



# ASSESSMENT POLICY

## VIRGINIA COLLEGE



### MISSION STATEMENT

*Tús Feasa Fiafraí*

Faithful to our motto, Virginia College is committed to providing quality teaching in a safe and positive learning environment. Whilst fostering academic and personal achievement, we aim to nurture an educational community of informed, responsible and caring citizens for an ever-changing world.

Policy Name	Assessment Policy
School Name	Virginia College
Date of Ratification of Policy by the Board of Management	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Date of Scheduled Review of Policy by Board of Management	November 2026
Signature Chair Board of Management	

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# Introduction

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. Assessment forms a fundamental part of the educational process. Its purposes include fostering learning, improving teaching and providing valid information about what has been done or achieved as well as offering advice for continued improvement. It provides feedback for students and teachers and offers opportunities for the evaluation of curriculum and of students' progress.

## Related Policies

This policy relates to, and should be read in conjunction with, other school policies including:

- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Policy
- Student Support (AEN) Policy.

This policy is reflective of the vision for ETBI as promoted in:

- [ETBI Patrons' Framework on Ethos](#) (ETBI, 2022)

This policy is informed by national policy including:

- [A Framework for Junior Cycle](#) (DES, 2015)
- [Reporting Guidelines](#) (NCCA, 2018)
- [Ongoing reporting for effective teaching and learning](#) (NCCA, 2018).
- [Looking at Our Schools 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools](#) (DES, 2022)
- [Education Act, 1998](#) (DES, 1998)

## Aims

This policy aims to:

1. Explain the rationales and importance of assessment
2. Ensure that Virginia College meets statutory obligations for assessment
3. Promote coherence and consistency in approach to assessment across the school
4. Promote a common understanding of standards both within the school and nationally
5. List the different modes of assessment used in Virginia College
6. Raise expectations of student success
7. Detail the annual schedule of assessment
8. Detail the reporting procedures of assessment results

The purpose of this policy is to provide students and parents with information regarding our Assessment Policy and procedures in line with the Education Act 1998, which requires schools to “regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents”. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student’s progress and achievement. As a school we recognise that parents, teachers and students need to have an effective learning focused partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes can be achieved for our students. The quality framework in Looking at Our Schools 2022, the School Self Evaluation (SSE) process and distributed/shared model of leadership give us, an opportunity to focus on continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

This Assessment Policy was developed in partnership with all stakeholders of the Virginia College school community and will be presented to and reviewed as appropriate by the school’s Board of Management.

## Definition of Assessment

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. Methods include examinations; homework; class work; projects; written, oral and aural work. This list is not exhaustive.

## Legalisation

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. This Assessment Policy outlines the importance of assessment and the key role students, parents and teaching staff play in supporting this policy document. All procedures are in keeping with the assessment procedures as outlined in Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015 and Circular Letter 0059/2021 and 0015/2023

## Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is part of excellent teaching and learning and allows the school 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 student’s learning and adapt his/her teaching strategies and / or learning activities as appropriate.
- Reinforce the learning carried out in the classroom
- Provide the students and parents with information regarding progress
- Establish baseline data in relation to a student’s attainments in certain subjects
- Identify students for levels in Junior Cycle and at Senior Cycle
- Assess a student’s eligibility for additional support and services and to inform consultations with the NEPS psychologist where necessary.
- Assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention
- - Fulfil the course requirements in certain subjects

## Effective Feedback

The most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement is feedback. This does not mean using many tests and providing over-prescriptive directions. It means providing information about how and why the student understands and misunderstands, and what directions the student must take to improve (John Hattie, Influences on Student Learning, Inaugural Lecture at the University of Auckland, 1999).

Feedback is critical to improving learning as it both influences students' motivation to learn and their ability to do so.

Effective feedback:

- focuses on the quality of the student work
- relates to agreed success criteria
- identifies success and achievement
- indicates suggestions for improvement
- prompts student thinking
- allows time for improvement to take place.

Feedback includes telling students what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. It also includes reminding students of what they were aiming to achieve (the learning intentions). Finally, high quality feedback is always given against explicit and agreed criteria for success (adapted from Focus on Learning; Formative Feedback, NCCA, 2015).

