



# Teaching & Learning Principles

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## 1. What is a QEGS Learner?

### Curious

Our learners are **engaged** with the world around them and approach new information and viewpoints with an **open mind**. They are **independent** thinkers who have clear views which they can defend due to their developing **resilience** when they are challenged.

### Creative

**Pride** is taken in all learners' work, ensuring that everything they do has an **individual** touch. The result is that all students produce a **vibrant** range of **unique** work which is a product of **pro-active risk takers** who are not afraid to get things wrong and in doing so, seize the learning opportunity.

### Critical Thinker

Students are **articulate** as they gain a wide **perspective** of the world which allows them to speak with **confidence**. They are able to **reflect** on new learning and are adaptable to different situations and experiences.

### Considerate

**Respect** is at the heart of everything we do. Our students are **polite** and **inclusive** in their outlook on life. Their experiences enable them to demonstrate a high degree of **Emotional Intelligence** as they understand how others are affected by their actions and strive to be respectful of this.

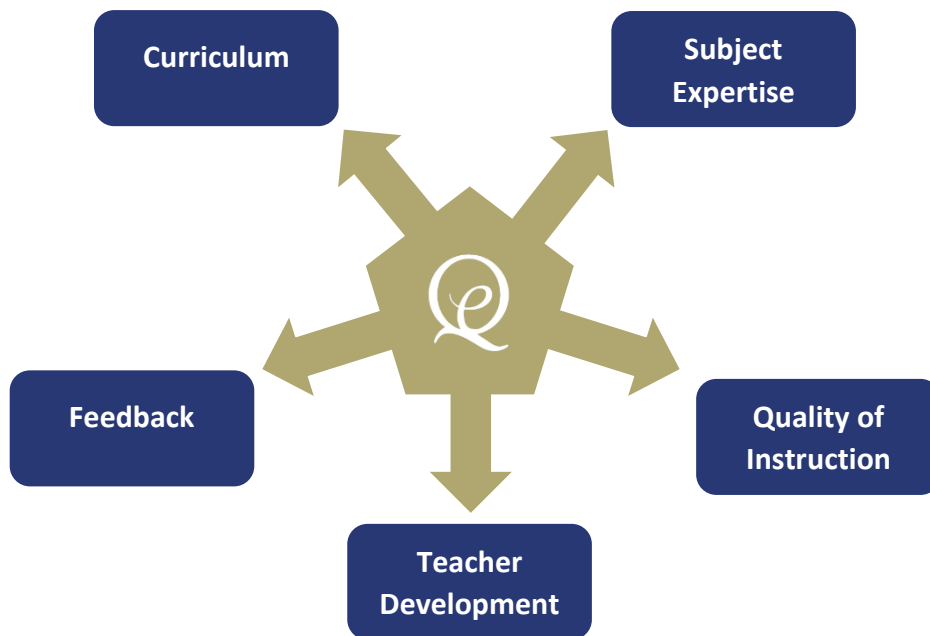
### Community Minded

Our students are **altruistic**; acting not for their own benefit but for the common good. They are **trust-worthy** and therefore are trusted to be **responsible** and **support** others in all that they do, whether this be within the school community or in the wider community outside the school.

## 2. Context

This policy is informed by current educational research. As such the Appendices will be updated as research develops. Links to key documents and research can be found in Appendix 2.

Teaching and Learning at QEGS covers the following key areas:



### Curriculum

Our curriculum design enables pupils to develop a framework of knowledge and understanding in each subject area that provides a solid foundation for further study.

*What does this look like?*

- a. The curriculum is appropriately challenging for the students we teach.
- b. The curriculum is systematic and develops core knowledge and skills over time.
- c. It is clear how literacy and numeracy is being developed and supported within the curriculum.
- e. In examination cohorts curriculum planning develops knowledge beyond the exam specification.
- f. In lessons and schemes of learning it is clear what the learning intention is and what the success criteria are.

## Subject Expertise

Teachers are subject experts with an excellent understanding of the intellectual journey on which they are taking their pupils. This is something that requires time and is continually developing. We prioritise staff engaging with their subject. Department time will be used to develop subject knowledge. This might look like one member of the department delivering CPD on an area of expertise, it could also include using outside providers or all members of the department researching a particular concept.

## Quality of Instruction

Teaching is complex. How our subject is delivered to students is important; in order to do it effectively we need to know where the learner is going, where they currently are and how to get them to where we want them to be<sup>1</sup>. Planning the order of the content is key to ensure small steps and building up knowledge in a coherent way

In order to do this:

Teachers **anticipate** (before teaching) some potential barriers to learning<sup>2</sup>:

1. **Potential misconceptions**: misconceptions are common in learning. Some are developmentally predictable and can be very resistant to teacher correction.
2. **Key gaps in prior knowledge**: significant gaps in prior knowledge hampers students' ability to access new learning. Sometimes they do not access prior knowledge in predictable or consistent ways and they don't always organise their learning in a way that helps them remember it.
3. **Wandering attention**: we are 'cognitive misers', we do not always pay attention, particularly when tasks are long and complex or involve writing.
4. **Working memory limits**: working memory is limited and it is easy to forget what we have been taught.
5. **Overconfidence**: pupils tend to be overconfident about their learning and think they know more than they do.
6. **Communication challenges**: students struggle to write, speak, read and actively listen.
7. **Self-regulation challenges**: students often struggle to manage their own behaviour and to plan and work independently.

Things in **yellow** are things that are **subject specific**, those in **green** are about **teaching children**. Strategies to help reduce these issues are suggested in Appendix 1.

