



Ashfield Girls' High School



“Each different. Each talented. All valued.”

Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy



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Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy



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Executive Summary

The Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy outlines how Ashfield Girls' High School sets standards for the presentation of written internal standardised assessments. Pupils complete a minimum of 4 standardised assessments in the academic year. As pupils progress through school they will be entered for external written examinations where quality control has been carried out to ensure external written examination papers are of a high standard.

The Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy should also be read in relation to other school policies including the Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Reporting Policy and the Internal Examinations Policy.



Section A (Aims of the Policy)

The aim of this policy is to ensure the quality of internal written assessment papers for the school's Winter (tracking 2) and Summer (tracking 4) written assessments. Standardisation of the format and basic layout of examination papers needs to take place. Assessment is very important for tracking progress, planning next steps, reporting and involving parents, children and young people in learning. By having sound standardisation and moderation processes, assessments stand a better chance of being fair, comparable and reliable.



Section B (Legislative Context and Linked Policies)

There are no legislative or guidance documents relating to Quality Assurance of Written Assessments however this policy is designed to embed the high standards set by external Examination Boards.

Linked Policies

Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Reporting Policy

Effective Use of Assessment Data Policy



Section C (Policy and Procedures)

To write well thought out assessment questions we need to firstly think about what content to assess learners on, then we need to select an appropriate question type, carefully word the question, consider the correct option as well as plausible incorrect options. The goal of a written assessment is to assess the learner's understanding of the content, not catch them out. Assessment questions should be straightforward, clear and concise. The learner should know exactly what the question is asking of them. It is vital that instructions in a written assessment are clear, explicit and unambiguous. Sometimes instructions or questions that seem perfectly clear to you are not as clear as you believe. Thus, it can be a good idea to ask a colleague to read through the assessment to make sure everything is clear and unambiguous.

Thought should be given to how long it will take students to complete the examination paper. It is important to design written assessments that can be reasonably completed in the time allotted. The mark value ascribed to different questions should be in line with their difficulty, as well as the length of time they are likely to take and the importance of the skills they assess. Difficult and complex question types should be assigned higher mark values than easier simpler question types.

Questions that assess pivotal knowledge and skills should be given higher point values than questions that assess less critical knowledge. Research has shown that an easy-to-hard question arrangement results in better performance than a hard-to-easy question arrangement (Leary & Dorans, 1985). Where appropriate, the first few questions in a paper should be relatively easy so that candidates can relax and not become over anxious. An easy-to-hard arrangement ensures that students are not discouraged early on, thus avoiding the possibility of students failing to attempt questions. Placing easier questions towards the beginning of the paper ensures that less able candidates attempt questions on which they can achieve marks before they run out of time.



Standardisation and Moderation

By having sound standardisation and moderation processes, assessments stand a better chance of being fair comparable and reliable.

Standardisation – ensuring all assessors are marking to the same standard, this is helped by agreeing to a mark scheme in advance.

Moderation – sampling of assessments to confirm accuracy and consistency of marking

Standardisation

Agreement can only be reached by discussion – Head of Department (HOD) must take the lead and arbitrate where there is a disagreement. Everyone marking should be involved at this stage. Agreement can be trickier for longer response questions/essays. It is **important to discuss** the unacceptable answers as well.

The point of standardisation is to have a debate and reach agreement or consensus. Not every assessor has to agree 100% with every decision but they have to feel comfortable enough with it and accept it and abide with it during the marking process.

When do we carry out standardisation? – when an assessment is being designed and drafted.

Moderation

This is an extension of the standardisation process undertaken once marking is underway, it is usually done fairly early on so that any deviations from accurate marking can be corrected and changes made where appropriate.

Lead assessors need to keep a check on the assessors' marking by confirming the marking of a sample of each assessor's work, confirming it is in an accepted tolerance. Moderation can take place throughout the marking process.

An alternative is for all assessors to mark the same pieces of work at the outset of marking and the lead assessor would check how close their marking is.

Basic Requirements for Standardisation & Moderation

- Draft (but almost final) mark schemes for discussion and agreement during standardisation.
- The key purpose of standardisation and moderation is to facilitate and maintain standards and comparability.
- Subjectivity cannot be entirely removed from assessment but we should do all we can to improve and support the process.
- Mark schemes that are valid and use clear language will support consistent understanding and application as well as accurate marking.
- Mark schemes should be designed so that they can be easily and consistently applied by all assessors.
- Equally valid responses presented in different forms should achieve the same marks and these responses should be anticipated.

