# **Business Department Assessment Policy**

## The Importance of Feedback

Learning will not happen instantly and takes time; attending lessons is not enough, you also need to be working outside of class, to learn new information and consolidate learning. In the process, you will make mistakes but hopefully feedback will enable you to learn from these mistakes. Better to make a mistake during the year and correct it, than make your first mistake in the actual exam! Feedback is essential for your learning and will consist of written (teacher marking), peer (where you feedback on someone else’s work in the class) and self (where you assess yourself).

## Weekly Independent Tasks (Homework)

Homework does not necessarily need to be completed at home! You can use free periods during the day to complete these tasks outside of lessons. To keep a good work/life balance, you might like to treat College as an 0845 to 1615 day and use your free periods in the library completing tasks. This will minimise the work you need to complete at home and might make you more productive!!

Each week, you should be spending approximately 4.5 hours on independent tasks. Your teacher will set homework tasks and advise you of additional reading that you should undertake. If the homework set does not take the full 4.5 hours to complete, you should conduct further reading and research to consolidate learning. Homework tasks will consist of two main types:

*‘PREP WORK’:* Not all homework will be marked. It will be given a quick inspection in class and then will involve peer and self-assessment as part of a class exercise. This work will ‘prepare’ you for the lesson and could involve reading specific chapters in a text book or carrying out specific research.

*CONSOLIDATION EXERCISES:* These may take the form of revision worksheets, small case studies, or past paper questions/common works to be used for formal/self/peer assessment or discussions in lessons.

**Annual Review Grade (ARG)**

At the end of year 1, your teacher will decide what your ARG will be, based upon your benchmarks and other factors such as your ‘Approach to Learning’ (see below). You will have a 1-2-1 in the Summer, when your Lead Teacher will tell you what your ARG is. The ARG is your teacher’s honest decision on your grade performance in the first year of your course and therefore will be the chief determinant for your predicted grade, which is what is entered on your UCAS application forms. Universities will offer places on their courses based upon these grade predictions alongside other elements of the UCAS form including references and personal statements. Benchmark 3 and 4 would normally carry more weight than 1 and 2 but since they have been carried out remotely under the current Covid-19 scenario, although still valid, they will be taken into consideration alongside other factors like your ‘Approach to Learning’ before and after lockdown to signal your academic potential.

The ARG plays a key part in determining the context in which you progress to the second year. Students who receive an A\*-D grade are encouraged to continue with their studies into the 2nd year. However for students who receive a U or E Grade as their ARG, it suggests that for whatever reason they have struggled with the transition from Level 2 Courses (GCSE) to Level 3 Courses (A-level). This will be evidenced by poor performances throughout their benchmarks and an inconsistent or poor approach to learning in their student reviews and via formal Action Plans. The college will be concerned about students who receive an E/U grade and their ability to pass their course. A comprehensive action plan will be put in place for these students and we would expect to see improvements over the Summer with the work that was set. They would also be expected to attend lunchtime workshops for the remainder of the course and we would be in more contact with their parents to ensure they are staying on track.

The College adopts a consistent and optimistic approach to predicting grades to ensure that they are both aspirational and achievable. A predicted grade is what we believe a student is likely to achieve by the conclusion of their course in positive circumstances.

The ARG is important in forming the basis for the predicted grade, but the predicted grade will also be aspirational for the students’ ambitions although it must remain realistic and cannot be based on the idea that only now will the student start to work harder in the second year.

**Approach to Learning**

How you were engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers.

How you are engaging in your learning remotely, evidenced by the ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, attendance at any remote lessons (unless previously communicated to state your unavailability) and communication with your teachers via Email and/or Microsoft Teams.

