



Assumption Secondary School

Assessment & Reporting Policy

Assessment and Reporting Policy



Our Mission Statement

We endeavour to educate young women in an inclusive, caring, Christian atmosphere of respect for self, others and the environment.

We value freedom, equality and security and strive to promote the growth of positive thinking, self-worth and justice.

Rationale for the policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide students and parents with information regarding school assessment and reporting procedures in line with the Education Act 1998, which requires schools to “regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents”.

Our assessment and reporting procedures provide an account of each student’s progress and achievement.

Parents, teachers and students need to have an effective learning focused partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes can be achieved for our students.

Assessment

The term ‘assessment’ refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning: abilities, attainments, strengths and needs. Assessment is an important component in achieving the effective educational progress of each student and facilitates ongoing learning growth and improvement on the part of the student and teachers.

Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning and should motivate pupils, enabling and encouraging them to achieve to the best of their ability. Effective assessment policy will help teachers to identify early and ongoing interventions that need to be put in place to assist students in reaching their potential.

The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment should enable students:

- To realise and reach their full academic potential
- To be involved in their own learning
- To develop each student’s ability to self-monitor and judge her own performance
- To be motivated to achieve their full potential.

Assessment should enable teachers:

- To assess progress and adapt planning as required
- To evaluate their student's learning needs
- To ensure that students know how to improve the standard of their work
- To evaluate teaching and learning styles
- To review and change practice
- To monitor a student's progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning
- To identify the next steps in progressing learning and adapt teaching strategies and/or learning activities as appropriate
- To meet statutory requirements
- To provide the students and parents with information regarding progress
- To establish baseline data in relation to a student's attainments in subjects
- To identify appropriate subject levels for subjects for State Examinations purposes
- To identify areas of difficulties for students in order to provide them with additional support
- To identify high achieving, gifted and talented pupils
- To assess a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations 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 give positive feedback to the learner
- To ensure consistency and the standardised agreement of levels of work within each subject area
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis
- To establish baseline data that may be used for school self-evaluation purposes.

Reporting of assessment should enable parents:

- To be involved in their daughter's learning
- To understand and encourage the progress their daughter is making
- To check their daughter's progress throughout their time in secondary school.

Types of Assessment

This policy recognises the importance of on-going assessment both formative (assessment for learning) and summative (assessment of learning) that supports student learning.

Formative Assessment involves a range of strategies designed to give students, teachers and parents' feedback about students' understanding of elements of their learning. It is an integral part of the learning process where information is shared with the learner on the quality of learning. It is linked to learning intentions and success criteria and looks forward to the next stage of learning.

The most common forms of assessment used in the school are of a formative nature and takes place regularly in the classroom. Formative assessment is at the discretion of individual teachers who will use them constructively for learning to take place. Timely feedback and constructive advice are vital components in this process. Where appropriate, teachers will keep records of these assessments to provide an insight into a student's progress over time and to fully inform the learning process. In line with the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, 'Most assessment activities in junior cycle will be formative in nature'.

Effective formative assessment enables students to understand how to improve their work by:

- 1) Helping them to understand the assessment criteria before they begin an assignment.
- 2) Providing feedback on what they have done well and how they can improve.
- 3) Comparing their work with examples of work that meet criteria for success.
- 4) Recognising all the students' educational achievements.
- 5) Helping them develop as independent learners with the capacity to identify how they themselves can further improve their learning.

Key classroom practices and strategies needed for formative assessment:

- A positive classroom culture and ethos, which encourages students to think and talk about their learning and which provides a safe place for open, honest and respectful discussion and teacher-pupil relationship.
- Questioning skills (student to teacher/ teacher to student/ student to student), which stimulate thinking and reflection on learning and the explicit teaching of how to consciously reflect on what one knows and how to make an evaluative comment on it (Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Frequent identification and review of learning goals through teacher-directed discussion, clearly defining learning objectives and success criteria thereby empowering students and enabling them to take responsibility for their learning.
- A recognition and acknowledgement of the purpose and importance of collaboration between home and school in the student's learning process.

