

# Classroom-Based Assessments:



Classroom-Based Assessments will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in a way which would not be possible in a formal examination. The tasks will cover a broad range of activities including oral presentations, written work of different types, practical or designing and making activities, artistic performances, scientific experiments, projects or other suitable tasks. A particular purpose of the Classroom-Based Assessments will be to facilitate developmental feedback to students. Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) are best described as the occasions when the teacher assesses the students using the specific tasks set

out in the curriculum specification for each subject. They are completed within the teaching time allocated for each subject.

The CBAs and the Features of Quality, which support teacher judgement, are set out in Assessment Guidelines for each subject. The assessment is similar to the ongoing assessment that occurs every day in every class. In the case of Classroom Based Assessment the teacher's judgement is recorded for the purpose of subject learning and assessment review, and for the school's reporting to parents and students. Students prepare for the ClassroomBased Assessment 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 the level of achievement for the Classroom-Based Assessments There are four level descriptors of achievement for each CBA; teachers use the Features of Quality, set out in The Assessment Guidelines for each subject to decide the level of achievement in each CBA.

The Features of Quality are the criteria 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 all of the Features of Quality for the Classroom-Based Assessment very well. The student shows a clear understanding of how to complete each area of activity of the investigation, and the work is praised for its rigour. 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 errors that need to be addressed.

**NOT REPORTED** describes when a student has not submitted any piece of work for assessment

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 will 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 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. The teachers in each subject will meet during a Subject Learning and Assessment Review.

Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings enable teachers to collaboratively reach consistency in their judgments of student work against common, externally set Features of Quality. Greater understanding of standards and expectations will develop over time as teachers come together in professional discussion to reflect on the quality of their own students' work, informed by the subject specification, assessment guidelines and other support material including annotated examples of students' work provided by the National Council for Curriculum & Assessment (NCCA). During this meeting teachers will review their initial descriptors awarded to students to check for consistency with the Features of Quality.