

Elysian

Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy



Reviewed March 2025

Next Review due March 2026

Elysian is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Introduction

Elysian regards assessment as a critical element of teaching and learning. Valid, regular and various assessments of young people's progress informs both teachers and young people as to how they are doing, what progress they are making and areas to work on. Feedback is given to the young person as an ongoing part of the therapeutic learning process rather than in addition to it.

We set both formative and summative assessment tasks as part of day-to-day teaching through marking, testing and providing opportunities for self and peer assessment. Due to the history of the young people that attend Elysian, low self-esteem is a common barrier to learning. Conventional methods of assessment are usually counter-productive in raising self-esteem in young people. Our first aim is to support the young people to build on their self-esteem and emotional resilience, enabling them to access the benefits marking, feedback and reflection can bring. An individual, sensitive and measured approach is then taken to introducing methods of assessment.

Aims

Through our methods of assessment, we aim to;

- Create a baseline which shows the starting point for each young person on entry. This will include academic, social, emotional, mental health, readiness to learn and any other areas where progress can be made.
- Provide the opportunity for young people to demonstrate and review their progress.
- Inspire each young person to understand what they have achieved and to believe that, through hard work and perseverance, they can achieve great things.
- Regularly assess progress, allowing us to plan effectively and to identify areas to celebrate and areas to develop.
- Understand which areas need more or less input from specialist staff.
- Provide an accurate representation of progress and next steps for Parents, Carers and other stakeholders.
- Gather data to ensure we are continually improving as a wider provision.
- Ensure compliance with all regulations, guidance and law.
- Gather data to allow us to compare progress across groups.
- Gather data to ensure decisions based on progress are made with facts in mind.

Baselines

At Elysian, we aim to carry out a comprehensive baseline assessment for each new young person within their first six weeks of starting. This includes assessments in numeracy, literacy, and reading, as well as other curriculum areas to ensure we have a clear understanding of their starting point. We use the Salford Reading Test, and if appropriate, a phonics test, alongside a Maths and English Functional Skills assessment. These assessments provide valuable insight into any gaps in learning, the level at which the young person is currently working, and where we need to pitch their bespoke learning to ensure it is appropriately challenging and supportive.

In addition to academic assessments, we also use a baseline measure to evaluate cognitive, emotional, behavioural, environmental, and social difficulties that may impact the young person's ability to learn. This holistic approach allows us to identify specific needs and tailor support accordingly. The information gathered is then used to inform the young person's PSHE curriculum and Individual Learning Plan, ensuring that all aspects of their development are considered. All summative assessments are conducted in a way that is sensitive to the learner's needs, creating a supportive environment where they feel comfortable and able to engage with their education.

Examinations

Where appropriate, examinations at levels from EL1 to L2 (GCSE equivalent) are encouraged sensitively to ensure anxious learners develop the confidence and self-assurance to stretch themselves to achieve their potential. Due to the high anxiety levels of the majority of learners at Elysian, examinations will only be encouraged where it gives the opportunity for enhancing self-esteem and mental health rather than increasing anxiety and stress. Where a young person has a clear aspiration and feels they want to undertake an examination to access a post-16 college course, Elysian will facilitate and support this. Examinations are carried out throughout KS4, building the confidence of the young people and offering every opportunity to achieve.

AQA Awards

At Elysian, we also incorporate AQA Unit Awards into our everyday planning to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our young people.

The AQA Unit Award Scheme (UAS) provides a flexible way to acknowledge progress in a variety of subjects and skills, helping to build confidence, motivation, and a sense of accomplishment. By embedding these awards into daily learning, we ensure that students are consistently working towards achievable milestones, reinforcing their engagement and progress.

Over time, they can build a personalised portfolio of certificates that reflect their strengths, interests, and learning journey at Elysian.

This approach not only supports their personal development but also provides tangible evidence of their achievements, helping them to take pride in their work and supporting their transition to future education or employment.

Crossfield Integrated Project

At Elysian, we also offer the **Crossfields Integrated Project**, providing young people with an additional pathway to gain qualifications. This project is highly bespoke, allowing young people to focus on a particular topic of personal interest, making their learning experience meaningful and individualised.

The curriculum is broad and transdisciplinary, with a strong emphasis on collaborative and individual project work, critical thinking, and problem-solving. By selecting the core modules, learners will engage in:

- An Independent Project, where they can explore a passion or career aspiration in depth.
- Modules focusing on Creative Thinking Skills and Personal and Social Learning Skills, incorporating formal, non-formal, and informal learning.

Key Features of the Crossfields Integrated Project:

This qualification equips young people with essential skills to support their future education, employment, or entrepreneurial pathways, including:

- ✓ Effective communication skills
- ✓ Teamwork and collaboration
- ✓ Creative thinking and problem-solving
- ✓ Idea generation and innovation
- ✓ Situational awareness and adaptability

By offering this qualification, we enable our young people to take ownership of their learning, pursue their interests, and develop valuable life and career skills in a way that is engaging, practical, and personally meaningful.

Equine assessments

At Elysian, we offer an Equine Assessment framework for both riding and groundwork, allowing our young people to develop their skills at a pace that suits them. Our structured Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels provide a clear progression pathway, ensuring that each individual can build confidence, competence, and a deeper understanding of equine care and horsemanship.

- **Bronze** focuses on basic skills, including handling, grooming, and fundamental riding or groundwork techniques.
- **Silver** builds on these foundations, encouraging young people to refine their skills, develop greater independence, and take on more responsibility in horse care and riding.
- **Gold** challenges students to advance their technical abilities, demonstrate a higher level of control and understanding, and work towards more complex tasks in both riding and groundwork.
- **Platinum** represents the highest level of achievement, where young people showcase their expertise, demonstrate leadership skills, and take an active role in mentoring others in equine activities.

This progressive approach allows our young people to track their development, set personal goals, and gain a real sense of achievement as they move through the levels. Whether focusing on groundwork, riding, or a combination of both, the equine assessment provides a structured yet flexible way to nurture a love for horses, build essential life skills, and foster resilience, responsibility, and confidence.

Ongoing and Summative Assessment Process (SEESAW App)

All staff at Elysian all have access to the Seesaw App.

SEESAW is an online Learning Journal. Individual Learners develop a digital portfolio, made up of observations: notes, photos, videos, voice notes and images of paper-based learning. At Elysian we use SEESAW to record and celebrate moments of teaching and learning. This provides a snapshot of the Learners' progress in skills and knowledge in subjects such as English, Maths, Science and PSHE, interacting with the animals, as well as evidence of their development of Readiness to Learn attributes. This information can be used as part of an assessment to inform future teaching and learning, as well as reporting back to parents/carers.

Observations

Observations are made during the Learner's engagement in provision, using the SEESAW app on Staff mobiles. We aim to capture:

- moments when Learners demonstrate progress in their skills/knowledge, for example when they independently demonstrate a new skill handling or caring for an animal, progress towards maths or literacy targets, or in their riding.
- moments when Learners demonstrate progress in their Readiness to Learn attributes, for example when engaging in a small group or demonstrating resilience.
- moments that Learners are particularly proud of and would like to capture as part of their Learning Journey.

Observations follow a common format giving the following information:

- Who the Learner is
- What they have engaged in
- How Staff have supported/extended/interacted with them
- Which skills they have demonstrated
- Reference any evidence (photos, videos, voice notes, Learner Voice).
- Initial the observation and make assessments

All sessions are carefully planned and shared with staff on the daily timetable. A different focus for assessment is listed on each session, including different objectives for different levels where appropriate. For example, feeding the goats might have a focus on the 'shape, space and measure' strand (weighing food, measuring water). The same activity plan might have a literacy focus, looking at reading instructions. Assessment information gathered from these sessions is collated using internal systems, helping to build a picture of academic progress.

Marking and feedback

Due to the complex difficulties faced by the young people who attend Elysian, marking and feedback is only applied where appropriate. It is our ambition to build resilience through positive feedback applied in a targeted, sensitive way. Areas for development are suggested and discussed on an individual level, only in those circumstances where a young person is able to use this information to improve their work without damaging their self-esteem. Where marking and annotation is deemed appropriate, the following will be used:

| | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|----|----------------|
| Please include the Date, Adult Initials, YP Name, and a brief summary including the context of the lesson. | | | | |
| Marking Key | | | | |
| Encountered | 1 | Scaffolded | # | eg # word bank |
| Aware | 2 | Equipment Used | E | eg E multilink |
| Engaged | 3 | Engagement | | |
| Gaining | 4 | Independent | I | |
| Secure | 5 | Support | S | |
| Absent | A | Support Plus | S+ | |
| Disengaged | D | Group Work | GW | |

Reports

Elysian termly reports will be guided by the principle that all reports are written in a positive, personal, and individual way. Even when addressing areas for development, language will remain constructive, clearly outlining how the young person can progress in that area.

Our reports will focus on the holistic progress and achievements of each pupil, encompassing not only academic and behavioural data but also their broader development. Each report will include personalised comments from the young person's key worker, the teaching team, and, where appropriate, the therapy team.

To ensure parents and carers have a comprehensive understanding of their child's progress, reports will include:

- Levels of English and Maths, providing insight into where their child is currently working.
- Readiness to learn scores, reflecting their engagement and progress in this area.
- Attendance data, helping to track consistency and participation.
- An equine comment, if relevant, to highlight engagement and development within our equine activities.

Our termly reports are designed to help parents and carers track their child's journey at Elysian, understand their next steps, and gain a clear picture of their progress and experiences within our provision.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Heads of Education.

For the purposes of this policy, where the term Elysian is used, it refers to Elysian Animal Assisted Interventions Ltd including Elysian School and Elysian Animal assisted Therapy and Learning.