

## Impact Summary

### Does removing the Key Stage 3 relative grading system improve students' wellbeing and performance, and why is this the case?

#### Context

Putney High School (PHS) is a member of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), with the senior school providing for 634 students between the ages of 11 and 18 in the past academic year. It is set in an affluent area of London, and most of the intake is fee-paying. Factoring in the 320 junior school students, there are 59 students with special educational needs, of whom 49 receive learning support. Two students have a statement of special educational needs. Some students are bilingual, but none require extra support for English as an additional language. The average ability of most students at the school is above the national average, with many students having ability that is well above the national average. The ISI report of 2015 observes that the school is exceptional.

I conducted a five-month action research project in the field of Key Stage 3 assessment, including randomised trials, from January to June as part of the inaugural GDST Research Learning Communities (RLC) project. Improving student wellbeing was a school strategic aim for this academic year, and this partially informed my research focus.

#### Problem or Driver for Innovation

There is some lack of resilience among the girls in the senior school, presenting as intense student anxiety before assessments and subsequent anxiety over imperfect grades. A degree of this is likely to result from parental pressure, demonstrated through interactions via email and consultation evenings, and a moderately competitive atmosphere and excellent public examination results also combine to create a perceived need to succeed.

I believed another contributing factor was the grading system for classwork in Key Stage 3, which has been in place since 2015. Students' work is marked with relative grading: the best work is given an E (or E\*, if it is particularly impressive), below that, approximately the upper half of the class receives a 1, the lower half receives a 2 and those students at the bottom receive a 3. These marks also translate into relative marks on the grade cards.

The Haverstock School literature review reveals that students often experience a dip in motivation and performance when moving from primary to secondary school, and early failure can lead to a downward trajectory. Is it helpful, therefore, for students in the earliest stages of senior school to be told their work is among the worst in the class? In addition, the GDST Research Review states that marking is less helpful when it focuses the student's mind on their positional level relative to other students in the class.

I presented a survey to all teachers, eliciting their views on the current policy to determine the true extent of the perceived problem. This survey asked all teachers to score from zero (very poor) to 10 (excellent) on two scales the effectiveness of the marking policy in promoting student progress and helping student confidence. Based on the 37 responses, each scale received an average of 4.4. When converted into average scores awarded by each department, the highest mark for each was six, while the lowest for progress was 2.5 (Mathematics & Computing) and 2.3 for confidence (Science).

Teachers commented that students focused too much on the number and not enough on the comments. They said the system did not equate to anything useful in terms of future GCSE gradings and the range of possible marks was rather narrow and lacked nuance. A key issue was that confidence was affected if the girls got anything below a 1, and some admitted that they chose never to award a grade of 3 for such reasons.

I then issued a survey to current and former Key Stage 3 students. This asked them to explain the marking system and to award a score from zero to 10 for how well it allowed them to understand their performance. Only four of the 109 students who responded mentioned anything pertaining to the relative nature of the marking system. In the section where they could give additional comments, a high number (20 of the 57 surveyed post-Key Stage 3

students) mentioned the stigma attached to receiving a 2 or below and some said the different approaches that teachers took to using the system had caused confusion. Interestingly, a detrimental effect on motivation was most markedly apparent in Year 7 responses, echoing the findings of the Haverstock review.

Additional information from surveys sent to four non-PHS teachers and the results of a survey sent to Year 7 parents, which highlighted some confusion with the system and how it was applied in different ways by different teachers, confirmed the need for innovation.

## **The Innovation**

In January, three teachers agreed to embark on a five-month randomised trial with treatment classes using a system of comment-only marking, with an absolute marking system for infrequent assessment (where all students could achieve 10/10, for example). These classes were Year 7 English (26 students), Year 8 French (27 students) and Year 9 Geography (20 students). All three teachers had another class in the same year group, therefore giving a greater indication of the effects of the system rather than the teacher.

