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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin
Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Assessment Policy

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

25/05/2026

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Section 1: Introduction:

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir is a co-educational and multi-denominational Community College under the patronage of the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board. We are committed to ensuring that all students who enrol with us experience a safe, positive, structured, and caring environment in which they can develop, grow, and flourish holistically. This policy has been devised and agreed as part of a consultative process involving the Board of Management, Senior Management, parents, students, and staff of Coláiste Bhaile Chláir. Assessment practices are implemented through a lens of equality, including but not limited to anti-racism, ensuring they are equitable, inclusive, and free from bias, and that diverse identities and experiences are respected, recognised, and valued.

This policy outlines a range of assessment procedures and methods; however, it is not intended to be exhaustive or overly prescriptive. Where innovative assessment approaches are identified and recommended, teachers will exercise their professional judgement in implementing these to support student learning and success. Such practices will be shared among staff and, where appropriate, agreed approaches to assessment and reporting will be implemented on a whole-school basis.

Section 2: Relationship to Mission Statement:

At Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, our ethos, grounded in a commitment to excellence in education, underpins all aspects of school life. We are dedicated to creating a caring environment that fosters respect for self, for others, and for our community. We aim to support each member of the school community in reaching their full potential, celebrating students' achievements and providing them with the skills necessary to meet life's challenges with confidence and belief. Through empowerment and the promotion of personal responsibility, we strive to nurture capable, resilient, and engaged learners

It is important therefore to reflect on all our activities, practices, procedures, facilities and attitudes with a view to continuous improvement. Assessment in its widest sense includes all evaluations of student achievements in curricular and co-curricular activities to improve learning and teaching. Our Assessment and Reporting practices are designed to be helpful, supportive and encouraging of students so that all students can experience success and reach their own potential. In partnership with parents, who are the primary educators of students, we strive to respect the dignity, worth and individuality of our students by affirming genuine effort and success, and providing encouragement, motivation and support to students to help them reach their potential

Section 3: Assessment Definition:

Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems. Educational

assessment provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes (www.NCCA.ie).

3.1 Legislation:

Under the *Education Act (1998)*, schools are required to carry out regular evaluations of student progress and to report these results periodically to both students and their parents. To meet this obligation, schools must establish assessment procedures that offer a reliable and accurate reflection of each student's progress and achievement.

Section 4: Assessment Method:

This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning (www.NCCA.ie).

4.1 Types of Assessment:

- Formative Assessment e.g. oral questioning, class activity outcome, students' homework and classwork
- Summative Assessment e.g. Term Exams, Mock Examinations, Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Exams
- Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) for Junior Cycle
- Oral and Aural Language Assessments
- Assessment Tasks
- Project Work – Presentations, PowerPoints, Portfolios/E-portfolios, visual displays, posters
- Practical Exams in Art, Construction Studies, Home Economics, Music
- Field Study – Geography, History, Home Economics and Science
- Online assessments – At the beginning of 1st Year students undertake a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT 4). Students' scores help school Management to provide base-line data for academic tracking and monitoring purposes as well as highlighting students who are under or over performing.
- Psychometric Tests – CAT 4, WIAT III, NGRT etc. (as appropriate)
- Learning Reflections at the end of a chapter / unit of work and as part of house exams for Junior Cycle classes
- Literacy e.g. Library, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), literacy competitions
- Numeracy e.g. Maths Week
- Fitness Tests in P.E.
- Assessments may be conducted by teachers using a digital format, as appropriate, and feedback reported to the student in digital format (e.g. Microsoft Forms)

4.2 Psychometric Tests

Standardised numeracy and literacy data for each incoming First Year student is gathered from feeder primary schools in advance of their transition to second-level education, through the Student Passport system.

The CAT4 Level E assessment is administered to First Year students each September by the Assessment & Reporting AP1. This assessment measures ability across four areas: Verbal, Numerical, Non-Verbal, and Spatial reasoning. When results become available, they are shared with teachers, parents, and students. This data is uploaded to Athena and used as a baseline to support the tracking and analysis of student progress over time. Students identified as having numeracy and/or literacy needs are provided with appropriate supports.

Students identified as having reading and/or comprehension difficulties are further assessed using the NGRT (New Group Reading Test), a standardised, group-administered assessment which measures reading ability against a national norm. This test supports the identification of students requiring additional intervention. These students may participate in an intensive reading programme (SRA), and are reassessed in April to monitor progress and inform next steps.

Students who achieve high scores in the CAT4 assessment and demonstrate exceptional ability may be referred to the Centre for Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI) to support and further develop their academic potential.

4.3 Homework as a Form of Assessment

Homework plays an important role in helping students strengthen their understanding of what has been taught in class. It provides the teacher with an informal way to gauge how well students have understood new material and helps both teacher and student to identify what learning should happen next.

Teachers use a range of methods to correct homework, including collecting and marking it with a grade or comments, reviewing it together in class, or using peer and self-assessment. Sometimes students are given marking schemes or “features of quality” to guide corrections. These approaches help teachers check student progress.

Students are expected to complete homework on time and to the best of their ability. They are encouraged to manage their time to avoid overload. If a student feels under pressure, they should feel comfortable asking their teacher for an extension or adjustment. Teachers also appreciate being informed about test clashes and will accommodate changes where possible.

