

Junior Cycle Business Studies

Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and
Assessment Task

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Introduction

This document, Junior Cycle Business Studies: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task, provides:

- General information on Classroom-Based Assessments
- Detail of the nature and scope of the two Classroom-Based Assessments described in the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle Business Studies
- The Features of Quality used to decide the level of achievement in each Classroom-Based Assessment
- Guidelines for schools and teachers on completing the Classroom-Based Assessments
- Details of the Assessment Task in Business Studies and how the school supports its completion.

The guidelines should be used in conjunction with the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle Business Studies, which can be accessed at <http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Business-Studies>.

Other documentation

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.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/framework-for-junior-cycle>.

All documentation relating to assessment at junior cycle can be accessed at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting>.

Classroom-Based Assessments: General Information

Classroom-Based Assessments 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 Business Studies, which is a minimum of 200 hours. 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 formative 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 a specified period of time in second and third year. The results of 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 (p17 and 25), 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 all of 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 activity and the work is praised for its consistency. 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. Where it is not clearly evident which quality descriptor should apply, teachers must come to judgment, 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 [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 Classroom-Based Assessments so that they can suit the particular needs and circumstances of students and the school. Students and teachers have a choice of topics for the first Classroom-Based Assessment, Business in Action. There are further possibilities within how the research can be conducted and presented for assessment to allow students to tap into their own interests and motivations. Similarly, students are actively encouraged to use a variety of support materials when completing the second Classroom-Based Assessment, Presentation, such as digital technology, posters, and infographics. Within the parameters set by the guidelines, the range of themes and topics for the Presentation 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 assessment guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments 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 set out in this document
- 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 as set out in these guidelines
- 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 <http://juniorcycle.ie/Assessment>.

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 a reasonable level of support, having discussed it with the student, the teacher can make a note of the level of assistance provided. This will assist the teacher when using the Features of Quality to make judgements about the level of achievement of the student's work.

Reasonable support may include:

- Clarifying the requirements of the task

- Using annotated examples of student work provided by NCCA 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 research, evaluation and report
- Providing supports for students with special educational needs (SEN) as outlined below.

It is not envisaged that the level of support involved requires teachers to edit draft projects, or to provide model text or answers to be used in the student's evidence of learning.

Inclusive assessment practices

Special provisions may be put in place for a student with a specific physical or learning difficulty to remove as far as possible the impact of the disability on the student's performance in both Classroom-Based Assessments and the Assessment Task so that he or she can demonstrate his or her level of achievement. The accommodations – for example, the use of Irish Sign Language, 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 school year and are not designed to compensate for a possible lack of achievement arising from a disability.

Classroom-Based Assessments in Business Studies

There are two Classroom-Based Assessments in Business Studies. 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. This timetable for Classroom-Based Assessments for all subjects will be provided on an annual basis at <http://www.ncca.ie/junior-cycle> and at www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle.

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 Business Studies. The Classroom-Based Assessments for Business Studies are outlined in Table 1 below.

Classroom-Based Assessments	Format	Student preparation
Business in Action	Group project based on one of three options: Enterprise in action Economics in action Finance in action	During a maximum of four weeks with support/guidance from teacher
Presentation	Individual presentation and investigation on a business-related topic	During a maximum of three weeks, with support/guidance from teacher

Table 1: Classroom-Based Assessments for Business Studies

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 Business Studies. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based. In the case of Business Studies this is the Presentation. The details of the Assessment Task are set out in these guidelines and are outlined in Table 2 below.

	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 the Presentation (CBA 2)	Following completion of the second Classroom-Based Assessment in Year 3

Table 2: Assessment Task for Classroom-Based Assessment 2, Presentation

Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Business in Action

Business in Action gives students an opportunity to actively engage in a practical and authentic learning experience that reflects activities undertaken regularly in the business environment. They will act as consumers, entrepreneurs, managers and decision-makers as they plan and conduct research, analyse data and information, problem-solve and make decisions, use digital technology to manage information, and take action. They will learn about, and make informed decisions about, their own resources and issues of social, cultural and global importance. These are essential skills required for life, work and further education.