As a testament to the school's support, the director of assessment made the necessary changes in the School Information Management System (Sims) to omit a relative grade from the report cards issued during this period to the treatment classes. Instead, a different set of numbered grades were available to each treatment class, reflecting the grade they would be likely to achieve if assessed now on the new GCSE 9-1 scale. This scale is gradually being phased in to replace A\*-G grades in both maintained and independent schools, with a 9 reserved for the highest-achieving students. The reports reflected students' increasing attainment, so Year 7 received grades from 6-1, Year 8 received 7-2 and Year 9 received 8-3.

The aim was to see whether students responded better when a consistent focus on grades was replaced with a greater emphasis on comments. Attainment would be measured via teachers' reflections on formative tasks, with the summer examinations providing quantitative data across the year group for comparison. Wellbeing would be ascertained via student surveys and a discussion with a student focus group set up especially for this research.

## **Activities and Interactions**

I met with the treatment teachers after one month to discuss initial findings. All three provided favourable feedback – all students had responded maturely and no parents had expressed any concerns. The changes to the marking policy were explained to the classes in the first lesson of term, but the occasion was deliberately understated in case the very idea of change immediately affected the students' response to it. We took a similar approach to the parents, feeling that letters home could make the research appear unnecessarily contentious – parents should know that all changes we make have the students' interests in mind.

Each teacher had adopted a slightly different approach to their marking, although each only gave a summative grade once a half-term. The Geography teacher had lessons with each of her Year 9 classes once a week. To promote student confidence, she had chosen to give a ratio of two positive remarks to one area for improvement in each of her comments and ensured that these were always specific and individualised. The shortage of lessons prevented in-class Designated Improvement Reflection Time (Dirt), which was a feature of the English teacher's thrice-weekly lessons. The English teacher said the use of comment-only marking forced the students to focus more on the comments and improved the quality of Dirt. She also saw it as a great opportunity to praise the weaker students for what they were doing well, and it became more meaningful when there was no grade attached.

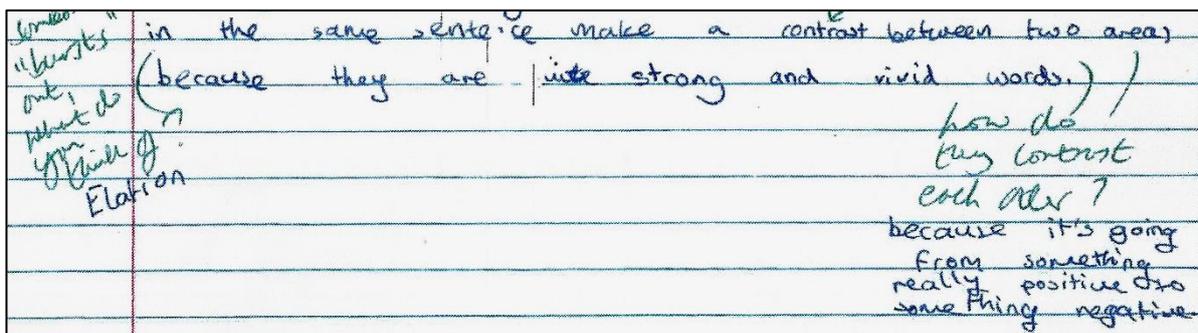
For each of his twice-weekly lessons, the French teacher had been providing formative marking with individual corrections in the text and a general comment at the end, along with a target tailored specifically to that student. Before subsequent pieces of work, the students would draw upon his previous individualised comments to write a target at the top of the page but also give a 'how', a specific way in which they were going to meet it. The teacher would refer to the 'how' in his marking at the end and state whether the student was successful. There was sometimes peer-review to see if the students met their targets – they could make corrections, but the teacher still checked this work at the end. The English teacher adopted this teacher's 'how' approach after hearing the initial indications of improved responsiveness.

## Learning

The May examinations gave us interesting quantitative data. The French teacher's treatment class was the best-performing French class in terms of the average score, achieving 79% against an average of 77% for the rest of the year group and allaying fears that a lack of marks might reduce achievement. The same number of top grades was evenly distributed among classes, but there were few students achieving the lower grades in this class.

