

Junior Cycle Assessment Policy, 2022

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. This policy replaces the previous JC Assessment Policy following a review in April 2022.

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 subsequent circulars from the Department of Education and Skills.

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
- 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.
- The JCPA will also reflect learning that has occurred outside of the classroom. This is recorded in the Other Areas of Learning section.
- Achievements in Wellbeing (CSPE, SPHE and PE) will be recorded in the Wellbeing Section of the JCPA when this comes on stream with the SEC.

5 Role of Individual Teachers

In relation to JC assessment, the teacher 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
- enter CBA results on the VSware system
- provide the AP2 (State Examinations Coordination) and the Year Leader with records of attendance at ATs
- follow procedures laid out by the relevant department in regard to assessment (see Point 10)
- engage in the SLAR process where appropriate
- enter results of CBAs onto P-POD when and if this facility is made available by the Department of Education and Skills

6 Role of AEN Key Workers

In relation to JC assessment, AEN 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 teacher responsible for Junior Cycle Assessment & Reporting Coordination

In relation to JC assessment, this teacher shall:

- share all relevant assessment dates with staff when they are made available
- schedule the annual calendar of CBAs and ATs
- answer any queries or concerns regarding assessment procedures
- ensure that all CBAs are recorded on VSware
- collate information for the JCPA in relation to the 'Other Areas of Learning' and 'Wellbeing' components, where relevant

8 Role of teacher responsible for State Examinations Coordination

In relation to JC assessment, this teacher 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

9 Role of the AEN Co-ordinator

In relation to JC assessment, this teacher shall:

- liaise with RACE to ensure that digital booklets and other relevant material are made available
- oversee the special supports put in place for AEN 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
- nominate one teacher to act as SLAR Facilitator as outlined in the relevant circular

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 at ATs
- make contact with home where appropriate, particularly in the case of absence

- liaise with Principal/Deputy Principal(s) regarding 'mop-up' assessment events where appropriate (see Points 13 & 14 below)

12 Role of Principal/Deputy Principal(s)

In relation to JC assessment, the Principal/Deputy Principal(s):

- facilitate teachers to carry out all roles as outlined in Points 5-11 above
- oversee all assessment events

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.

13.3 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 may 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 the Principal/Deputy Principal(s), will exercise his/her discretion as to whether a student 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 as required, taking into account any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents from within Newpark or from the Department of Education.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management, Newpark Comprehensive School at its meeting on 8th June 2022.

Signed: Robert Grier
Chairman, Board of Management

Signed: Eoin Norton
Secretary, Board of Management

Date: 8th June 2022

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