



Assessment Policy

Currently under review

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Chair of IEB	_____

Assessment Policy

This assessment policy exists to ensure that students, parents and staff have a clear understanding of assessment protocols at Orion Academy.

Guiding principles

The school is guided by the following principles concerning assessment

- Assessment should be viewed as essential to, and an integral part of, effective teaching and learning. It should be incorporated into the planning, delivery and review cycle of learning taking place across lessons, schemes of learning and, longer term, across years and key stages;
- The purpose of assessment is to provide information for a range of audiences;
- Assessment will crucially inform teachers about what will be taught next and which skills or competencies need further repetition or generalisation across a range of situations;
- Assessment will always inform the school's strategic planning and this will be recognised in the raising achievement plan;
- Assessment will provide key stakeholders, such as staff and parents, with valuable information about the profile of our learners;
- The criteria for assessment will be made clear and be consistently applied to ensure equal opportunities for all, however the policy recognises that different areas of learning have specific needs and decisions can be made at an individual subject level;
- Our assessment uses Assessment for Learning principles and therefore students will be involved with assessment as much as possible;
- All assessment will be informed by national guidance and national benchmarking will be used wherever possible.

Types of assessment

The following types of assessment are used:

- Formative: the information gained affects the next learning experience;
- Diagnostic: finding out what attitudes, knowledge, understanding or skills still need to be developed;
- Evaluative: analysing the impact of planning, teaching and the curriculum on students' outcomes;
- Summative: the systematic recording of information which leads towards a summary.

Target setting

We set ambitious targets for our students using FFT Aspire. This allows us to benchmark our students' progress against local and national data. Key to our target setting for all students is their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes which are monitored by Termly Outcomes Plans (TOPs). We also consider each student's learning profile; the progress they have made so far; any significant gaps in learning; specific barriers to learning; prior knowledge; how to maximise and accelerate the mastery of subject specific skills as well as the broad development of social and emotional aspects of learning.

As well as setting academic targets, we also set targets for social factors which impact on academic progress such as attendance. This is targeted through whole school % targets, identified cohorts where increased attendance is required and with individual students where necessary.

Assessment will be built explicitly into lesson planning, with a strong focus on assessment for learning strategies that involve students in self and peer assessment. Learning is reviewed regularly during lessons via the use of mini-plenaries and across a sequence of lessons via formal assessments.

For students in Key Stage 3, rather than assessing students by national curriculum levels, outcomes are measured by a % of the competencies required to fulfil the gradations of skill toward specific assessment objectives for the specific curriculum area. For example, a student may be assessed in English as having achieved E1.65 which means that the student has achieved all of the skills competencies for Entry Level 1 in English and 65% of the competencies of Entry Level 2 in English. Students in Key Stage 4 are assessed against the same Assessment objectives but often at a higher level of competency. For example, a student may be assessed in English as having achieved E3.25 which means that the student has achieved all of the skills competencies for Entry Level 3 in English and 25% of the competencies of GCSE grade 1 in English.

Baseline assessment

Assessment of learners at Orion Academy begins with accurate baseline assessment on which progression can be measured. The following types of assessment are used:

Assessment tool	Assessment information	Location
Baseline assessments in mathematics, English and science	current knowledge of the National Curriculum Programmes of study	Assessment folder
Access Reading Test (ART)	literal comprehension, analysis, vocabulary and inference skills	Assessment folder
Vernon's Spelling Test	spelling age and indication of gaps in spelling knowledge and skills	Assessment folder
Sandwell Early Numeracy Test	current understanding of five strands of basic number skills: identification of numbers, oral counting, value/computation, object counting and use of mathematical language	Assessment folder
Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)	Identification of handwriting difficulties including speed, accuracy and legibility	Assessment folder

Accreditation

All students have opportunities to be entered into public examinations and/or receive accreditation from exam boards. Entries will be linked to the curriculum being offered to each class group and consideration is also given to the needs of individual students as stated on their EHCPs.

Statutory reporting

The progress of each student is recorded centrally within the school and is reported annually to the Local Authority. This recording of progress enables the school to monitor and evaluate the progress of each student and identified groups of students as well as ensuring we meet statutory responsibilities e.g. Key Stage 2 Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) and accreditation at Key Stage 4.

Progression

Orion Academy provides high quality formative assessment, rather than merely producing summative grades, to ensure that progress will evidence a deepening understanding and mastery than just concentrating on students moving on to work of greater difficulty. We understand that progression can also be about consolidation, especially when assessing students with ASC, as outlined in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment Without Levels (September 2015). Our assessment model enables students with ASC and SEMH to make sustained and rapid progress without confining them to a linear assessment tool and this will be achieved through prioritising gaps in knowledge and by consolidating skills.

Every student has individual percentile targets set in September, which are reviewed at three points across the year by the senior leadership team. This is cross-referenced with historical progress, across the whole school and within specific cohorts e.g. year group, primary SEND need. At these data points we will assess if students are on track to meet or exceed their targets. In addition to this, excellent formative feedback and teacher assessment will be used throughout; class teachers and senior leaders will moderate assessments across classes, carry out classroom observations, conduct learning walks, sample work and collect and analyse cohort data sets to ensure that assessment is carried out effectively.

Recording assessment

Student assessments are stored in each student's assessment folders, where a clear record of progression can be found including development in attainment, attitude to learning and learning style.

Feedback

Parents receive formal feedback regarding assessment four times a year; three TOPs meetings and one formal end of year written report. In addition to this, parents will also receive informal feedback via phone calls, postcards home and informal meetings.