A Mastery Approach to the Acquisition of Skills and Knowledge

KS3 Assessment at Kesgrave

Staff Guide (HoD)

Overview

For September 2016, the National assessment of pupils at KS2 using SAT levels has changed radically, levels are no longer assigned and instead a numerical measure from 80 to 120 is awarded. At KHS we have taken this year of transition as an opportunity to develop and introduce a new way of assessing students in KS3, without reliance on either the outgoing levels or the new KS2 measures.

The Mastery approach - Fundamentals

Pupils are continuously tracked through the curriculum allowing specific targets for improvement to be identified and acted on, therefore promoting progress in the core skills and understanding required as we prepare pupils for KS4.

We want students to understand that if they are not constantly making progress, this is not necessarily a bad thing. An important aspect of learning anything is to know what we are good at, but also what we need to focus on more, in order to improve further.

We want all our students to believe that with the right motivation and guidance they can all achieve.

Our core principles of assessment at KS3 remain focussed on encouraging the very best from all our pupils.

How is “Mastery” different from levels?

Pupils are not assigned a target level, all pupils can aspire to “Mastery” encouraging a Growth Mind-set associated with progression.

Our teachers set the standard of “Mastery” expected, reinforcing our high standards.

Pupil do not receive feedback such as “you’re a 4a”, instead we focus on formative feedback that encourages students to think about how to progress.

Rubrics used for planning our teaching and progression.

What information will be collected & reported?

Formatively

In our day to day teaching we will continue to look at the standard of work produced by each student against the learning outcomes required for that piece of work. Teachers will record these assessments in 4Matrix and give feedback to the student in order for them to make further progress.

Summatively

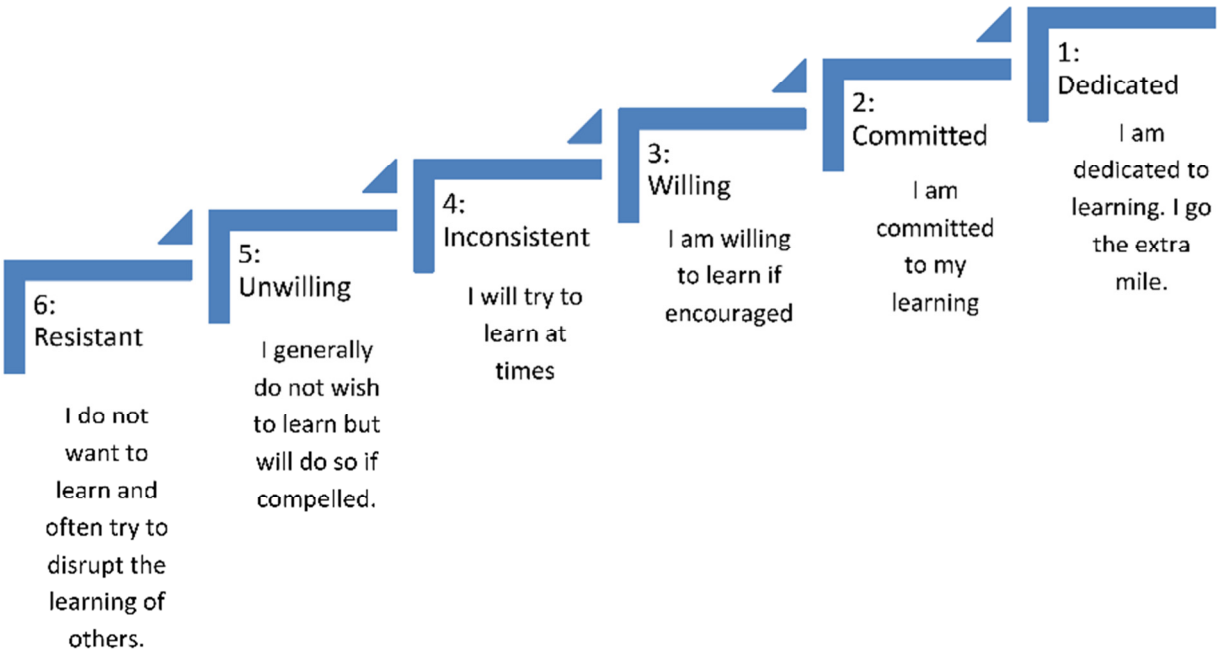
Once a term, teachers will carry out a tracking point assessment of all students. This may take the form of a test, an assessed piece of writing / other piece of work, or maybe a summation of work covered so far. Following this assessment, the teacher compares pupil performance against the content covered in each subject, and data is entered into SIMS in a manner similar to our existing data collection routines. This information is then collated into a student report that is issued to parents :

