



Loreto College Foxrock Assessment Policy

Introduction:

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of evaluation to students and their parents/guardians. In fulfilling this requirement, Loreto College Foxrock has developed assessment procedures which aim to provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement. The aim of this policy is to create a consistent, coordinated assessment approach that encourages, supports, monitors and reports on student progress and achievement.

Our assessment methods are designed to encourage independent, self-directed learning so that our students become critical thinkers and develop positive lifelong learning habits. We support our students to become confident in their learning, developing a growth mindset approach whereby students understand that learning is a journey that involves not just achieving personal excellence, but also understanding what needs to be done in order to improve. We support our students to reflect regularly on their learning.

Our aim is to enable students to view themselves not just as active agents in their own learning, but also as agents in activating each other's learning through working collaboratively to achieve learning goals. In order that students learn that they are responsible for their own learning now and for life, Loreto College Foxrock aims to foster a climate where students' sense of inquiry is expected and actively encouraged.

Mission Statement:

In line with our school mission statement, this policy aims to support Loreto College Foxrock as a caring, enabling, learning community where all staff and students work together with mutual respect to fulfil their God-given potential with integrity, compassion and a sense of humour in the generous pursuit of a just world.

1. Definition of Assessment

The term "Assessment" refers generally to the gathering, collating and interpretation of information related to a student's learning attainments, learning strengths and areas of learning that need addressing. 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. 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 College Foxrock's Data Protection Policy. In fulfilling this requirement, the school develops assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

3. Rationale for Assessment in Loreto College Foxrock:

Schools are obliged to assess students regularly in accordance with the Education Act (1998) and to report on student progress on a regular basis.

Assessment is an integral part of the ongoing teaching and learning process in our school and is carried out for the following reasons:

- To enable the teacher to monitor a student's understanding, knowledge, skills and progress and make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This information allows the teacher to identify the next steps in advancing the students learning and adapt teaching strategies and learning activities 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' and the Senior Cycle key skill of the learner 'Being Personally Effective'.
- To provide parents with information regarding progress and attainment which enables the fostering of a shared involvement and responsibility between school and home.
- To assist school management in identifying students, subjects, classes and areas of the curriculum that require further timetabled support.
- To establish student learning styles the CAT4 Cognitive Ability Test are administered which aids in the maintenance of effective and progressive pupil records and student learning support.
- To inform subject choice, to aid students in identifying the correct level. To 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.
- To evaluate teaching and learning practices and to support consistency across all subject departments
- To establish baseline data which may be used for school self-evaluation and school improvement purposes

4. Methods and 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 inter-related throughout the academic year.

4.1 Formative Assessment

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 processes are embedded in teaching and learning and so involves regular adjustment of instructional strategies. It is an important component

of the Junior Cycle key skill 'Managing Myself' and the Senior Cycle key skill 'Being Personally Effective' which outlines that students should aim to understand themselves as learners so that they can develop personal goals and plans, make informed decisions and reflect on their progress.

As part of best practice, we routinely share intended learning outcomes in our lessons. To enable students to achieve to the best of their ability, subject departments create and share success criteria with students so that they understand what success looks like in a particular area/task.

4.1.1 Examples of Formative Assessment for learning in Loreto College Foxrock:

This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive but aims to show some of the methodologies which a staff member may use:

- Comment only marking on homework/tests
- Facilitation of written student reflections
- Effective Questioning
- Class discussion
- Peer Collaboration
- Student Self-Assessment
- Student Peer Assessment
- Entry/Exit cards
- Presentations
- Think/Pair/Share
- Show-Me Boards
- Differentiation
- Oral feedback
- Use of AFL comments on reports
- Use of learning outcomes in classrooms
- Junior Cycle descriptors
- Junior Cycle SLAR meetings
- Use of grading rubrics/Success Criteria, based on shared learning outcomes
- Use of online various platforms where format is subject/context dependent, including but not limited to comments on Teams assignments, Blooket, Quizlet and Kahoot.