## Benchmark Assessment Tasks

Throughout the course, you will be set benchmark assessments. These will consist of the type of questions that you would see in the exam and will cover the topics covered to date. How you perform in these assessments will be formally logged and will directly contribute towards your ARG, although in the current Covid-19 scenario they will be viewed alongside a much wider set of variables, such as your Approach to Learning. Benchmarks provide a valuable opportunity for feedback regarding your knowledge and understanding as well as an opportunity to develop your exam technique. Feedback can take the following forms:

* *WRITTEN TEACHER FEEDBACK:* Some benchmark assessments and home works will receive written feedback in the form of comments that relate directly to the assessment criteria of the exam board. Alongside this, comments and questions will be posed about how to improve.
* *VERBAL TEACHER FEEDBACK:* This may take place during lesson time however formal 1-2-1’s will also occur in November and March at which point progress with assessments can be discussed.
* *WRITTEN PEER FEEDBACK*: One some occasions, your teacher will ask you to formally mark and feedback on a classmate’s common work in lesson. This is valuable experience for you to not only learn from others but gain a better understanding of the assessment objectives and mark schemes.
* *REFLECTION AND TARGET SETTING:* After each assessment, students will be expected to reflect on the written/verbal feedback from their teacher and set themselves targets for improvement in the period in question.

Benchmarks and home works tasks are an ideal way to assess your knowledge and understanding and get valuable feedback.

## The Final Assessment

At the end of the two years, students will complete three 2 hour 15 min exams, one for each of the three components of the course studied.

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| **PAPER 1: Business Opportunities and Functions** | **PAPER 2: Business Analysis and Strategy** | **PAPER 3: Business in a Changing World** |
| * Section A – compulsory short answer questions * Section B – compulsory data response questions   To assess Business Opportunities and Functions. | * Compulsory data response and structure questions   To assess business strategy and analytical techniques used in the business decision-making process. The subject content in Comp 1 will underpin the context for Business Analysis and Strategy. | * Section A – compulsory questions based on a case study * Section B – one synoptic essay from a choice of three.   To assess all of the A level subject content. |

## Other Considerations

* *LATE POLICY:* In line with the ‘College Assessment Policy’, the department are under no obligation to provide feedback to a student who does not meet the internal deadlines for weekly independent tasks, benchmark assessments or coursework drafts. Please be warned that a failure to meet the final coursework deadline is the equivalent to missing the exam and it will be recommended that the student should be removed from the course. Students who fail to prepare adequately for the lesson as requested maybe excluded for part of the lesson and asked to work independently at the back of the classroom. A continued failure to meet ‘PREP’ work requirements will result in a reference to the pastoral team and a phone call home to parents.
* *RETURNED WORK:* Work will be assessed and returned within 10 working days of it being submitted unless it is the final coursework submission. The exam board stipulates that no feedback or formal grade can be released to students by the teacher. The exam board reserve the right to inform you of the final grade in August with your results. Please do not ask the teacher for your final mark as they will be unable to provide it.
* *PLAGIARISIM:* Plagiarism is submitting another person’s written work as one’s own original work or using someone else’s idea without referencing the source or using pictorial work without permission or referencing the source. If there is a suspicion of plagiarism, the Head of Department and Senior Tutor will be informed and a meeting will take place. If a student is found guilty, they will be subject to disciplinary action by the College and the awarding body will be informed. Students should be aware that the College is subscribed to software designed to detect plagiarism.
* *ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS*: If you qualify for any exam concessions, all access arrangements will be honoured in timed exercises such as mocks and benchmarks.

