

Alps - The Foundations of Effective Monitoring: An Introduction

Conducting highly effective reviews of student progress is not a simple matter. It requires high levels of organisation and commitment from students, teachers, as well as school and college leaders. Each school or college will have its own monitoring systems. At Alps, we believe that for monitoring to be truly effective, it should include the following Five Foundations of Effective Monitoring:

The First Foundation: High Quality Dialogue

Monitoring is not an event, it's a process. The dialogue between staff and students should be about developing an understanding of how monitoring processes will affect and involve them. There should be openness to the conversation. Be mindful of sharing the following information with students:

- The data behind the process; help them understand how Minimum Expected Grades are set, what is expected of them, as well as what they can aspire to
- How well the student is performing through assessment and reviews
- The typical habits of highly effective students
- The various ways in which subject teams will support them
- Identify clear steps to be taken - review these steps to see if they have had the desired impact

Develop a dialogue with parents as well as students.

High expectations are powerful. The Alps Minimum Expected Grades are aspirational Minimum Expected Grades, set at a standard that is beaten by students at a quarter of schools and colleges. By setting Minimum Expected Grades at this level, a clear message is sent to students: *'we have high expectations for you. At the end of this course, we want you to be performing at a level well above that which would have been achieved by students with similar prior attainment profiles in previous years, and above what is typical nationally. We don't want our students to be average, we want you to achieve something remarkable'*.

Key questions to consider:

- Are the senior leadership of a school or college involved in leading students into the process, demonstrating their commitment to monitoring from the outset?
- Are the rationale for setting target grades, the statistical basis for the process and the arrangements for reviewing progress shared with students and parents at the start of the course?
- Do students understand what a Minimum Expected Grade is? How about a progress grade?
- How effectively are students prepared for progress review interviews?
- Are target grades aspirational?
- Are students prepared for review in each individual subject, emphasising the 'special' nature of each subject?
- Is an appropriate record kept of the detail of progress review discussions, so that progress towards completing aims and achieving objectives can be monitored?
- Do leaders check the quality and detail of the actions being set?

- Is the completion of actions from progress reviews monitored?
- Do students experience an overall pastoral review that draws together the outcomes of the various subject interviews?
- Are the outcomes of these reviews shared with parents?

Keep these questions at the forefront of your mind, and you'll be on your way to a successful monitoring period. Read on to find out about our Second Foundation of Effective Monitoring: