

# Essa Academy Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

## **Rationale**

Staff at Essa Academy understand that effective teaching, learning and assessment is fundamental to improving student outcomes in order to ensure that 'All Will Succeed'. We recognise that students are motivated by good quality teaching and will make good progress if lessons are well planned and delivered effectively.

Good teaching and learning at Essa Academy is characterised by our core principles, which are shared by both staff and students:



### **Be Resilient**

We take risks; if we get something wrong, we do not give up. We take responsibility for our learning and behaviour. We are motivated, engaged and ready to learn. We take pride in ourselves and our work. We become masters of our own learning through perseverance and reflection.



### **Support and Grow**

We endeavor to break down barriers to learning in order to ensure that everyone has the confidence, regardless of ability or need, to make progress and achieve. All members of the Essa family work together and this trusting relationship enables supportive and effective learning.



### **See the Relevance**

We recognise the significance of the links between our learning and the wider world. We understand how our learning connects together as we make our journey through the Academy and into our future.



### **Communicate**

We are good listeners and embrace the opportunity to work with others. We can articulate our learning to different audiences and relish the opportunity to develop our leadership skills. We maintain the highest standards of literacy throughout all of our work.



### **Accept the Challenge**

We challenge ourselves and others to always aim high. We know that in order to make progress and achieve the very best, we must step out of our comfort zone. We know that learning is not meant to be easy.



### **Reflect, Refine, Practise**

We know what success looks like and the steps we need to take in order to achieve it. We review our own progress in order to move our learning forward. We seek opportunities to take advice that will improve our work and advise others on how to improve their work. We strive for perfection through practice and application of our skills.

There are a variety of approaches to teaching and staff acknowledge the different ways in which students learn. In addition, opportunities should be given to students to explore, investigate and research subject information. Teachers should use a variety of resources in their teaching, including the innovative use of technology, which is central to our approach and will be seen in most lessons.

### **Literacy**

In lessons, students should be exposed to a rich variety of language, which is modelled by staff. In order to raise levels of oracy, students should be encouraged to engage in discussion, formal debates and questioning with staff and peers. The development of extended writing skills is essential in all subjects; well structured speaking and listening activities, as well as exposure to a broad range of literature, will help scaffold writing.

### **Numeracy**

It is part of every teacher's responsibility to ensure that numeracy skills are incorporated into lessons. This should be subject appropriate and have relevance to the topic being taught.

Teachers should ensure that they are familiar with correct mathematical language, notation, conventions and techniques relating to their own subject, and encourage students to use these correctly.

Teachers need to be aware of the numerical aptitude of students and provide differentiated support or challenge where appropriate.

### **Assessment** (refer to appendix 1 - Assessment Policy)

The Academy recognises the benefits of target setting, formative and summative assessments. Faculties will monitor student progress and set targets on a *termly basis*. Students will engage in on-going self and peer assessment and monitor their own progress. Students will also undergo summative assessment at the end of each module/unit of study, in line with the Academy's assessment schedule.

- Target/progress tracking sheets should be visible in books or in a Tracking Folder on Showbie. They should identify GCSE targets / end of year targets, a current grade and a section to be completed by the student identifying how they will improve.

- The frequency of assessments is to be determined by the Head of Faculty - reference assessment policy.
- The grading of work should be reserved mainly for summative assessments with ESSA feedback to ensure that the next steps in learning are understood.
- Key assessments should use the mastery approach 'assess – re/teach – re-assess', linked closely to the 'reflect, refine, practise' principle.
- Formal assessments will contribute towards students' reports at Parents' Evening.

### **Marking and Feedback** (refer to appendix 2, Marking and Feedback Code of Practice)

Effective and regular marking and feedback is an integral part of the continuous dialogue between teachers and students. This enables students to understand their next steps in learning and contributes to the ethos that All Will Succeed. The ESSA marking model should be used as this gives students opportunities to respond to feedback and make necessary improvements to their work.

- Marking should be formative, personalised and learning focused.
- Assessment/work should be marked using the ESSA marking model following every 4.5 hours of learning.
- Real time marking, along with other types of feedback, are part of the iterative learning cycle that secures progress in learning.
- Time and support should be made available to ensure that the 'Student Response' is completed.
- Staff mark in green pen, students respond in purple pen either self or peer
- Faculty Heads should agree a centralised 'location' for marking and feedback. This will either be all on Showbie or all in books/folders. The exception being for subjects such as MFL, Drama & PE where there is a clear distinction between practical and theory work.
- Work should be presented to a consistently high standard, as outlined in the Marking and Feedback Code of Conduct. This is the case whether work is written in books or completed electronically.
- There should be evidence of marking for literacy. This includes real time, regular marking of SPaG.
- Where students are completing GCSE courses, feedback should refer to the skills, content and grades/marks required for success in the subject.

### **ESSA marking model**

**E.** Excellent? Positive and supportive comments focusing on key achievements in relation to the success criteria.

**S. Stop and Think.** Quality, specific and personalised feedback to clarify or extend knowledge around learning, addressing misconceptions and errors, then guiding students' next steps with a question or a challenge.

**S. Student Response.** Students are required to respond to feedback with the aim of improving their work.

**A. Achieved?** A response by the teacher to close the feedback loop, either immediately or at a later stage, acknowledging whether a student has achieved the learning outcome or not. This may require further action, consideration or intervention.

## **Displays**

Faculties should display students' work and these should be changed every half term. This will enable students to take greater pride in themselves, their work and in their learning.

## **Homework**

### **Rationale**

At Essa Academy, prior learning and homework is an essential part of the learning process. Evidence suggests that independent study aids long term memory and deepens the learning experience.

Prior learning or homework should be completed before the beginning of designated lessons in preparation for classroom based learning. On occasions homework is set to help consolidate learning. SAM Learning and Accelerated Reader are used across the Academy as prior learning and homework tools.

### **Purpose:**

- To help prepare for new learning or extended work covered in the learning challenge.
- To develop independent learning skills.
- To demonstrate progress and understanding.
- To help students take ownership and responsibility of their own learning.
- To develop perseverance and self-discipline.
- To promote quiet reflection of new learning thus promoting enquiry.
- To encourage students to investigate topics of study in depth.
- To encourage students to enjoy the skills, concepts and experiences related to study.
- To encourage students to talk, discuss and research using the rich variety of learning resources available.

### **Frequency**

Homework is set weekly as a minimum expectation per subject. This may come in the form of prior learning to prepare students for the next lesson or a consolidation of learning task.

### **How parents support**

- Look at and discuss prior learning and/or homework with their child in order to show an interest in and engage in their learning.
  - Provide a quiet place to work.
  - Check that homework/prior learning tasks are completed to a high standard.
  - Check their books to ensure that all classwork has been completed to a high standard and that feedback given by teachers has been responded to.
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