Formative assessment strategies:

- 1) Effective Questioning using Bloom's Taxonomy (See Appendix 2).
- 2) Teachers utilise varied formative (AFL) strategies in lessons.
- 3) Learning Intentions: Lessons are guided by specification/syllabus linked learning intentions that are shared with students. Teachers at their own discretion share the learning intention(s) as appropriate for the lesson either before, during or as a result of learning. Teachers 'check in' with the learning intention(s) at the end of lesson(s) using AFL strategies to move students on in their learning.
- 4) Comment Only Marking and feedback, this includes notes on:
 - What the student has done well
 - Where the areas for improvement are
 - How the improvement might be made

This allows both teacher and student to identify the next steps in learning.

- 5) Two stars and a wish strategy.
- 6) Sharing Criteria for Success: Success criteria are co-created by teachers and students with specific activities in mind. They are discussed and agreed prior to the undertaking of an activity. Success criteria provide a scaffold and focus for students while engaged in the activity and are used as a basis for feedback and peer /self-assessment.
- 7) Peer Assessment and Self-Assessment: Teachers will, occasionally, supervise students as they assess their own or their peer's work, based on criteria for success. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work, write down how they can improve and assist them in achieving it.
- 8) Feedback: As part of the schools' focus on assessment in planning for school improvement formative feedback is provided based on success criteria. Students are encouraged to use feedback to reflect and make improvements.
- 9) Homework: In line with the demands of specifications/ syllabi and our Homework Policy, teachers set regular homework, comment on this homework, and make suggestions for improvement.
- 10) Differentiated Learning: Assessment work may be differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of the individual, determined by individual teachers.

There are several purposes to formative assessment:

- To provide feedback for teachers during the learning process so that subsequent learning activities and experiences can be modified
- To identify and remediate group or individual areas for improvement
- To encourage peer-assessment and self-assessment
- To encourage student self-reflection this enables the student to see where exactly they are and how they can improve on this
- To move the focus away from achieving grades and onto learning processes.
- To encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Assessment Feedback:

Feedback is the central function of assessment. It typically involves a focus on the detailed content of what is being learned rather than simply a test score or other measurement of how far a student is falling short of the expected standard.

Good Feedback

- Clarifies what good performance is (success criteria, expected standards)
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning
- Provides high quality information to students about their learning
- Encourages both teacher and student self-reflection
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning
- Motivates students and encourages growth and development
- Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
- Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching

Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment is used to determine a student's level of performance on a specific task or at the conclusion of a unit learning. It refers to the assessment of learning, looking back on learning and aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner. It happens after the learning takes place.

Information is gathered by the teacher and information is usually transferred into grade descriptors or marks. Comparison with performance of others can take place.

- 1) **Class Tests Assessments:** These forms of assessments will be conducted at the discretion of the teacher on a monthly or end of topic basis. These formal tests are a vital component in providing feedback to teachers, students and parents, on the level of each student's attainment and learning in that specific subject area. Constructive feedback will be given by teachers to students.
- 2) **Christmas and Summer Exams:** Students take formal in house examinations, to monitor their academic performance. Common tests are encouraged. These examinations follow the SEC procedures for the running of state examinations
- 3) **Mock Examinations:** These are held for Third and Sixth Year students during the second term. The purpose of these is to further prepare students for the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations.
- 4) **Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs):** Students undertake two Classroom-Based Assessments facilitated by their teacher, generally one in second year and one in third year. Classroom-Based Assessments in all subjects are specified at a common level. The assessments associated with CBAs cover a broad range of activities. CBAs will be undertaken by students within class time to a national timetable. Details of the timetable along with assessment guidelines for each subject are available on www.ncca.ie and our school website. When students have completed CBAs, the CBAs are assessed by the students' teachers, and the outcomes will be reported to the students. To support teachers in assessing students' Classroom-Based Assessments, teachers engage in Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meetings (SLAR). At these meetings, teachers share and discuss representative samples of students' work and build a common understanding about the quality of their students' learning.