4.4 Forms of Assessment

Assessment is generally categorised into two main types:

a) Assessment of Learning (AoL)

This is ***summative*** in nature and provides a snapshot of student achievement at a specific point in time. Examples include:

- Term Assessments at Week 10, 20 & 30
- Subject-specific class tests
- Mock Examinations

- TY portfolios
- State Examinations
- LCA
- WIAT III
- CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test)
- NGRT (New Grade Reading Test)

Effective summative assessment helps students improve their work by:

- Providing clear feedback on what they have learned and where gaps remain
- Highlighting strengths and areas for improvement
- Encouraging reflection on their performance
- Setting goals for future learning
- Motivating students through recognition of their progress
- Informing planning for revision and targeted support

The primary purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of a teaching period by measuring it against predefined standards or benchmarks. It is also used by teachers to identify areas that need revisiting.

b) Assessment for Learning (AfL)

This is ***formative*** in nature and is used to inform and enhance both teaching and learning. Its goal is to positively impact student engagement and progress. Examples include:

- In-class questioning and activity
- Retrieval Practice
- Constructive feedback on written work
- Guidance on next steps for improvement

Effective formative assessment helps students improve their work by:

- Providing clear, specific, and actionable feedback that identifies strengths and areas for improvement
- Highlighting learning goals and success criteria so students know what quality work looks like
- Encouraging self-assessment and reflection to help students take ownership of their learning
- Offering guidance on next steps to close the gap between current and desired performance
- Identifying misunderstandings and correcting them early through ongoing checks for understanding
- Supporting peer feedback opportunities, allowing students to learn from and with each other
- Promoting a growth mindset by focusing on progress and effort rather than just outcomes
- Allowing for revisions and resubmissions so students can act on feedback and demonstrate improvement
- Tailoring instruction to individual learning needs, which helps students engage more effectively with the material

4.5 Formative Assessment: Key Classroom Practices and Strategies

At Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, we view the following as essential classroom practices that support effective formative assessment:

- **A Positive Learning Environment:** A supportive classroom culture where students feel safe to discuss their learning openly, reflect honestly, and engage in respectful teacher-student relationships.
- **Effective Questioning and Reflection:** Teachers and students use questioning to promote deeper thinking and reflection. Students are taught how to reflect on their knowledge and evaluate their learning, drawing on frameworks such as Bloom's Taxonomy.
- **Clear Learning Goals:** Teachers regularly identify and review learning objectives and success criteria with students. This helps students understand their learning targets and take ownership of their progress. Teachers return and assess the learning frequently, relevant to the learning goals and adapt their future teaching accordingly.
- **Home-School Partnership:** We recognise the important role that collaboration between home and school plays in supporting student learning.

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir has adopted the following key formative assessment strategies:

a) **Effective Questioning (Bloom's Taxonomy):**
Teachers use questioning techniques based on Bloom's levels of thinking. Visual prompts (e.g. Bloom's posters and journal inserts) help guide this practice.

b) **Assessment for Learning (AfL) Techniques:**
Teachers use varied AfL strategies including cold call questioning, "Show me" boards, retrieval practice diary pages and Do Now class starters. There are many other classroom tools that support ongoing assessment.

c) **Learning Intentions:**
Lessons are framed by learning intentions linked to the curriculum. Teachers share these with students at the start, during, or end of lessons, depending on what suits the learning context best. Lessons involve constant referral and review of progress toward the intention using AfL methods.

d) **Success Criteria:**
Success criteria are co-created with students and agreed upon before starting a task. They provide clarity and direction during learning and are used as a basis for feedback and peer/self-assessment.

e) **Peer and Self-Assessment:**
Teachers occasionally guide students to assess their own or a peer's work using agreed criteria. Students then reflect and write down ways to improve, supported by teacher guidance.

f) **Feedback:**
Formative feedback is linked to success criteria and used to help students reflect on and improve their work. This is a key focus in our school's improvement planning. Effective feedback is timely, specific and actionable.

g) **Homework:**
In line with curriculum demands and the Homework Policy, teachers assign regular homework, provide comments, and suggest ways for improvement.

h) **Differentiation:**
Teacher's tailor assessment and class/homework tasks to suit the individual needs and abilities of students. The education and assessment of all students is the responsibility of all teachers.

i) **Portfolios (Transition Year):**
Students design and develop Portfolios that showcase their learning and progress. These portfolios are built through a process of reflection, drafting, and redrafting, guided by clear learning intentions, success criteria, and feedback.

Formative assessment helps monitor student learning continuously. It provides ongoing feedback that teachers can use to refine their instruction, and students can use to develop their understanding and performance. It enables students to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, allowing them to focus on key targets for growth. It also importantly informs the teachers about next steps in teaching.

Teachers typically integrate both formative and summative assessments throughout the teaching and learning process to support holistic development.

4.6 Purpose of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment serves multiple important purposes in the learning process:

- It gives teachers timely feedback during lessons, allowing them to adjust teaching strategies and learning activities.
- It helps identify areas where individual students or groups need support.
- It allows the teacher to adapt their teaching and methodology in real time if
- It promotes peer and self-assessment, encouraging active involvement in the learning process.
- It supports student self-reflection, helping them understand their current level and how to improve.
- It shifts the focus from simply achieving grades to valuing the learning journey, which builds confidence and reduces over-reliance on external rewards.
- It encourages students to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

4.7 The Role of Feedback

Feedback is at the heart of formative assessment. Rather than just focusing on scores or grades, effective feedback looks closely at what students are learning and how they can improve.

