



# TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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## 0. Document Control

The table below contains the changes made between the different final editions of this document set for approval. This is to help provide information to those reviewing and approving the document of the changes being made.

Document Edition	Section	Details of change
1	4	Updated teachers responsibilities
1	4	Updated Heads of Faculty responsibilities
1	14	Updated Appendix – Links to RGTS Teaching and Learning materials

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## 1. Definitions

The “Trust” refers to the company known as the University Schools Trust, East London and all Trustees, Governors and Staff who work within it.

A “School” refers to an individual academy within the Trust, as denoted by their Unique Reference Number. As such a ‘school’ may span one or several phases of education to the individual academies within the Trust. Depending on the context the term “School” may refer to a singular academy or to all of the academies within the Trust but as separate entities.

The “Staff” refers to any individual who is employed by the Trust or who operates on the Trust’s behalf, e.g. Trustees and Governors.

A “Parent” includes the natural or adoptive parent of a pupil as well as any non-parent / carer who has parental responsibility including being involved in the day to day care of a pupil.

A “Pupil” includes any incoming or current pupil at any School within the Trust. It also includes any individual who was previously a pupil at any School within the Trust and who has left within the appropriate timeframe for consideration as necessary, e.g. complaints. The term pupil is used as standard by the UST in its policy documents but can be replaced with the term “student” or “child” with no change of definition.

The “Headteacher” is defined as the individual who has ultimate responsibility for a school in line with UST strategy, approach, ethos and values. Individual schools may have alternative titles for this position such as Executive Headteacher or Principal.

Policy specific definitions...

A ‘Responsive Teaching Plan (RTP)’ is a teacher’s response to an assessment implemented for each class in response to formative and summative assessment data analysis.

A ‘Topic Delivery Guide’ is a document that is similar to a scheme of work. It sets out the sequence of learning for a particular topic and is broken down into key areas:

A ‘subject delivery guide’ is designed to be a catch all document that allows for collective agreement within a subject on how the subject should be taught: what practices are most appropriate and how lessons should be implemented consistently across all teachers within a faculty.

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## 2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff and students at RGTS.

## 3. Policy Aims and Ethos

The Policy aims to:

- Establish a framework for quality first teaching and learning across the school;
- Ensure consistency across the school in terms of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment;
- Inform teachers about how the quality of teaching and learning will be monitored to ensure a self-improving system

## 4. Links to Legislation and Guidance Documents

### 4.1. Relevant Internal Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

- Assessment policy
- Teacher Pay Policy
- Teacher Appraisal Framework
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium and Catch up Strategies
- Exams Policies
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

### 4.2. Relevant External Documents

- Teachers' Standards
- The National curriculum Programmes of Study
- Specifications for examination subjects (supplied by Exam boards)

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### 5.1. Senior Leadership team

It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team (SLT) to:

- Model the high expectations that the school has on teaching and learning in their own classrooms;
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the whole school through a calendared programme of quality assurance measures including learning walks, book reviews, curriculum reviews and student voice activities;
- Manage faculties effectively to ensure appropriate challenge and support is given to middle leaders to ensure continuous improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the whole school.

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## 5.2. Heads of Faculty

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Faculty and curriculum leaders to:

- Use the National Curriculum, DfE guidance and relevant exam specifications for Key Stage 4 and 5 to plan a curriculum that provides students with the knowledge and skills and attributes needed to prepare for future learning.
- Ensure that long term plans are in place for each year group that are ambitious and informed by an underlying intention for the subject knowledge, skills and experiences that students will acquire during their time at school informed by the national curriculum/exam requirements
- Ensure that medium term plans are in place for each Topic Delivery Guide so that teachers are able to strategically plan their lessons over time and are informed by an overarching assessment plan for each subject with success criteria/mark scheme as appropriate
- Monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within their faculty through learning walks, peer to peer lesson observations, book reviews and student voice activities. These self-evaluation mechanisms should be used to inform improvement plans for the faculty.
- Ensure the Faculty Development Plan is aligned to the whole school development plan to inform faculty priorities and raise standards.

