# Assessment, Examinations and Reporting Policy



# Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed

April 2025

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## Table of Contents

# 1. Introduction

This section outlines the Rationale for this policy, provides a broad overview of the term assessment and set out the primary aims for this policy including the legislative overview.

## How this Policy relates to our School's Mission

At Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed, our school's mission is to 'develop a caring and inclusive learning community that encourages the potential of each person'. It is therefore important to reflect on all practices, procedures and activities undertaken in our school with a view to continuous improvement. Assessment includes the evaluation of student achievements in our school in all activities, both curricular and cocurricular, in order to improve teaching and learning. It is underpinned by our core values of care, community, respect, equality and excellence in education.

## Rationale

Assessment is central to all teaching and learning experiences and it is critical that all stakeholders – students, parents and teachers have as much knowledge as possible about a student's development. Assessment is designed to improve student learning, monitor effectiveness of programmes and provide future direction. There needs to be a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the tools used to make consistent judgements. This policy is underpinned by our core value of academic excellence whereby assessment is designed to support each student to achieve to the best of their ability with students, teachers and parents/guardians working together to achieve this.

## 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 through formative and summative assessment. It is important to appreciate that assessment is a partnership between students, parents and teachers.
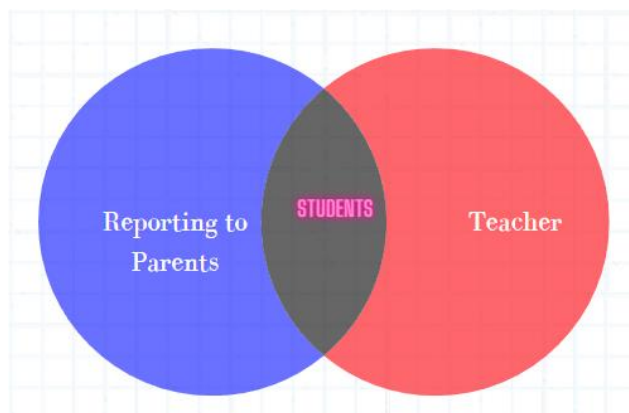
We recognise that assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning and should motivate pupils, enabling and encouraging them to achieve to the best of their ability. An effective assessment policy will help teachers to identify early and ongoing interventions that need to be put in place to assist students in reaching their potential. We utilise the NCCA's 'Focus in Learning - Ongoing Assessment Toolkit' to plan our whole school approach to professional learning which in turn improves our assessment practices. We do so while remaining cognisant of our school's Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Irish Schools (DEIS) targets and measures.

## Aims of Assessment

**Assessment should enable students:**
- To improve their achievement through the provision of timely feedback
- To be involved in their own learning
- To be motivated to achieve their full potential
- To set targets to support realistic academic achievement and growth

**Assessment should enable teachers:**
- To assess progress and adapt planning as required
- To evaluate their students' learning needs in addition to strengths and areas for improvement
- To support students to set realistic growth orientated targets
- To ensure that students know how to improve the standard of their work
- To review and reflect on practice to meet the needs of students
- 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. This can inform and support DEIS targets and measures
- To identify students for levels in subjects where this is appropriate

- To aid in the assessment of a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the ETB or private 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 or who may require reasonable accommodations for state examinations
- To meet statutory requirements.

**Reporting of assessment should enable parents:**
- To be involved in their child's learning
- To understand and encourage the progress their child is making
- To check their child's progress throughout their time in Secondary School

## 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.

## 2. Formative Assessment

This section explains formative assessment and provides an overview of how it is used in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Definition: Formative assessment describes all those processes by which teachers and learners use information about student achievement to make adjustments to the students' learning that improves their achievement. It's about using information to adapt teaching and adapt the work of the students to put the learning back on track - in short, to make sure that the learning is proceeding in the right direction and to support that learning.

Assessment for Learning: Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed 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.' It should be cooperative, and student centered.

The following infographic from William, Thompson 2007 summarises the key points in this section.

| | Where the learner is going | Where the learner is | How to get there |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher | Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions | Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning | Providing feedback that moves learners forward |
| Peer | | Activating students as learning resources for one another | |
| Learner | | Activating students as owners of their own learning | |

Adapted from Wiliam, Thompson 2007

Assessment for Learning should support learning as well as measure the outcomes.