The majority of feedback is provided orally by teachers to students during lessons. A conversation to support reflection on learning and to elicit feedback from the student is hugely beneficial. It can be helpful to ask students to repeat back what they heard in terms of feedback and to take note of it in their copy or journal. Teachers often give oral and/or written feedback on activities and tasks in teams/OneNote. Again, students are often asked to respond to this feedback and to reflect on their learning.

Feedback can be provided in many formats depending on the learning context:

- written
- oral; to an individual, pair, group or class-group & voice recorded
- teacher to student
- student(s) to student(s)
- self-assessment

# Forms of Assessment

## Assessment of Learning – Assessment for Learning

Our policy covers both Assessment **of** Learning and Assessment **for** Learning. Assessment **of** Learning is assessment for accountability purposes, to determine a student's level of performance on a specific task or at the conclusion of a unit of teaching and learning. The information gained from this kind of assessment will be used in reporting. Assessment **for** Learning, on the other hand, is a continuous process which combines a grade with advice to the student towards further improvement. Both forms of assessment are invaluable, and will be used equally by teachers in this school.

The following table outlines the main differences between summative (Assessment **of** Learning) and formative (Assessment **for** Learning). Source: <https://pdst.ie/pp/literacynumeracy/aflresources>

Assessment OF Learning (Summative)	Assessment FOR Learning (Formative)
Happens after learning takes place	An integral part of learning process
Information is gathered by teacher	Information is shared with learner
Information is usually transferred into marks	Information is available on quality of learning
Comparison with performance of others	Is linked to learning intentions and success criteria
Looks back on past learning	Looks forward to the next stage of learning

Assessment **of** Learning and Assessment **for** Learning should not be seen as opposing or contradictory practices. While the Assessment **of** Learning will always have a place in education and in classroom and school practice, the development of Assessment **for** Learning offers new opportunities for teachers.

## Summative

Summative assessment aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner. It can take the form of homework, class tests, House Examinations, State Examinations and practical exams. It generally takes place after the learning has taken place and the information is usually transformed into marks or grades. It allows the teacher to check student progress since the last test or examination. It also allows for comparison with the performance of others.

## House Exams

- During our house exams, subject departments will use either the standard VC assessment cover page or an individualised version of the standard VC assessment cover page. Please see appendix for more information.
- Our subject departments will also, as far as possible, collaborate and create a common assessment for each of the house exam periods. This will also result in a common marking scheme in line with best practice.

## Formative

Formative assessment is ongoing and involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding on the next steps to ensure successful outcomes. It involves a shift from focusing mainly on summative judgements to engaging in ongoing activities that can be used to support next stages of learning. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to their students and students' feedback to teachers. Through a range of assessment for learning strategies the teacher helps the student to identify what has been achieved and where there is room for further learning and development. Virginia College 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.' We recognise, however, that not all aspects of this approach are of benefit in all curriculum areas and the discretion of the teacher is advised to adapt the theory to suit the demands of the subject. The key elements of Assessment for Learning are:

1. Sharing Learning Intentions = Teachers will share the learning intentions with students at the beginning of each lesson/ where deemed necessary and refer back to them during questioning throughout the lesson and at again at the end of the lesson if necessary. This will help to clarify what the student was supposed to have learned and will assist both teachers and students in determining the levels to which the outcomes have been achieved. Teachers may co-create success criteria with the students.
2. Sharing Success Criteria = Teachers will tell students in advance of a piece of work what exactly they will be looking for when assessing it. Teachers are aware that it is important to share this information with students beforehand so that they will be in a better position to know what is expected of them. They can also decide how far they want to push themselves.
3. Effective Feedback = Feedback will be linked to the Learning Intentions and the Success Criteria that have been shared with the student. Focused feedback will help students identify aspects of their work that is of high standard and areas where they can make improvements.
4. Effective Questioning = Teachers' use a variety of lower and higher order questioning. Sequencing of questions that build on and extend students' thinking. Question levels are also used to help differentiate for the various learning needs and styles in the class. Blooms Taxonomy is a key document to support effective questioning.
5. Self-assessment (Students as owners of their own learning) and Peer Assessment (Students as instructional resources for each other) = Teachers will, occasionally, supervise students to correct their own or their peer's work, based on a list of criteria for success. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work and write down how they can improve and assist them in achieving it.



