UTC South Durham Assessment and Marking Policy

Date of adoption	August 2018
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Signed: (Principal)	**Date:** 30 August 2018
Signed: (Chair of Trustees)	**Date:**

Date to be reviewed by	July 2020
Responsibility	Deputy Principal / Vice Principal

1. Statement of principles

The purpose of this policy is to enable UTC South Durham to:

- All students will have equal opportunities to be involved in their own learning, progress and performance
- Emphasise achievement and progress rather than failure, and assessment will enable students to improve on their current progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning
- Raise expectations and standards
- Realise our vision and aims
- Use data in an intelligent way, ensuring that we provide teachers and students with information which allows them to progress rather than data which overwhelms
- Collect summative data on the progress of students, but understand that collection of data itself will not aid progress. We believe that an important principle is to use assessment as an intrinsic part of the teaching and learning process

At UTC South Durham our curriculum is designed to:

- Support innovative learning and teaching so that exciting and stretching opportunities exist for all our students
- Enable our partners to work with us to ensure that learning is exciting, engaging and related to their industries
- Deliver the main outcome for students, which is to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and personal attributes to enable them to successfully embark on a career in engineering or advanced manufacturing
- Deliver the core skills of leadership, team work, independent enquiry, self-management, reflective learning, communication, problem solving and resilience; central to student development. These are as important as the achievement of qualifications
- Entice and engage students in active learning. This will be the core of the curriculum around which all 'subjects' will revolve; for example acquiring mathematical and scientific skills and understanding through the exploration of practical real business situations
- Allow each student to work on major work-related industry projects. These projects will be designed in conjunction with local employers and involve both practical and theoretical elements. Pitches and presentations to employers will be part of the assessment as well as adding the motivation of a competitive element. Projects will promote collaborative and enquiry-led learning and foster self-confidence and independence in students

2. UTC South Durham mission, vision and values

- **Excellence** - We strive for excellence in all that we do with every activity focused on providing an outstanding academic and practical technical education for students
- **Innovation** - We are inspired by and enthusiastic about science, technology, engineering and maths. We encourage our students and staff to experiment, invent and pioneer new technology, products, processes and learning methods
- **Collaboration** - We encourage partnerships amongst students and with employers, education providers and community groups, enabling students to develop workplace skills, form close links with businesses and prepare for their future careers
- **Accessibility** - We welcome to our community people from different backgrounds, gender, abilities and locations. All students, irrespective of their starting point, will thrive and progress to meaningful education, employment or training
- **Integrity** - We expect high standards of our students and staff and we show mutual respect to others reflecting the UTC's ethos as a grown-up place to learn

3. Policy aims

To make full and effective use of all data collected on students in order to set challenging targets for their performance at all levels.

- To involve students actively in their own learning and progress
- To ensure that students have a clear idea of how all learning (in lessons, project time and enrichment) contributes to their overall achievement in building knowledge, skills and behaviour
- To guide students on what they should do to improve their performance and celebrate what they have achieved
- To achieve consistency in the way in which students expect their progress to be shared with them, including feedback on how they can improve
- To give teachers a range of information which will help them know if particular lessons, topics or subjects have been properly understood by all students, and to plan work best suited to each individual
- To enable mentors to support and understand students' development
- To put in place targeted intervention to support individual student progress in their areas of need
- To inform parents about their child's progress and encourage their support of the learning process
- To enable FDs and HODs to evaluate areas of strength and weakness within the delivery of the curriculum, aiding further development
- To ensure that the SLT, FDs and HODs can monitor progress effectively within the UTC
- To provide appropriate information for prospective employers and other external agencies