The decrease in lower grades supported the teacher's belief that his approach most noticeably helped the weaker students. He said the students who did not perform so well over the course of the research were those who were not properly reading targets and reflecting on the process, although even these students eventually began to improve when they realised past comments allowed for future success. The cyclical nature of the feedback process gave weaker students a framework to use – they worked hard and had something that clearly showed them what their targets needed to be. For the teacher, this approach made it easier to determine where and what the weaknesses were, and it more clearly moved the onus of improvement towards the student.

The Geography teacher's treatment class fared comparably with her other class and the remainder of the year group. The English teacher's treatment class also performed just as well. In preparation for the close analysis required in the comprehension task, she had typically had students rework paragraphs of writing where the target and the 'how' concerned the effects of language devices. The image below shows a student's engagement with the teacher's questions before such reworking.



## Changes in Behaviour

More noticeable improvements in grades may require more time with this process, but there is already clear progress in reactions to grades. The French teacher said he returned the papers and the non-treatment class immediately produced their calculators and tried to calculate their percentages, whereas not a single person produced their calculator in the treatment class. They were removed from that summative instinct. Instead, students in the treatment class asked which pieces of paper they could write on to make notes for future reflection.

The Geography teacher supported these comments, saying her treatment class was a lot more subdued when examination papers were returned, whereas the other class was 'trying to claw back certain marks'. This increase in reflectiveness bodes well for other subjects and, indeed, future life – whether it remains with the students is a matter for further research.

Interestingly, the Geography teacher also added that the decision not to award grades had encouraged her to be more honest when writing undisclosed formative marks in her mark book, which therefore gave her a better idea of how the students would perform. She said that when awarding marks to the non-treatment class, she had tended to overinflate because it was a challenging class that needed encouragement before picking their option subjects.

All three teachers agreed that they had become more precise in their comments due to this research.

## Difference

The teachers' feedback was encouraging and suggested improvements beyond the research project, but I also wanted to hear the students' thoughts. A survey issued to each of the treatment classes revealed a general desire for a return to grades, although there was a strong feeling among some students that the new approach made it easier to see how they could improve their work. The surveys were completed anonymously, so I gathered a selection of students from Years 8, 10 and 12 to form a new school research group and offer their comments on my findings. Their valuable feedback revealed how a comment-only approach could achieve positive outcomes *and* gain student support, if introduced in the right way.

They told me that any new system, such as comment-only marking, must start in Year 7 and as early as possible – the expectation of a grade is a hard thing to eliminate. There was also the issue of non-treatment classes having the ability to brag about grades that treatment classes had not been receiving, and the E\*-3 system gave students a reassurance that they were not currently working towards their GCSEs, unlike the 9-1 system applied to reports for treatment classes.

Some in this group said that comment-only marking for Years 7 and 8 would be sustainable but Year 9 work should be graded in preparation for the GCSE years, while another said that effort grades rather than attainment grades should be considered for lower years.

One interviewee was a part of the Year 8 treatment. She said she had not missed the grades and the process had obvious benefits: 'It forces you to look at your comment from before, which I don't think I was previously doing. I don't think I was looking at it and thinking "how can I improve directly from this piece of work?" and I think the fact I've only had comments has helped me to do that.'

## Reframing Value

The director of assessment responded with interest to the findings and had considered various ways to improve current marking since my project began, but he has since stated that retaining a distinction between Key Stage 3 attainment and GCSE grades may be desirable in terms of maintaining student confidence. Creating report descriptors for 9-1 grades available to each of the year groups and for each of the subjects is also too burdensome a task to set up, communicate and implement.

He has, however, now asked all teachers to award grades only for significant pieces of work – approximately half-termly with classes seen for at least two hours a week and termly when seen for one hour a week. He has stressed that the focus should be on good-quality feedback and teachers should not feel constrained by the proportions suggested for the awarding of grades E\*-3.

This move towards infrequent and more flexible grading with an emphasis on good-quality feedback is a fitting response to my findings, but the long-term effects of comment-only marking on the confidence and attainment of students in PHS still requires study. While the experiment did not significantly raise achievement, it did not make things worse, and it seems to have engendered a more productive approach to feedback from the students.

