



Coláiste Éamonn Rís

Assessment and Reporting Policy

1. Definition:

The term “Assessment” generally refers to any activity used to gather and interpret information relating to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs. Methods include, but are not limited to; examinations, homework, class work, projects, written, oral and aural work.

The term “Reporting” refers to all forms or methods used to distribute this information to the relevant parties i.e. Parents/Guardians, Students, Teachers and other relevant Bodies

2. Why Assess?

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

- to monitor a student’s progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the necessary steps to facilitate a students learning and adapt their teaching strategies and or learning activities accordingly.
- to reinforce learning which takes place within the classroom.
- to provide the students and parents with information regarding progress.
- to establish baseline data in relation to a student’s attainments in specific subjects.
- to identify appropriate subject levels for students for both Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle.
- to assess a student’s eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with outside parties i.e. the NEPS psychologist, where necessary.
- to enable identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- to fulfil course requirements in specific subjects.

3. Legislation:

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report these results to students and parents. In fulfilling this requirement, it is necessary for schools to develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student’s progress and achievement.

4. Formative Assessment: (Assessment FOR Learning)

(1) Definition: The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning, to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to validate their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments;

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that require attention
- help teachers recognise where students are struggling in order to adequately address problems immediately

Formative assessment involves a range of strategies designed to give students, teachers and parents' feedback about students' understanding of elements of their learning in courses e.g. homework and classwork.

(2) Coláiste Éamonn Rís, Wexford has adopted the Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach to formative assessment. Its purpose is to use the whole process of assessment to help students 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.

(3) 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.

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

Coláiste Éamonn Rís, Wexford endeavours to implement formative assessment (AFL). This involves using the following method:

- **Sharing of Learning Outcomes with students:** Teachers will share the learning outcomes with students at the beginning of each lesson/where deemed necessary and refer back to them during questioning throughout the lesson and at again at the end of the lesson if necessary. This will help to clarify what the student was supposed to have learned and will assist both teachers and students in determining the levels to which the outcomes have been achieved.
- **Sharing of Features of Quality/Criteria for Success:** Teachers will tell students in advance of a piece of work what exactly they will be looking for when assessing it. This is known as WILF (What I'm Looking For). Teachers are aware that it is important to share this information with students beforehand so that they will be in a better position to know what is expected of them. They can also decide how far they want to push themselves.

Comment-Only Marking: Teachers will periodically engage in comment-only feedback: This will include 3 things: a)What the student has done well, b)Where the areas for improvement are and c)How the improvement might be made. This allows both teacher and student to identify the next steps in learning.

- **Peer Assessment and Self-Assessment:** Teachers will, occasionally, supervise students to correct their own or their peer's work, based on a list of criteria for success. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work and write down how they can improve and assist them in achieving it – perhaps in a separate section of their copy, similar to a reflective journal. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work and write down how they can improve

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We consider the following to be key classroom practices and strategies needed for AfL:

- 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.
- questioning skills (student to teacher/ teacher to student/ student to student), which stimulate thinking and reflecting on learning and 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. This may be facilitated by various means including web resources.

5. Summative Assessment: (Assessment OF Learning)

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

- All years (except Transition Years) have House Examinations in December. Junior Cert. and Leaving Cert. have Mock examinations in early February and the State Examinations in June. First, Second and Fifth Years have school Exams in May.
- Teachers give regular class tests in various subjects and results are recorded on page 4 & 5 of the Homework Journal to track progress.
- The mode of assessment may include: written examinations, practical's, aural and/or oral work.
- Transition Year assessments may involve the following: External certification, portfolio, oral presentation, self and peer evaluation.
- Examinations generally follow a similar format to the Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations and a marking scheme is clearly identified.
- Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally.
- Reports are made available, through ePortal, to Parents/Guardians of all years in December; Junior Cert. and Leaving Cert. in February/March and to First, Second, Fourth and Fifth Years in June.
- The report template is computerised and allows teachers to distinguish levels. A mark and grade are awarded and a comment can be generated from a menu or using Freetext.
- Parents of Transition Year students receive a progress report from teachers three times per year.

