

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW 2026 - 2027



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Embrace • Empower • Evolve

At PMBS, assessment is used to improve learning, not simply measure it. Every assessment should provide meaningful information that informs teaching, supports student progress and celebrates achievement.

Contents

- 1. Policy rationale and alignment**
- 2. Aims and principles**
- 3. The PMBS assessment model**
- 4. Knowing our students**
- 5. Baseline assessment and starting points**
- 6. Age-related expectations and attainment**
- 7. Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)**
- 8. Assessment evidence and record keeping**
- 9. Formative assessment and feedback**
- 10. Standardised and benchmark assessments**
- 11. Inclusion and access arrangements**
- 12. Moderation and quality assurance**
- 13. Data analysis, intervention and school improvement**
- 14. Reporting to parents and students**
- 15. Roles and responsibilities**
- 16. Whole-school assessment calendar 2026-27**
- 17. Monitoring, review and evidence for KHDA**

1. Policy rationale and alignment

At PACE Modern British School (PMBS), assessment is central to securing high standards, raising achievement and improving teaching and learning. It enables teachers and leaders to understand each student's starting point, identify what they know, understand and can do, measure progress over time, and provide appropriate support and challenge.

The policy is aligned with the National Curriculum for England, the school's curriculum and assessment expectations, KHDA inspection expectations and UAE National Agenda requirements. It reflects the PMBS values of Embrace, Empower and Evolve and the principle that assessment should be purposeful, inclusive, proportionate and primarily used to improve learning.

KHDA-ready principle: Assessment evidence must demonstrate impact: leaders and teachers should be able to explain what the data shows, what action was taken, and what changed for students as a result.

2. Aims and principles

The PMBS assessment framework aims to:

- secure knowledge, skills and understanding over time;
- establish accurate starting points and measure progress from baseline;
- identify misconceptions, underachievement and gaps early;
- inform responsive teaching, adaptive practice, intervention and enrichment;
- provide appropriate stretch and challenge for higher-attaining and gifted learners;
- promote independence, resilience, reflection and student ownership;
- provide clear, accurate and timely information to students, parents, leaders and other stakeholders;
- support reliable school self-evaluation, curriculum review and improvement planning;
- ensure assessment is inclusive, equitable and manageable for staff and students.

3. The PMBS assessment model

Assessment at PMBS consists of three complementary approaches. No single approach is sufficient in isolation.

Approach	Purpose	Typical examples
Assessment FOR Learning	Ongoing assessment that informs the next teaching decision.	Questioning; mini-whiteboards; retrieval; observation; discussion; exit tickets; low-stakes quizzes.
Assessment AS Learning	Students reflect on, understand and take increasing ownership of their learning.	Self-assessment; peer assessment; success criteria; reflection; use of WAGOLL/exemplars.

Assessment OF Learning	More formal evaluation of attainment at a defined point.	Baseline; end-of-unit assessments; Progress Tests; mock examinations; practical/coursework evidence; TAGs.
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Formal data collection consists of one Baseline collection and five Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) collection points. These formal points sit within a continuous assessment cycle; they do not replace daily formative assessment.

4. Knowing our students

Effective assessment begins with knowing the learner. Teachers are expected to use available information before and during teaching to anticipate barriers, pitch challenge appropriately and plan responsive support.

- CAT4 cognitive profile data, where available;
- NGRT reading age, stanine and Standard Age Score;
- SEND, EAL and Gifted & Talented information;
- IEP targets and documented support plans, where applicable;
- attendance, pastoral and behaviour information;
- home language and relevant medical information;
- previous TAGs, end-of-unit assessments and prior attainment;
- GL Progress Test outcomes and question-level analysis in English, Mathematics and Science.

Non-negotiable: Knowing student data is not about lowering expectations. It enables teachers to remove barriers, adapt teaching and ensure every learner has access to appropriate challenge.

5. Baseline assessment and starting points

Every academic year begins with a Baseline Assessment. Baseline establishes the student's current knowledge, understanding and skills and provides the starting point from which progress is evaluated.

- Every student should complete an appropriate baseline assessment.
- Baseline should assess prior knowledge and prerequisite skills needed to access the year ahead; it should not simply test untaught content.
- Baseline is a starting-point judgement, not a prediction of potential.
- Teachers use baseline evidence to identify misconceptions, plan appropriate challenge, adapt teaching and identify students requiring support or stretch.
- Students joining during the year should have an appropriate starting point established using available prior information and school-based assessment.

Attainment and progress

Attainment describes what a student knows, understands and can do at a specific point against curriculum expectations. Progress describes the improvement made over time from the student's

starting point. Two students may have the same attainment outcome but have made different amounts of progress.

6. Age-related expectations and attainment

From Years 1-9, attainment is judged against the expectations of the National Curriculum for England using the PMBS nine-band framework. Judgements reflect the breadth, security and independence of learning demonstrated over time.

