



Assessment Policy

1. Definition:

The term “Assessment” refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

1. Why Assess?

Assessment is part of good teaching and learning and takes place for the following reasons:

- to monitor student progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how they are learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in progressing the student learning and adapt her / his teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
- to provide the students and parents with information regarding academic progress.
- to establish baseline data in relation to student attainment in certain subjects and comparative results to CAT and DATS.
- to identify appropriate subject levels for students at Junior and Senior Cycle.
- to assess student eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
- to assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- To evaluate student eligibility for examination accommodations. (RACE)
- To enable students to have realistic aspirations relative to their ability and expected performance which will in turn inform choices and decisions about their career focus.
- To identify students who would benefit from a modified timetable.

3. Legislation:

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of student progress and achievement.



4. Formative Assessment:

(a) **Definition:**

Formative assessment involves a range of strategies designed to give both students, teachers and parents feedback about student understanding of elements of their learning in courses.

(b) Coláiste Phádraig has adopted the Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach to formative assessment. Its purpose is to use the whole process of assessment to help learners improve their learning. It is formative because its intention is to form, shape or guide the next steps in learning. It is about 'learning to learn.' We recognise, however, that not all aspects of this approach are of benefit in all curriculum areas and the discretion of the teacher is advised to adapt the theory to suit the particular demands of the subject.

(c) In line with the demands of the syllabus in each curriculum area, teachers set regular homework and comment on the merits of work and make suggestions for improvement.

(d) Assessment work may be differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of the individual.

5. Summative Assessment:

(a) **Definition:**

Summative Assessment refers to the assessment of learning and aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner.

(b)

- Third and Sixth Years have examinations in November, Mock examinations in February and the Certificate Examinations in June.
- First Years, Second Years and Fifth Years have examinations in December and May.
- There is common assessment of all subjects in December and May of First Year.
- Transition Years have written examinations in their core subjects and a language in December and also in May.

(c)

- The mode of assessment may include: written examinations, practicals, aural and/or oral work, interviews, presentations.
- Transition Year assessments may involve the following: External certification, portfolio, oral presentation, multi-media, self and peer evaluation.

(d) Examinations generally follow a similar format to the Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations and a marking scheme is clearly identified.



(e) Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally.

(f) All house examinations are co-ordinated by an Assistant Principal.

(g)

- Reports are forwarded to Parents/ Guardians of First, Second and Fifth Years in January and June and in December and March for Third and Sixth Year students.
- The report template for non-exam classes is computerised and allows teachers to distinguish levels. A grade is awarded and a comment from the teacher may be added.
- All reports are signed off by the Year Head and the Principal.
- In May, Transition Year students are awarded a distinction, merit or pass grade based on their progress and application to work over the course of the year.

(h)

At the beginning of Second Year, students will be divided into Higher Level and Ordinary Level Irish classes based on exam results during First Year. Similarly at the beginning of Second Year, students will be divided into Higher Level and Ordinary Level Maths classes based on exam results during First Year. Subject levels for English are decided after the mocks in Third Year. All other subjects are common level for Junior Cycle. Parents are advised of all divisions related to subject levels and may seek a meeting with the subject teacher to discuss divisions if they so wish.

At Leaving Cert level, students will be divided into Higher Level and Ordinary Level classes in Irish, English and Maths at the beginning of Fifth Year. Divisions will be based on levels taken at Junior Cert and previous results. Classes will be divided up following consultations between the subject teacher and the Careers Guidance teacher. Subject levels for other subjects are decided during Sixth Year. Parents are advised of all divisions related to subject levels and may seek a meeting with the subject teacher to discuss divisions if they so wish.



6. Junior Cycle Assessment

- **Classroom Based Assessments in Subjects and Short Courses**

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) have been introduced to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and skills and their ability to apply them in ways that may not be possible in an externally assessed examination. They will be used in the assessment of learning in subjects and in short courses.

CBAs will be assessed by the students' teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during junior cycle and in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). In subject areas, students will undertake two CBAs facilitated by their teacher, one in second year and one in third year (with the exception of Gaeilge where CBAs are completed in the first two terms of third year). CBAs in all subjects will be specified at a common level. Junior Cycle short courses will have one CBA.

- **Assessment Task**

The written Assessment Task for each subject will be specified and published by the NCCA. It will relate to the learning outcomes of the second CBA. Students must complete the second CBA in order to undertake the associated Assessment Task.

The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher in accordance with a timeframe and guidance from the NCCA. The Assessment Task will be returned to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for marking and will be marked as part of the final state examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the calculation of the grade for that subject by the SEC. The value to be assigned to the Assessment Task will be included in the assessment guidelines for each subject.

A separate Assessment Task will not be required in those practical subjects where the second CBA will continue to be assessed by the SEC (Visual Art, Engineering, Wood Technology and Graphics).

- **Summary**

Subjects in Junior Cycle with new specifications will be assessed through:

- Two **CBAs** assessed by students' teachers and reported on to parents/guardians by the school.
- An **Assessment Task** in each subject, marked by the SEC.



- A **Final Examination** set, held and marked by the SEC.

Psychometric Tests:

The following tests are administered to incoming 1st Year students in January of the enrolling year by the Guidance Counsellors & Learning Support Department.

