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Teaching and Learning policy

This policy links to:

- **Assessment policy**
- **Observation policy**
- **Learning and Behaviour policy**
- **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy**
- **Staff Code of Conduct**
- **Learning at Teaching strategy**
- **Inclusion strategy**
- **The role of the Tutor**
- **DfE Teaching Standards**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Teaching and Learning Policy is to establish a shared vision and consistent expectations for high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment across Big Creative Academy. It provides a common framework that supports teachers to deliver excellent lessons, enables learners to make sustained progress, and ensures that all educational practice aligns with the Academy's mission, values, and curriculum intent.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure every learner has access to high-quality, inclusive teaching.
- Promote consistency and clarity in pedagogical practice across all subject areas.
- Support teachers in planning, delivering, assessing, and reviewing learning effectively.
- Strengthen the culture of continuous improvement, reflection, and professional development.
- Maintain high standards that contribute to positive outcomes, progression, and learner success.

The definitions below clarify the roles that underpin and enable this policy:

Teacher - A teacher plans and delivers high-quality learning that enables students to acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding over time. They use assessment to adapt teaching, provide feedback, and ensure progress for all learners. A teacher is accountable for curriculum delivery, classroom culture, and outcomes.

Personal Tutor / Tutor - A personal tutor provides pastoral and academic guidance, supporting students' progress, wellbeing, and personal development. They monitor attendance, achievement, and barriers to learning, acting as a key point of contact. The tutor coaches' students to set goals, reflect, and stay on track.

Facilitator - A facilitator plans and delivers learning experiences that promote active participation, collaboration, and independent thinking. They create conditions for learners to explore, discuss, and construct understanding rather than directly instruct.

2. Rationale

Teaching and learning are at the heart of Big Creative Academy's mission to prepare learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours they need for future study, employment, and life. A clear, coherent policy ensures:

- Quality and consistency in the learning experience across all courses, pathways, and levels.
- Clear expectations for staff and learners that support high standards of behaviour, engagement, and achievement.
- Equity and inclusion, ensuring that all learners receive appropriate, effective support.
- A culture of professional reflection, where teachers evaluate the impact of their practice and make informed improvements.
- Alignment with regulatory and inspection requirements (e.g., Ofsted), ensuring high-quality provision and strong learner outcomes.
- This rationale underpins the Academy's commitment to excellence in every classroom.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All teaching and support staff involved in the planning, delivery, assessment, and review of learning.
- All study programmes
- All learners, regardless of level, pathway, background, or learning need.
- All learning environments, including classrooms, practical spaces, studios, workshops, and off-site/industry settings.
- The expectations set out in this policy must be upheld across all areas, ensuring a consistent and high-quality experience for every learner at Big Creative Academy.

4. Teaching

Definition: Big Creative Academy defines teaching as the process of enabling learning through a structured cycle of:

1. **Planning**
2. **Delivery**
3. **Assessment / Review**

The role of a **teacher** is to:

- Share and build knowledge.
- Develop learners' skills, understanding, and behaviours
- Guide learning through appropriate challenge and support
- Create understanding and meaningful learning experiences
- Ensure learners make positive progress from their starting points
- Track and monitor learner progress and achievement
- Stretch and challenge learners to achieve their best

Exemplary Teaching and Learning at the Academy is underpinned by BCA Pillars of Learning and Teaching.

All aspects of teaching are quality assured regularly. For further information and guidance on quality assurance, please see the following policies:

- Assessment and IV policy
- Observation policy and procedures

Teaching consists of **three** interconnected stages:

4.1 Planning

Definition: Teaching begins before entering the classroom. It involves:

- Understanding the curriculum intent of the course, to better plan its implementation (delivery).
- Developing Schemes of Work that demonstrate how teaching, learning and assessment is scaffolded to achieve positive outcomes from the course (mostly typically summative assessments).
- Designing activities that incorporate Differentiation and Inclusion, to include those considered disadvantaged.
- Naturally embedding English and Maths, Digital and Employability skills into the curriculum.