Effective assessment for learning enables students to understand how to improve their work by:
- Ensuring they know what they should be learning in each lesson
- Helping them to understand the assessment criteria before an assignment begins
- Telling them what they have done well and how they could improve their work
- Making available examples of work (where appropriate) which do meet the criteria so they can see how to improve their own work
- Being a part of discussion at subject planning meetings – helps teachers to modify teaching methods
- Focusing on how students learn

Central to the school's vision for learning and teaching is the class teacher's commitment to:

- Sharing learning intentions and success criteria
- Effective questioning
- Effective formative feedback
- Encouraging Student Reflection

a) Effective Questioning using Bloom's Taxonomy: the school has created a document on effective questioning as part of engagement with TL21 which is in the staff shared folder (See Appendix 1).

b) Assessment for Learning Strategies: Teachers utilise, where appropriate, varied formative (AFL) strategies in lessons. Examples of approaches that support formative assessment in Coláiste Mhuire Co-ed are:

- Observation
- Questioning (considering Blooms taxonomy)
- 2 Stars and a wish
- Self-assessment

- KWL
- Peer evaluations
- Traffic Lights in student journals
- Exit cards
- Think pair share
- Show me boards

It is important to note that these approaches are not in themselves formative. It is rather how the teacher and students use them to widen and shape their teaching/learning that helps to improve the learning.

c) Learning Intentions: Lessons are guided by specification/syllabus linked learning intentions that are shared with students. Teachers, at their own discretion, share the learning intention(s) as appropriate for the lesson either before, during or as a result of learning. Teachers 'check in' with the learning intention(s) at the end of lesson(s) using AfL strategies to move students on in their learning.

d) Sharing Criteria for Success: Teachers are encouraged to co-create success criteria with students with specific activities in mind. They are discussed and agreed prior to the undertaking of an activity. Success criteria provide a scaffold and focus for students while engaged in the activity and are used as a basis for feedback and peer/self-assessment.

e) Peer Assessment and Self-Assessment: Teachers will, occasionally, supervise students as they assess their own or their peer's work, based on criteria for success. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work, write down how they can improve and assist them in achieving it.

f) Feedback: As part of the schools' focus on assessment in planning for school improvement formative feedback is provided based on success criteria. Students are encouraged to use feedback to reflect and make improvements.

When providing feedback, it is important to note that good feedback:
- Clarifies what good performance is (success criteria, expected standards) and is related to the quality of the work and agreed success criteria
- Facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning
- Identifies success and achievement
- Provides high quality information to students about their learning and indicates suggestions for improvement
- Encourages both teacher and student self-reflection
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning
- Motivates students and encourages thinking, growth and development
- Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
- Allows time for improvement to take place
- Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching

- Makes learning visible for both teachers and students

In recognising the importance of feedback teachers will (where appropriate):

- Mark work assigned to students and provide appropriate oral or written feedback based on the success criteria/features of quality
- Use peer or self-assessment
- Encourage student reflection
- Use formative comments in written reports

g) Homework: In line with the demands of specifications/syllabi teachers set regular homework, comment on this homework, and make suggestions for improvement.

h) Differentiated Learning: Assessment work may be differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of the individual, determined by individual teachers.

i) ePortfolios: During Junior Cycle (as part of JCSP) Transition Year and LCA students plan and create their own ePortfolio. This is a process where students reflect on their learning to choose specific examples of work that best represents their progress and achievement to showcase within their ePortfolio. These examples are ideally the result of a reflective drafting and redrafting process where Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, and Effective Feedback are central.

j) Keep examples of students' work (within the bounds of GDPR) as exemplars and highlight how student work on display meets success criteria.

k) Teachers are encouraged to use digital technologies to support learning and assessment. Embedding digital technologies in learning, teaching and assessment practices cuts across subjects, school departments and programmes. Teachers are encouraged to use Google workspace to promote student learning and both formative and summative assessment. Feedback can be given via comments, mote or screencast. Student collaboration can be achieved by sharing documents and encouraging students to create Google sites or ePortfolios. When presenting best work for ePortfolios the emphasis must be on reflection.

## 3. Summative Assessment & Academic Tracking

This section explains summative assessment and the Academic tracking process. There is also an explanation of the target grade system which is integral to the summative assessment process in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Definition: Summative Assessment refers to the assessment of learning and aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner. It is important to note that such assessment is carried out at a summative moment but also has formative potential.

Academic Tracking: is the process whereby students record their target grades and actual grades in their diary and on the school information system and this progress is monitored by subject teachers and year heads.

