

# TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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Date of Policy	September 2019
Approved by Principal	September 2019
Next Review Date	August 2020
Lead for Review	Deputy Head Academic

## Aim

To promote consistent, high standards of learning, in the latest research into educational practice. Central to this policy is the principle of aiming to create independent, lifelong learners who can take ownership of their learning and enjoy it. We aim to create a supportive, stimulating and inclusive environment for learning, designed to maximise student attainment. Integral to this is the provision of a stimulating, individualized programme of cpd for teachers, so that they continue to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogy, which will then be translated into a creative and enthusiastic learning environment for their students.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all academic staff, as well as students and parents, clearly understand how to ensure the provision of a quality learning experience at the college.

## Purpose

The policy is designed to:

- Ensure students develop independent thinking and learning skills to maximise their potential during the course of their studies in the college, and for their future lives.
- Improve Curriculum planning to ensure quality teaching and learning.
- Promote a whole-college approach to teaching and learning.
- Ensure that students receive a range of teaching and learning experiences.
- Maximise student attainment and achievement.

To ensure that this policy becomes the standard for creating a quality teaching and learning experience for all students at the college, it is important that the following occurs:

## All academic staff will:

- Be made fully aware of the content of this policy.
- Implement the policy while planning their lessons.
- Recognise that quality teaching and learning is not an accident but rather the result of careful planning.
- Be aware of all the cpd opportunities on offer at CATS, but also encouraged to identify individual, bespoke cpd where appropriate.

## In order to be successful we need:

- Creative teaching and learning strategies which increase subject understanding and develop academic skills
- Teachers who promote motivation and self-confidence, with high expectations of all learners and celebration of success.
- Student ownership of learning and celebration of student voice.
- An effective partnership between the college, the student, and the student's home, which recognises and promotes the value of learning.

## Practice

### Planning

Curriculum Directors, Programme Directors and individual teaching staff will be responsible for planning the curriculum in consultation with the Teaching & Learning policy, overseen by the Director of Studies.

Curriculum Directors are to ensure staff follow policy consistently and should endeavour to establish links with other curriculum areas to help co-ordinate the Curriculum and promote transferable skills..

Good teaching and learning occurs when:

- Teachers are organised and incorporate clear learning intentions into their planning and delivery;
- Planning takes into consideration the needs of every student, and teachers recognise that all students progress at different rates;
- The teacher uses available data to assess prior attainment and to establish clear targets for students to follow.
- Homework / Flipped learning preparation are incorporated into planning and delivery

The SLT should ensure that the college has clear and understandable systems which promote excellence across the whole college. SLT are responsible for the clear strategic direction of the college's Development Plan. In conjunction with the college's Development Plan, the T&L Coordinator should provide a clear, inclusive programme to address the academic staff's cpd needs.

The Deputy Head Academic and Curriculum Directors are responsible for the inclusion of the whole college's strategic T&L planning into their Curriculum areas.

Strategic direction of the college should be reflected in all Department Action Plans

The Curriculum Directors should ensure that Schemes of Work are developed and shared within their teams. Schemes of Work should provide sufficient detail to secure student progress through the relevant key stage. However, individual lessons may still contain flexibility for professional interpretation.

Curriculum Directors and individual teaching staff are responsible for the consistent delivery of the Curriculum across their subject areas.

The primary role of Curriculum Directors is to ensure quality teaching and learning in their teams.

Curriculum Directors should endeavour to establish links with other curriculum areas to help co-ordinate the Curriculum and promote transferable skills.

The essential aspect of every Lesson is that they incorporate planned progression and student centred activity, and that there is a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the students which is taken into account. A range of resources should be used as appropriate and

lessons will demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught including relevant subject literacy.

Learning intentions should be drawn from an appropriate source and reflect the needs of the students to make progress. Sources of information could be subject guidelines, Government recommended work, and exam board syllabi. Learning intentions should be incorporated into teacher planning and delivery but there is no single expected format.

If Lesson Plans are requested, for example for formal Lesson Observations, they should be completed to an approved college format.

Teachers should ensure they cater for the learning needs of all students across a lesson and series of lessons, considering additional learning needs, including those of high or low achievers. Every lesson should ensure differentiation to maximise students' learning.

A series of lessons should provide different learning activities designed to enfranchise students.

All lessons should demonstrate opportunities for consolidation and challenge.

Students should be encouraged to be independent learners and thinkers, through the careful structuring of appropriate tasks.

Teachers should be fully aware of the latest ISI criteria on the quality of teaching and learning.

