ABBEY COLLEGE IN MALVERN
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Managing Academic Progress Policy

Related Documents Include:

- Introduction to the Academic Courses Offered at Abbey College
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy and Examinations Policy
- Academic Staff Handbook
- Course Overviews
- Schemes of Work
- Protocol for General and Subject-specific Vocabulary
- SEND Policy and any relevant individual learning support records
- Behaviour Policy / College Rules and Justice System

Legal Status (Regulatory and Guidance Framework)

This policy is intended to support the College's compliance with the applicable requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended, particularly Part 1:

- Paragraph 2(1) and 2(2)(h): the curriculum policy and its effective implementation, taking account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, and ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- Paragraph 3(a)–(g): teaching which enables pupils to acquire knowledge and make good progress according to ability; develops motivation and independent learning; is well planned; takes account of aptitudes, needs and prior attainment; and uses regular and thorough assessment to inform teaching.
- Paragraph 4: a framework for evaluating pupils' performance by reference to the school's aims and/or national norms.

The College will also have regard, as applicable, to the Equality Act 2010 (including the duties relating to disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments in education), the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, and relevant Department for Education guidance. The College's inspection preparation and self-evaluation will take account of the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Inspection Framework and associated guidance in force at the time of inspection.

These references do not replace the detailed requirements of the legislation, statutory guidance or awarding organisations.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Principal will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.
- The next official date for review is **December 2027**

Produced by:	WR	Date:	30/01/2017	Checked by:	JKS	Date:	17/11/20265	Approved by:	MN	Date:	17/11/2026

Introduction

Abbey College is committed to enabling every student to make progress appropriate to their age, aptitude, prior attainment, needs and chosen course. Academic progress is monitored throughout a student's time at the College. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that progress is assessed regularly and thoroughly, that strengths and areas for development are identified, and that appropriate teaching, guidance and intervention are provided in good time.

The College's arrangements are intended to support students in acquiring knowledge, increasing understanding and developing the skills required in their subjects. They also aim to foster self-motivation, intellectual effort, interest in learning, independence and the ability to think and learn for themselves.

The policy applies to students across the College's academic and English-language programmes, with appropriate regard to the different aims, levels and assessment requirements of each course.

Initial Assessment and Course Placement

Prior to arrival, students complete an English test. This is scanned, marked by the College and retained for reference. In addition, a Teams or Zoom interview is completed where appropriate to assess more effectively the student's listening, comprehension and speaking levels in English. For NQF Level 3 Foundation courses, the existing course admissions requirement recorded by the College is an IELTS score of greater than or equal to 5.5. Current course-specific entry requirements must always be checked against the relevant admissions and course documentation.

Upon arrival at the College, all students complete an English test and, where appropriate, a Maths and/or Science test. Results are considered alongside prior attainment, course information and the student's interview and are used to counsel the student onto the most appropriate course. If a student's English level is below that required to access the intended academic course, the student may be counselled onto an intensive English course.

Initial assessment is not a one-off exercise. Teachers should use subsequent classwork, homework, questioning and formal assessment to check that the original placement remains appropriate. Any concern that a student has been placed on a course which is too demanding or insufficiently challenging should be raised with the Director of Academic Studies and/or Principal.

Ongoing Assessment & Monitoring of Progress

Emphasis is placed on continuous assessment in all subjects. The College's assessment arrangements aim to help students recognise how well they are doing in each subject, understand their strengths and areas for improvement, and identify what they need to do to make better progress. This is particularly important in courses which culminate in public examinations.
Students' work is assessed on an ongoing basis. This includes:

- Written work completed in class, as incorporated into the course Schemes of Work.
- Assessment for Learning (AfL), including responses to verbal questions, discussion and other checks of understanding in class.
- Written work completed outside class, including homework and independent study.

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- Tests and other subject-specific assessments completed in class.
- Mid-Term and End-of-Term examinations, where applicable.
- Practical, oral, coursework or project-based assessment where required by the subject or examination specification.

Assessment should be purposeful and proportionate. Teachers should use the information gained to identify misconceptions, gaps in knowledge, developing skills and patterns of performance, and to adapt subsequent teaching, explanations, practice and support. Assessment should not be limited to recording a grade: students should understand what they have learned, what they have not yet mastered and the steps needed to improve.