Expectation: Planning expectations at Big Creative Academy:

- Every course within a learner's programme of study needs a Scheme of Work, that details where teaching, learning and assessment takes place within the course.
- Every course within a learner's programme must have a Course Plan outlining the learning content, assessment activities, and expected delivery timelines. This includes initial assessments, Assessment Check Points, and both formative and summative assessments.
- Each course in a learner's programme requires a visible Curriculum map to show how units of study and project briefs are structured throughout the course. This should be visible to all learners.
- Each exam board also has its own set of specific planning requirements that must be met to ensure successful delivery. The Academy would expect that all planning documents required by the exam board are created ahead of curriculum delivery. This includes Assignment and/or project briefs.
- It is expected that every lesson be fully planned to ensure purposeful learning, clear sequencing, and high-quality delivery that supports all learners to make progress.

Guidance: Exemplary Curriculum Design includes:

- **PASSION** - Curriculum design is creative, ambitious, challenging, and engaging.
- **PURPOSE -** Curriculum design is purposeful and responds to local, regional and national needs within the labour market.
- **PRINCIPLES** - All curriculums are vocationally driven and academically underpinned. English, Maths and Digital skills are embedded throughout.
- **COMMUNITY** - The curriculum celebrates its learners' by being inclusive, diverse and promotes equity of learning for all. The curriculum promotes a global and holistic education, whilst being responsive to its learners' needs.
- **EXCELLENCE -** The curriculum is challenging and enables all to achieve high results to reach positive destinations.

All templates and exemplar of expected planning documents are saved in the Teaching and Learning folder on Staff intranet.

4.2 Delivery

Definition: This is the active phase of learning where the teacher:

- delivers and guides activities within the lesson. All sessions timetabled on Arbor are classed as lessons and should be taught accordingly.

Expectations: Delivery Expectations at Big Creative Academy:

- Lessons begin promptly at the scheduled time, with a clear and purposeful start that maximises learning time.
- Learning aims and objectives are clearly displayed and explicitly communicated at the beginning of each lesson.
- Registers are completed within the first 10 minutes and updated as necessary for late arrivals.
- Lessons are carefully sequenced and structured to ensure scaffolded, progressive, and purposeful learning.
- Visual aids are used effectively to support teaching and enhance learner understanding throughout the session.
- Independent learning activities are purposeful, appropriately monitored, and reviewed to maintain engagement and progress.
- Staff consistently model and uphold the Learning and Behaviour Policy, including expectations regarding coats, hoods, headphones, bags on the floor, phones away, and no food or drink other than water.
- Academy procedures for lateness and punctuality are applied consistently.
- Lessons conclude with a clear plenary and finish at the scheduled end time.
- Inclusive practice underpins all teaching, ensuring that every learner can access the curriculum.
- Tasks and activities are appropriately differentiated, particularly for learners with SEND and EHCPs, to support individual needs and progress.
- Where a learner has an EHCP, the Teacher must inform and liaise with the SENDCo to ensure appropriate provision is in place.
- Learning resources are selected and used intentionally to enhance engagement and deepen understanding.
- Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies are embedded throughout lessons to identify progress and address misconceptions.
- Teachers will apply appropriate interventions to support learners who are not making expected progress.
- Teachers will liaise with relevant support mechanisms across the Academy to ensure holistic learner support.
- All staff must adhere to safeguarding policies, acting on concerns in line with Academy procedures.
- Staff must adhere to all reporting requirements, ensuring timely, accurate, and professional communication of learner progress and concerns.

Guidance: Exemplary Teaching includes:

- **PASSION** - Teaching is led with enthusiasm and drive. Teachers are encouraged to take risks and be progressive.
- **PURPOSE** -Teaching is conscious and drives progression. Teachers are articulate in their rationale for delivery. Vocational teachers have relevant industry experience that they use exceptionally well to bring real-life examples into their teaching.
- **PRINCIPLES** - Teachers ensure that learners embed key concepts in their long-term memory and apply them fluently and consistently. Teachers communicate new concepts skilfully to help students understand and develop in ability.
- **COMMUNITY** -Teaching is collaborative and learner focused. Teachers facilitate discussion and debate to enable learners to interpret the complex world. SEND Support that is nuanced and planned of sessions to meet specific individual needs.
- **EXCELLENCE** -Teaching is good or better in all lessons. Teachers plan and use assessment very effectively to support. Teachers are highly skilled and professional, having expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. If they do not, they are supported to address gaps so that learners are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching.

