

Junior Cycle History

Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment and Assessment Task

First Edition

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Introduction

This document, *Junior Cycle History: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment and Assessment Task*, provides

- general information on Classroom-Based Assessments
- detail of the nature and scope of the Classroom-Based Assessment described in the specification for Junior Cycle History
- 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
- details of the Assessment Task in History and how the school supports its completion.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle History and the *Assessment Toolkit* for junior cycle, which includes further details of the subject learning and assessment review process and other aspects of junior cycle assessment set out in these guidelines.

All documentation can be accessed at <http://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-CycleSubjects/history>. An 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>.

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 subject specification. They are included within the time allocated for History, which is a minimum of 200 hours. The Classroom-Based Assessments 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 Assessments, the teacher's judgement is recorded for Subject Learning and Assessment Review and is used in the school's reporting to parents and students. Students prepare for 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.

Deciding on the level of achievement in Classroom-Based Assessments

There are four level descriptors of achievement in each Classroom-Based Assessment: *Exceptional*, *Above expectations*, *In line with expectations*, and *Yet to meet expectations*. All work submitted is judged to fit one of these four descriptors.

Teachers use the Features of Quality, set out in these guidelines, to decide the level of achievement in each Classroom-Based Assessment. The Features of Quality are the criteria that will be used to assess the student work as best fitting one of the following Descriptors:

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 students' 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 curriculum online; by the features of quality in these guidelines; and by collaboration and discussion with colleagues during Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings.

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

These guidelines set out a range of options for the two Classroom-Based Assessments so that they can suit the particular needs and circumstances of students and the school. A variety of possibilities are presented as to how the research can be conducted and presented for assessment to allow students to pursue their own interest and motivations. For both Classroom-Based Assessments, students are encouraged to use a variety of support materials and to present their work in a variety of formats. Within the parameters set by these guidelines, the range of themes and topics for the 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 Specification and Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment and Assessment Task* are provided to teachers
- 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
- applying the guidelines for Subject Learning and Assessment Review
- supporting teachers and students in the completion of the Assessment Task
- following arrangements for transfer of the completed Assessment Tasks to the State Examinations Commission for marking
- 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).

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.

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)

Note that only work which is the student's own can be accepted for assessment in the JCPA.

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 History

There are two Classroom-Based Assessments in History. They are assessed at a Common Level. They relate to specified learning outcomes and are scheduled to be undertaken by students in a defined time period within class contact time to a national timetable (as advised by the NCCA) in the school calendar. Following the second of these assessments students will complete an Assessment Task which is marked by the State Examinations Commission as part of the state-certified examination in History. The Classroom-Based Assessments for History and indicative timings are outlined in Table 1 below.

Classroom-Based Assessments	Format	Student preparation	Completed
The Past in My Place	Display Group, pair or individual	During a maximum of 3 weeks with support/guidance from teacher	Towards the end of Year 2
A Life in Time	Written record Individual	During a maximum of 3 weeks, with support/guidance from teacher	Term 2 of Year 3

Table 1: Classroom-Based Assessments for History

Students may wish to start considering possible subjects for the CBAs shortly before the three-week period for work on the assessments begins.

Assessment Task

The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time. It is not marked by the class teacher but is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking as part of the state-certified examination in History. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based. In the case of History this is *A Life in Time*. The details of the Assessment Task are outlined in Table 2 below, with further information provided on pp. 30 and 31 of these guidelines:

	Format	Student preparation	Completed
The Assessment Task (AT)	Students complete a specified written task which is sent to the SEC for marking	The Assessment Task will link to <i>A Life in Time</i> (CBA 2)	Following completion of the second Classroom-Based Assessment in Year 3

Table 2: Assessment Task for Classroom-Based Assessment 2, *A Life in Time*

Exploring the nature of history

The junior cycle history specification emphasises the importance of ‘Strand 1: The nature of History’:

Strand One is a formational strand, supporting students to explore the concepts, practise the skills and consider the values and attitudes that inform the discipline of history and the work of the historian. Strand One will help students to acquire a ‘big picture’ of the past and an understanding of the importance of evidence that will enhance their historical consciousness... Strand One is also a unifying strand, whereby the learning outcomes can be achieved through engaging with the context provided in Strands Two and Three in relation to personalities, issues and events.

As students engage with the two classroom-based assessments in history, they will have opportunities to further deepen their understanding of the nature of history, as they work with evidence, develop their historical consciousness and deepen their understanding of the ‘big picture’. In doing so, they will further expand their understanding of some aspect(s) of the history of Ireland, Europe or the wider world.

