Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan
Assessment Policy October 2026

Introduction

This Assessment Policy was developed in partnership with all members of the Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan Community – students, teachers, parents, management and trustees. It recognises the requirement of the school to *regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of these evaluations to the students and their parents*, as set down by the Education Act 1998. This Assessment Policy will be reviewed regularly, as directed by the Board of Management.

Relationship to Mission Statement

Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan is a Catholic co-educational school committed to the holistic education of all students, to ensure that individually, they each realise their full potential in a social and physical environment that is caring, supportive and joyful. We work in partnership with students, staff, parents and the community, and welcome all students from our multicultural society.

This Assessment Policy plays key role in striving to ensure that each student realises his/her full academic potential in a learning environment that reflects a culture of partnership between teachers, parents and students.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The primary aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To facilitate improved teaching and pupil learning.
- To create a consistent and standardised assessment procedure for monitoring and reporting achievement in the school.
- To co-ordinate assessment procedures within departments on a whole school basis.

Assessment for Learning & Assessment of Learning

Our policy covers both **Assessment *of* Learning** and A**ssessment *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 source of empowerment and motivation for learners. It is an ongoing process which is associated with improvement in levels of achievement and a better disposition towards learning. The essential aim of **Assessment *for* Learning** is to provide a learner with feedback, to ensure learning can progress effectively. With the support of the teacher, **Assessment *for* Learning** draws attention to 1) what a learner is doing right, 2) where any weaknesses in the learner's work are and 3) the next steps that the learner should take in order to achieve learning goals.

The Purposes of Assessment

- To evaluate what a student has learned in a particular area.
- To provide feedback to students in a timely and constructive manner.
- To provide feedback to teachers on the success of particular teaching methodologies in the learning process.
- To highlight difficulties and shortcomings in the learning process in order to develop intervention strategies.
- To identify students who require extension activities such as learning support.
- To keep records of attainment that will inform parents through the school's reporting process.
- To measure the progress of students over time.
- To raise expectations and standards.
- To act as an incentive for students in the learning process.
- To ascertain whether it is appropriate for a student to continue studying in any given subject area
- To encourage and increase the skills of self and peer-assessment
- To help students to reflect on their learning and to set targets

Forms of Assessment

Formative assessment involves a range of strategies designed to give students, teachers and parents, feedback about students' understanding of elements of their learning in courses. The feedback is the essential element of formative assessment.

Summative assessment refers to the assessment of learning at a particular juncture and aims to provide a summary of the achievements of the learner at that point in time.

Types of Assessment

Assessments can be either informal or formal.

1. Informal Assessment

The most common forms of assessment used in the school are of an informal nature, and these take place regularly in the classroom. These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers who will use them constructively for learning to take place. Timely feedback and constructive advice are vital components in this process. Where appropriate, teachers will keep records of these assessments to provide an insight into a student's progress over time and to fully inform the learning process. Informal Assessments methods include –

- Worksheets & written classwork.
- Questions and answers in class.
- Essays & assignments.
- Reading & writing in class.
- Sample exam questions.
- Homework – written or learned.
- Quizzes.
- Projects.
- Oral Presentations.
- Digital Assessment.

2. Formal Assessment

Formal assessment is an integral part of teaching & learning

Monthly/End of Topic Test – These forms of assessments will be conducted at the discretion of the teacher on a monthly or end of chapter basis. These formal tests are a vital component in providing feedback to teachers, students and parents; on student attainment and learning in that specific subject area. Constructive feedback will be given by teachers to students who partake in these tests, and the results of these tests will be used in the school's formal reporting structure where appropriate.

Framework for Assessment

1st Years	
Formative Assessment	All subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas.
Christmas Exams	**Christmas Exams -** Irish / English / Maths / Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music
	No Christmas Exams – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion / Computers
	In Class / One Hour Duration.
	Late November / Early December / One Set Week
Christmas Reports	**Christmas Exam Grades & Comment (All Common Level) -** Irish / English / Maths / Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **Comment Only -** CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion / Computers
Summer Exams	**Summer Exams -** Irish / English / Maths / Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **No Summer Exams** – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion / Computers
	Formal Timetabled Exams / One Hour Duration
	Last week before Summer Holidays
Summer Reports	**Summer Exam Grades & Comment (All Common Level) -** Irish / English / Maths / Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **Comment Only**: CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion / Computers

2nd Years	
Formative Assessment	All subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas
	Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) CBAs will be conducted throughout the school year as per the whole school plan for CBAs. The outcomes of these CBAs will be recorded on VSWare for families to access on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.
Christmas Exams	**Christmas Exams – Higher or Ordinary :** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level :** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music
	No Christmas Exams – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion
	In Class / One Hour Duration
	Late November / Early December / One Set Week
Christmas Reports	**Christmas Exam Grades & Comment –** **Higher or Ordinary:** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level:** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **Comment Only** – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion
Summer Exams	**Summer Exams - Higher or Ordinary:** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level:** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music
	No Summer Exams – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion
	Formal Timetabled Exams / 1.5 Hours Duration
	Last week before Summer Holidays
Summer Reports	**Summer Exam Grades & Comment –** **Higher or Ordinary :** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level :** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **Comment Only** – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion

3rd Years	
Formative Assessment	All subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas
	Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) CBAs will be conducted throughout the school year as per the whole school plan for CBAs. The outcomes of these CBAs will be recorded on VSWare for families to access on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. **Assessment Tasks** Where relevant, Assessment Tasks will be completed throughout the school year as per the whole school plan for Assessment Tasks. These Assessment Tasks will be stored and sent to the SEC for correction at the normal time of the Junior Cycle State Exams.
Christmas Exams	**Christmas Exams – Higher or Ordinary:** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level:** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music
	No Christmas Exams – SPHE / PE / Religion /CSPE
	In Class / One Hour Duration
	Late November / Early December / One Set Week
Christmas Reports	**Christmas Exam Grades & Comment –** **Higher or Ordinary :** Irish / English / Maths **Common Level :** Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music **Comment Only** – CSPE / SPHE / PE / Religion
Mock Exams	**Mock Exams –** Irish / English / Maths **(Only)**
	Formal Timetabled Exams as per State Junior Cycle Exams format. To be held before the February Mid-Term Break
3rd Year Spring Reports	**Mock Exams: Level (Higher or Ordinary), Descriptor & Comment –** Irish / English / Maths **Continuous Assessment: All Common Level, Descriptor & Comment** – Science / French / German / History / Geography / Visual Art / Business Studies / Graphics / Home Economics / Engineering / Wood Technology / Music

Transition Years	
Formative Assessment	All Subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas
Christmas Exams	Transition Years will not have any set Christmas Exams
Christmas Reports	All Transition Year students will receive a Christmas Report whereby they will receive a comment, and a ranking in the areas of Attainment and Participation, with regard to each subject that they are studying. **Continuous Assessment grade for English & Maths**
Summer Exams	Transition Years will not have any set Summer Exams
Summer Reports	All Transition Year students will receive a Summer Report whereby they will receive a comment, and a ranking in the areas of Attainment and Participation, with regard to each subject that they are studying. **Continuous Assessment grade for English & Maths**
TY Credit System	All Transition Year students will receive a TY Certificate at the end of the year. This will be based on a Credit System that assesses many areas of Transition Year such as attendance, attitude, punctuality, work experience, extra-curricular participation, behaviour, etc. Each TY student will also participate in an end of year interview which will inform this assessment. This will include a presentation of one element from each student's TY Portfolio.
	Students will achieve one of the following overall grades -
	• Distinction
	• Merit
	• Pass
	• Unsuccessful

5th Years	
Formative Assessment	All Subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas
Christmas Exams	**Christmas Exams –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **No Christmas Exams** – Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion / LCW
	In Class / One Hour Classes as appropriate
	Late November / Early December / One Set Week
Christmas Reports	**Christmas Exam: Level, Grade & Comment –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **Comment Only** – Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion / LCW
	Continuous Assessment mark recorded and based on a **minimum** of two pieces of work.
Summer Exams	**Summer Exams –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **No Summer Exams** – LCVP / Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion
	Formal Timetabled Exams / Two Hours Duration
	Last week before Summer Holidays
Summer Reports	**Summer Exam: Level, Grade & Comment –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **Comment Only** - Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion
	Continuous Assessment mark recorded and based on a **minimum** of two pieces of work.

6th Years	
Formative Assessment	All Subjects will undertake Formative Assessment throughout the year in all subject areas
November Exams	**November Exams –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **No November Exams** – Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion / LCW
	In Class / One Hour Classes as appropriate
	One Set Week - First Week after Mid-Term Break
November Reports	**November Exams: Level, Grade & Comment –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **Comment Only** – Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion / LCW
	No Continuous Assessment mark recorded.
Mock Exams	**Mock Exams –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects **No Mock Exams** – Career Guidance / SCPE / Religion
	Formal Timetabled Exams as per State Leaving Cert Exams format
	Last fortnight before February Mid-Term Break.
Mock Reports	**Mock Exams: Level, Grade & Comment –** All Leaving Cert Exam Subjects
	No Continuous Assessment Mark

Additional Assessment Components & Coursework at Senior Cycle

'Additional Assessment Components (AACs)' (for redeveloped Leaving Certificate subjects) and 'Leaving Certificate Coursework' (for subjects yet to be redeveloped) are the names given to formal project work completed by Senior Cycle students. Such work is prescribed and externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and makes up a portion of a student's final grade in a particular subject.

This additional work is integrated with ordinary teaching and learning in a subject. It is completed over the course of the two-year Senior Cycle Programme. AACs and Coursework Projects are designed to assess a broader range of learning than can be captured through a terminal exam, i.e., practical, research and problem-solving skills.