Key Assessment Tasks: Subjects should use key assessment tasks to measure pupil progress.  These may take the form of formal tests but may also be longer pieces of work completed over a period of time. Practical and investigative work will also be used in several subjects. The aims of these assessments are to:

- Assess students' achievements against clear objectives i.e., success criteria
- Raise students' awareness for their progress towards their optimum grade
- Ensure that students understand how they can improve their work by using assessment for learning techniques

The assessment will:

- Be standardised by departments (while being cognisant of the need for differentiation) in order to be able to moderate across the year group and ensure a consistent standard related to the programmes of study
- Be assessed against level descriptions set by the Department of Education and material from the State Examinations Commission
- Be an integral part of the learning process
- Take place on 3 occasions per year for 1$^{st}$, 2$^{nd}$ years and 5th years
    - First and Second years have class-based examinations in Autumn and formal house exams in November/December and May
    - Fifth years have class-based examinations in Autumn and Spring, and formal house exams in November/December and May
    - Third and Sixth Years have examinations in late November/December, Mock examinations in early February and the Certificate Examinations in June
    - Transition years are assessed using a continuous assessment Credit System (which is collated twice per year) and part of that system awards credits for completion of e-portfolio. See the TY policy for more information on same
    - Leaving Cert Applied students are assessed using in-house exams at Christmas and summer as appropriate for Examinable Subjects. There are a range of modes of assessments for all other Subjects in LCA which include: satisfactory completion of modules through key assignments and 90% attendance. Tasks are assessed as per State Examinations Commission (SEC) guidelines by a combination of Marking of Task Reports, followed by an interview with an examiner from the State Examinations Commission. Oral examinations are conducted in foreign languages and English & Communications.
        - Final examinations are held by the SEC for one language at the end of the first year of LCA and for the remaining examinable subjects at the end of the second year of LCA.
        - Students will also receive an effort grade which is based on agreed criteria (see Appendix 1).

- The mode of assessment may include: written examinations, practicals, aurals and/or oral work. **Where a format other than a summative exam is used for reporting purposes the teacher will provide a statement outlining the learning outcomes being assessed and the mode of assessment.** This will be distributed to parents with the report.

Formal examinations will normally be assessed numerically, and students will be given a grade generally following the same format as the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations. Teachers are asked to use questions and marking schemes that align with those set by the State Examinations Commission in their subject area.

- Grades are recorded on Compass, in teacher diaries, and homework diaries.

### Target Grades

John Hattie's[1] research indicated that self-reported grades are the best way to raise student attainment. He further clarifies this by stating that it is the dialogue between students and teachers in this process that is the most powerful component. With this in mind in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed students are required to set target grades.

The target grade is recorded in the student diary and entered by the student on the school information system. It is what we believe students should be aiming towards. Teachers are encouraged to negotiate this grade with parents and students. The target grade is what they should achieve in each exam through hard work, endeavour and with support and guidance. Students should also record the results of academic tracking tests in their diaries. Teachers are encouraged to discuss academic grades with reference to target grades.

### Athena Analytics Academic Tracking

Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed uses an academic tracking tool called ATHENA which analyses students' results using their CAT score as a base. This aids teachers, students, parents and year heads to support student learning after assessment. It ensures students can unlock their potential. It also makes teachers and other school staff aware of those who are not performing to the best of their ability so extra support may be given.

## 4. Assessment in the Junior Cycle

As Junior Cycle is new for many parents, it was felt that a comprehensive section which explains how assessment at this level is carried out was necessary.

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[1] Hattie, John (ND) "Glossary of Hattie's influences on Student Achievement" Glossary of Hattie's influences on student achievement - VISIBLE LEARNING (visible-learning.org)

## Explanation of Junior Cycle Assessment

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 $2_{nd}$ and $3_{rd}$ Year. This assessment is conducted by teachers, and is moderated by means of:

- A SLAR (Subject Learning and Assessment Review) meeting. Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings enable teachers to collaboratively reach consistency in their judgments of student work against common, externally set Features of Quality. Teachers come together in professional discussion to reflect on the quality of their own students' work, informed by the subject specification, assessment guidelines and other support material including annotated examples of students' work provided by the NCCA.
- CBAs are reported using statements rather than grades

Assessment Task (AT):
- A number of subjects (but not short courses) engage in the Assessment Task in $3_{rd}$ 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 $3_{rd}$ 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. Students prepare a variety of other areas of learning in each year of their junior cycle and choose their preferred statements at the end of the process.

## Junior Cycle Assessment in the Event of Student Absence

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.

To allow for planning of medical, dental, and other essential appointments, Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed shall provide dates of assessment events as they become available. Students are also required to note these dates in a page in their journals/student diaries.

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.

<span style="color:blue">CBA and Assessment Task Arrangements</span>

The following are the arrangements for Classroom Based Assessment and Assessment Tasks in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed, Thurles.