3.1. Guidelines

- Teachers will provide constructive feedback for students enabling them to close the gap between current performance and target grades. Assessment within the Department or Faculty will relate to target grades on a regular basis, indicating to students the skills, knowledge and understanding in which they are secure and those that need improvement.
- Feedback to students, for example in marking, will place emphasis upon steps towards future progress rather than merely recording levels attained. We recognise that if comments are always juxtaposed with levels and grades they may not be read or heeded and therefore, some less formal assessment may not give grading of work.
- We use coherent and consistent methods of internal assessment and marking to enable students to understand what needs to be done in order to make outstanding progress
- Classroom assessment will be formal on a regular basis and informal on a continuous basis. It is an expectation that common assessment tasks in schemes of work will be used for moderation and standardisation, and that this portfolio of assessed work will be kept as a Department assessment tool, exemplifying work at a particular level. Marking will follow the principles set out in the UTC Marking Guidance document and will be adapted by department to fit their specific needs
- Learning objectives for lessons and units of work will be shared with students in accordance with the Teaching and Learning Policy
- Departments will keep an up to date and comprehensive spreadsheet, detailing student progress
- An agreed set of assessment data will be centrally recorded on Bromcom and SISRA
- Data collection and distribution will be done according to a published timetable which will allow staff to plan their work effectively
- Data from external examinations, tests and commercial systems will be collected and collated centrally and made available throughout the UTC as required, an example would be GL Assessment's Digital Solution CAT testing and Progress Tests in Maths and English.
- Class teachers will have data relating to prior performance and target grades. This data will inform the process of planning for lessons and expectations placed upon students
- FDs and HODs will receive data in a format that is helpful to analyse. Analysis of team performance will be carried out as directed by the Vice Principal
- Class teachers will complete a review of their teaching groups in accordance with the assessment schedule. Whole class, group and individual trends will be identified and action plans compiled for each teaching group following the data captures
- Students and parents will be actively involved in the assessment process and kept properly informed through effective reports
- Students will be able to assess themselves against assessment criteria and will know what they have to do to improve
- The reporting system will give students the opportunity to comment on their progress
- Students' achievements will not be limited to performance in national tests and examinations but more broadly defined. Recognition will be given to achievement and progress in a range of forms.
- Opportunities and encouragement will be given to participate in a wide range of activities both within faculties and in the extra-curricular and enrichment dimensions of the UTC
- Communication to parents will include student participation and the development of skills and behaviours relevant to work based skills
- Opportunities for peer and self-assessment will be given to students on a regular basis within faculties.
- Criteria for grades and levels will be made explicit to students in language that they can easily understand

4. Responsibilities

Students must:

- Be reflective and take responsibility for improving their own learning and acting on marking / feedback
- Know when to ask for help if needed
- Provide feedback about their learning to staff in a positive and constructive manner
- Take pride in their work and follow the UTC presentation guidelines

Teachers should:

- **Ensure that the lesson content is appropriate to the age and ability of the students, using, where appropriate, differentiated materials and resources**
- **Share clear learning objectives with students and show students what is expected of them plus give clear feedback to students on their performance**
- **Demonstrate high expectations of students**
- Engage in peer lesson observation
- Support Faculty and department colleagues regarding teaching and learning
- Consider implications of Assessment for Learning and pedagogical matters relating to assessment (for learning)
- Value students' contributions and make use of praise and reward to underline the value of achievement
- Reflect on their teaching and the subsequent progress made by students, adapting planning and using alternative strategies as appropriate
- Be competent in using a range of datasets for class, sub-group and individuals to inform planning / set challenging targets /provide pertinent feedback / contribute to UTC monitoring systems

Faculty Directors and Heads of Department are to:

- **Monitor the quality of assessment and marking of all teachers in their Depatment using the agreed self-evaluation process**
- **Monitor the impact of assessment and marking on student achievement**
- Be actively involved in parental consultations
- Conduct lesson observations
- Ensure that assessment and marking developments are included in Department meeting agendas and CPD activities
- Ensuring compliance with the assessment schedule of the UTC
- Use feedback from learning walks and QA to lead improvement in their department
- Formulate an action plan following reviews and data collections with the VP responsible for teaching and learning
- Manage progress checks
- Check the quality of reports and the inclusion of extra-curricular achievements of students
- Sample students' work
- Support individual teachers where appropriate

Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning is to:

- To ensure that assessment and marking developments are included in CPD activities and programmes
- To ensure staff are aware of current research and national initiatives related to assessment and marking
- To lead and manage the teaching and learning review process for subject areas (which involves monitoring the assessment and marking quality of all teachers)
- To formulate, with FDs and HODs, assessment and marking action plans following the review process
- Review and propose updates to this policy in the light of on-going developments and the changing needs of the UTC
- Conduct lesson observations, some may be joint observations with other teaching staff.
- Manage cycle of meetings with FDs and HODs to interpret and understand performance data
- Hold an overview of performance within year groups
- Analyse the use of progress checks and data within the pastoral structure

Vice Principal for Curriculum is to:

- Oversee production of reports of whole UTC performance
- Oversee production and management of assessment and reporting cycle
- Quality assure reports

Deputy Principal is to:

- Line manage Exams/Data Manager

Trustees are to:

- Support the use of appropriate assessment and marking strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Monitor teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations
- Seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality assessment and marking
- Monitor the effectiveness of the UTC's assessment and marking approaches through the UTC's self-review processes, which include reports from FDs and the Principal's termly report to trusties

Parents / Carers are to:

- Give due importance to home learning and support their child to develop literacy and numeracy skills
- Be realistic about their child's abilities and promote a positive attitude towards UTC and learning in general
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home-UTC agreement.

5. Support for staff

Staff will be supported in implementing the policy through Professional Development opportunities. These opportunities will include but not be limited to:

- Sharing good practice / peer observations
- Identification of high quality training and progression opportunities
- UTC regional and national meetings
- Regular and meaningful performance review by SLT, FDs and HODs

6. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of assessment / marking is highly complex and far-reaching. It includes all matters relating to the collection and use of assessment data as well as teaching and learning issues in the classroom. It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to ensure this policy is adhered to. This will be supported by a programme of monitoring and evaluation directed by the Vice Principal responsible for teaching and learning, involving all teaching staff in the process.

Monitoring and evaluation checklist below is intended to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive:

- Formal work sampling by SLT, FDs, HODs and relevant trustees on a regular basis to assess consistency / quality
- Analysis of student progress and attainment data
- Performance Management Systems
- Student voice feedback as well as parental and other stakeholder feedback
- SEF / DiP cycle as well as subject quality assurance e.g. subject reviews
- Analysis of exam, controlled assessment and assignment data
- Establishing an 'open-door' culture in order to encourage and develop the above processes

7. Other policies / documents

This policy should be read in combination with other UTC South Durham policies/documents:

- Baseline Testing and Target Setting Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Education Plan
- Staff Appraisal Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Non Negotiables
- UTC presentation of work guidelines

Updated Appendix 1 – From UTC South Durham Assessment and Marking Policy

1. **Marking with regulatory and impact**

All teaching staff will:

- Ensure that AfL strategies are planned for and in place in all lessons, and that lessons are planned and adapted in light of this

- Acknowledge all work completed by students, at a minimum of after every 5 hours of learning time in their subject or every 2 weeks whichever is soonest. Much of the work may be acknowledged by a tick mark, which should be used to indicate exactly where a student has shown understanding of a set task or question, or the successful completion of a task.

- At least once per half term, use a Departmental Marking Token to provide in-depth feedback (**in red ink**) of a more formally assessed task, which uses a RAG rating to indicate the extent to which a student has met the success criteria for example, applying understanding of content to a situation or successfully demonstrating a skill.

   The marking token will also

   - Give clear advice on how to improve the work and provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate improvement

   - Assess the literacy skills demonstrated.

   It is vital not merely to focus on presentation, quantity and effort, though untidy and incomplete work should always be challenged

- Ensure that assessment grades and areas for improvement are filled in on the Front Sheet Tracker sheet.
- Ensure that improvement targets are acted upon by the student in order to close the gap between current and desired performance (**students use green pen**). Teacher to acknowledge the green pen improvement.

Other teacher considerations:

- **Ensure that students are clear about their current level of performance and know what they need to do to improve further**

- **Ensure that students are given time to read and reflect upon teacher comments, and encourage them to ask for help where appropriate**

- It may be appropriate to give a grade or level depending on the nature of the assessment.