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

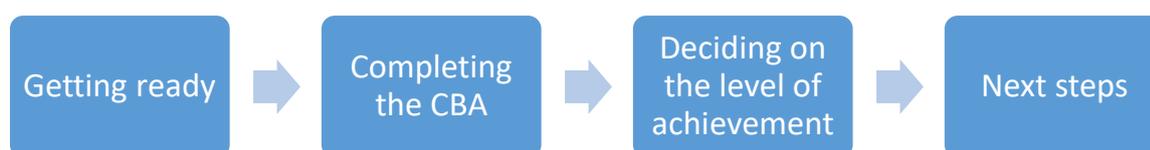


Figure 1 Process for conducting a CBA

Students are given three options from which to choose a Business in Action project:

1. Enterprise in Action	Students are given an opportunity to engage in an enterprising activity
2. Economics in Action	Students are given an opportunity to explore an economic trend, development, change or policy that is impacting positively or negatively on the Irish economy and society
3. Finance in Action	Students are given an opportunity to identify and research a financial challenge for a consumer or an organisation (profit or not-for-profit)

Business in Action is a group project. It comprises of four areas of activity: *conducting research*; *evaluating information*; *developing action plans*; and *reporting findings*. Students should collaborate with classmates in order to complete the project but teachers should ensure that each student makes an individual contribution to the project, and produces their own evidence to meet the Features of Quality for this assessment.

Project Option 1: Enterprise in Action

Students are given an opportunity to engage in an enterprising activity. They can choose from the following:

- Students can develop a product or service. The product or service can be one they devise or create themselves (which they identify as having a potential market), or one that already exists (which they identify as having the potential to expand its market).
- Students can organise an enterprise event or activity (for-profit or not-for-profit). It can be a once-off event or one that is organised over a longer period of time. It can be undertaken for economic, social or cultural purposes.

As part of this action project students will:

- Carry out research in order to assess the feasibility of their idea
- Evaluate their research findings
- Develop a business plan based on their research findings which will describe elements of the marketing mix to be applied and financial information for the enterprise
- Provide their chosen product, service, enterprise event or activity to their target market, where possible
- Record the inputs and outputs of the enterprise, where possible
- Compile a project to summarise the enterprise.

The project will be submitted in May of second year. The main learning outcomes to be assessed through Business in Action in this option are:

Personal Finance	Enterprise	Our Economy
1.2, 1.10	2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.11	3.10

Project Option 2: Economics in Action

Students are given an opportunity to explore an economic trend, development, change or policy that is impacting positively or negatively on the Irish economy and society.

As part of this action project students will:

- Carry out research on their chosen economic issue
- Evaluate their research findings. The economic evaluation will include identifying and assessing the economic, social and environmental benefits and costs for different key stakeholders

- Demonstrate use of relevant economic indicators and graphic representations to support their research findings
- Develop an action plan outlining an economic policy change that might improve the resulting economic outcomes
- Compile a project to summarise their work.

The project will be submitted in May of second year. The main learning outcomes to be assessed through Business in Action in this option are:

Personal Finance	Enterprise	Our Economy
1.1	2.5	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6

Project Option 3: Finance in Action

Students are given an opportunity to identify and research a financial challenge for a consumer or an organisation (profit or not-for-profit).

As part of this action project students will:

- Investigate and research a chosen financial challenge for an individual or an organisation (for-profit or not-for-profit)
- Evaluate their research findings. The evaluation may describe some causes for the financial challenge, identify the costs on different key stakeholders and classify the positive and negative impacts on income and expenditure
- Support their analysis with tabular and graphic representations
- Develop an action plan to address the financial challenge based on their evaluation of the research findings
- Compile a project to summarise their work.

The project will be submitted in May of second year. The main learning outcomes to be assessed through Business in Action in this option are:

Personal Finance	Enterprise	Our Economy
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.8	2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13	3.1, 3.5

Getting ready



Student preparation

Students should have developed some knowledge, understanding and skills across the three strands of study, Personal Finance, Enterprise and Our Economy, in order to undertake their chosen Business in Action project. As part of ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes for Business Studies, students should have opportunities to develop research and evaluation skills. 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. From the outset, students should be familiar with the Features of Quality used to judge the quality of their work.

