

Exams and Non-examination Internal Quality Assurance Policy



Hazel Oak School

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Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation and guidance
3. Principles of assessment
4. Assessment approaches
5. Moderation
6. Collecting and using data
7. Reporting to parents
8. Inclusion
9. Training
10. Roles and responsibilities
11. Monitoring

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on our approach to formative and summative assessment
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to recording summative assessment outcomes and reporting to parents
- Clearly set out how and when assessment practice will be monitored and evaluated
- Provide clear guidance for staff on their responsibilities in supporting best practice, whilst ensuring lean systems limit workload.

2. Legislation and guidance

Since the removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, schools have been free to develop their own approaches to assessment.

This policy refers to the recommendations in the Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels.

It also refers to statutory reporting requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005: schedule 1.

It is a statutory expectation that all teachers comply with Teacher Standards from the DfE. This policy is especially pertinent to standards 4, 5 and 6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

3. Principles of assessment

At Hazel Oak we believe assessment is for the whole school community; for all staff, pupils, parents and carers. In its varied forms the goal of assessment is to inform learners, their teachers and families about the stage they are currently at in their learning. It provides an on-going dialogue that also reflects on what individuals need to do next to achieve the targets set for them.

Assessment has developed within school to establish best practices that are tried and tested, as well as incorporating new strategies in response to the removal of levels in 2015. Our bespoke systems aim to be transparent for all involved and do the job efficiently and effectively, keeping the wider learning community up to date and confident about the direction of their on-going progress.

Each form of assessment has a clear purpose and is geared towards a specific outcome that supports individual progress. We are constantly reviewing assessment practices to ensure they meet the needs of

all learners at every age and stage and to ensure they are in line with our wellbeing value by keeping systems lean for staff, whilst being simple and accessible to families and pupils.

The key ethos of assessment at Hazel Oak is the 'Hero's Journey', or the acknowledgement that we may need a struggle to achieve and overcome our challenges. Growth mindset is advocated by staff to support pupil self-assessment and self-esteem. "I can't do this . . . **yet**".

4. Assessment approaches

At Hazel Oak School we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and it is closely linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day in-school formative assessment, in-school summative assessment and locally standardised summative assessment.

In-school formative assessment

Effective in-school formative assessment enables:

- Teachers to identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons
- Pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives, and identify areas in which they need to improve
- Parents to gain a broad picture of where their child's strengths and weaknesses lie, and what they need to do to improve

Daily marking by staff (*purple pen*) and pupils (*green pen*) takes place, in line with our marking policy. Staff comment on small steps within the lesson and discuss learning with individual pupils. Pupils are encouraged to mark their own work and also to respond to comments made by their teacher or teaching assistant. More detailed marking takes place when a topic or theme has progressed within the teaching sessions and 'deep marking' will be used with specific assessment pieces.

Feedback is a key element of lessons, which can be verbal or written. This helps staff and pupils gauge where learners level of understanding and abilities are at that time and support next steps through pupil specific praise and development points.

EHCP core targets support personalised steps in progress for all pupils. Through on-going dialogue and feedback opportunities, staff and pupils decide on the next small steps that will support the development of knowledge and skills. P

Staff use open questioning to assess throughout lessons and make links to philosophical thinking where appropriate (Philosophy for Children).

Pupil resilience and self-awareness is developed through self and peer assessment. Pupils are given opportunities to review and correct their own work in purple pen. They may also mark work of their peers and give supportive feedback, if appropriate to learner needs.

Pupils must be at the centre of the assessment process if it is to be effective and this is encouraged through the strategies mentioned above. Staff will identify with pupils how well they are developing in their knowledge, skills and understanding and use formative assessment to identify any misconceptions and gaps that need to be closed.

In-school summative assessment

Effective in-school summative assessment enables:

School leaders to monitor the performance of pupil cohorts, identify where interventions may be required, and work with teachers to ensure pupils are supported to achieve sufficient progress and attainment.

- Teachers to evaluate learning at the end of a unit, module or period and the impact of their own teaching, informing future planning and pupil progress discussions.
- Pupils to understand how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can improve, through a medium that is appropriate to individual communication needs..
- Parents to stay informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period.

Pupils are assessed via specially designed summative tasks within half termly Assess and Review weeks. These weeks are a departure from usual classroom teaching and can be individual, group or whole class activities that allow staff and pupils to review their progress towards wider learning goals. Core subjects are assessed at each mid term, whilst the foundation curriculum is assessed at the end of each term, linking with the practical elements of the challenge curriculum.

For pupils in the secondary phases nationally standardised summative assessments take the form of GCSEs (where appropriate), Entry Levels and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4, and these then extend and develop according to need and the make of each year group towards post-16 qualifications in Key Stage 5.

