

Teacher's Professional Autonomy & Consultation and Consensus

Can school management decide what assessments are devised/used for inclusion in the school report?

No.

Subject teachers know their students best and will be in the better position to balance a variety of factors in arriving at the most suitable form of assessment to put in place for their cohort of students.

TUI members should consult with their subject department colleagues to devise the most appropriate assessment in their subject area taking into consideration the cohort of students in their class and in particular, the ability of such students to engage in learning since school buildings closed on 12th March. Following this consultation, TUI members should advise school management of the appropriate assessment that will be used in their subject area.

Quotes taken from Assessment and Reporting on Students' Learning at Junior Cycle May 2020 announced by Minister for Education and Skills – on 29th April 2020:

*“The assessment of students’ learning achievements in each subject will take place at school level and will be **based on the teacher’s professional knowledge of each student’s learning.**”*

*“School-designed examinations, tasks, projects, assignments, essay style questions, presentations, or other tasks **chosen by the teacher**”*

*“For each subject, the evidence of learning to be used and any method of assessment chosen should be **decided by the relevant subject teachers..**”*

Can school management dictate what is included in the school report?

No.

The details to be included in the school report must be decided in consultation with teachers. Teachers know their students best and can make informed decisions based on that knowledge.

Consultation and Consensus

What is consultation?

Being presented with decisions as a fait accompli or being told what is going to happen is not consultation.

Consultation must be a genuine engagement that seeks to reach agreement regarding matters raised (either by management or staff). All the information necessary for fully-informed decision-making should be provided.

What is consensus?

Consensus does not mean a simple majority or veto but exists where there is general agreement and support or an absence of significant opposition.