



# Junior Cycle Level 1 Short Course

Keeping Well, Looking Good, Being Great

Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment

First Edition

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# Introduction

This document, *Junior Cycle Level 1 Short Course—Keeping Well, Looking Good, Being Great: 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 specification for the junior cycle Keeping well, looking good, being great short course.
- the Features of Quality used to describe the level of achievement in the Classroom-Based Assessment
- guidelines for schools, teachers and students on completing the Classroom-Based Assessment.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the specification for the junior cycle Keeping well, looking good, being great short course and the *Assessment Toolkit* for junior cycle. A detailed outline of assessment in junior cycle can be found in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*, which can be accessed at

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-2015.pdf>.

In junior cycle short courses there will be a range of assessment approaches to complement learning. These will include ongoing assessments, including routine teacher-designed tasks and tests; ongoing assessment for students undertaking Priority Learning Units at Level 1; and one Classroom-Based Assessment.

## Classroom-Based Assessments: General information

Classroom-Based Assessments are best described as the occasions when the teacher assesses the students using the specific task(s) set out in the NCCA short course specification or in the school-developed short course specification. The tasks are described and the Features of Quality, which support teacher judgement, are set out in these guidelines.

Although the assessment is similar to the ongoing assessment that occurs every day in class, in the case of Classroom-Based Assessment the teacher's judgement is used in the school's reporting to parents and students. Students prepare for the Classroom-Based Assessment over a suggested period of time in second or 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.

## Deciding on the level of achievement

Classroom-Based Assessments are common level assessments. The teacher bases the level achieved by the student in the Classroom-Based Assessment on the Features of Quality set out in these guidelines. At Level 1 there are two descriptors—*Successfully Completed and Progress Achieved*. The evidence of work for the award of Successfully Completed should closely match all or nearly all the criteria for that level within the Features of Quality and the teacher’s ‘on-balance’ judgement should be that the student’s work is deserving of the Descriptor. In the case of awarding the Progress Achieved descriptor, the student will have benefited from accessing some learning outcomes in the short course and there will be evidence to support this award.

## Time for Classroom-Based Assessment

The Classroom-Based Assessment is included within the time allocated for short courses, which is approximately 100 hours. This Classroom-Based Assessment is the culmination of the work undertaken in the three strands of the Keeping well, looking good, being great short course. The Classroom-Based Assessment for this short course is My personal profile which outlines the progress made by students throughout the course. The student will complete a personal profile prior to commencing the Keeping well, looking good, being great short course. A second personal profile should then be created when the course has been completed.

Teachers draw upon their own professional judgement to decide how much time is needed to complete the assessment, depending on the individual needs of the student(s). Whilst the timing of Classroom-Based Assessment in short courses may vary from school to school, Classroom-Based assessments for reporting purposes in the JCPA cannot be conducted in first year.

## School autonomy in preparing for the Classroom-Based Assessment

These guidelines set out a range of options for the Classroom-Based Assessment so that it can suit the particular needs and circumstances of students and the school. A variety of possibilities are presented as to how the Classroom-Based Assessment can be conducted and the role the teacher plays in facilitating students’ needs. Within the parameters set by the guidelines, the range of themes and topics for the assessment can be determined independently by the school, teachers and students.

Schools have the flexibility to adapt any NCCA short course to suit their particular needs and school context. If adapting the course, schools may also need to adapt the Classroom-Based Assessment, so that it reflects the learning their students undertook. Schools may also develop their own short course(s) and related Classroom-Based Assessment. Guidelines for schools who wish to develop their own short course(s) are available.

## How the school supports the completion of the assessment

The school supports the completion of the assessment by:

- ensuring that the NCCA *Specification and Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment* are provided to teachers
- supporting teachers in recording the level descriptor awarded to each student
- ensuring accessibility of assessment for all students
- reporting the outcomes of the Classroom-Based Assessment to students and their parents/guardians as part of the school's reporting procedures and through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

In gathering evidence for assessment purposes within the junior cycle short courses, it is important that teachers use approaches which are sustainable and proportionate. As assessment is about empowering teachers to improve outcomes for students, it is important to ensure that too much paperwork and overly-complex processes do not get in the way of learning and teaching. Any paperwork needs to support learning rather than becoming an end in itself. Assessment judgements should be based on evidence drawn mainly from day-to-day learning.

An efficient planning process which identifies when and how key aspects of learning will be captured as evidence for assessment is one way to ensure that assessment in short courses remains manageable and sustainable. This approach avoids excessive and inappropriate evidence being collected about student performance. It also avoids the pressure at the end of the course to search for and identify evidence to support judgements about overall performance.

To facilitate providing feedback to students during their engagement with assessment, the process of completing the Classroom-Based Assessment 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.

