

**Action Research Title:**

Assessment, Marking and Feedback. An Interim Review

**Contact:** [npayne@bsecus.org](mailto:npayne@bsecus.org)  
for more details.

A group of cross-phase schools within the Teaching School Alliance wanted to explore how effective their current marking and feedback policies are. The schools therefore decided to support an action based research project looking into current practice across the phases.

The research team as part of the teaching school alliance aims to implement this research with an aim of facilitating a collaborative review of current systems, thus allowing schools to use evidence of best practise to help with the formation of a new marking and feedback policy.

As part of the research, a sample of students in each year group completed a questionnaire to gauge their current understanding of the marking policy and how it is used. Questions are positive and only ask students to reflect on best practice.

The overwhelming response from staff was that they would like to see a core policy produced with fundamental principles, but that each school would retain individuality. Therefore much of the work to date has involved deciding on core principles that would be seen across the Alliance schools involved in the project. This will be used by the individual schools to further develop their own policies.

Further action research has taken place to trial a method of marking/feedback that seemed to fit the feedback from students and staff in the questionnaires. The RAG123 method has been trialled across year groups which involve students rating themselves after each lesson against set objectives after which staff also mark and check against pupil's ratings. This allows staff to modify teaching for the next lesson and set starters linked to level of understanding of individual pupils. The evidence from this has been remarkable; Pupils' effort and understanding has increased markedly. Reasons for this may be numerous, but certainly a significant factor is the increased participation of pupils and the ownership they have to take through engagement in the process. Pupil voice surveys have shown so far that they really like this form of assessment as they can see that staff are tailoring their approach as a result. It also improves pupil-teacher dialogue which has a large motivational impact on both parties. The other benefit of this style of feedback is that it saves the teacher time. Although they are marking books after each lesson, because the pupils have already self-assessed, it allows the teacher to see what the pupil has had difficulty in and can then modify plans and act on it. More detailed feedback is then given on assessed pieces of work.

The next steps are to finalise the core principles document and tie in the school policies with the new assessment policy for September.