



# PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL

## Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy



Supporting High Quality Teaching  
And Learning

<b>Management - WG/SMT/ Other</b>	SMT/WG
<b>Date of Policy/ <i>draft</i></b>	August 2021 Draft V2
<b>Review date</b>	September 2022

### **Companion Policies/ Protocols**

- Assessment Guidance for Staff – 2022-23
- PHS Presentation Policy SQA
- PHS Tracking and Monitoring protocol – Senior Phase and BGE
- PHS Reporting Policy
- PHS Reporting protocol

# Learning, Teaching and Assessment at Penicuik High School

## The Background

The Learning and Teaching strategy at Penicuik High school has been developed to ensure that all young people learn in a high quality environment that meets their needs. It places learning and teaching at the heart of the school's work.

In developing the Supporting Big 5 strategy, the school has looked:

- *inwards* - knowing ourselves inside out through effective self-evaluation, finding excellent practice and sharing it more widely.
- *outwards* - learning from what happens elsewhere to challenge our own thinking, using robust data to evidence what works
- *forwards* - exploring what the future might hold for today's learners and planning how to get there to help us secure continuous improvement.

In finalising our approach to great learning, cognisance has been taken of:

- The National Improvement Framework - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00511513.pdf>
- The Education Endowment Fund online toolkit  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/>
- How Good is Our School? 4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
[https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2\\_NIHedditHGIOS/FRWK2\\_HGIOS4.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2_NIHedditHGIOS/FRWK2_HGIOS4.pdf)
- Outcomes of the school's self-improvement activities
- Dylan Williams – Embedding Formative Assessment – 2<sup>ND</sup> edition

## The Strategies

**Five main areas** are the focus for strategic development within our Teaching and Learning Policy

1. We will focus on developing a rich curriculum experience that focuses on developing knowledge and understanding through a sequential curriculum that is coherent and builds on prior knowledge. Skills are recognised as knowledge
2. Knowledge is not confined to explicit knowledge (declarative and procedural) but includes tacit knowledge and implicit (skills)
3. All courses will be based on progressive programmes of learning developed using the Curriculum for Excellence's experience and outcomes at the appropriate level in that subject and taking cognisance of the National benchmarks for assessing progress in terms of breadth and depth. All courses should give all students a clear course outline and detail the nature of assessment within the course.
4. A consistently **structured lesson** that contains:

- An introduction; including at some point within the lesson sequence, clear learning intentions and success criteria with regard to that learning. Not all single lessons may require that specific input but learners should know what they are doing and why. Starters may be used within the introductory period for retrieval practice and feedback.
- Critical and planned activities that allow students to meet the *success criteria* relating to the *learning intention* and involve use of the Big 5 Strategies. Lessons should ensure pace and challenge for all learners through consideration of cognitive load theory and scaffolding of learning. Explicit instruction with active student engagement is encouraged as a pedagogy with good evidence for impact.
- A plenary that reviews the activities and the outcomes in relation to the success criteria and informs teacher planning in the sequence of lessons. Plenaries may not occur in every lesson but at a point where the LI/SC are reviewed within a sequence.
- The delivery of appropriate homework that is used to give feedback to learners and supports progression through identification of security of learning and next steps. See *PHS new Homework policy 2022-23*

*Building learner confidence, knowledge, understanding and creativity should be the key purpose of learning in order that students may progress from one stage of learning to another and progress to the best possible attainment and leaver destination outcomes.*

5. **Big 5 project:** Teaching practice within lessons should ensure delivery of the Big 5 Strategies to support the development of learners who understand: *what are my goals in this subject, what progress am I making toward my goals and what are my next steps to make better progress.* It is recognised this

requires the development of metacognitive skills not just cognitive skills, and this can only be developed by the way we teach, not what we teach.

### The Big 5 Strategies

The School Improvement plan will outline on-going development work and phase 2 and 3, from 2022-23 onwards. Work will involve developing teacher practice in the Big 5 strategies, developing learner understanding of the importance of Big 5 strategies within their own learning and developing self-evaluation systems involving staff and students. Collaborative working will be based around teacher collaboration and inputs via SMT/PT.

The Big 5 strategies as outlined in Embedding Formative Assessment are:

- Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success.
- Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions and learning tasks.
- Providing feedback that moves learners forward.
- Activating students as the owners of their own learning.
- Activating students as instructional resources for one another.