## Classroom Based Assessments

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) are the occasions when the teacher assesses the students in the specific assessment that are set out in the subject specification. CBAs provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and skills in ways not possible in a pen and paper examination, for example, their verbal communication and investigation skills. CBAs will be facilitated by the classroom teacher. CBAs will be undertaken during a defined time period within normal class contact time and to a national timetable. Students will complete one CBA in second year and the other CBA in third year in each subject (except in Gaeilge when both CBAs will be completed in third year). CBA's are assessed using feature of quality that are shared with the student.

CBAs will be reported on in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) using the following descriptors:

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

A summary of the type of CBAs in each subject is shown in the Appendices.

This assessment is conducted by teachers and where appropriate, is moderated by means of a Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting. Once the descriptors are agreed on, feedback will be provided to the student in class and on the school report cards. The material pertaining to the SLAR meeting can then be disposed of.

## Assessment Tasks

The written Assessment Task for each subject will be specified and published by the NCCA. It will relate to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. Students must complete their second CBA in order to undertake the associated Assessment Task. The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher in accordance with a timeframe and guidance from the NCCA. The Assessment Task will be returned to the SEC for marking and will be marked as part of the Final

Examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the calculation of the grade for that subject by the SEC. The value to be assigned to the Assessment Task will be included in the assessment guidelines for each subject. A separate Assessment Task will not be required in those practical subjects where the second CBA will continue to be assessed by the SEC (Art, Craft and Design, Music, and the Technology subjects – MTW and T.G).

Subjects in Junior Cycle with new specifications will be assessed through:

- Two Classroom Based Assessments (one in second year and one in third year) reported on to parents/guardians by the school
- An Assessment Task (marked by the SEC) in each subject
- A Final Examination set, held and marked by the SEC.

The combination of the Assessment Task and the Final Examination will generate a final grade, certified by the SEC.

## Homework as a means of Assessment

Homework is an important element in reinforcing the student's grasp of material and work covered in class. It allows the teacher to informally assess how well the students have grasped new concepts and allows both the teacher and student to identify the next steps of learning. It consists of both written assignments and the

learning of work done in class. Homework is corrected in a variety of ways at the discretion of the individual teacher. These methods may include the teacher collecting and correcting it and giving a grade or comment only marking. It could also consist of the teacher demonstrating in class how the homework should have been completed and students peer or self-correct. Alternatively, the teacher gives the students the marking scheme or the list of “features of quality” and students peer or self-correct. The teacher ascertains during such activities how well students are progressing.

## Assessment in the Event of Student Absence

It is recognised that the Junior Cycle programme presents many 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, Virginia College shall provide dates of assessment events as they become available.

- 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.
- In the case where illness precludes a student from engaging with an assessment task event, a deferred session will be offered to students who provide a medical certificate. This is in keeping with the practice in other state examinations.
- 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 a deferred session to engage with the assessment event.
- Virginia College is an inclusive school and looks to meet the needs of all students. In the case where a student has a need identified by a psychologist, or a medical condition identified by a doctor, the school shall endeavour to put arrangements in place to facilitate engagement with the assessment event.

# Schedule of Assessment by Year

## Key Summative Assessment Dates

Dates below are general dates and are subject to change as required by school leadership and teachers. It is also important to note that this calendar must align with the CBA calendar.

Key Summative Assessment Dates			
November	Assessment Week 11 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Year	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> year block over 3 or 4 days in classrooms 6 <sup>th</sup> year block over 3 or 4 days in hall for 2hr block  1st/2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> year 1 hour exam (2 practical exams may be timetabled within 2 hour block)  Up to departments if 5 <sup>th</sup> year exams are 2 hour exams
October	Module 1 – Rotation	TY	TY group is in a rotation block rotate four times during the year. Students are assessed and give a % grade for their report
December	Assessment 1	TY	Core subject reporting – modules for full academic year
January	Module 2 – Rotation	TY	TY group is in a rotation block rotate four times during the year. Students are assessed and give a % grade for their report
Mid January	Mock Exams Senior Cycle	6th Year 21 <sup>st</sup> - 31 <sup>st</sup> January	Use hall
Mid January	Mock Exams Junior Cycle	3rd Year 27 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> January	Use hall/2012 building
February	Assessment Week 22	1st, 2nd and 5th year	REPORTING PERIOD  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linked to CBA Calendar</li> <li>• Written report</li> <li>• Teachers can use CBA result, classroom test</li> </ul>
March	Module 3 – Rotation	TY	TY group is in a rotation block rotate four times during the year. Students are assessed and give a % grade for their report
May	Assessment Week 33 23 <sup>rd</sup>	1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 5th year	5th year to have 2 hour blocks in hall over 3 days 1st/2 <sup>nd</sup> year 1 hour exam over 3 days
May	Assessment 2 14 <sup>th</sup> May	TY	Core subject reporting – modules for full academic year
May	Module 4 – Rotation	TY	TY group is in a rotation block rotate four times during the year. Students are assessed and give a % grade for their report

