

A Brief Introduction to the New Certification at Junior Cycle

Introduction

You are aware from the school and the media that there is an ongoing reform of the Junior Cycle. We wish to advise you of the basic structure of the state's reform programme and how it impacts on what happens here in the school and how your son / daughter will learn and have his / her learning recognised, assessed and certified now that he or she is in 3rd Year.

Classroom – Based Assessments (CBAs) Information and Dates 2018 / 2019

The new Junior Cycle spreads assessment across 2nd and 3rd Year of Junior Cycle, giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning away from the exam hall.

The CBAs take place towards the end of second year and from November to February of Third Year. Each CBA is different, but they focus around project work, presentations and experiments. They are a form of continuous assessment. The results of CBAs will be recognised on each student's official Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Subject teachers will explain the Classroom – Based Assessment procedures in more detail to students in class.

Here are the dates for CBA2s and Assessment Tasks for students undertaking Third Year in 2018 / 2019

Subject	Title	Date Begins	Date Ends
English CBA2	Collection of Texts	November 2018	December 2018
English Assessment Task	Assessment Task based on Collection of Texts	December 2018	December 2018
Business CBA2	Business Presentation	November 2018	December 2018
Business Assessment Task	Assessment Task based on Business Presentation	December 2018	December 2018
Science CBA2	SSI – Science in Society Investigation	January 2019	January 2019
Science Assessment Task	Assessment Task based on SSI	January 2019	January 2019

The CBAs will allow each student to work over a period of time supported by the feedback from their teachers and others, ensuring that they can produce their best work. The CBAs are reported on using the following descriptors:

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

It is important that both teachers and parents affirm to each student that it is not only the grade that matters but also what they have learned about themselves throughout the CBA experience. In particular, they should reflect on how their project work or experiments have helped them engage with their subjects and how the feedback they have received will enable them to progress further in the future.

Please be aware that for 3rd Years in 2018/19 there are only CBAs and Assessment Tasks in English, Business and Science.

Another important point to note on this timetable are the Assessment Tasks. In Third Year after completing the CBA2, each student will complete a short classroom assessment called the Assessment Task. This is worth 10% of the final grade in that subject. It is marked by the State Examination Commission and the written element is generally completed within one forty - minute class period and takes place within the normal school timetable.

School Policy around the Classroom – Based Assessments (CBAs) and Assessment Tasks.

As CBAs are reported on in each student’s Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), it is vital that students and parents note the dates of the CBAs and do their very best to ensure student’s attendance within the nationally set timetable. We will only consider doctor certs for absences during the CBA timeframe. However, Parents / Guardians should be aware that teachers must input results promptly after CBA final dates and have very little leeway to give any form of extension.

The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

Certification will be provided by the State Examinations Commission. However, the state’s certification will form part of your son / daughter’s Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement. This will be issued by the school, signed off on by the Principal. It will be a complete report on your child’s progress during their entire Junior Cycle education. It will report on results achieved in the state certified exams, inclusive of the school Classroom Based Assessments and student achievements in Other Areas of Learning.

The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement is divided into three sections outlining:

1. The results of the formal Junior Cycle written exams taken at the end of Third Year.
2. The results / descriptors for Classroom Based Assessments taken in 2nd and 3rd Year.

3. Other Areas of Learning * - a summary of the student's extracurricular activities and achievements over the last 3 years.

The following table provides an explanation of the current and revised grading system for Junior Certificate / Junior Cycle subjects.

Level	Junior Certificate		Junior Cycle	
	Percentage	Grade Descriptor	Percentage	Grade Descriptor
Higher, Foundation/ Bonn	≥ 85 to 100	A	≥ 90 to 100	Distinction
	≥ 70 and < 85	B	≥ 75 and < 90	Higher Merit
	≥ 55 and < 70	C	≥ 55 and < 75	Merit
	≥ 40 and < 55	D	≥ 40 and < 55	Achieved
	≥ 25 and < 40	E	≥ 20 and < 40	Partially Achieved
	≥ 10 and < 25	F	≥ 0 and < 20	Not Graded (NG)
	≥ 0 and < 10	NG		

Both the old and the new grading systems will appear side-by-side on the Statements of Provisional Examination Results issued by the State Exams Commission when the Junior Certificate Results are issued each September and on the final Junior Certificate Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which will be generated by schools in December / January annually.

*Other Areas of Learning (OALs) recognise the key skills developed through participating in school based, extra-curricular activities. A student could merit an OAL if they have:

- ✓ Won a specific award for sporting, cultural or behavioural achievements at an end of year school awards ceremony.
- ✓ Been an active member of a school sport's team / panel.
- ✓ Been a member of the Students' Council.
- ✓ Entered a competition such as the BT Young Scientist.
- ✓ Taken part in the organisation of a charity fundraising event in the school.
- ✓ Performed in front of classmates / schoolmates at a school musical, dramatic or dance performance.

- ✓ Been an active member of any school club.

OALs are an important innovation in the Junior Cycle as they encourage students to become active members of the school community. Crucially, they also contribute towards a more accurate and holistic overview of a student's achievements throughout their Junior Cycle career.

In April of Third Year, students will be asked to complete a short report on the Other Areas of Learning that they feel should be included on their JCPA. Parents / Guardians will be asked to review, amend and sign that report, which will be used to frame the Other Areas of Learning part of the JCPA.

Further Information can be accessed in the school, as well as from two websites – www.jct.ie and www.curriculumonline.ie.