


Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

*This document should be read in conjunction with *20Q _ Access, Transfer and Progression policy*.*

Purpose

The purpose of this QA policy is to provide a more detailed document for management, staff, students and all other stakeholders regarding assessment and progression for students at PEA. This document will be publicly available on the school website should students wish to read it.

For more simplified instructions, teachers and students can consult their respective handbooks.

Scope

This policy applies to management, staff, students, agents.


Progression and Assessment Procedure

At Patrick’s English Academy, testing and assessment is an integral part of the students’ learning pathway and the course progression. Our philosophy around assessment is that it should be regular, relevant and meaningful. Having regular and predictable in-class tests will lower students’ anxiety around assessment and build their endurance for future, higher-stakes exams. Relevancy in the testing material ensures validity and sets students up for success by testing what they have been taught in class, using similar exercise types to what they will already be used to. Finally, formative assessments that carry weight- for example, the opportunity to progress to the next level- will make the tests meaningful and promote a sense of accomplishment, boosting learner motivation.

The assessment process at Patrick’s English Academy combines initial, diagnostic, formative assessments— fortnightly classroom tests—and a final summative evaluation through an external proficiency exam, such as TIE, Cambridge, or IELTS. These external exams are mandatory for students residing on a Stamp 2 study visa.

Entry Level Test (Initial Assessment)

Prior to enrollment, students complete an online placement test covering aspects of grammar and vocabulary. This test is taken from the Outcomes material, published by National

Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

Geographic Learning, and takes the form of a multiple-choice online Google form. Students are asked to complete the test before their first day of school without help, in order to correctly place them at their starting level. Students and school administration will receive their result immediately. There are 50 questions with a maximum of 50 possible marks. This test has limited reliability due to the fact that students complete it unsupervised, outside of class time; there is also no time limit. However, the speaking test on their first day will ensure they are reliably placed in the correct starting level.

Link to online placement test:

<https://forms.gle/KUf7EXHrkiHJFpt1A>

<i>Placement test Score</i>	<i>Starting level</i>
<i>0-18 points</i>	<i>A1 Elementary</i>
<i>19-25 points</i>	<i>A2 Pre Intermediate</i>
<i>26-32 points</i>	<i>B1 Intermediate</i>
<i>33-39 points</i>	<i>B2 Upper Intermediate</i>
<i>40-50 points</i>	<i>C1 Advanced</i>

On their first day of school, students do a speaking test with the DOS. This takes the form of a brief private interview where the DOS asks questions about the learner's experience in Ireland, their past jobs or studies, and their future plans. The DOS will then make a decision based on the student's placement test results and speaking ability and place the students in their starting level.


Sample questions:

A1: *What is your name? Where are you from? What is your job?*

A2: *When did you arrive in Ireland? How did you travel to Cork? What is your favourite thing about Ireland?*

B1: *What are your plans for your time in Ireland? What are the positive and negative things about your job?*

B2: *What are your first impressions of Ireland? Why is English important to your future? If you could travel anywhere in Europe, where would you go and why?*

Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

C1: *If you hadn't decided to come to Ireland, where would you be now? What would you be doing instead?*

The student will receive an email with an explanation of the level they have been placed in and the CEFR can-do statements as a self-assessment grid.

The class teacher will closely monitor the new student during their first week and suggest any level changes to the DOS before Friday of the student's first week. Any changes will be communicated to the student via email by Friday of their first week.


In-class testing (Diagnostic and Formative assessments)

Teachers do a review/ progress test every two weeks in class (preferably on a Thursday or Friday), covering language from the past 2 weeks and at least 1 of the 4 skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). These tests can be created by the teacher or adapted from English File and Headway resources. This ensures validity as the language contained will be the same as that covered during the week and the exercise type will be familiar to the students. These tests are conducted during class time under exam conditions, ie. no phones, no notes, no speaking or sharing answers and strict timings, to ensure reliability of results and to uphold academic integrity. Students with dyslexia or other learning difficulties, such as ADHD, may be granted extra time or other adjustments, such as larger font tests or tests printed on cream-coloured paper.

Assessment may take different forms, including, for example, recycling, quizzes, tasks, projects and presentations, as well as more traditional test types.

The class test is marked in class and errors are explained. This should be done in a learner-centred way, giving opportunities for students to explain the reasoning behind their answers and to revise problematic language. The teacher identifies weak areas for further practice (preferably in the same week or early the following week). Teachers are expected to assess students' productive skills with reference to the CEFR. This test is also an opportunity for teachers to adjust their content or approach to meet learner needs as it fulfils the criteria for an assessment for learning (AFL)

Teachers upload students' class test results percentage to the relevant excel sheet, which is accessible by the DOS and all teaching staff. This ensures open communication among teachers

Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

following a students' progress and is an important factor in the decision whether a student is ready to progress to the next level.

Level changes (Formative assessments/ Achievement tests)

All students are up for a mid-course level reassessment on week 12 of their individual 25 week course.

