

Southend High School for Girls



Assessment Policy for English 2026-27

Our assessment policy and procedures are underpinned by three key questions:

1. Where is the learning going?
 2. Where is the learner now?
 3. How does the learner get there?
- (Dylan Wiliam)

Our students should be able to answer these two questions:

1. What am I doing well in the subject?
2. What do I need to do to improve my work in the subject?

At SHSG we see assessment, in all its forms, as an integral part of teaching and learning and as such it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use three broad overarching forms of assessment at Southend High School for Girls:

1. Diagnostic assessment – assessment used to determine what students already know (usually at the start of a lesson / unit)
2. Formative assessment (responsive teaching) – assessment used during the learning process to provide feedback and encourage students to act upon it to make improvements
3. Summative assessment (in-school summative assessment and nationally standardised summative assessment) – used at the end of the learning process as a measure of where students are in their learning.

KS3

By the end of KS3 students should be able to accurately use all the subject terminology in the KS3 Knowledge Organiser and effectively use the KS3 essay and creative writing skills, listed below.

Essay writing skills

- Writing paragraph points
- Identifying relevant, meaningful evidence
- Embedding and contextualising evidence
- Explaining evidence

- Analysing language, form and structure
- Explaining big ideas and context
- Creating a conceptualised response

Creative writing skills

- Creating a character.
- Describing a setting in vivid detail.
- Writing direct speech.
- Using 3rd person limited narrative voice, with free indirect narration.
- Controlling time in a story, including using timeshifts.
- Writing an opening and matched closing (article)
- Writing a body paragraph (article)
- Creating an effective structure (non-fiction)

KS4

By the end of KS4 students should be able to accurately use all the subject terminology in the GCSE Knowledge Organiser and effectively use the GCSE essay and creative writing skills, listed below.

Essay writing skills

- Identifying relevant, meaningful evidence
- Embedding and contextualising evidence
- Explaining evidence
- Analysing language, form and structure
- Explaining big ideas and context
- Creating a conceptualised response

Creative writing skills

- Creating an effective structure (fiction and non-fiction)
- Creating a character
- Describing a setting in vivid detail
- Writing an opening and matched closing for a given text type
- Writing a body paragraph for a given text type

KS5

English language

By the end of KS5, students should be able to construct analytical and theoretical essays. Students should be able to approach unseen texts of different genres and time periods and explore how the writers use language to create meanings and representations, using a Critical Discourse Analysis method which enables for clarity and cohesion in their responses (AO1). Students should consider the writer's intentions (AO3), as well as contextual

influences such as genre and time period (AO3) in their responses. They should also be able to draw links between texts (AO4). Students should use apt and judiciously chosen references supported by linguistic methods, from a range of language levels (AO1). Students should also be able to produce evaluative and critical responses to theory-based questions (AO2), drawing on comprehensive knowledge of concepts and ideas studied, as well as examples (AO1) to support this. Finally, students should be able to produce their own opinion-editorial writing (AO5), demonstrating the ability communicate theoretical knowledge (AO2) to a non-specialist audience.

English literature

By the end of KS5, students should be able to construct an essay-based argument which perceptively examines how a theme or idea is presented by writers, taking into account the context in which it was written and received, and how it may be understood today, according to the New Historicist approach which underpins A level English literature. Students should be able to write comparative and single-text focussed essays about prose, poetry and drama texts, both taught and unseen. Students should be able to support their ideas with precise referencing of texts and through analysis of writers' methods.

Diagnostic assessment methods

- Baseline tests
- Quizzes on reading homework tasks
- Language method terminology knowledge test

Formative assessment methods

- Knowledge Checks– key subject terminology short-answer tests
- Skill Checks – discrete written tasks – generally done every 3 weeks
- Cold calling – random sampling to check general understanding
- Think-pair-share
- Show-me boards
- Whole-class feedback
- Peer marking using assessment criteria
- Student-led presentations
- Additional KS4 set text-based essays
- Additional KS4 AQA writing tasks
- Additional KS5 mini-essays on discrete elements of set texts
- Additional KS5 fortnightly essays on set and unseen literature texts
- Paired theoretical essay planning

Summative assessment

Year 7

- The Lie Tree story
- Dystopian Fiction essay
- Dystopian fiction story opening
- Essay writing examination task

Year 8

- Lord of the Flies essay
- Storytelling creative writing 1
- Storytelling creative writing 2
- Poetry comparison essay examination task

