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Assessment Policy 2022



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Ardscoil Mhuire

Assessment Policy

1. Definition:

The term “Assessment” refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

2. Why Assess?

Assessment is part 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 next steps in progressing the students learning and adapt her / his teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
- to provide the students and parents with information regarding progress.
- to establish baseline data in relation to a student’s attainments in certain subjects.
- to assess a student’s eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist 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 help identify students’ aptitude in various areas, to help with career choice and subject choice.

3. Legislation:

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

4. Formative Assessment:

4.1 Definition:

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

4.2 Ardscoil Mhuire has adopted the Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach to formative assessment. Its purpose is to use the whole process of assessment to help learners 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.

Characteristics of Assessment for Learning

Effective assessment for learning happens all the time in the classroom. It involves:

- sharing learning goals and success criteria with pupils
- helping pupils know and recognise the standards to aim for
- providing feedback that helps pupils to identify how to improve

- believing that every pupil can improve in comparison with previous achievements
- both the teacher and pupils reviewing and reflecting on pupils' performance and progress
- pupils learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve
- recognising that both motivation and self-esteem, crucial for effective learning and progress, can be increased by effective assessment techniques.

Key characteristics of assessment for learning are:

- Effective questioning techniques
- Formative feedback
- Sharing Learning Intentions and success criteria
- Students reflecting on their learning
- Learning Outcomes

4.3 In line with the demands of the syllabus/specifications in each curriculum area, teachers set regular homework and comment on the merits of work and make suggestions for improvement.

4.4 Assessment work may be differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of the individual.

5. Summative Assessment:

5.1 Definition:

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

5.2 Calendar for Assessments

- First Years have house examinations in December and May.
- Second Years have house examinations in December and May.
CBA's may replace or be used as part of the Christmas/Summer house examinations at the teacher's discretion in accordance with best practice.
- Third years have house examinations in December, Mock examinations in February and the Certificate Examinations in June.
CBA's may replace or be used as part of the Christmas house examinations at the teacher's discretion in accordance with best practice.
- Fifth Years have house examinations in December and May.
- Sixth Years have house examinations in October, Mock examinations in February and the Certificate Examinations in June.
- Second, third and fifth year students are assessed on an ongoing basis by each subject teacher and the average grade achieved makes up 20% of their overall term report.

5.3 It is school policy that students are tested in all subject areas regularly (e.g. weekly, monthly or at the end of a chapter/section as appropriate to individual subjects).

5.4 Mode

- The mode of assessment may include: written examinations, practicals, presentations, projects, aurals and/or oral work.
- Transition Year assessments may involve the following: external certification, portfolio, oral presentation or multimedia.

5.5 Examinations generally follow a similar format to the Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations and a marking scheme including Success Criteria & Features of Quality is clearly identified.

5.6 Mock Examinations are set and corrected internally/externally for third years and sixth years at the discretion of the Board of Management.

5.7 All Summative assessments are co-ordinated by the Exams Co-ordinator except for LCA2 mocks, which are co-ordinated by the Program Co-ordinator)

5.8 Reports

- Reports are forwarded to Parents/ Guardians of First, Second & Fifth Years in December and May.
- Reports are sent to Parents/Guardians of Third years in December and after the mocks are completed.
- Reports are sent to Parents/Guardians of Sixth years in November and after the mocks are completed.
- Reports are sent to Parents and Guardians of Transition Year students in November and May.
- Reports are sent to Parents and Guardians of LCA students in February and May.
- Reports are sent to Parents and Guardians of the 7A Class students in December and May.
- The report template is computerised and allows teachers to distinguish levels. A mark and grade are awarded and a comment can be given for all mainstream classes.

Assessment in 7A

- Class 7A complete the Junior Cycle at Level 3, Level 2 and Level 1 based on their needs and abilities.

- Assessment of Level 2 and Level 1 Learning Programmes is school-based and ongoing. Each Learning Programme is made up of Priority Learning Units (PLUs), 2 Short Courses and other areas of learning.

Students create a portfolio of evidence which demonstrates their achievement of the majority of learning outcomes for each element in the PLU. The portfolio can be a hardcopy and/or e-portfolio i.e. may be a combination of both

Examples of types of evidence of learning that might be included in the portfolio are:

- written work (stories, letters, poetry)
- project work and/or work in visual arts
- charts, diagrams, photographs
- video recordings of the learner's participation in an activity, event or achievement
- recordings of musical work.

- Assessment of PLUs and short courses and the awarding of the JCPA is school based.

Assessment in TY

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process in TY. Students are assessed on all aspects of the programme using a variety of assessment techniques. Assessment will be a combination of exam, project work, practical, aural, oral presentation, worksheets and interviews. Employers will provide evaluation reports of work experience. At the end of the year a selection of students work from different areas of the TY Programme will be exhibited at the TY Graduation evening. Students also take an Exit interview worth 50 credits which is based on their involvement in TY.

Students will receive two reports throughout the year based on a credit system. Each subject/ module has a total number of credits that are broken down into two terms. Students will receive a Pass, Merit or Distinction at the end of year based on the credits they achieved throughout the year.

Assessment in LCA

The LCA Programme follows the Guidelines and procedures set out by the Department of Education and Skills as follows:

The Leaving Certificate Applied Assessment takes place over two years under three headings:

1. Satisfactory Completion of Modules.
2. Performance of Students Tasks.
3. Performance in the Terminal Examinations.

MODULES

At the end of each Session a student is credited on satisfactory completion of the appropriate Key Assignments for each Module. 90% Attendance is a requirement for awarding credits for the Module. Credit attainment at end of each session are sent home to parents.

STUDENT TASKS

7 Student Tasks are completed over 4 Sessions. Each student is required to produce a report on the process of completing the Task. Student Tasks (Projects) are assessed by External Examiners appointed by the Department of Education and Skills.

TERMINAL EXAMINATIONS

Terminal Examinations are in the following subjects: English and Communications
Mathematical Applications
Social Education
Languages (Irish & French)

2 Vocational Specialism

In order to prepare for the terminal examinations students will sit mocks in February and results will be sent home to Parents/Guardians.

6. Psychometric Tests:

The following is a list of the tests used:

CAT 4:	Cognitive Abilities test
WIAT-III-UK -T(Teachers):	Wechsler Individual achievement Test
N.G.R.T:	New Group Reading Test
PTM:	Progress Test in Maths
DRA:	Diagnostic Reading Analysis
DASH:	Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting

Details of these tests are outlined in the Assessment Instruments Policy.

Assessment of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Competence

In line with the guidelines as outlined in the Continuum of Support for schools, social, emotional and behavioural needs are assessed by compiling all of the information gathered through the assessment of educational competence and combining it with information obtained from teacher observation, use of checklists and charts and communication with parents/guardians and students. Year Heads, tutors and subject teachers work with the school's care team to assess and identify social, emotional and behavioural needs. The school's care team is made up of the school Principal, Deputy Principal, Year

Heads, Guidance Counsellor, SEN Coordinator. They gather information from subject teachers, parents and students.

Signed:

L. Dolan C. Penn

Date:

09/05/2022