

Junior Cycle Assessment Policy

1 Introduction

The Board of Management recognises the importance of assessment as a valuable learning opportunity for students. This policy has been put in place to ensure the smooth running of in-class assessments which take place as part of the Junior Cycle programme.

2 Rationale

2.1 It is recognised that assessment is an important part of the Junior Cycle programme as it “provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes” (*NCCA Glossary note on assessment*).

2.2 It is important that procedures are put in place to facilitate Junior Cycle assessment to allow students the opportunity to reach their full potential and engage positively with the Junior Cycle programme.

2.3 The school shall endeavour to facilitate student assessments in a way that is reasonable and fair to all.

2.4 All procedures are in keeping with the assessment procedures as outlined in *Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015* and *Circular Letter 0015/2017*.

3 Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to:

- provide a transparent mechanism for students, parents/guardians and teachers as to how assessment takes place in Junior Cycle
- encourage full participation in assessment procedures
- minimise any stress that may be felt by students
- provide clear guidelines as to how assessment takes place when a student is unavailable for assessment
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the Junior Cycle assessment process

4 Assessment Overview

There are three strands to Junior Cycle assessment: Classroom Based Assessment, Assessment Task and Final Assessment.

- Classroom Based Assessment (CBA): All subjects and short courses engage with this form of assessment. CBAs take place in 2nd and 3rd Year. This assessment is conducted by teachers, and where appropriate, is moderated by means of a SLAR (Subject Learning and Assessment Review) meeting.
- Assessment Task (AT): A number of subjects (but not short courses) engage in the Assessment Task in 3rd Year. This is marked by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The AT takes place during class time.
- Final Assessment (FT): The Final Assessment applies to a number of subjects (but not short courses) and takes place by means of an exam in June of 3rd Year.
- It should be noted that CBAs and ATs should be considered formative modes of assessment.
- All strands of assessment are reflected in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which is awarded to students following completion of the Junior Cycle programme. This includes students accessing Junior Cycle at Level 2
- The JCPA will also reflect learning that has occurred outside of the classroom. This is recorded in the Other Areas of Learning section.

5 Role of Individual Teachers

In relation to JC assessment, individual teachers shall:

- familiarise him/herself with assessment procedures and requirements. Information is available at www.curriculumonline.ie
- facilitate assessment events
- keep attendance records at all assessment events
- inform the Year Leader in the event where a student is absent from an assessment event and provide additional details if required
- provide the Junior Cycle Co-ordinator with results from CBAs
- provide the State Examination Liaison Person and the Year Leader with records of attendance at ATs
- follow procedures laid out by the relevant department in regards to assessment (see Point 10)
- engage in the SLAR process where appropriate
- enter results of CBAs into P-POD when this facility is made available

6 Role of SEN Key Workers

In relation to JC assessment, SEN key workers shall:

- approach individual teachers to discuss which supports are necessary for students with extra needs
- ensure that appropriate supports are put in place, e.g. scribe, reader, laptop etc.
- inform students with special needs and their parents/guardians, as to what supports are in place
- organise USB keys to save assessment materials where appropriate. Such USB keys should be labelled with the individual student's exam number

7 Role of Junior Cycle Co-ordinator

In relation to JC assessment, the Junior Cycle Co-ordinator shall:

- share all relevant assessment dates with staff when they are made available
- communicate with parents/guardians providing information regarding assessment events
- answer any queries or concerns regarding assessment procedures
- locally store all results from CBAs
- collate information for the JCPA in relation to the 'Other Areas of Learning' component

8 Role of State Examination Liaison Person

In relation to JC assessment, the State Examinations Liaison Person shall:

- distribute relevant booklets and examinations material as they are made available
- distribute examination numbers
- collect examination booklets and other relevant material from teachers, and post them to the State Examinations Commission
- collect students' signatures where appropriate

The tasks prescribed for this position are subject to review in light of the increased workload envisaged as new assessment procedures are rolled out.

9 Role of the SEN Co-ordinator

In relation to JC assessment, the SEN Co-ordinator shall:

- liaise with RACE to ensure that digital booklets and other relevant material are made available
- oversee the special supports put in place for SEN students
- liaise with key workers and management where appropriate

10 Role of Subject Departments

In relation to JC assessment, subject departments shall:

- discuss assessment procedures and put appropriate plans in place

- compose a tick-list particular to the subject department. This will detail what needs to be submitted to the State Exam Liaison Person and how it should be submitted (e.g. numerical order by exam number)
- nominate one teacher to act as SLAR Facilitator as outlined in *Circular Letter 0015/2017*

11 Role of Year Leaders

In relation to JC assessment, Year Leaders shall:

- liaise with management and other teachers where appropriate
- receive information from teachers and key workers regarding attendance
- make contact with home where appropriate, particularly in the case of absence
- liaise with Senior Management regarding ‘mop-up’ assessment events where appropriate (see Points 13 & 14 below)

12 Role of Senior Management

In relation to JC assessment, Senior Management shall:

- facilitate teachers to carry out all roles as outlined in Points 5-11 above
- oversee all assessment events
- liaise with teachers and other management as appropriate

13 Assessment in the Event of Student Absence

13.1 It is recognised that the Junior Cycle programme presents a large number of assessment events. It is likely, that on occasion, circumstances will result in student absences during these times. Students and parents/guardians should look to minimise such occurrences.

13.2 To allow for planning of medical, dental and other essential appointments, Newpark shall provide dates of assessment events as they become available.

13.3 Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule essential appointments outside of school time where possible. Parents/guardians are advised not to schedule appointments during the times of assessment events.

13.4 In the case where illness precludes a student from engaging with an assessment event, a ‘mop up’ session will be offered to students who provide a medical certificate. This is in keeping with the practice in other state examinations.

13.5 In exceptional circumstances where a student is precluded from engaging with an assessment event, parents/guardians should contact the Year Leader. The Year Leader, following discussion with Senior Management, will exercise his/her discretion as to whether students may avail of a ‘mop up’ session to engage with the assessment event.

14 Assessment Procedures in the Case of Extra Need

Newpark is an inclusive school and looks to meet the needs of all students. In the case where a student has a particular need identified by a psychologist, or a medical condition identified by a doctor, the school shall endeavour to put arrangements in place to facilitate engagement with the assessment event (see points 6, 9, 11 and 13 above).

15 Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed taking into account any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents from within Newpark or from the Department of Education and Skills. Feedback from