Assessment may now also inform next year's focus for the PHS teachers who have taken an interest in action research because of our RLC project. Our new learning and research microsite promotes evidence-based practice, and students in the research group are now keen to work on their own learning research projects.

## Bibliography

Brown C (2012) Haverstock Transitions Research Project: Literature Review, printed by the Institute of Education, University of London

Watkins C (2010) Literature Review: Learning, Performance and Improvement, Research Matters, 34, pp.1-16. ISEIC: Institute of Education, as published in the GDST Research Review: Resilience through Growth Mindsets

## Appendix A: Example of a pre-innovation survey sent to non-PHS teachers (completed)

Name and school: (supplied)

**1. What is your official work title and subject?**

Head of Department (English)

**2. Which public examinations for your subject do your students sit at KS4 and KS5? Please include the names of the exam boards.**

KS4- IGCSE English Language and IGCSE English Literature-Edexcel (9-1)

**3. Is there a departmental approach to marking that you use in KS3 for classwork? If so, please describe it below.**

Yes. We have a Reading and Writing mark scheme for Years 7, 8 and 9.

**4. If the answer to question 3 was 'no', please explain why your school does not have a departmental approach to marking and describe the approach that tends to be used or which you personally use.**

N/A

**5. How often is KS3 classwork supposed to be marked?**

Once every two weeks.

**6. Do you, personally, believe your system of marking effectively prepares students for KS4? If so, how?**

Yes. We use criteria that the students are familiar with so they know exactly what they need to succeed. A lot of the skills the students are being assessed on (more so in Year 9) link directly to the KS4 assessments.

**7. How easily and effectively do the students understand how they need to improve their work?**

It is departmental policy to always set a target which is achievable for students. Students are made aware that they can attend 'Surgery' (additional help classes) to seek further clarification of their work. Our marking motto is 'kind, helpful and specific'.

**8. Have you any positive or negative experience of *comment-only* marking in KS3?**

I often use comment-only marking, particularly on Key Stage Three work. I feel this allows students to focus on what they have achieved and what they actually need to do to improve. I have found that giving a numerical/alphabetical mark can often be received with a passive attitude, as students may be complacent with the grade they receive.

**9. Have you any positive or negative experience of *relative marking* in KS3? (This could mean the only mark the students receive indicates the quality of their work *in relation to other students in the class*, with comments on what went well and what could be improved.)**

I have not used this approach. I have on occasions commented on the length of work and how much other students have managed to achieve in the time given.

**10. If you have a vision for an ideal marking system for KS3 classwork, please describe it below.**

I believe a holistic approach should be taken. Rigorous marking should be undertaken when a final assessment piece has been produced. Classwork should be marked to show that the teacher has acknowledged note-taking exercises as well as shorter pieces of work produced in class to assess understanding. It is also desirable to ask questions which will allow students to develop their understanding. Time should be given as part of feedback to answer and respond to teacher comments. Teacher comments and feedback should also be on speaking and listening activities.



Putney High School

Survey of Parents/Guardians of Key Stage 3 Students

Please explain what you know about how the E\*-3 marking system is used by teachers.

How would you rate this system for how it helps you understand your child's performance?

Very poor

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Excellent

Please briefly explain why you have awarded this rating.

Thank you for your help!

Putney High School

Survey of Post-Key Stage 3 Students

Please explain what you know about how the E\*-3 marking system is used by teachers.

How would you rate this system for how it helped you understand your performance?

Very poor

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Excellent

Please briefly explain why you have awarded this rating.

Thank you for your help!

