



cadburycollege

ENGLISH & MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

REF NO: CU.06

cadburycollege

Downland Close

Kings Norton

Birmingham

B38 8QT.

Telephone: 0121 458 3898

Website: www.cadcol.ac.uk

Email: enquiry@cadcol.ac.uk

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English & Mathematics Across The Curriculum Policy

1. Introduction and rationale

We recognise that English and Maths skills are very important for successful outcomes for students on their courses here at college, but that they are also essential life skills which will determine progression to Higher Education and employment.

At Cadbury College we expect all students to gain a grade 4 (C) or above in GCSE English and Mathematics if they have not already done so at school. This is in line with government policy and is also vital for our students' future life chances. Where students have already attained these benchmarks, there is still much potential to raise standards in these core subject areas and there is considerable need to do so. For example, research by the Higher Education Academy investigated the requirements for mathematical skills at undergraduate level across a wide range of disciplines and found that “too many students arrive in Higher Education without a realistic understanding either of the relevance of Mathematics to their discipline or of the demands that will be put upon them”. (The Higher Education Academy STEM project, 2014)

We are all responsible for contributing to the development of English and Maths skills in our students wherever possible within the context of our subject areas. We also recognise that while consistency is important, the starting points for our student body vary enormously and that the support therefore needs personalising.

The college prides itself on its inclusion practices, particularly within its Study Plus provision within which there is a strong emphasis on English and Maths skills.

2. Raising standards in English across the curriculum

2.1 At enrolment, all students undertake 10 minute a piece of free writing which will screen for indicators of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs). ALS will follow up to identify whether students have SpLDs and allocate support as required.

2.2 Subject teams will identify four literacy skills from Assessment Zero which are of particular importance for their subject, and record these within schemes of work. Class teachers will then prioritise the development of the subject-specific literacy skills which they have chosen (in the case of subjects which require a high level of numeracy skills, up to two targets may be numeracy-focused and two literacy-focused. Mathematics is an exception where all targets may be numeracy-focused).

Examples of subject-specific literacy skills:

Paragraphing, spelling of commonly-used words, spelling of subject-specific terminology, use of appropriate academic register, use of linking and signposting words, embedding quotations, handwriting legibly, using evidence to support points, use Standard English to explain, explore and justify ideas, adapt spoken language for different purposes, identify key points of an argument...

2.3 At least one piece of work per half term should be assessed against all subject-specific skills. Feedback will be given by class teachers to students via the use of a college-wide assessment coversheet.

2.4 English skills are to regularly feature on the agenda at team meetings with good practice shared and monitored. In addition, all classrooms should have evidence of literacy focus e.g. posters, students' work, key terms/glossaries. Students may also attend Study Plus for English support.

2.5 Departments should work with LRC staff to encourage reading around all subjects, with subject-specific book lists which include fiction and non-fiction. We should clearly identify ourselves as a College with a pro-active approach to encouraging students to read both for pleasure and around the subject (not mutually exclusive) – and these initiatives should be worked at in collaboration with LRC staff. As a result, the half term holiday will be called 'reading week' and an extensive reading list has been created for this purpose.

3. Raising standards in Mathematics across the curriculum

Recommendations:

3.1 While some subject areas do not require a wide range of mathematical skills for successful outcomes, all students need opportunities to develop these skills for their future life chances. We need to make the most of such opportunities when they arise outside of Maths and Science lessons. (See Ofsted report 2014)

3.2 Teachers will complete a Maths audit to identify the skills needed in their subject areas. Teachers will then identify the greatest areas of difficulty faced by students in their subject; this will form the basis of a Maths skills target for the subject area. The Maths audit should be included in the Quality File and references will be made on SoWs. Courses with at least 10% of their total marks allocated to maths skills have been asked to record the maths marks for individual assessments on assessment forms so that progress can be measured. (These courses include Psychology, Economics and Business studies)

3.3 Marking / feedback of work needs to show an error but more importantly how to put it right. Students notoriously “ignore” valuable feedback so it is recommended to find class time to ask students to work in groups on “their corrections” and then ask a few students to come out and explain some particular pertinent issue to the rest of the class.

3.4 Clear signposting to access support is needed – e.g. academic facilitators, A2 student mentors, posters in classrooms, resources in the LRC, recommended websites and apps.