The language used to record pupil attainment will be in the form of :

"Mastery" Measure	Description
Not accessing	Knowledge / skills are not currently being applied.
Emerging	Knowledge / skills are beginning to be applied Significant development required
Developing	Work is generally good Some areas need further development
Secure	Work is of a high standard, all concepts are well understood and applied
Mastered	Outstanding work / performance

This new "Mastery" measure will be reported to parents alongside our existing Commitment to Learning (CtL) scale, an Attitude to Homework indicator (AtH), a reference to previous progress targets and a new set of progress targets if applicable.

Commitment to Learning (CtL) – Steps to Success



Attitude to Homework

	Homework is often late or absent.
	Homework is completed. Several aspects require attention.
	Homework is completed. Standard is high for the student.

What will a report look like and how can it be interpreted?

INSERT here : to be confirmed following SIMS preparation

Frequently asked questions

When my child gets their report and there is an 'Emerging' box or two, it's not very motivational is it?

We want to be honest with our assessment of students. If anyone is going to move on with their learning, they need to know their weak areas, so they can address them in a more efficient manner.

In the past, my other children had a target level to aim for in KS3. Why can't my daughter be given a target threshold in KS3?

Whilst we can use data to predict how students with particular KS2 starting points usually perform at KS4, we don't want to use this to set targets at KS3. KS3 is a time when new subjects are introduced and we want all pupils to believe that with the right effort and the right guidance, they can make good progress and get that little bit better.

As the year goes on, why might the progress of my child change from one term to another?

There are a number of reasons why this might be the case. Some key factors to consider:

In some subjects e.g. PE, the content that is covered each term will be very different. For example, in term 1 a student might be doing gymnastics and find this quite difficult, however in term 2 they might be doing football and perform really well with this.

As the years go on, students consolidate their learning in a subject and so make better progress. For example, in term 1 a student may not be at the required standard, as they are getting to grips with the topic / subject. However, by term 2/3 they have had time to embed this learning and so their progress is better.

We spend a great deal of time encouraging students to reflect on their effort. As they do this, and their effort improves, their progress should follow.

How will “Mastery” be recorded and analysed in school?

Assessment without Levels (AWL) is a new feature of 4Matrix that we can adapt to suit our own purpose. The program has many features that are applicable now and some that we will explore and consider further along the KS3 pathway. These features are summarised below as the 6-layered tracking matrix.

The Planning Layer displays a planning grid. Subject Leaders can analyse the National Curriculum Subject Content for their subject and identify the “Key Concepts and Big Ideas”. These are the fundamentals which are key to Mastery of a subject.

The Teaching Layer allows Subject Leaders to define the Scheme of Work, arranged as a week-by-week or unit-by-unit teaching programme based on the planning grid. Statements derived from the Subject Content are arranged as Topics, with Learning Objectives assigned as components parts of each topic (to ensure the National Curriculum is delivered across the Key Stage).

The Learning Layer allows pupil progress to be recorded and is based on “Mastery” of the Learning Objectives. These are derived from the Planning Layer and Teaching Layers. This is relevant throughout KS3 where progress will be based on the acquisition of ideas, concepts, topics and knowledge, rather than the broader, holistic understanding expected by the end of the key stage.