Considering historical significance

A central feature of the work of the historian is the capacity to assess the historical significance of events and issues and personalities in the past. While historians may disagree about the significance

of particular events or people in the past, and the emergence of new evidence can alter historians' views, evaluating significance is an integral part of being an historian. The two Classroom-Based Assessments in history provide students with opportunities to think about historical significance, for instance, in justifying why they selected their chosen subjects, what evidence they decided to include in their display and record, and their interpretation of that evidence. Thinking about and discussing historical significance is also a useful means of enhancing students' critical thinking skills in history.

There are many frameworks proposed for considering historical significance when choosing a subject for further research or exploration. In approaching the Classroom-Based Assessments, (and indeed in their general thinking throughout their work on all learning outcomes), the following set of criteria might be useful for teachers to discuss with students in determining whether a theme or subject is significant. However, students need not feel bound to use these criteria, nor does a subject need to demonstrate all (or indeed any) of the five 5 Rs to be deemed significant.

Five 'R's for thinking about historical significance

- Remarkable (the event/development was remarked upon by people at the time and/or since)
- Remembered (the event/development was important at some stage in history within the collective memory of a group or groups)
- Resonant (people like to make analogies with it; it is possible to connect with experiences, beliefs or situations across time and space)
- Resulting in change (it had consequences for the future)
- Revealing (of some other aspect of the past)

Counsell, Christine. 2004. 'Looking through a Josephine Butler-shaped window: focusing pupils' thinking on historical significance' in *Teaching History* 114. London: The Historical Association.

Classroom-Based Assessment 1: *The Past in My Place*

The Past in My Place allows students to experience history at a personal level through the study of an issue, event, theme or person relating to their locality. Studying local history affords students the opportunity to see how the forces of change that they encounter in their classroom exploration of the past have immediacy in terms of how their own local environments experience change. It supports students' appreciation of their heritage and awareness of their cultural inheritance. It allows them to apply their growing conceptual and contextual understanding of history to their own local settings.

For the purpose of this Classroom-Based Assessment, the term 'my place' can be interpreted in a broad fashion so as not to preclude students from researching areas of genuine interest. Thus, local history may relate to the student's homeplace (parish, local town/ village); county; province or region. Where students who come from other countries (or whose families have origins in other countries) express an interest in pursuing an aspect of the history of the place from which they or their families originate, this is also perfectly valid and may play a part in encouraging greater appreciation and understanding of difference and diversity in the classroom and in society.

Students who wish to research an aspect of their own family history may do so. Attention is drawn to p. 21 of the Junior Cycle History Specification, which states that the subject of study may 'include personal/ family history, as appropriate'. The teacher may offer guidance where proposed subjects might be considered controversial, contentious or sensitive and may discuss the appropriateness of any such subject with the student before he/she/they proceed with the proposed research.

Students will present their research in the form of **a display**, of the type that they may encounter in a museum, heritage centre or library. However, students should not confine themselves to simply presenting information. Rather, they are encouraged to use their research evidence to interpret the past and to display their understanding of the nature of history.

Students may work on this Classroom-Based Assessment individually, in a pair or in a group. Where students work collaboratively, each student should participate in the research process and in creating the display. The number of students in a group should be such as to allow each group member to make a meaningful individual contribution. All students will complete a reflection note.

Learning Outcomes on which Classroom-Based Assessment 1: The Past in My Place is based

The essence of history is such that themes or topics can never be easily categorised or classified as relating to one particular branch of study because so many different contexts relate to each other. For instance, when studying the Reformation, themes such as religion, politics, identity, power, economics and social class are all at play. Consequently, it is noted that in choosing a subject for research in the Classroom-Based Assessments, some learning outcomes relating to the history of Ireland and of Europe and the wider world may be invoked and student learning in these domains may be reinforced and supported in working on the Classroom-Based Assessments. However, given the importance of students acquiring the metacognitive or disciplinary understanding of history that enables them to make sense of the contexts that they encounter, the three elements and associated learning outcomes in strand 1: The nature of history are considered to be of particular importance in the Classroom-Based Assessments.

