

Fingal Community College

Assessment Policy

May 2017

Review Date

May 2018

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.

ASSESSMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES

- Assessment information will be used to improve student learning and teaching practice and is a key element of whole school improvement work.
- Assessment information on attainment, effort, conduct and presentation will be valid and meaningful for learners, teachers, parents and other audiences.
- Assessment systems will make use of both quantitative data such as test results, pupil targets and National Curriculum level outcomes and qualitative information such as teacher and pupil comments and opinions to drive improvements in student learning.

RATIONALE

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. In keeping with our school's Mission Statement, we seek to enable each child to develop his/her full potential.

The school's policy on assessment and reporting procedures are guided by the various legislative requirements enshrined within the following:

The Education Act (1998).

The Data Protection (Amendments) Act (2003).

The Equal Status Act (2000).

The Education (Welfare) Act (2000).

The Education for persons with special Educational Needs Act (2004).

The Freedom of Information Act (1997,2003).

Looking at Our Schools (2016)

Our Assessment Policy will:

- Ensure that the school meets statutory obligations for assessment.
- Promote coherence and consistency in approach to assessment across the school.
- Promote a common understanding of standards both within the school and across other schools.
- Provide a framework within which Departments can design assessment to meet their particular needs.
- Raise expectations of pupil success.

Aims Of Our Assessment Policy

- To motivate students to engage in the learning process and associated target setting and take greater personal responsibility for their learning outcomes.
- To inform parents and students of progress.
- To encourage students of our school to take responsibility for their education. □
- To pursue academic excellence while providing for the wellbeing of the students. □
- To facilitate and encourage a love of learning that will become a lifelong process. □
- To encourage parents to take an active role in, and a shared responsibility for their children's education.
- Assessment forms an integral part of the educational process. Its purposes include fostering learning, improving teaching, and providing valid information about what has been done or achieved. It provides important feedback for students and teachers. Assessment offers opportunities for the evaluation of curriculum and of students' progress.

Assessment

- During their time in school all pupils will be assessed on an ongoing formal and informal basis.
- Assessment results will be readily available to parents, teachers, Year Heads and those in charge of pastoral care of students.
- Assessment in particular subjects will be in accordance with assessment criteria of subject requirements.
- All teachers will keep a record of pupil's attendance, class tests, homework and end of term tests in their Teacher's Roll Book.

Forms of Assessment

The forms of assessment used in Fingal Community College aim to provide recommendations, clarifications and encouragement for all partners in the teaching-learning process.

Assessment Models

Summative Assessment – Assessment of Learning

This can include homework, class tests, formal House Exams, Leaving and Junior Cycle Examinations, and practical exams. Summative assessment generally takes place after the learning has taken place and the information is usually transformed into marks or grades. It allows teachers to check student progress since the last test or exam. It also allows for a comparison with the performance of others.

Formative Assessment – Assessment for Learning

This compliments Assessment of Learning. It is based on identified Learning Outcomes and Success Criteria. It can take the form of questions, peer and self-assessment and feedback. Information is shared with the learner. It aims to inform students on how to improve on their current academic performance. Information is available on the quality of the learning and formative learning looks forward to the next stage of learning

Incoming 1st Year Students

Students who have enrolled with the school sit an assessment test during the first week of February before they start.

They sit the CAT 4 and are assessed using

- Verbal Battery Test.
- Quantitative Battery Test
- Non-verbal Battery Test.

When the results become available

Guidance Counsellor meets with the Learning Support teachers

Students with particular needs are identified.

Mixed ability classes are put together

Assessments

Students at Fingal Community College are assessed using a combination of Continuous Assessment and formal House Exams.

Term One

First And Second Year

- In Term One, First and Second Year students are assessed by Continuous Assessment based on Success Criteria.
- Teachers in each subject collaborate to form Success Criteria for each assessment, which are shared with students. In each subject, four pieces of work are submitted for assessment.
- Teachers give students feedback on each piece of work.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on this feedback and set themselves goals for improvement.
- The combined results of Continuous Assessment are given on the end of term report.

Fifth Year

Continuous Assessment

- In Term One, Fifth Year students submit a minimum of two pieces of work for Continuous Assessment.
- Teachers in each subject department collaborate to form Success Criteria for each assignment submitted for Continuous Assessment.

Formal Examinations

Fifth Year Students sit formal House Exams in November

Reports

- End of term reports for fifth year combine the results of Continuous Assessment and Formal Assessment
- Each Subject Department will decide on the percentage of the end of term result given to Continuous Assessment.

Third and Sixth Year

- Third and Sixth Year Students sit formal House Exams in November

Term Two

First and Second and Fifth Years.

Continuous Assessment

- Students submit four assignments for Continuous assessment.
- Teachers in each subject department agree on the Success Criteria for each assignment.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on feedback given on each assessment and to set goals for improvement.

Formal Assessment

- All students sit formal end of year House Exams

End of Year Report

- End of Year Reports combine results of Continuous Assessment with Formal Assessment

Transition Year Assessments

TY students are assessed on a credit system. Methods of assessments vary across subjects and can include project work, presentations, written exams amongst others. Each student must compile a portfolio. The portfolio is a summary of their year and must include pieces of work, photographs and reviews of out-of-class experiences. This portfolio is awarded credits. Transition Year Students are also interviewed towards the end of the Year as part of their assessment.

Their Transition Year result is awarded as follows:

Distinction

Merit

Pass

Fail

Standardised Testing

- First Year
- All students complete the Group Reading Test and a standardised spelling test
- Some students may receive further testing carried out by the Learning Support Department

Second Year

- All students sit a standardised test (e.g Drumcondra Online Test) of Reading and Maths in May.

Third Year

- The Learning Support Department carry out Standardised Testing of Students who may require RACE.
- All Third Year Students do CAT 4

Fifth and Sixth Year

The Learning Support Department Continue to carry out standardised testing of SEN and/or students who may require RACE.

Special Educational Needs

- Students with Special Educational needs may be facilitated with differentiated modes of assessment as appropriate.
- SEN students who meet the criteria for Reasonable Accommodations are facilitated in Leaving Cert and Junior Cycle Mock Examinations e.g access to a reader, use of a laptop, recording answers etc.
- As far as possible, SEN students are given opportunities to avail of Reasonable Accommodations in House Exams.

RESPONSIBILITIES

School Management Team should:

- Facilitate meetings for departments or teams of teachers to discuss assessment/recording/reporting.
- Look at early predictions of final Junior Certificate/Leaving Certificate grades and facilitate mentoring of individual pupils to find ways to improve their performance.
- Analyse and evaluate test/exam results and discuss implications of findings with departments with respect to future developments in teaching and assessment.
- Support, monitor and evaluate assessment/recording/reporting within the school.

Subject Teachers should:

- Ensure that all students are actively involved in their learning and in the self-assessment of their progress.
- Ensure that all students take an active role in setting their own targets.
- Share learning objectives and success criteria with students.
- Provide students with regular formative feedback on the standard of their work, in line with agreed marking and assessment procedures.

- Use assessment data to inform lesson planning, including differentiated activities to meet the identified needs of individual students.
- Complete reports on students' progress.

Students should:

- Take responsibility for their own learning through reflection on their work, feedback given and self-assessment.
- Work towards achieving agreed target levels/grades.

Parents should:

Support and encourage their child's learning by working in partnership with the school, e.g. attending parent/teacher meetings, monitoring homework, checking their child's Homework Journal and VS WARE account.

Review Procedure

This Assessment Policy will be reviewed annually by the Assessment Team in consultation with teaching staff and all other relevant partners for ratification by the Board of Management and Trustees