1. Dates of CBAS, Assessment Tasks and SLARS are agreed by staff within their subject departments, based on windows set by the Department of Education and are adhered to in each subject.
2. Dates are sent to parents and students by the Junior Cycle Coordinator using the School Information System and are put on the school website.
3. CBAs must be submitted in the timeframe outlined. The final date of that period is the deadline date.
4. Subject departments may request that a text be sent to the relevant cohort reminding them about key dates as they arise.
5. Best practice is that the SLAR takes place within 3 weeks of the CBA deadline.
6. If a child is not engaging with the CBA the classroom teacher must flag this with the year head and the year head will contact parents regarding the same.
7. If a student is absent for a period of time during the CBA timeframe, a teacher may try to facilitate their completion, but this may not always be possible. In the case of a subject where there is a 3- or 4-week window) a one-week extension can be given for the Classroom Based Assessment where a medical cert is presented or in the event of a bereavement (death of parent, sibling or grandparent. This is arranged by the class teacher in consultation with the Year Head and parents. Parents are phoned and notified in writing by the Year Head. This extension period cannot extend beyond the agreed SLAR date.
8. In the case of a medical cert or bereavement (death of parent, sibling or grandparent) a rearrangement of the Assessment Task date can be made. This is arranged by the class teacher in consultation with the Year Head and parents. Parents are phoned and notified in writing by the Year Head. This extension period cannot extend beyond the SEC's set date for completion.

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

**The regulations of the State Examinations Commission apply to assessment tasks, practical exams and summative assessment and take precedence (where applicable).**

## Reasonable Support

To facilitate providing feedback to students during their engagement with assessment, the process of completing the Classroom Based Assessments should be viewed as part of teaching and learning, and not solely for assessment purposes.

It is envisaged that teachers will guide, support and supervise throughout the process. Teachers should refer to the assessment guidelines in their subjects for further clarification.

## Transition Year Assessment

Transition Year Grading System

Transition Year in Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed is graded on a Pass, Merit or Distinction basis. The grading is determined by the awarding of credits. These credits are awarded at the end of the school year. A report will be issued at the end of the school year showing the credits for each subject and a teacher's comment. The number of credits per subject changes from year to year based on the amount of contact time.

The following is a sample of what the credit system can look like (please note at time of ratification TY is undergoing reform):

| COMPONENT | CREDITS |
|---|---|
| English | 50 |
| Maths | 50 |
| Enterprise | 30 |
| Physical Education | 30 |
| Irish/EAL | 20 |
| RSE | 20 |
| Music | 20 |
| French | 20 |
| Programming | 20 |
| Chemistry | 20 |
| Physics | 20 |
| Biology | 20 |
| DCG | 20 |
| Engineering | 20 |
| Construction | 20 |
| Art | 20 |
| Home Ec | 20 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Chinese | 20 |
| Japanese | 20 |
| Irish Culture | 20 |
| Sustainability | 20 |
| CV | 50 |
| Work Experience | 100 |
| Digital Portfolio | 100 |
| Reflection/Presentation | 50 |
| Extra-Curricular | 100 |
| Certification | 100 |
| TOTAL CREDITS | 1000 |

At the end of TY students will receive a certificate awarding 40-59% Pass, 60-79% Merit, 80-100% Distinction.

Leaving Certificate Applied Assessment

Leaving Certificate Applied Grading System

Leaving Certificate Applied is graded on a Pass, Merit or Distinction basis. Students who achieve less than 120 or leave the programme early will receive a record of experience. The grading is determined by the awarding of credits in subjects.

The credit breakdown is as follows:

Pass 120 - 139 Credits.
Merit 140 - 169 Credits.
Distinction 170 - 200 Credits.

LCA Modes of Assessment
The LCA assessment is based on:

a. Satisfactory completion of modules
     o Evidence of completion of 4 key assignments for each module
     o One credit per course module in which there is a final exam
     o Two credits per course module in which there is no final exam

b. 90% attendance worth 62 Credits (31%)

This section is recorded in school by subject teachers who submit records for each session to the LCA coordinator who uploads them to the SEC online entry system. All evidence and records are kept in house.

c. LCA tasks worth 70 Credits (35%) LCA students undertake 7 tasks which are assessed through an interview by an external examiner.

These tasks account for 10 credits each, totalling 70 Credits (35%)
- o Vocational Preparation
- o Vocational Education (x2)
- o General Education
- o Contemporary Issue
- o Personal Reflection
- o Practical Achievement

d. Final Examinations worth 68 credits (34%)
- o English & Communication
- o Vocational Specialisms 1- Graphics and Construction or Hotel Catering and Tourism
- o Vocational Specialisms 2 - Engineering or Childcare and Community Care
- o Language Year 1 Irish
- o Language Year 2 French/German/Spanish
- o Social Education
- o Mathematical Applications

State Exams: Exams are run by the SEC in June of each year. LCA 1 will have a language assessment at the end of year one and the remaining exams are accessed at the end of year.