4.8 Principles of Effective Feedback:

- Clearly explains what success looks like (e.g. learning goals and success criteria)
- Supports students in developing their self-assessment skills
- Provides detailed, meaningful information about progress

- Encourages reflection for both students and teachers
- Promotes dialogue about learning between teacher and students
- Inspires and motivates students to improve
- Helps students close the gap between their current performance and learning goals
- Offers insights that teachers can use to guide future instruction

Section 5: Assessment – General Aims

5.1 Assessment should empower students to:

- Realise and achieve their full academic potential
- Actively engage in and take ownership of their learning
- Develop the ability to self-monitor and evaluate their own performance
- Stay motivated to reach their highest potential

5.2 Assessment should support teachers in:

- Monitoring student progress and adjusting lesson plans accordingly
- Identifying and responding to students' learning needs
- Guiding students on how to improve the quality of their work
- Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching strategies and learning styles
- Reflecting on and refining teaching practices
- Tracking individual student progress and informing instructional decisions
- Identifying next steps in the learning process and adapting teaching methods or activities as necessary
- Meeting statutory and curriculum requirements
- Communicating progress effectively to students and parents
- Establishing baseline data on student achievement in various subjects
- Determining appropriate subject levels for State Examinations
- Recognising areas where students may need additional support
- Identifying high achieving, gifted, and talented learners
- Assessing eligibility for support services and informing relevant consultations
- Supporting referrals to external professionals or agencies when needed
- Providing constructive, positive feedback to students
- Promoting consistency and standardisation of work levels within subject areas
- Coordinating assessment procedures at a whole-school level
- Generating baseline data to support school self-evaluation initiatives

5.3 Reporting of assessment should enable parents to:

- Engage meaningfully in their child's learning journey
- Understand and encourage their child's academic development
- Monitor their child's progress throughout their secondary education

Section 6: Assessment at Junior and Senior Cycle

Junior Cycle Assessment places the student at the centre of the learning process. It encourages new approaches to learning and allows for the assessment of a broader range of skills and competencies. For more information, visit www.ncca.ie.

Senior Cycle Assessment is designed to help students achieve success in the Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. It promotes the development of independent learning and critical thinking in alignment with the Key Skills for Senior Cycle.

6.1 Junior Cycle Key Skills

Assessment focuses on not just what students know, but also what they understand, the dispositions they are developing and the skills that they are learning.

In Junior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills:

- Managing Myself
- Staying Well
- Communicating
- Working with Others
- Being Creative
- Managing Information and Thinking
- Being Literate
- Being Numerate.

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs)

Classroom-Based Assessments focus on the value of formative assessment in supporting teaching and learning. Each subject includes two CBAs, both led by the class teacher.

Students will complete one CBA in Second Year and another in Third Year. These assessments give students the chance to show their understanding and skills in ways that aren't possible in a traditional written exam.

CBAs also aim to give students helpful feedback while they are working on the task and after it is completed, supporting their learning and growth.
Examples of CBAs include oral presentations, various types of written work, hands-on projects, artistic performances, scientific investigations, design and make tasks, or other suitable activities.

Assessment Task:

- The Assessment Task has not been reinstated since COVID 2020 but should it be reinstated, the following is true.
- The written Assessment Task, marked by the SEC, will be specified by the NCCA and will relate to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based

Assessment. The written Assessment Task may require the student to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills developed during the second Classroom-Based Assessment. It may facilitate the student in highlighting key learning gained by the student as they undertook the classroom-Based Assessment in question. The written Assessment Task may also provide an opportunity for students to refer to skills and competencies that were developed and to describe ways in which their learning might be applied to future situations.

- The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher and will be sent to the SEC for marking along with the script for that subject in the state-certified examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the presentation of the grade for that subject.
- There is no Assessment Task in Visual Art, Music, Home Economics and The Technology subjects. Students in these subjects sit a final practical exam instead.
- The Assessment Task takes place over a minimum of 80 minutes.
- The Assessment Task is to be submitted to the State Examinations Commission for marking as part of the state-certified examination.
- It will go towards determining the result awarded by the State Examinations Commission.
- The Assessment Task is at a Common Level and the questions posed will consider the broad cohort of students taking the assessment.

The Final Junior Cycle Assessment

The final examination will be:

- ❖ No longer than two hours duration.
- ❖ Taken in a maximum of ten subjects only.
- ❖ Available at a common level apart from English, Mathematics and Irish where there will be two levels (higher and ordinary).
- ❖ Assessed by SEC using the following set of grades: Distinction, Higher Merit, Merit, Achieved, and Partially Achieved.

Level 1 and Level 2 programmes for students

The Level 1 Learning programme (L1LP) and Level 2 Learning programme (L2LP) are programmes designed for students who are unable to access the Level 3 Junior Cycle Curriculum. Students with mild to moderate learning difficulties are encouraged to access all mainstream subjects initially. They may continue with these to exam level and/or access junior cycle L2LP/L1LP. Evidence-based decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student and their parents/guardians. The decision would require evidence of the student under-performing in first year, despite differentiated teaching methodologies and supplementary support. Students wishing to access L1/L2LP must be registered by the 1st week of October in second year.

