



Beaufort College

Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy

Introduction

This teaching, learning and assessment policy has been developed in partnership with all members of Beaufort College's School Community. This policy recognises Assessment for Learning (AFL) as an integral part of delivering the highest quality of teaching and learning in our school.

School context and policy relationship to the school mission statement

Beaufort College is a coeducational second level school under the trusteeship of the Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). The school has DEIS status and is committed to delivering equality of opportunity for our students. The characteristic spirit of the school as stated in our mission statement *seeks to enrich students' lives and empower them for life's challenges*. This teaching learning and assessment policy reflects the school ethos of **quality education**. This policy also reflects the LMETB core values of excellence in education, equality, care, respect and community.

Scope of this Policy

Focusing on formative assessment, this policy applies to:

- All students
- All teachers
- All school leaders
- All school-based student support services. Support services include:
 - BFL (Behaviour for Learning)
 - HSCL (Home School Community Liaison)
 - SCP (School Completion Programme)
 - JCSP Library service
 - Guidance Counselling
 - SEN/AED Special Educational/Additional Educational Needs)

It is applicable at every level of activity in the school and is strongly anchored in everyday classroom practices and student homework.

This policy aims to develop a coherent, whole school Teaching, Learning and Assessment methodology, **Assessment for Learning (AfL)**. This will ensure common standards among departments and between professionals.

“Assessment that is explicitly designed to promote learning is the single most powerful tool for raising standards and empowering life-long learning”. (Assessment Reform Group, 2002 p.2)

Black and Wiliam’s seminal research 1998 began the evolution of AfL in modern Teaching Learning and Assessment policies: [BlackandWiliam1998.pdf](#)

“... formative assessment does improve learning. The gains in achievement appear to be quite considerable, among the largest ever reported for educational interventions. As an illustration of just how big these gains are, an effect size of 0.7 (See Appendix 1), if it could be achieved on a nationwide scale, would be equivalent to raising the mathematics attainment score of an ‘average’ country like England, New Zealand, or the United States into the ‘top five’ after the Pacific Rim countries of Singapore, Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong.” (Beaton et al., 1996, Black and Wiliam’s 1998, p. 61)

Rationale - Aims and Objectives of this policy

This policy seeks to:

- Promote a consistent, whole school approach to facilitate improved Teaching, Learning and Assessment.
- Incorporate the science and up-to-date research on Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Beaufort College makes use of the *NCCA Focus on Learning Series* as part of this work. [NCCA - Focus on learning](#)
- Provide a clear roadmap in terms of CPD for Teaching Learning and Assessment practices
- Promote inter-department and intra-department sharing of ideas and best practices on Assessment for Learning.
- To enrich our school DEIS plan and achieve our DEIS targets under the themes of Attendance, Retention, Literacy, Numeracy, Attainment, Transition, Partnership with parents and others.
- Reflect Beaufort College’s continuous school self-evaluation and improvement process.

Looking at our Schools ([LAOS 2022](#)) explicitly directs teacher practice to promote reflection, collaboration, and student ownership of their own learning. In addition, Beaufort College’s most recent WSE/MLL report highlighted the importance of developing “effective feedback and assessment strategies” (Beaufort College, WSE/MLL Report 2019) in the school.

Characteristics of Formative Assessment (AfL) and it’s practical application in Beaufort College

Assessment for Learning is primarily focused on supporting student performance and improvement in learning. AfL is a methodology that emphasises the student’s active role in their learning. It is about using assessment as a tool to improve and support student learning. AfL exists before, during and after every lesson rather than at the end of a unit of teaching. AfL allows for effective differentiation and gives students ownership of their learning, encouraging students-lead rather than teacher-directed learning. Students start to *think like a teacher*, this promotes independent learning. AfL supports the

key learning skills of managing myself, managing information, and thinking, in addition to the wellbeing indicators of being responsible, respectful, resilient, and aware.