Teacher preparation

In order to prepare for the Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following documentation:

- Junior Cycle Business Studies curriculum specification: <http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Business-Studies>
- Annotated samples of student work: <http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Business-Studies/Examples-of-Student-Work>
- Assessment in junior cycle: <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting>

The project should be undertaken over **four weeks** within a timeframe provided by the NCCA. It is recommended that teachers discuss the assessment with colleagues and plan any teaching and revision that may be required. It will be important to set the times and dates for carrying out the assessment as early as possible. It is recommended that a date for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review is established at the outset to assist in the planning, implementation and reviewing of the Classroom-Based Assessment. Once the school has decided this date, teachers and students can prepare for the completion of the Business in Action Classroom-Based Assessment. The timing of the process may vary from school to school. However, the Business in Action Classroom-Based Assessment must be completed by the end of second year.

Completing the Classroom Based Assessment 1: Business in Action



Business in Action will be completed within a **four week period**. In this Classroom-Based Assessment students will engage in four areas of activity, which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement:

1. Conducting research
2. Evaluating information
3. Developing action plans
4. Reporting findings.

1. Conducting research

A priority for completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment is developing a student's research skills. Once the teacher and students have decided which Business in Action project they wish to undertake, students will be divided into groups. Each group should try to define their project idea and brainstorm key words, phrases and information.

Each student in the group will be required to gather data and information from different sources to research their project. A student can undertake some field (primary) research and/or some desk (secondary) research, for example:

- Field visit
- Interview
- Survey
- Online research
- Newspapers and magazines.

Each individual student must conduct his/her own research (see Appendix 1, p. 29). It is important that each student records the source(s) of all the information gathered in order to assess its reliability and quality, and to ensure that the sources used can be referenced in the project. They should be encouraged to search effectively, evaluate and synthesise material.

2. Evaluating information

Individually, each student should examine the information he/she has gathered in order to appraise the research findings. Each student should be supported in evaluating the information (see Appendix 1, p. 29).

Collectively, the group should come together to examine all the information gathered from team members to appraise the research findings.

Enterprise in action	<p>The group will evaluate their research in order to assess the feasibility of their enterprise. Some questions they could address include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should we modify our idea based on the research? ▪ Is there a market for this enterprise? ▪ What expenses are required to develop this enterprise? ▪ How will we generate income from the enterprise?
Economics in action	<p>The group will evaluate their research in order to assess the benefits and costs of their economic issue. Some questions they could address include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the economic benefits and costs on different stakeholders? ▪ What are the social benefits and costs on different stakeholders? ▪ What are the environmental benefits and costs on different stakeholders? ▪ Are there graphs, statistics or economic indicators available to support the analysis?
Finance in action	<p>The group will evaluate their research in order to assess the financial position of a consumer or organisation. Some questions they could address include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How is income or revenue impacted as a result of the financial issue? ▪ How is expenditure impacted as a result of the financial issue? ▪ Is this a short-term, medium-term or long-term issue? ▪ Are there graphs, statistics or accounts available to support the analysis?

3. Developing action plans

Having completed and evaluated the research, the group will then apply their analysis of the research findings to developing an action plan. The students should demonstrate sound evidence-based judgements, which address the challenges posed by their project. The course of action should be justified by the research findings.

Enterprise in action	Students will develop a business plan which will describe elements of the marketing mix to be applied and financial information for the enterprise. They will endeavour to provide their chosen product, service, enterprise event or activity to their target market, where possible.
Economics in action	Students will develop an action plan outlining an economic policy change that might improve the resulting economic outcomes.
Finance in action	Students will develop an action plan to address the financial challenge in order to improve the financial position of the individual or organisation. Students will support their plan with tabular and graphic representations.

Although this phase of the work is monitored by the teacher, the analysis and compilation of the action plan is the group's own work, carried out in active, meaningful collaboration.

4. Reporting findings

To complete the Classroom-Based Assessment, each group of students must submit evidence of their work. One project is submitted per group. Students will select the information which they feel is most relevant, reliable and of good quality to be included as evidence of their completed project.