Classroom Based Assessment Descriptors

- ❖ Exceptional
 - ❖ Above Expectations
 - ❖ In Line with Expectations
 - ❖ Yet to Meet Expectations
- 5) **Assessment Tasks (AT):** The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher. The Assessment Task will be returned to the SEC for marking and will be marked as part of the Final Examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the calculation of the grade for that subject by the SEC. A separate Assessment Task will not be required in practical subjects where there will be a practical examination.

All Junior Cycle Specification exams will be graded as follows

GRADE	RANGE
Distinction	≥90 - 100
Higher	≥75 < 90
Merit	≥55 < 75
Achieved	≥40 < 55
Partially Achieved	≥20 < 40
Not Graded	≥0 < 20

Types of Assessment used in our school:

- Formative Assessment
- Summative Assessment
- Classroom Based Assessments (CBA)
- Oral and Aural assessments in languages
- Assessment Tasks (AT)
- Project Work – Presentations, Power Points, visual displays, posters etc.
- Practical Examinations in Home Economics, Art and Music
- Coursework/Projects – Home Economics, History and Geography
- Learning Reflections
- For detailed information on assessment for Learning Support please see our Learning Support Policy.

Homework

Please see our Homework Policy.

1 st Year	1.5 hours
2 nd Year	2 – 2.5 hours
3 rd Year	2.5 – 3. hours
Transition Year	1.5 hours
5 th Year	3 – 4 hours
6 th Year	3 – 4 hours
All year groups	Study/homework time must also set aside at weekends.

Standardised Tests / Learning Support Assessments

The results of these assessments are utilised to:

- Identify students with particular needs
- Guide Resource and Learning Support teachers
- Develop Student Support Files / Individual Education Plans (IEP's)
- Apply for reasonable accommodations for the Junior and Leaving Certificate State Examinations where applicable.

CAT4 Testing (Cognitive Ability Testing)

- Incoming first year and fifth year students will undertake CAT4 testing (age appropriate testing levels).

- In the case of first year students the information gathered from the results will be used as a basis to form mixed ability first year classes.
- For both year groups the testing information will offer indicators to the school of a student's academic potential.

House (in school) Exam Lengths Christmas Exams

Year Group	Exam Length
1 st	1 hour
2 nd	1 hour
3 rd	1 hour 30 minutes
TY	1 hour
5 th	1 hour 30 minutes
6 th	2 hours

Summer Exams

Year Group	Exam Length
1 st	1 hour 15 minutes
2 nd	1 hour 30 minutes
5 th	2 hours

Examination Levels

Taking examinations at Higher Level is the 'Norm' for all year groups.

All Junior Cert students sit Higher Level exams unless there are SEN/AEN challenges presenting. Please discuss concern re SEN/AEN with the Deputy Principal.

Higher Level or Ordinary Level classes will NOT be established without prior approval of the Principal.

- Student selection for classes must be fair and transparent.
- Students and Parents must be given advance notice of assessment dates and the criteria for selection.
- Students wishing to take Higher Level will be accommodated.
- Parents and students must 'sign off' on examination levels.
- 'Change of Level' and 'Change of Class' forms must be used by the subject teacher.

State Exams

The school will strive to ensure that all 3rd and 6th Year students participate (as directed by the State Exams Commission) in the many assessments that make up the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Examinations. These assessments which may include orals, course work, practical work, portfolio work amongst others, will be conducted in accordance with the regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission. Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations begin the first Wednesday after the June Bank Holiday Monday each year. The exact timetable of examinations is usually available from the previous January and will be posted on the school website.

Transition Year

Continuous assessment forms an important element of Transition Year.

Each student will be assessed at regular intervals, with teachers taking responsibility for this within their own subjects.

