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Guidelines for the Classroom- Based Assessment

Junior Cycle Home Economics

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Introduction

This document, *Junior Cycle Home Economics: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment*, provides

- general information on Classroom-Based Assessments
- detail of the nature and scope of the Classroom-Based Assessment described in the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle Home Economics
- the Features of Quality used to describe the level of achievement for each Classroom-Based Assessment
- guidelines for schools, teachers and students on completing the Classroom-Based Assessments.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle Home Economics, which can be accessed at <http://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/JuniorCycleSubjects/HomeEconomics>.

Classroom-Based Assessments: General Information

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) are best described as the occasions when the teacher assesses the students using the specific tasks set out in the subject specification. They are included within the time allocated for Home Economics, which is a minimum of 200 hours. The Classroom-Based Assessments and the Features of Quality (FoQ), which support teacher judgement, are set out in these guidelines.

The purpose of assessment at this stage of education is to support learning. While Classroom-Based Assessments are summative, they have a formative value and should be used as a tool to provide feedback to students, parents and teachers on student progress and learning. Providing focused feedback to students on their learning is a critical component of high-quality assessment and a key factor in building students' capacity to manage their own learning and their motivation to stick with a complex task or problem.

The teacher's judgement of the student's work arising from the Classroom-Based Assessment is recorded for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting and is used in the school's reporting to parents and students on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). Students undertake the Classroom-Based Assessments over specified periods of time in second and third year. The results of other projects, homework or tests undertaken by the students in the course of their normal classwork do not add up to the award of a descriptor for the Classroom-Based Assessment.

The autonomy of the school in preparing students for the Classroom-Based Assessments

There are two Classroom-Based Assessments in Home Economics. They are assessed at a common level. These guidelines set out a range of options for the Classroom-Based Assessments so that they can suit the particular needs and circumstances of students and the school.

The first Classroom-Based Assessment is completed in Year 2. Students and teachers have a choice of two options from which to choose a Creative Textiles project. The second Classroom-Based Assessment is completed in Year 3 and is directly linked to the practical food skills examination. This Classroom-Based Assessment is based on a food literacy skills brief selected

from a list of briefs issued annually by the State Examinations Commission. Students draw a brief under the supervision of the teacher from the list provided by the State Examinations Commission. Students utilise the design brief process to research, generate ideas and possible solutions for the chosen brief. Within the parameters set by these guidelines, the range of approaches in both Classroom-Based Assessments can be determined independently by the school, teachers and students.

How the school supports the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessments

The school supports the completion of the assessments by:

- ensuring that the NCCA *Junior Cycle Home Economics Specification* and *Junior Cycle Home Economics: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment* are provided to teachers
- ensuring the projects presented for the Classroom-Based Assessments is the students' own work
- supporting teachers in recording the level descriptors awarded to each student
- retaining records and pieces of work, as appropriate, for the purposes of Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings
- applying the guidelines for Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings
- applying inclusive assessment practices and ensuring accessibility of assessment for all students
- reporting the outcomes of Classroom-Based Assessments to students and their parents/guardians as part of the school's reporting procedures and through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)

Further information can be found at [Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#).

Reasonable support

To facilitate providing feedback to students during their engagement with assessment, the process of completing the Classroom-Based Assessments should be viewed as part of teaching and learning, and not solely for assessment purposes. It is envisaged that teachers will guide, support and supervise throughout the process. If a student requires more than what could be deemed as

reasonable support, the teacher can make a note of the level of assistance provided. The level of initiative demonstrated by the students is an element of the Features of Quality used to decide the level of achievement of the student's work.

Support may include:

- clarifying the requirements of the task
- using annotated examples of student work to clarify the meaning and interpretation of the Features of Quality to students
- providing instructions at strategic intervals to facilitate the timely completion of the assessments
- providing supports for students with special educational needs (SEN) as outlined below.

Note that only work which is the student's own can be accepted for assessment in the JCPA. It is not envisaged that the level of support involved requires teachers to edit draft work, to provide model answers or to alter a student's text work to provide perfect samples of work to be used as a student's evidence of learning.

Inclusive assessment practices

Schools facilitate inclusive assessment practices whether as part of ongoing assessment or Classroom-Based Assessments. Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable supports may be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in Classroom-Based Assessments. These supports 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.