4.3 Assessment and Review

Definition:

Assessment and review are closely linked processes within teaching, working together to inform learning by measuring progress and reflecting on how learning can be improved.

Assessment is the planned process of gathering evidence of learners' knowledge, skills, and understanding to measure progress and identify strengths and gaps.

(For further details regarding definition; expectation and guidance of assessment please see ASSESSMENT & INTERNAL VERIFICATION (IV) POLICY, INCLUDING APPEALS.)

A core component of the teaching role is evaluating student work through:

- Conducting Initial Assessments to understand learner starting points.
- Learning Checks throughout lessons, to check understanding and address misconceptions.
- Grading formative and summative assessment and providing purposeful Feedback to support progress.
- Engaging in Standardisation and Internal Verification (IV) to ensure quality and consistency.

Review is the reflective element of the teaching and learning cycle. It involves the teacher evaluating learner progress, providing targeted feedback, and implementing timely interventions to improve future outcomes. This process includes:

- Conducting learner reviews and tutorials to discuss progress, barriers, goals, and next steps. At Big Creative Academy, learner reviews and tutorials typically falls within the role of the tutor.
- Evaluating impact and achievement using evidence (e.g. results, learner voice), to refine planning and inform the next stage of learning.
- Effective review ensures teaching is responsive, learner-centred, and focused on continuous improvement.

Expectation - At Big Creative Academy, teachers are expected to:

- Provide clear, constructive feedback that helps learners understand their progress and what they need to do next to develop better knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Implement interventions promptly, based on identified needs or gaps in learning.
- Use review insights to refine teaching, ensuring lessons are adaptive, inclusive, and aligned with learner needs.
- Celebrate progress and achievement, supporting learner motivation and resilience.
- Update and revise group and learner profiles as necessary.

In addition:

- A tutor is expected to carry out at least three reviews with learners per year using assessment data, attendance patterns, behaviour information and work completed as evidence.
- A tutor should record outcomes from reviews where appropriate to track progress and support future planning.

(Please see 'The role of the Tutor' document for further guidance tutor expectations.)

Guidance:

a. Learner Reviews and Tutorials

- Reviews should be structured, purposeful and learner-focused. Effective practice includes:
- Setting clear goals with learners.
- Discussing strengths, challenges, attendance and engagement.
- Identifying barriers and agreeing solutions or support needed.
- Recording key actions or targets where appropriate.

b. Feedback

Feedback should be:

- Timely, so that learners can act on it.
- Specific, highlighting what went well and what needs improvement.
- Action-oriented, giving learners clear next steps.
- Supportive, encouraging progress and confidence.
- Where appropriate, use grading.

For further guidance and expectations please see ASSESSMENT & INTERNAL VERIFICATION (IV) POLICY, INCLUDING APPEALS.

c. Evaluating Impact and Achievement

Teachers should use evidence from Learning Checks, classwork, assignments, formative and summative assessments to evaluate:

- Whether learners are meeting targets.
- Which teaching strategies are most effective.
- What misconceptions or gaps need addressing.
- Whether differentiation and support strategies are working.

d. Informing Future Planning

Insights from the review process should influence:

- Lesson planning and sequencing.
- Differentiation and support strategies.
- Grouping, targeted interventions, or stretch and challenge activities.
- Changes to delivery approach where needed.

e. Supporting Inclusion

The review process should actively support learners with:

- SEND needs
- EHCP requirements
- All recognised disadvantage markers, including:
    - Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) or Pupil Premium
    - Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)
    - Young carers
    - Learners from low-income households
    - English as an Additional Language (EAL)
    - Poor attendance or persistent absence
    - At risk of or with a history of exclusion
    - Safeguarding concerns
    - Mental health or wellbeing needs
    - Unstable housing or risk of homelessness
    - Involvement with social care or external agencies
- Low confidence or motivation
- Barriers such as attendance or wellbeing

Intervention should be timely, personalised and connected to the broader Support and Inclusion framework.

5. Learning

Definition - Learning is the process through which individuals acquire new knowledge, skills, behaviours, and understanding, enabling them to think, perform, and respond in more advanced or effective ways.