Teachers then make adaptations which may include:

1. Multiple representations e.g. concrete/pictorial/abstract in explanations
2. Worked examples
3. Live modelling
4. Scaffolds/pre mortems
5. Structured class discussion to support high quality talk

## Feedback

They then make assessments which may include:

1. Low stakes quizzing using mini whiteboards
2. Multiple choice questions
3. Self and peer assessment
4. Structured debrief questions

### **A note on written work and marking:**

The purpose of marking is to gain feedback on how students are doing and to move learning forward. Effective feedback happens in a number of ways including:

1. Comment only marking
2. Whole class feedback
3. Graded marking
4. Verbal feedback

It is important to note that written marking is not the only (or most important) way of gaining feedback. Individual departments might have specific marking policies or systems.

### **Summative Assessments:**

1. There are assessments for each unit of work. The assessments only assess what has been taught.
2. Assessments are used by Subject Leaders to evaluate how effectively units of study have been delivered, and adaptations are made for the next year if needed.
3. The outcome of assessments informs teachers of whether or not students are ready to progress to the next unit of study. Teachers do not automatically move on to new learning if secure understanding has not been achieved.

## Teacher Development

We are invested in the overall development of our staff, both professionally and personally. We support all teachers both within and outside of school to develop their skills and expertise. This could be through individual projects within school, leading one of the teaching and learning groups or through pursuing professional qualifications such as NPQs. Teachers have the autonomy to teach in their own style (as long as they are sure all children are learning), experimenting with strategies and methodologies, learning from the successful and unsuccessful moments.

## APPENDIX 1 STRATEGIES

### **Challenge Misconceptions:**

- Plan the curriculum to address likely misconceptions
- Create a culture of error in your classroom, where we learn from mistakes
- Fostering a safe environment to make mistakes in learning

### **Key gaps in prior knowledge:**

- Plan the curriculum so that knowledge is revisited, linked and developed
- Get pupils to routinely activate background knowledge
- Use multiple examples so pupils don't just see something in one context
- Use and model graphic organisers to organise pupils' thinking

### **How to help concentration (wandering attention):**

- Chunk tasks, especially longer tasks
- Teach active listening skills and behaviours
- Make sure the purpose of what they are being asked to do is clear.
- Use of timers or cues to help focus
- Make some routines in the classroom e.g. starts to lessons automatic

### **How to help limited working memory:**

- Teach students about their memory
- Chunk/break down information
- Low stakes quizzing
- Teach memory strategies
- Anticipate and teach any new language needed

### **Overconfidence:**

- Give students lots of opportunities across the curriculum to self-assess and develop their meta-cognitive strategies
- Teach lots of different strategies for self-assessment throughout the curriculum

### **Communication challenges**

#### **How to support reading, writing and oracy:**

#### **Reading:**

- Key words with definitions – particularly subject terms – for lesson, unit of work;
- Highlighted on worksheet, given in advance, on display;

#### **Writing:**

- Explicitly teach planning in your subject – it will be different in other subjects.
- Share examples of types of texts. If students have to write a report on x, give them an example of a report on y. This scaffolds and guides but cannot be copied.
- Sentence stems – give a variety so students can pick from a choice. This helps students work independently, shows them there is a range of ways to success, and allows them in time to step away from the support.
- Modelling

- Show examples of what ‘writing like a scientist’ looks like.
- Talk them through an example you have already written. Ask them for advice on how to improve.
- ‘live write’ in front of them, so they see false starts, mistakes, rethinking as well as successes.

### **Oracy:**

- Think-pair-share
- Ask students to feedback on someone else’s ideas
- Time between asking a question and allowing answers
- Role cards and role responsibilities in group work – everyone has an explicit job.

### **Self-regulation challenges:**

- Clear expectations within the classroom that are consistent
- No opt out (i.e. everyone is expected to contribute) supported through think-pair-share and prior warning.
- Circulation
- Teach planning and organisational strategies
- Culture of kindness
- Planning to check in with students in the learning episode
- Developing a culture of error – celebrating mistakes.

### **Ways of the teacher assessing what students are learning in the lesson:**

- Whole class vote
- No hands up questioning
- Mini whiteboards
- Finger voting
- Exit tickets
- Zero stakes quizzes
- Opening up closed questions: ‘why is this a polygon’ rather than ‘is this a polygon’?
- Hinge questions: A good hinge question meets the following criteria:
  - it doesn’t take too long to ask (e.g. around 30 seconds)
  - it doesn’t take too long for students to respond (at most two minutes)
  - all students in the class respond at the same time
  - it doesn’t take too long for the teacher to read and interpret the responses of all students (no more than 30 seconds)
  - students with the correct thinking and students with the incorrect thinking give you different answers.
- Two minutes to share what we have learned
- Student summaries
- Assessing anonymous work
- Students write their own exam questions
- Asking why something is good
- Student friendly rubrics

**Peer assessment:**

- Ladder of feedback: clarify, value, state concerns, suggest
- Pre flight checklist
- What not to write

**Self assessment:**

- One small change
- Student summary
- Self-assessment checklists
- 'What is going well?' 'What can we improve?' 'What are the questions?'  
'What are the issues?'

**Feedback that moves students forward (how do we make sure it is impactful):**

- Be specific in our praise
- Comment only marking
- Three questions
- Assess against only a couple of criteria
- +, -, =
- Four quarters marking
- Whole class feedback



## **APPENDIX 2: LINKS TO THE RESEARCH**

Early Career Framework:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60795936d3bf7f400b462d74/Early-Career\\_Framework\\_April\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60795936d3bf7f400b462d74/Early-Career_Framework_April_2021.pdf)

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction: <https://cirl.etoncollege.com/tom-sherringtons-division-of-rosenshines-principles-of-instruction-into-strands/>