Students who sit the L2LP programme at Junior Cycle may be best suited to achieve through the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme where offered. Please see Senior Cycle Programmes Policy for further information. Attainment is monitored regularly, and short-term interventions are put in place as determined by the Student Support Team.

Level 1 Learning Programme (L1LP)

Students taking an L1LP are likely to be at an early stage of cognitive development. Some students may also have an identification of a learning disability which falls in the range of low moderate to severe and profound from an educational or clinical psychologist. Consultation involving parents/guardians, schools and other professionals working with the student will determine the suitability of the L1LP for the student.

Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP)

The Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP) is a junior cycle programme designed for students with General Learning disabilities in the low mild to high moderate range of abilities. These students will benefit from an L2LP as it purposely focuses on development and learning in such areas as: elementary literacy and numeracy, language and communication, mobility and leisure skills, motor-coordination and social and personal development.

6.2 Senior Cycle Key Skills

In Senior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills:

- Communicating
- Working with Others
- Being Personally Effective
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Information Processing.

Assessment in the New Senior Cycle

Assessment in the redeveloped Senior Cycle will include a combination of teacher-based assessment and final State Examinations. Typically, 40% of the final grade will be based on teacher-assigned tasks such as projects, presentations, or portfolios completed during the course, while 60% will come from a final SEC-set exam. These changes aim to provide a more balanced, inclusive, and skill-focused approach to assessing student learning.

To ensure consistency and fairness in assessment at Senior Cycle, departments will engage in moderation practices for common summative tasks. This includes the development and use of shared marking schemes, occasional cross-marking between teachers, and short moderation meetings to align expectations and standards. These

practices mirror the benefits of Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) at Junior Cycle, supporting shared professional judgment and consistency across classes.

Section 7: Assessment in Transition Year

Transition Year places a strong emphasis on experiential learning and personal growth. As a result, assessment methods are varied and flexible to reflect the diverse learning experiences. Examples of assessment approaches include:

a) Portfolios or e-Portfolios showcasing classwork
b) Student self-reflection activities
c) Peer reflection and feedback
d) Individual and group projects
e) Oral presentations and class discussions
f) Work experience reports
g) Summer assessments in core subjects such as Irish, English, Maths.
h) End-of-year reflective interviews
i) External awards and certifications (e.g., GAISCE)

Section 8: Inclusive Assessment Practices

8.1 Students with Additional Educational Needs

At Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, we aim to make assessment practices as inclusive as possible, within our available resources. Teachers use a variety of differentiated teaching and assessment strategies to support all students in achieving success and meeting challenges.

The Principal and AEN Coordinator apply to the NCSE for supports (e.g. SNA, Assistive Technology) when professional reports indicate that additional help is required. The SET team works with subject teachers and parents to tailor supports such as small-group or individual tuition, co-teaching, visual aids, spelling and grammar waivers, extended time, or use of bilingual dictionaries.

In some cases, NEPS psychologists may assess students or advise on appropriate supports in consultation with parents. Where applicable, the school provides reasonable accommodations during formal assessments (e.g. mock and summer examinations), such as the use of assistive technology or writing supports, to minimise the impact of a student's disability. It is recognised, however, that it may not always be practicable to implement all accommodations outlined in a student's Student Support File (SSF) across every summative assessment during the academic year, including term examinations and major class tests.

The RACE application process is managed annually in line with the State Examinations Commission (SEC) guidelines. The SENCO coordinates the initial application process, with support from the relevant Year Head and the student's

Anchor teacher. Third- and Sixth-Year students are prioritised for applications, with testing for Second Years typically completed in Term 2. Where needed, further assessment is conducted in Senior Cycle to re-activate Junior Cycle accommodations. All relevant testing records, RACE applications, and decisions are kept on file Parents and students are informed of application timelines, required documentation, and outcomes at each stage. It is important to note that all arrangements are subject to SEC approval and may vary from year to year.

8.2 Inclusive practices for EAL learners

The school recognises the diverse needs of students who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL). Appropriate accommodations will be made for newcomers and EAL learners to ensure fair access to assessment. These may include the use of bilingual dictionaries and subject-specific glossaries, differentiated tasks that emphasise visual supports and oral modes of expression, and adapted assessment formats where required. Teachers are encouraged to apply differentiation strategies to ensure that EAL students can demonstrate their learning effectively.

8.3 Other inclusive practices

In line with our commitment to inclusion and fairness, we also give due consideration to the timing of religious celebrations or events; where assessment clashes occur, we will make reasonable accommodations to ensure that individual students or groups are not disadvantaged. Consideration will also be given to students experiencing high levels of anxiety, with appropriate supports or adjustments made where reasonably practicable, not limited to these circumstances.