	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is	How to get there
Teacher	Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions	Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	Providing feedback that moves learners forward
Peer		Activating students as learning resources for one another	
Learner		Activating students as owners of their own learning	

## Supporting Teacher Change – Collaboration and Evaluation

Units of collaboration will be:

1. **Working Group** – Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA)
2. **Trio** – Department/Faculty (Session 2022-23)
3. **Trio – networks** for larger scale exercise and evaluations

Collaborative working will be based around teacher collaboration and high trust monitoring inputs from PTC/SMT. The monitoring inputs will look at Trio group reports relating to collaboration and enablement of Big 5 strategies by individuals within the trios and sharing good practice. The use of Trios will not be developed until 2022-23 onward after we have embedded understanding of the Big 5 strategies.

A secondary input to measure penetration of Big 5 strategies within the teaching practice of staff will be via walkthroughs and anonymised aggregated data on what is seen across weeks of teaching. The data will be quantified in terms of consistency and persistency of practice. Other evaluation inputs will be student self-evaluation formats that will be developed in phase 2, PT monitoring returns and NQT observations.

A big part of successful implementation of the Big 5 will be developing a range of strategies and techniques that can be used broadly and lead to automaticity of practice by staff across a session. This means the Big 5 will become embedded as effective practice and not an occasional practice. Consistency of practice based on what works to impact on learners is the prime focus and adherence to the broad strategies is required by all staff.

All staff (including learning assistants and youth workers) and students will be expected to eventually know what the Big 5 are and how they can help learners/themselves.

## Assessment - BGE

(See also Assessment Guidance document 2022-23)

Assessments will fall into **summative or formative categories**. Under the Big 5 strategic approach, **formative assessment** is a crucial instrument for eliciting evidence of learning and giving feedback. It also enables peer and self-evaluation and is a resource that supports genuine student voice in learning. The format of formative assessment instruments in terms of their design and testing does not always need to be as rigorous as summative tools but should still give valid information about learner progress (this does also intend on their use as a judgement of progress). Various types of assessment data may be produced and recorded on a short or medium term basis. **Formative and summative assessment** will be used to inform teacher planning and delivery of programmes of learning; this should be part of teacher practice, in all classrooms, on a regular basis.

Education Scotland no longer talks about holistic assessment but instead talks about high quality assessment and for our purposes this is really about high quality **summative or formative assessment**. They emphasise that these assessment instruments will give an opportunity to gather evidence about breadth, depth and application and in particular allow learners to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. This is about both near contexts; material assessed that is close to the context taught and far contexts; which are about new and different contexts, with the latter providing a chance to challenge more able learners. The use of various formats will assist in writing high quality assessments that provide a range of performance descriptors within a level, including rubrics based on the national benchmarks.

N.B. For **summative assessments** teaching staff should also note that instruments designed to formally assess learning must be valid and reliable and where there are multiple classes within a subject cohort the same test should be given notwithstanding any need to differentiate testing for some sub groups. **For guidance on assessment design refer to the Assessment Toolkit information.**

All summative assessment instruments should be moderated either internally and/or externally. They should be designed to be practicable, equitable and fair. They should also be checked for content validity (i.e. do the test items or questions in the assessment actually represent the material that needs to be assessed and with the correct weighting in the assessment based on their emphasis within the course), construct validity (i.e. the degree to which a test or other measure assesses the underlying theoretical construct it is supposed to measure or in other words that the test is measuring what it is purported to measure) and reliability as an assessment tool in terms of the results when it is used over time across similar groups.

## Assessment - Senior phase

Assessment at senior phase will be in line with prevailing SQA guidance and the Understanding standards resources for that subject course and level. **Please refer to the relevant SQA Guidelines on the SQA website**

**Prelim assessments currently occur within session at the following times:**

S4/5/6 National 5 examinations - December and January

S5/6 Higher/ Advanced Higher – January

These assessments are held under formal conditions with secure papers and internal / external moderation is required in case of appeals.

Assessment information regarding outcomes and progression of students for all senior phase courses must be kept by individual staff and reported via our PHS tracking and monitoring system for guidance / SMT input and reporting to parents as per the current relevant policies – internal and external.