music only
- Summer of Year 10: binary satisfactory/unsatisfactory progress for HPQ/Sports Leaders; A-E for Additional Maths; 8-1 GCSE short course Music
- November of Year 11: as above, with effort grades given too in Additional Maths and GCSE short course Music
- January mocks: GCSE short course Music and Additional Maths report grades from exams

Music short course GCSE parents' evenings appointments are bookable in the June of Year 10 and February of Year 11: all other Thursday afternoon activities are not due to staffing needs in mainstream timetable teaching.

Sixth Form

For Year 12, we grade on a scale of A*-E. There is a cap to grade Bs for reporting in the first autumn term in Year 12 which then increases to an A in the spring term until the summer exams in Year 12, when the A* grade is introduced. For Year 13 we grade on an A*-E grading system all year. No effort grades are given.

Homework

Homework forms part of our assessment programme. Homework is offered to allow extended learning away from lesson time, develops students' independence and allows the reinforcement of material learnt at school. Homework timetables provide guidance to the scheduled setting of homework in a week in Years 7 – 11. We always try to provide a reasonable time for the completion of homework when set, accepting the students have busy lives. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all homework in Years 7 - 11 will have at least two weekday evenings for completion. We do not rigidly set homework in every available slot, and teachers have the discretion to occasionally not set homework. Sixth Form students see work set as appropriate by staff.

Homework can take a number of forms, many of which are outlined as above in the school's overall approach to assessment. In addition, the following are also valid and useful homework activities:

- Consolidation and reflection upon previous work across the year
- Revision for an upcoming assessment
- Academic extension, in pushing the students into new and unusual fields of study

Students are issued with homework timetables in Years 7 - 11. The homework timetables have been planned so:

- There is an age-appropriate demand for homework on our students
- The homework demand increases as the students get older
- It allows students to explore subjects outside lessons yet takes their wellbeing into consideration
- There is space for students who have 25% Extra Time to complete their work in line with the maximum time advised provided by Duke University (see below)
- The suggested timings are generally maximums for a teacher to set for those without Extra Time
- No one does more than two hours of homework a night, even in the Sixth Form

As a guide we would expect:

- A Year 7 to do 2 x 25 minutes homeworks per night
- A Year 8 to do 2 x 30 minutes homeworks per night
- A Year 9 to do 2 x 35 minutes homeworks per night
- A Year 10 to do 2 x 40 minutes homeworks per night
- A Year 11 to do 2 x 45 minutes homeworks per night

Students will receive varying amounts of homework depending by day due to the way in which subjects fall in timetabling, with deadlines coming at different times for each subject thereafter due to when lessons fall. However, we would advise that all students follow the guidance for undertaking homework on any given evening as below, which is based upon significant investigation and research into homework by Duke University in the USA:

Year group	Maximum amount of advised time on homework in any evening
7	70
8	80
9	90
10	100
11	110
Sixth Form	120

Absolutely no student – including at Sixth Form level – should do more than two hours of homework a night regularly. Sixth Formers should of course utilise their free periods for further study when not in directly-taught lessons in addition to this homework time guidance as above though.

If any student is struggling to complete homework for whatever reason, they should approach their teacher to highlight the situation and seek guidance and an extension where necessary. If a student is having broader troubles with completing homework, Study Support help is available for any student with generic, study skills queries. Please contact Learning Support for more information about this help. Form Tutors are also here to support students with all academic matters.

We do not set holiday homework for Years 7 – 10 and try to limit this if work is set for Years 11 – 13. Homework will be set as normal in the last weeks of terms which should be completed as normal. But this is not holiday homework per se, and we certainly do not set 'filler' homeworks purely if the students are on holiday.

Feedback

Assessment allows the opportunity for feedback and further development for the future. Assessment and then feedback can take a variety of forms, including:

- Assessment for future learning – often called formative assessment. This will generally include comments and guidance for future improvement
- Assessment of learning – often called summative assessment. This will generally include a number, percentage or grade. Although summative assessment is generally about providing a yardstick – of where a student is – it is also of course formative, providing guidance for future learning too
- Where a grade or mark is given, we generally do not provide extensive written feedback
- Feedback can be written, verbal, delivered by the teacher but also from self-reflection and self-assessment, peer assessment, group / class assessment and through online resources that assess pupil work.

Self- and peer- assessment have been shown to be as effective as teacher assessment, and we encourage a range of assessment deliveries

- It is important to note that marking and feedback are two different things. Books can have lots of teacher annotation, but maybe limited feedback of real use that has been absorbed by a pupil. Conversely, a book or file might have less teacher annotation, but pupils might have availed of excellent feedback individually, verbally in class and the like. Essentially, not all feedback can be seen and recorded in a book or file
- Feedback is a two-way process: it is not intended to be a one-way stream from teacher to pupil. The best feedback initiates a discussion and engagement for future learning that is personal and individualised
- Feedback is formally provided to parents and carers too via reports and parents' evenings, as well as at other times across the year

As the above hopefully shows, assessment, homework and feedback are multi-faceted, dynamic and moving enterprises in the twenty-first century. It is important for all stakeholders to appreciate that learning and education have evolved significantly over the last decades, and the experience that parents or carers might have had at school themselves is now likely to be radically different to what the students at Loughborough High experience.

We directly address these matters with the girls throughout the year to develop their understanding about these principles.

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