Code	Descriptor	Broad interpretation
BEL	Below	Working below age-related expectations
BEL+	Below+	Working below age-related expectations with increasing security
EME	Emerging	Working towards age-related expectations
EME+	Emerging+	Working towards age-related expectations with increasing security
EXP	Expected	Working at age-related expectations
EXP+	Expected+	Secure within age-related expectations and moving beyond
TEXC	Towards Exceeding	Working towards above age-related expectations
EXC	Exceeding	Working above age-related expectations
EXC+	Exceeding+	Working securely and consistently above age-related expectations

The level of independence matters. Work completed with significant scaffolding or modelling should not automatically be judged equivalent to work demonstrated independently. Teachers should use gradual removal of scaffolds as evidence of secure learning.

At Key Stage 4, assessment and reporting reflect the requirements and grading structures of the relevant iGCSE/GCSE specifications. Mock examinations, examination-style assessments and subject-specific evidence form part of the wider evidence base.

7. Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)

TAGs provide a holistic judgement of a student's typical and sustained level of attainment. They are not calculated from one test and must never be based on professional opinion alone.

- TAGs draw on a broad, valid, reliable and sufficient range of evidence collected across the reporting period.
- Evidence may include classwork, independent work, questioning, retrieval, low-stakes quizzes, homework, practical work, presentations, formal assessments and progress over time.
- Teachers must be able to justify every TAG.

- A single unusually high or low assessment should not normally determine the TAG.
- Where formal test outcomes and classroom evidence differ substantially, teachers investigate the reason rather than automatically changing either judgement.
- TAGs are moderated before or around formal data collection points to strengthen consistency.

Core question: Would another teacher, reviewing the same breadth of evidence against the same curriculum standard, be likely to reach the same judgement?

8. Assessment evidence and record keeping

Teachers maintain a formal electronic record of student performance for each teaching group. The tracker is a working document and should be updated routinely, not retrospectively immediately before a TAG deadline.

Assessment evidence should be:

Expectation	Meaning
Regular	Collected routinely throughout units and sequences of learning.
Varied	Drawn from formative, practical, verbal, written and summative sources as appropriate.
Accurate	Reflective of current knowledge, understanding and skills.
Accessible	Organised and available for moderation, QA and parent/student discussion.
Holistic	Representative of sustained performance over time rather than one isolated outcome.
Proportionate	Sufficient to support reliable judgement without unnecessary workload.

Evidence should allow teachers to answer: What does the student know and understand? What can they do independently? What misconceptions remain? What progress have they made? What do they need to do next? Can the reported judgement be justified?

9. Formative assessment and feedback

The greatest emphasis at PMBS is on assessment within everyday teaching. Teachers continually gather evidence through questioning, observation, retrieval, discussion, practical work, independent work and written responses. This evidence should lead to responsive action.

Feedback is timely, purposeful and focused on improvement. It may be verbal, written, whole-class, peer- or self-assessed in line with the school's Feedback and Marking expectations. Impact on learning is prioritised over the volume or frequency of written marking.

WAGOLL, success criteria and student agency

WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like), agreed exemplars and success criteria help establish a shared understanding of quality. Models should make standards visible without becoming templates that students simply reproduce. Students should understand both where they are now and what they need to do next.

10. Standardised and benchmark assessments

Externally benchmarked assessments support triangulation of internal judgements, curriculum evaluation and school improvement. PMBS uses, where applicable:

- CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Tests);
- GL Progress Tests in English, Mathematics and Science;
- NGRT reading assessments;
- ABTs and other KHDA-required assessments;
- TIMSS and PIRLS where applicable.

Standardised data informs professional discussion but does not automatically determine a TAG. Question-level analysis should identify curriculum strengths, gaps, priority groups and implications for teaching.

Following GL Progress Test cycles, core subject teams produce Assessment Action Plans identifying students requiring intervention or stretch, common misconceptions, curriculum priorities and planned actions.

11. Inclusion and access arrangements

Assessment is inclusive and equitable. Assessment methods should enable students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do while maintaining the integrity of the assessed standard. Diagnostic and classroom assessment should support early identification of additional needs.

Assessment evidence for SEND and EAL learners should be interpreted alongside documented support, language acquisition and curriculum access needs.

Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) should reflect normal classroom practice and documented need. Arrangements may include additional time, separate seating, enlarged papers, reader/scribe support, technology, prompts, calculator use where permitted, or ILSA support where appropriate.

External examination access arrangements must follow the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

12. Moderation and quality assurance

Moderation is essential to ensuring assessment is accurate, consistent, fair and evidence-informed. It should occur throughout the year, not only immediately before reporting.

PMBS five-stage moderation process

Stage	Expectation
1. Select	Choose representative evidence across attainment bands, including boundary judgements where useful.
2. Review	Independently review against curriculum expectations, PMBS descriptors, outcomes, success criteria and agreed exemplars.
3. Compare	Compare professional judgements and explain the evidence supporting them.
4. Agree	Reach an evidence-based judgement; do not compromise by simply averaging two opinions.
5. Act	Adjust judgements where necessary and identify implications for teaching, curriculum, assessment design or exemplification.

Moderation takes place within classes, year groups/departments, across year groups, across phases where appropriate, and through leadership QA. Year 6 to Year 7 moderation is particularly valuable for transition. Cross-school moderation within the PACE group may be used to strengthen consistency.

