



## Dominican College Sion Hill Assessment and Reporting Policy

### Introduction

Dominican College, Sion Hill's Mission Statement; ***"We aim to help each student achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially in a happy secure environment."*** underpins our approach to teaching, assessment, learning and reporting. 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.

### Reporting

Reporting aims to support and underpin ongoing learning and assessment, and to be manageable, accessible and effective for the school, teacher, student and parent (Junior Cycle Framework, 2015).

### Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to help the student discover 'where to go next' and help the teacher support that growth. Assessment in the widest sense is a snapshot of where a student is at a particular point in time.

In planning for effective assessment and reporting teachers in Dominican College Sion Hill will use the Looking at our Schools 2016 document to support their classroom practice. This document will direct the teacher in the planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress students' learning. Subject specifications, curriculum and assessment guidelines are all key documents in the planning for assessment and reporting.

### Inclusive Assessment

Inclusive assessment practices are a key feature of teaching and learning in schools. Accommodations, e.g. the support provided by a special needs assistant or the support of assistive technologies, should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year. Where a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations will be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in their assessments. Accommodations which enable all students to access learning and assessment are based on specific needs.

## **Ongoing Reporting in Dominican College Sion Hill**

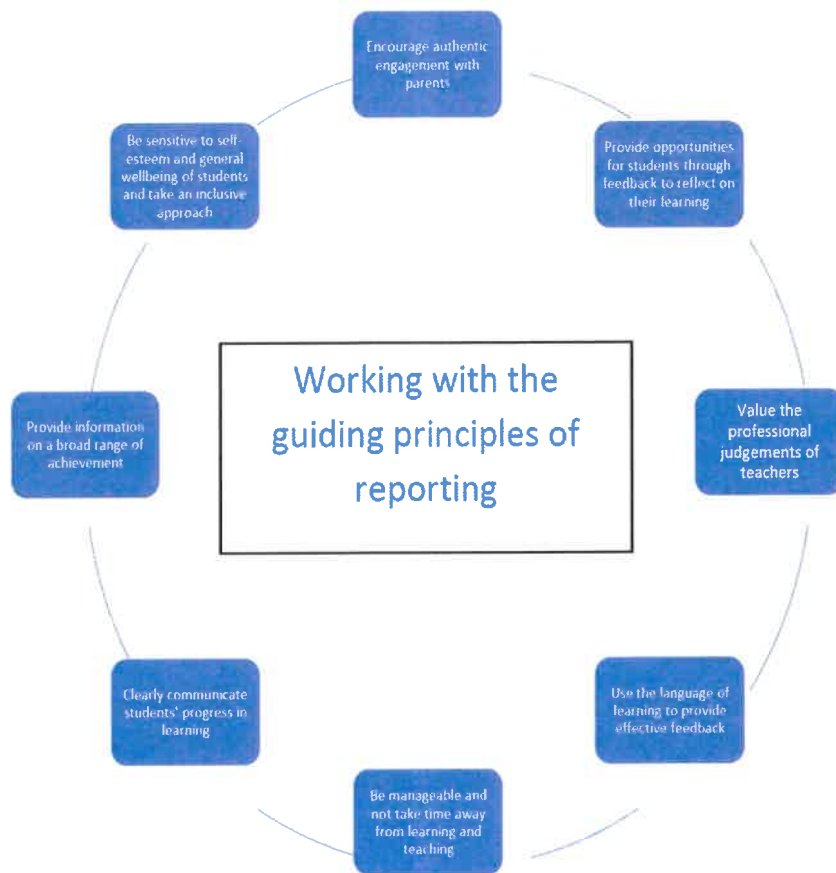
Ongoing reporting on student progress can take a variety of forms in Dominican College Sion Hill

- Informal oral and written feedback
- Student Journal
- Parent teacher meetings
- Discussions with class teacher/tutor/year head/SEN coordinator
- Student learning logs, diaries, reflections
- End of topic/term/year reports
- Communication and engagement with parents/guardians via telephone, VShare, Schoolwise, post, Twitter, School App.
- Students' learning progress and achievement in subjects and short courses
- Engagement with the learning behaviours and dispositions of students
- The wellbeing of students
- Student participation and achievement in extra-curricular activities
- The results of classroom-based-assessments (CBA'S)
- The results of CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test 4, 1st Year), New Group Reading Test (1st Year), Progress in Maths (1st Year), Eirquest (4th Year), Cambridge Profile Aptitude Test (5th Year)

## **The guiding principles of reporting**

Effective reporting in Dominican College Sion Hill

- Encourages authentic engagement with parents
- Provides opportunities for students through feedback to reflect on their learning
- Values the professional judgements of teachers
- Uses the language of learning to provide effective feedback
- Is manageable and does not take away from learning and teaching
- Clearly communicates students' progress in learning
- Provides information on a broad range of achievement
- Is sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students and take an inclusive approach. (NCCA, 2018)