Summative assessment occurs twice during the academic year. The results are subsequently used, in part, to determine the level of award for each student at the end of the year.

Forms of assessment used may vary from the standard practices used in other years and may include - written, practical, oral, aural, projects, portfolios and exhibitions of work.

For the purpose of determining the level of award for each student, school attendance and engagement in the work experience programme are also considered.

Following successful completion of the Transition Year Programme, students will receive a certificate awarded at Pass, Merit, Distinction or Higher Distinction.

Students also receive a Portfolio of Certificates which they have earned throughout the year.

Time of Assessment

All summative assessments will take place on a planned and regular basis.

- Class tests at the discretion of the teacher
- House exams at Christmas and summer
- Mock examinations during the second term for third and sixth year students.

Recording of assessments:

- Teachers record both formative and summative assessment
- Summative assessments such as house, Mock examinations, Academic Progress Reports and CBA reports are recorded on school record
- Students record assessments in their log in the school journal

Reporting:

Reporting aims to support and underpin ongoing learning and assessment, and to be manageable, accessible and effective for the school, teacher, student and parent (Junior Cycle Framework, 2015).

Ongoing reporting on student progress can take a variety of forms:

- Informal oral and written feedback
- Feedback on areas such as punctuality, behaviour and attendance
- Student Journal
- Parent Teacher Meetings (see Appendix 1)
- Discussions with subject teacher/ year head/SEN Team
- Student learning logs, diaries, reflections
- End of unit assessments in subject areas either formative or summative
- End of term/year reports
- Communication and engagement with parents/guardians via telephone, VShare, post, and the school website

- Student participation and achievement in extra-curricular activities – Other Areas of Learning
- Classroom-Based-Assessments reports.
- Provide opportunities for student feedback to reflect on their learning
- Use the language of learning to provide effective feedback
- Encourages authentic engagement with parents
- Values the professional judgment of teachers
- Uses the language of learning to provide effective feedback
- Is manageable and does not take away from learning and teaching
- Clearly communicates students' progress in learning
- Provides information on a broad range of achievement
- Is sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students and take an inclusive approach. (NCCA, 2018).

Progress reporting:

- Reports containing results of Christmas and summer exams are sent home. Teachers distinguish levels (where appropriate) as well as enter the mark achieved. A comment is also entered informing parents about their daughters' work ethic and academic development. Reports are signed by the Year head and / or the Principal or Deputy Principal. Records of the results are kept in the school.
- Direct Contact - the teacher may decide as they see fit to contact the parent/guardian directly with respect to the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student.
- Signature of Parent on Assessment – the teacher may send the corrected assessment home with the student to be viewed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- Parent-Teacher Meetings – At these meetings it will be possible for teachers to relay the outcomes of varying assessments to parents/guardians of individual students.
- Student Journal – the teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parent/guardian of a student by writing a note in the student's journal. The parent/guardian is expected to acknowledge receipt of this note by countersigning it.
- Formal reporting on the progress and achievements of students in Junior Cycle will be through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement which is to issue from the school within the calendar year of the examination. The JCPA will report student achievement across a range of areas of learning in Junior Cycle, including in: - SEC Final Examinations inclusive of the Assessment Tasks; Classroom-Based Assessments; and Other Areas of Learning.
- Reporting at the end of Transition Year comprises a graded certificate for all students and a score that is reflected the students overall result for participation in Transition Year.

Assessment and Wellbeing

- Reporting on Wellbeing through the JCPA Reporting on students' learning in Wellbeing aims to provide a picture of what students have learned

about Wellbeing and the skills they have developed to support their Wellbeing.

- Wellbeing will show in a separate area of the JCPA. It is in this area that schools will report on student achievement in CSPE, SPHE and PE.
- This will be facilitated by the use of the descriptors which have already been developed and reflect the appropriate language of learning.
- The Wellbeing area of the JCPA will also include a free text space where schools can report on achievement in Wellbeing in other areas.