Evidence of learning

The project should provide the following information:

- Introduction to the project
- Evidence of student research for each group member (see Appendix 1, p. 29)
- An action plan for implementing the findings of the research
- Conclusion and recommendations
- The Student Reflection of each group member (see Appendix 2, p. 31)

The project should be up to 1500 words in length. Depending on the chosen format, some projects may involve fewer words but nonetheless present all the research and findings comprehensively. All

evidence submitted will be used to judge the student's level of achievement against the relevant Features of Quality set out on pp. 17-18.

The project should include support materials such as prototypes or artefacts, graphic representations, financial accounts, surveys, interview questions, images, photographs, a storyboard and infographics where appropriate. The innovative use of different means of representing information should be promoted and encouraged. The project should be set out in a clear and attractive format.

Before submitting their project each individual student must complete a Student Reflection (see Appendix 2, p. 31). Completion of the reflection is the student's specific declaration of the part that he or she has played in the work of the group on the project. It is recommended that the number of students in a group should be between three and five students to allow each group member to make a meaningful contribution and to facilitate work being distributed and shared more easily among group members.

Deciding on the level of achievement: Business in Action



Features of Quality

Key Features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement for Business in Action are described here. The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess each student's work as best fitting the Descriptors (see p. 3).

Features of Quality: Business in Action

Exceptional

- The student uses a highly effective research method to collect data and demonstrates a high level of analysis of his/her data findings.
- The evaluation of the collective research findings is of excellent quality, demonstrating a consideration of different points of view and the credibility of sources of information.
- The action plan demonstrates ambition and creativity and is based on a sound, evidence-based judgement of all the information available to the student. It is completed to a very high standard.
- The project is completed to a very high standard, is very comprehensive and represents information in a variety of different formats e.g. visual, written, with little scope for improvement.
- The individual Student Reflection describes clearly and in detail how the student engaged at an exceptional level in all stages of the project. It presents a meaningful reflection on his/her experience of group work.

Above expectations

- The student uses an effective research method to collect data and demonstrates a good analysis of the data findings.
- The evaluation of the collective research findings is of very good quality, demonstrating some consideration of other points of view and the credibility of sources of information.
- The action plan demonstrates an evidence-based judgement of the information available to the student. It is completed to a high standard.
- The project is complete and presented in a clear and organised manner, with some scope for improvement.
- The individual Student Reflection demonstrates how the student engaged fully in all stages of the project. It presents some reflection on his/her experience of group work.

In line with expectations

- The student uses an acceptable research method to collect data although the analysis of the data findings lacks depth.
- The evaluation of the collective research findings is sufficient, although there is limited consideration of other points of view and the credibility of sources of information.
- The action plan is completed to a good standard displaying a reasonably sound judgement of the evidence.

- The project has some omissions but overall is complete and is presented in an organised manner.
- The individual Student Reflection provides some evidence of how the student engaged at some stages of the project. Reflections on his/her experience of group work are limited.

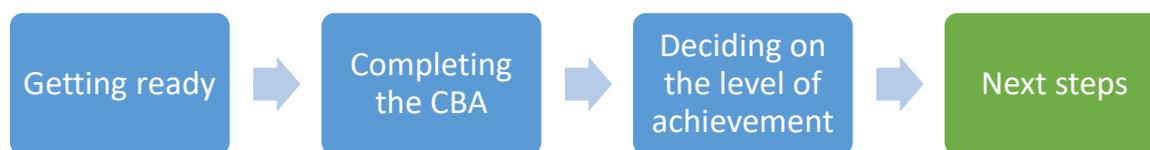
Yet to meet expectations

- The student uses an ineffective research method to collect data and the analysis of the data findings is cursory.
- The evaluation of the collective research findings is poor, demonstrating little consideration of other points of view or the credibility of the sources of information.
- The action plan demonstrates a judgement of the evidence, though the evidence on which it is based is flawed in places.
- The project provides a very basic summary of information, omits important elements and lacks clarity in its presentation.
- The individual Student Reflection demonstrates limited engagement by the student in the project. The reflection on his/her experience of group work is very narrow.

These Features of Quality 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 www.curriculumonline.ie.