CAT IV Level E

When the results of the tests become available:

- Guidance Counsellors meet with the Learning Support teachers.
- Students with particular needs are identified and further assessment may be carried out or sought from outside agencies.
- Based on assessment results, a pupil may be offered extra help in line with the NCSE Continuum of Support.
- When replies are received from the NCSE, Parents/Guardians are informed of allocated resources.
- IEPs (Individual Educational Plans) and/or Care Plans are drawn up by the Learning Support Team in conjunction with parents and school management.

Differential Aptitude Tests (DATS) or **Centigrade Profiling Tests** are administered to all Fifth Year students. The Guidance Department meet each student individually to discuss results and explore suitable career options.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:

Date: _____

Signed: _____



Appendix – Departmental Assessment Practices

English

- A practice CBA to be conducted in 1st that will count as 10% of grade and also 10% value for the 2nd CBA also.
- Bridging essays in 2nd year and 3rd year exams. 2nd year worth 10% of summer exam and 3rd year 10% of November test.
- Common House Exams for Junior Cycle classes.
- Reflective sheet at the end of each exam to be standard across Junior Cycle.

Irish

- Common House Exams, Common Topic Tests.
- Regular Oral Assessments (Allocating 10% of House Exam mark to this in 1st to 3rd Year).
- CBAs to be linked to house exams.
 - Digital Portfolio with work uploaded to Google Classroom.

Maths

- **Summative assessment** - In class and house exams to be common and co-ordinated across year groups.
- **Formative Assessment** - Diagnostic questioning once a term with 1st years.
- **Formative Assessment** - Cover sheet on house and class exams 1st years.
- **Formative Assessment** - Traffic lights.

Science

- Common House Exams, Common Topic Tests.
- 10 % to be allocated in 1st and 2nd year for Christmas and Summer exams under the following headings:
 - 1st Year
 - Christmas: Prepare a visual report / presentation / model of a plant or animal cell. This is to include information from each of the 5 points of criteria.



- Summer: Compare using a visual report / presentation / model of any two planets. This is to include information from each of the 5 points of criteria
 - 2nd Year
 - Christmas: Prepare a visual report / presentation / model of any one of the 1st 20 elements of the periodic table. This is to include information from each of the 5 points of criteria
 - Summer: Prepare a visual report / presentation / model of any 4 different types of energy sources. This is to include information from each of the 5 points of criteria
- Criteria
 - 1. Find information from a number of sources.
 - 2. Explains the relevant science (everyday application).
 - 3. Present in a well-structured way.
 - 4. Uses relevant scientific terminology.
 - 5. Reflection: Identify strengths and weakness, comment on mode of learning, is there any enhancements or improvements that could be made.
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Geography

- Common House Exams.
- CBAs
 - Projects will be conducted by all JC students.
- Essay / Long questions during the term will be linked to summative exams.
- Class Tests to include a worksheet at the end linked to student reflection.

History

- Common House Exams.
- CBAs
 - Projects will be conducted by all JC students.
- Essay / Long questions during the term will be linked to summative exams.



Business

- **Summative Assessment** - Common Tests for all year groups.
- **Formative Assessment** – To be given at least twice a year per student.
- **Peer Assessment** – Tasks involving this type of assessment to be reintroduced to class.
- **Literacy** – Key words to be given to all students.

Practical Subjects (Engineering, DCG, Construction, Art)

- **Formative Assessment** – The use of feedback during practical classes to inform students where they are doing well and give them areas to improve on.
- **Peer/Self-Assessment** – During exercises students will be allocated time to assess their peers and their own work and look for points of improvement and areas that they are doing well while grading through a rubric, previous students' work and a list of success criteria.
- **Summative Assessment** – At the end of a topic/term we will set exams that will assess students' knowledge through written exams.
- **Alternative Assessment** - Use of portfolios that link into projects to evaluate student work at research.

Languages

- Common House Exams, Common Topic Tests.
- Regular Oral Assessments (Allocating 10% of House Exam mark to this in 1st to 3rd Year.
- CBAs
 - Digital Portfolio with work uploaded to Google Classroom.

Computer Science & Coding

- For Junior Cycle the assessment approaches are as follows:
 - **1st yr:** Term 1: Quizlet/G-Forms plus Scratch project. Term 2: G-Forms , Project on Scratch (hardware).
 - **2nd yr:** Term 1: G-Forms plus Website. Term 2: G-Forms , advanced website on Computers in Society topic.



- **3rd yr:** Term 1: G-Forms plus Website. Term 2: CBA. Term 3: G-Forms , Python project.
- For Senior Cycle the assessment approaches are as follows:
 - **TY:** Details of Project / Assignment to be Completed. HTML website build. Basic Python coding assignment. Micro-Bit code & practical function assignment.
 - **5th Year:** CA using Isaac computers and CSlinc. Christmas 2 hr test split between Coding and Theory 50:50. Summer 2 hr test split between Coding and Theory 50:50. ALT's individual and group feed and indicative score based on Success criteria.
 - **6th Year:** CA using Isaac computers and CSlinc. Christmas 2 hr test split between Coding and Theory 50:50. Final ALT individual and group feed and indicative score based on Success criteria. Mock 2.5 hr test split between Coding and Theory corrected externally.

PE

- At Junior Cycle there is currently one CBA to be conducted either in 2nd or 3rd year. From 2023 onwards that is due to increase to two CBAs one conducted in 2nd year and another in 3rd year.
- At Senior Cycle there is a house exam at Christmas of 5th year and then for summer there will be a project accounting for 30% of the overall mark.