6. Range of Assessment Experiences at Junior Cycle:

First Years:

- Homework which may include written, oral, aural, reading, project or portfolio work is assigned regularly.
- Engage in Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies with the purpose of progressing student learning to the next stage.
- Formative feedback from teachers both verbal and written feedback, which may include comments and/or grades.
- First Years develop the 8 key skills of the Junior Cycle of Achievement e.g. self-assessments promote the ‘managing myself’ key skill.
- Referred to NEPS for review/assessment if concerns arise from incoming First Year assessment.
- The Wellbeing Unit of Learning entitled “Moving Up” and SPHE cover study skills, a good homework routine, organisation skills and time management skills to prepare students for summative and formative assessments.
- First Year students receive a report, available through ePortal, bi-annually, in January and June after completing Christmas and Summer House Exams.

B) Second Years:

- Homework which may include written work, oral presentations, research, aural, reading, project or portfolio work is assigned regularly.
- Engage in Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies with the purpose of progressing student learning to the next stage.
- Formative feedback from teachers both verbal and written feedback including comments and/or grades.
- Second Years develop the 8 key skills of the Junior Cycle of Achievement e.g. self-assessments promote the ‘managing myself’ key skill.
- Second Years undertaking new Subject Specifications for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement complete the first classroom-based assessment (CBA). Classroom-Based Assessments are best described as the occasions when the teacher assesses the students using the specific tasks set out in the subject specification e.g. oral presentation in English or the Business in Action Group Project in Business Studies or the Extended Experimental Investigation in Science.
- The criteria for assessment are found in the features of quality linked to each Classroom-Based Assessment. Although the assessment is similar to the formative assessment that occurs every day in class, in the case of Classroom-Based Assessment the teacher’s professional assessment is recorded for Subject Learning and Assessment Review, and is subsequently used in the school’s reporting to parents and students.
- Second Year students receive a report, available through ePortal, bi-annually, in January and June after completing Christmas and Summer House Exams.

C) Third Years:

- Homework which may include written work, oral presentations, research, aural, reading, project or portfolio work is assigned regularly.
- Engage in Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies with the purpose of progressing student learning to the next stage.
- Formative feedback from teachers both verbal and written feedback including comments and/or grades.
- Third Years develop the 8 key skills of the Junior Cycle of Achievement e.g. self-assessments promote the ‘managing myself’ key skill.
- WRAT4 and CAT4 are completed to support RACE applications where required (The WRAT4 is a norm referenced test that measures the basic academic skills of word reading, sentence comprehension, spelling and maths computation).

- Third Year students complete the practical components in certain subject areas.
- Third Year students undertaking new Subject Specifications for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement complete the second classroom-based assessment (CBA). Examples of the second CBA due for completion in 3rd Year include; the Collection of Student's Texts in English, the Science in Society Investigation and an individual presentation in Business Studies on a Business topic or business-related issue of local or personal relevance.
- The criteria for assessment are found in the features of quality linked to each Classroom-Based Assessment. Although the assessment is similar to the formative assessment that occurs every day in class, in the case of Classroom-Based Assessment the teacher's professional judgment is recorded for Subject Learning and Assessment Review, and is used in the school's reporting to parents and students.
- Third Year students complete an Assessment Task for new subject specifications. The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time, which is not marked by the class teacher, but is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based.
- Third Year students receive an ePortal report for their Christmas House Exams in January and for their Mock Exams in March/April.

7. Assessment & Reporting in the New Junior Cycle of Achievement:

As the new subject specifications are rolled out up to 2022, they will continue to be examined by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in June of third year, however each subject exam paper will be no longer than 2 hours in the case of new specifications. The results will form part of each student's Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), which will offer a more complete report on progress during junior cycle. The JCPA will also include descriptors awarded for levels of achievement in classroom-based assessments, short courses and other learning experiences. The Assessment Task mark will be included in the final examination grade and both are graded by the SEC. The grading of new subjects will be as follows in State Exams:

Grading of the Final Examinations

Descriptor	Grade Boundaries
Distinction	≥90% to 100%
Higher Merit	≥75% and <90%
Merit	≥55% and <75%
Achieved	≥40% and <55%
Partially Achieved	≥20% and <40%
(not graded)	≥0% and <20%

Grading Classroom-Based Assessments

Classroom-Based Assessments in all subjects will be specified at a common level and marked by the teacher. CBAs will be undertaken by students within class time to a national timetable. When assessing the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment the Features of Quality, are used to assign one of the following four descriptors.