Language, Literacy & Subject-specific Vocabulary

The College recognises that secure command of English, including the language used within individual subjects, is an important factor in academic progress and examination performance. This is particularly relevant to students for whom English is an additional language, but explicit teaching of vocabulary and academic language benefits all students.

The College's policy, "Protocol for General and Subject-specific Vocabulary", is a key means of improving academic progress and performance and must be implemented alongside this policy. Teachers should identify and explicitly teach the general academic vocabulary and the subject-specific terminology that students need in order to understand instruction, read subject material, participate in discussion, explain concepts and answer examination questions accurately.
In practice, teachers should, as appropriate:

- Identify and introduce essential vocabulary within schemes of work and lesson sequences, rather than assuming that students already understand it.
- Explain meanings, pronunciation, spelling and usage, including distinctions between everyday meanings and subject-specific meanings.
- Model accurate use of key terms in spoken and written explanations and require students to use the terminology themselves.
- Revisit and reinforce vocabulary over time through retrieval, questioning, discussion, reading, written work and examination-style questions.
- Check that students understand command words and the language of assessment, including what questions require them to describe, explain, compare, evaluate, calculate or justify.
- Provide appropriate vocabulary lists, glossaries, sentence structures or other scaffolding where these help students access learning, while building their independence.
- Address errors or imprecise use of terminology through constructive feedback and opportunities to correct and improve work.

Teachers should make appropriate reference to the Protocol when planning, teaching and reviewing student progress. Heads of Department and the Director of Academic Studies should consider the development and accurate use of vocabulary when reviewing schemes of work, assessment outcomes and the progress of individual students or groups.

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Communicating Progress to Students and Parents

Progress is communicated both formally and informally and involves class teachers, tutors and the Principal. Informal communication is frequent, reflecting the College's relatively small class sizes and the close contact between staff and students.

Three times per year, subject teachers complete individual student reports. Reports should provide a clear and fair account of the student's performance, progress, engagement and areas requiring further attention. Where appropriate, teachers should distinguish between current attainment and the progress being made towards the requirements of the course or public examination.
The College's established reporting grades are:

Grade	Descriptor
Excellent	Consistently meets expectations
Good	Often meets expectations
Satisfactory	Often does not meet expectations
Unsatisfactory	Rarely meets expectations
Poor	Very rarely meets expectations

Subject teachers must also specify what the student needs to do to improve. These targets are recorded on the student's target sheet and/or the College's designated student record. Targets should be specific, understandable and capable of being reviewed. Students discuss reports with a specified member of staff and their progress against targets is monitored throughout the term.

Parents and, where appropriate, agents or other relevant parties are kept informed through the College's established reporting and communication arrangements, having regard to the student's age, circumstances, consent and applicable data-protection requirements. Significant concerns should not be left until the next formal report; they should be communicated promptly through the appropriate College channels.

Examinations

All students complete Mid-Term and End-of-Term examinations in their subjects, with the exception of Study Skills, Art, Citizenship and PSHEE, where the nature of the course or its assessment arrangements may differ. Any alternative assessment arrangements should remain consistent with the relevant course requirements and the College's Assessment and Examinations Policies.

If a student underperforms in a Mid-Term examination, the subject teacher should investigate the reasons for the result and arrange a resit or other appropriate reassessment where this is considered beneficial. A resit should be used as part of a supportive process to establish whether learning has been secured and what further teaching or practice is required; it should not replace analysis of the original performance.

Mid-Term examination results are discussed in departmental and Senior Academic Management meetings. Patterns of underperformance, students at risk of not meeting course or examination expectations and any necessary interventions should be identified and followed up.

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After the End-of-Term examination, G2, A-Level and Foundation students attend feedback sessions with their subject teachers before the end of each term. These sessions provide an opportunity to review examination papers, identify what the student did well, understand errors and misconceptions, and set targets for improvement during the End-of-Term Break. These sessions are an important part of the learning process and all relevant students are expected to attend.

Before an examination paper is given to the Examinations Officer, it should have been approved by the relevant Head of Department. The setting, conduct, marking, access arrangements and administration of formal examinations must also comply with the College's Examinations Policy and the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation and examination regulations.

Managing Poor Performance & Underachievement

If a student is underachieving in a subject, the reason should be identified and appropriate action taken. Underachievement may arise from a range of factors, including gaps in prior knowledge, language or literacy difficulties, misunderstanding of subject vocabulary, insufficient independent study, poor attendance, lack of engagement, personal or welfare concerns, an unsuitable course placement or an unmet learning need. Staff should avoid assuming that underachievement is simply a lack of effort.