**Leaving Certificate Assessment Breakdown**

| | **For candidates sitting exams in Summer 2025** | | For candidates sitting exams in Summer 2026 | | **For candidates sitting exams in Summer 2027** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Subject** | **Breakdown** | **%** | Breakdown | % | **Breakdown** | **%** |
| **English** | **Written Exam 2 papers** | **100%** | Written Exam 2 papers | 100% | **Written Exam 2 papers** | **100%** |
| **Irish** | **Oral Aural Written Exam** | **40% 10% 50%** | Oral Aural Written Exam | 40% 10% 50% | **Oral Aural Written Exam** | **40% 10% 50%** |

| Subject | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maths | Written Exam- 2 papers | 100% | Written Exam- 2 papers | 100% | Written Exam- 2 papers | 100% |
| French | **Higher:** **Oral** **Aural** **Ordinary:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** | 25% 20% 20% 25% 55% (both levels) | Higher: Oral Aural Ordinary: Oral Aural Written Exam | 25% 20% 20% 25% 55% (both levels) | **Higher:** **Oral** **Aural** **Ordinary:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** | 25% 20% 20% 25% 55% (both levels) |
| Japanese | **Higher:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** **Ordinary:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** | 25% 20% 55% 25% 25% 50% | Higher: Oral Aural Written Exam Ordinary: Oral Aural Written Exam | 25% 20% 55% 25% 25% 50% | **Higher:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** **Ordinary:** **Oral** **Aural** **Written Exam** | 25% 20% 55% 25% 25% 50% |
| Agricultural Science | **Project Work** **Written Exam** | 25% 75% | Project Work Written Exam | 25% 75% | **Project Work** **Written Exam** | 25% 75% |
| Art, History and Appreciation | **Project** **Practical Day Exam** **Written Exam** | 50% 20% 30% | Project Practical Day Exam Written Exam | 50% 20% 30% | **Project** **Practical Day Exam** **Written Exam** | 50% 20% 30% |
| Biology | **Written Exam** | 100% | Written Exam | 100% | **Written Exam** **Biology in Practice Investigation** | 60% 40% |
| Chemistry | **Written Exam** | 100% | Written Exam | 100% | **Written Exam** **Chemistry in Practice Investigation** | 60% 40% |
| Physics | **Written Exam** | 100% | Written Exam | 100% | **Written Exam** | 60% |

| | | | | | Physics In Practice Investigation | 40% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Business** | **Written Exam** | **100%** | Written Exam | 100% | **Written Exam** **Business Alive Investigative Study** | **60%** **40%** |
| **Engineering** | **Higher:** **Project** **Practical Exam** **Written Theory Exam** **Ordinary:** **Project** **Practical Exam** **Written Theory Exam** | **25%** **25%** **50%** **30%** **30%** **40%** | Higher: Project Practical Exam Written Theory Exam Ordinary: Project Practical Exam Written Theory Exam | 25% 25% 50% 30% 30% 40% | **Higher:** **Project** **Practical Exam** **Written Theory Exam** **Ordinary:** **Project** **Practical Exam** **Written Theory Exam** | **25%** **25%** **50%** **30%** **30%** **40%** |
| **Construction** | **Project** **Portfolio** **Experiments** **Practical Day Exam** **Written Exam** | **10%** **10%** **15%** **25%** **50%** | Project Portfolio Experiments Practical Day Exam Written Exam | 10% 10% 15% 25% 50% | **Project** **Portfolio** **Experiments** **Practical Day Exam** **Written Exam** | **10%** **10%** **15%** **25%** **50%** |
| **Design and Communication Graphics** | **Project** **Written Exam** | **40%** **60%** | Project Written Exam | 40% 60% | **Project** **Written Exam** | **40%** **60%** |
| **Home Economics** | **Food Studies Coursework** **Written Exam** | **20%** **80%** | Food Studies Coursework Written Exam | 20% 80% | **Food Studies Coursework** **Written Exam** | **20%** **80%** |
| **Link Modules** | **Portfolio (due March of 6th year) Written** | **60%** **40%** | Portfolio (due March of 6th year) Written | 60% 40% | **Portfolio (due March of 6th year) Written Exam (first Wednesday** | **60%** **40%** |

| | Exam (first Wednesday in May) | | Exam (first Wednesday in May) | | in May) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **History** | **Research Study Report Written Exam** | **20% 80%** | Research Study Report Written Exam | 20% 80% | **Research Study Report Written Exam** | **20% 80%** |
| **Geography** | **Project Written Exam** | **20% 80%** | Project Written Exam | 20% 80% | **Project Written Exam** | **20% 80%** |
| **Music** | **Listening Composing Performance Remaining 25% is chosen by students in either listening, composing or performing.** | **25% 25% 25% 25%** | Listening Composing Performance Remaining 25% is chosen by students in either listening, composing or performing. | 25% 25% 25% 25% | **Listening Composing Performance Remaining 25% is chosen by students in either listening, composing or performing.** | **25% 25% 25% 25%** |

## Referencing

It is expected as a matter of normal academic practice that students will refer to (or cite) the sources they use in their work. This is particularly important in project work such as Classroom Based Assessments at Junior Cycle and project work at Senior Cycle. The sources that students cite or refer to could be a book in print format, an e-book, journal article, film, piece of music, newspaper article, computer program, etc. Citing and referencing sources shows the amount of research you've done and can strengthen your work by giving your ideas support from writers or researchers in the subject area. The Harvard referencing system is used at Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed and resources are available to support students to use this system.