The five major principles of AfL

- Sharing Learning Intentions with students
- Developing and sharing success criteria with students
- Providing feedback
- Involving students in peer and self-assessment
- Using effective questioning to develop higher-order thinking skills

AfL strategies are linked to improvements in student performance. Research shows that these strategies particularly help low-achieving students to enhance their learning (Black and Wiliam 1998).

Our school has developed a whole school AfL Checklist to aid in the understanding and implementation of AfL in the school (Appendix 1). This is used with Beaufort College's Dollops of Feedback AfL plan 2022 - 23. (Appendix 2)

Key elements of the Formative Assessment Teaching and Learning AfL Policy

For Staff

- Staff CPD on key elements of AfL
- Spotlight on Teaching, Learning and Assessment through the internal staff communication system and at all staff meetings.
- Induction support for new teachers.
- A Teaching, Learning & Assessment Team will support subject department and inter-departmental development and sharing of best practice.
- All summative assessments have feedback (**Two Medals and a Mission**) built in. Feedback dissemination over grade distribution is emphasised, e.g. Delay the Grade.
- Student reflection at regular intervals is promoted and facilitated by teachers.
- AfL style feedback will be promoted on School reports via the free text section in e-portal in addition to a grade.

For Students

- "Learning to Learn" support for students focusing on journal usage during Wellbeing class.
- Year-Group Teaching and Learning assemblies will support students understanding of AfL and other Teaching Learning and Assessment developments.
- Students will capture oral feedback received in class through note taking
- Students engage with **Medals** and **Missions** feedback as a means of supporting their own learning.
- Student self- reflection promotes ownership for student own learning.
- Student Council meetings feature a Teaching, Learning & Assessment element.

For Parents

- Parent Presentation on Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Parents' Association meetings.

- Student attendance and active participation in Parent Teacher meetings is encouraged.

Roles and Responsibilities

- All teachers have a responsibility to use AfL in the classroom setting e.g. Comment-Only marking.
- The Assistant Principal with responsibility for Teaching & Learning and Assessment supported by the Deputy Principal and Teaching, Learning and Assessment team will develop staff CPD and opportunities for learning and practice.
- The Assistant Principal with responsibility for Teaching, Learning and Assessment will liaise with all subject coordinators regarding department-based initiatives and reflection techniques; and subsequently share the best practice across all departments.
- The Senior Leadership Team will ensure all staff meetings are AfL structured and have Teaching and Learning as an explicit focus of the meeting structure
- Year Heads manage Parent-Teacher meetings in line with any updated planning

Success Criteria for this policy

The following indicators will be used to gauge the effectiveness of this policy in Beaufort College:

- Comment-Only Marking will form 30% of all subject department assessment structure in year-1
- The language of **Medals and Mission** is embedded in all feedback
- The language of learning intentions and success criteria is used in every lesson
- Success criteria are shared explicitly with students and used in the comment-only feedback
- Opportunities are created for students to self and/ or peer assess
- The Assistant Principal with responsibility for Teaching Learning and Assessment will lead the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Team in organising a variety of AfL CPD opportunities and training, and will further support subject departments in identifying and sharing best practice in-house

Monitoring Procedures

- The Assistant Principal with responsibility for Teaching Learning and Assessment, supported by a Deputy Principal will establish review mechanisms.
- The Teaching, Learning and Assessment team will meet a minimum of 4 times per annum to examine feedback from the review mechanism.
- The Assistant Principal with responsibility for Teaching Learning and Assessment will include a TLA report at the end of each year to the Principal.
- The DEIS Plan annual review will take account of progress on this policy.