## Appendix C: Results of the PHS teacher surveys

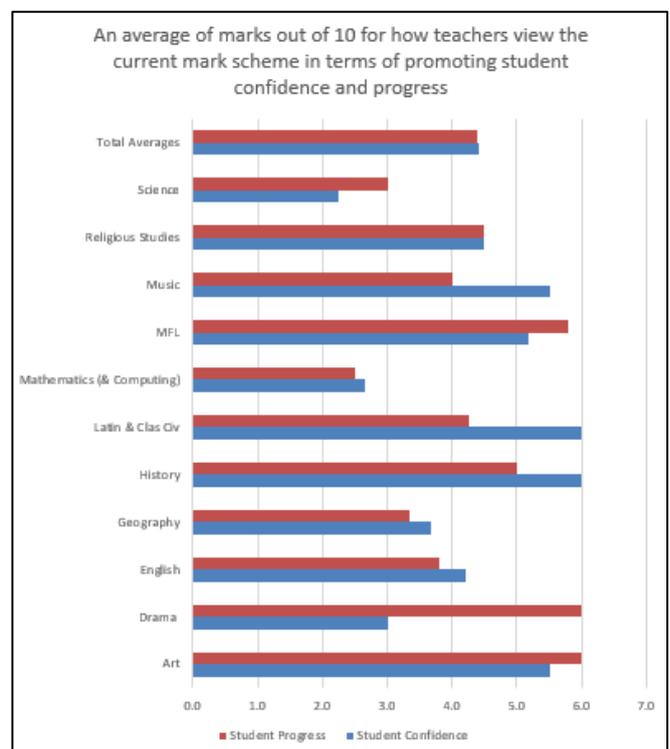
How would you grade the effectiveness of the E*-3 system in promoting student <b>confidence</b> ?			
How would you grade the effectiveness of the E*-3 system in promoting student <b>progress</b> ?			
Please briefly explain why you have awarded these grades.			
Art	4	4	Pupils focus too much on the number and not enough on the comments, so I end up giving far too many 1s and 2s in order to give them confidence, but it is meaningless. I'd rather just give comments and then every so often a grade to show overall how they're working.
Art	7	8	Pupils value the marks given and they can act as a spur to do better. I say for example 1 (can go higher) if they follow written advice on how to improve.
Drama	3	6	Confidence is crucial in Drama and the girls don't take it well if they get below a 1 and it can be detrimental to their attitude.
English	3	2	I don't think the system equates to anything meaningful in terms of future GCSE gradings and assessment. I also feel the girls fixate on the mark and fail to really focus on my targets for improvement. They are generally perfectionists, so anything less than a 1 is seen as 'poor' in their eyes.
English	6	4	The grades are too vague. 2 could be dispiriting (but accurate). 'E' takes a while to gauge and only seems to occur when a very bright student is particularly inspired by a task. I have been using 2+ (etc.) to encourage progress, by indicating that there is further to go.
English	6	7	I think it does help to communicate the sort of level students are working at and it's a kind of shorthand that avoids the need for lengthy explanations (i.e. it concisely communicates that they are doing ok, well/very well). I don't often use a 3 as I consider this quite demotivating.)
English	3	3	Students often feel disappointed if they are given a 3 (or even a 2 in some cases) and don't necessarily see it as an opportunity to improve. Unless you actively engage students in your comments, they will ignore them and only focus on the grade.
English	3	3	Students look straight at the grade and pay much less attention to the comments. They perceive a 2 in Year 8 as being worse than a 1 in Year 7.

Geography	0	1	Nothing succeeds like success - pupils who do well feel confident. Equally, give a dog a bad name - low marks demotivate. To progress, pupils need to focus on the comments - marks detract from this unless they are for specific points (e.g. mark out of 5 for a map - 1 for title, 1 for labels... criteria referenced)
Geography	3	3	Feels ambiguous and a bit pointless. Can't draw direct comparisons between teachers and subjects. Without effective feedback there is no way of knowing how to progress. Pupils fixate on score and compare.
Geography	8	6	They feel good about getting a 1 or E but don't necessarily know why they get a 2 or 3.
History	Blank	5	They don't know what it means. My class and homework tasks are graded so they know what an E means. They don't listen, though.
History	6	5	In terms of progress, limited impact as far too broad. In terms of confidence, some impact as teachers tend to award higher grades and many students receive inflated grades.
Latin & Clas Civ	7	5	At this level, numerical scores in tests/exercises are more precise. Depends on the activity.
Latin & Clas Civ	8	3	As with most marking systems (with the exception of % or /10), this is quite a blunt tool. Pupils are too fixated on the grade and not the comment and feel defeated and cross if they don't get the highest grades. E is hard to award for language work - how can you go above and beyond getting everything correct?
Latin & Clas Civ	2	2	It's only good for students who get an E or 1; for the rest it is a mark of failure - they are either within the bottom half of the class or the bottom 10%.
Latin & Clas Civ	7	7	I'd give 7s for my grade boundary method - prior to that, it promotes shoddy marking!
Mathematics	0	0	Meaningless! I like the merit system.
Mathematics	4	5	Students have not necessarily made progress if they move up a grade as it could be a different topic. I find it useful for my markbook but could just use grades 9-1 for all years.
Mathematics	1	1	Great for top set; rubbish for bottom set. Girls tend to get themselves into repeated runs of 1s, 2s and 3s. If grades are to be useful, some idea of what was good or what needs to be improved upon is more useful.
Mathematics	5	5	It very much depends on the student/parent/ They love to receive an E on their report; for example, some are very disheartened by a grade of 2 or less and we sometimes receive emails from parents as a result.