## Use of AI

As per Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed's AI policy, AI tools may be used where assessment permits the use of the internet and where the student can demonstrate that the final submission is the product of their own independent research and independent thinking.

AI tools are not permitted to be used in student work in the following examples:
- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content to the point that the work can no longer be considered to be the student's own

- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student's own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies

Ultimately, in all cases, it is a student's responsibility to explain, understand and stand over it, and defend their own work.

More information can be found in our AI and Acceptable Use policy.

# 5. Reporting

## Written reports

Written reports are forwarded to Parents/ Guardians of First, Second Years, TY and Fifth year students in December and in June. Reports are forwarded to Parents/Guardians of Third and Sixth year students in December and after the Mock Examinations. The report template is computerised and allows teachers to distinguish levels. A mark, grade and effort grade are awarded, and an original comment is given. Comments are phrased in a formative positive manner and the purpose of this comment is to guide future progress.

Transition Year parents receive a report following term 1 and at summer which shows how students are progressing according to the merit system and an overview of progress from the coordinator.

All reports are signed off by the year head and the Principal and a general comment may be made on progress to date.

## Teacher comments in reports

When writing comments teachers are asked to:
- Write formative comments
- To highlight areas of strength and areas for future improvement
- To ensure that comments directly link to future progress and learning

## Parent teacher meetings

Parent teacher meetings are seen as an integral part of the reporting process.

At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed students attend the parent teacher meetings. Meetings are held once per year in a schedule provided with summer correspondence for all year groups

Parents and students should bring their school journal/diary to the meeting and target grades and actual attainment should form the basis of the conversations.

# 6. Roles of Key Personnel in Assessment

## Role of Students

In relation to assessment, individual students shall:

- Prepare well for exams.
- Follow guidelines for study at home as outlined in the school journal.
- Self-assess and peer assess with guidance from their teacher.
- Keep up to date with results on Compass and set targets for future results.
- Attend Parent/Student/Teacher Meetings and Information Evenings.

## Role of Parents

In relation to assessment, individual parents shall:

- Show interest in student's schoolwork, exam preparation, exam performance as well as to encourage, motivate and act on recommendations and feedback.
- Attend Parent/Student/Teacher Meeting and Information Evenings.
- Check Compass regularly.
- Provide a quiet place to study.

## Role of Individual Teachers

In relation to assessment, individual teachers shall:

- familiarise him/herself with assessment procedures and requirements. Information is available at www.curriculumonline.ie.
- incorporate the principles of formative assessment into their practice.
- facilitate assessment events.
- keep attendance records at all assessment events.
- record results in compass and results of CBAs into P-POD, when this facility is made available
- inform the Year head in the event where a student is absent from an assessment event and provide additional details if required.
- provide the Junior Cycle Coordinator with results from CBAs.
- provide the Examinations secretary with any examination material and records of attendance at ATs.
- follow procedures laid out by the relevant department regarding assessment.
- engage in the SLAR process.
- discuss academic tracking results with parents at parent teacher meetings or at an appointed time if requested to do so by the year head, deputy principal or principal.

## Role of SEN team

In relation to assessment, SEN key workers (SEN Coordinator, RACE Coordinator & Exam Secretary) shall:

- Be accessible to teachers for discussion regarding necessary exam/assessment supports for students with extra needs.
- ensure that appropriate supports are put in place for students where sanctioned, e.g. scribe, reader, laptop etc.

- inform students with special needs and their parents/guardians, as to what supports are in place for the state exams.
- organise USB keys to save assessment materials where appropriate during state exams / assessments. Such USB keys should be labelled with the individual student's exam number.
- 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 at exam / assessment times.
- liaise with key workers and management where appropriate.

