



Principles – Our Intent

Our assessment policy is designed to fully prepare students for a world of linear qualifications, and to respond and dovetail with the school's move towards knowledge-rich teaching approaches. It responds to the national agenda around teacher workload and wellbeing, reducing the collection of any unnecessary data and ensuring that it responds to guidance from OFSTED that schools should not be collecting data any more than three times during an academic year – and that these collections should have a meaningful focus. Finally, it is designed to challenge students and further support the development of a High Performance Learning ethos.

In addition, the assessment policy seeks to support students by:

- **Giving them a clear sense of how well they are currently performing and how to improve**
- **Making them ready for future qualifications by engaging with GCSE skills at all stages**
- **Coaching and developing skills in revision and retrieval for success at GCSE and A Level study**
- **Diagnosing needs effectively to allow well-planned re-teaching of misconceptions**
- **Building resilience/high performance by learning to handle the challenges of rigorous assessments**

It seeks to support teachers, Curriculum Leaders and senior leaders by:

- **Providing teachers with meaningful opportunities for assessing their students formally**
- **Guiding and support future planning of learning and curriculum development for all departments**
- **Informing effective and robust Quality Assurance processes with departments**
- **Providing reliable and trustworthy evidence for the judgment of teaching and learning effectiveness**
- **Allow senior leaders to effectively provide CPD, intervention and resources to secure attainment**

It seeks to support parents and carers by:

- **Providing regular, robust updates on the progress of students and how to support them further**
- **Suggesting areas for independent study that could maximise the attainment of their child**

Systems and Structures – Our Implementation

Our summative assessment structure

Students will complete three major pieces of summative assessment throughout each academic year, with each one leading to a whole-school capture of data. These three pieces of summative assessment should be cumulative and synoptic in nature, in that the scale and scope of the assessment should increase as the year goes on, training students to revisit learning and revise effectively.

Each piece of summative assessment will come at the end of a Learning Phase which might consist of one or more elements, topics or themes of a course.

The first summative assessment, towards the end of the Autumn Term, should assess the learning which has taken place during the **first Learning Phase**, assessing all of the content of the Autumn Term.

The second summative assessment, towards the end of the Spring Term, should assess the learning which has taken place during the **first Learning Phase** and the **second Learning Phase**, with about 70% of content from the Spring Term and 30% taken from the Autumn Term.

The third summative assessment, a formal end-of-year test, towards the end of the Summer Term, should assess the learning which has taken place during the **first Learning Phase**, the **second Learning Phase**, and the **third Learning Phase**. This can be split in any way which is appropriate to test the school year's learning in full.

In this way, students are being assessed in a cumulative way that compels them to re-engage with learning from earlier in the year and even earlier in the key stage and previous key stages, in line with the requirements of linear GCSEs.

Summative assessment processes

Preparation

In a Learning Phase, the bulk of the time should be spent learning, revising, retrieving and applying new knowledge and content, but some time should be clearly set aside for revision in the week or two before the assessment. This should be clearly indicated as a period of revision, in which students actively re-engage with the content that they have previously studied (in Knowledge and Assessment Organisers or other forms), giving the summative assessment suitable profile and sense of importance, as well as ensuring readiness to succeed in the assessments. This will be supported through whole-school messaging and year-group level focus activities led by Year Leaders and senior leaders.

In addition, students should have experienced some of the elements of the summative assessment during the Learning Phase, often as application and consolidation tasks in their day-to-day lessons. They should have received significant formative feedback about their strengths and weaknesses, and have a clear sense of their personal targets and focuses for the upcoming summative assessment before it happens. The build-up to the summative assessment should give them confidence that they can achieve well in these assessments.

Content

Summative assessment should lead naturally from formative assessment processes and learning that has taken place during the Learning Phase, and should be accessible and appropriate for students at all levels of performance. It may be entirely appropriate to have multiple summative assessments for students in different prior performance pathways. Summative assessments should be quality assured by Curriculum Leaders or those with responsibilities for Key Stages or year groups within the department and will be created in response to relevant examiners' reports.

Some key indicators of successful summative assessments are:

- **Students complete extended tasks which require a degree of resilience and focus**
- **The assessment broadly fills one lesson, and students are occupied throughout this time**
- **Students have accessed all areas of the knowledge needed to succeed in all questions**
- **The types of questions or tasks that students perform are ones that they have seen before**
- **Students can achieve a significant amount of marks – 70% or so is an optimum average mark**

Fundamental principles of successful summative assessment are that they **must not**:

Be specific tasks that students have seen before the assessment itself

or

Be based on content that students have not studied at all

So, a rule of thumb for best practice is that assessments should be things that **students have not seen before, but that they have done before**, in the sense of similar tasks or skills practised earlier in the Learning Phase.