Mathematics	2	2	The grading system is a very broad brush which doesn't suit Maths well. In general, the girls can see how many questions they got right or wrong, so putting 1, 2 or 3 does not add anything.
Maths/Computing	4	2	A lower grade on a one-off basis could be motivational and promote progress through greater effort. Comments/highlighting of errors will provide more specific ways to promote progress.
MFL	5	Blank	Would rather have more flexibility of grades (e.g. A*, A, A/B etc.) so differentiation is clear. 3 is only satisfactory, so I find work is at least 'quite good'.
MFL	7	7	I used it with students' homework, vocab tests and assessment. Let students write down their target. It is very useful.
MFL	4	6	Girls compare - I want them to think.
MFL	7	7	Students feel reassured to have summative criteria, although the range of possible marks is rather narrow and lacking in nuance.
MFL	5	7	There isn't enough differentiation between E, 1, 2, 3, M and U. I'd rather have A+, A, A- etc. It's clearer for me than 9, 8, 7....
MFL	3	2	Research shows that comment-only marking is more effective than any graded system.
Music	4	6	The girls hate being given less than a 2. George asks us to place girls in quintiles, but this seems illogical - if you have a great class, can't they all get a good grade?
Music	7	2	At the moment, the girls are generally made to feel good about their work, as the usual range of marks awarded is E-2. We, as a department, very rarely give E* or 3, making it quite a 'safe' system. What I don't feel the E*- 3 system shows enough of is progression. We have music-specific skills that the girls learn through time, but I find that these summative assessments show more about the students' understanding and development than the E*-3 grades. I find myself using these summative assessments to inform my report-writing and truer understanding of pupil progression.
Religious Studies	5	5	It's great for students who always get Es, but frustrating for those who don't understand that a 1 is very good!
Religious Studies	4	4	As chosen ratings (E*-3), I do not believe they have context and therefore lack relevance. There is nothing to compare them against and I don't believe they measure progress accurately.

Science	0	0	Students interpret the grade as an effort mark, so are demotivated by 3 or M. Assigning levels to work is totally subjective.
Science	0	0	The kids are fixated on their report grades and confuse them with effort. They tend to ignore what we write in their exercise book.
Science	7	9	A lower confidence rating as some pupils are disappointed with their mark and usually are reluctant to do better on their piece of work. Higher score on progress as girls usually want to maintain their mark in future pieces of work they do.
Science	2	3	Confidence - even when a student gets 90% and above in a test, they don't feel good about themselves unless I give them a 1. Progress - following the binomial curve means that a student can make loads of progress and still get a 2. I'm not trying to be negative - I think we need to change the culture so that pupils are progress-focused.