## Benchmark Checkpoints, Student Reviews (Reports) and Mock Exams 2022-24

Below is an overview of all the key assessment checkpoints

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| **CHECKPOINT** | **DATE** | **DETAILS** |
| **Benchmark 1 Checkpoint** | Oct 2022 | **25 mins. 2 x 8 mark past exam questions on topics studied so far.** |
| **Parents Evening (For All)** | Oct/Nov 2022 | **Meetings with your parents to discuss how you have settled in and transferred from GCSE to A-level learning based upon:**   1. **Approach to learning** (how you are engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you have sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers) 2. **Performance Grade** in Benchmark 1 and from your homework tasks |
| **XMAS BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 2 Checkpoint** | Dec 2023 | **60 mins Mock Exam on Business Opportunities** |
| **Student Review 1** | Jan 2023 | **A review of your progress in the first term (12-13 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor:**   1. **Performance grade (A to U)** (based on benchmark 1 and 2 but also your homework tasks) 2. **Approach to Learning** (how you are engaging in your learning, evidenced by attendance, punctuality, ability to meet weekly deadlines with quality work, how you have sought out extra support via workshops and your overall communication with your teachers). |
| **Benchmark 3 Checkpoint** | Mar 2023 | **35 mins data response questions on Business Functions** |
| **Parents Evening (Targeted)** | Mar 2023 | **Meetings with your parents primarily where teachers may have a concern about your progress since Student Review 1 in January.** |
| **EASTER BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 4 Checkpoint** | June 2023 | **90 mins MID COURSE ASSESSMENT**  Data response, past paper questions. Questions could be on anything from COMP1 (Business Opportunities and Business Functions). |
| **Student Review 2** | June 2023 | **A review of your progress for the academic year (30-35 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (Annual Review Grade or ‘ARG’ – performance for whole year (see notes above in main doc.) 3. Predicted Grade |
| **SUMMER BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 5 Checkpoint** | Sept 2023 | **45 mins on Decision Making Models**  2 x multi-stage past paper questions on topics covered at the very start of year 2 of study. |
| **Parents Evening (All)** | Oct/Nov 2023 | **Meetings with your parents to discuss how you have settled in to the second phase of learning:**   1. **Approach to learning** (how you have engaged since Student Review 2 including completion of summer homework and the first five weeks of teaching – deadlines met, engagement in class and communication with teacher) 2. **Performance**with reference to your draft coursework mark and to talk about the final deadline for after half-term. 3. **How to support you:**Discuss how parents can further support you and what is coming up in this year |
| **Benchmark 6 Checkpoint** | Nov 2023 | **30 mins exam style question on Ratio Analysis**  This will require you to undertake a full ratio analysis of a business from accounts provided. |
| **Student Review 3** | Dec 2023 | **A review of your progress for the academic year since last Student Review (July) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (based upon benchmark 6 and homework tasks) compared to Predicted Grade |
| **XMAS BREAK** |  |  |
| **Benchmark 7 Checkpoint** | Feb 2024 | **2 hour and 15 mins Mock Exam**  This will be a COMP2 style exam. |
| **Student Review 4** | Mar 2024 | **A review of your progress for the academic year (30-35 weeks of teaching) after a 1-2-1 with your Lead Tutor (see above)**   1. Approach to Learning 2. Performance Grade (based upon benchmark 7 Mock Exam only) compared to Predicted Grade |
| **Parents Evening (Targeted)** | Mar 2024 | **Meetings with your parents primarily where teachers may have a concern about your progress since Student Review 4.** |
| **EASTER BREAK** – Last day of U6 teaching Fri 12th May | | |

## Rationale for Assessment Programme

It is really important that when you come to sit your final assessment, you are prepared and able to perform at your highest ability.  Therefore, because Business is predominantly assessed under examination timed conditions, the benchmark assessments are designed to practice the skills need to sit a timed exam, so that you are ‘exam fit’.

Therefore, the first few benchmarks start with you being able to practice shorter-answer exam questions and have a scaffolded approach. These then become more challenging with less scaffolding as the course progresses. The big mock exam in the second year is a key assessment and should be treated very carefully – it is perhaps the only time you will be able to sit in an exam hall under timed conditions to complete an assessment.  It is positioned there for you to learn from the experience with enough time to correct any issues before you sit the final A-level assessment after Easter.

## Grade Boundaries

All benchmarks will be taken from past papers, so they are 100% on point for your final exams. As such, the mark schemes and grade boundaries will be used as a basis upon which to determine marks and grades. Grade boundaries will be adjusted to reflect the cohort sitting the benchmark however, rather than the cohort that sat the actual external A Level exam.