4.2 Summative Assessment

Summative assessment aims to provide a summary of achievements of the learner. It identifies a standard of pupil attainment and is generally carried out at the end of a defined period of learning – typically at the end of a unit, course, term, programme or school year.

4.2.1 Examples of Summative Assessment in Loreto College Foxrock:

This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive but aims to show some of the methodologies which a staff member may use:

- Class tests*
- Presentations
- Groupwork
- Project Work
- Practical Assignments
- Aural Exams
- Oral Exams

- Assessment Tasks (Junior Cycle)
- Projects/Portfolios for State Examinations
- Winter Assessments (1st, 2nd and 5th Years)
- Continuous assessment such as classwork, homework and in-class tests are used to inform the 3rd Year grade for the Winter Report
- Mock Examinations for 3rd and 6th Year students. Mock exams are set and corrected externally.
- Summer Assessments (1st, 2nd and 5th Years)
- Transition Year students have Winter Assessments in Irish, English, Maths, Modern Languages and their academic modules, and they engage in continuous assessment throughout the year in all of their subjects.
- Continuous assessment of class projects and in-class tests are used to inform the Summer Report grade
- Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Junior Cycle Examinations

*Class tests are to be signed by a parent/guardian

4.2.2 In-house Summative Assessment Schedule:

| ASSESSMENT | TIMING |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Winter Assessments (1 st , 2 nd , TY & 5 th Years) | November |
| Mock Examinations (3 rd & 6 th Years) | Late January/Early February |
| Easter Continuous Assessment Reports (1 st , 2 nd & 5 th Years) | Before Easter |
| Summer Assessments (1 st , 2 nd & 5 th Years) | May |

Students who are absent from an in-house examination due to an approved and certified reason, such as a verified medical appointment or bereavement, will be granted an opportunity to sit the examination at a rescheduled time and have it formally assessed. In all other circumstances, rescheduling of in-house examinations will not be permitted. Family holidays are not grounds for a student being allowed to sit an exam on an alternative date.

In the event that a student is absent for an In-house Assessment, the parent/guardian of the student must make contact with the school in order to ascertain if it is possible for the student to sit the exam at an alternative time and/or at home. The result of assessments completed in these circumstances will be reported in the comment section only.

Students who are undertaking heritage language subjects (eg language spoken at home) may be accommodated to complete the corresponding mock examinations within the school. This provision is strictly subject to availability within the established examination timetable and cannot be guaranteed.

4.3 Self-Assessment

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 progress. It also fosters a self-reflective learning culture which is integral to our SSE goals in Loreto College Foxrock and values students' ownership of their learning.

4.3.1 Examples of Self-Assessment

- Learning Goals forms completed by all students in advance of Learning Advice Meetings
- Facilitation of written student reflections on class tests and/or assignments
- Student correction of completed work with the use of shared learning outcomes and/or success criteria
- Winter and Summer Assessment Reflection Sheets
- January Learning and Wellbeing Reset Form

5. Reporting

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

5.1 Reporting Summative Assessment Results

Free-comment reporting is provided to all students and parents via Vsware, our online school database platform. The feedback provided in the reports is specific to the individual student. The teacher comments identify areas of strength and areas for improvement for a student, and they are based on the student's performance in the assessment and in their progress in the subject. All reports are reviewed by the Year Head and an overall comment may be made on progress to date.

Guidelines for filling in and formatting comments on reports are available in the Staff Handbook.

