

Glossary of Assessment 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.
Learning Outcome	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
Learning Intention	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.
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.
Formative Assessment	The Junior Cycle will be underpinned by the further integration of formative assessment as a normal part of teaching and learning in classrooms. Formative assessment involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding next steps to ensure successful outcomes. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to their students. Through a range of assessment activities, the teacher helps the student to identify what has been achieved and where there is room for further learning and development. To facilitate the type of learning envisaged above, the role of the teacher and the dynamics of the teacher-student relationship will evolve. Teachers will place a greater emphasis on integrating assessment into their teaching, so they can better monitor students' progress in learning and identify how they can support students to reflect on and critically analyse their own learning.
Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA)	Classroom-Based Assessments 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.

Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting	Following the completion of a Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers will engage in review meetings, where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build common understanding about the quality of student learning.
Assessment Task	The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time and is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task for each subject will provide all the necessary details.
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.
Features of Quality	Features of quality are the statements in the short course/subject specifications that support teachers in making judgements about the quality of student work for the purpose of awarding achievement grades for certification. As success criteria are closely linked to learning intentions and based on the day-to-day processes in the classroom, student learning will gradually come to reflect the requirements set out in the features of quality which are used for certification purposes.
On Balance Judgement	When using the Features of Quality to assess the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers use 'on-balance' judgement. The teacher should read the Features of Quality (starting with <i>Yet to meet expectations</i>) until they reach a descriptor that best describes the work being assessed. Where it is not clearly evident which quality descriptor should apply, teachers must come to a judgment based on the evidence from the student's work, to select the descriptor that best matches the student's work overall. This 'best fit' approach allows teachers to select the descriptor that 'on balance' describes the work being assessed.