Year 9

- Purple Hibiscus essay
- The Yellow Wallpaper essay
- Scary Stories non-fiction writing task
- Non-fiction writing examination task

Year 10 Language

- AQA Paper 1 Writing
- AQA Paper 1 Reading
- AQA Paper 2 Writing

Year 10 Literature

- A Christmas Carol essay
- Macbeth essay

Year 11 Language

- AQA Paper 2 Reading

Year 11 Literature

- Poetry Anthology comparative essay
- An Inspector Calls essay
- Unseen poetry essay
- Unseen poetry comparative essay

Year 12 Language

- Textual variations and representations– unseen individual and comparative analysis of texts
- Theory: Language Diversity

Year 12 Literature

- Unseen poetry essay
- Rebecca and poetry anthology comparative essay
- Othello essay

Year 13 Language

- Theory:
 - a. Children's Language Development
 - b. Language Change
- Language Discourses: Analysis and production of opinion-editorial articles

Year 13 Literature

- Journey's End essay
- Wilfred Owen poetry and The First Casualty comparative essay
- Unseen prose essay

Marking and Feedback

Summative assessment marking

- All KS3 and KS4 department-wide summative assessment should be completed using one of the standard feedback sheets for the appropriate year group. These sheets include feedback on the key skills demonstrated in the summative assessment.
- A summative comment should always be included which highlights primarily the strengths evident in the piece of work, though key weaknesses can also be highlighted.
- Teachers may wish to write targets too, though the feedback on the standard frontsheet should direct students to areas of weakness.
- KS5 Literature and Language summative assessment should use the AQA mark scheme, and should be marked holistically, according to AQA's most recent guidelines. Marginal and brief summative comments should communicate a student's strengths. Targets should be focussed on the skills and knowledge which need to be improved for future assessment, rather than pertinent to the specific task just completed.

Formative assessment marking (Skill Checks)

- Errors should be flagged clearly for students to see (circled, underlined) and some brief comments may be included
- Detailed feedback and targets do NOT need to be given for Skill Checks – students should follow up by revising the skills using the specific website guides

Other important information

- All assessed work must be stuck into the Progress Book when returned to students, never loose in folders or stuck into exercise books.
- Assessment question sheets should not be returned to students

- The assessment feedback sheet and the assessment itself should be stuck into the Progress Book at the front, not the back
- Literature teachers should mark all Skill Checks (including Language ones) for two-teacher GCSE classes – this is because the workload for Language-only teachers is already unfair based on allocation hours.

Student follow-up on assessment

- For formative assessment, KS3 and KS4 students can access very specific self-study guides on the SHSG English website to help them revise key knowledge and practise skills.
- Based on information in a standardised feedback sheet, KS5 English literature students are encouraged to collaborate with their teacher to set targets following essay-based formative assessment.
- Students should follow-up summative comments by ensuring they understand skill skills and content as directed by their teacher. The SHSG English website is aimed at KS3 and KS4, but also useful for KS5 students, especially when considering literature terminology.
- Teachers will decide appropriate follow-up tasks in some cases, such as rewriting partial or whole essays, setting new tasks, or providing opportunities for students to have one-to-one English Lunchtime Support sessions.
- In KS5 Language, students are given reflection time to review their personalised feedback, alongside whole cohort feedback. Sample essays modelling best practice, along with exam board feedback are also shared with classes to enable students to identify how key skills are shown in responses. Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with previous feedback before writing their next response.

Marking and Feedback Codes

When providing written feedback in exercise books to ensure consistency across the school particularly for literacy the following codes should be used above the relevant word /section:

- ✓ good point
- X incorrect or wrong point
- SP spelling error which needs correction
- P punctuation error which needs correction
- GR grammatical error which needs correction
- / start a new sentence
- // start a new paragraph
- ? the point is not clear
- WW wrong word

^ missing word

[] this part needs rewording

Presentation

- All work should have a date on the right hand side, written in full and underlined with a ruler (e.g. 12th September 2023). MFL require students to write the date in the relevant target language
- All work will have a title / heading which is underlined with a ruler
- All work should have CW/HW written in the top left-hand margin
- Only black or blue ink should be used for writing with the exception of peer assessment
- All diagrams / graphs should be done in pencil.
- All work should be set out neatly.

Recording and Monitoring of Assessment

- Individual teacher planners
- Key stages 3 and 4 tracker for Progress Checks (termly)
- KS5 shared tracker for Teacher 1 and 2
- SIMS cross-cohort Marksheets