Classroom-Based Assessments in Home Economics

There are two Classroom-Based Assessments in Home Economics. They are assessed at a common level. They relate to learning outcomes and are scheduled to be undertaken by students in a time period under the supervision of the class teacher to a national timetable (as advised by the NCCA) in the school calendar. This timetable for Classroom-Based Assessments for all subjects will be provided on an annual basis at [Junior Cycle | NCCA](#) and at [Junior Cycle | Curriculum Online](#). Following the second of these assessments students will complete a Practical Food Skills examination which is marked by the State Examinations Commission as part of the final examination in Home Economics. The Classroom-Based Assessments for Home Economics and indicative timings are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Classroom-Based Assessments for Home Economics

Classroom-Based Assessment	Evidence of learning
Creative Textiles	This is an individual project. Students will produce evidence of the application of the design brief process to one of the following options: Make a creative textile item for an individual or the home OR Recycle or upcycle a creative textile item for an individual or the home
Food Literacy Skills Brief	This is an individual submission. Students will utilise the design brief process to research, generate ideas and possible solutions for their food literacy skills brief, drawn from a list of briefs issued by the State Examinations Commission

Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles

Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their practical textile and craft skills in a creative way. It also provides an opportunity to actively engage with the design brief process. Textile and craft skills are integral to this Classroom-Based Assessment and include hand and/or machine craft sewing skills. Students will apply the design brief process to make/recycle a textile item for the individual or the home giving due regard to basic human needs, consumer trends, ecological issues and technology. Through this Classroom-Based Assessment students develop their knowledge, understanding, skills, and values, thereby supporting the achievement of many of the learning outcomes across Strands 2 and 3 in the junior cycle home economics specification.

For the purposes of the learning outcomes and assessment in the home economics specification the term 'textile item' encompasses all textile-based crafts for an individual and the home.

Students are given two options from which to choose one Creative Textiles project:

1. Make a textile item for an individual or the home

OR

2. Recycle or upcycle a textile item for an individual or the home

As part of the Creative Textiles project, students will show evidence of:

- applying the design brief process
- applying the principles of design and sustainability
- using basic hand sewing and/or machine sewing techniques in the making of the product
- fabric embellishment techniques (where applicable)
- appropriate textile care and maintenance.

Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles is completed during second year. The date by which Creative Textiles is completed may vary from school to school and, within schools, from teacher to teacher. This flexibility is to allow for the planning, organising and sharing of resources such as specialised rooms.

Process for completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles

The graphic below sets out the process for conducting Classroom-Based Assessment 1. The aim of this process is to provide guidance for teachers as they support their students completing Classroom- Based Assessment 1.



Getting ready

Student preparation

Students should have developed some knowledge, understanding and skills across the strands of study: Responsible Family Living, and Textiles and Craft, in order to undertake their chosen Creative Textiles project. This Classroom-Based Assessment is undertaken by students during Year 2 over 8 to 10 weeks depending on access to appropriate and specific resources. This work should be produced under the supervision of the subject teacher. As part of ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes for Home Economics, students should have opportunities to develop textile and craft skills, knowledge and creativity, and be enabled to make sustainable decisions before completing the Classroom-Based Assessment. From the outset, students should be familiar with the Features of Quality used to judge the quality of their work.

Teacher preparation

Programme planning by the teacher needs to develop students' knowledge, understanding, skills and values across the learning outcomes of the specification incrementally in advance of and during the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment. The role of the teacher should be to guide, support, enable and provide direction to students as they complete the Creative Textiles Classroom-Based Assessment. Due to the nature of the subject and the requirement of using appropriate and specific resources, approaches for completing Creative Textiles can be decided at school level.

In order to prepare for the Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following documentation available on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#):

- Junior Cycle Home Economics Specification
- Junior Cycle Home Economics: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment
- Annotated examples of student work
- Assessment and Reporting in junior cycle ([Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#)).

Completing the Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles



In this Classroom-Based Assessment students will engage in a practical and creative way with the design brief process in creating a textile item for an individual or the home. Students have two options to choose from:

- make a textile item for an individual or the home
- recycle or upcycle a textile item for an individual or the home.

Students will undertake two areas of activity, which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement:

1. Applying the design brief process
2. Demonstrating creative textile skills

1. Applying the design brief process

Evidence of the design brief process should be submitted and should include the following information:

- statement of chosen brief
- factors to be considered when choosing a possible solution to include the principles of design and sustainability
- investigation of two possible solutions (can be sketched)
- chosen solution: creative designs/sketches/drawings of the craft/textile item
- two reasons for choice
- list of resources which the student will need to complete the brief
- flowchart/workplan, which outlines the steps the student is planning to undertake in the process and the order in which they are taken.
- Textile care label:
 - The care label should reflect the fabric used in the textile item and include appropriate care symbols for washing, drying, ironing, and any special handling instructions.