Next steps



Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting

Shared understanding of standards within junior cycle will arise through professional discussion in Subject Learning and Assessment Review 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 Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Business in Action by students will be gathered/recorded for discussion at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. In preparation for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting, each teacher will identify one sample of students' work for each descriptor, where feasible, and will have these available for discussion at the meeting. Further details on managing and participating in the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting are included in the Appendix and are available online at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>.

The key date to establish at the outset is the date to be set aside for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review. In setting the date the school should be guided by the Key Dates for Classroom-Based Assessments provided by the NCCA at <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle> and <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>. Once the school has decided on this date the teachers and students can plan for the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment.

Using feedback

Providing effective feedback is a crucial step in using Business in Action to support learning. Students will be informed of the Descriptor they have been awarded once the SLAR 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 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 Descriptors awarded for Business in Action, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.

Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Presentation

This Classroom-Based Assessment has two priorities: to give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to real-life settings, and to develop their communication skills. The Presentation allows students to: develop their self-awareness as learners; to evaluate evidence and reflect on their values; to demonstrate how they can communicate competently using a range of tools prevalent in the business environment; and to make considered decisions and recommendations.

This Classroom-Based Assessment helps students to apply course learning to their daily lives, integrate theoretical ideas to practical contexts and begin to develop reflective skills. It is designed to build on the positive dialogue between students and teachers on business-related interests throughout the three years of study.

The Presentation is an individual project. It comprises of three areas of activity:

- Investigating
- Making informed judgements
- Communicating.

Students may collaborate with classmates in gathering relevant information but teachers should ensure that each student is able to individually produce evidence to meet the Features of Quality for this assessment.

The main learning outcomes to be assessed through the Presentation are:

Personal Finance	Enterprise	Our Economy
1.3, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10	2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6	3.1, 3.5, 3.9, 3.10

Getting ready



Student preparation

Students should have developed sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake a presentation. As part of ongoing teaching, learning and assessment of the learning outcomes for Business Studies, students are given opportunities to develop communication skills as they realise various learning outcomes. These communication skills include an ability to discuss and debate, to listen to and express an opinion, to use language and numbers to communicate, and to communicate using digital technology. As students make progress through their course of study they should be encouraged to identify issues, topics, individuals or organisations they want to know more about, to discuss current affairs that appear in the media, or to explore concerns of a local or global nature that are relevant to business. While the Classroom-Based Assessment is summative, it has a formative value and should be used as a tool to provide feedback to teachers, students and parents on student progress and learning. 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

In order to prepare for the Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers should familiarise themselves with the following documentation:

- Junior Cycle Business Studies curriculum specification: <http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Business-Studies>
- Annotated samples of student work: <http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Business-Studies/Examples-of-Student-Work>
- Assessment in junior cycle: <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting>

The Presentation is completed over **three weeks**. In preparation, teachers will discuss the assessment with colleagues and plan any teaching and revision that may be required. It will be important to set the times and dates for carrying out the assessment as early as possible. It is recommended that a date for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review is established at the outset to assist in the planning, implementation and reviewing of the Classroom-Based Assessment.

Completing the Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Presentation



Over the course of **three weeks** the student will engage in three areas of activity which contribute to the generation of their evidence of learning and achievement in the Classroom-Based Assessment:

- Investigating
- Reflecting on learning
- Communicating.

1. Investigating

The Presentation requires the student to investigate and present on a business-related topic. The chosen topic may be directly related to specific course content or the student may decide to study an issue of personal or local relevance, provided it is related to the business environment.

Some potential topics are:

- Field visit to a local enterprise
- Investigation of a business-related story in the media
- Leaders in the Irish business field
- Investigation of the impact of an organisation on a community
- Consumerism
- Investigation of a current economic issue
- Careers in business

The student is precluded from presenting on his/her Business in Action Classroom-Based Assessment.

Once the student has decided on his/her topic of interest, he/she will undertake some original investigative work in order to find out more about the topic. The student will begin to gather information from primary and/or secondary sources e.g., organising a meeting/interview or online research. As the topic options are very broad, given their age, ability, interests and the timeframe involved, the student should focus on one aspect of the topic.

It is important for the student to record the source(s) of all the information gathered in order to be able to assess its reliability and quality. Many business-related topics can be looked at from different perspectives and students should be encouraged to consider differing viewpoints.