### Role of Junior Cycle Coordinator

In relation to JC assessment, the Junior Cycle Coordinator shall:
- share all relevant assessment dates with staff when they are made available and collate a timetable annually.
- communicate with parents/guardians providing information regarding assessment events.
- communicate with students the dates of CBAs and maintain a notice board re same.
- 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**.**

### Role of Assistant Principal with responsibility for Exams and Reporting
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
- lead school initiatives to raise attainment
- Oversight of school reports (setting up, sending home)
- Organise Parent Teacher meetings
- Oversight of ePortfolios

### Role of Subject Departments
Subject departments shall:
- plan collaboratively for assessment and build up exemplars of good practice to facilitate best practice when sharing success criteria, keeping GDPR in mind, over time.
- discuss assessment procedures and put appropriate plans in place.
- subject departments will request that a text be sent to the relevant cohort reminding them about key dates as they arise.
- liaise with the Junior Cycle Coordinator as appropriate.
- nominate one teacher to act as SLAR Facilitator as outlined in *Circular Letter 0017/2020.*

### Role of Year Head

- o liaise with management and other teachers where appropriate.
- o receive information from teachers regarding attendance.
- o make contact with home/refer to HSCL where appropriate, particularly in the case of absence.
- o liaise with Senior Management regarding 'mop-up' assessment events where appropriate**.**

### Role of Principal

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

## 7. Psychometric Tests

The following tests are administered to all students:

- Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) E 4th edition (computerised). This is a **diagnostic assessment** that is designed to help students and their teachers understand how they learn and what their academic potential might be. It assesses how students think in areas that are known to make a difference to learning.

The following tests are administered if the need arises:

- PT Maths Test - Progress Test in Maths (PTM) is a series of age-appropriate tests for students. Each test assesses aspects of mathematical skill and knowledge, together with key process skills of fluency, mathematical reasoning and problem solving. The PT Maths 11T is used as a transition test on entry to secondary education.
- The New Group Reading Test comprises three sections: Phonics, Sentence Completion and Passage Comprehension. The test is adaptive; each student's performance is assessed as they complete the test, and the questions are adapted to be in line with the ability they demonstrate. Standard Age Scores reflect the age of the student and the difficulty level of the test questions attempted.

Students with particular needs are identified.  Retesting occurs as deemed necessary by the Learning Support Department.

Testing as is deemed appropriate by the Department of Education for the purposes of Irish Exemptions.

Testing as is deemed appropriate by the State Examinations Commission for the purposes of RACE is also administered.

### Teacher Professional Development

Coláiste Mhuire Co Ed continues to encourage teachers' professional development to develop assessment processes. This learning is shared with staff through staff meetings, subject department meetings and

teach meets. These professional development hours (when done in own time) can be put towards Croke Park hours within the constraints of the agreement for the use of Croke Park hours.


## 8. Inhouse Examination Regulations

1. Study time must be used to revise for upcoming exams.
2. Students must familiarise themselves with their exam timetable, which will be distributed in advance of the exam.
3. Students must follow all instructions by supervising teacher.
4. Students must be on time for all exams and in full uniform.
5. Students must sit in their assigned seat during examinations. Students must remain in their allocated seat for the duration of the exams unless requested to move by a member of staff.
6. Students must bring all the necessary equipment for their examinations- e.g.: Maths sets, calculators, drawing equipment etc.
7. Students must remain in the exam centre for the duration of the examination. Students who have completed their examinations must sit quietly and study for next exam and must not disrupt other students. Students who do not have exams must have books or notes to study, if not doing an exam.
8. No mobile phones or music players allowed in the exam centre.
9. No chewing gum, food or drinks allowed in exam centre.
10. Students must not leave exam centre without permission.
11. Students must not leave school grounds after an exam (except in case of Leaving Cert)
12. Students are not allowed to go to the bathroom, except in the case of an emergency.
13. Students must respect the rights of other students to complete exams. Disruption of any sort will not be tolerated.  Students must not attempt to talk to or distract another student in the exam centre.
14. When examination officially ends, students must go quietly to the canteen area, or leave the school grounds where permission has been given. Normal classes may be ongoing, and students are not permitted to disturb these classes.
15. If a student disobeys a clear instruction, they will be sent to another exam centre and will be required to sit the exam after school that day.


## 9. Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed – State Examinations Policy

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed encourages all students to avail of every opportunity to optimise their potential. Part of this is to fully engage with state examinations. Students who are properly organised and have all the necessary equipment are better prepared. Students who remain in the exam for the full official duration of the exam give themselves a better chance to answer questions fully and to revise answers where possible/necessary.

If students need support during the exam period, the student support page at www.cmco.ie may offer some useful points of contact. http://www.cmco.ie/information/pastoral/student-support-2/.

Parents are also reminded that the National Parents Council offers useful supports which can be found at www.npcpp.ie.

Parents and students should note the section on study skills in the student diary which includes a section on Study Tips for students in Exam Years.

During the exam period parents and students should consider the following:
· Know the exam timetable
· Know what equipment is needed for each day
· Avoid "postmortems" (going over and over an exam), allow students to say how they got on and try to focus on the next day.
· Encourage students to eat a healthy diet and to get exercise.
· Make sure they get a good night's sleep before an exam.