The learning outcomes assessed will, to an extent, depend on the subject chosen. Some that may be particularly relevant are:

2.11 Make connections between local, personal or family history and wider national and/ or international personalities, issues and events (from Strand 2, the History of Ireland)	
Strand 1	The Nature of History
Element	Developing historical consciousness
1.1	Develop a sense of historical empathy by viewing people, issues and events encountered in their study of the past in their historical context
1.2	Consider contentious or controversial issues in history from more than one perspective and discuss the historical roots of a contentious or controversial issue or theme in the contemporary world
1.3	Appreciate their cultural inheritance through recognising historically significant places and buildings and discussing why historical personalities, events and issues are commemorated
1.4	Demonstrate awareness of historical concepts, such as <i>source and evidence; fact and opinion; viewpoint and objectivity; cause and consequence; change and continuity; time and space</i>
Element	Working with evidence
1.5	Investigate the job of the historian, including how s/he finds and uses evidence to form historical judgements which may be revised and reinterpreted in the light of new evidence
1.6	Debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and appreciate the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry
1.7	Develop historical judgements based on evidence about personalities, issues and events in the past, showing awareness of historical significance
1.8	Investigate a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition
Element	Acquiring 'the big picture'
1.9	Demonstrate awareness of the significance of the history of Ireland and of Europe and the wider world across various dimensions, including political, social, economic, religious, cultural and scientific dimensions
1.10	Demonstrate chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras
1.11	Make connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras

Guidelines for completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment: *The Past in My Place*

Figure 1 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 the students completing Classroom-Based Assessment 1.

Figure 1: Process for conducting Classroom-Based Assessment 1



Students are free to choose a theme for their research relating to the history of their place, in accordance with the advice laid down in these guidelines and under the supervision of their teacher. The rationale is that students can research subjects about which they have a genuine sense of curiosity and which can inspire them to generate an authentic, personal response.

Possible themes or subjects for research

Local history

In consultation with their teacher, students have autonomy in selecting the subject for research for *The Past in My Place*.

Note that the list of possible subjects included below is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to suggest that considerable variation in the research areas selected by students is to be expected:

- the contribution of a local person to an aspect of life in the locality, or to a specific episode or event or movement in the locality or elsewhere.
- a local manifestation of a national or international movement or phenomenon
- a local historical incident that was an important cause of change
- a study of an aspect of life in the locality at a given time in the past
- a survey of how life changed over time in a locality
- a study of a local place of historical interest, such as a church, school, factory, workhouse, place of work, stately home, round tower, monastery, abbey etc.
- a study of a monument, statue, memorial or other such site of historical interest
- a study of the historical origins of local placenames

- a study inspired by an historically significant local artefact or archaeological discovery or site of interest
- the impact of a national or international event or issue on the locality

Family/ personal history

- investigation of a family member who is historically significant at local, national or international level
- a genealogical study

As part of Classroom-Based Assessment 1, students will:

- Choose a research idea in consultation with their teacher and peers and work individually, in pairs or in groups
- Consider an approach to conducting the research, including identifying key research questions; identifying possible sources of evidence/ information; and identifying where such evidence might be located
- Present their research findings in the format of a display, carefully selecting which research items and modes of presentation to include
- Reflect on the process undertaken and the conclusions reached about their subject and include some reflections in the final display.

Getting ready: *The Past in My Place*



Student preparation

Students should have developed some knowledge, understanding and skills across the three strands of study in history (The Nature of History, the History of Ireland and the History of Europe and the wider world) before engaging with the first Classroom-Based Assessment, *The Past in My Place*. They should have had opportunities to develop some of the values, attitudes and dispositions that inform much of the learning outcomes in strand 1, The nature of History, to which this Classroom-Based Assessment particularly relates. As part of the ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes across all three strands, students should have regular opportunities to develop and

demonstrate skills that will help them to engage meaningfully with *The Past in my Place*. Where opportunities arise, students should be encouraged to make connections between their local context and national or international contexts that they encounter in classwork. Such experiences will be of benefit to them as they engage with *The Past in My Place* at a level appropriate to their age and stage of learning.

Students should also have opportunities to evaluate their progress and learning from time to time throughout their work, for example, through personal annotations, reflective journals or classroom discussions with peers and the teacher. While the Classroom-Based Assessment is summative, it has a formative value and should be used as a tool to provide feedback to students, parents and teachers on student progress and learning. At an appropriate moment in their learning, students should be familiarised with the Features of Quality that will be used to judge the quality of their work.

Teacher preparation

To prepare for Classroom-Based Assessment 1, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following:

- Junior Cycle History Specification
- Junior cycle history: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments
- Assessment toolkit
- Annotated examples of student work.