- The label should be accurately created and presented either as a physical tag attached to the item, a separate label, or included as part of the design brief using a format that best demonstrates the student's understanding (e.g., drawn, photographed, or digitally created).
- a short student reflection should be submitted, which demonstrates how the student evaluated the design brief process. It should include:
 - an evaluation of the textile item 's quality, finish, and how well it meets the brief
 - a reflection on what went well and challenges encountered during the design brief process
 - conclusions i.e. if I was to go through the design brief process again and/or make/recycle a textile item again what would I do differently.

2. Demonstrating creative textile skills

The creative textile item should meet the brief. Students should show evidence of:

- using a range of basic stitches and/or hand sewing and/or machine sewing techniques in the making of the product
- fabric embellishment/texturing techniques (where applicable)
- attachment of a textile care label.

Evidence of learning

Students will submit a textile item and evidence of the application of the design brief process including the textile care label. The evidence should be a concise account of the application of the design brief process. The Classroom-Based Assessment will be assessed by the teacher using the Features of Quality provided in these guidelines (see p. 17-18).

The evidence of learning for the design brief process and reflection can be presented in a format, allowing students to communicate their work in a way that best suits their skills and learning styles. Students may incorporate visual, oral, digital, or physical demonstrations to showcase their design process and reflections. Examples of multimodal evidence include:

- Visual formats – Annotated sketches, diagrams, mind maps, or photographs capturing key stages of the textile item's development.
- Oral formats – Voice recordings or video explanations of design choices, material selection, or sustainability considerations.

- Digital formats – E-portfolios, blogs, slideshows, or short video walkthroughs of their creative process.
- Physical demonstrations – Step-by-step recorded demonstrations of specific textile techniques used in the construction of their item.

Creative Textiles: Advice for students

- The preparation for this Classroom-Based Assessment will be supported by your teacher
- Use your own initiative in selecting and creating your creative textiles item
- Make sure you are familiar with the Features of Quality and discuss the Features of Quality with your teacher and peers
- Select a creative textile item that can be completed within the time allocated
- Choose a textile item which is within your level of skill and practice your craft/textile skills before commencing on the item being presented as your Classroom-Based Assessment

Planning and the Design Brief Process

- Be sure to include the following information in your design brief process:
 - statement of your chosen brief
 - factors to be considered when choosing your solution
 - investigation of two possible solutions (can be sketched)
 - chosen solution: creative designs/sketches/drawings of the craft/textile item
 - two reasons for your choice
 - list of resources which you will need to complete the brief
 - flowchart/workplan, which outlines the steps you are planning to undertake in the process and the order in which they are taken
 - Textile care label: You must create a clear and accurate textile care label for your item. This should include:
 - Fabric type and key properties
 - Appropriate care symbols (e.g., washing, drying, ironing instructions)
 - Any special care recommendations
 - The label can be physically attached, presented as a separate tag, or submitted as part of the design brief.

Evaluating Your Work

- A short student reflection should be submitted showing how you evaluated the design brief process. It should include:
 - an evaluation of the textile item
 - a reflection on what went well and challenges you encountered during the design brief process
 - conclusions i.e. if I was to go through the design brief process again and/or make/recycle a textile item again what would I do differently.

Ongoing Reflection and Best Practice

- Follow the design brief process from the outset when undertaking the Classroom-Based Assessment.
- Reflect on your own work on an ongoing basis, identifying what you have done well and where you can improve in relation to the design brief process and the textile item.
- Consider what format would best suit you to demonstrate your learning (e.g., spoken reflections, video walkthroughs, annotated images) where appropriate.

In planning and preparing for your Classroom-Based Assessment you may collaborate with your peers in pairs or groups. However, please note that it will be your individual evidence - the submission of the design brief process and the craft/textile item - that is the evidence of your work. The descriptor you achieve, based on this evidence, will be reported on for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Deciding on the level of achievement: Creative Textiles



Features of Quality

Features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement in Classroom-Based Assessment

1: Creative Textiles are described here. The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess the student work as best fitting one of the four descriptors of achievement: Exceptional, Above expectations, In line with expectations, and Yet to meet expectations.