Classroom-Based Assessment Descriptors

- Exceptional
- Above Expectations
- In Line with Expectations
- Yet to Meet Expectations

8. Assessment Procedures for Transition Year:

Portfolio:

- Students to complete a portfolio which will consist of a scrapbook, designed by the students, containing pieces of work/photographs etc. from each subject.
- Coordinator and Year Head would oversee production of this portfolio in a weekly timetabled class.

Certification:

- All students will receive certification at the end of the year during the Awards ceremony.
- They will receive one of the following grades on their cert:
 - Distinction (85%+)
 - Merit (64%-84%)
 - Pass (40%-63%)
 - Fail (<40%)
- The grades will be determined as follows:
 - Attendance (20% of the marks)
 - Classwork & Application (40% of the marks)
 - Portfolio interview (40% of the marks)

TY Review Meeting and Portfolio Assessment:

- A meeting will take place shortly after the Easter holidays, with all TY teachers, to review the year and plan for the following year.
- At this meeting all TY teachers will be assigned 3/4 students. This will replace the TY parent/teacher meeting and the requirement for teachers to attend the end of year Awards ceremony.
- Students will be given a designated time and teacher. They must attend in full uniform. Parents will also be invited to attend. Each student will be allocated a time of 15 minutes.
- Students must present a required amount of evidence from their portfolio to the teacher in this time.
- Teachers must grade the student's presentation using a detailed marking scheme.

Classwork & Application:

- The mark for Classwork & Application will come from the Reports which teachers will complete at the end of each Term.

Reports:

- Due to the fact that the mark for Classwork & Application will be formed from the Reports it is important that we have a grading system that will work for all subjects.
- Suggestions????

Journal:

- Students will receive a new TY journal.
- It is important that teachers familiarise themselves with this journal as there are a large number of pages that students can use which may be relevant to your subject.
- Students will be required to complete an assessment of each module in their journal that their teachers will need to sign.
- Students will also be expected to fill in a weekly reflection.
- The use of the journal will be monitored throughout the year by Coordinator/Year Head/Class tutors.

9. 5th and 6th Year Assessment Experiences and Reporting:

Fifth Year Assessment Experiences and Reporting:

- Homework which may take the form of written work, oral presentations, research, aural, reading, project or portfolio work is assigned regularly.
- Engage in Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies with the purpose of progressing student learning to the next stage.
- Formative feedback from teachers both verbal and written feedback including comments and/or grades.
- Project work for Leaving Certificate subjects
- Referred to NEPS for: review or assessment if required
- WRAT-IV and CAT-IV for RACE applications where required
- Fifth Year students receive an ePortal report bi-annually, in January and June after completing Christmas and Summer House Exams.

Sixth Year Assessment Experiences and Reporting:

- Homework which may take the form of written work, oral presentations, research, aural, reading, project or portfolio work is assigned regularly.
- Engage in Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies with the purpose of progressing student learning to the next stage.
- Formative feedback from teachers both verbal and written feedback including comments and/or grades.
- Sixth year students engage in a range of formal and informal assessments.
- The Pre-Examinations are in February or March.
- The Leaving Certificate State Exams are in June.
- Project or practical course work for Leaving Certificate subjects.
- Preparation for and completion of the oral component of Irish, German or French.
- Sixth Year students receive an ePortal report after completing their Christmas Exams in December and after their Mock Examinations in February/March.

10. Homework as a means of Assessment:

Homework is considered to be an important element in reinforcing the student's grasp of material and work covered in class. It allows the teacher to informally assess how well the students have grasped new concepts and allows both the teacher and student to identify the next steps of learning. It consists of both written assignments and the learning of work done in class.

Homework is corrected in a variety of ways at the discretion of the individual teacher. These methods may include the teacher collecting and correcting it and giving a grade or comment-only marking. It could also consist of the teacher demonstrating in class how the homework should have been completed and students peer or self-correct. Alternatively, the teacher gives the students the marking scheme or the list of "features of quality" and students peer or self-correct. The teacher ascertains during such activities how well students are progressing.