The Outcomes Layer allows pupil progress to be recorded in relation to the broader, holistic statements of attainment, represented by the National Curriculum Subject Content statements for each subject. These are defined in 4Matrix as Attainment Targets. This layer will be used as a summation of KS3 (may be either Yr 8 or Yr 9 depending on subject).

The Predictions Layer could be used to calculate the average grade, per-pupil, from either the Learning or Outcomes layers in real-time, and it is possible to commit (or 'sync') this layer (i.e. tell 4Matrix to treat these grades as a standard series), in order to utilise the usual analysis tools, such as Progress 8. This layer can produce 'end-of-key-stage-certificates' which could estimate what the school expects a pupil to go on and achieve at the end of Key Stage 4, based on current performance.

The Attainment layer is a Flight Path tool which displays a graphical representation of pupil performance over time. It can support both 'tracking towards' and 'working at' approaches for Key Stages 3 and 4. The Learning Layer and Outcomes Layer support a Mastery approach to teaching and learning.

Departmental Preparation

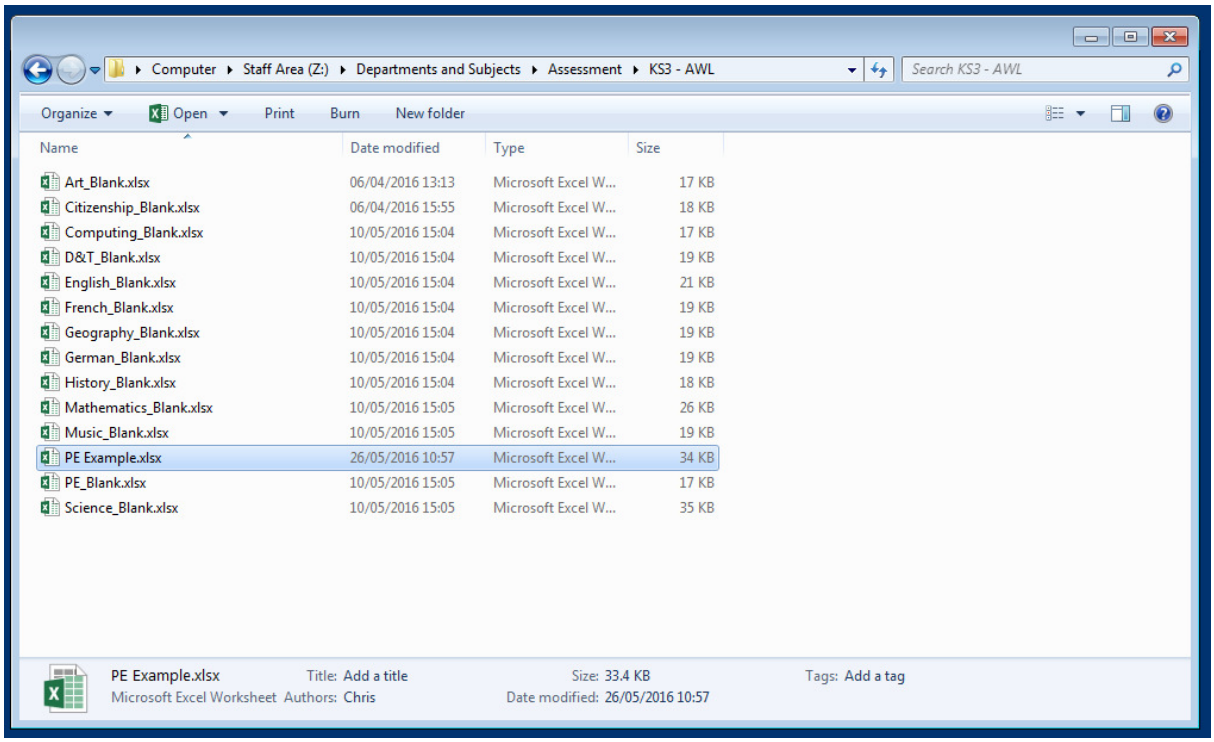
In order for information to be stored in 4Matrix, it is necessary for us to "prime" the system by bringing together three key components, therefore, mapping out our SoW and making specific reference to teaching aims and lesson objectives.