Improving results:

- Analysis of state examinations is recorded. This provides the basis for discussion and planning within departments and Senior Management in addition to allowing comparisons and evaluation with national results.
- Study skills sessions are held with students to ensure that they are familiar with effective study techniques.
- Academic interviews will be conducted with fifth and sixth year students to further advise and encourage students which will enable them to reach their full potential.
- Academic Awards are presented to each class group at Christmas.
- A Student of the Year Awards (Academic) is presented to a student in each year group at the Annual Whole School Awards Ceremony in May of each year.
- Reflection on feedback is actively encouraged.

Roles and responsibilities

Teachers are responsible for:

- Monitoring and formatively assessing student learning on an ongoing basis
- Setting and marking assessments
- Filling in reports
- Providing clear feedback to students in relation to how they can improve their performance
- Liaising with other teachers in the department to coordinate assessments

The School Guidance Department is responsible for:

- Organising the assessment of incoming 1st Year students and fifth year students

The SEN Coordinator and team are responsible for:

- Identifying students with particular needs
- Testing SEN students and liaising with external agencies
- Monitoring and assessing their progress
- Liaising with and assisting Senior Management in the structuring and allocation of Educational provision
- Assisting and guiding learning support/resource teachers to devise a suitable programme of support
- Guiding and supporting the classroom teacher through the setting of individual targets for SEN students

- Developing Student Support Files by the Learning Support Team in conjunction with parents and school management
- Applying for reasonable accommodations for the Junior and Leaving Certificate State Examinations where applicable

Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to:

- To encourage attendance
- To be familiar with key dates relating to assessment
- To engage in active and positive communication with teachers when necessary and appropriate
- To support teachers in their work to help students achieve their full potential
- To be actively involved in their daughter's education
- To ensure that their daughter completes all work assigned in the time designated
- To monitor their daughter's progress.

Students have a responsibility to:

- Have good attendance
- Be aware of key dates for assessment
- Complete all work assigned by their teachers in the time designated
- Put in the effort required for their studies
- Learn and revise course content on an ongoing basis
- Follow the advice and guidance of teachers as to how best achieve their potential
- Encourage each other
- Ask for help as appropriate

Appendix 1

Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent Teacher Meetings provide parents with the opportunity to meet with each of their daughter's teachers in a one to one private setting in our school.

Why you must attend:

- It lets your daughter know that you care about their progress in school.
- You will see how your daughter is getting on in school
- You will learn of their strengths and the challenges that present for them in their learning
- You will learn of their interaction with other students and about their extra- curricular activities etc.
- Meetings also allow for the teachers to learn more about your daughter in order that you can work together for your daughter's success.
- You will have the opportunity to ask questions. What is a CBA? (For example).
- Your daughters Year Head will be present. You should meet with them briefly.
- The school Guidance Counsellor and Home School Community Liaison will also be present. You should say hello.

Unfortunately it is often believed that if students are doing well there is no need to attend Parent-Teacher meetings. This is not the case. Our Principal, Deputy Principal and highly qualified and motivated teaching staff will always be able to give advice to parents to further support your daughters learning and engagement in school life. We offer a holistic education in Assumption Secondary School and parents and students often need advice and support as to how they can access all that our school offers both in and outside of the classroom.

Meeting Length

- The time limit for each parent(s) at the annual Parent Teacher Meeting at secondary school is about 2-4 minutes long.
- It is therefore important to stick to this, as it can be irritating for other parents if the teacher's time is taken up by a couple of parents.
- If there is a lengthy issue to discuss please schedule a later appointment
- The best way to approach the meeting is to be positive and remember that both teacher and parent are on the same team.

How to prepare for the meeting

- Talk to your daughter about her progress.
- If you have any previous reports, check them for progress, trends, repeated behaviour and names of your child's subject teachers.
- Come with prepared questions. Jot them down in order to keep your meeting focused.
- The teacher will usually start with an outline of your daughter's progress and will probably have examples of their work, test marks etc. So try and keep your questions specific and ask the important ones first.