Administration

Summative assessments should be given suitable profile, focus and sense of importance by all staff, and be highlighted and communicated as important elements of the school year which need their due attention.

They should therefore be conducted in silence, with the classroom set up to ensure maximum focus. Any issues with conduct in these sessions should be treated with an even higher degree of importance than in a regular lesson, and whole-school conduct processes used to ensure that the rigour of these experiences are total. Other students should not be disadvantaged by poor conduct, and any incidents of this nature should be dealt with appropriately.

The obvious exception to this requirement of silence is any subject where there is a speaking component, and in practical and performance-based subjects where this might need to form part of the summative assessment as a natural part of the course. In these situations, Curriculum Leaders should develop appropriate protocols for these assessments and these should be made clear to all staff and students to ensure that assessment is well-managed.

Marking

It is important that all summative assessments – from Year 7 onwards – are broadly representative of the type of assessment and skill demand that will be placed on students at GCSE and BTEC level. This, however, does not mean simply giving students GCSE materials from Year 7 onwards, as this would be inappropriately challenging for the vast majority of students, particularly in the early stages.

It should, however, be clear that the work addresses perhaps certain assessment objectives, knowledge elements or skills and attributes that will be later important in GCSE study. This is broadly the case already, as all departments at Colton Hills have planned curriculums with GCSE outcomes in mind, though this should always be subject to revisiting and review over time.

The design of the calendar is such that there should be time for assessments to be marked appropriately and fed back to students before the end of the term. Therefore, it is important that the marking is completed within two weeks, and Curriculum Leaders should have appropriate processes in place to ensure that this is the case. In particular, appropriate division of this labour amongst the department should be put in place to ensure equity and appropriate workload balance. It is best practice that the work is not always marked by the classroom teacher of a particular group, to ensure the type of impersonality and rigour of real exams.

Marking at Colton Hills will be rigorous and reliable because we will:

- **Use existing exam board materials with mark schemes and exemplars wherever possible**
- **Take advantage of awarding bodies CPD opportunities to improve standards at all times**
- **Pre-moderate assessments to ensure that standards are consistent across departments**
- **Use 'blind' marking processes to anonymously mark students' work wherever possible**
- **Curriculum Leaders to post-moderate assessments and sample work to ensure that marking is accurate**
- **Ensure that exam marking is incentivised and that exam markers are present in all departments**
- **Seek external validation from colleagues in other schools and exam boards where this is available**

Finally, time should be given before and after summative assessments for appropriate and effective moderation to take place. This is a highly important process and particularly supports less experienced staff by providing invaluable CPD and high-quality professional discussions. In order to support this moderation, departments should be able to provide comparative judgments of work against quality standards of material judged against a GCSE standard, and, where appropriate, Foundation level standards to support less able students and those for whom the language provides a barrier. These materials should be developed by departments and be available at all times, using live GCSE materials and reclaimed scripts to ensure accuracy and validity of judgments at all levels of the school. When looking at any piece of GCSE assessment, teachers should be able to say whether it is reflective of work at, say, Foundation Level 2, GCSE grade 3, or GCSE grade 7, in order to accurately place students on a trajectory to their expected attainment.

Feedback

The feedback given to students as a result of summative assessment should be clear, concise and meaningful, with clear comments made on achievement and clear areas for improvement offered in the form of targets. In particular, this should dovetail with our knowledge-rich curriculum by offering areas of revisiting and re-teaching that would be of benefit to the students. Praise and congratulation should be offered when students have met or exceeded expectations on the assessment, or for the effort demonstrated even when achievement is not quite where it should be. Positivity should be emphasised, and all negative aspects couched in appropriate language about subsequent improvement.

Colton Hills is seeking to reduce the amount of written marking of student work during the year, supporting teachers in reducing workloads and maintaining a healthy work-life balance, focusing their time on planning and teaching. In this spirit, the feedback given for the three summative assessments across the year should be the most extensive given by teachers across the year, but this detail is not expected at other points for work completed in class. Live marking and whole-class Responding to Feedback activities allow students to self-regulate and act on teacher feedback.