## 5.3. Teachers

It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to:

- Adhere to the Department for Education (DfE) Teachers' Standards that stipulate the minimum required standards for all teachers, in relation to the stage of their career.
- Plan and deliver lessons that provide appropriate challenge and support that allows students to learn and develop new knowledge and skills within their subject and make progress in line with the Teaching and Learning handbook.
- Tailor their teaching to support the needs of all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities and any disadvantage faced by students eligible for pupil premium
- Ensure that all classwork and homework is marked regularly according to the schools marking and assessment policy
- Ensure that student work is sufficiently differentiated so that all students can complete their tasks accordingly in lessons.
- Keep a record of marks and levels achieved in accordance with the agreed procedures within the subject areas
- Explain the marking and assessment grading system to the students
- Ensure that assessment information informs further curriculum planning
- Give pupils time to engage with and access marking and feedback  
Allow discussion regarding feedback with students in lessons to ensure that they are able to respond effectively
- Ensure that 'Responsive Teaching Plans' are completed and implemented for each class in response to formative and summative assessment data analysis.
- Ensure the completion and delivery of the Topic Delivery Guides in line with faculty expectations.

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## 5.4.Support Staff

It is the responsibility of support staff to:

- Ensure that their work contributes to the overall delivery of high quality of teaching and learning and assessment
- Support teaching staff to ensure that students’ needs are addressed and supported in a strategic and robust manner in line with appropriate setting documents e.g. ECHPs, IEPs or pastoral support plans.
- Work collaboratively with the teacher to co-plan and deliver parts of the lesson to support students effectively.

## 5.5.Parents

It is the responsibility of parents to:

- Engage with their child’s learning through the student planner and ensure that it is signed weekly
- Support their child’s learning at home by providing a space for them to work independently
- Ensure that their child is suitably equipped for school with the correct uniform and equipment

## 6. Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact

At RGTS, the curriculum is rooted in a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills that students require in order to succeed at Key Stage 4 and 5 and flourish in learning in later life. Learning, defined as a long-term alteration in long-term memory<sup>1</sup>, is guaranteed through effective curriculum design that is rooted in clear intention of the subject knowledge that students must gain whilst sparking curiosity and enthusiasm in subject disciplines.

RGTS offers a broad and balanced curriculum offer for all its students. At Key Stage 3, students study the following subjects: English, Maths, Science, Humanities, PE, Drama, Music, Computing, Art, Technology and MFL. With its specialism in Creative Arts and Technology as well as its provision in the academic subjects, the school is able to ensure that students receive a curriculum offer that provides a balance between academic and vocational study.

As well as the core curriculum, RGTS also offers an enhanced co-curriculum to include opportunities for personal and character development, study skills and cultural capital. These opportunities are explicitly taught as well as being embedded into curriculum areas.

RGTS ensures that all students receive a full curriculum experience by maximising the breadth of Key Stage 3 from Year 7-9 and beginning GCSE schemes of learning in Year 10.

All schemes of learning and individual lessons are structured and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on students’ prior learning.

<sup>1</sup> Ofsted Definition of Learning – 2019 Framework

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## 7. Planning

*Teachers at RGTS must plan their lessons to fit in as part of wider schemes of learning a strategic curriculum overviews that are consistent across each faculty . Teachers are required to provide evidence of planning in line with teaching standards – this can be done through the following:*

- *Annotated seating plan, detailing the SEND, EHCP, EAL,PP, reading ages, KS2 attainment band (HAP, MAP and LAP for KS3 and KS4) and KS4 APS and ALPs predictions for Key Stage 5 students and medical needs*
- *Copies of PowerPoints from lessons (these should be provided for formal lesson observations)*
- *Copy of the class’ markbook with most up to date assessment data*

*All faculties must have schemes of work in place that fit into a wider strategic overview of their curriculum. This is to ensure that a strategic approach is taken to ensuring that key knowledge and skills are effectively interleaved and spaced across a students’ learning journey. The knowledge and skills must be revisited more than once and students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate increased ability to retrieve.*

*As part of this strategic planning, all faculties must also consider how to embed the use of educational trips and visits, enrichment opportunities, external visitors and experiential learning to engage students in the subject content.*

*It is acknowledged that teachers have the autonomy to deliver lessons that are personalised to their own teaching style.*