At Hazel Oak there are a range of summative assessment strategies employed to support this: Assess and review weeks, as mentioned earlier in this document, focus on obtaining progress and attainment information through targeted tasks and practical sessions where pupils employ their new knowledge and skills.

Assess and review weeks at the mid-term point focuses on English, Maths and Science using Trackable assessment ladders to support data collection through the development walls. The walls reflect the National Curriculum and are set out as progressive steps in acquiring knowledge and skills.

In addition to internal moderation, external moderation occurs with a group of local special schools.

In Key Stage 4 and 5 accredited courses are assessed with internal testing and end of year exams. Coursework and samples of examination papers are sent to the exam board for external moderation. A report is then sent to The Exams Officer. Any actions from the reports are addressed for the following cycle.

Coursework is also moderated through the year within school and by external moderators.

All staff are involved in moderation for all key stages, regardless of which key stage they work in. This supports whole school standardisation, reduces workload and wider supports staff development. It is also important for all staff to be aware of starting points for their pupils, tracking a journey through the key stages to final destinations.

5. Moderation

Responsibilities and Training

Teacher – responsible for delivering the qualification/unit learning outcomes and completing formative assessment.

Assessor – can be the teacher. Responsible for assessing summative activities and providing feedback to the candidate (and to the teacher, if not the teacher).

Internal moderator (IM) – responsible for reviewing and approving assessment plans. Responsible for quality assurance of the assessment process by sampling and moderating each unit being delivered and units delivered by each assessor. Responsible for providing feedback to the assessor(s) to improve assessment practices and decisions.

Internal verifier (IV) – responsible for ensuring that the form and content of assessment tasks and methods are: appropriate, fair and valid in terms of standards; fit for purpose and will effectively assess the achievement of learning outcomes; and present an appropriate level of challenge to students.

Internal quality assurer (IQA) – if not the lead IM, responsible for quality assurance of the entire process, from setting the assessments (assessment plans) to training the IM.

EXAMS MODERATION

AIMS

- Internal moderation practices are valid and reliable, cover all tutors/assessors and meet the requirements of the awarding organisation.
- The internal moderation procedures are fair and open and relevant to our staffing structure.
- Accurate and detailed records are kept of internal moderation decisions.

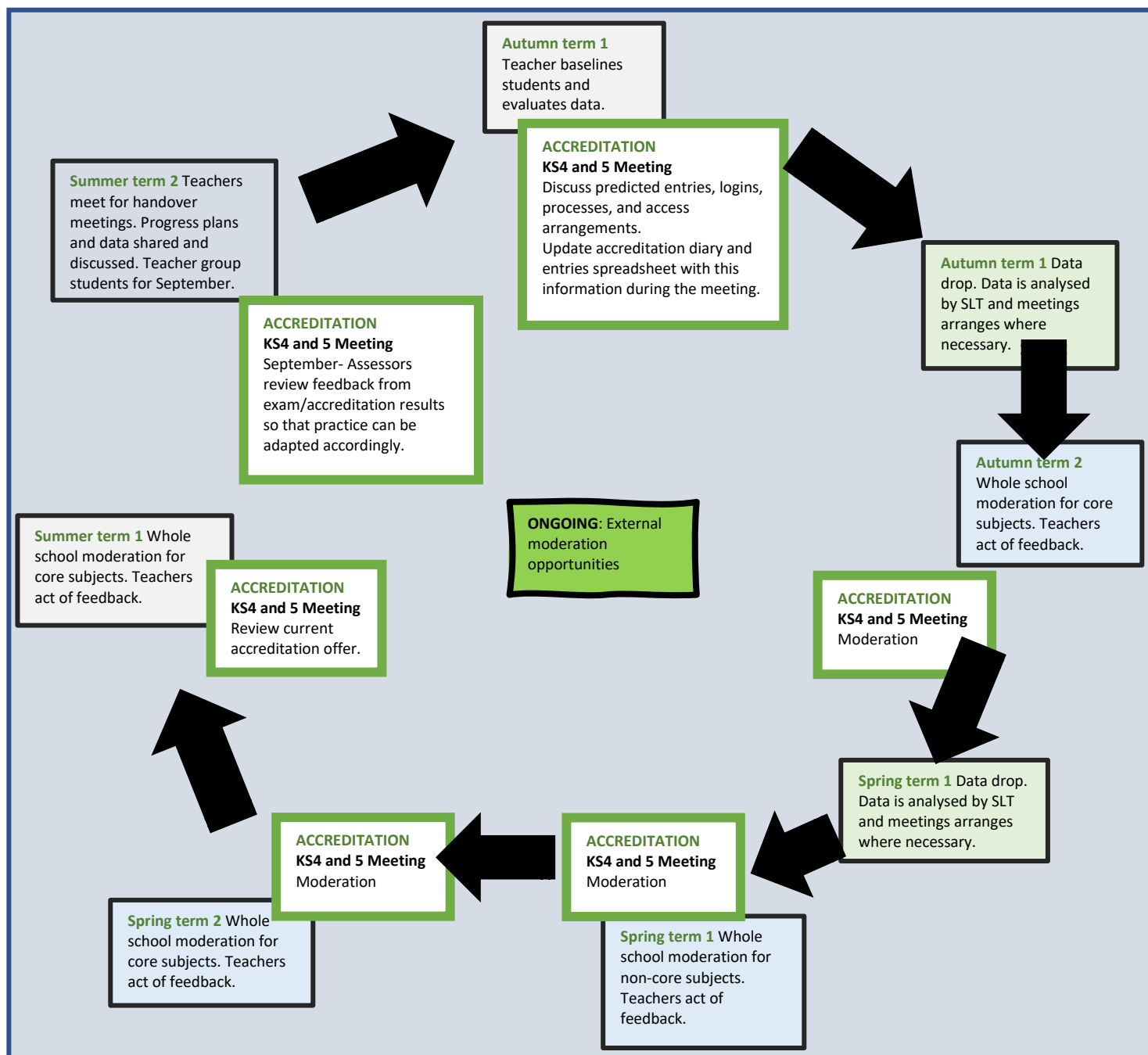
Hazel Oak School will:

- . Ensure that all assessment activities are valid, appropriate and fit for purpose.
- . Apply a strategy that will provide a representative sample across all tutor/assessors.
- . Create a plan of internal moderation in relation to all assessment activities.
- . Define, maintain and support effective internal moderation roles, including the provision of training where required.
- . Use standardised documentation to support internal moderation activity and record-keeping.
- . Ensure that feedback and outcomes of internal and external moderation support future development of good practice and will be fed back to those delivering qualifications. It is the responsibility of the **IQA** to read feedback from previously submitted samples and forward to the Exams Officer and the wider team who deliver the course. It is also the responsibility of the **IQA** to adapt practice in line with the feedback. The feedback will also be discussed and during the internal moderation sessions.
- . Carry out an annual evaluation and review of internal moderation policy and procedures.
- . Moderation meeting take into consideration previous year's feedback from Examination boards.

Moderation Meetings:

- Moderation occurs at least once per half term and IQA provides moderators with an internal moderation form (Appendix A). Any discrepancies are adjusted directly after moderation.
- Where possible, Assessors are encouraged to select their least confident sample, as this provides opportunities for professional conversation and resolution.
- Moderated work is stored in a standards folder.
- Hazel Oak are part of a special schools' moderation hub. Moderations occur every half term and results are feedback to the assessor and IQA.

Moderation Process



Notes:

Sampling: 3 pieces of work are selected for moderation. Depending on the focus, samples may include: entire books/folders of work; specific topics; specific modules/units of accredited work. Samples can be higher, middle and lower, or specific pupil's work where teachers feel a deeper review would help to increase accuracy. SLT are responsible for selecting the assessment focus as they need to respond to audit data.

How is moderation carried out? Teaching staff are organised into groups. Staff are encouraged to moderate across the key stages, so they gain a better understanding around subject progression and pupil

progress. Alternatively, for accreditation standardisation, staff are nominated at the beginning of the year to moderate/standardise work; this enhances consistency and competency. During the moderation session, staff complete a feedback form including: a comments section; checklist; and agreed level.

6. Collecting and using data

All data collected has a specific purpose and forms part of the annual assessment cycle (see appendix A). This supports staff to inform pupils and families on current attainment and progress towards targets set for each individual pupil.

The year begins with baselining of new pupils and verification of previous year's data for existing pupils. Bespoke targets are then set for the year ahead to challenge each pupil to continue to progress in English, maths and science.

Baseline data is confirmed and shared with families at parents evening in the first half term (October). Long term targets are discussed with pupils in 1 to 1 progress meetings but only small steps are shared in books and learning ladders. This is to promote motivation and growth mindset, in line with our school values. We do not believe it is helpful for pupils to be reminded of longer-term goals and that greater focus and success can be achieved with short-term aims. These are bespoke to individual need.

Senior leaders work with teachers to review data against previous outcomes and ensure new targets are challenging and appropriate to pupil needs. They may refer to moderation feedback.

In the Spring term a mid year report is shared with families and outlines whether pupils are currently working on track to achieve the targets set in English, maths and science. Next steps are shared as written comments, rather than 'level' expectations, to be practically useful for extended work at home and for pupil understanding.

Throughout the year when annual review meetings for pupil EHCPs take place, HOPI achievements can be equated to external end of year expectations if external comparisons are required at parental request. It should be made clear that this is an approximation as the HOPI steps do not parallel those of the mainstream National Curriculum expectations. Within school, the HOPI system is the sole recording and reporting approach for the core subjects.