Aim to make mark schemes as clear and legible as the tasks to which they relate.



Quality Assurance Team

Each QA team member is responsible for reviewing questions, providing any necessary comment(s) in terms of:

- ✓ Accuracy
- ✓ Degree of difficulty (should be a progression of difficulty from Year 8 to Year 9 to Year 10 etc and also a progression of difficulty from start to end of a paper). Tracking 4 should be more difficult than tracking 2.
- ✓ Content – suitable representation of the term's work for tracking 2 and of the year's work for tracking 4.
- ✓ Mark allocation is appropriate and total marks allocated are correct.
- ✓ Layout is appropriate including font type and font size (preferred Arial 11/12)
- ✓ Spacing – appropriate spacing for written responses / diagrams
- ✓ Drawings / maps have been photocopied and are clear to read
- ✓ Spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct
- ✓ Time allocated is appropriate
- ✓ Numbering of questions and sub-questions is consistent.
- ✓ Emboldening is consistent and appropriate
- ✓ Suitable mixture of questions – multiple choice (where appropriate), short response questions, extended writing response questions
- ✓ Key Stages 4 and 5 papers should reflect standard of external exam body papers



Layout of Written Assessment Paper

Type of Font

This plays an important role in appearance of written examination papers. Arial font (size 11 or 12) has been found to be more accessible to visually impaired candidates.

Emboldening

Emboldening should be used to highlight what is required where candidates are likely to misread the action word.

Numbering

The style of numbering questions should be consistent.

1 a) b) c) etc

2 a) (i) (ii) b) (i) (ii) (iii) etc

Spacing

It is important to give candidates appropriate spacing to complete their written responses. If lines are added there should be plenty of space for pupils to complete their written sentences. A suitable amount of space should also be available for any diagrams to be drawn.

At Ashfield Girls' High, question papers for written assessments must use a standard front cover. This front cover template should contain:

- ✓ Name of the subject
- ✓ Date of assessment
- ✓ Time allowed in hours and minutes
- ✓ List of instructions – notes necessary for understanding what is required of pupils
- ✓ Any additional information – material aids allowed

An example of a front cover using the template can be found in **Appendix 1**.



Section D (Roles and Responsibilities)

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors have responsibility for the strategic direction of the school. All decisions relating to significant changes in curriculum and assessment are taken by the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will ratify, monitor and review the aims and direction as set out in the Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy.

Vice Principal (Curriculum)

The Vice-Principal (Curriculum) is the Chair of the School Improvement Team – Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments. The Vice Principal (Curriculum) has overview of whole process. The Vice Principal (Curriculum) is responsible for communicating with Heads of Department and the Quality Assurance Team.

Heads of Department

Heads of Department (HOD) should compile the written assessments used in tracking 2 and tracking 4. Mark schemes should be agreed with whole department to ensure all assessors are marking to the same standard. A copy of the written assessment and mark scheme should be forwarded at least two weeks in advance to the assigned Quality Assurance (QA) team member for checking.

Quality Assurance (School Improvement Team)

Each QA team member is assigned specific departments. Each QA team member is to report back to HOD within 1-2 days of receiving the papers to ensure any necessary changes can be made and photocopying of papers can be achieved in time.



Section E (Consultation, Communication, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy)

This policy has been developed in consultation with governors and staff, including the Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments – School improvement Team.

A copy of the Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Policy is available on the school website at <https://www.ashfieldgirls.org/>

The Vice Principal (Curriculum), along with the Quality Assurance of Internal Written Assessments Team are responsible for monitoring the policy.

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the policy, the Board of Governors shall:

- be updated regularly on any changes
- identify issues and priorities for action
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at ensuring the effective presentation of written examination papers



Appendix 1



Ashfield Girls' High School

Life and Health Sciences

Assessment Unit A2 2

assessing
Organic Chemistry

Tuesday 20 April 2021

Time:

1 hour

Instructions:

Read all questions carefully.
Write your answers in the spaces provided.
Answer **all 5** questions.

Information:

You will need a black pen and calculator for this exam.

Your attention is drawn to the Data leaflet which is used with the question paper.

The total mark for this paper is **60**.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in Question **4 (b)**.

Question	Marks
1	/13
2	/17
3	/8
4	/12
5	/10
Total: _____ / 60	
_____ %	Grade: _____

Name: _____



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Challenging girls today; creating women of value in the future



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