- Recognise that in-depth written guidance should not be restricted to core pieces of work

- Take the opportunity to comment on students' oral skills and offer praise and correction of speaking and listening

- Provide students with supported opportunities to self-correct, redraft or act upon their target

- Encourage students to respond in writing to the teacher's marking as a means of more actively engaging with comments and targets and recognising their role in developing their learning

- Complete and record the results of formal assessments with their classes and students in line with whole UTC, Faculty and subject policies or course grades where applicable

- Maintain records of marked work and take appropriate action where students are failing to complete work. This information should be easily accessible either in written format or stored electronically

- Seek support in the first instance from HODs if they encounter any difficulties in adhering to this policy

- All students should be encouraged to show pride in their work and present their work to the highest possible standard.

- Teachers should always challenge poorly presented work and reinforce high expectations of presentation at all times.

1.1.   Developing self and peer assessment strategies in all classrooms

All staff will provide and plan regular opportunities for students to assess both their own work and that of their peers. To improve learning, it must be an activity that engages students with the quality of their work and helps them reflect on how to improve it. Peer assessment helps develop self-assessment, which promotes independent learning, helping students to take increasing responsibility for their own progress. If self and peer assessment is to be successful, staff should:

- **Provide students with clear success criteria to help them assess the quality of their work - students can be actively involved in the creation of such criteria;**

- **Ensure that students are capable of making constructive comments about learning as opposed to superficial comments about presentation**

- **Ensure that assessment is focused and where appropriate linked to the learning outcomes**

- Give students opportunities in lessons to discuss and reflect on problem-solving and reasoning strategies, comparing and evaluating approaches

- Frequently and consistently encourage students' self-reflection on their learning and guide them to identify their next steps

Students should indicate in **green pen** any self / peer assessment opportunities using **S.A.** and **P.A.** and sign their assessment as a means of encouraging greater responsibility for their comments. Good practice would be for students to use the WWW / EBI method or reference to success criteria / assessment objectives for assessment as directed by teaching staff.

1.2.   Marking for whole UTC literacy

It is essential to develop a consistent approach to the assessment of literacy and in doing so improve the technical accuracy of students' writing in order to raise attainment across the curriculum. Teachers will:

- **Exercise professional judgement when determining which errors to highlight so that marking can have a positive impact on learning. For example, when marking the work of a student who shows difficulty with spelling, teachers may wish to focus on key spelling mistakes only**

- Highlight and/or correct specific literacy errors in students' work on a regular basis. These may include errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar as appropriate to the needs of the subject and the ability of the student

- Make errors obvious to the student in line with the UTC expectations

- Use relevant codes to indicate strengths and targets

- On a minimum of a half termly basis, plan for their students to produce an extended piece of writing that can be marked for SPAG/QWC. This may be encompassed in the half termly assessment task.

All teacher marking is done in **red pen**. It is essential that students understand the codes (to follow) if they are to respond to marking of written expression.

Spelling – **sp** written in the margin, the error underlined and the correct spelling written either above it or in the margin.

Punctuation – **p** in the margin, error underlined.

Capital Letters – circle the capital letter if it should be lower case. Circle the lower case letter if it should be capital

Paragraphs – show where a new paragraph should have been started by using the symbol **//**

Ww – put this is in the margin if a word has been used incorrectly, underline the word and put another suggestion above it

^ - Put this symbol between words and letters if something has been missed out

Grammar – put **g** in the margin, underline the error and write the correct word either above it or in the margin

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- In key assessed pieces of work or where the quality of written accuracy necessitates, give written guidance on how weaknesses in literacy might be addressed and how to make improvements. For example:

  - *Improve the organisation of your writing*
  - *Start a new paragraph each time you introduce a new topic*
  - *Use connectives to structure your argument*

- Provide students with supported opportunities in the lesson / independent study time to self-correct, redraft or act upon literacy comments

- Encourage students to record their spellings separately and learn the corrections

- Reward success and challenge repetition of the same errors offering practical support as appropriate