

## Junior Cycle History Features of Quality 5 W's & 1 H: 5 W's: What, Where, Who, When & Why & 1 H: How

### 5 W: What, Where, Who, When & Why:

#### 1. What are the Features of Quality?

They are criteria set by the NCCA to support the assessment of student work in history CBAs. The Features of Quality are designed with reference to the learning outcomes from the History Specification on which CBAs are based which focus in particular on Strand 1 The Nature of History.

#### 2. Where are the Features of Quality applied?

Features of Quality are applied to the Students work during their two Junior Cycle History Classroom-based assessments.

#### 3. Who uses Features of Quality?

**Students:** should be familiarised with the Features of Quality that will be used to judge the quality of their work, at an appropriate moment in their learning.

**Teachers:** should use the Features of Quality to inform the design of learning experiences for the three-week window of the CBAs. Features of Quality will also be used by teachers to evaluate students' progress during the CBA window and provide formative feedback and help progress learning.

**Subject Departments:** should use Features of Quality to support collaborative planning and develop consistency in their professional judgements of students work.

#### 4. When are Features of Quality used?

##### In preparation for Classroom-Based Assessments:

**Teachers:** the Features of Quality inform the design of learning experiences for the three-week window of the CBA.

**Students:** at an appropriate stage in their learning and as part of their preparation for their CBAs learners should be given an awareness of the Features of Quality that will be used to judge the quality of their work.

**Subject Departments:** the Features of Quality may inform collaborative planning of units of learning. This will ensure students are provided with an opportunity to engage with and demonstrate the learning outcomes from Strand One before their CBAs.

##### During the Classroom-Based Assessments:

**Teachers:** Features of Quality facilitate the provision of formative feedback during student's engagement with the CBAs.

**Students:** Features of Quality may be used to provide formative feedback to the student while undertaking their CBAs. It is envisioned that the annotated examples of student work, may help to to clarify their meaning and interpretation for teachers and students.

**Subject Departments:** Features of quality may support teacher's collaboration and reflection on the progress of their students and the effectiveness of the planning of units of learning.

##### After the Classroom-Based Assessments:

**Teachers:** use the Features of Quality to award their provisional descriptors to students work. The provisional judgements may be modified considering insights gained from the professional discourse during the SLAR. When reporting to student and parents the final CBA Descriptor awarded to the work, teachers may find the Features of Quality useful to support formative feedback to prompt student reflection and future learning.

**Students:** may refer to the Features of Quality when reflecting on the final descriptor awarded to their work on the History CBA and as prompt for future learning.

**Subject departments:** Features of Quality may be referenced to support reflection on the teaching and learning experience of the CBAs and to adapt and modify collaborative plans to support CBAs.

## 5. Why are Features of Quality used?

Features of Quality are used to support the awarding of descriptors to students work (Display and/or Written Record) in CBAs. The provision of Features of Quality set by the NCCA for each of the history CBAs enables teachers to reach consistency in their judgements of their students work.

Features of Quality support the formative assessment value of CBAs, by supporting the provision of feedback to students. Features of Quality provide terms of reference for teachers discourse which supports the making professional judgements in relation to the awarding of *Descriptors* when reviewing student work during *Subject Learning Assessment Review* (SLAR) meetings.

### 1 H: How

#### 1. How are the features of quality applied?

The application of Features of Quality to students work in CBAs and the subsequent attribution of the Descriptors does not follow any particular distribution pattern. The student work is being assessed in relation to how it shows evidence of the Features Quality and not in relation to the work of other students.

#### Provisional application (Before the Subject Learning Assessment Review)

The teacher uses the features of quality to award the student work a provisional descriptor. This is achieved using an 'on balance' judgement approach. This approach is achieved by the teacher starting their assessment by applying the Features of Quality for work that would be described as *Yet to meet expectations*. They move through the levels until they reach the descriptor, they feel best describes the work. The teacher using these provisional assessment selects pieces of work to bring to the SLAR meeting. Teachers are encouraged to select a piece that represents each of the descriptors – where feasible.

#### During the SLAR meeting:

The facilitator of the SLAR meeting supports the application of the Features of Quality to the samples of student work during the review of the provisional assessments. The focus of the professional discourse between teachers will be on gaining consensus of on how well students' work matches the Features of Quality and building a common understanding on the quality of students' work. Teachers share their professional 'on balance' judgements of student work with their colleagues to establish a consensus in relation to standards. If during the review meeting, there is a lack of consensus the 'best fit' approach is adopted. Through discussion, the teachers review the piece of work and look for evidence that matches all or nearly all of the Features of Quality associated with a particular descriptor. The explanation of each of the descriptors informs the professional judgements of the teachers in a SLAR meeting. The descriptor recommended for the work should be the one that 'best fit and on balance' matches the work being assessed.

#### Awarding of final Descriptors:

Following the SLAR meeting, teachers may revise the provisional descriptors allocated to the student work in light of the insights gained through professional discourse. They may wish to revisit their application of the Features of Quality before reporting and recording of the final descriptor to the students work.