The types of questions that you might like to ask.

- What area is she best at?
- Is she working to the best of her ability?
- Does she comprehend what she reads?
- Are there any areas she finds difficult? If so what are these specific areas?
- Do you have any suggestions as to what I might do at home to help?
- Does she participate in class?
- How does she relate to others in the class?
- Does she hand up homework /assignments on time, completed and at an acceptable level?
- Does she have difficulty paying attention/following instructions/organising work or notes?
- Is there anything about her performance or behaviour that you are concerned about?
- Is she coping with the particular subject level?
- How does she cope with exam stress?
- Remember to take notes, as it's easy to forget something, particularly with the number of teachers to see at Secondary level

Follow-up

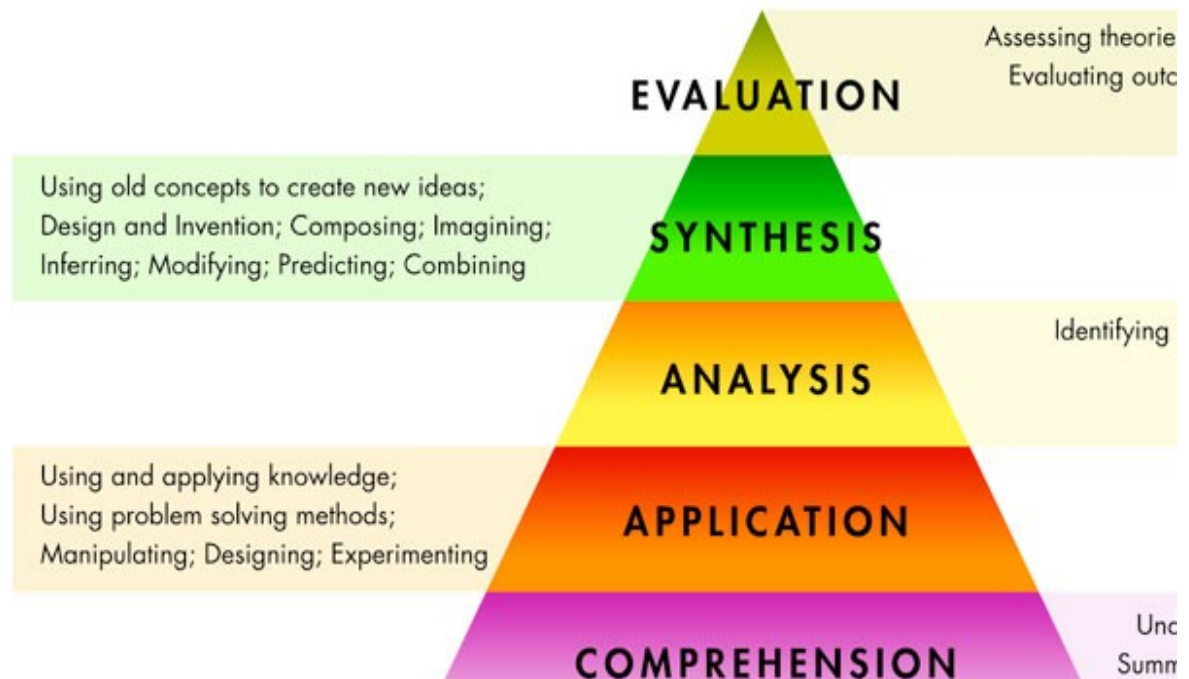
- If you need to review anything suggest a further meeting there and then or phone/write and set up an appointment that suits both of you.
- Let your daughter know how the meeting went and discuss your notes.

Student name _____			Date and time of Parent-Teacher meeting
			Year Head name:
Subject	Level	Teacher	Parents Notes
Irish			
English			
Maths			

My questions

Appendix 2

B L O O M S T A X O N O M



This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 8th February 2023 and is subject to review.