Exceptional describes a piece of work that reflects the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment to a very high standard. While not necessarily perfect, the strengths of the work far outstrip its flaws, which are minor. Suggestions for improvement are easily addressable by the student.

Above expectations describes a piece of work that reflects the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of the task. Feedback from the teacher might point to the necessity to address some aspect of the work in need of further attention or polishing, but on the whole the work is of a high standard.

In line with expectations describes a piece of work that reflects most of the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment well. It shows a good understanding of the task in hand and is free from significant error. Feedback might point to areas needing further attention or correction, but the work is generally competent and accurate.

Yet to meet expectations describes a piece of work that falls somewhat short of the demands of the Classroom-Based Assessment and its associated Features of Quality. Perhaps the student has made a good attempt, but the task has not been grasped clearly or is marred by significant lapses. Feedback will draw attention to fundamental shortcomings that need to be addressed.

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 *Yet to meet expectations*) until they reach a descriptor that best describes the work being assessed. While it should be noted that none of the descriptors imply faultless

achievement, evidence of work for the award of Exceptional should closely match the criteria for that level within the Features of Quality. Where it is not clearly evident which quality descriptor should apply, teachers must come to a judgement, 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.

Teachers should not assume that the results of a group of students being assessed will follow any particular distribution pattern, as the work is being judged only against the Features of Quality rather than other students' performances.

Teacher judgements about the quality of student work, with the aim of arriving at a shared understanding of standards and expectations, are supported by annotated examples of student work published on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#); by the Features of Quality in these guidelines; and by collaboration and discussion with colleagues during Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings.

The Features of Quality (presented overleaf) will be applied to authentic examples of student work. Arising from this process

- adjustments may be made to the Features of Quality
- amended Features of Quality, where necessary, will be published in the assessment guidelines and
- annotated examples of student work will be published on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#).

Features of Quality: Creative Textiles

Exceptional

A piece of work that reflects these features to a very high standard. The strengths of the work far outstrip its flaws.

- The application of craft/textile skills is of a very high standard. The textile item is well-made with excellent craftsmanship and high-quality finishing.
- The textile item shows a very high level of creativity and applies the principles of design and sustainability effectively. The student has made thoughtful and original design choices and has considered how materials are used responsibly.
- The textile care label is completed to a very high standard and includes accurate and well-presented textile care guidance that correctly reflects the properties of the fabric used.
- The design brief process including the reflection demonstrates clear, well-reasoned decision-making throughout the process, and provides a detailed and meaningful evaluation of their work.

Above expectations

A piece of work that reflects these features very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of the task. Feedback might point to the necessity to address some aspect of the work in need of further attention but, on the whole the work is of a high standard.

- The application of craft/textile skills is of a high standard. The textile item is well-made, with only minor areas that could be improved in construction or finishing.
- The textile item shows creativity and applies the principles of design and sustainability well. The student has made thoughtful design choices and has considered how materials are used responsibly.
- The textile care label is mostly accurate and appropriately presented with key care symbols and instructions relevant to the fabric used.
- The design brief process and reflection are well developed and show good decision-making. The student provides a clear evaluation of their work.

In line with expectations

A piece of work that reflects most of these features well. It shows a good understanding of the task in hand. Feedback might point to areas needing further attention but the work is generally competent.

- The application of craft/textile skills is of an acceptable standard. The textile item is complete and functional, though there may be some issues with construction, technique, or finishing.
- The textile item shows some creativity and makes some use of the principles of design and sustainability. The student has included design elements and made some effort to think about responsible material use.
- The textile care label is included and provides basic care instructions, though some details may be missing or inaccurate.
- The design brief process and reflection are completed to an acceptable standard. The student has attempted to evaluate their work, though some aspects may be underdeveloped.

Yet to meet expectations

A piece of work that falls some way short of the demands of the Classroom-Based Assessment and its associated features. Perhaps the student has made a good attempt, but the task has not been grasped clearly or is marred by significant lapses. Feedback will draw attention to fundamental shortcomings that need to be addressed.

- The application of craft/textile skills is not fully developed. The textile item may be incomplete, poorly constructed, or have major issues with finishing.
- The textile item shows little creativity and does not apply the principles of design and sustainability effectively. There is limited effort to include design elements or think about material use.
- The textile care label shows significant inaccuracies or is absent, showing limited understanding of textile care.
- The design brief process and reflection are not adequately developed and may be incomplete in places.

Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief

Classroom-Based Assessment 2 is directly linked to the practical food skills examination. Therefore, it is based on one food literacy skills brief drawn from a list of briefs issued annually in Third Year by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). Students will use the design brief process to demonstrate their culinary and creative food literacy skills and nutritional knowledge in the researching, analysing and planning of a food literacy skills brief for everyday living.

The briefs, issued by the State Examinations Commission, may include but not be exclusive to options from the following broad areas:

- healthy family meals to reflect the current healthy eating guidelines;
- a special dietary consideration or a diet-related disease;
- a particular stage of the lifecycle; healthy school lunches;
- a healthy homemade alternative of a commercial / takeaway meal;
- resourceful cookery;
- a food enterprise / farmers market product/s;
- ethnic cookery.

Food literacy skills briefs will be drawn by students under the supervision of the teacher following instructions issued by the State Examination Commission. Students will use the brief as the basis for their Classroom-Based Assessment. Students follow the design brief process, undertake research, generate ideas and examine all aspects of the brief. Students research and present two possible solutions to meet the chosen brief requirements.

As part of Classroom-Based Assessment 2 students will be provided with feedback from teacher and peers. This feedback will help inform students in preparing for the practical food skills examination. Feedback is critical to improving learning as it both influences students' motivation to learn and their ability to do so. Teacher feedback should include telling students what they have done well, what they need to do to improve and reminding students of what they are aiming to achieve in relation to their chosen brief.

Students will use peer discussion to reflect on their own work and provide feedback to their peers. Peer discussion occurs when students offer each other advice and feedback about their work which includes what has been done well and what could be done in order to improve the Food Literacy Skills brief. Peer discussion is most effective in an atmosphere of support and respect where students feel comfortable with each other. The opportunity to share one's reflections is helpful because students develop both the language and practice of reflection.

As part of the Classroom-Based Assessment, students will use technology, where appropriate, in researching, analysing, planning and presenting their results.

Process for completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief

The figure below sets out the process for conducting a Classroom-Based Assessment 2. The aim of this process is to provide guidance for teachers as they support their students completing Classroom- Based Assessment 2.



Student preparation

Students should have developed some knowledge, understanding and skills across the two strands of study, Food, Health and Culinary Skills, and Responsible Family Living in order to undertake their Food Literacy Skills Brief. As part of ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes for Home Economics, students should have opportunities to develop research skills as well as have opportunities to discuss their own work as well as that of their peers. From the outset, students should be familiar with the Features of Quality used to judge the quality of their work in this area.

Teacher preparation

Programme planning by the teacher needs to develop students' knowledge, understanding, skills and values across the learning outcomes of the specification incrementally. In order to prepare for the Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following documentation available on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#):

- Junior Cycle Home Economics Specification
- Junior Cycle Home Economics: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment
- Annotated examples of student work
- Assessment and Reporting in junior cycle ([Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#)).

Completing the Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief



In Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief, students will show evidence of their research based on a selected practical food skills brief issued by the State Examinations Commission. Students will also record the feedback they receive from their teacher and peers. They will use this to reflect on their work to date as well as the possible direction/s of their practical food skills examination.

In this Classroom-Based Assessment students will engage in two areas of activity, which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement:

1. Researching, analysing and initial planning
2. Student reflection

1. Researching, analysing and initial planning

Students will draw a brief from the list provided by the State Examinations Commission under the supervision of their teacher as the basis for their Classroom-Based Assessment 2. They will utilise the design brief process in generating ideas and possible solutions for their brief. The evidence of their proposed solution to the brief should include a short account of the following information:

- statement of brief
- three factors to be considered when choosing a possible solution
- two possible solutions
- two sources of information
- chosen solution
- two reasons for choice incorporating all aspects of the brief
- evidence of the research carried out.

2. Student reflection

Having undertaken the design brief process, students should:

- provide a summary of feedback received from their teacher and peers
- reflect on their work in light of the feedback they received.

Evidence of Learning

Students will present an outline of their proposed solution to the brief for the practical food skills examination. The outline of their proposed solution to the brief, submitted for Classroom-Based Assessment 2, will not be marked by the State Examinations Commission. The evidence of learning submitted for assessment will be judged against the relevant Features of Quality set out in these guidelines.