Section 9: Assessment Calendar at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Yearly Assessment Calendar	
First Year	• CAT4 Assessment – September • NGRT Assessment - October • Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments – November • Week 20 Assessment – February • Parent Teacher Meeting – March • NGRT Assessment - April • Week 30 Assessment – May **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**.
Second Year	• Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments – November • Parent Teacher Meeting - December • Week 20 Assessment – February • Parent Teacher Meeting – March

	• NGRT Assessment - April • Week 30 Assessment – May • Classroom-Based Assessments – November to May, dependent on subject (as per calendar / schedule supplied by NCCA). **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**.
Third Year	• Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments – November • Mock Examinations– February • Parent Teacher Meeting – December • Classroom-Based Assessments – (as per calendar / schedule supplied by NCCA). • Practical Exams for State Examinations Commission – March to April. • Oral Exams in Languages – March to April. • Junior Cycle State Examinations – June. **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**.
Fourth Year	• Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments in core subjects (English, Irish, Maths & MFL) – November • Written feedback on Rotation 1 - November • Week 20 Assessments in core subjects (English, Irish, Maths & MFL) – February • Written feedback on Rotation 2 - February • Parent Teacher Meeting – March • Week 30 Assessments in core subjects (English, Irish, Maths & MFL) – May • Written feedback on Rotation 3 - May • Portfolio of work completed throughout the year – graded by TY co-ordinator. **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**.
Fifth Year	• Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments – November • Parent Teacher Meeting - January • Week 20 Assessment – February • Week 30 Assessment – May **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**
Sixth Year	• Regular Reporting on exam-based subjects and Wellbeing subjects • Week 10 Assessments – November • Parent Teacher Meeting – November • Mock Examinations– February • Practical Exams for State Examinations Commission – March to April. • LCA interviews. • Oral Exams in Languages – March to April. • Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Links Module – May.

	• Leaving Certificate Computer Science Exam - May • Senior Cycle and LCA State Examinations – June. **All term assessments and class assessments entered to Tyro by teachers – Parents have access to these results**.

9.1 Missed or Late Assessments

The school operates a fair and transparent procedure for missed or late assessments. Students must notify the relevant teacher and/or Year Head in advance where possible. A resit opportunity will be provided within a defined window, subject to authenticity checks to ensure fairness. Failure to engage with this process without valid reason may result in the assessment being recorded as incomplete.
In circumstances where a student is experiencing pastoral concerns, including illness, family difficulty, or bereavement, the school will adopt a compassionate and flexible approach. Appropriate accommodations, such as adjusted deadlines or alternative assessment arrangements, will be made where reasonable to support the student's wellbeing and ensure they are not disadvantaged.

9.2 Test Clash Protocol

Where students face a clash of scheduled assessments, the Year Head will act as the single point of contact for resolution. Students will be given a reschedule window in which to complete the missed assessment. This ensures clarity, fairness, and consistency for both staff and students. Consideration will also be given to students experiencing pastoral difficulties or bereavement when determining suitable alternative arrangements.

Section 10: Learner Progress

Teachers enter term assessment marks on TYRO for each student. These assessments take place during Week 10 (November), Week 20 examinations and mock examinations (February), and Week 30 (May). These marks are expected to broadly align with CAT4 assessment results, which, alongside previous attainment data, provide a baseline for measuring learner progress. The school further utilises Athena as a data analysis tool to support the tracking and interpretation of this data, enabling a more informed and strategic approach to student achievement.

The Learner Progress system involves the analysis of data generated from term and mock examinations, which is recorded and monitored using Athena. This data supports the tracking of each student's progress and informs the provision of targeted feedback in collaboration with Senior Management, Year Heads, teachers, and parents.

Year Heads and Assistant Year Heads, play a central role in identifying students who may be underperforming or excelling and in coordinating appropriate follow-up supports where necessary. Both quantitative data (e.g. assessment results, CAT4 profiling, and targets) and qualitative insights (e.g. teacher and student feedback) are used to inform learner support and goal setting.

Tracking Learner Progress is designed to raise student expectations and encourage ownership of learning. Students set goals and reflect on their progress using the Learner Progress section of their journals, supported by subject teachers, SPHE/tutor time, and parents where possible.

Section 11: Assessment in the State Examinations

Formal assessment in senior cycle, as used to test and certify achievement, is managed through the State examinations, administered by the State Examinations Commission. A broad range of assessment methods are used across the range of Leaving Certificate subjects, including oral and aural examinations, coursework and practical examinations.

At the end of senior cycle, students who have followed the Leaving Certificate (Established) take the Leaving Certificate examination. Student achievement in this examination is directly linked to processes of selection for courses of study in further and higher education. In addition to the examinations taken by other students, students who follow the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme take an examination paper and submit a portfolio in the Link Modules. Students who follow the Leaving Certificate Applied programme take a final examination and also accumulate credits over the two years of study. (www.curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/assessment/)

Section 12: Annual Review of State Exam Results

After the SEC releases Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate results, the Deputy Principal works with Athena to analyse the data and compare it with previous years. These reports are shared with the Principal and Subject Coordinators, then passed on to relevant teachers. Each Subject Department should meet (using Professional Time or Croke Park hours) to review the results, comparing them to national averages and analysing trends over the past three years. Findings are recorded in meeting minutes, with analysis stored in both digital and hard-copy subject plans. Departments reflect on results, identify areas for improvement, and set measurable targets. Effective or innovative practices are also noted to help sustain strong performance.

Section 13: Academic Integrity and Misconduct

Academic misconduct refers to any behaviour—intentional or not—that compromises academic integrity and may give an unfair advantage or disadvantage to any student. It can take many forms, so it is important for all students to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and to act responsibly in their learning.