Completing the CBA: *The Past in My Place*



The Past in My Place will be completed over a three-week period. Students will engage with their chosen subject across four stages of activity, which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement. These four stages are laid out in Figure 2:



Figure 2: Student process for engaging with Classroom-Based Assessment 1: The Past in My Place

1. Investigating

In beginning their work, students should reflect upon which aspect of the past in their place excites their curiosity. They should discuss possible ideas with their peers, teacher and, if working in a pair/group, other group members. This project should also allow students to engage with older relatives or members of the community whose life experiences or memories of the past in the community may generate ideas for study. Older people, local libraries and local historians can also be valuable sources of information and provide rich oral evidence of the past. Having established a theme or subject, students can begin to formulate enquiry questions that will steer their investigation of the past and help to provide a structure for their work.

If working as part of a pair/group, each student's individual role and contribution to the work will be the focus of assessment. It is important that each student involved in the group notes accurately their own part in the process and their contribution to the group's work. Students will note their individual contribution both in the display (see below) and in their student reflection note.

2. Discovering

In moving into the discovering phase of the work, students will identify answers to the questions posed in the investigating phase. In engaging in the process of discovery, a number of methodologies might be employed, such as, for example:

- To examine different types of sources that might be relevant to the subject such as photographs, letters, personal papers
- To examine relevant archival records, e.g. census records, birth/ baptismal records
- A visit to local heritage centre/ museum/ library or other repository of information
- A visit to a relevant site if the subject relates to one, e.g. building, site of event, memorial etc.
- To consult local history books/ journals/ periodicals/ newspapers or other such publications

- To consult general history books to learn more about broader national or international context to the subject, if applicable
- To visit relevant websites or other electronic sources of information
- Interview local historian or other person with information or experiences of the subject of study
- Interview a local person with memories of aspects of the past in the locality.

3. *Displaying*

Students will present their findings in the form of a **display**. The format of the display may feature any combination of modes of presentation, for example, text, excerpts from primary and/or secondary sources, display folder or booklet, digital format(s), photographs, images, timelines, charts, graphs, audio or audio-visual recordings, model(s), artefact(s) etc.

It is recommended that students carefully consider why they are using a particular mode of presentation and select modes which support them to display their research and their understanding of the nature of history. A student may present their display through a single mode (e.g. audio) provided it includes a range of sources and offers interpretation of and reflection on the research.

When working in pairs/groups, each student should indicate (perhaps using a symbol or their initials) which part(s) of the display they contributed to so that the teacher can assess their contribution to the display. Where students work as part of a pair/group, each student's individual role and contribution to the display will be the focus of assessment.

4. *Reflecting*

The reflection process is central to work on *The Past in My Place* so that the student can think about what learning has taken place, both about the subject and about the process undertaken. It is advised that students record observations or thoughts about the process and what they are learning as they engage with the subject over the three-week period. The student(s') display should incorporate some of their reflections on the experience of conducting the research and the opportunities and challenges they faced in assuming the role of historian.

All students will complete a reflection note. Completion of the note is the student's declaration of the part that he or she has played in the assessment. The note is submitted to the teacher. Students will record their own, personal contribution to the work to assist the teacher in identifying the student's individual contribution to the display where students worked in pairs/groups. A reflection note is included as an appendix to these guidelines.

Contributing to the historical record

This Classroom-Based Assessment offers students an opportunity to contribute to the historical record. Following the subject learning and assessment review meeting, students may, if they wish, donate or loan their display to a local library or museum or present it to a local historical society or group. Students may also donate their display to the school.

Deciding on the level of achievement: *The Past in My Place*



Features of Quality

Key Features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement in *The Past in My Place* are described here. The Features of Quality below are the criteria used to assess the student work as best fitting the descriptors. The Features of Quality are designed with reference to the learning outcomes on which *The Past in My Place* is based and focus in particular on strand 1 The Nature of History.