Food Literacy Skills Brief: Advice for students

- The preparation for this Classroom-Based Assessment will be supported by your teacher
- Make sure you are familiar with the Features of Quality and discuss the Features of Quality with your teacher and peers
- Read the brief carefully and highlight key words
- Research all aspects of your brief and show evidence of your research
- Be sure to include the following information in your design brief process:
 - Statement of brief
 - Three factors to be considered when choosing a possible solution
 - Two possible solutions
 - Two sources of information
 - Your chosen solution
 - Two reasons for your choice
 - Evidence of the research you carried out.
- Ensure menus are presented in menu format
- Select a solution that can be completed within the time allocated for the practical skills examination
- Choose a solution which is within your level of ability and will best show your skills
- When stating reasons for your choice of solution develop your answer with reference to your specific brief

The descriptor you achieve, based on your individual submission, will be reported on for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Deciding on the level of achievement: Food Literacy Skills Brief



Features of Quality

Features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement in Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief are described here. The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess the student work as best fitting one of the four descriptors of achievement: Exceptional, Above expectations, In line with expectations, and Yet to meet expectations.

Exceptional describes a piece of work that reflects the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment to a very high standard. While not necessarily perfect, the strengths of the work far outstrip its flaws, which are minor. Suggestions for improvement are easily addressable by the student.

Above expectations describes a piece of work that reflects the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of the task. Feedback from the teacher might point to the necessity to address some aspect of the work in need of further attention or polishing, but on the whole the work is of a high standard.

In line with expectations describes a piece of work that reflects most of the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment well. It shows a good understanding of the task in hand and is free from significant error. Feedback might point to areas needing further attention or correction, but the work is generally competent and accurate.

Yet to meet expectations describes a piece of work that falls somewhat short of the demands of the Classroom-Based Assessment and its associated Features of Quality. Perhaps the student has made a good attempt, but the task has not been grasped clearly or is marred by significant lapses. Feedback will draw attention to fundamental shortcomings that need to be addressed.

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 *Yet to meet expectations*) until they reach a descriptor that best describes the work being assessed. While it should be noted that none of the descriptors imply faultless achievement, evidence of work for the award of Exceptional should closely match the criteria for that level within the Features of Quality. Where it is not clearly evident which quality descriptor should apply, teachers must come to a judgement, 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.

Teachers should not assume that the results of a group of students being assessed will follow any particular distribution pattern, as the work is being judged only against the Features of Quality rather than other students' performances.

Teacher judgements about the quality of student work, with the aim of arriving at a shared understanding of standards and expectations, are supported by annotated examples of student work published on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#); by the Features of Quality in these guidelines; and by collaboration and discussion with colleagues during Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings.

The Features of Quality (presented overleaf) will be applied to authentic examples of student work. Arising from this process

- adjustments may be made to the Features of Quality
- amended Features of Quality, where necessary, will be published in the assessment guidelines and
- annotated examples of student work will be published on [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#)

Features of Quality: Food Literacy Skills Brief

Exceptional

A piece of work that reflects these features to a very high standard. The strengths of the work far outstrip its flaws.

- The outline of the student's proposed solution to the brief is completed to a very high standard and is very comprehensive. The proposed solution demonstrates a very good interpretation of all aspects of the food literacy skills brief
- The research and analysis is evidence-based and completed to a very high standard
- The student reflection provides a very comprehensive summary of the feedback received and is evident in the student's proposed solution.

Above expectations

A piece of work that reflects these features very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of the task. Feedback might point to the necessity to address some aspect of the work in need of further attention but, on the whole the work is of a high standard.

- The outline of the student's proposed solution to the brief is completed to a high standard. The proposed solution demonstrates a good interpretation of most aspects of the food literacy skills brief with some scope for improvement
- The research and analysis is evidence-based and is completed to a high standard
- The student reflection provides a comprehensive summary of the feedback received and is evident in the student's proposed solution.

In line with expectations

A piece of work that reflects most of these features well. It shows a good understanding of the task in hand. Feedback might point to areas needing further attention but the work is generally competent.

- The outline of the student's proposed solution to the brief is completed to an acceptable standard. The proposed solution is a good interpretation of some aspects of the food literacy skills brief but has some omissions
- The research and analysis is completed to an acceptable standard
- The student reflection provides a satisfactory summary of the feedback received but may not be fully evident in the student's proposed solution.