3.5 We should attempt to engage students’ interest in maths by celebrating national/international maths days and to make students aware of how important mathematical skills are for Higher Education and future employment. Some students have adopted a ‘can’t do’ attitude which needs to be challenged.

4. Quality Assurance

While teaching staff are free to use their professional judgement about how to incorporate maths and English in their teaching; quality assurance checks will be made to ensure that these skills are being addressed at fixed points throughout the academic year as follows:

Schemes of Work: All schemes of work are to be uploaded by teaching staff to TeamSite on a half-termly basis. All schemes of work are then to be reviewed by the CPD. SoWs containing insufficient detail on English and Maths will be revisited by teaching staff. Examples of good practice will be shared across the teaching team.

Assessment forms: There are six key assessment points throughout the academic year. Teaching staff are required to upload assessment feedback sheets for three students per course (to include the highest, lowest and average grade) to TeamSite. Assessment forms from the same three students are to be uploaded at each assessment point so that progress in English and Maths can be measured. Quality assurance checks of a random sample of assessment forms will take place after each assessment by the CPD and CM (with the exception of ‘Assessment Zero’).

Appendix A

Free writing Task - Instructions (exemplar)

Undertake a 10 minute timed written task titled.

“Write about yourself; we would like to know why you have chosen your A-level subjects, about your future plans and any hobbies, jobs and outside interests you have.”

The purpose is to screen all incoming students to determine if they will need exam concessions and/or learning support to improve their written communication. Please ask the students to leave a gap of one line in their writing every five minutes. The aim is to ensure better targeting and earlier identification of support so that the students who need additional learning support get it from the start of the year. This should also reduce the need for teachers to refer students for learning support during the year.

At the end ask students to calculate their word count. Directions for Counting

- Record the total number of words in each line, at the end of that line. Put the total number of words at the bottom.
- Initials acting as a name e.g. PC or GCSE count as 1 word, but if there are full stops between the letters count letters as separate words.
- A series of numbers without punctuation count as one word; with punctuation count the numbers separately.
- A dash joining two words makes them count as one word.
- Abbreviated forms of ‘and’ all count as one word.
- Two words written as one, count as one word e.g. alot

Appendix B

Mathematics audit (exemplar)

Subject area:

Please complete the audit below so that we can identify the necessary skills in different subject areas and any support needed. Once completed, pass one copy to the Curriculum Manager for English and Mathematics and place one copy in your class file. The chosen mathematics target(s) should be displayed in your classrooms. Only one form needs to be completed per subject. Mathematics and Science courses need not complete this audit.

1. Make a list of the Mathematics skills needed for success in your subject. Also include any skills that could be developed as a natural by-product of the specifications.

2. What do you consider to be the greatest area of difficulty with mathematics for students in your subject?

3. Choose one target that will be the focus for this academic year. (this could be based on question 2)

Appendix C

Mathematics audit (exemplar)

Subject area: Sociology

Please complete the audit below so that we can identify the necessary skills in different subject areas and any support needed. Once completed, pass one copy to the Curriculum Manager for English and Mathematics and place one copy in your class file. The chosen mathematics target(s) should be displayed in your classrooms. Only one form needs to be completed per subject. Mathematics and Science courses need not complete this audit.

4. Make a list here of the Mathematics skills needed for success in your subject

Understand simple fractions and recognise when two simple fractions are equivalent

Recognise and use simple percentages and ratios

Identify overall patterns and trends in graphs and tables (examples include differences in GCSE results by Socio-economic background, changes in unemployment rates and divorce rates)

To be able to identify percentage changes without reliance on a calculator.

Round numbers into a more simplified form for use in essays. (e.g. to write “just over three quarters of Chinese students achieved the GCSE pass rate” instead of “75.9% for Chinese”)

To determine the likely generalizability of research data based on the sample size compared to the size of the target population

To understand the differences between the mean, median and mode

Calculate how much time should be spent on exam questions based on time allocated and available marks

5. What do you consider to be the greatest area of difficulty with mathematics for students in your subject?

To simplify statistics for use in essays

6. Choose one (or more) targets that will be the focus for this academic year. (this could be based on question 2)

Sociology target: To identify changes in sociological trends

