



Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey

Assessment Policy

'Our school is a caring Christian Community in which pupils have the opportunity to achieve academic excellence and to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, creatively and physically in a healthy environment'.

1. Definition

The term 'assessment' refers to the process of obtaining, analysing and interpreting information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs. This information is for use by students, teachers, parents/guardians and appropriate external parties. It is fully integrated with the delivery of the curriculum and is an essential component of effective classroom practice.

2. Rationale for Assessment

Assessment is an intrinsic part of the ongoing teaching and learning process and takes place for the following reasons:

- To provide the teacher with an awareness of the students' understanding, knowledge, skills and progress. This information allows the teacher to identify individual learning styles, strengths and weaknesses and to adapt teaching strategies as appropriate.
- To provide the students with information regarding their own progress which enables self reflection and independent, realistic target setting and to develop students' capacity for self assessment, an integral aspect of learning which is highlighted by the Junior Cycle key skill 'Managing Myself'.
- To provide parents with information regarding progress which enables the fostering of a shared involvement and responsibility between school and home.

- To establish baseline data e.g. CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test, in relation to students' attainments which aids in the maintenance of effective and progressive pupil records.
- To aid students in identifying the correct level and to inform subject choice and help students identify and discover their strengths and interests.
- To assess a student's eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
- To assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- To reward progress, effort and achievement and to foster self esteem and social development.

3. Legislation

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

4. Types of Assessment

Assessment encompasses formative, summative and self assessment. The discretion of the teacher is advised to adapt the theory of each assessment category to the particular demands of the subject. Formative, summative and self assessment are applicable to all subject areas and are all interrelated throughout the academic year.

4.1 Formative Assessment

4.1.1 Definition

Formative assessment is ongoing assessment for learning (AFL). It provides evidence of and for progression of learning. It supports learning through identifying difficulties, providing feedback and diagnosing future learning priorities. Formative assessment is an important component of the Junior Cycle key skill 'Managing Myself' which outlines that students should aim to understand themselves as learners so that they can develop personal goals and plans, make considered decisions and reflect on their progress.

4.1.2 Examples of Formative Assessment

- Comment only marking on homework/tests
- Facilitation of written student reflections
- Use of directive comments on reports
- Use of learning outcomes template in classrooms
- Junior Cycle descriptors
- Junior Cycle SLAR meetings
- Use of grading rubrics, based on shared learning outcomes.
- Use of online various platforms where format is subject/context dependent, including but not limited to Socrative, Flubaroo/Google Sheets results Kahoot and Quizlet results, comments on Google Classroom

4.3 Summative Assessment

4.3.1 Definition

Summative assessment aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner. It identifies a standard of pupil attainment and is generally carried out at the end of a significant period of learning.

4.3.2 Examples of Summative Assessment

- October/November, Mock and State Examinations for 3rd and 6th Year students. Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally.
- November, February and May examinations for 5th Year students.
- Continuous assessment such as classwork, homework and in-class tests are used to inform the 1st and 2nd Year grade in November. 1st and 2nd Year students sit formal house exams in February and May.
- Transition Years have written examinations in Irish, English, Maths and Modern Languages in February and engage in continuous assessment throughout the year in all of their subjects.
- In-class summative assessment also occurs regularly throughout the year.
- The above summative assessments include but are not limited to written examinations, practicals, aural work, group work, oral work, presentations, Flubaroo quizzes, class tests and quizzes assigned via Google Classroom, work completed on G-suites, Book Creator, Popplet, Socrative or Quizlet.

4.3.3 Reporting Summative Assessment Results

Reporting ensures regular and relevant communication on progress to students, teachers, parents and other appropriate external audiences.

- Reports are forwarded to parents/guardians of First, Second, Fourth and Fifth Years in November/December, February and in June and in November and February for Third and Sixth Year students.
- The report template is digitally formatted and allows teachers to distinguish levels where relevant. All reports include a comment which identifies progress to date and offers direction to aid future learning.
- Transition Year parents/guardians receive a copy of reports in November, February and June. The reports combine formative and summative assessments.
- All reports are reviewed by the Year Head and the Principal and an overall comment may be made on progress to date.

5. Self Assessment

5.1 Definition

Self assessment encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning by evaluating their own achievement against shared learning outcomes and based on formative feedback provided by the teacher. It encourages individual learning goals and action plans for future progression. It also fosters a self reflective learning culture and values ownership for learning.

5.2 Examples of Self Assessment

- Facilitation of written student reflections
- UCAS/Higher and Further Education Applications
- Student correction of completed work with the use of shared learning outcomes and checklists based on the formative feedback provided by the teacher.
- TY Video Diary
- Digital Annotations: Video, audio, typed.
- Hand written self-assessment log/journal of digital schoolwork.
- Self-Assessment Rubrics

6. Psychometric Tests

Psychometric tests are administered to support students' educational development and learning, as well as career development over the course of their education in Loreto Abbey.

6.1 These tests include:

The CAT4 Cognitive Ability Testing which is administered to 1st Year Students by the Guidance and AEN Department.

Eirquest 'My Future Choice' aptitude test is administered to all Transition Year Students. Results are provided to students during a debriefing session with the Guidance Department.

Woodcock Johnson IV Tests of Cognitive Abilities (Irish Edition) is administered to individuals as deemed appropriate by the AEN Department and the Guidance Department.

6.2 When the results of the tests become available:

- Students with particular needs are identified.
- The results of these tests are shared with parents/guardians and students if it is deemed necessary.
- Contact is made with parents/guardians of students stating the extra resources available for those students.
- When replies are received regarding extra help and parental permission obtained, a programme is devised by the AEN team depending on timetable and availability of learning support staff.
- IEPs (Individual Educational Plans) are drawn up by the AEN Team in conjunction with parents and school management where applicable.

This policy is due for review in 2026/'27.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on:

Date: 14th May 2024

Signed: 

Chairperson