Final assessments are carried out during June and July to consolidate teacher judgements for the end of year report. The achievements are again shared with families with written comments on specific achievements and areas for ongoing development.

All pupils are baselined for English, maths and science in Autumn Term 1. New pupils are assessed against the development walls (or HOPIs) and existing pupil data is verified and moderated by the class staff. This data is used to set challenging targets that take into consideration historical progression steps (if known) and wider teacher assessment. Target setting is completed by class teachers with support from subject leaders and senior leaders. From this point progress is reported as being 'on track' or 'not on track'. Beyond this initial baseline there are two 'data drops' each year, when summative data is collected:

1. End of Spring Term 1 (February) – when data is reported to parents in a mid year report.
2. Mid June – when final data is recorded for end of year submission to the Local Authority and for End of Year Reports.

This cycle has reduced the former 3 termly reporting deadlines to reduce workload and the mid and end of year reports are new documents that further streamline the system, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of detail for parents.

Use of data

All data collected is used to benchmark where individual pupils are in their learning, highlight next steps in the short term and longer-term goals. Where progress towards targets is not on track, staff work to implement appropriate interventions within their planning and teaching and extra support is directed where required.

The data collection also allows staff to track how well all groups are performing, including ASD, boys and girls, disadvantaged and any other contextual factors to make sure all pupils progress well from their starting points. This data is also shared with Governors at full board meetings and from April 2018 with the new Curriculum Committee.

7. Reporting to parents

Since the removal of levels in 2015, our assessment systems have evolved to accommodate all learners in school, keeping parents and stakeholders informed on current attainment and progress towards shared goals. This is communicated to parents as follows:

- Progress is discussed with parents and carers at the first parents evening in October, where goals and next steps are shared. A brief baseline report outlines targets for the year in core subjects.
- A Mid Year Report is shared in February, detailing attainment in English, maths and science for Key stages 2 and 3, plus progress towards accreditation courses for Key Stages 4 and 5. At this stage progress is reported as being 'on track' if pupils are working as expected or beyond. Where they are working beyond target, this will be re-set and communicated with pupils and parents. If an area is reported as 'not on track' suggested next steps and interventions will be shared to support enhanced progress. This report will also communicate the level of engagement from the pupil against curriculum areas.
- In July an End of Year Report is issued to all families, detailing final achievements for the year with written statements on what has been achieved and what pupil should work on next. Engagement will also be reported for subjects.
- In all cases, reporting of the ASDAN Life Skills curriculum will evidence steps taken towards independence, resilience and life-readiness.
- Throughout the year all families will be invited to attend an annual review of the EHCP. Where academic achievements are required for this, comparisons and conversions can be made with the external system of end of year expectations.

8. Inclusion

The principles of this assessment policy apply to all pupils and staff.

Assessment will be used diagnostically to contribute to the early and accurate identification of pupils' special educational needs and any requirements for support and intervention.

We will use meaningful ways of measuring all aspects of progress, including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. We will have the same high expectations of all pupils whilst taking in to account individual need.

As our pupils are working below the national expected level of attainment, our assessment arrangements will consider progress relative to pupil starting points, and take this into account alongside the nature of pupils' learning difficulties.

9. Training

All staff will receive induction training and attend weekly CPD sessions. Some of these sessions will cover moderation, assessment tools and discussion of strategies used to assess. During the spring term Joint Practice Development opportunities will support staff in moving between class groups and key stages to observe a range of assessment strategies in action. Staff are encouraged to share best practice and to work together to develop ways of working effectively.

Moderation meetings take place each term within school and also with other special schools from neighbouring authorities. Different staff attend these moderations to gain experience with colleagues and strategies externally. At internal moderation it is expected that all staff engage with the process so that the wider team understand expectations for each key stage and their related assessments and accreditations.

10. Role and responsibilities

Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Being familiar with statutory assessment systems as well as how the school's own system of non-statutory assessment captures the attainment and progress of all pupils
- Holding school leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by rigorously analysing assessment data

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy is adhered to
- Monitoring standards in core and foundation subjects
- Analysing pupil progress and attainment, including individual pupils and specific groups
- Prioritising key actions to address underachievement
- Reporting to governors 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 and for supporting and developing the engagement of teaching assistants in these procedures. It is a shared responsibility of class teams to follow the assessment policy to fully support the plan-do-review cycle and ensure the best pupil outcomes.

11. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assessment lead and IQA. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. Andy Simms and IQA are responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed.

The leadership team will monitor the effectiveness of assessment practices across the school, through: *Moderation, lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, pupil progress meetings, pupil feedback and data collection and analysis.*