Features of Quality: History- *The Past in my Place*

<p>Exceptional</p> <p>A piece of work that reflects these Features 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.</p>	<p>The display reveals a highly developed sense of historical consciousness and is shaped to a very clear purpose</p> <p>The display shows exceptional understanding of the role of evidence in making historical judgements</p> <p>The display is compelling in connecting the local with a 'big picture' of the past, showing some originality.</p>
<p>Above expectations</p> <p>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 or polishing, but, on the whole the work is of a high standard.</p>	<p>The display reveals a strong sense of historical consciousness and is shaped to a clear purpose</p> <p>The display shows very good understanding of the role of evidence in making historical judgements</p> <p>The display clearly connects the local with a 'big picture' of the past in a very interesting way.</p>
<p>In line with expectations</p> <p>A piece of work that reflects most of these Features 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.</p>	<p>The display shows some sense of historical consciousness and is shaped to a purpose, though this purpose is not always clear</p> <p>The display shows some understanding of the role of evidence in making historical judgements</p> <p>The display makes some connections between the local and a 'big picture' of the past.</p>
<p>Yet to meet expectations</p> <p>A piece of work that falls somewhat 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 errors that need to be addressed.</p>	<p>The display shows little to no sense of historical consciousness and is not shaped in a purposeful way</p> <p>The display shows little or no understanding of the role of evidence in making historical judgements</p> <p>The display makes little or no connection between the local and a 'big picture' of the past.</p>

Next steps: *The Past in My Place*



Subject Learning Assessment and Review meeting

Shared understanding of standards within junior cycle will arise through professional discussion in Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. Participating teachers bring their own examples of student work and compare their judgements with other colleagues, along with the annotated examples of student work and specifications provided by the NCCA. This process over time will help develop a greater understanding of standards and ensure consistency of judgement about student performance.

All schools or individual subject departments will retain a small sample from the body of submitted work in support of the process of Subject Learning Assessment Review. Teachers will retain samples of *The Past in My Place* work that they will use for discussions at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. An example at each of the four level descriptors, where feasible, will be needed for this purpose.

While this process can be organised more easily within a school where there is more than one history teacher, it is recommended that, in a school with one history teacher, the teacher should discuss 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, implementation and reviewing of the Classroom-Based Assessment. Teachers will again retain samples of the work from *The Past in My Place* for discussion at the Subject Learning Assessment Review meetings. 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 Assessment Review meeting are included in the Appendix and are available online at <http://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>.

Using feedback

Providing effective feedback is a crucial step in using *The Past in My Place* to support learning in history. 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 students' work, and on areas for improvement can be used to support their future learning. Further information on the use of feedback is available at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/focus-on-learning>

Querying a result

Queries in relation to the descriptors awarded to *The Past in My Place*, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.

Classroom-Based Assessment 2: *A Life in Time*

The study of history is based on an interrogation of evidence relating to human life in the past. As such, it centres on exploring the human condition and seeks to understand the impact of human actions through examining the motivations that led to such actions. A major feature of historical enquiry is the biography, where significant figures from the past are assessed in a comprehensive fashion, and where related evidence is explored and discussed.

In this context, *A Life in Time* gives students an opportunity to research a figure from the past that is of interest to them and to write an historical assessment of this person, or an aspect of this person's life or career. The rationale is that students can research subjects about which they have a genuine sense of curiosity and which can inspire them to generate an authentic, personal response as they deepen their understanding of the past.

For the purpose of this classroom-based assessment, as in Classroom-Based Assessment 1, students have autonomy in selecting the subject of study. There are no date parameters or restrictions in terms of place, time or area of human endeavour in which the chosen subject is engaged. This allows students to research a person about whom they have genuine historical interest. The suitability of the subject chosen can be measured in terms of the person's significance to our historical understanding, or in relation to how the person's actions or ideas affected some aspect of change in the world. The subject chosen should be agreed in consultation with the teacher, who may be able to advise on the appropriateness for research of the person selected.

The research will be presented in the format of a written record. Students may choose to present their written record in a variety of types of format. Students will also reflect on the research process and the subject by completing a reflection note.

The subject of *The Past in My Place*, if it relates to a person, may not be the subject of *A Life in Time*. In cases where the subject of a student's work in Classroom-Based Assessment 1 related to a place outside of Ireland, the person who is selected for *A Life in Time* should relate to the history of Ireland. In this way, all students who engage with the two Classroom-Based Assessments will engage with the history of Ireland and the history of Europe and the wider world.

The Assessment Task will relate to the student's work in Classroom-Based Assessment 2 *A Life in Time*.