Where a student has the ability to make better progress but is not applying sufficient effort or completing work to the required standard, the teacher should address this promptly. This may include clear expectations, additional guidance, closer monitoring, contact with the tutor and, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary action in accordance with the levels of disciplinary action described in the College Rules and Justice System. Behavioural action should be proportionate and should not replace appropriate academic support.

Teachers should ensure that work accepted from a student is of the required quality. Work which is incomplete or does not meet the expected standard should be returned with clear guidance and the student should be given an appropriate opportunity to correct, improve or repeat it. Feedback should explain what needs improvement and, where useful, model how that improvement can be achieved. Where a student is finding the academic work difficult, teachers should consider whether the difficulty arises from gaps in subject knowledge, English-language proficiency, literacy, vocabulary, study skills, the pace or level of the course, or a possible special educational need and/or disability. Teachers should provide suitably differentiated work, scaffolding, additional explanation or practice, and should seek advice from the tutor and senior academic staff. The student's family may be approached, where appropriate, to discuss additional tuition or other support.

The student's tutor will also discuss progress and performance and set or review targets for improvement. These discussions should draw on feedback from the student's class teachers, welfare, activities and any other relevant source of information, including parents where appropriate.

Where concerns persist, the matter should be escalated to the Head of Department and/or Director of Academic Studies and Principal. An agreed plan should identify the concern, actions to be taken, the staff responsible, the support to be provided, the expected improvement and a date for review. The outcome should be recorded in the student's file or designated College record.

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Progression between Intensive EAY and an Academic Course

Students who have been counselled onto an intensive English (Pre-sessional) course because of a low language level are encouraged to work hard in order to progress as quickly as possible. When their teachers consider them ready to progress onto an academic course, the student may be asked to attend academic classes as an observer. During this period, academic teachers can assess whether the student's language level and subject readiness are sufficient to access the course.

The final decision about a change of course is made during the weekly General Staff Meeting, taking account of the evidence gathered and the views of the relevant English-language and academic teachers.

Student Meetings

All students sitting public examinations have meetings with the Director of Academic Studies and/or Principal to discuss predicted grades, progress on the course and the steps required to achieve their potential. Where necessary, targets and support arrangements are agreed and reviewed.

Communication Between Departments

Staff should communicate relevant information about students' progress and performance both informally and through the College's formal management arrangements. If a member of staff has a concern about a student, it should be raised formally in a departmental meeting or the weekly General Staff Meeting. These meetings are also attended by the Head of Welfare and the Director of Student Experience, who can provide relevant support and contribute information within their areas of responsibility.

Academic concerns which may be connected to attendance, health, welfare, safeguarding, behaviour or pastoral circumstances should be referred promptly to the appropriate member of staff. Information should be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the College's safeguarding and data-protection policies.

English Language Tests

The majority of Abbey College students sit an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) examination before the end of the academic year. The existing programme records the following usual arrangements:

- G1 students usually sit the Trinity ESE/Cambridge PET examination.
- AS students usually sit an appropriate English-language examination, such as IELTS, in accordance with their course and progression requirements.
- A2 and Foundation students are expected to achieve the IELTS level required by their course and progression pathway; the existing policy records a minimum Grade 6.5.
- The existing policy records a minimum IELTS Grade 5 for entry to the Foundation course. All entry and progression thresholds must be checked against the current admissions and course documentation before being applied.

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Several examinations are held in external centres throughout the year. The College can arrange transport and supervision as needed. Results should be considered as part of the wider picture of each student's English-language development and academic readiness.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Subject teachers	Assess students regularly; use assessment to inform teaching; teach and reinforce relevant vocabulary; provide feedback and targets; identify and report concerns; implement agreed interventions.
Heads of Department	Monitor subject progress and assessment outcomes; support consistent standards; review schemes of work and subject-specific vocabulary; discuss concerns and follow up actions.
Tutors	Review the student's overall progress; discuss reports and targets; bring together relevant academic and pastoral information; liaise with parents and staff where appropriate.
Director of Academic Studies	Coordinate academic monitoring; review examination and reporting information; support intervention and course-progression decisions; bring significant concerns to senior management.
Principal	Oversee implementation and effectiveness of this policy; monitor academic performance and intervention; ensure appropriate review, evaluation and reporting.

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