



# ASSESSMENT POLICY

*Presentation Secondary School,  
Milltown, Co. Kerry*



## School Mission

*Our school is a Catholic school which aspires to the full development of all its members according to Christian Principles. Every effort is made to ensure that each student develops according to his/her talents and potential: physically, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually.*

*We aim to develop fully integrated people who are aware of their own dignity as persons, who have Christian values, who are reliable, trustworthy, honest, truthful, caring, prayerful, devoted to duty, lovers of God and of neighbour; people who are prepared to reach out to those less fortunate than themselves.*

## Rationale

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

Assessment is part of good learning and teaching and takes place for the following reasons:

- to monitor a student’s progress and to provide the teacher with information to make decisions about how the student is learning and progressing. This information allows teachers to identify the next steps in progressing the students learning and adapt her / his teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
- to provide information which affirms students in their learning, and which may be further affirmed through positive re-enforcement and encouragement.
- to provide students and parents with information regarding progress.
- to establish baseline data in relation to a student’s attainment in each subject and across their curriculum.
- to identify the level best suited for each student in each of the State Examination and make recommendations to parents/students if necessary.
- 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.

## 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.

## Formative Assessment/Approaches

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

Formative assessment (Assessment for Learning - AFL) uses a range of assessment methods and learning approaches 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.'

Formative assessment often requires levels of differentiation to suit the needs and abilities of the individual.

Cognisant of the demands of the syllabus in each curriculum area, teachers integrate formative assessment into learning and teaching.

The work being carried out by our Learning & Teaching Team includes a focus on building the capacity of teachers to embed formative assessment/approaches into their teaching and into students' everyday learning activities. A key focus is looking at what our students are being asked to do with the information in order to determine what they have learnt and understood, how deep the understanding is and which areas require further development. For example, students sequencing, classifying, replacing or comparing can demonstrate to the teacher and the students what level of learning is taking place and where further support may be needed.

## Summative Assessment

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

All 1<sup>st</sup> Year students complete CAT 4 and PPAD-E testing in the first few weeks. This is used to identify areas where additional support is necessary and those who are exceptionally able. Teachers are made aware of students who have been identified through testing, educational psychology assessments or other means. School supports are offered for those who require it and exceptionally able student are linked in the DCU CTYI programme.

In-class tests and summative assessments take place in class throughout the school year in all subjects and form crucial elements in assessing students' progress.

Formal examinations take place as follows,

- 1<sup>st</sup> Years class tests are given at the end of October. Formal exams in December & May.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Years have formal examinations in December and May.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Years have formal examinations in November and February (Pre-LC/JC exams)
- Transition Years have formal examinations in December and May.

Modes of assessment may include: written examinations/tests, practical projects, assignments, aurals and/or oral work.

Transition Year assessments may include external certification, portfolio, oral presentation, multimedia, self and peer evaluation.

Examinations generally follow a similar format to the Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations and a marking scheme is clearly identified.

As far as is practicably possible, and cognisant of the need for differentiation, subject departments are encouraged to produce common examinations and marking schemes for each year group.

Results of the above formal assessment are formally reported to Parents/ Guardians in the weeks following each set of assessments/examinations (mark, grade, and comment).

Mock Examinations are set and corrected externally. Results are communicated to students via teacher feedback and to parents via our reporting system.

Results of formal assessment (as well as formative observations/learning and class tests) are reviewed by the Principal/Deputy/Guidance Counsellor/Year Heads, throughout the year, to build a picture of the student's overall learning experience and progress across their full curriculum.