Averages in Dept.	Student Confidence	Student Progress
Art	5.5	6.0
Drama	3.0	6.0
English	4.2	3.8
Geography	3.7	3.3
History	6.0	5.0
Latin & Clas Civ	6.0	4.3
Mathematics (& Computing)	2.7	2.5
MFL	5.2	5.8
Music	5.5	4.0
Religious Studies	4.5	4.5
Science	2.3	3.0
<b>Total Averages</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>



Appendix D: Results of KS3 student, post-KS3 student and Year 7 parent surveys

Results of PHS Year 7 student surveys on KS3 marking

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your performance?	Lack of understanding/student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the student indicate its relative nature?
7KFY	7		Y	Y	
	8		Y	Y	
	6	Y	Y	Y	
	7	Y		Y	
	7	Y			
	6				
	9	Y			
	7		Y		
	6	Y	Y	Y	
	7	Y	Y		
	7	Y	Y		
	8		Y		
	8	Y	Y		
	7				
	6	Y	Y	Y	
	5			Y	
	6	Y			
	8				
	3	Y		Y	
	8				
	9	Y	Y		
	8		Y	Y	
	7		Y		
	7	Y	Y		
	2	Y			
	5		Y		
Average	6.7				
Total		14	15	9	
%		54	58	35	

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your performance?	Lack of understanding/student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the student indicate its relative nature?
7KJY	5.5	Y			
	9				
	8				
	7				
	4				
	8	Y			
	5				
	4		Y		
	6	Y			
	3				
	6			Y	
	6	Y			
	3	Y			
	4				
	8.5				
	4	Y		Y	
	9				
	9				
	5				
	8				
	9				
	9				
	8				
	8			Y	
	8				
	10				
Average	6.7				
Total		5	1	3	
%		19	4	12	

**Results of PHS post-KS3 student surveys on KS3 marking**

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your performance?	Lack of understanding/student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the student indicate its relative nature?
9-3	6	Y			
	8		Y		
	7				
	8.5				
	7		Y		
	7		Y		
	8				Y
	6				
	7				
	8	Y			
	7		Y		
	7		Y		
	3				
	5				
	8		Y		Y
	10				
	5	Y			
	Average	6.9			
Total	3	6	0		
%	18	36	0		

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your performance?	Lack of understanding/student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the student indicate its relative nature?
10B	3				Y
	8				
	7				Y
	6				
	7		Y		
	7	Y			
	6		Y		
	7				
	6.5			Y	
	7		Y		
	6		Y		
	7	Y			
	6				
	5				
	8				
	5		Y		
	5				
	6		Y		
	5				
	5				
Average	6.1				
Total	2	6	1		
%	10	30	5		

**Results of PHS post-KS3 student surveys on KS3 marking (cont.)**

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your performance?	Lack of understanding/student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the student indicate its relative nature?
11ABN	6	Y			
	3		Y		
	4	Y	Y		
	3		Y		
	4		Y	Y	
	4	Y	Y		
	8			Y	
	5				
	8				
	6	Y			
	8				
	4				
	2		Y		
	5	Y			
	5				
	10				
	10				
	6	Y	Y		
	7			Y	
	2	Y	Y		
Average	5.5				
Total		7	8	3	
%		35	40	15	

**Results of Year 7 parent surveys**

	How would you grade this system for how it helps you understand your child's performance?	Lack of understanding/parent or student finds it confusing	Used differently by different teachers	Hard to get high marks/demotivating	In their description of the mark scheme, did the parent indicate its relative nature?
7NRE	6	Y	Y		
	6				
	3	Y			
	9				
	5	Y			
	8				
	9				
	8				
	8				
	8				
7MOE	8		Y		
	0	Y			
	6				
	8				
	5	Y	Y		
	5	Y			
	9				
	3	Y			
	8				
	6				
9					
6					
Average	6.4				
Total		7	3	0	
%		35	15	0	

Appendix E: Examples of post-innovation students' work

Sur le fin de Semaine

T: Focus on accents and feminine, masculine and neutral nouns.  
 H: Check/revise them from the textbook - Student set target

Sur le fin de Semaine j'ai visité mes copains. Elle a un chien appelé Soda. Je voudrais un chien, mais j'ai deux chats. Mes copains et moi bavardons beaucoup.

En suite, je suis allé à la maison. J'avais des devoirs; il y a assez beaucoup. Après ça je lis mon roman et je regarde une télé. Le dimanche, je joue sur mon mobile et je bavarde avec mes copains de nouveau. J'avais encore des devoirs mais 'j'ai oublié'. Par contre, j'avais fait mon des devoirs pour lundi.