The level test will be completed during class time but outside of class, under the DOS' supervision and exam conditions, to ensure reliability. An approximate time frame is given but, as these tests are often taken individually, and in order to lower students' anxiety, the timing is flexible and the test administrator will check in with students if they need extra time. For purposes of validity, the entry tests for English File are used, ensuring that the learners will have studied the language during their course, and cover grammar and vocabulary for the next level, a short writing task and a spoken interview with the DOS. This is also an opportunity for the DOS to check in with students welfare and wellbeing at this point in their course.

Sample Speaking Section questions:


A1- What do you do in your free time? What are your hobbies? How many people are in your family?

A2- What do you usually eat for lunch? Describe a person in your family. Tell me about your last holiday. Describe what you are wearing.

B1- Tell me about a job you would like to do. Tell me about an important cultural celebration in your country. Tell me about the clothes you like to wear

B2- Tell me a piece of technology you use often. Tell me about an important achievement in your life. Tell me about a place you visited that made an impression on you.

The productive skills section of the level change test aligns with the equivalent CEFR can-do statements. The writing section gives students the choice to answer one of three short tasks, with a word limit. These tasks are adapted from English File test resources, but reworded to fit the CEFR. The speaking section takes the form of a brief interview that follows the conventions of IELTS speaking part 2 and 3: the student will be asked to speak at length about a topic (eg. the

Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

food they usually eat for breakfast for an A2 level student), and then the DOS will ask 2-3 follow up questions.

The productive skills section is designed to allow students to utilise all linguistic knowledge at their disposal to fully complete the task; the speaking section, in particular, is designed to be a predictor of the learner’s likely performance in the world outside the classroom. This level change test could be described as an ‘achievement’ test, as it allows the student to demonstrate all the language and productive skills he or she has developed on their course so far. The DOS will assess students’ writing and speaking using the CEFR can do statements and the ‘Qualitative aspects of spoken language use’ grid. Students who are deemed not ready to move up will be given guidance by the DOS and their teacher on what language/ skills need to be improved, and a time frame (eg. 4 weeks) before the student may reattempt the level change test.


At PEA, we believe that a vital criteria for a student to change level is that the students themselves are eager to move. For this reason, a student or teacher may withdraw from the mid-course level reassessment if the student does not feel ready. Similarly, students who have demonstrated that they are ready to move up a level may opt to sit the level-change test earlier than the 12-week mark, with guidance from their teacher.

Students who are encountering difficulties in their level and would like to move down should speak to their teacher and/ or DOS directly. A level change test is not required to move down, but will be necessary when the time comes for the student to move back up.

End of course external examination (summative assessment)

Patrick’s English Academy does not conduct in-house end of course summative assessments. The reasons for this are mainly practical: since the student body is so varied, with students studying on courses of differing lengths, different start and end dates due to rolling enrollment and a broad range of motivations and goals, it is unfeasible to expect all students to sit an exam at the same time.

All students on a student visa (25-week course) are required to sit an external examination upon completion of their course (usually TIE, Cambridge or IELTS). The exam certificate will need to be produced when applying to renew their visa and will allow them to transfer to another school should they wish to renew their visa. Exam fees for the TIE exam are included in the course fees.

Title:	Progression & assessment Procedures 2025		
Policy No.: 21Q	Version No.: 1		
Document author: Sophia Pope	Document owner(s): Sophia Pope		
Approval date: 21/03/2025	Approved by: Academic Committee, Director		
Next Revision:	Not later than 24 months from issue date		

Not later than 4 weeks before the end of their course, students are emailed with instructions on how to book their exam. The school will contact the test centre and book the exam on the students' behalf, but it is the students' responsibility to attend their end of course exam.

To support students in future external summative assessments, teachers will include minimum 1 hour exam preparation work per week in class. This could be Cambridge suite exams, TIE or IELTS. Exam preparation work must be included in teachers' weekly lesson plans. The course curriculums and syllabuses will guide teachers on what material to cover each week. Students are also offered monthly TIE exam information sessions, CAE and FCE preparation workshops, writing workshops etc outside of class time. As of 2025, students who have opted to sit the IELTS or Cambridge exam will be offered to sit a mock speaking exam with the DOS.

Academic Integrity/exams

To ensure that academic integrity is maintained,

Teachers will;

- Never leave the room when students are doing internal exams. In a case where the teacher needs to leave the room, the DOS should be contacted to supervise.
- Be vigilant of any suspicious activity and report this to the DOS.
- Take care when correcting exams and seek advice from colleagues and DOS if in doubt about any answer.

DOS will;

- Do random spot checks to ensure examinations are being appropriately supervised.
- For each assessment cycle, choose at two exams at random and correct to check that exam scores match/check for inaccuracies.

Should any issues in exam marking be identified, these will be brought up in monthly staff meetings and support offered to teachers