The importance of students acquiring the disciplinary understanding of history that enables them to make sense of the historical contexts that they encounter is emphasised, such that strand 1: *The*

nature of history is of particular importance to *A Life in Time*. The learning outcomes assessed will, to an extent, depend on the subject chosen. Some that may be particularly relevant are

Strand 1	The Nature of History
Element	Developing historical consciousness
1.1	Develop a sense of historical empathy by viewing people, issues and events encountered in their study of the past in their historical context
1.2	Consider contentious or controversial issues in history from more than one perspective and discuss the historical roots of a contentious or controversial issue or theme in the contemporary world
1.3	Appreciate their cultural inheritance through recognising historically significant places and buildings and discussing why historical personalities, events and issues are commemorated
1.4	Demonstrate awareness of historical concepts, such as <i>source and evidence; fact and opinion; viewpoint and objectivity; cause and consequence; change and continuity; time and space</i>
Element	Working with evidence
1.5	Investigate the job of the historian, including how s/he finds and uses evidence to form historical judgements which may be revised and reinterpreted in the light of new evidence
1.6	Debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and appreciate the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry
1.7	Develop historical judgements based on evidence about personalities, issues and events in the past, showing awareness of historical significance
1.8	Investigate a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition
Element	Acquiring 'the big picture'
1.9	Demonstrate awareness of the significance of the history of Ireland and of Europe and the wider world across various dimensions, including political, social, economic, religious, cultural and scientific dimensions
1.10	Demonstrate chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras
1.11	Make connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras

Guidelines for completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment: *A Life in Time*

Figure 3 below sets out the process for conducting Classroom Based Assessment 2. The aim of this process is to provide guidance for teachers as they support students completing Classroom-Based Assessment 2.

Figure 3: Process for conducting Classroom-Based Assessment 2



Possible subjects for research

A Life in Time is designed to help students deepen their understanding of the human condition and the motivations underpinning the achievements and follies of humankind that have shaped the world they live in. The following represent some ideas for research that could be chosen:

- the contribution of the subject to an aspect of significant historical change
- an examination of an aspect of the subject's life or career (e.g., the subject's early life, or a particular phase or episode relating to the subject's life or career)
- an investigation of what might have influenced the subject's beliefs/ actions
- a study of an important relationship in the subject's life/ career

Students are encouraged to consider a wide variety of possible subjects and are not restricted to researching a person who features largely in their classroom studies. If the chosen person is one whose career is covered elsewhere in the student's course, then the focus could be on a particular, more in-depth aspect of that person's life.

As part of Classroom-Based Assessment 2, students will:

- Choose a research idea in consultation with their teacher and peers (while each student will have a distinctive subject, it is possible for students to collaborate and share experiences during the research process)

- Consider an approach to conducting the research, including identifying key research questions; identifying possible sources of evidence; and identifying where such evidence might be located
- Present their research findings in the form of a written record, chosen from a variety of formats
- Reflect on the process undertaken and the conclusions reached about their subject

Getting ready: *A Life in Time*



Student preparation

Students should have developed some knowledge, understanding and skills across the three strands of study in history (The Nature of History, the History of Ireland and the History of Europe and the wider world) before engaging with the first Classroom-Based Assessment, *The Past in My Place*. They should also have had opportunities to reflect on the values, attitudes and dispositions that inform much of the learning outcomes in strand 1, The nature of History, to which the Classroom-Based Assessments particularly relate. As part of the ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes across all three strands, students should have regular opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills that will help them to engage meaningfully with *A Life in Time* at a level appropriate to their age and stage of learning. Given the focus of the work in this Classroom-Based Assessment, experience of exploring how significant figures in the past affected change will be of particular value in supporting students' research for this classroom-based assessment.

Students should also have opportunities to evaluate their progress and learning from time to time throughout their work, for example, through personal annotations, reflective journals or classroom discussions with peers or with the teacher. While the Classroom-Based Assessment is summative, it has a formative value and should be used as a tool to provide feedback to students, parents and teachers on student progress and learning. At an appropriate moment in their learning, students should be familiarised with the Features of Quality that will be used to judge the quality of their work.

Teacher preparation

To prepare for Classroom-Based Assessment 2, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following documentation:

- Junior Cycle History Specification
- Junior cycle history: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments
- Assessment toolkit
- Annotated examples of student work.

Completing the CBA: *A Life in Time*



A Life in Time will be completed over a three-week period. Students will engage with their chosen subject across four stages of activity, which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement. These four stages are laid out in Figure 4 below:

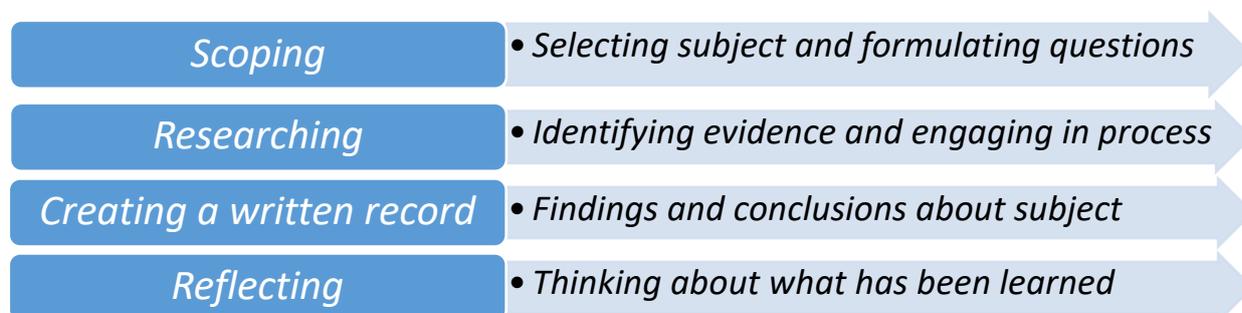


Figure 4: Student process for engaging with Classroom-Based Assessment 2: *A Life in Time*

1. Scoping

The following points should be considered:

In keeping with the emphasis on enquiry that underpins historical research and study, students are encouraged to refine the subject of their study by designing questions that refer to an aspect of the life or career of their chosen person. Questions that might help to inform the scoping out of a subject include, but are not limited to:

- Why is the person that I have chosen worth researching? What do I know about him/her already? What do I want to find out?
- What questions would focus my project and address the issues I like to see answered?
- What background information do I have about the wider context of my subject?
- How will I narrow the focus of my study? Is there a specific aspect of the life/ experience/ career of my subject that I will explore? Can I refine my study by inserting date parameters? Is there a particular episode or event that I can focus on?

2. Researching

The process of locating relevant sources and finding information from them is a valuable learning experience. Among the questions that students might consider are:

- What sources will I use? How will I access these sources? Library visit? Websites? Other sources?
- Is there anybody I can speak to who might have information about my subject?
- How will I find information about my subject from books that I have located? Contents page? Index?
- How will I keep note new information that I discover? Keep a folder?

It is not necessary for students to read large texts or whole volumes, though they may if they wish.

3. Creating a written record

Students should aim to answer their research questions and present their historical judgements in the form of a coherent piece of writing in a chosen written format, using evidence from their sources to support their conclusions. The sources used should be cited in a bibliography at the end of the record. Students should consult a variety of sources during their research; at a minimum at least two sources should be consulted.

Students may choose from a variety of formats to present the written record, such as, an article, essay, blog, script for a broadcast, address to an audience, letter to a journal or newspaper, obituary, speech etc.

Exploring different formats of written record in deciding which is most suited to their approach will help students to understand the diverse range of written sources of evidence with which historians engage.

4. Reflecting

As in CBA 1, the process engaged in by the student should be the subject of some reflection- both in terms of what was learned about the subject and the experience of being a historian. Students will complete a reflection note which is included as an appendix to these guidelines. Students are not expected to show their reflections about the process and the subject in the written record itself, as the format chosen will be shaped to the purpose of writing historically about the chosen person.

Deciding on the level of achievement: *A Life in Time*



Features of Quality

Key features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement in *A Life in Time* are described next. The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess the student work as best fitting the descriptors. The Features of Quality are designed with reference to the learning outcomes on which *A Life in Time* is based and focus in particular on strand 1 The Nature of History.

Features of Quality: History- *A Life in Time*

<p>Exceptional</p> <p>A piece of work that reflects these Features 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.</p>	<p>The written record reveals a highly developed sense of historical consciousness, with remarkable coherence of content, approach and structure</p> <p>The written record displays exceptional research and understanding of the role of evidence in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</p> <p>The written record makes compelling connections between the subject and a 'big picture' of the past, showing some originality.</p>
<p>Above expectations</p> <p>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 or polishing, but, on the whole the work is of a high standard.</p>	<p>The written record reveals a strong sense of historical consciousness, with commendable coherence of content, approach and structure</p> <p>The written record displays very good research and understanding of the role of historical sources in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</p> <p>The written record makes clear connections between the subject and a 'big picture' of the past in a very interesting way.</p>
<p>In line with expectations</p> <p>A piece of work that reflects most of these Features 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.</p>	<p>The written record reveals some sense of historical consciousness, with content and approach presented in a reasonably well-structured manner</p> <p>The written record displays good research and some understanding of the role of historical sources in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</p> <p>The written record makes some connections between the subject and a 'big picture' of the past.</p>
<p>Yet to meet expectations</p> <p>A piece of work that falls someway 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 errors that need to be addressed.</p>	<p>The written record reveals little or no sense of historical consciousness, with significant lapses in content, approach and structure</p> <p>The written record displays limited research and little or no understanding of the role of historical sources in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</p> <p>The written record shows little or no sense of 'big picture' and connections between it and the subject are haphazard and/or poorly sustained.</p>

Next steps: *A Life in Time*



The Assessment Task

Students undertake a written Assessment Task to be submitted to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for marking as part of the state-certified examination for History. The Assessment Task will be allocated 10% of the marks used to determine the overall grade.