Depending on the subject, AACs and Leaving Certificate Coursework can take various forms, such as research projects; practical investigations or experiments; portfolios; performance or creation of objects and oral assessments.

It is imperative that AACs and coursework are completed in line with NCCA Guidelines, 'Coursework Rules and Procedures' (SEC) and the guidance of individual teachers.

AACs and coursework have various completion dates, which are advised by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). Strict adherence to both subject deadlines and official completion dates is essential for verification, authentication and submission procedures to take place.

More information on AACs / Leaving Certificate Coursework is available on our school website at www.mercykilbeggan.ie.

Junior Cycle

The assessment of the New Junior Cycle Programme ensures that a range of skills are assessed, placing students at the center of the learning process. Students will complete Classroom Based Assessments (CBA) during class time in both 2nd and 3rd Year, which will be reported on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). Students can achieve one of four grade descriptors (listed below) once teachers have conducted a Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting in which students' work is moderated.

E	Exceptional
AE	Above Expectations
I	In Line with Expectations
Y	Yet to Meet Expectations
NR	Not Reported

Where a descriptor for a Classroom Based Assessment has not been given to a student, the term 'Not Reported' is used. There is no appeal to the allocation of a student's grade descriptor. In addition, students in 3rd Year complete an Assessment Task (in most subject areas) which accounts for 10% of their final exam result. There will also be opportunities for students to contribute towards their JCPA by participating in 'Other Areas of Learning'. These are activities which must be school based and are also recorded on their JCPA. Finally, when the students receive their JCPA, their final grades consist of the following language:

Distinction	≥ 90 – 100
Higher Merit	≥ 75 - < 90
Merit	≥ 55 - < 75
Achieved	≥ 40 - < 55
Partially Achieved	≥ 20 - < 40
Not Graded	≥ 0 - < 20

Other Assessments – the school may engage in other forms of assessment from time to time. All students will be screened by the Learning Support Department to investigate the possible provision of additional help or Reasonable Accommodation where necessary. The school's NEPS psychologist, in consultation with school management, may carry out psychological assessments and other assessments on students at different times throughout the year.

General Guidelines

The form that these informal and formal assessments will take, are dependent on the subject area being assessed and will vary from subject to subject. Certain forms of assessment may be unsuitable for a particular subject.

All forms of assessment above will strive to meet the additional needs of students in the classroom when they arise. Classroom strategies such as differentiated assessment, visual aids, spelling waivers, increased time and dictionaries, amongst others, may be used from time to time as determined by the individual subject teacher.

Where feasible, and as determined by each department plan, common assessments across a year group will be used in each subject area. This will provide for increased cooperation, peer collaboration and a common benchmark across each subject area.

Students are expected to treat all of the above forms of assessment with respect. Any student who willingly fails to participate fully, or who acts in a disrespectful way towards any form of assessment in the school will be dealt with in line with the Code of Behaviour.

Assessment and Reporting

There are different methods whereby the results of formal and informal assessments will be reported to parents.

- **Student Journal** – The teacher may communicate the outcome of any assessment to the parents/guardian of a student by writing a note in the student's journal. The parent/guardian is expected to acknowledge receipt of this note by countersigning it.
- **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
- **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.
- **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 generates a accurate picture of the student's progress.
- **Published Reports** – Formal reports will be published on the school's VSWare System for the parents/guardians of students on two occasions during the academic year, depending which year group they are in. 1st, 2nd, Transition Year and 5th Year parents/guardians will have their *Christmas Report* published on VSWare in December before the Christmas holidays, and their *Summer Report* published on VSWare during the Summer holidays.
  Parents/guardians of 3rd Year will also have a *Christmas Report* published on VSWare in December, and a *Spring Report* published on VSWare following their Junior Cycle Mock Examinations. 3rd Year parents/guardians do not receive a *Summer Report*.
  Parents/guardians of 6th Year will also have a *November Report* published on VSWare, and a *Spring Report* published on VSWare following their Leaving Certificate Mock Examinations. 6th Year parents/guardians do not receive a *Summer Report*.

Signed: Theresa Dunne

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 29/10/2026

Signed Garrett Farrell

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date : 29/10/2026

TY Credit System

Criteria	Assessment Details	Credits Awarded	Students Name
Attendance	Over 15 days absent over 30 days	-20 -50	
Behaviour	Any formal referral to year head for behaviour Note in journal	-20 per referral -10 per note	
Journal and Portfolio	Missing subject Portfolio piece Journal not completed	-10 per item -50	
Total Deductions			
Interview	Participation, effort, completion. Excellent 80-100 very good 60-80 good 40-60 satisfactory 40 unexplained absence 0	+100	Total
Total	**Distinction** **Merit** **Pass**	**300-400** **150-300** **Under 150**	**Total:**