## A Typical lesson

- Intentions are planned and reinforced during each lesson;
- There are clear expectations of a prompt arrival and good behavior of all students;
- The lesson starts promptly and latecomers are challenged appropriately;
- Students are consistently engaged;
- Students are required to explain their thinking;
- Differentiation activities should be included in every lesson and facilitate appropriate learning for students' differing needs which may include those relating to linguistic ability, academic ability and additional educational needs and cultural backgrounds;
- English must be encouraged at all times by students and academic staff (except in language-specific subjects, ie. MFL), although there are times when explanations in native language can be helpful (paper dictionaries should be encouraged rather than electronic translators);
- Subject literacy - key vocabulary and terminology should be reinforced throughout the lesson as well as high expectations for the development of subject literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening);
- Lessons should explicitly develop students' higher level thinking and learning skills;
- Teachers should regularly check students' understanding of lesson content and student progress in the class;
- Independent learning should be expected, encouraged and enabled.

## Homework (Independent Study)

- Should be relevant.

- Should extend work that has gone on in the lesson or prepare students for the next lesson.
- Should be flexible and differentiated.
- Should not usually be used to finish incomplete lessons.
- Should be completed in a professional manner and stored for future reference.

## Subject Literacy (English in lessons):

- During lessons it is expected that under normal circumstances (ie. not MFL classes), students will speak in English;
- Students are rewarded for speaking English in college with 'Speaking English' reward cards which are exchanged for a prize at whole college assemblies;
- Following initial testing, an estimated IELTS score will go onto Shackleton to inform academic staff about English levels of students in their group;
- Students are also screened for learning difficulties in their first weeks in the college, and are also tested in Maths, as appropriate, to assist any setting arrangements;
- Subject specific terminology and literacy requirements must be embedded and explicitly developed in lessons.

## Reading Week:

- To specifically support UFP students and students in the second year of A-level or IB, there will be a further opportunity for learning support during the Easter Vacation. This period will focus on revision and examination techniques, but there will also be opportunities for educational trips or visits from external speakers to provide student enrichment.

## Ethos and Values

- Lessons will encourage respect for other people paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equalities Act
- Students should receive an effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society
- Students will be taught in way which does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

## Scrutiny of Work and Lesson Observation

Curriculum Directors and the SLT will also scrutinise students' work as part of the college's commitment to continuous improvement. Scrutiny will focus on the organization of students and check that whole-school T&L strategies are being reinforced in classrooms.

All academic staff in Departmental teams should receive both collective and individual feedback on the outcomes of this scrutiny of work.

Lesson observations will occur on a regular basis to ensure good practice is occurring, and to help academic staff develop their teaching.

Lesson observation will be conducted using the college's Observation Procedures.

Members of academic staff will all receive at most 3 formal lesson observations per academic year, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Academic staff will ordinarily be observed by their Curriculum Director and/or members of the SLT.

Regular learning walks are conducted more frequently and are included in the college calendar. They are carried out by Curriculum Directors, the Teaching and Learning coordinator, as well as the SLT.

## The Learning Environment

The classroom should be a place conducive to learning where the student desires to learn, and is motivated by their surroundings.

The classroom teacher is responsible for maintaining an environment which foster students' interest in their subject.

Classroom displays should be appropriate and updated on a regular basis.

## Use of ICT

Schemes of Work and planning should make reference to ICT opportunities.

Members of staff should, where possible, use new technology to enhance the delivery of their Curriculum. Staff are encouraged to use CATS VLE (Moodle) as an additional interface with students. Moodle can be used for staff to share resources with their students and can also be used for students to submit work for teachers to monitor and provide feedback.

Use of laptops or devices in class should be monitored to ensure they are used effectively by students.

## Professional Development

Teachers and Curriculum Directors are able to request academic CPD opportunities through conversation with Curriculum Directors and via their Performance Management platform (BlueSky). The approval of CPD should be based on identified needs of staff, as documented during performance management, observations or professional conversations.

Academic staff can expect a minimum of 32 hours INSET per academic year, to include local, national and international CPD opportunities as relevant to their teaching contexts.

The college provides a T&L calendar of events which incorporates a mixture of compulsory and optional opportunities for professional development. Academic staff members are welcome to request specific workshops and are encouraged to deliver their own.

Academic staff are expected to document and reflect on their CPD each academic year using their performance management platform (BlueSky).

## Policy Links

- Curriculum
- Assessment & Reporting
- ALS

*Date for review: the college will review this policy annually and evaluate its effectiveness. This policy takes account of any guidance issued by the Secretary of State*