Yet to meet expectations

A piece of work that falls some way short of the demands of the Classroom-Based Assessment and its associated features. Perhaps the student has made a good attempt, but the task has not been grasped clearly or is marred by significant lapses. Feedback will draw attention to fundamental shortcomings that need to be addressed.

- The outline of the student's proposed solution to the brief process provides a basic summary of information. The proposed solution is a limited interpretation of many aspects of the food literacy skills brief and omits some information.
- The research and analysis is unsatisfactory
- The student reflection is very limited.

Next steps

The Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting



Shared understanding of standards within junior cycle will arise through professional discussion in Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings, where staff bring their own examples of student work and compare their judgements with other colleagues and with annotated examples of student work provided by the NCCA. Over time, this process will help develop a greater understanding of standards and ensure consistency of judgement about student performance.

Samples of CBA 1: Creative Textiles and CBA 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief by students will be gathered for discussion at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. Teachers will organise a SLAR meeting after each Classroom-Based Assessment. An example at each of the four descriptor levels, where feasible, will be needed for this purpose. Further details on managing and participating in the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting are included in the Appendix (see pg. 30) and are available online at [Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#).

While this process can be organised more easily within a school where there is more than one home economics teacher, in a school with one home economics teacher, it is recommended that the home economics teacher discusses the assessment arrangements with their school facilitator/management with a view to contacting and coordinating with teachers from nearby schools. The teacher along with their colleagues can plan and agree a date for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting.

Recording and reporting results from Classroom-Based Assessments

Following the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting each individual teacher reconsiders the judgement they had made of their students' work, based on the outcomes of the meeting, and where necessary makes the appropriate adjustments to the level of achievement awarded to the work. The record is used in reporting progress and achievement to parents and students as part of the school's ongoing reporting procedures. The Classroom-Based Assessment results are recorded through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Where it arises that a student does not submit any work for their Classroom-Based Assessment, a descriptor cannot be awarded, as there is no work to discuss against the Features of Quality. In such cases, 'Not reported' should be selected when inputting results for the JCPA.

Using feedback

Providing effective feedback is a crucial step in using CBA 1: Creative Textiles and CBA 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief to support student learning. Students will be informed of the descriptor they have been awarded once the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting has taken place and its outcomes have been processed. However, effective feedback goes beyond the naming of the descriptor awarded. Feedback on the strengths of the students' work, and on areas for improvement can be used to support their future learning. Further information on the use of feedback can be found at [Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#).

Querying a result

Queries in relation to the descriptors awarded for the Classroom-Based Assessments, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.

The final examination

The final examination consists of a practical food skills examination (50% weighting of externally assessed examination) and a written examination (50% weighting of externally-assessed examination). Both are set out and externally marked by the State Examinations Commission. The food literacy skills briefs and guidelines for the practical food skills examination will be issued annually by the State Examinations Commission. These guidelines will provide information on all the requirements for the practical food skills examination.

Useful links

- Framework for Junior Cycle: An outline of assessment in junior cycle can be found in the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, which can be accessed at [gov.ie - Framework for Junior Cycle](#).
- Assessment in junior cycle: All documentation relating to assessment at junior cycle can be accessed at [Assessment and Reporting | NCCA](#).
- State Examinations Commission: All instructions for the final examination will be included in a brief, issued by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) during the third year of junior cycle on [SEC Home - State Examination Commission](#).
- Curriculum specification for Junior Cycle Home Economics: [Home Economics | Curriculum Online](#).

Appendix 1: Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meeting

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings enable teachers to collaboratively reach consistency in their judgments of student work against common, externally set Features of Quality. Greater understanding of standards and expectations will develop over time as teachers come together in professional discussion to reflect on the quality of their own students' work, informed by the subject specification, assessment guidelines and other support material including annotated examples of students' work provided by the NCCA.

Overview

The review process is centred on teachers discussing student work at structured meetings. It will play an important role in helping teachers to develop an understanding of standards and expectations by enabling them to reflect on the evidence of students' work and to share the learning and teaching strategies supporting that work.

The objectives of the review process are to achieve:

- greater consistency of teachers' judgement
- better feedback to students
- greater alignment of judgements with expected standards,
- and to assure parents and others that students are receiving appropriate recognition of their achievements in line with standards and expectations.

The time for review meetings will be provided for in the school calendar from the allocated 22 hours of professional time for each full-time teacher each year. One teacher of each subject will be allocated two additional hours by school management to prepare for and coordinate each review meeting. This role will normally be rotated among the relevant teachers.