13.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when someone uses another person's work or ideas and presents them as their own. In schools, this usually happens in two ways:

- Copying another student's work, such as homework or exam answers, and submitting it as your own.
- Taking content from a source like a website and claiming it as your original work.

13.2 Collusion

While collaborative learning is encouraged in our school, some tasks are designed to assess individual understanding. *Collusion*, or *undisclosed collaboration*, occurs when students work together on assignments meant to be completed independently. It's fine to discuss ideas and study with others, but individual assignments must be your own work when submitted.

13.3 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is central to teaching and learning. The school adopts an educational approach, teaching students the skills required to work with integrity rather than solely policing infractions. This includes mini-lessons and guidance on citation and attribution, effective paraphrasing, acceptable collaboration, and responsible research practices.

13.4 Use of artificial Intelligence (AI)

Learners and teachers must attribute any AI-generated text or images used in assignments, homework, or teaching materials. AI tools may be used for research, brainstorming, revising text, and certain school-approved activities with prior permission. When used for research, learners must fact-check information, consult additional sources, and reference them appropriately. AI-generated material is permitted in assignments or homework only if its use is clearly documented, credited, and includes an explanation of how the AI tool was used and the extent of its contribution.

13.5 Protocols and Disciplinary Procedures

Breaches of academic integrity will be addressed by the class teacher and escalated in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. In the case of cheating or communicating during house exams, the student's script will be removed and submitted to the Exams Secretary. Disciplinary actions will follow school policy, and the exam may not be marked. A student may be allowed to re-sit the exam later, depending on teacher and supervision availability. Repeated breaches may result in more serious consequences, including possible suspension, as outlined in the Code of Behaviour..

13.6 Data Protection and Transparency

All assessment data is processed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The lawful basis for processing includes the school's obligations under education legislation and the provision of educational services. Data is stored securely, and assessment records (such as standardised tests, CAT4, NGRT, and psychometric assessments) are retained only for the period required to fulfil their educational purpose and statutory obligations. Access is restricted: class teachers may view relevant assessment data for their students; Year Heads and SEN staff may access data to support student learning and wellbeing; and parents/guardians may request access to their child's records in line with GDPR rights.

Reporting

Section 14: The Guiding Principles of Reporting

Teachers are expected to communicate assessment results and report comments in plain English, ensuring that feedback is clear, strengths-based, and constructive. Reporting should acknowledge student progress while offering practical advice for improvement, in line with TYRO and school reporting guidelines. The process aims to encourage authentic engagement with parents, provide students with opportunities to reflect on their learning, and value the professional judgement of teachers. Effective reporting uses the language of learning to give meaningful feedback, is manageable for teachers, and communicates student progress in a balanced way. It should capture a broad range of achievements, while remaining sensitive to student self-esteem, wellbeing, and inclusivity, consistent with the NCCA Reporting Guidelines (2018).

Section 15: Purpose of Reporting

Reporting at Junior Cycle culminates in the awarding of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), and at Senior Cycle in the Leaving Certificate. The JCPA links Classroom Based Assessments, State Examination Assessments and Other Areas of Learning, in which student's development of some Key Skills through co-curricular or extra-curricular involvement is reported. This offers parents 'a clear and broad picture of their child's learning journey over the three years of Junior Cycle' (The Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015).

This style of Reporting at Junior Cycle contributes to the personal development of students, supports learning and teaching and is both manageable and accessible for everyone involved (Reporting Guidelines, NCCA, P.4). Formal reporting arrangements complement other reporting opportunities, including parent-teacher meetings, teacher-student dialogue and other home-school written communications. All reporting is about informed discussions, either orally or written, between teachers, parents and students about how to improve learning. 'In building a process of effective reporting, we aim to ensure that the students' learning and achievement are clear to all and that parents are actively engaged in the student's learning on an ongoing basis' (Reporting Guidelines, NCCA, P.4).

Section 16: Reporting on Student Progress at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir

Student progress is reported in a variety of ways, including:

a) Informal oral and written feedback
b) Use of the Student Journal

c) Parent-teacher meetings
d) Assessment results (including Wellbeing subjects at Junior Cycle) uploaded to Tyro, accessible to parents
e) Discussions with class teachers, Year Heads, AEN Coordinator, AEN Team, or Student Support Team
f) Student portfolios, learning logs, and reflections
g) End-of-unit, term, or year reports, including week 10, 20 & 30, and Progress Reports

Ongoing reporting reflects many aspects of school life such as:

- Teaching and learning aligned with the school calendar
- Parent communication via phone, text, Tyro, post, social media, and the school website
- Academic achievement and subject progress
- Student engagement and learning behaviour
- Wellbeing and personal development
- Attendance, punctuality, and behaviour
- Extracurricular participation and achievements
- Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) results
- Behaviour monitoring through reports issued by the Year Heads
- Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (including Other Areas of Learning)
- Leaving Certificate results

In accordance with DES Circular 56/2011, the school requests standardised test results and Education Passport documentation from primary schools to support student transition. Similar information may be requested when students transfer from other post-primary schools.

Section 17: Reporting using descriptors

17.1 Junior Cycle:

The new subject specifications will 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.