### **Types of Assessment in Dominican College Sion Hill – See Glossary for further details**

- Formative Assessment
- Summative Assessment
- Classroom Based Assessments
- Oral and Aural assessments in languages
- Assessment Tasks
- Project Work – Presentations, PowerPoints, Eportfolios, visual displays, posters,
- Practical Exams in Home Economics, Art, Music
- Log Books/Field Study – Home Economics, Science, History, Geography
- Online assessments – Entrance Exams
- Learning Reflections for ALL year groups
- Literacy
- Numeracy

## Other Assessments

### **CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test 4), 1st Year**

This test is designed to support Post-Primary schools in understanding pupils' developed abilities, likely academic potential and learning preferences. It measures the four principal areas of reasoning – verbal, non-verbal, quantitative and spatial.

### **New Group Reading Test (1st Year)**

The *New Group Reading Test (NGRT)* is used in groups to assess and monitor reading and comprehension – and if necessary, phonemic awareness. This can help identify, for instance, competent readers with weak comprehension skills who would benefit from a follow-up individual assessment and learning support.

### **Progress in Maths (1st Year)**

*Progress in Maths (PiM)* tests a pupil's mathematical skills and concepts. The group test highlights pupils' strengths and weaknesses helping teachers to address areas of concern and build upon what pupils already know, in order to increase their understanding.

### **Eirquest (4th Year)**

EirQuest is a careers guidance programme designed for students planning to take the Irish Leaving Certificate. It is based on an interest questionnaire (online based). EirQuest analyses individual student responses and produces an Interest Profile based on over 40 broad career areas.

In addition, it provides:

- useful information for each student on the top key career areas
- a personalised subject selection and availability chart
- a facility for structured careers research
- access to MyCareersRoom
- a hard copy and online version of The Careers Directory for each student

### **Cambridge Profile Aptitude Test (5th Year)**

This test provides an added means of assessment when matching a student with a career area or a more specific job. It provides an opportunity for students to experience such tests in advance of being presented with them by employers or others in future objective assessment of academic potential.

### **Fitness tests**

These are taken as part of the PE curriculum to encourage healthy eating and exercise.

### **Learning Support Assessments**

If a student is identified as being in need of additional support the Learning Support Co-ordinator will apply to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for that assistance. Classroom strategies such as differentiated assessment, team teaching, one-to-one tuition, visual aids, spelling waivers, increased time and dictionaries amongst others, may be used from time to time, as determined by the Learning Support Co-ordinator in consultation with individual subject teachers. The psychologist from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) assigned to Dominican College Sion Hill, in consultation with school management, may carry out psychological assessments and other assessments on students at different times of the year.

### **Target Grade Setting**

Students, in consultation with teachers, set their target grades for all their subjects at the beginning of each academic year. These are reviewed throughout the year. Every student is assessed on a monthly basis. These monthly assessments include three sets of House Examinations in October, February and May. Parents can access full reports on VsWare after each set of house exams, with individual feedback from all teachers. Parents/Guardians have online access to all monthly assessments, house exams and target grades on VsWare and Schoolwise.

### **Monthly Assessments**

A grade is available to parents/guardians every month in every examinable subject for every student in the school.

### **School Exams**

Three sets of full house exams for the whole school are carried out in October, February and May. Full report (with individual teacher feedback) issued after each set.

### **Student Journal**

Contains areas on academic progress, target grades and self-assessment. Reviewed by guardians and tutors regularly.

### **Parent Teacher Meetings**

Held once a year for all year groups. Feedback from ability testing given to parents.

### **Academic Awards**

An annual award ceremony whereby medals are issued for the highest grade in each subject within each year group.

### **Tracking academic attainment and promoting academic growth to achieve full potential.**

Sion Hill continues to develop a comprehensive academic tracking programme. To determine expected levels of achievement, students take tests in cognitive ability, interests and attitude to learning at key stages. This, in combination with, a rigorous review of the outcomes of school examinations and monthly assessments in subjects, relative to each student's ability, is used to inform mainstream teaching, or to provide support or mentoring as required. The purpose of this unique programme is to ensure that every student reaches their full potential academically in a caring and supportive environment. Department of Education Inspection within the school have highlighted the uniqueness and high quality of this system.