## Summary of Classroom Based Assessments by Subject

3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Classroom-based Assessment Calendar										
Week 1 28 <sup>th</sup> August	Week 2 6 <sup>th</sup> September	Week 3 11 <sup>th</sup> September Visual Art CBA 2	Week 4 18 <sup>th</sup> September Visual Art, Wood, Technology, Graphics & Engineering CBA 2	Week 5 25 <sup>th</sup> September Visual Art, Wood, Technology, Graphics & Engineering CBA 2	Week 6 2 <sup>nd</sup> October Visual Art, Wood, Technology, Graphics & Engineering CBA 2	Week 7 9 <sup>th</sup> October Visual Art, Wood, Technology, Graphics & Engineering CBA 2	Week 8 16 <sup>th</sup> October Visual Art, Wood, Technology, Graphics & Engineering CBA 2 SLAR and VsWare input	Week 9 23 <sup>th</sup> October		
October Mid- Term	Week 10 6 <sup>th</sup> November	Week 11 13 <sup>th</sup> November  Home Ec CBA 2	Week 12 20 <sup>th</sup> November  Home Ec CBA 2	Week 13 27 <sup>th</sup> November  Home Ec CBA 2 PE CBA	Week 14 4 <sup>th</sup> December  Home Ec CBA 2 PE CBA	Week 15 11 <sup>th</sup> December  Home Ec CBA 2 SLAR submit to VsWare  PE CBA	Week 16 18 <sup>th</sup> December  PE SLAR submit CBA to VsWare	Christmas Break		
Christmas Break	Week 18 9 <sup>th</sup> January	Week 19 16 <sup>th</sup> January	Week 20 23 <sup>rd</sup> January	Week 21 30 <sup>th</sup> January	Week 22 6 <sup>th</sup> February	Week 23 13 <sup>th</sup> February	February Mid-Term	Week 24 27 <sup>th</sup> February  Gaeilge & Music CBA 2		
Week 25 6 <sup>th</sup> March  Gaeilge & Music CBA 2	Week 26 13 <sup>th</sup> March  Gaeilge & Music CBA 2	Week 27 20 <sup>th</sup> March  Gaeilge & Music SLAR & submit CBA 2 to VsWare	Week 28 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Easter Break	Easter Break	Week 30 17 <sup>th</sup> April	Week 31 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Week 32 1 <sup>st</sup> May		
Week 33 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Week 34 15 <sup>th</sup> May	Week 35 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student Voice and Learning Experience</li> <li>▪ NCCA CBA Dates &amp; Windows</li> <li>▪ Access to Resources</li> <li>▪ Collaborative Practice</li> <li>▪ SLAR Meeting Dates</li> </ul>							
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Classroom-based Assessment Calendar										
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9		