Expectation - At Big Creative Academy, learning is expected to be evident in every lesson and over time. This means:

- **Learners actively engage** with tasks, discussions, and activities that build knowledge and skills.
- **Learners can demonstrate progress**, showing improved understanding, accuracy, confidence, or independence.
- **Learning is purposeful and aligned** with clear aims and objectives that are understood by learners.
- **Teachers create the conditions for effective learning**, including high-quality explanations, modelling, scaffolding, and practice opportunities.

- **Learners receive timely feedback** and use it to refine and improve their work.
- Learners are expected to follow the **Learning and Behaviour policy,** to access the most effective learning experience.
- **Learning is inclusive**, ensuring that all learners including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND or EHCPs can access and demonstrate progress.
- **Learning involves reflection**, enabling learners to understand what they know, what they need to improve, and how to move forward.

Guidance - Exemplary Learning includes:

- **PASSION -** Learning is active, fun, engaging and positive.
- **PURPOSE -** Learning is sequenced logically and enables learners to reach their next steps.
- **PRINCIPLES -** Learning is scaffolded and applied to practical and professional. scenarios, exploiting opportunities with partners in industry.
- **COMMUNITY -** Learning is accessible and enjoyable for all.
- **EXCELLENCE -** Learning develops detailed knowledge across the curriculum and, as a result, achievement is high across all areas of their study

6. BCA Teacher Development

At BCA, we are committed to developing a high-performing, reflective, and inclusive teaching workforce. Our strategy supports all educators—from trainees to experienced practitioners—through structured development pathways, mentoring, and a culture of continuous improvement. This approach is aligned with our institutional Pillars, our commitment to safeguarding and inclusion, and our ambition to deliver outstanding learning experiences for all students.

6.1 Development Pathways at BCA

a. Initial Teacher Training (PGCE)

BCA hosts and supports PGCE trainees through:

- Structured placements with experienced mentors
- Access to CPD and reflective practice sessions
- Integration into departmental teams and teaching communities

b. Early Career Teachers (ECTs)

- Induction Tutor: Oversees statutory induction and ensures progress tracking
- Mentor: Provides weekly coaching, models effective practice, and supports reflection
- DoC/DDoC Mentorship: Within the first 6 months, Directors or Deputy Directors of Curriculum act as mentors to embed BCA's culture, expectations, and values

c. New Teachers to BCA

All new staff receive a comprehensive induction including:

- Introduction to BCA's Pillars and ethos

- Clear expectations for lesson delivery, assessment, and learner engagement
- Training on safeguarding (SG) and supporting learners with additional needs (AN)
- Assignment of a mentor for the first term to support integration and development

d. Supporting Unqualified Teachers (UQTs)

UQTs are supported through:

- Guidance to complete QTS, DETs, or other recognised qualifications
- Access to internal CPD and mentoring aligned with qualification requirements
- Opportunities to observe experienced colleagues and engage in structured reflection

6.2 Developing Qualified Teachers (QTs)

Professional Development Framework

- Learning Walks: Regular, supportive observations to celebrate strengths and identify areas for growth
- Coaching & Mentoring: Targeted support for pedagogical development and leadership growth
- Teacher Development Plans: Co-created with line managers to align individual goals with institutional priorities

CPD Opportunities

- Cross-Academy CPD: Collaboration with partner institutions to share best practice
- Specialised CPD: Focus on digital learning, curriculum design, inclusive practice, and leadership
- Monthly Reflection Groups: Facilitated sessions to share practice, address challenges, and promote professional dialogue

7. Embedding Reflective Practice

Reflection is a core component of teacher development at BCA:

- Encouraged through journals, coaching, and peer discussions
- Embedded within observation feedback, CPD, and departmental planning
- Aligned with BCA's Pillars to ensure consistency in values and practice

8. Supporting Learners with Additional Needs (AN)

All staff receive training on:

- Identifying and supporting learners with SEND and additional needs
- Differentiation and inclusive curriculum design
- Effective collaboration with Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and the AN team

9. Safeguarding (SG) Training and Support

- Annual safeguarding training for all staff
- Termly updates and scenario-based training
- Accessible safeguarding leads for guidance and support
- Enhanced safeguarding training for all new staff

10. Conclusion

BCA's Teacher Development Strategy and subsequent policy is built on reflection, collaboration, and ambition. By investing in staff at every stage of their professional journey, we ensure that all learners benefit from high-quality, inclusive, and impactful teaching.