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 final project.

## Classroom-Based Assessment in Keeping well, looking good, being great

Assessment in Keeping well, looking good, being great will be classroom-based. There is one Classroom-Based Assessment, which is the culmination of work undertaken in the three strands of the Keeping well, looking good, being great short course. It is important to note that work completed in year one of junior cycle cannot be included for reporting in the JCPA.

### Classroom-Based Assessment: My personal profile

The personal profiles provide an opportunity for students to reflect on what they have learned and the changes they have taken to develop a positive outlook on their physical and mental wellbeing. The title is open to wide interpretation and may include any format or mix of formats (photographic/video evidence, questionnaire, interview, work samples, role-play etc.) which allows the student to demonstrate their achievements in relation to knowledge learned and skills developed.

The learning outcomes assessed through My personal profile will, to an extent, vary depending on the individual needs of the student.

Some that may be particularly relevant are

Classroom-Based Assessment: My personal profile

1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 2.10, 2.13, 2.16, 2.17, 3.2, 3.5, 3.8, 3.9, 3.13, 3.14

## **Completing the Classroom-Based Assessment in Keeping well, looking good, being great**

The student will complete a personal profile prior to commencing the Keeping well, looking good, being great short course. A second personal profile should then be created when the course has been completed.

My personal profile assessment tasks should align closely with the Features of Quality outlined below and may include any format or mix of formats (photographic/video evidence, questionnaire, interview, work samples, role-play...) which allows the student to demonstrate their achievements in relation to knowledge learned and skills developed. The teacher can use their own judgement to differentiate the tasks or activities to suit the abilities and needs of their students. The amount of adaptation and support will vary according to the individual learning needs of each student.

Once both personal profiles have been completed, the teacher and student can compare the evidence gathered and appropriately assess the student's progress and achievements throughout the Keeping well, looking good, being great short course.

### **Preparation**

Students studying this short course have many opportunities to acquire knowledge and demonstrate skills learnt. They learn where and who to go to when they feel unwell or in pain. They communicate with both familiar and unfamiliar adults at various times throughout the course, e.g. to communicate when they feel unwell, to convey their personal information, to book appointments and to greet people appropriately.

Preparation might involve some original elementary investigative work by the student e.g. survey, interview, emailing or letter-writing. Internet sources might provide information as well as hand-outs and information provided by the teacher and/or other adults in a learning environment inside or outside of the classroom. However, the student should record the key messages from the investigative activity using a medium familiar to them (written or audio notes, symbols etc.). The student may need support in organising the material into a format suitable for presenting a small number of central messages using key vocabulary.

Preparation for the communication of the information is also important, as is developing awareness among students of the need to communicate clearly using the chosen medium, e.g. oral, digital, dramatic arts or Irish Sign Language (ISL). Students need to recognise the significance of making a connection with one's audience/communicative partner, e.g. through eye contact, gestures, the use

of humour or choice of props. Other students could be asked to model, at an appropriate level, the features of making effective presentations such as voice projection, pace and tone of voice and use of effective visual or digital support material.

## Advice for students

- You can demonstrate your knowledge and skills using any format.
- You may collaborate with peers but will be assessed individually.
- Keep a diary as you go. This will help you remember what you did and learned when you are ready to complete your personal profile.
- Ask questions if there is anything you don't understand or are unsure about.

## Deciding on the level of achievement: Features of Quality

### Features of Quality

Classroom-Based Assessments are common level assessments. There are two descriptors at Level 1: **Successfully Completed** and **Progress Achieved**.

The teacher's judgement on whether the student's work in the Classroom-Based Assessment is awarded the Successfully Completed descriptor is based on the Features of Quality set out in these guidelines. The evidence of work for the award of Successfully Completed should closely match all or nearly all the criteria for that level within the Features of Quality for My personal profile set out in these guidelines, and the teacher's judgement should be that the student's work is 'on balance' deserving of the descriptor.

The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess the student's work.

#### Features of Quality: My personal profile

##### Successfully Completed

- There is evidence that the student can identify ways to maintain a physically healthy life.
- The student demonstrates how they care for their appearance.
- The student makes a positive contribution in their family/school or community.

In the case of awarding the Progress Achieved descriptor, the student will have benefited from accessing some learning outcomes in the short course and there will be evidence to support this award.

### **Using feedback**

Providing effective feedback is a crucial step to support learning. Students will be informed about whether or not they have been awarded the Successfully Completed or Progress Achieved descriptor once the teacher's judgement has been reached. However, effective feedback goes beyond the naming of the descriptor awarded. Feedback on the strengths of the student's 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 <http://juniorcycle.ie/Assessment>.

### **Querying a result**

Queries in relation to the awarding of the descriptor for the Classroom-Based Assessment, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.