26 <sup>th</sup> August	2 <sup>nd</sup> August	9 <sup>th</sup> September	16 <sup>th</sup> September	23 <sup>rd</sup> September	30 <sup>th</sup> September	7 <sup>th</sup> October	14 <sup>th</sup> October	21 <sup>st</sup> October
October Mid-Term	Week 10 4 <sup>th</sup> November	Week 11 11 <sup>th</sup> November <b>History CBA 1</b>	Week 12 18 <sup>th</sup> November History CBA 1	Week 13 25 <sup>th</sup> November <b>Business CBA &amp; Geography CBA 1</b> History CBA 1	Week 14 2 <sup>nd</sup> December <b>Business CBA &amp; Geography CBA 1</b> History SLAR	Week 15 9 <sup>th</sup> December Business & Geography CBA 1	Week 16 16 <sup>th</sup> December Business & Geography CBA 1 SLAR & submit CBA 1 to VsWare	Christmas Break
Christmas Break	Week 18 6 <sup>th</sup> January <b>Technology, Science &amp; Maths CBA 1</b>	Week 19 13 <sup>th</sup> January Technology, Science & Maths CBA 1	Week 20 20 <sup>th</sup> January Technology, Science & Maths CBA 1	Week 21 27 <sup>th</sup> January Technology, Science & Maths CBA 1	Week 22 3 <sup>rd</sup> February Technology, Science & Maths CBA 1	Week 23 10 <sup>th</sup> February Technology, Science & Maths SLAR & submit VsWare	February Mid-Term	Week 24 24 <sup>th</sup> February
Week 25 3 <sup>rd</sup> March <b>Modern Languages CBA 1</b>	Week 26 10 <sup>th</sup> March Modern Languages CBA 1	Week 27 17 <sup>th</sup> March Modern Languages CBA 1	Week 28 24 <sup>th</sup> March Modern Languages SLAR and input to VsWare	Easter Break	Easter Break	Week 30 28 <sup>th</sup> April <b>English CBA 1</b> <b>Music CBA 1</b>	Week 31 5 <sup>th</sup> May English CBA 1 Music CBA 1	Week 32 12 <sup>th</sup> May English CBA 1 Music CBA 1
Week 33 19 <sup>th</sup> May Music, & English SLAR & submit CBA to VsWare	Week 34 26 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Voice and Learning Experience</li> <li>• NCCA CBA Dates &amp; Windows</li> <li>• Access to Resources</li> <li>• Collaborative Practice</li> <li>• SLAR Meeting Dates</li> </ul>					

- Flexibility is allowed for in this schedule of assessment
- The administration and awarding of grades for continuous assessment (CBA) will be at the discretion of subject departments.
- CBA calendar will reflect summative dates and if CBA results are being done instead of summative exam, these results must be shared with parents at the same time

## State Examinations

The school will support students in preparation for the State Examinations. We will ensure that students are fully informed of the practices and procedures necessary for these exams. The Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations begin the first Wednesday after the June Bank Holiday Monday each year. The exact timetable of examinations is usually available from the previous January.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Role of Tutors

In relation to JC assessment, tutors shall:

- Remind students of assessment dates
- Support and encourage students where they express concerns
- Set out expectations for students to achieve their potential

### 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](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)
- Facilitate assessment events
- Keep attendance records at all assessment events
- Record assessments on vsware in a timely manner during the assessment periods
- Record written progress for all subjects on vsware for communication home, including non exam subjects for all assessment periods
- **Where practical teachers have only met their 1<sup>st</sup> year students for a short period of time during Week 11 assessments, no comment is required**
- Input CBA results into VsWare
- Follow procedures laid out by the relevant departments in regard to assessment
- Engage in the SLAR process where appropriate
- Ensure that if a teachers professional view is that a student is not capable of achieving a grade in their current level of study that the reason for this is communicated home and any concerns engaged with. The form in appendix must be filled out and signed by all involved. This includes students moving to OL subjects (Maths, English and Gaeilge) in second year.

### Role of AEN Core Team

In relation to assessment, AEN core team shall:

- approach individual teachers to discuss which supports are necessary for students with extra needs
- ensure that appropriate supports are put in place, e.g. scribe, reader, laptop etc for mock exams
- inform students with additional needs and their parents/guardians, as to what supports are in place
- organise USB keys to save assessment materials where appropriate. 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
- liaise with key workers and management where appropriate

## Role of Junior Cycle Co-ordinator

In relation to JC assessment, the Junior Cycle Co-ordinator shall:

- share all relevant assessment dates with staff when they are made available
- communicate with parents/guardians providing information regarding assessment events
- answer any queries or concerns regarding assessment procedures
- collate information for the JCPA in relation to the 'Other Areas of Learning' component
- liaise with Senior Management regarding deferred assessment events where appropriate

## Role of State Examination Secretary

In relation to JC & SC assessment, the State Examinations Coordinator 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
- Inform and engage JC students to complete the E8 form
- Inform and engage LC student to complete the E7/online portal

The tasks prescribed for this position are subject to review in light of the increased workload envisaged as new assessment procedures are rolled out.