Finally, GCSE grades will not be given as part of the feedback until Year 10. Whilst these summative assessments will be judged against GCSE standards as previously described, this is not part of the information that will be shared with students or their parents and guardians. Instead, teachers should indicate whether the performance on the summative assessment is Well Below Track, Below Track, On Track or Above Track, in line with curricular targets set for students on an individual basis. This is the information that will be given to parents and guardians as part of the whole-school reporting cycle, though there will be a robust set of metrics that sit behind this to give all stakeholders reliable data.

Target-setting and Reporting

New for 2023-24, we have moved away from our former Tracks system to focus on Attainment for All, aligned with our High Performance Learning philosophy. All students in Key Stage 3 are assessed at three points in the school year, and we have based our assessments on a challenging curriculum informed by the National Curriculum and Key Stage 4 expectations. They are cumulative in nature, asking students to revise and revisit content regularly.

These assessments are marked with a raw score which is converted into a percentage figure. This percentage figure is then translated into Above Track, On Track, Below Track or Well Below track to ensure that students and parents/carers have a clear indication of whether expectations are being met. Classroom-based interventions focus on those students who are Below Track, and wider intervention and investigation is made into Well Below Track.

Termly reports are sent home, which tell parents and carers:

- **What percentage the student got in their assessment**
- **How this compares to an average across the year group**
- **How this compares to their previous assessment**
- **Whether this is On Track, Above or Below expectations**

At Key Stage 4, students receive a Working At Grade and a Predicted Grade in their reports in Years 10 and 11. This is based on their assessment activities and is reported home. These grades are placed against the School Target, which is a challenging target grade based on FFT5 data from the previous year, with no target grade lower than a 4 at GCSE or Level 2 Pass at BTEC. These target grades are designed to support a High Performance ethos, but without putting a ceiling on realistic Attainment for All. We expect all students to aim for at least a passing grade in all subjects that they undertake.

Results, Data and QA – Our Impact

Following a set of summative assessments, the following processes will take place at the following levels of the school:

At classroom teacher level, teachers will input data and generate a set of class results which will then be subject to their analysis. As a result of this analysis, they will complete action-planning for the next Learning Phase, by reflecting on less successful elements of this Learning Phase that will need re-teaching, or challenging areas of knowledge that students will benefit from revisiting. In particular, this may lead to the re-assessment and re-writing of the retrieval quizzes at the start of lessons, to ensure that areas of difficulty and challenge re-occur regularly in the next Learning Phase. It may well also lead to specific revision being offered prior to the next summative assessment, and suggestions to Curriculum Leaders of areas that students will need to revisit. All of this information should be made available to Curriculum Leaders.

At middle Leader level, the data from the summative assessments should be pulled together and analysed appropriately, with a focus on student groups of particular focus and classroom level data. This analysis will form an integral part of updating Department Improvement Plans, which are an integral part of our quality assurance processes at Colton Hills. In particular, this should highlight and raise areas of the curriculum and teaching which were of greater and lesser success, and form part of the departmental activities for next term. Areas of underperformance in particular classes will be investigated through discussion, observation and subsequent CPD as necessary. The outcomes of this analysis will be shared with senior leaders through line management processes, with senior leaders offering guidance, support and resources as necessary.

At senior leader level, members of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for particular departments will investigate the data provided to standardise and look at the bigger picture of student performance across the school. Significant anomalies will be investigated, and meetings with Curriculum Leaders will take place to ask questions and challenge the validity of the data, gaps in performance and ongoing actions as a result of these findings. This will lead to revision of the Department Improvement Plan for each department, which will be redrafted and finalised with all stakeholders made aware of the final outcomes. Finally, senior leaders will co-ordinate the administration and delivery of reports to parents and guardians to ensure that they have a clear sense of whether students are achieving as they should be.

Reviews of Department Improvement Plans should be completed in readiness for the next Learning Phase, ready for all actions to begin at the beginning of the next Learning Phase, with all staff at in the department made aware of headlines, highlights and needs going forward.

Appendix A: Colton Hills Summative Assessment Calendar – 2023-24

Autumn Term

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
LP	Learning Phase 1									Learning Phase 1			Learning Phase 2				
In class	LP 1 teaching									Revision/Testing			LP 2 teaching				
													Y11/Y13 mocks 1				

Spring Term

Week	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
LP	Learning Phase 2						Learning Phase 2			Learning Phase 3		
In class	LP 2 teaching						Revision/Testing			LP3 teaching		
										Y11/Y13 mocks 2		

Summer Term

Week	1	2	3	4	5		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
LP	Learning Phase 3							Learning Phase 3			Revision and Reflection			
In class	LP 3 teaching							Revision/ End of year tests						