### **Standardised Assessment Table**

Every teacher uses the Standardised Assessment key when correcting Homework and written Exams. See **Appendix 1**

### **Examination Cover Sheet**

All students are required to complete a reflection exercise at the end of each House Examination. This reflection may be awarded marks in the Examination. Please see **Appendix 2**

## Formal Assessment Calendar

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, October, November, December, January, March, April.</li> <li>● October House Exams</li> <li>● February House exams</li> <li>● Summer House Exams - May</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting -</li> </ul>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, November, December, January, March, April</li> <li>● October House Exams or CBA 1</li> <li>● February House Exams or CBA 1</li> <li>● Summer House Exams or CBA 1 - May</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, November, December, January, March, April.</li> <li>● October House Exams or CBA 2</li> <li>● Mock Exam February</li> <li>● Junior Cert State Exam June</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>TY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, November, December, January, March, April</li> <li>● October House House Exams</li> <li>● February House Exams</li> <li>● Summer House Exams - May</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, November, December, January, March, April</li> <li>● October House House Exams</li> <li>● February House Exams</li> <li>● Summer House Exams - May</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Monthly Tracking Assessment</i>; September, November, December, January, March, April.</li> <li>● October House Exams or CBA 2</li> <li>● Mock Exam February</li> <li>● Leaving Cert State Exam June</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meeting</li> </ul>

## Reporting Descriptors for Programmes

### Reporting Descriptors for Junior Cycle

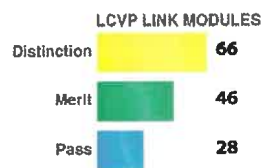
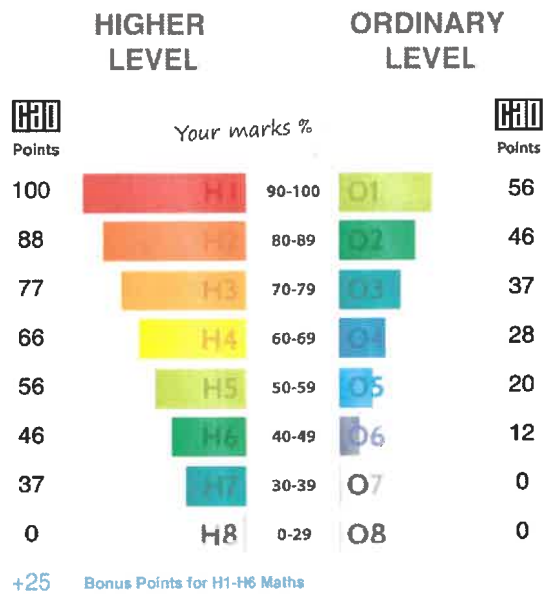
New Junior Cycle Subject Grade Descriptors	
Distinction	$\geq 90$ to 100
Higher Merit	$\geq 75$ and $< 90$
Merit	$\geq 55$ and $< 75$
Achieved	$\geq 40$ and $< 55$
Partially Achieved	$\geq 20$ and $< 40$
Not Graded (NG)	$\geq 0$ and $< 20$

### Reporting Descriptors for Junior Cycle CBAs

Classroom-Based Assessment Descriptors
Exceptional
Above Expectations
In line with Expectations
Yet to Meet Expectations



## Reporting Descriptors for Leaving Certificate



## Reporting Descriptors for Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

<b>Distinction</b>	<b>80-100%</b>
<b>Merit</b>	<b>65-79%</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>50-64%</b>

## State Examinations

The Junior and Leaving Certificate state examinations are conducted by the State Exams Commission (SEC) nationally for third year and sixth year students respectively and are held each June. For third year students these results can inform their subject choices for senior cycle whilst for sixth year students the results can lead to career path opportunities for their future.

## **National Comparison of State Examination Results**

At subject department level teachers are required to compare their Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate results to the National outcomes under a number of headings. The results are reported at a full staff meeting and in the minutes of subject department meetings where strategies for improvements are outlined and discussed. Teachers are asked to collaborate and reflect on the results and set measurable targets that can lead to incremental improvements. Areas of good practice should be identified to ensure these results are maintained.

## **Standardised Marking**

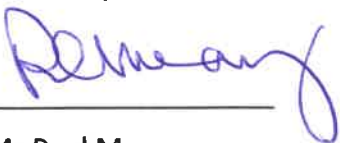
In line with moderation, standardised marking is key. Where possible a marking scheme should be set out. It is vital that this is not subjective but a definite descriptor of what is a correct or incorrect answer. It is important therefore when applying overall marks in grading that there is a consensus as to what is 'very good' 'good' and so on. This can only be achieved when the paper or assessment piece is discussed among the setters and examination teachers. The use of SEC marking schemes and Chief examiners reports play a vital role in this process. This is best practice particularly when common level tests are the norm.

## **Procedures for House Exams**

House Exams take place for all year groups in October, February and May for students not sitting State Examinations. The purpose of house exams is to allow students to experience a setting similar to that of the State Examinations. 1st and 2nd Year students are scheduled for 1.5 hours, 3rd Year and 5th year students 2 hours and 6th Year students for 2.5 hours.

This Assessment and Reporting Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **27<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

It will be reviewed every 3 years or more often if necessary. Any review will continue to be guided by the school's characteristic spirit.