5.2 Reporting Schedule:

| YEAR GROUP | REPORT |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 st Year | Mid-Term Progress Report |
| 1 st , 2 nd , TY, 5 th Years | Winter Assessment Report |
| 3 rd Year | Winter Continuous Assessment Report |
| 3 rd and 6 th Year | Mock Examinations Report |
| 1 st , 2 nd , 5 th Year | Easter Continuous Assessment Report |
| TY | Summer Continuous Assessment Report |
| 1 st , 2 nd , 5 th Year | Summer Assessment Report |

The subjects that are reported on for each year group are set out below:

| 1 st Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| English | English | English |
| Irish | Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths | Maths |
| History | History | History |
| Geography | Geography | Geography |
| Religious Education | Religious Education | Religious Education |
| Science | Science | Science |
| French | French | French |
| Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Business Studies | Business Studies | Business Studies |
| Art | Art | Art |
| Home Economics | Home Economics | Home Economics |
| Music | Music | Music |
| Classical Studies | Classical Studies | Classical Studies |
| PE | PE | PE |
| CSPE | CSPE | CSPE |

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------|
| SPHE | SPHE | SPHE |
| Wellbeing Modules | Wellbeing Modules | |

| TY Core Subjects | TY Choice Subjects |
|--|---------------------|
| Maths | Business |
| English | Accounting |
| Irish | Physics |
| | Applied Maths |
| PE | Chemistry |
| | Biology |
| | Economics |
| Religious Education | Classical Studies |
| | Art |
| SPHE | Spanish |
| | French |
| Guided Reflective Practice – Portfolio, Diary, Self Assessment (Tutors report) | History |
| | Home Economics |
| | Geography |
| | Music |
| | Sports Science (PE) |
| | All modules |

| 5 th Year | 6 th Year |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Applied Maths | Applied Maths |
| Biology | Biology |
| Chemistry | Chemistry |
| Physics | Physics |
| Business | Business |
| Accounting | Accounting |
| Economics | Economics |
| Classical Studies | Classical Studies |
| Music | Music |
| Home Economics | Home Economics |
| Leaving Certificate PE | Leaving Certificate PE |
| Art | Art |
| History | History |
| Geography | Geography |
| SPHE | SPHE |
| PE | PE |
| Religious Education | Religious Education |

5.3 Other forms of Reporting:

- Student Journal – teachers may communicate with the parents/guardians of a student by writing a note in the student journal
- Class tests – parents/guardians are to sign class tests
- One-to-one feedback on individual assessments, orally and/or in writing is provided to students by subject teachers

- Reporting of assessment/homework/behavioural issues is facilitated by Vsware
- Learning Advice Meetings are held for all year groups and provide a forum for students, teachers and parents to discuss a student's progress. TY, 5th and 6th Year students are invited to attend the Learning Advice Meetings with their parent/guardian.

6. Additional Academic Tracking

- Our school uses the Athena Tracker developed by Athena Analytics. The Athena Tracker is a valuable academic monitoring tool designed to establish a student's baseline potential in each subject and indicates where a student's performance falls below this potential. This baseline is carefully crafted using a statistical model that relies on the exam results of previous students who have used the software. Its primary purpose is to draw attention to situations where a student's performance falls below their potential. If a student's performance falls below their baseline potential, this information can be brought to the attention of the Student Support Team.

7. Standardised testing

CAT4: Cognitive Ability Test for 1st Years (may also be administered to new students who did not sit the original assessment)

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) is an assessment that is designed to help students, parents 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.

CAT4 is designed to give schools a much broader, more rounded view of each individual students, their potential and how they learn.

EAL Assessment (pre-entry for EAL students)

Students whose first language is not English, will have both an oral assessment and the EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit to ascertain their CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) language level. This will assess their ability to access the national curriculum and to gauge their previous knowledge (if any) of curricular subject, thus highlighting where support can be provided.

8. Assessment in Additional Education Needs

The AEN department uses a variety of methods of assessment:

Standardised:

- WIAT III – literacy test
- WRAT V – literacy and numeracy testing
- DASH – handwriting assessment
- Woodcock Johnson – literacy and numeracy
- EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit

Other forms of assessment that may be used:

- Summative assessments (e.g. class tests, summer and winter assessments)
- Samples of work

- Subject teacher observation
- Student interview
- Dyslexia screener

This is not an exhaustive list and may be changed to include any other standardised testing listed by the DES.

