



17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As part of a whole-school approach to assessment, Loreto College Foxrock staff will be using a predominantly 'Comment-only' approach to marking the work of all 5<sup>th</sup> Year students each month until the October mid-term break. Staff will continue to record grades for students (where relevant to the individual subject) but these grades will only be shared with students at the end of each month.

The rationale behind comment-only marking is that it helps students to focus on how they learn. Research shows that students respond better to constructive comments than to grades as it allows them to better understand how their work can be improved. At Senior Cycle, it helps students to be more active, independent and responsible participants in their own learning – skills that help our students to not just to achieve their full potential in state examinations but also to become lifelong learners.

This approach to marking procedure in our school reflects wider changes sought by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) as they promote 'Assessment for Learning (AfL)' approaches across second-level schools. The DES considers this approach to assessment an exemplar of 'highly effective practice' and it will, in time, become the generic standard for all schools. In recognition of the fact that these changes will take some time and that students still engage in summative assessments (state examinations); post-midterm, teachers will use a combination of comment and graded feedback.

Thank you for your ongoing support as our school continues its journey towards the implementation of DES reforms in education.

Yours faithfully

Suzanne Lea

Teaching and Learning Team