2. Reflecting on learning

Having undertaken some original investigative work on the business-related topic, the students should:

- Evaluate what they have learned about the business environment as a result of the investigation
- Reflect on whether/how they see the world differently and whether/how their behaviour has changed having engaged with this topic.

This will include, for example:

- Exploring the importance of the topic for personal, local, social or environmental relevance
- Applying their knowledge, understanding and ideas relevant to the chosen topic
- Explaining different opinions related to the chosen topic where appropriate
- Reflecting on what they thought about the topic before the investigation and what they think now
- Reflecting on whether/how their behaviour or attitudes have changed having found out more about the topic.

In other words, the student should aim to develop a personal opinion in relation to the business-related topic. Justification for holding this opinion should be sourced in the original investigative work.

3. Communicating

Each student will present orally on what they have learned having examined a business-related topic. The information should be presented in their own words to demonstrate personal understanding of the knowledge and ideas relevant to the chosen topic. A priority for this assessment is to encourage confidence in a student's presentation and communication skills. Students should be encouraged to experiment with and practise their presentation. Although this phase of the task is monitored by the teacher, the preparation is the student's own work, carried out individually or in active, meaningful collaboration as part of a group.

The presentation should be structured along the following lines:

- Identify and provide a brief overview of the business-related topic
- Explain their interest in the topic

- Evaluate what they have learned about the business environment as a result of their investigation of the topic
- Reflect on whether/how they see the world differently and how their behaviour has changed having engaged with the project
- Present an opinion on the business-related topic
- Demonstrate the development of their communication skills.

Evidence of learning

As a guideline, the presentation should last up to three minutes per student including time set aside for engagement with the audience. Teacher support for the student’s communication, in the form of questions or interventions, may be part of the presentation. A student may speak with or without notes, and a reading of a prepared script is allowable.

Students can use a range of different support materials and tools, such as stimulus material, digital technology, tabular or graphic representations, posters, or storyboard, taking into account a school’s unique context and the abilities and interests of the individual students. The use of different support materials to support the oral presentation is encouraged and rewarded when used to scaffold the presentation where appropriate.

The presentation is completed by the student as an individual.

Deciding on the level of achievement: Presentation



Features of Quality

Key Features of Quality in support of student and teacher judgement for the Presentation are described here. The Features of Quality are the criteria used to assess each student’s work as best fitting the Descriptors (see page 3).

Features of Quality: Presentation

Exceptional

- The student communicates eloquently and very confidently, displaying a very comprehensive knowledge of the topic, and the presentation is very well-structured.
- The support material chosen displays creativity and is used very effectively to captivate the audience.
- The student's reflections on the topic are of excellent quality, demonstrating clearly how the student's point of view has developed or evolved over time.

Above expectations

- The student communicates clearly, competently and with confidence, displaying a very good knowledge of the topic, and the presentation is well-structured.
- The support material is well-chosen to interest the audience, displaying some creativity.
- The student's reflections on the topic are of very good quality.

In line with expectations

- The student communicates well displaying a good knowledge of the topic but lacks some confidence and the presentation is unclear in places.
- The support material chosen is appropriate but not used to its full potential.
- The student displays an ability to reflect on their own perspective of the topic.

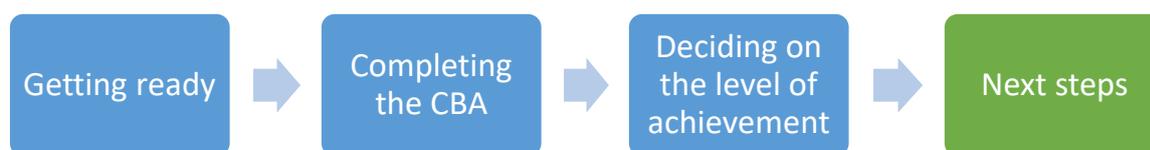
Yet to meet expectations

- The student does not communicate clearly or confidently, displaying a very limited knowledge of the topic, and the presentation lacks structure.
- The support material chosen is used in a basic manner.
- The student's reflections on the topic are narrow and of poor quality.

These Features of Quality 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 www.curriculumonline.ie.