The school expects that all homework will be completed on time and to the best of a student's ability. All homework – written and learning – is to be recorded by students in their School Diary. Students are encouraged to spread their homework evenly through the week so as to minimise the risk of overload on any given night.

It is important that students feel comfortable enough to mention to their subject teachers if they are under pressure and if they desire a reasonable extension to submitting a homework essay or project or a reduction in the amount of homework. In addition to this, teachers welcome students telling them if they have a number of tests on a particular day so that the teacher can change the date of a test if possible.

Students who miss class due to school matches, medical/dental appointments are expected to find out from their classmates what homework was set by the teacher and to complete it on time.

The School Diary of students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd years is to be signed on a weekly basis by both the Class Teacher and a parent. As students differ so much in terms of their ability and speed of completion of work, it is impossible to be specific as to the amount of time to be spent on a daily basis on homework and revision by each individual student. However, the following general guidelines are offered:

Year	Hours per school day on homework and revision
1 st	1 to 2
2 nd	1.5 to 2
3 rd	2 to 3
TY	Variable in accordance with amount of project work
5 th	3
6 th	3+

Parents are asked to ensure, where possible, that students are afforded a suitable room at home in which to study i.e. quiet, adequately ventilated/heated and equipped with a proper table and chair.

Parents and students should also ensure that any part-time jobs held by students do not interfere with the full and proper completion of homework and revision. The school strongly recommends that sixth year students do not engage in any part-time work in term time as their commitments to study are already considerable.

11. Questioning and Bloom’s Taxonomy:

In 1956 Benjamin Bloom headed a group of educational psychologists who developed a classification of levels of intellectual behaviour important in learning. Teachers’ questions start at the bottom of this triangle which is known as “lower-order questioning”. Depending on how far the teacher wants to push the class, he/she will gradually move up the triangle to make their questions stimulate a “higher order” thinking among their students.



- **Remembering:** can the student recall or remember the information? define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce state
- **Understanding:** can the student explain ideas or concepts? Classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase
- **Applying:** can the student use the information in a new way? Choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
- **Analyzing:** can the student distinguish between the different parts? Appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.
- **Evaluating:** can the student justify a stand or decision? appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate.

- **Creating:** can the student create new product or point of view? assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write.

When teachers question as above, they can ascertain how students are progressing which assists in identifying the next steps in learning.

12. Psychometric Tests:

The following tests are administered to incoming First Years students by the Guidance Counsellor and the Deputy Principal on First Year Assessment Day:

- CAT 4 Level E – Verbal, Numerical, Non-Verbal, Spatial
- GRT 2– General Reading Test to assess reading age.

When the results of the tests become available appropriate action is taken in line with S.E.N. Policy. Students with numeracy and/or literacy issues are identified and applications made to to the DES for low incidence hours were necessary.

Standardised numeracy and literacy scores for each incoming First Year student are gathered from the feeder primary schools in advance of their attendance at second level. Each student's scores from primary and secondary school tests are compiled on a spread sheet by class. This information is distributed to each class teacher of First Years to facilitate differentiation in terms of teaching approaches. It is also used for academic monitoring purposes where the academic progress of the student is tracked during each academic year by the Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal.

Assessment Instruments:

Definition of Assessment Instruments:

Standardised ability tests (sometimes referred to as psychometric tests) are designed to be curriculum-independent and measure more enduring and long-term traits than the attainment of learning, that is, they measure what a student is capable of knowing rather than what is known.

Standardised achievement tests (sometimes referred to as attainment tests) measure what a student knows and can be used to assess, for example, students' knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and to determine progress in these areas. On foot of information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, further information may be gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests to provide a more detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.

A diagnostic test is designed to provide specific information about a student's strengths and needs in some aspect of learning, for example, word identification skills or understanding of number concepts.

Career and interest tests/inventories are types of assessments used to measure a student's interests in different occupational areas. Guidance Counsellors may use the outcomes of ability and interest tests to guide and to support students' decision-making regarding subject choice and senior cycle programme options and to support their career development, including planning for higher education and/or further education and training.