Each meeting will:

- be subject specific
- be approximately two hours long
- take place at a time as near as possible to the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment
- involve the review of student work related to a specific Classroom-Based Assessment.

Where there is a single teacher of a subject in a school, the teacher can be facilitated to participate in a Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting in another school. In the case of an Irish-medium school, the single teacher of a subject can participate in a Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting in another Irish-medium school.

Facilitator's Guide

Teachers will fulfil the role of facilitator during Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings on a rotational basis. The facilitator will model effective questioning during the discussion of the samples of student work focusing on how well students' work matches the Features of Quality. During review meetings, where it is not clearly evident which descriptor should apply, the group should look for the evidence in the student's work that matches all or nearly all of the Features of Quality associated with a particular descriptor. This 'best fit' approach allows teachers at the review meeting to select the descriptor that 'on-balance' best matches the work being assessed. The facilitator will submit a short report of the review meeting to the school principal.

Teachers should not assume that the results of a group of students being assessed will follow any particular distribution plan as the student's work is being judged only against the Features of Quality rather than other students' performance.

Before the meeting

As a first step, teachers may find it helpful to review some of the relevant NCCA annotated examples prior to coming to decisions about their own students' work.

Once students have completed their Classroom-Based Assessment, the teacher will carry out a provisional assessment of the students' work based on the Features of Quality. These provisional assessments may be modified in light of the discussions that take place at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting.

The teacher will make a note of the descriptor allocated to each student and any other point they may wish or find useful to refer to during and after the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting.

This note will be for the teacher's own use.

In preparation for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting, each teacher will identify one sample of student's work for each descriptor, where feasible, and will have these available for discussion at the meeting.

During the meeting

The facilitator leads the meeting and keeps the record of the decisions made in a template, which is used to generate the report of the meeting (see Appendix 2). It is recommended that the meeting should generally follow this sequence:

- The facilitator explains that the purpose of the meeting is to support consistency of judgement about students' work and to develop a common understanding about the quality of student learning. The value of the meeting in providing feedback to students on how they might improve their work should also be highlighted.
- The facilitator asks one member of staff to introduce a sample of work they have assessed as Yet to reach expectations. Following a short introduction by the teacher, the facilitator leads a general discussion on the extent to which the student's work matches the relevant Features of Quality. If the meeting affirms the judgement, this is noted in the meeting record by the facilitator.
- Where there is a lack of agreement, the facilitator should refer to relevant annotated examples of student work provided by the NCCA and, if appropriate, a couple of examples of student work that other teachers in the group have assessed and awarded that descriptor to.
- The facilitator should look to establish consensus during the discussion of examples but the emphasis should be on developing teachers' professional knowledge and skills rather than on seeking unanimous agreement over every Feature of Quality in every example.
- The emphasis in affirming judgements during the review meetings should always be on a 'best fit' approach which allows teachers to agree the descriptor that 'on-balance' is most appropriate for the work being assessed.
- While reasonable time should be allowed for discussion, the facilitator should use his/her professional judgement to decide when it would be appropriate to proceed to the next sample.
- If possible, there should be discussion of at least two samples for each descriptor and the facilitator should ensure that each teacher has at least one of their samples discussed during the meeting.
- The process is repeated, in turn, with samples assessed as In line with expectations, Above expectations and Exceptional being discussed and shared in the group. At the end of the meeting, the facilitator briefly summarises the key points from the discussion.
- It's important that each teacher notes the implications of the decisions made during the meeting for the rest of the student work they have already assessed, particularly in the case of descriptors where their judgement did not align with the view of the majority of teachers at the meeting.

After the meeting

After the meeting, each teacher considers the assessment of their students' work based on the outcomes of the meeting and, where it is considered necessary, makes the appropriate adjustments to their provisional assessments.

Following the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting, the facilitator submits their report from the meeting focusing on the outcomes of the discussion of student work at the meeting, and submits it to the school principal.

The facilitator may also ask teachers, should they wish, to contribute some student work to a bank of examples:

- To support the induction of new teachers
- To support future Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
- To use with students and parents in demonstrating the standard of work achieved.

Appendix 2: Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meeting:

Facilitator's Report

Subject:	Date/time:
Attendance	
Key decisions taken	
Points of note for future review meetings	
Any further comments	
Facilitator	
Date	



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