Next steps



Assessment Task

Students complete a written Assessment Task to be submitted to the State Examinations Commission for marking as part of the state-certified examination for Business Studies. It will be allocated 10% of the marks used to determine the grade awarded by the State Examinations Commission. The Assessment Task is directly related to the nature and focus of the second Classroom-Based Assessment, the Presentation, where the knowledge and skills developed by students emerge from their investigation, growing awareness of and presentation of a topic related to the business environment. The purpose of the Assessment Task is for students to undertake a focused reflection on their individual Presentation.

The Assessment Task will assess the students in aspects of their learning including:

- Their ability to evaluate new knowledge or understanding that has emerged through their experience of the Presentation
- Their capacity to reflect on the skills they have developed in undertaking the Presentation
- Their ability to reflect on how their value system has been influenced through their experience of the Presentation.

The Assessment Task is at a Common Level and the questions posed will take into account the broad cohort of students taking the assessment. It consists of two stages: firstly, discussing and evaluating their individual presentations; and secondly, reflecting on and writing about their experiences as presenters. The Assessment Task takes place over a double class period or two single class periods, a minimum of 80 minutes. The first class period is used for preparation purposes. The second class period is used for writing up their response. The student response is written into a pro-forma booklet and the school forwards the completed student booklets for the Assessment Task in accordance with arrangements set out by the SEC.

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 Business Studies.

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.

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting

A Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting will be organised subsequent to completion of the second Classroom-Based Assessment, Presentation. Samples of Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Presentation by students will be gathered/recorded for discussion at the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. In preparation for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting, each teacher will identify one sample of students' work for each descriptor, where feasible, and will have these available for discussion at the meeting. Any audio or audio-visual recording device, such as a tablet, mobile phone, laptop or video camera, available in the school can be used for this purpose. School rather than personal devices should be used. The recording should take place with cognisance of child protection guidelines and in line with the school's acceptable use and data protection policies.

Further details on managing and participating in the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting are included in the Appendix and are available online at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>.

The key date to establish at the outset is the date to be set aside for the Subject Learning and Assessment Review. In setting the date the school should be guided by the Key Dates for Classroom-Based Assessments provided by the NCCA at <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle> and <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/slar-meetings>. Once the school has decided on this date the teachers and students can plan for the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment.

Recording and reporting results from Classroom-Based Assessments

Following the Subject Learning and Assessment Review each individual teacher re-considers the judgement they had made of their student's 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 ongoing reporting procedures and 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. Further information in relation to reporting Classroom-Based Assessment descriptors for the JCPA is available from the DES at the following link: <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services>Returns/Post-Primary-Online-Database-P-POD-Project/>

Appealing or querying a result

Student appeals regarding the state-certified examination grade, inclusive of the Assessment Task, will be processed as per the current appeal arrangements. Queries in relation to the Presentation, where they arise, will be dealt with by the school.

Appendix 1: Business in Action – Template for Student Research

Project option: Enterprise in Action <input type="checkbox"/> Economics in Action <input type="checkbox"/> Finance in Action <input type="checkbox"/>	
Title of your project	Student name
Method of research	Field (primary) research <input type="checkbox"/> Desk (secondary) research <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1 Introduction: Outline briefly the purpose of your research	
1.2 Method of research: Explain briefly why you have chosen your method of research	
1.3 Sources: List your source(s) of information	
1.4 Summary: Give a brief summary of what you found out as a result of your research	

1.5 Evaluation of findings: Think critically about the following questions and write a short response

(a) Were you surprised by your findings? Give a reason for your answer.

(b) Is the source of your research reliable? Give a reason for your answer

(c) Is the information one-sided or biased? Give a reason for your answer.

1.6 Conclusion: Based on your findings what is the key message you will share with your team?

1.7 Decision-making: How do you think your findings will affect your team's action plan?

1.8 Recording your sources: Provide some evidence of your research e.g. interview questions, questionnaire, photocopies, images, notes, graphic organizers etc.

(c) How I contributed to developing the action plan

(d) How I contributed to compiling the project

1.4 Review: Describe how you got on as a team and any difficulties you overcame while working as a team *or* Describe the advantages and challenges of working on this group project from your individual perspective

1.5 Teacher feedback