Ensuite, je regarde un film au cinéma. J'ai aimé beaucoup; le film est appelé La La Land. Puis, j'ai écouté le lecteur MP4 et je lis mon roman. Mon chat dormait à côté de moi.

Head use of new vocabulary  
 ① Be careful what tense you are writing in - you flip from present to past with abandon.

Teacher Comments

Left: Year 8 French work with the target, the 'how', relevant corrections and a subsequent teacher target.

①: Revise - être in all persons.  
 How: Revise them!

Bonjour!  
 Je m'appelle Camille. J'ai une grande bande de copains. Mes meilleures amies s'appellent Saskia, Willow, Ella, et Georgie. Je les connais depuis l'école primaire. Saskia est très amusante et travailleuse. Elle est très pas timide mais vraiment bavarde! Willow est assez timide cependant elle est gentil et amusante. Elle est très active! Ella est très timide mais vraiment généreuse et travailleuse. Elle est un peu artiste et amusante. Georgie est active et créative. Elle est assez sociable cependant elle est un peu timide! Elle ne suis pas méchante car elle est toujours heureuse. Moi? Je suis sportive et très bavarde! Je suis assez travailleuse mais je ne suis pas courageuse!  
 J'ai une grande bande de copains mais

Formative feedback in relation to target

Right: Year 8 French work where the student has set themselves an unsatisfactory 'how'. The teacher's corrections reveal the need for a more considered 'how' in future.

## Appendix F: Post-innovation survey issued to treatment classes

### Student survey on the new marking policy

Since January, your work in English with Ms Ley has been subject to a different marking policy than other classes. This has relied on comment-only marking rather than marking with E\*, E, 1, 2 and 3.

Please be honest in your following answers.

Generally, how have you felt about this new policy?

Please circle the most appropriate number for each of the statements below.

#### The new policy has helped improve my confidence

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### The new policy has helped me understand how I need to improve my work

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### The new policy has helped me improve my academic attainment

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### The new policy is, overall, more effective than the previous policy

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If possible, please suggest any improvements that could make the new policy more effective:

Appendix G: Quantitative results of survey issued to treatment classes

Y7 English	Improve my confidence	Know how to improve	Improve attainment	More effective overall	Y8 French	Improve my confidence	Know how to improve	Improve attainment	More effective overall	Y9 Geog.	Improve my confidence	Know how to improve	Improve attainment	More effective overall
	1	4	1	2		4	6	5	4		3	0	2	0
5	8	7	3	1	0	1	1	5	2	4	2			
5	8	7	3	5	8	7	4	2	4	3	9			
3	7	6	3	5	4	5	6	2	2	2	0			
4	7	5	4	4	7	5	4	4	6	6	2			
3	5	1	0	0	1	1	0	5	3	4	2			
6	8	5	6	2	1	1	1	5	2	1	0			
6	8	4	3	5	5	6	8	5	3	4	1			
7	9	7	6	1	1	2	1	7	7	5	6			
4	2	3	1	0	5	0	1	7	9	4	8			
3	10	5	7	4	8	6	3	4	4	4	2			
3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	4	5	5	2			
6	9	5	7	0	5	0	0	<b>Avg.</b>	4.42	3.92	3.67	2.83		
5	5	5	5	3	5	3	0	12 out of 20 completed						
7	7	6	8	0	1	0	0	<b>Overall Average</b>	3.15	4.03	3.07	2.43		
4	5	4	4	3	5	3	0							
0	0	0	0	3	7	4	3							
1	3	1	2	0	6	0	0							
5	2	2	2	1	1	2	0							
0	3	3	0	2	2	0	1							
1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0							
0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0							
1	5	3	2	1	1	1	1							
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0							
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0							
5	5	5	5	<b>Avg.</b>	1.76	3.28	2.08	1.52						
<b>Avg.</b>	3.27	4.88	3.46	2.92	25 out of 27 completed									
26 out of 26 completed														