



## **Written Feedback Policy**

The Sutton Trust (2011) found that the single most powerful strategy to improve learning and increase attainment is effective feedback, with a gain effect equating to nine months more teaching over the course of a year. The most effective formative feedback empowers students, helps to create successful, independent learners, and leads to high levels of engagement and interest.

At Isaac Newton Academy marking is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. A consistent approach to giving written feedback is used across the curriculum, with shared expectations of the approach to marking and the quality of marking, regardless of the subject. Frequent and consistently high quality diagnostic feedback is given to students so that they know how to improve their learning.

### **Expectations of subject teachers**

Subject teachers:

- Make the marking criteria for each task explicit to students
- Complete at least one STA per half term
- Mark students' books once every two weeks by scanning every piece of work produced by students, including notes, mind maps and workings-out to check that learning is of a consistently high quality, that misconceptions are not creeping in or becoming embedded and that any CP concerns, including potential radicalisation, are not missed. Teachers should use ticks to indicate that the work has been read and annotations to highlight such things as misconceptions or poor presentation
- Give diagnostic written feedback on assessed written responses including answers to questions, essays, reports and investigations
- Mark for literacy to support the development of students' literacy skills (See INA Marking for Literacy Policy)
- Provide opportunities for students to peer and self-assess
- Provide planned opportunities in lessons for students to read, respond to and act on the feedback they are given

### **Characteristics of Effective Written Feedback**

*Feedback is information given to the learner that relates directly to the learning goal which then redirects or refocuses the learner's actions to achieve the goal.*

'Feedback to any pupil should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other pupils. Feedback has been shown to improve learning where it gives each pupil specific guidance on strengths and weaknesses.'

'Inside the Black Box' (Black and Wiliam, 1998)

'Error is the difference between what we know and can do, and what we aim to know and do. Knowing this error is fundamental to moving towards success.' (John Hattie, 'Visible Learning for Teachers', 2012)

Feedback is most effective if it:

- focuses on the task or the process of the task
- is about challenging tasks or goals
- refers to the assessment criteria
- is related to the learning objective
- is individualised
- is specific and meaningful
- starts with a positive comment directly related to the task or goal
- confirms when the student is on the right track
- explains clearly what the student needs to do to improve and stimulates correction of errors or improvement
- acts as a scaffold to support students' next steps
- is encouraging and praises effort rather than ability (See INA Language for Learning Policy)
- requires interactivity and action by the student

### **A common structure for diagnostic written feedback on student outcomes**

'The aim is to provide feedback that is 'just in time', 'just for me', just for where I am in my learning process', and 'just what I need to help me move forward.' (John Hattie, 'Visible Learning for Teachers', 2012)

At INA we use the STA approach to structure feedback to students and to engage them in a dialogue about their written and practical learning outcomes.

|          |                        |   |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| <b>S</b> | Strength               | the teacher /peer gives positive focused feedback relating to the assessment criteria |
| <b>T</b> | Target for improvement | the teacher /peer highlights a specific aspect to be developed                        |
| <b>A</b> | Action                 | student identifies the action they will take in response to the feedback              |

Example:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>S</b> | You structured your ideas clearly and developed them particularly effectively in the first three paragraphs            |
| <b>T</b> | You could strengthen your argument by providing at least one more piece of evidence in each of the last two paragraphs |

- A** I will look at my research again and re-write the final part with more examples (*followed by evidence that this has been done*)

When a teacher re-visits the students' action they should mark the action with either "TM" (target met) or "TNM" (target not met) depending on whether the target has been met or not.

### **Phrasing targets for improvement**

'Feedback is most effective when students do not have proficiency or mastery – and thus it thrives when there is error or incomplete knowing or understanding. Errors invite opportunities. They are exciting because they indicate a tension between what we *now* know and what we *could* know.' (John Hattie, 'Visible Learning for Teachers', 2012)

Written targets have most impact when they clearly and succinctly define the aspect of the work that needs to be refined or improved. They also direct the student to a particular section of the work that requires improvement or development. They encourage student activity by either giving an instruction or posing a question to the student.

Examples:

- You need to include more information/evidence/examples to support your argument
- You need to use the correct technical/scientific vocabulary. Read over your list of key terms and make sure you have used them correctly
- You haven't developed your ideas fully. You could extend/add to this by ...
- You have not answered the question directly. Reread the question and then rewrite the paragraph
- You need to draw some clear conclusions. What are the three key things you learned from doing this investigation?

### **Looping Back**

Teachers check students' completed actions and comment on the quality of the student response and/or annotate with 'TM' (Target Met).

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