Senior and middle leaders sample assessment evidence through the QA cycle to evaluate reliability of TAGs, consistency between classes, level of challenge, progress from starting points and the impact of assessment on teaching.

13. Data analysis, intervention and school improvement

Assessment data has value only when it leads to action. Leaders and teachers analyse individual, class, cohort and group performance to identify strengths, underachievement, gaps and trends.

- Progress from baseline and previous attainment;
- students significantly below, at or above age-related expectations;
- priority groups and differences between groups;
- curriculum areas or question types showing common misconceptions;
- students requiring targeted intervention, adaptation, enrichment or greater challenge;
- the impact of previous actions and interventions.

Pupil Progress Meetings and subject/phase review processes should result in clear actions, named responsibility, timescales and subsequent evaluation of impact. Data should be used intelligently and proportionately and should not create unnecessary workload.

14. Reporting to parents and students

Parents and students receive clear, accurate and timely information through formal reports, consultation meetings and ongoing communication. Reporting should reflect attainment and progress over time, identify strengths and next steps, and be consistent with the evidence held by teachers. Where a student's performance changes significantly, or where there is concern about progress,

communication with parents should not wait unnecessarily for the next formal reporting point.

15. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Key responsibilities
Teachers	Embed formative assessment; know student data; maintain accurate evidence; award and justify TAGs; provide effective feedback; participate in moderation; adapt teaching in response to evidence.
Subject / Year / Phase Leaders	Set and exemplify standards; moderate judgements; analyse data; identify curriculum and group priorities; monitor intervention; support consistency and staff development.
Assistant Heads / Assessment & T&L Leaders	Coordinate assessment systems; quality assure implementation; evaluate phase/subject performance; support moderation; ensure assessment informs curriculum and T&L improvement.
Senior Leadership Team	Set whole-school expectations; evaluate reliability and impact; ensure alignment with school priorities, KHDA expectations and National Agenda requirements; hold leaders accountable for actions and impact.
Inclusion / Pathfinder Team	Support identification of need, assessment adaptations and access arrangements; ensure equitable access while maintaining assessment validity.
Students	Engage with feedback, success criteria and reflection; understand current performance and next steps; increasingly take ownership of improvement.
Parents / Carers	Engage with reports and consultations; support attendance, independent study and agreed intervention where appropriate.

16. Whole-school assessment calendar 2026-27

No.	Assessment / collection	Deadline
1	Baseline	W/B 14 September 2026
2	TAG 1	12 October 2026
3	TAG 2	24 November 2026
4	TAG 3	02 February 2027
5	TAG 4	27 April 2027
6	TAG 5	15 June 2027

Key Stage 4 assessment arrangements may differ because of mock and external iGCSE/GCSE examinations. Subject leaders should ensure internal assessment complements, rather than duplicates unnecessarily, external examination requirements.

17. Monitoring, review and evidence for KHDA

Implementation of this policy is monitored through the school's Quality Assurance cycle. Evidence may include:

- teacher assessment trackers and breadth of assessment evidence;
- moderation records and exemplification/WAGOLL banks;
- baseline, TAG and standardised assessment analysis;
- GL question-level analysis and core-subject Assessment Action Plans;
- Pupil Progress Meeting records and intervention plans;
- work scrutiny, lesson visits and student voice;
- reports to parents and evidence of communication;
- progress and attainment of individuals, cohorts and identified groups;
- evidence that actions taken in response to assessment have improved teaching, curriculum provision or student outcomes.

KHDA line of enquiry: Leaders should be able to show a clear chain from starting point -> assessment evidence -> analysis -> action -> review -> improved outcomes.

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier where required by changes to curriculum, examination, KHDA or UAE requirements. The next scheduled review is September 2027.

Appendix A - Assessment evidence examples

Phase / subject	Illustrative evidence
Primary English	Guided reading observations; phonics; independent writing; handwriting; speaking; fluency; spelling; questioning.
Primary Mathematics	Arithmetic; times tables; problem solving; mini-whiteboards; independent practice; exit tickets; observation; end-of-unit assessment.
Primary Science	Practical investigation; scientific enquiry; predictions/conclusions; retrieval; explanations; end-of-topic assessment; discussion.
KS3 English	Reading comprehension; analytical/extended writing; SPaG; vocabulary; presentations/discussion; retrieval; end-of-unit assessment.
KS4 Mathematics	GCSE-style questions; topic tests; mock papers; retrieval; homework/independent study; diagnostic assessment; fluency/reasoning.
KS4 History	Source analysis; extended GCSE-style responses; retrieval; essays; timed examination practice; homework; questioning/discussion.

Appendix B - Moderation prompts

1. What does the evidence demonstrate that the student knows, understands and can do?
2. Is performance typical and sustained or an isolated example?
3. How independently has the student demonstrated the standard?
4. Is the evidence sufficiently broad and appropriately challenging?
5. Would another teacher reach the same judgement from this evidence?
6. If internal and external evidence differ, what explains the difference?
7. What action should follow from this moderation?

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