Mr Paul Meany

Chairperson, Board of Management

## Appendix 1

Standardised Assessment Table:

Spelling	
Grammar	 (underline straight)
- Tense	T
- Word Order	→←
- Capital Letter	
- Punctuation	P
- Wrong Word	( )
- Illegible/Unrecognizable	??
- Sentence Structure	 (underline squiggle)
- New paragraph	┌
Missing a word	^
Examples needed	e.g ?
More development needed	++
Reference needed	Ref?
Wrong answer	X
Good Point/Correct Answer	√
Irrelevant	IRR
Be more Specific	SPEC
Label Diagram	LD

## Appendix 2

### Dominican College, Sion Hill



Student Name and Class: \_\_\_\_\_ ( Please read ALL instructions.)

Section 1		<b>Subject:</b>  <b>Date and Time:</b>  <b>Room:</b>		
Section 2				
Section 3				
		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>KEYWORDS</b> To be filled in when exam is returned                   _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____             </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>Corrected Errors</b>                   _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____             </td> </tr> </table>	<b>KEYWORDS</b> To be filled in when exam is returned  _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Corrected Errors</b>  _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>KEYWORDS</b> To be filled in when exam is returned  _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Corrected Errors</b>  _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____			
Total				
Fraction				
Decimal				
%				
Grade				

<p><b>1. How did you find the Test. (Tick box)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">                 Easy <input type="checkbox"/>                                      OK <input type="checkbox"/>                                      Difficult <input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><b>2. How well did you prepare for this test? (Circle one of the following)</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Not at all</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;">Very well</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </table>	Not at all			Very well	0	1	2	3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Reflection</b></p>
Not at all			Very well						
0	1	2	3						
<p><b>3. What went well?</b></p>  <p><b>4. Identify the things you found most difficult</b></p>  <p><b>5. What could you do to improve your grade</b></p>									

## Appendix 3

### Glossary of Terms

<b>Assessment</b>	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.
<b>Assessment Task</b>	The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during classtime, 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 and they are also available in the Assessment Toolkit.
<b>Assessment Method</b>	This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback in order to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning.
<b>Blended Learning</b>	This refers to the practice of using both online and real-time learning experiences when teaching students. This combination of content delivery allows for both methods to support and compliment each other and personalise the learning process. This can also be referred to as 'hybrid learning' or 'mixed mode learning'.
<b>Classroom Based Assessment CBA</b>	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. (Click 'subjects' on the left for further subject specific information).
<b>Diagnostic Assessment</b>	This is a type of assessment that is intended to diagnose the strengths and/or areas of need in students prior to a learning activity. It allows for the identification and provision of the appropriate interventions and pedagogical approaches necessary to scaffold the learning to meet the individual learning needs of students.
<b>Differentiated</b>	Differentiated instruction refers to the wide range of strategies,

<b>Instruction</b>	techniques and approaches that are used to support student learning and help every student to achieve and to realise his or her potential.
<b>Features of Quality</b>	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 assessment and reporting purposes.
<b>Formative Assessment</b>	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 his/her learning.
<b>Individual Education Plans</b>	Plans developed in schools which detail the teaching and learning approaches intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests and aspirations of individual students.
<b>Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement</b>	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.
<b>Learning Intention</b>	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.
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	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.
<b>Moderation</b>	Moderation is a collaborative process that enables teachers to reach consistency in their judgements of student work against agreed success criteria or features of quality. The moderation process involves teachers discussing the qualities demonstrated in examples of student work to reach agreement about the standard of that work.
<b>Ongoing Assessment</b>	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 tests and may occur at defined points in the school calendar.

**Peer Assessment**

Peer assessment is the assessment of the work of others of equal status. In the context of student learning, peer assessment is used by students to estimate the worth of other students' work with reference to specific and agreed criteria.

**Reliability**

This is the extent to which the assessment would give the same result if repeated. Reliability in assessment means that high quality evidence and information is provided on student performance and is comparable (i.e. it stands up when compared to judgements across learners, departments and schools).

**Reporting**

The communication of information on the results of assessment of student achievement.

**Self-Assessment**

Self-assessment is the involvement of students in making judgements about their own work, based on features of quality. It is a measure of the extent to which their own work has met these features of quality.

**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.

**Standardised Test**

This is a test that is given in a consistent way to all the test takers and uses uniform procedures for administration and scoring. This term is primarily associated with large-scale tests administered to sizeable populations of students, and allows for comparison of relative performance of individual students or groups of students. These tests will provide an additional indicator of student progress and are devised to supplement and not replace the teacher's professional judgement.

**Subject Learning Assessment and 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.

**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.
<b>Validity</b>	This is the degree to which an assessment instrument accurately measures what it was designed to measure.