Use of Standardised Ability Tests (Psychometric Tests):

- All test results are confidential.
- Psychological tests are carried out in accordance with Test Manual Instructions.
- The most appropriate norms for the students will be used in the scoring of such tests.
- Students will be informed and advised about the tests and their purpose prior to testing.
- Adequate notice about the testing days will be given to both staff and students.

- It may not be possible to repeat testing day for students who were absent, the Guidance Counsellor may endeavour to do so depending on work pressures.
- Test results will be included in the students file.
- Test results may be interpreted for parents at their request. They must make an appointment to do so.

Schedule of Standardised Ability Tests (Psychometric Tests):

Year Group	Test Administered	When	Purpose
1 st Year	CAT4 Test	February before starting school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a diagnostic tool –to establish in an objective manner to ability levels of our student intake. ● Identify students who need Educational Support and Learning support Dept. ● To establish a profile of each student’s learning ● Identify students who are eligible for CTYI Talent Search
4 th Year	DATS for Guidance	Late November/Early December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a tool to help identify students’ strengths or overlooked areas regarding flair for certain subjects. ● To encourage student to make good decisions in subject choice for Leaving Cert. ● To help give a better objective picture of a student’s ability or potential. ● To give students an opportunity to experience ‘aptitude tests’ which may be used as a method of job /course selection in their future careers.

Schedule of Career and Interest Tests/Inventories:

Year Group	Test Administered	When	Purpose
4 th	Rothwell Miller Interest	TY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To help students to identify vocational interests ● To highlight the relationship between vocational interests and abilities
4 th /5 th /6 th	Careers Interest Inventory	TY/5 th /6 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a tool to help identify students’ interests in school subjects and school-related activities and in fields of work. ● Provides information on students’ educational goals ● To encourage student to make good decisions in subject choice for Leaving Cert. ● To give students an opportunity to experience ‘ability tests’ which may be used as a method of job /course selection in their future careers.

Administration of Assessment Instruments

Administration of assessment instruments will be undertaken by appropriately qualified school staff only, which in some instances will involve subject teachers, the school guidance counsellor and/or the learning support teacher (depending on the nature of the test).

Data Protection

The school will ensure that the information, in line with data protection requirements, is kept secure with access confined to designated school staff. In the case of electronic information this will be kept secure through password protection. Only designated school staff will have access to this password.

Access to Data

In order to ensure that the student receives an education that best supports his development, the information and results may be shared with the student's teachers in accordance with established test practice. This is to ensure that teaching approaches can be adapted to accommodate the different learning needs and styles of students. In addition, the guidance counsellor and the learning support teacher will have access to the information.

Data Storage and Retention

The school will retain the information until seven years after the student has left the school. This is in line with GDPR requirements and the Data Protection Policy of Coláiste Éamonn Rís

Provision for Feedback

All parents/guardians will be informed of the test scores achieved by their sons in relation to DATs for Guidance and upon request for CAT4. The information will be presented in accordance with established test practice and in a format that is easily understood. Students will also receive feedback on how they did. This will be through a meeting with either the guidance counsellor/learning support teacher or the subject teacher who administered the test. **Student with a Special Educational Needs (SEN) or takes English as an Additional Language (EAL).**

In the event that a student has been identified as having a SEN or is an EAL student, and parents have disclosed this information to the school, it may not be necessary or appropriate for the student to take a specific test. A member of the school staff will be in touch with parents prior to the administration of a test to discuss this further.

1st year:

- 1st years will not be given CAT4 test results but test result may be interpreted for parents at their request. Testing procedures will be explained to parents at the night for 1st year enrolment to parents.
- Principal, learning Support and Resource Teacher and Career Guidance counsellor will have access to results. Consultation regarding individual educational plans may result.
- Class teachers will not have access to test results but may request an interpretation of results where discrepancies in students' performance arise

4th year:

- 4th years are met individually and results explained. The results are then sent home to parents. Parents are asked to sign and return information slip to the school to confirm receipt of results. They are requested not to put pressure on anyone else to disclose their results.
- Results may be interpreted for parents at their request.

Data Protection: The Guidance Department of Coláiste Éamonn Rís are aware of obligations relating to access to stored data under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2013, associated regulations, and the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:

Date: 17th November 2015

This policy will be due for review in **September 2017**

Reviewed and adopted by Board of Management 2-4-2020