The AEN department collaborates and communicates with both students and parents in relation to these assessments.

The school's AEN team will, where necessary, suggest that parents should arrange for additional individualised diagnostic assessment.

In the event of private consultation, parents are asked to supply the school with a copy of the report.

With the use of VSware, the AEN Department shares information with subject teachers on diagnoses and recommendations so that appropriate accommodations/modifications (including differentiation methods) can be incorporated into their teaching to suit the needs of the students. Assessment undertaken by the AEN department is also used to identify priority learning needs as part of the planning process for students with additional educational needs.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

- Ensure that they understand what knowledge and skills are being assessed
- Ensure they read their reports thoroughly
- Engage in self-reflection as guided by the school, and in doing so, identify areas of strength and areas for improvement
- Take responsibility for completion of classwork and homework, upcoming assessments by the relevant deadline or date
- Take responsibility for any class time they may have missed and actively seek out the material they have missed
- Be active in their own learning and take on board the feedback that is provided
- Liaise with subject teachers and other relevant school personnel when they encounter challenges regarding subject material and assessments

Teachers:

- Measure student progress and adjust learning plans accordingly
- Co-create quality criteria for students to ensure they are clear about what is expected of them
- Support students to be actively involved in their learning and in setting their own targets
- Advise and give direction to students about assessments and preparation for assessments
- Assess students both formatively and summatively to measure the educational needs and educational outcomes of the students
- Provide regular feedback to students on how to improve their learning
- Maintain a record of student homework, test and examination results using the school-approved formats of staff journal, Microsoft Office 365 and Athena Tracker as required
- Set common winter and summer examinations in conjunction with their subject departments at all levels and in all years
- For continuous assessment reports, communicate clearly with students the criteria for the grade entered on the report
- Make contact with parents/guardians where necessary
- Liaise with and/or make a referral to relevant school personnel where concerns arise about student progress ie Year Head, Guidance Team, AEN Team, Deputy Principal, Principal

- Complete the relevant section of reports published to parents/guardians on Vsware in line with agreed procedures

Parents/Guardians:

- Are actively involved in supporting and encouraging their child's learning journey
- Work in partnership with the school to support their child's learning journey
- Regularly check their child's school journal (every week for 1st-3rd Year parents) and encourage their organisational skills
- Read all information issued by the school in relation to teaching and learning and assessment practices
- Ensure their child is present and punctual for assessments
- Sign class tests
- Support student adherence to deadlines for submission of work
- Access and read their child's report on Vsware
- Inform the school in advance of their child's absence from a scheduled assessment
- Attend Learning Advice Meetings

Year Heads:

- Liaise with students, parents, subject teachers, Guidance and the AEN team regarding students' progress
- Oversee the reports for their year group and add comments that provide a personalised overview of the students' progress
- Track academic progress of the students in their year group using the Athena Tracker and school records on Vsware
- Bring the names of students of concern as well as those who are excelling to the weekly Student Support Team meetings for discussion

Assistant Principal Roles:

The following post holders have responsibilities relating to assessment and reporting:

- Leader of Teaching and Learning
- Leader of Assessment and Reporting
- Examinations Aide
- Junior Cycle Coordinator
- Transition Year Coordinator

Deputy Principal and Principal:

- Organise training and support when required for staff in areas related to assessment
- Facilitate discussion opportunities for subject departments or teams of teachers to discuss assessment/recording/reporting.
- Analyse and evaluate assessment results and discuss implications of findings with subject departments as appropriate
- Review assessment modes with staff to support teaching, learning and attainment
- Support subject departments to ensure assessment forms an integral part of subject department planning
- Liaising with post-holders and administration staff to ensure the smooth and timely running of assessments and issuing of reports

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 1/12/2025. It will be made available to school personnel, and a copy will be made available to the Department of Education & Youth and Loreto Education Trust if requested.

Signed:



Date:

1/12/25.

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:



Date:

1/12/25

(Principal)