



Coláiste Chill Mhantáin Assessment Policy

RATIONALE

Coláiste Chill Mhantáin believes that assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and an important element in the professional responsibility of teachers.

Assessment supports each pupil in the achievement of his or her full learning potential and fosters the development of self-esteem and personal responsibility. It takes place in a self-reflective context and encourages the involvement of all staff, pupils and parents.

INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

“The teachers’ assessment of the pupils’ work can be considered effective when:-

- assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning;
- teachers use suitable forms of assessment, based on expectations which are clear, realistic and understood by the pupils
- the pupils’ written work is regularly and consistently marked in ways that highlight the strengths and areas that can be improved upon, using approaches that are well understood by pupils and their parents
- the level and nature of the pupils’ prior attainments influence the selection and use of teaching methods and subject content;
- the pupils’ strengths are consolidated and their weaknesses are addressed
- the purpose of homework is explained clearly; the work which is set is appropriate to the needs of the pupils, reinforces and extends their knowledge and understanding and provides the teachers with evidence of progress

Aims

Assessment referenced from the Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment may be both formative and summative. It is used to inform the learning process. Teachers aim to:

1. Use assessment for learning strategies and regularly reinforce the context for learning.
2. Provide advice about what learners can do next to improve.
3. Provide regular opportunities for learners to give feedback about their learning experiences.
4. Be prepared to modify their classroom practice in response to learners' feedback.
5. Incorporate strategies to encourage self-assessment and peer assessment.
6. Assess work and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties by using a variety of feedback, for example grades, written and oral comments which show the student where and how to make improvements.
7. Record and analyse assessment data to inform their future teaching.
8. Use homework effectively to reinforce and extend learning.

Coláiste Chill Mhantáin recognises and encourages the following as characteristics of Good Practice:

(a) Assessment should help students to develop fully their academic abilities and self-confidence, to develop skills which they need for reflective and independent study and to establish shared understanding by students and teachers of clear and explicit study goals.

(b) Assessment, both formal and informal, should complement and reinforce the delivery of the curriculum. It should enable the learning needs of individual students to be identified and allow future teaching strategies to be determined.

(c) Assessment should recognise individual progress and achievement and provide students with meaningful information which will allow them to participate in self-evaluation.

(d) Assessment should involve a range of techniques both formal and informal - carried out in a variety of contexts which will allow individual students to show what they know, understand and can do.

(e) Assessment and reporting are an integral part of the link between the school and parents and should provide parents with meaningful information.

METHODS AND RANGE OF ASSESSMENT:

(a) The wide variety of assessment methods used in school include formal assessment by examination (public and internal), coursework, homework, practical work, oral work and class tests.

(b) Teachers are involved in the continuous assessment of students' work during class activities, monitoring not only academic attainment but other skills such as managing information, creativity, problem solving and decision making, self-management and working with others.

(c) Through assessment, students become aware of what they are learning and applying, and of their progress in a subject. They must, therefore, understand how their work is marked. This will enable students to focus their efforts on important aspects of the subject and to take on more responsibility for their own work and progress.

(d) Each department should aim to involve students in the assessment process, wherever possible. Students who are encouraged to assess their own effort and performance are likely to be more highly motivated and to develop more confidently the skills needed for effective independent study.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT USED IN COLÁISTE CHILL MHANTÁIN

SUMMATIVE is Assessment OF Learning. It is used mainly to measure performance and clearly identifies a standard of student attainment. It is carried out at the end of a period of learning. Regular written tests are given at the end of each topic or group of topics.

All tests including Mock Examinations are marked by teachers. It is NOT school policy for these tests to be sent to outside agencies for correction nor for students to incur any charge for the marking of Mock Examinations.

Examples

- External Examinations
- Internal School Examinations
- End of Topic/Unit Tests
- Standardised Tests

FORMATIVE is Assessment FOR Learning. It is ongoing and provides evidence of and for progression in learning. It supports learning through identifying difficulties, providing feedback and diagnosing future learning priorities.

- using effective questioning techniques
- using marking and feedback strategies
- sharing learning goals
- peer and self-assessment.

Examples

- Class work
- Home work
- Questioning
- Oral Discussion
- Group Work

- Presentation
- Short Recall Test
- Practical Project
- Research

SELF ASSESSMENT encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning by:

Evaluating their own achievement against shared learning outcomes

Identifying their own strengths and areas for improvement

Encouraging individual learning goals and action plans for future progression

Fostering a self-reflective learning culture

Encouraging independence in learning

Examples

- Student Personal Statement written in careers guidance classes
- Higher & Further Education applications
- New JC Achievement Profile

PEER ASSESSMENT will often be the necessary stepping stone towards self-assessment as students develop the objectivity and recognition of quality required for effective self-assessment.