## Role of Subject Departments

In relation to JC assessment, subject departments shall:

- discuss assessment procedures and put appropriate plans in place
- nominate one teacher to act as SLAR Facilitator as outlined in Circular Letter 0015/2017. Nominate a Subject Convenor annually for the Department.
- Support common assessment across all year groups
- Collaborate and create a common assessment for each of the house exam periods.
- This will also result in a common marking scheme in line with best practice.
- Support teacher professional conversations in relation to ensuring students achieving to their highest potential. This includes ensuring that students have access to higher level subjects (JC English, Maths and Gaeilge).

## Role of Assistant Principal – In House Exam Secretary

- Work with SLT to set appropriate dates for assessment periods for academic calendar
- Inform staff regarding these dates and the closing dates for teacher comments which will normally be 10 working days after last assessment
- Support 'Comment Only' marking for 1<sup>st</sup> year students during Week 11 assessments
- Create an assessment timetable for Week 11, Week 22 and Week 33 assessments to ensure that overlapping assessment does not occur and share with relevant year heads for sharing on Teams and social media if required
- Liaise with TY coordinator in relation to TY assessment which may be different due to rotating blocks
- Liaise with LCA coordinator in relation to LCA assessment which may be different due to Session dates and tasks.

- Inform staff of expectations for staff, students and reporting expectations during assessment periods
- Create JC and LC Mock exam timetable and share with relevant year heads for students on Teams
- Liaise with admin regarding purchase of paper, mock exam papers etc as required through procurement process
- Work with SLT regarding any room changes that are required during mock exams
- Oversee the storage of mock exam papers and the delivery of these papers to a safe location after the exams
- Evaluate each exam period with staff, students and parents
- Encourage meaningful feedback and review with Year Heads after assessment periods

## Role of Year Heads

In relation to assessment, Year Heads shall:

- liaise with management and other teachers where appropriate
- receive information from teachers and key workers regarding attendance
- make contact with home where appropriate, particularly in the case of prolonged absence with support of attendance officer
- Monitor performance using academic tracking supports and meet with student to ensure a plan for improvement.

## Role of Senior Management

In relation to assessment, Senior Management shall:

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

## Reporting Procedures

- An agreed date will be set for the input of these results to VsWare.
- Reports are made available to parents in through Vsware approximately 10 school days after the assessment finishes after weeks 11, 22 & 33.
- Athena tracker results are inputted and shared with parents/guardians home to compare target grades.
- Class teachers, tutors and year heads discuss performances of Athena results with the students and parents.
- In the case of mock examinations, reports are available to parents as soon as possible following the examinations.
- Subject Departments or individuals are free to incorporate results of continuous assessment. with the results of the formal assessments.

Here are many different methods whereby the results of formal and informal assessments can be reported to students and parents e.g:

- Student Journal/vsware behaviour – the teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parents/guardian of a student by writing the result or a note in the student journal or on vsware behaviour. The parent/guardian is expected to acknowledge receipt of this note by countersigning it if in journal.



- Direct Contact - the teacher may decide as they see fit to contact the parent/guardian directly with respect to the outcome of any assessment undertaken by a student.
- Parents are welcome to arrange a meeting by appointment.
- Signature of Parent on Assessment – the teacher may send the corrected assessment itself home with the student to be viewed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- Parents may access their child’s academic records through the VShare system.
- Parent Teacher Meetings – there are Parent Teacher Meetings for all year groups throughout the academic year. At these meetings it will be possible for teachers to relay the outcomes of varying assessments to parents/guardians of individual students that generate an accurate picture of the student’s progress.
- 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. The JCPA will also reflect learning that has occurred outside the classroom. This is recorded in the Other Areas of Learning section.

## Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

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

**Please see AEN policy for more detail**

## Standardised Tests

The following tests are administered to students by the Learning Support Team & Guidance Counsellors

- Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4 Level E) – this is administered prior to entry
- Standardised literacy tests are students requiring support
- When the results of the tests become available:
  - Students with particular needs are identified.
  - A programme is devised by the AEN coordinator/resource teacher depending on timetabling and availability of learning support staff.
  - Student support plans are drawn up by the AEN Team in conjunction with parents and school management.