Component	Description	Status
Teaching Aims	A short list of broad aims that the students work towards throughout the key stage.	For the majority of subjects these are provided (but can be modified).
Scheme of Work	A series of lessons that address one or more of the Teaching Aims	It is expected that these already exist for all subjects.
Lesson Objectives	A series of testable statements that the pupils can be assessed against. The nature of the assessment is entirely under the control of each teaching area, but should be internally moderated.	These need to be written by each department so that LOs assigned to each SoW match content and key skills that can be assessed.

It is anticipated that the SoW, each containing a small number (variable number depending on teaching duration and suitability), Lesson Objectives, will collectively address all the Teaching aims and provide a coherent path for the pupils through KS3.

Using this new assessment system does not require SoW to be re-written, only Teaching Aims and Lesson Objectives need to be made explicit as students will be assessed against these. To accomplish this task partially completed templates are available for most departments, alongside an annotated example.

The annotated example can be found here :



Subject specific templates can be found in the same directory as above. If you find that a subject is missing then please let me know asap.

Required – Part 1

The table below summarises the tasks required for each "Tab" in the file.

Tab Name	Task
Details	Leave this alone
AT	These are the Attainment Targets and are taken directly from the KS3 National Curriculum.
LO	These are the Lesson Objectives. You can add new statements as required, and have as many as you want – but each will become a "testable statement" and if assigned to a SoW will become part of the assessment process. End of unit tests and homework can also be included.
Planning	This is useful, but very complicated – I recommend leaving this until the 4Matrix routine becomes more established and familiar.
Teaching	This is where the ATs and LO are assigned to SoW. Each row can represent a whole SoW, or an individual lesson. At this stage I recommend each row is a SoW.

	Vital : Year; Topic; Ats; Los This will give the system the minimum information required for use. The year of study The name of the SoW The AT incorporated (add multiple entries as 2, 3, 5 etc) The LO incorporated (add multiple entries as 2, 4, 7, etc)

Once the file has been amended it should be returned to Mat Stapleton for transfer to 4Matrix

Required – Part 2

As a whole school shift in KS3 (starting with Year 7 in Autumn 2016), we are replacing the "old style" teaching reports to focus more attention on specific targets and progress in an individual pupils' highlighted area of weakness (aided by the LO statements in 4Matrix). For each LO it is anticipated that a short target will be written that can be selected by number in the SIMS data collection routine and becomes part of the pupil report.

Once part 1 above has been completed, the LO will be stripped out of the transfer file and re-sent to HoD for targets to be assigned.

Targets should be short statements that encourage progress in each area of the curriculum as defined by the LO.

Once the file has been amended it should be returned to Mat Stapleton so that the targets can be selected during the SIMS reporting process.

In Practise - Our expectations

Ensure the curriculum delivery fosters a Growth Mindset

If we want successful learners, we need to develop a 'Growth Mindset' within our students. This can only be done effectively if it is an integral part of our teaching, as well as our day to day interactions with students.

So within our teaching of the curriculum we need to ensure that we are developing the following attributes:

Expect excellence
Develop a belief that everybody can improve and reach for excellence, when expectations and levels of challenge are high.

Be resilient
Develop in students an understanding that learning requires hard work, effort, deliberate practice and learning from our mistakes – but that with the right approach, we can all overcome obstacles.

Respond to feedback
Give good quality and specific feedback, as well as the opportunity for students to respond to this feedback.

Be inspired by others
Use the success and excellence of others to inspire students to go on and improve their own work.