Review Procedures

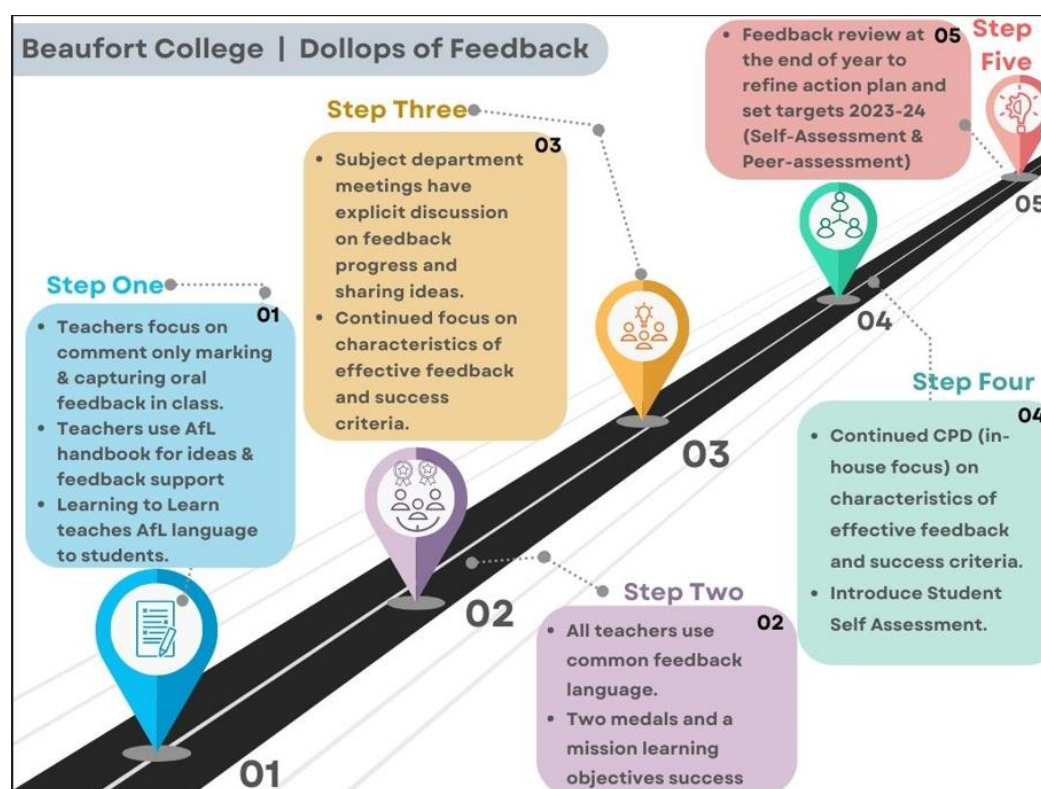
This policy will be reviewed annually in the context of the overall assessment and reporting policy and practices. This policy will also be reviewed as part of the DEIS planning process.

This TLA policy must be read in conjunction with the Assessment Policy.

Appendix 1 - Beaufort College Checklist for AfL

AfL Principles	Description
Sharing Learning Intentions with Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher developed from subject/course curriculum or achieved through student questioning.
Developing and Sharing Success Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher developed from subject/course curriculum or achieved through student questioning. Success Criteria may be referred to as “Marking Scheme”.
Providing Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback MUST be based on Success Criteria Oral feedback must be captured through student reflection & notetaking Formative feedback is Comment Only (2 Medals and a Missions)
Involving students in Peer and Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ Success Criteria Teacher must NEVER work harder on feedback than student
Use Effective Questioning to develop Higher order (<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply Blooms Taxonomy (Appendix 2) Apply the NCCA 7 Steps to Effective Questioning (Appendix 3) Observe wait time



Appendix 2 - Dollops of Feedback - Beaufort College’s Teaching learning and Assessment AfL Pan 2022-23



(The Teacher handbook - “Assessment and Learning Pocket Book” by Ian Smith Second Edition)

BOM & LMETB Ratification/Resolution Process for This Policy

BOM Ratification

<i>Date Ratified by the Board of Management:</i>	16/03/2023
<i>Proposed By:</i>	Sean Hughes
<i>Seconded By:</i>	Mark O Halloran
<i>Signed:</i>	 (Chairperson, BOM)
<i>Signed:</i>	 (Secretary to the BOM)
<i>Scheduled Date for Review of the Policy:</i>	September 2024

LMETB Ratification/Resolution of the ETB Board

<i>Date of Resolution of ETB Board</i>	
<i>Signed</i>	(Chairperson)