## Monitoring and Review

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our Assessment Policy and Procedures. This is conducted through student reflections and evaluations, feedback via the student council, staff review and parental feedback. This policy will be reviewed every two years, unless a need arises at an earlier time.

## Appendix

### Glossary of 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.
Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA)	Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) 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).
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 their learning.
Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)	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.
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 written assessments and may occur at defined points in the school calendar.

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.
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.

Adapted and accessed: <https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary/>.

**DE** (Department of Education)

**NCCA** (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

**SEC** (State Examinations Commission)

## Guidance to support effective comment marking

You may wish to identify:

1. What has been achieved /areas of strengths
2. Attitude & behaviour
3. Participation in class
4. Organisation
5. An area for improvement

### Steps to achieve effective comment marking

- Step one: Share success criteria: The success criteria are negotiated through a discussion with the class, thus helping to give them ownership. The success criteria are exemplified through shared examples of good work (from the previous year perhaps).
- Step two: Students produce a rough draft: Students produce a rough draft of the assessment in their exercise books. This can be done at home or in class and is then handed in to the teacher.
- Step three: Identify what has been achieved: Three things students have achieved are highlighted and a note is made of the success criteria which have been met. At the bottom of the work a smiley face is drawn and the three things they have done well summarised.
- Step four: Identify a target for improvement: Next a star is placed alongside one section of the work where a success criterion has not been met fully. A star is also put at the bottom of the work alongside suggested ways of improving this section.
- Step five: Student reflection and response to marking: Students' work is returned so that a final copy of their assessment can be produced. This must include the suggested improvement.
- Step six: Levelling work and returning to students: The final drafts are levelled. No comments are written on these. This does mean that they may compare levels with peers. However, as this happens only three times a year it limits potential negative impact on low achievers.

### Comment Only Marking

- Comments should be individual and differentiated.
- Comments should identify where success has been achieved and one area for improvement.
- Students should do something with the comment.
- Final pieces of work do not need comments.
- Mark examples of meeting success criteria in highlighter pen.
- Literacy (eg key words) should often have a high profile in success criteria.
- You should explain to the class how work has been marked and what highlighting and notation means.
- When redrafting students should put improvements into a different font/colour so they stand out.
- Teachers should actively encourage students to make the improvement.
- Feedback should be given as three points (successes) and a star (improvement).
- All feedback should be against success criteria.
- Comment marking should be supplemented by oral feedback against success criteria.



# Formative Assessment Feedback Cover Page

## Virginia College



Assessment Week	
Subject	
Teacher	
Date of Exam	
Time of Exam	

Please check that you have answered all questions

<i>Students: Please complete this section only when you have finished the exam</i>	
<p><b>Student Expected Mark:</b> Having completed the exam, what mark do you think you have achieved?</p>	<p><b>Student Comment:</b> Explain why you think you have achieved this result</p>

Teacher Feedback	
Areas where you did well are:	Even better if:

<p><b>Student Review:</b> Having examined the feedback from teachers, what are your areas of focus to improve?</p>
<p><b>Key assessment words/terms:</b></p>

Overall marks		
Section 1		%
Section 2		%
Section 3		%
Section 4		%
Total:	/	%

# Changing Subject Level Form



## Virginia College

### Changing Subject Level



*In Virginia College, we aim for each student to achieve their potential. After much consideration, taking into account recent examination results and continuous assessment, it is recommended that your son/daughter carefully considers moving to ordinary level in this subject. If students show the required work ethic for higher level, then we will discuss this move further.*

In order to confirm your son/daughters change of level it is important that you complete the following and return it to the relevant teacher:

I have spoken to all parties concerned and I wish to change the following:

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Request to move from (level): \_\_\_\_\_

Request to move to (level): \_\_\_\_\_

Step	Staff/Parent Signature	Agreed Y/N	Date
Discuss with Subject Teacher			
Discuss with parents			
Discuss with Guidance Counsellor			

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Student)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***This form should be returned to the teacher and a copy will be given to the student and teacher concerned.***