



CAMBRIDGE
SCHOOL OF
VISUAL &
PERFORMING
ARTS

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY AND PRACTICE

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AIM & PURPOSE

The aim at CATS Cambridge and CSVPA is to establish every student as an enthusiastic, effective, and pragmatic life-long learner equipped with the learning skills, habits and attitudes needed to achieve their full potential. Excellent teaching, and the setting of consistently high standards, are the means to realising this goal.

The purpose of this policy is to state the professional expectations to which all of those involved in teaching and learning at CATS Cambridge School and CSVPA will be held.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The School recognises the CATS Global Schools' Teacher Standards as a useful guide for teachers. For ease of reference, a summary of those standards is provided in Appendix One. Additional guidance as to the hallmarks of 'expert teaching' is also provided in Appendix One. All teachers are expected to be fully conversant with the CGS [Teachers' Standards](#) and the characteristics of expert teaching and they are expected maintain and develop their classroom practices accordingly.

Teachers are also expected to acquaint themselves with and be mindful of the criteria employed by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and the approach that ISI adopts to evaluating the educational quality of a school through work scrutiny and lesson observations. Teachers should note that the ISI will assess the quality of a school's classroom practices based on the students' personal development as well as their academic achievements. (The Independent School Standards - Guidance for independent schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)).

Teachers are expected to be proactive in continuously improving their classroom practice with view to maximising the learning that their teaching elicits for each of their students as individual learners.

At CATS Cambridge and CSVPA there is an expectation that all teachers actively seek to continuously improve their professional practice. Their improvement should be focused on ensuring that they are offering all their students the very best of opportunities to realise their potential. This expectation extends beyond classroom interaction.

SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

Teachers should know their subjects thoroughly, and by their enthusiasm seek to excite in the students an abiding academic curiosity.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining and developing their subject knowledge and for ensuring that they are fully aware of, and understand, the examination board specifications and assessment criteria for the programmes of study on which they teach.

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CAPACITY TO LEARN

Teachers are expected to be experts in the art and science of learning; and are expected to be model life-long learners, as such they should model good learning habits in their lessons and in the way that they conduct themselves.

Teachers should ensure that their teaching practice effectively balances the teaching of content with teaching their students how to learn effectively. As such the CATS School is developing its own CATS Cambridge Future Skills Framework (FSF) to further develop students' core transferable skills. This provides a framework around all that we do and is fundamentally delivered by PTs. However, all teachers are expected to actively develop students' Complex Problem Solving, Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking & Self-Regulation and Digital Literacy skills in the learning experiences that they curate.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment for learning (AfL) is essential for effective planning and delivery of lessons that meet the learning needs of students. Teachers should ensure that they plan frequent AfL opportunities and that they give careful consideration to the techniques that they use. More guidance on AfL is provided in the Assessment and Reporting Policy. The use of cognitive wrappers (designed to help students understand their strengths, weaknesses and effectiveness of learning strategies) around all summative assessments provides a formalised way of doing this, but good practice dictates that teachers should embed a variety of forms of AfL into their lessons.

MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEMES OF WORK AND COURSE DESCRIPTORS

Subject teachers are expected to maintain and develop the Course Descriptors and Schemes of Work for the programmes of study in which their subject is taught, as directed by their Head of Department.

Course descriptors and Schemes of work must be completed using the appropriate template. Heads of Department are expected to submit schemes of work for the following academic year by 13 June 2025.

LESSONS

Lessons should be thoroughly prepared; well-judged in content and duration; have a clear purpose, beginning and end; employ a variety of teaching and learning strategies and techniques. Lessons should be designed to reflect the need to exploit opportunities for students' personal development as well as their academic achievement. When considering personal development particular emphasis should be placed on developing the students'

facility with the English language and facilitating students' progression towards becoming enthusiastic, effective, and pragmatic life-long learners.

Where appropriate, teachers are encouraged to take full advantage of the learning resources provided by the School; these include Padlet, UpLearn and other applications, mini-whiteboards, PROMETHEAN boards, TEAMS or CANVAS (the School's virtual learning environment, VLE); and both its physical and its virtual resources.

Teachers must ensure that all students are equally involved in a lesson, by judicious questioning, and by managing discussions and debates appropriately. They should differentiate, within a given class, between those who can be stretched more than the rest of the group and those who clearly have difficulties. The setting of tasks and the pace at which work is done, may be varied accordingly.

Written work should be set regularly and marked conscientiously in accordance with the School's Assessment and Reporting Policy. Teachers should check to ensure that their **students understand** any feedback provided, in particular that each student understands what they need to do to improve.

Poor work should not be tolerated but returned for rewriting. Nevertheless, it is very important to encourage, motivate and reward students for good work wherever possible. A particular emphasis should be placed on celebrating progress and effort.

Additional **advice on assessment**, in particular assessment for learning, is provided in the Assessment and Reporting Policy.

PUNCTUALITY AND SUPERVISION

Lessons should start at the designated time. To that end:

- Teachers and students should arrive punctually.
- Where a lesson is not followed by a break, teachers should release students at least 2-3 minutes before the designated start time of the next lesson.

During their timetabled lessons teachers are expected to remain in their classroom to teach, supervise and support their students.

All teachers should note that it is the School's policy **NOT** to have a break in double lessons.

CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Although different teaching styles and approaches to classroom management are welcomed, it is essential for the purposes of providing a consistent, positive, and purposeful learning environment that the School's classroom routines are applied consistently by all

teachers. Whilst the autonomy of teachers in their classrooms is expected, the start of all lessons must involve the following:

- Teachers greeting students, at the door, at the beginning of the lesson.
- A learning objective must be shared on the board. It is up to the teacher whether they choose to share the differentiated outcomes.
- A hook / 'do it now task' for students to be engaged on which will either be recall focused, or designed for students to expand their knowledge on the theme of the lesson.
- Students should place bags on the floor and all personal mobile devices and peripherals in the box at the front of the classroom, unless explicitly told otherwise by the teacher.
- Students should calmly enter the room, sit down, note down the lesson's date, objective and title prior to independently undertaking the 'do it now' task.
- The register must be complete within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Latecomers should be dealt with in a way that does not impact the learning of the rest of the group.

MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

It is the subject teacher's responsibility to ensure that they have appropriate teaching and learning materials to effectively deliver the relevant schemes of work. Bids for teaching and learning materials should be made via the teacher's Head of Department.

Subject teachers are responsible for ensuring that all of their students their notes and assessed work are effectively organised along with the teaching and learning materials with which they have been issued. Subject teachers are also responsible for ensuring that all of their students properly record work that is set.

As an international school, it is not uncommon for new students to join the School up to half a term or, on occasion, even longer after a course has started. It is essential that teachers are able to provide late arriving students with a full pack of the teaching and learning materials that have already been issued, these can be found on the school VLE which all students have access.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT

Teachers should be aware of students receiving Additional Learning Support (ALS), and should discuss the progress of such students with the ALS Co-ordinator. It is the subject teacher's responsibility to ensure that they have read and act on the advice offered by the School's LS Co-ordinator with respect to students with SpLDs and SEND. As far as possible, assistance for students with SEND and other learning issues consists of a partnership between the relevant academic department, the students' PTs and HDs, and the LS Co-ordinator.

Students on the School's ALS register **must be** clearly highlighted in their subject teachers' mark-books.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Nearly all of the students studying at CATS Cambridge are learning in English with English as an additional language (ESL). Teachers must make sure that they are aware of each of their students' level of English and that they adapt their teaching accordingly. Where they encounter difficulties, subject teachers should be proactive in seeking out advice from the student's Teacher of ESL and/or the Head of ESL & Languages.

Teachers should also be mindful that they have a role to play in improving students' English. Every contact point should be seen as an opportunity to do so. Teachers in all departments have a responsibility for ensuring that spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are corrected.

Teachers **must** ensure that the standard of each of their student's English is clearly annotated in their mark-book.

MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching at CATS Cambridge is maintained and developed through:

- Lesson observations
- Formal lesson observations conducted by the School's SLT and the Heads of Department;
- Learning Walks
 - Peer lesson observations;
- Training, teachers are encouraged to identify their CPD needs and relevant training opportunities in consultation with their line manager; and by regular professional discussion of subject matter and of the craft of teaching achieved via teacher's participation in their allocated Teacher Led Learning Group meetings as well as in department meetings.

The School is keen for teachers to continually seek to improve their students' learning and encourages teachers to experiment with new pedagogical approaches in their classrooms. Action research protocols should be employed for such experiments. Proposals for action research projects should be agreed with the teacher's head of department before the project is initiated.

There is a detailed induction programme of observation, mentoring and meetings for new teachers, and the Head of Department is responsible for monitoring the teaching in his subject area.

The Vice Principal works alongside the Heads of Department to ensure that continuing professional development and innovation in teaching and learning are integral to all areas of the CATS Cambridge curriculum.

At CSVPA, the Learning and Teaching Committee has the responsibility to:

- Ensure a strategic approach to learning & teaching is aligned with education strategy
- Encourage engagement with pedagogic theory in teaching practices
- Facilitate innovation in learning and teaching, including the sharing of best practice within and across disciplines
- Monitor & report on matters relating to the quality of teaching and performance of courses
- Consider the impact of changes to regulations, frameworks or policies on the quality of learning and teaching, and make recommendations to the Academic Quality & Standards (AQSC) on the same
- Consider, advise and report on proposals to change, develop, revalidate and discontinue programmes of study and to make recommendations to AQSC

MISSING LESSONS

Teachers who have to be away during the day must provide cover for their lessons. If possible their Head of Department should arrange cover within the Department. If that is not possible then the teacher's Head of Department should ask the Curriculum Office, a minimum of 24 hours beforehand, for cover to be allocated.

A teacher who has to be away for anything more than the odd lesson should inform the Principal or Vice Principal to get their agreement. This should be confirmed in writing.

It is the teacher's responsibility to provide instructions for the work to be completed in their lessons whilst they are absent. Work set should be able to be completed by students with the cover teacher's supervision but should not require the member of staff providing cover to teach. Please refer to the cover procedure for additional details.

APPENDIX ONE

CGS TEACHERS' STANDARDS

[CGS-Teaching-Standards_2023-05_v6.pdf](#)

[Interactive version :: Independent Schools Inspectorate \(isi.net\)](#)

[The Independent School Standards - Guidance for independent schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