The Assessment Task is directly related to the second Classroom-Based Assessment, *A Life in Time*.

The Assessment Task is offered at a common level and the questions posed will take into account the broad cohort of students taking the assessment. The Assessment Task consists of two stages: firstly, engaging with a piece of stimulus material to prepare for the written task; and secondly, reflecting upon and writing about their experience in completing *A Life in Time*.

The Assessment Task will comprise of **some or all** of the following:

- Engagement with a **short stimulus** in visual, written, audio or audio-visual format to prepare for the written task.
- **A written task** that tests the students in one or more of the following:
 - their ability to demonstrate their understanding of historical concepts by applying their historical thinking to researching the life of a person in history in *A Life in Time*
 - their ability to evaluate new knowledge or understanding that has emerged through their experience of *A Life in Time*
 - their capacity to reflect on the process of research, of forming historical judgements based on evidence and other skills demonstrated while working on *A Life in Time*
 - their reflections on how their experience of *A Life in Time* has influenced their attitudes and values
 - their general appreciation of the nature of history.

Including the experience of the stimulus material, the Assessment Task takes a double class period or two single class periods (i.e. a minimum of 80 minutes) to complete. The first class period should be given over to engagement with stimulus material made available by the NCCA, and to student reflection on their experience of *A Life in Time* in preparation for completion of the answer booklet. The completion of the answer booklet will take place in the second period. The student response is written into a *pro-forma* booklet and the school forwards the completed student booklets for the Assessment Task along with the final examination scripts in accordance with arrangements set out by the SEC.

The Assessment Task will be undertaken following the completion of the second Classroom-Based Assessment *A Life in Time*. Schools will have some flexibility in choosing the two class periods for completion, with a period of one week being identified during which the Assessment Task must be undertaken by students.

Where a student is absent for the completion of all or part of the Assessment Task, schools should make local arrangements in the school to allow the student to complete the task as close as possible to the timeframe scheduled for completion.

The mark awarded for the Assessment Task will be aggregated by the SEC with the mark awarded for the examination to determine the overall grade for the state-certified final examination in History.

Examples of Assessment Tasks, stimulus materials and guidelines on how to organise and manage the Assessment Task across two class periods will be available at www.curriculumonline.ie.

Subject Learning Assessment and Review meeting

Shared understanding of standards within junior cycle will arise through professional discussion in Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. Participating teachers bring their own examples of student work and compare their judgements with other colleagues, along with the annotated examples of student work and specifications provided by the NCCA. This process over time will help develop a greater understanding of standards and ensure consistency of judgement about student performance.

All schools or individual subject departments will retain a small sample from the body of submitted work in support of the process of Subject Learning and Assessment Review. Teachers will retain samples of *A Life in Time* work that they will use for discussions at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. An example at each of the four level descriptors, where feasible, will be needed for this purpose.

While this process can be organised more easily within a school where there is more than one history teacher, it is recommended that, in a school with one history teacher, the teacher should discuss 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, implementation and reviewing of the Classroom-Based Assessment. Teachers will again retain samples of the work from *A Life in Time* for discussion at the Subject Learning Assessment Review meetings. 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 Assessment Review meeting can be accessed at <http://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>.

Following the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting, each individual teacher reconsiders the judgement they had made for the 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 descriptors awarded are used in reporting progress and achievement to parents and students as part of the school's reporting procedures and through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Using feedback

Providing effective feedback is a crucial step in using *A Life in Time* to support learning in history. 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 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 <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/focus-on-learning>

Querying a result

Queries in relation to the descriptors awarded to *A Life in Time*, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.

Appendix A: Student Reflection Note

CBA:	Title:	
What were the most positive things in my experience of working on this CBA?		
What were the main challenges I faced?		
What aspect of my learning about my subject did I find most significant?		
What did I learn about the role of the historian in conducting and presenting research?		
Student:	Teacher:	Date:

Appendix B: Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meeting

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings enable teachers to collaboratively reach consistency in their judgements 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 1). 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.