The following regulations apply during exam time:
· Students must be on time for all their exams.  Students cannot be admitted to an exam after 30 minutes have elapsed. It is very important that students are in the exam centre at least 15 minutes before the official start time.
· The use of mobile phones and digital media is strictly forbidden by the State Examinations Commission. Should a student be found with such an item in an exam, the equipment will be forwarded to the State Exams Commission with a report outlining the incident.
· It the responsibility of parents to ensure that their son/daughter attends all exams. Parents and students must be familiar with the examination timetable.
· Junior Cycle Students are encouraged not to leave the exam until the official finish time of the exam.
    o If Junior Cycle students choose to leave early, they must go to supervised study, which is provided by the school.
    o They will not be permitted to leave this study session until the official finish end time of the exam unless they are signed out by a parent/guardian.
    o They will be permitted to make a call in the study centre to their parents/guardians.
    o A student may leave the study centre earlier than the official finish time if signed out (in person) by a parent/guardian.  Please note the parent/guardian must go to the study centre and sign their son/daughter out of the school.

· Students must bring all the necessary equipment (calculators, geometry sets, drawing equipment etc.) as spares are not available in the school and the State Exams Commission does not provide them.
· Students must wear full school uniform for the duration of the exams
· The normal code of behaviour applies throughout the exam period. Disruption of exams is not allowed and will be reported to the Department of Education by the state superintendents.
· As these regulations constitute school policy, students who fail to comply with them may be excluded permanently from Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed following the Junior cycle exams.

It is the policy of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed that only past pupils of CMCO or current PLC students in CMCO may complete the State Exams in our Leaving Cert centres. The school reserves the right to refuse external applicants.

The Board of Management adopted this policy at a meeting in April 2025 and the policy is available on the school website.

## Appendix 1

**Questions should be:**
**Planned, Purposeful, be spaced for thinking time, Move from Closed to Open**


<u>**Why we ask questions**</u>

To manage and organise student behaviour

To find out what students know

To stimulate interest in a new topic

To focus on an issue or topic

To structure a task for maximum learning

To identify, diagnose difficulties or blocks to learning

To stimulate students to ask questions

To give students opportunities to assimilate, reflect and learn through discussion

Research tells us that teachers ask one question every 72 seconds and 38% of them are answered by the teacher, not the students.


<u>**General points**</u>

Ask fewer questions

Ask more open questions

Sequence questions

Prepare key questions

Link questions to the learning intentions


<u>**Asking a range of questions**</u>

● Teacher asks a range of questions dealing with all levels of Blooms taxonomy  <u>Link to info on questions and Bloom</u>

|  | These questions sound like…….. |
|---|---|
| Knowledge | How many …<br>Who was …<br>Who spoke …<br>What happened when ….<br>Describe what happened at … |
| Comprehension | Can you explain that in your own words?<br>What do mean by? |

|  | Can you provide a definition for … |
|  | Who was the key character? |
| Application | Can you think of another instance when … |
|  | What would you change if … |
|  | Would this information be useful if you had to … |
|  | From the given information develop a set of instructions to … |
| Analysis | Which event could not have happened if … |
|  | Can you compare our answer with that presented in … |
|  | How is this similar to … |
|  | Explain what must have happened when … |
| Evaluation | Is there a better solution to …. |
|  | Defend your position using … |
|  | What changes would make it better … |
|  | Explain |
|  | Would you recommend this … and why |
| Synthesis | How would you have handled … |
|  | What are the possible solutions to … |
|  | Can you create new and unusual uses for … |
|  | How effective are …?? |

**Whole class questions**
**Use think pair share**

**Provide think time: Pause prompt praise strategy**

● Teacher gives "pause time" for students to reflect before selecting a student to answer.  Allow for think time (helps to alleviate anxiety).

● Teacher prompts students when unsure

● Listen fully to the response
Use "wrong answers" to develop understanding

● Teacher praises students for correct answer
Use wrong answers to develop understanding
Bounce wrong answers………bounce all answers (see below)

**Pause, prompt, praise, bounce**

- **Post question**
- **Pause - give students time to think - at least 10 seconds, be deliberate say we are waiting a while here….**
- **Pounce to a student to answer**
- **Bounce straight away for an opinion**

**Random selection of students (to avoid asking same students all the time)**

- Teacher uses a method to ensure random selection of students/no hands up.
  Suggestions: lollipop sticks
  Random name generator http://www.classtools.net/education-games-php/fruit_machine

**IDEA**
Identify the key questions in relation to the learning intentions for the lessons
Decide on the level, order and timing of questions
Extend the questioning - think of subsidiary questions to ask
Analyse anticipated answers and responses you might give

The final piece is that you need to see if you are doing this properly. You could ask a colleague to observe you and give feedback using this sheet or video yourself and use this sheet.

Ask anyone on the team for more assistance if you need it.  Good luck.