Students will need to have a clear and shared understanding of the criteria for their peer evaluation. Teachers must also ensure that formative action is taken using the information obtained through peer assessment as both teachers and students identify the “next steps” in learning.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Departments are responsible for:

- Their own subject specific assessment policy
- Carrying out moderation and standardisation of work within their department
- Providing guidance on assessment and promoting staff development in assessment strategies
- Monitoring and promoting good practice
- Liaising with the Examinations Officer concerning entries for all State Examinations and the processing of coursework.
- The organisation of the internal formal assessment of their subject regarding the setting and marking of examinations and the monitoring of agreed departmental assessments for internal reports.
- Agreeing with their departments the advice and information which is to be given to students to enable them to prepare for all internal and external assessments.
- Monitoring and evaluating agreed schemes of work and teaching strategies in the light of assessment outcomes and information from DES & the Inspectorate.
- Organising departmental record keeping.

Subject Teachers are responsible for:

- Following agreed school and departmental guidelines on assessment.
- Marking and commenting on all assessment tasks in a positive, accurate, meaningful and diagnostic manner - returning assessment tasks to students within an appropriate period of time.
- Compile and maintain individual student records
- Identifying the particular needs of individual students addressed by their Learning Plans and identifying pupils in danger of underachieving.
- Report to students and parents on individual progress will be per the attached reporting schedule at Appendix A
- Liaise with Department/ Year Head/ Resource Teacher re individual student support as required

Year Heads and Academic Coordinators are responsible for:

- liaising with Departments/ Principal, Deputy Principal /Subject teachers concerning individual student progress and monitoring their progress
- communicating with parents as required re individual student progress
- meeting with Principal to discuss student performance after internal examinations

External Examinations Officer is responsible for:

liaising with appropriate staff/students/parents/exam boards regarding all aspects of external assessment. This exam officer has responsibility for State Examinations.

REPORTING ensures regular and relevant communication of student attainment and progress to pupils, teachers, parents and other appropriate external audiences. It is linked to both formative and summative methods of assessment and the recording and reporting of individual pupil assessment outcomes, measured against agreed and shared assessment criteria, is the responsibility of each teacher, within the context of agreed departmental policies.

RECORDING

Consistent record keeping by all teachers allows the effective monitoring of pupil progress and the regular evaluation of teaching content/styles/methods.

Good Practice encourages:

- Common Assessment marks/grades recorded in Teacher Mark books/ Shared Documents area of school network/E-portal recording of assessment marks
- Homework marks/grades recorded in Teacher Mark Books
- Internal Exam marks/grades recorded in Teacher Mark Books/ E-portal recording of assessment marks

Teacher records can inform reporting, both formal and informal, to pupils, parents, Departments, Year Heads, Academic Coordinators and Senior Management.

FORMAL REPORTS

Are detailed on the attached schedule at Appendix A

Formal Examinations are timetabled, organised and administered according to the DES guidelines. The aural and oral elements of Irish, French and German are examined.

In the case of JC Science, Irish, English, Maths, French & German common papers are given to all students in the Christmas and Sumer examinations.

A full written report generated from Vs Ware comprise:

- Percentage Mark for each Subject,
- Percentage attendance in each class until that date,
- Number of days absent,
- Number of morning late arrivals to school.
- Subject Teacher Comment including exam performance, progress, effort, attitude, and organisation.
- Class Tutor Overview Comment on general progress and signature

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The Class Tutor has the primary responsibility for monitoring the overall progress of a student throughout the year and will liaise closely with students, parents, subject teacher, Year Heads and senior members of staff.
- Departments will monitor the progress of students in their subject and will liaise with students, members of staff in the Department and Year Heads / Academic Coordinators. They will seek to offer subject-specific support.
- When an unsatisfactory level of progress is indicated on a School Report, parents may be invited to meet with the Principal / Deputy Principal, the Year Head to put in place a strategy to help the student reach their full potential.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

Each year group has ONE annual Parent Teacher Meeting with students in attendance.

Subject and Year Teachers have the opportunity to report on the following: progress/achievement/homework/classwork/coursework/effort/attitude/presentation/organisation/guidelines & targets for improvement. Students have the opportunity to discuss with parents and teachers their own performance and progress to date.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an integral part of effective Assessment and it is a very important learning experience for all pupils. Good practice is promoted through Homework which is set regularly across all departments according to the needs of the pupils and within the context of agreed whole School and departmental policies.

The school sees homework as an important and integral part of each student's work. We look to parents to make sure that the student spends the recommended time each day on study. It is only through giving this time that maximum achievement can be assured.

The regular setting and marking of Homework encourages:

- consolidation and extension of learning
- monitoring of progress

- independent learning
- self discipline, personal organisation and responsibility
- home/school partnership

All departments are encouraged to:

- identify a range of meaningful tasks which facilitate progression in learning
- identify a variety of tasks which assess a range of subject skills
- establish a range of standard Homework tasks
- integrate Homework tasks with lesson planning and learning outcomes
- share learning outcomes with pupils
- mark all Homework against agreed criteria appropriate to task
- provide timely and constructive feedback which sustains pupil motivation and facilitates progression
- monitor the effectiveness of Homework re learning outcomes
- encourage the consistent use of Journals

We recommend the study times shown below as a minimum.

Years 1 and 2	1.5 hours per day
Year 3	2.0 hours per day
TY	1.5 hours per day
Years 5 and 6	3.0 hours per day

Pupils are encouraged to use appropriate ICT skills to research and present their homework.