Descriptor	Grade Boundaries
Distinction	$\geq 85\%\ to\ 100\%$
Higher Merit	$\geq 70\%\ and\ < 85\%$
Merit	$\geq 55\%\ and\ < 70\%$
Achieved	$\geq 40\%\ and\ < 55\%$
Partially achieved	$\geq 20\%\ and\ < 40\%$
Not Graded	$< 20\%$

Grading Classroom-Based Assessments

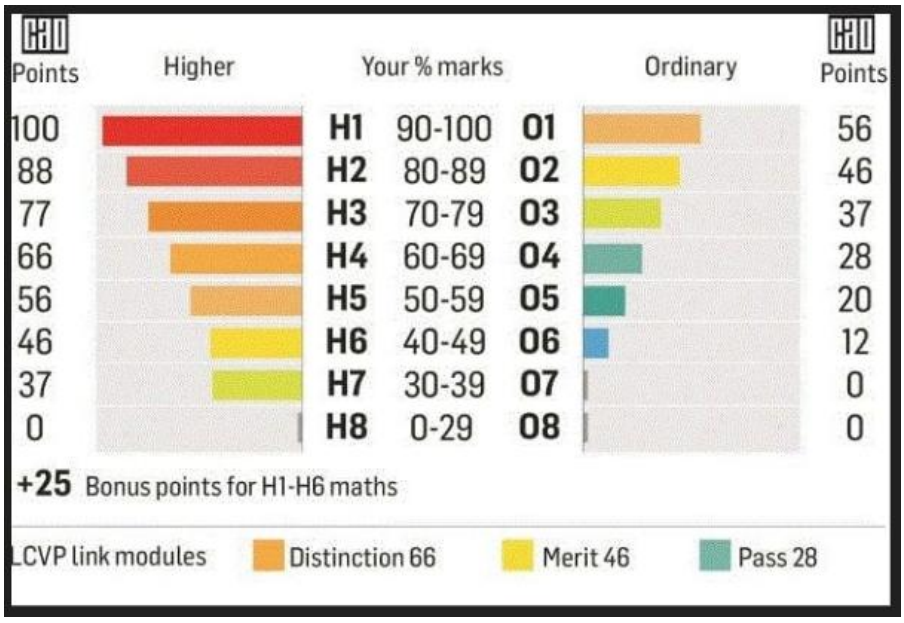
Classroom-Based Assessments in all subjects will be specified at a common level and marked by the teacher. CBAs will be undertaken by students within class time to a national timetable. When assessing the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment the Features of Quality, are used to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

Classroom-Based Assessment Descriptors

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

Teachers build their understanding of the assessment descriptors by taking part in Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. These meetings bring subject teachers together to review and discuss the quality of students' work. SLAR meetings are important for helping teachers agree on standards and expectations. The descriptors for CBA1 and CBA2 will be shared with parents through Tyro. They will also appear on each student's Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), which is issued by the school after they complete the Junior Cycle.

17.2 Senior Cycle:



School Reports (Week 10, 20 & 30 and Mock Exam Reports) will include an assessment mark, the appropriate descriptor (e.g. H1, H2 etc.) and an individual comment from the Subject Teacher. Where subjects are taken at Higher Level, Ordinary Level or Common Level the abbreviations HL, OL and C will be used on reports.

Section 18: Roles and Responsibilities in Assessment & Reporting

Role	Responsibility
School Management	• Support teachers and students in running assessment and reporting smoothly • Promote teacher professional development in assessment and reporting • Facilitate subject department or teacher team discussions on assessment practices • Review and analyse assessment data and discuss findings with departments • Monitor and evaluate assessment, recording, and reporting procedures school-wide
Learner Progress Monitor	• Plan, monitor, and evaluate the academic tracking system in consultation with Senior Management • Use assessment data to guide student progress and suggest intervention strategies • Work with the term assessment and mock examination data to ensure accurate academic profiles using CAT 4 as a baseline • Provide progress reports to Senior Management and Year Heads.
AEN Anchor	• Collects information from teachers, support staff, and external professionals to build a comprehensive profile of the student. • Tracks student progress against targets and interventions, ensuring accurate and up-to-date records. • Uses assessment data to inform and update IEPs or Student Support Files. • Highlights areas requiring additional resources or interventions based on assessment findings.
Year Heads	• Work closely with teachers, students, parents, and support teams on assessment issues • Act on underperformance or exceptional results with appropriate supports or affirmation • Lead assemblies to promote good assessment practices • Monitor student data and liaise with teachers and parents as needed • Conduct academic tracking and support interventions • Review quality of teacher report comments and take follow-up actions if necessary
Subject Teachers	• Track and record student progress through regular assessment

	• Engage students in self-assessment and using the Academic Tracking journal section • Encourage students to set and monitor their own learning targets • Share learning intentions and success criteria with students • Provide regular, constructive formative feedback • Use data to plan lessons and adapt for student needs (with reference to AEN records) • Submit summary of student performance to Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, or Management • Complete full reports twice yearly for Tyro (formerly VSware) • Enter % marks before midterm breaks for Academic Tracking purposes
Students	• Take responsibility for learning and complete all assessments to the best of their ability • Aim to reach academic potential in all subjects • Reflect on progress, act on feedback, and pursue improvement • Set and work towards target levels or descriptors • Engage fully in class, homework, and projects
Parents	• Support learning by attending meetings, reviewing the student journal, and checking homework • Provide a suitable study environment at home • Communicate any concerns with the Year Head or Dean • Use the journal to send notes and updates to the school

Section 19: Review Procedure

This Assessment and Reporting Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Assessment Team in consultation with teaching staff, the Student Council and the Parents' Council ratification by the Board of Management and Trustees.