*Learning objectives for lessons must be strategically mapped out and universally agreed across the faculty to ensure that there is consistency in learning for all students.*

*All Topic Delivery Guides must meet the following criteria:*

- *Clarity in learning objectives, mapped out across the scheme of work to show progression in learning*
- *Summative assessments modelled on Key Stage 4 assessment objectives to ensure that students engage with academically rigorous assessment*
- *Tailored approach based on an understanding of students’ prior learning and prior attainment*
- *Identify the subject knowledge that will be taught across the scheme of work*
- *Identify suggested learning activities that can be adapted by teachers across the faculty to suit their teaching style but maintain a consistency in the level of challenge and expectation from students*
- *Identify opportunities in the lessons for differentiation to ensure that all students’ needs are met*
- *Provide opportunities for students to engage in independent and collaborative learning*
- *Provide opportunities for students to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills*
- *Provide opportunities for student to develop their numeracy skills where appropriate*
- *Detail homework tasks that have been designed to support students’ consolidation of knowledge and skill at the frequency required for the specific Key Stage in this policy.*

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- *Detail opportunities for assessment and identify points where written feedback will be provided*
  - *Detail opportunities for students to engage in self and peer assessment*
  - *Identify opportunities for SMSC development and opportunities to raise aspirations*
- Map out homework points in line with the school's expectations on homework*

## 8. Delivery of Lessons

Teachers must ensure a high quality of delivery of their lessons that engages students and accelerates student progress. To ensure such high quality, teachers must follow the teaching principles outlined in the RGTS Teaching and Learning Handbook.

At RGTS, we uphold a set of core principles around teaching and learning. These are:

- Scaffolding
- Modelling
- Explanation
- Questioning
- Feedback
- Retrieval
- Practice

There are core expectations of what all lessons must contain in order to provide structure and a purposeful classroom climate. These are:

- Meet and greet
- Independent 'Do Now' activities
- Clarity in learning objectives

### Meet and Greet

Teachers should be on their classroom doors at the beginning of lessons. This is to ensure that students are brought into a safe and supportive learning environment and ensures that students have a smooth transition between their lessons.

### Independent 'Do Now' Tasks

Teachers must provide students with an independent 'do now' task that are meaningful, appropriate and time-bound to complete as soon as they enter the classroom that is based on retrieval or independent practice. This allows students to engage in high quality learning from the very outset of a lesson. Do now tasks must be able to be completed independently so as to train students to engage in learning on their own and build up their own resilience.

### Clarity in Learning Objectives

Learning objectives must be clear and concise for students to understand. Mager<sup>i</sup> identifies key requirements for a learning objective: the performance that the students should be able to do, the conditions under which they should be able to achieve that performance and the criteria for acceptable performance. It is essential that students understand what their lesson is teaching them and what they need to learn and do to be successful in each lesson.

Students are not required to copy down learning objectives. They must be able to understand what they are trying to achieve and how they will achieve this, but this can be done through teacher delivery.

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## 9. Assessment in Lessons

Checkpoints must be established in each lesson to ensure that teachers are aware of the progress that students are making and identify any misconceptions that may exist. If a teacher assesses that progress is limited or misconceptions are holding students back, then teachers must respond effectively to these and ensure high quality learning before moving on.

Feedback is recognised to be one of the most significant levers in accelerating student progress. Feedback can be verbal or written and must be regular and meaningful to the students. Research<sup>2</sup> indicates that effective feedback must provide a student with an understanding of what their goal is, how they are doing in relation to that goal and what they strategies they need to adopt in order to make progress towards their goal.

Written feedback is an essential part of teaching practice. Teachers must provide written feedback to students and provide regular opportunities for students to engage with and respond to the feedback.

As a minimum requirement, written feedback must be provided to students for at least two summative pieces of work per term, where students are provided with detailed feedback on their progress and next steps for improvement.

Students' work must be reviewed through written feedback and every third lesson at Key Stage 3. This can be done through live marking mechanisms in the lesson, peer and self-assessment, pre-populated success criteria sheets and show a recognition of students work. At Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, this must be more frequent, and next steps feedback must be in line with the specifications for each subject.

## 10. Homework

RGTS recognises the impact that homework can have on improving student progress. With that in mind, all students will receive homework that is based on the principles of retrieval or practice in order to consolidate the learning that takes place in lessons. Teachers must design and set homework tasks that are suitably challenging for all students.

Students should be set homework for each subject. The frequency requirements are shown below, depending on each Key Stage

Key Stage	Minimum Frequency
Key Stage 3	Once a week A minimum of a 20-minute task
Key Stage 4	Once a week A minimum of a 60-minute task
Key Stage 5	3 A Level Pathway: 6 hours of independent study per subject per week. Level 2 and GCSE Retakes: 6 hours of independent study per subject per week Level 3 BTEC: 18 hours of independent study per subject per week

<sup>2</sup> Hattie and Timperley, 2007, Review of Educational Research

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## 11. Monitoring the Quality of Teaching

At RGTS, leaders must ensure that teaching and learning is of the highest quality and that students are making excellent progress in all subjects. To that end, the school adopts a range of mechanisms to quality assure the quality of teaching and learning.

### 11.1. Learning Walks and Drop Ins

Learning walks or Drop Ins will take place on a termly basis. During a learning walk or Drop In window, Heads of Faculty and senior leaders will co-observe each teacher for a 20-30-minute period, looking at student work, asking students about their learning and progress and making an overall judgement on the quality of teaching impacts on the students' learning and progress in the lesson. During this, they will complete the relevant observation pro forma that will assess the impact of teaching according to a rubric that is responsive to the school's improvement priorities. Following the learning walk, the teacher will receive developmental feedback in a coaching style to agree next steps to improve teaching and learning.

### 11.2. Book looks

Throughout the year, samples of students' books will be called for leaders to review. During these reviews, books will be assessed for the presentation of student work, the depth and breadth of learning and the frequency and quality of teachers' written feedback. Feedback from these reviews will be made available to Heads of Faculty to address.

### 11.3. Curriculum leadership review

The curriculum leadership review is a monitoring and planning tool for middle leaders to strategically plan improvements at faculty level. At the beginning of each term, heads of faculty should use the most up to date data and findings from quality assurance exercises to review and plan the continued improvement of their faculty. Heads of Faculty must complete this document and submit to the DHT, Curriculum at least once per term.

### 11.4. Appraisal

Appraisal allows for the effective management of teacher performance. As a school, the priorities for appraisal targets will be informed by the whole school improvement plan. Senior and middle leaders must facilitate effective appraisal meetings and ongoing monitoring and support to ensure that teachers achieve their targets and ultimately continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

### 11.5. Data Analysis

The school follows a strategic assessment calendar to ensure that progress and attainment data is collected on all students for each subject. Following each data drop, senior and middle leaders must engage in follow up analysis and action planning to ensure that interventions are put in place and improvements are made to ensure students achieve the best possible outcomes. Where data suggests that specific subjects or teachers are underperforming, this may require follow up scrutiny to diagnose how teaching and learning can be improved to support students.

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## 11.6. Curriculum review

Every subject will undergo an extended curriculum review in which the faculty's curriculum intent, implementation, impact, leadership and management, behaviour and attitudes and personal development provision are all assessed. This will involve a series of learning walks, student voice activity, book review and extended interview with the Head of Faculty. The curriculum review will allow for a detailed action plan to be developed to support the Head of Faculty with their improvement planning.

## 12. Responding to Students' Needs

All teachers must ensure that they tailor their teaching to the needs of students with special educational needs. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) sets out a statutory duty on all teachers to ensure that teaching supports students and removes barriers to learning. Specifically, it says:

*“Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with SEN and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum.”*

At RGTS, this means that all teachers must use effective scaffolding and differentiation to ensure that students are able to access lessons and make excellent progress.

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### 13. Appendix 1 – Key Members of Staff Referenced

<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Longhurst
<b>Deputy Headteacher – Curriculum</b>	Tom Williams

### 14. Appendix 2 – Links to Legislation and Guidance Documents

[The National Curriculum](#)

[Teachers Standards](#)

### 15. Approval Signature

Signature of (enter position e.g. Chair) \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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