Appendix 1

Glossary of Key Terms	
Assessment	Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems. Educational assessment provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes.
Assessment Task	The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time and is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task for each subject will provide all the necessary details and they are also available in the Assessment Toolkit.
Assessment method	This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning.
Blended learning	This refers to the practice of using both online and real-time learning experiences when teaching students. This combination of content delivery allows for both methods to support and complement each other and personalise the learning process. This can also be referred to as 'hybrid learning' or 'mixed mode learning'.
Classroom - Based Assessment	Classroom-Based Assessments in subjects and short courses provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in ways not possible in a formal examination. Classroom-Based Assessments, facilitated by the classroom teacher, are undertaken by students in a defined time period, within class contact time and to a national timetable. (Click 'subjects' on the left for further subject specific information).
Diagnostic assessment	This is a type of assessment that is intended to diagnose the strengths and/or areas of need in students prior to a learning activity. It allows for the identification and provision of the appropriate interventions and pedagogical approaches necessary to scaffold the learning to meet the individual learning needs of students.
Differentiated instruction	Differentiated instruction refers to the wide range of strategies, techniques and approaches that are used to support student learning and help every student to achieve and to realise his or her potential.
Examples of student work	Annotated samples of authentic student work are published online to illustrate levels of achievement in relation to features of quality. They are developed so that teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders can familiarise themselves with achievement levels.
Expectations for Learners/Students	An umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work and demonstrates the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised.
Features of quality	Features of quality are the statements in the short course/subject specifications that support teachers in making judgements about the

	quality of student work for the purpose of awarding achievement grades for certification. As success criteria are closely linked to learning intentions and based on the day-to-day processes in the classroom, student learning will gradually come to reflect the requirements set out in the features of quality which are used for assessment and reporting purposes.
Formative assessment	Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process and used to adapt teaching to meet student needs. The process permits teachers and students to collect information about student progress and to suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach to instruction and the student's approach to learning. Assessment for learning covers all aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning.
Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	Plans developed in schools which detail the teaching and learning approaches intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests and aspirations of individual students.
Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement	The JCPA is the award that students will receive at the end of their junior cycle. The award will reward achievement across all areas of learning and assessment including ongoing, formative assessment; Classroom-Based Assessments; and SEC grades, which include results from the final examinations and the Assessment Tasks.
Learning intentions	A learning intention for a lesson or series of lessons is a statement, created by the teacher, which describes clearly what the teacher wants the students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities.
Learning outcomes	Learning outcomes are statements in curriculum specifications to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning.
Moderation	Moderation is a collaborative process that enables teachers to reach consistency in their judgements of student work against agreed success criteria or features of quality. The moderation process involves teachers discussing the qualities demonstrated in examples of student work to reach agreement about the standard of that work.
Ongoing assessment	As part of their classroom work, students engage in assessment activities that can be either formative or summative in nature. Teachers assess as part of their daily practice by observing and listening as students carry out tasks, by looking at what they write and make, and by considering how they respond to, frame and ask questions. Teachers use this assessment information to help students plan the next steps in their learning. Periodically, this assessment will be in more structured, formalised settings where teachers will need to obtain a snapshot of the students' progress in order to make decisions on future planning and to report on progress. This may involve the students in doing projects, investigations, case studies and/or tests and may occur at defined points in the school calendar.
Peer assessment	Peer assessment is the assessment of the work of others of equal status. In the context of student learning, peer assessment is used by students to estimate the worth of other students' work with reference to specific and agreed criteria.

Reliability	This is the extent to which the assessment would give the same result if repeated. Reliability in assessment means that high quality evidence and information is provided on student performance and is comparable (i.e. it stands up when compared to judgements across learners, departments and schools).
Reporting	The communication of information on the results of assessment of student achievement.
Self - assessment	Self-assessment is the involvement of students in making judgements about their own work, based on features of quality. It is a measure of the extent to which their own work has met these features of quality.
Specification	A subject or short course specification details the intended learning outcomes, and how they can be achieved and demonstrated. The specification outlines how the learning in any subject or short course is linked to particular statements of learning and key skills.
Standardised Test	This is a test that is given in a consistent way to all the test takers and uses uniform procedures for administration and scoring. This term is primarily associated with large-scale tests administered to sizeable populations of students and allows for comparison of relative performance of individual students or groups of students. These tests will provide an additional indicator of student progress and are devised to supplement and not replace the teacher's professional judgement.
Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings	Following the completion of a Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers will engage in review meetings, where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build common understanding about the quality of student learning. (See 'Review Meeting' for further details).
Success criteria	Success criteria are linked to learning intentions. They are developed by the teacher and/or the student and describe what success looks like. They help the teacher and student to make judgements about the quality of student learning.
Summative assessment	Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or of a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the students' achievements and to determine whether and to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality.
Validity	This is the degree to which an assessment instrument accurately measures what it was designed to measure.

Source: https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary/