ACORNS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Reviewed: April 2022

Abstract

Purposeful assessment has the potential to inform teaching and learning positively as well as provide feedback on achievement against set standards and performances. At AIS we aim to assess in ways that meet both of these needs.

Reviewed by:

Rachelle Hale
Head of Learner Support Services and PYP Curriculum Coordinator
Sam Weavers
MYP Curriculum Coordinator
Kanyesigye Kenneth
DP/A Levels Curriculum Coordinator

Assessment Policy

Assessment lies at the heart of the process of promoting children's learning. It provides a framework within which educational objectives may be set and children's progress expressed and monitored. This should be done in partnership with the learners and parents. At AIS School we believe that assessment provides the basis of informed teaching, helping learners to overcome difficulties and ensuring that teaching builds upon what has been learned. It is also how learners understand what they have achieved and what they need to work on. This policy provides a framework for all examination and assessment testing carried out at AIS.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To raise the standards of achievement throughout the school
- To maintain accurate records of the progress and attainment of individual learners and cohorts
- To ensure consistency in assessing achievement and identifying achievable and challenging targets for each learner
- To enable the active involvement of learners in their learning
- To enable teachers and other professionals to use assessment judgements to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of individual learners
- To provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their learner's learning
- To provide the information that allows school leaders and governors to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school and to evaluate the school's performance against its previous attainment over time and against national and international benchmarks

Forms of Assessment

At AIS, we use a combination of formative and summative assessment as outlined below:

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning - AfL)

Formative assessment is a powerful way of raising learners' achievement. It is based on the principle that learners will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim.

Formative assessments are used to:

- Identify learner's strengths and gaps in their skills/knowledge
- Identify next steps for learning
- Inform future planning
- Enable appropriate strategies to be employed
- Facilitate the setting of appropriate targets for the class, group, and individual
- Track the learner's rate of progress
- Facilitate evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning

- Inform future teaching and learning strategies
- Identify individuals and groups for specific intervention support

Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning -AoL)

Summative assessment is important for informing both parents and teachers of a learner's attainment and progress. This will also inform the whole school target setting and prediction of a cohort's future attainment, and identify the knowledge acquired during a unit of inquiry.

Summative assessments:

- Recognise the achievements of learners
- Identify attainment through one-off standardised tests at any given point in time
- Record performance in a specific area on a specific date
- Provide age-standardised information
- Provide information about cohort areas of strength and weakness to build from in the future

Self-Assessment and Peer Assessment (Assessment as Learning - AaL)

Wherever possible, children are involved in the assessment of their learning. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning by teaching them to evaluate their achievement against shared learning outcomes. It helps them identify their strengths and areas for improvement. It encourages individual learning goals and action plans for future progression. It fosters a self-reflective learning culture and encourages independence in learning.

Examples:

- Individual pupil target bookmarks for writing and reading
- Individual times table logs
- Pupil Target booklets
- Self-assessing against targets and teacher points for improvement from the previous piece of work
- Homework journal/diaries
- Contributing to their reports

Assessment Practices Across Departments

Assessments at ECDC			
What	**When**	**How**	**Why**
Formative assessment	Ongoing	Teacher observation and recording of feedback against set developmental standards.	For reporting purposes

Assessments at Primary				
What	**When**	**How**	**Why**
Formative assessment	Twice annually	Online MAP Assessments in Term 1 and 3. • PYP 1 and 2 taking Reading and Numeracy • PYP 3 taking Reading, Language Usage, and Numeracy • PYP 4 to 6 taking Reading, Language Usage, Numeracy, and Science	• Reporting purposes • To plan for future instruction • To identify learning needs
	Weekly	Student self-assessment against learning objectives	● Reflective practice ● Tracking and Monitoring
Summative assessment	End of unit summative	Project/performance-based authentic assessments.	● Assessment against essential elements of the curriculum.
	Mid-year/End Year	Internal paper-based assessments across all taught disciplines for all year levels.	● Reporting and recording purposes

Assessments at Secondary				
What	**When**	**How**	**Why**
Formative assessment	Twice-yearly	Online MAP assessments for Math, Language, Reading and Science.	● Reporting purposes ● To identify learning needs and adapt teaching accordingly
	Throughout Units of Inquiry	Practicing the criteria-based skills and gauging progress through the unit	● Reflective practice ● Tacking and Monitoring ● To identify learning needs and adapt teaching accordingly
Summative Assessment	End of unit summative	Project/performance-based authentic assessments scored against subject-specific criteria	● Assessment against criteria-objectives unique for each subject
	End of Term 1 and 3 assessments	Internal assessments across all subjects for all year levels.	● Reporting and recording purposes
Mocks	February	Internal assessments candidate classes MYP5, AS, A2, DP2 across all subjects	● Reporting and recording purposes

			● Guidance on how to prepare for final exams
Curriculum Specific	April/May	MYP5 eAssessments, DP2. AS and A-Levels externally set and externally marked examinations	● Reporting and recording purposes ● Benchmarked summary of achievement ● Requirement for graduating with curriculum credential

Homework as Assessment

Homework provides multiple opportunities to inform learning in the classroom and also provide feedback to teachers and parents on student understanding of taught concepts. At AIS, home tasks are designed as;

- A review, extension or application of tasks associated with classroom activities and curriculum areas.
- Collection/research of materials and/or information for use in class.
- Student reflections related to the essential elements of the curriculum.
- Continuation of classroom work, projects and assignements, essays and research.

A homework timetable is followed to ensure workload and deadlines are managed effectively.

Planning for Assessment

- The International Baccalaureate *Standards and Practices* is our guiding document. This programme provides us with the framework to ensure breadth and balance in our curriculum.
- Assessments should be planned with a clear purpose; the test items or performances should be designed with a clear purpose; assessment of learning or assessment for learning.
- Lessons are planned in line with learning objectives, based upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each learner. We strive to ensure all tasks set are appropriate to each learner's level of ability. The format of our lesson plans ensures that our lessons are planned in detail, taking into account the needs of all learners.
- Teachers use focused marking to assess learners' progress against the planned learning objectives and set next steps to show where the learner is in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim. Teachers use this information when planning for subsequent lessons.

Administering, Recording, Tracking and Monitoring

- All incoming students from PYP1 onwards are individually assessed upon joining AIS. We use MAP assessments - an online adaptive test used to assess proficiency in Math, Reading, Language and Science. Incoming students will take the screening tests for Math and Reading - results of which will be assessed against the norm performance standards established from years of testing at AIS. The results of these tests are used to set targets against which individual progress can be monitored. The diagnostic nature of these assessments also allows for those requiring intervention to be identified and appropriate learning support to be put in place.
- Teachers use assessment for learning (AfL) to provide on-going assessment, through the use of focused marking and/or observations of children's work against learning objectives and success criteria. This information is then used to assess progress towards meeting learning targets and give meaningful feedback on next step targets for each learner.
- Students will use teacher-designed or school templates for tracking and monitoring as a process of self-assessing against set standards and performances for the term. Student-led conferences will be organized around these self-assessments.
- Annotated plans and planning notes made by class teachers and other adults involved with each learner record other important information about the progress of learners in the class; this includes an individual cumulative ePortfolio of every learner. Learners, parents and teachers contribute towards the portfolio which follows the student throughout their time at AIS.
- Learners with identified Special Educational Needs and those learners not making expected progress are supported appropriately and their needs assessed regularly in line with their IEPs (Individualised Education Programmes)
- There are no formal examinations in the Early Childhood Years, however, student progress is monitored, recorded and reported against set standards of attainment.
- Learners from PYP1 are formally assessed for reporting at the end of term two and three where testing is carried out in all major disciplines, including French, Kiswahili and ICT.
- It is the policy of AIS to NOT rank its students based on academic performance since assessments are designed to identify individual student progress and recognise and celebrate the achievements of individual learners.

Other forms of assessment data gathering include but are not limited to:

- **Benchmarks/exemplars:** Benchmarks are student samples that are used as a concrete standard to judge other student work.
- **Rubrics:** Students are evaluated against a list of expectations, attributes, or elements that should be present in student work/performance.
- **Anecdotal Records:** Teachers take brief, written notes based on observations.
- **Continuums:** A continuum shows where a student falls in a given developmental stage of learning.

Standardization of Scores

Standardization is the process by which teachers at AIS share their expectations and understanding of common criteria and standards with each other in order to improve the consistency of their decisions about student learning.

Standardization helps teachers to increase the reliability and consistency of the assessment information that they gather so that it can be used to guide and improve teaching practices and enhance student learning.

Standardization serves to ensure that teachers are accountable for accurate and consistent assessment of student work.

Internal Standardization

Internal Standardization is the process by which the assessments of a teacher are quality assured by another colleague(s) from the same subject or course. It is the process where teachers share their understanding of grading criteria in order to improve the consistency of their assessments across classes and grade level. Internal standardization takes place to ensure that the grading process is uniform and shares a consistent interpretation of the criteria of the International Baccalaureate MYP and DP.

There are two types of Internal Standardization:

Teacher to Teacher Standardization

- Teachers will arrange a face-to-face meeting to share a range of assessments that have been completed by their students.
- Copies of the work, devoid of comments and grades, will be brought to the standardization meeting by the teachers involved.
- The sample of assessments must be reflective of the grade ranges produced by the students during this assessment task.
- The standardizing teachers will use the appropriate rubric to grade the assessment tasks previously graded by their colleagues, and compare grades. It is important that none of the moderators are aware of prior grades awarded during the standardization process or awarded by others participating in the standardization process.
- A discussion will then take place on the results of the standardization
- The entire process should transpire prior to the grades being published to students and formally documented.

Please note that if a course is delivered by a single teacher it is the expectation that the grading of assessments is still standardized according to the above protocols by cross marking by a colleague from another subject.

Student-to-Student Standardisation

Teachers empower students to grade their peers' work using the same process detailed above. Please note that Student-to-Student Standardization does not need to adhere to the final bullet point of Teacher to Teacher Standardization.

For student-to-student standardization to be successful, it is important that students are:

- taught how to use criteria referencing
- guided carefully through the criteria
- provided with the guidelines for a best fit approach to criteria
- coached on the use and definitions of wording used in the criteria descriptors

Student-to-Student Standardization is an important student-centred tool for learning. Teachers guide the standardization between students and help them to develop their understanding of the assessment criteria and expectations.

Student-to-Student Standardization has a direct, positive impact on teaching and learning as both teacher and student develop shared expectations and understanding of what quality work looks like and what criteria define it. Both students' and teachers' assessment capability can be powerfully enriched.

Standardization of Assessments

At AIS each course within a subject is required to set a minimum of two assessments for each learning unit, one formative and one summative. Teachers will use the Teacher to Teacher Standardization method to internally standardize at least one assessment per term.

Standardization of Personal Projects

1. All performances will be recorded by the supervisor assigned to that student
2. All project material, built or created, will be submitted to the supervisor assigned to that student
3. All project reports will be submitted to the supervisor assigned to that student
4. All final scores will be reported by the Personal Project Coordinator only when all standardization exercises are completed and no inconsistencies are present.

Assessment Teacher groups will be preselected by the Personal Project Coordinator. After the supervisor has submitted the first set of marks to the Personal Project Coordinator, (s)he will then give the student projects to the preselected teacher groups to assess the projects for the second set of marks.

If inconsistencies are found, the Personal Project Coordinator will assess the project in question and report the findings to the MYP Coordinator.

The Benefits of Standardization for Teachers

Making reliable and valid decisions across different points in the learning process is important, particularly when teachers teach common courses, publish learning updates and evaluations on student progress, or compare cohort data with historical information.

Standardization ensures that teachers make consistent grading decisions over time.

Consistent and secure standardization protocols used over time can prevent unreliability in grading in a number of ways:

- Applying the same standardized protocols ensures consistency across the Secondary Department
- Allowing the creation of sets of exemplars that can become external references used each year for benchmarking different levels of student achievement
- Using the exemplars for teaching purposes with the students
- Sharing the exemplars with new teachers so they can quickly acclimatize themselves to the teaching standards within the school.

_____

Teachers change over time, but the standard and consistency of assessment must remain consistent if transcripts and school reports are to remain valid.

Reporting on Assessment

- **Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Conferences provide an opportunity for the school, teachers, students and parents to discuss student learning and development. AIS has set aside three official conference periods per the calendar year; 3-way conferences in Term One, student-led conference in Term Two and parent-teacher conferences in Term Three. Additional conferences can be set up at any time in consultation with parents, teachers, or the school administration. Communication between all stakeholders is crucial to building an open relationship that will enhance student achievement.
- **ManageBac**: The Secondary Department uses the online curriculum software to feedback with parents and with students on how their units of work and tasks are progressing. This kind of transparency, where everyone can see progress clearly being made, individually and through the developments of units of work, is important in getting students to take responsibility for their own schooling.
- **Written Report:** The purpose of reporting is to provide quality feedback to all stakeholders. Teachers complete and send out the AIS termly report during all conferences reporting on the overall performance of the student against set expectations. Guidelines on report comments are included at the end of this policy document.
- **Portfolios:** All students fromPYP1 will develop a portfolio that will demonstrate student learning, growth, creativity, and reflections. Portfolios will move with students across year levels.
- **Collection/Recording:** Each year level teacher will provide to the Curriculum Coordinator evidence of assessment of essential elements of the curriculum for each Unit of Inquiry, and where applicable, rubrics or performance standards against which students will be evaluated.
- **Accessibility:** Student portfolios will be accessible to students, teachers, staff members, authorized school visitors or parents. Internal paper-based assessments will be kept separately from the student portfolios and will only be accessible to the student, teacher, and/or staff member who works with that student, parent, and school administration.

Reviewed by:

Rachelle Hale –PYP Curriculum Coordinator & Head of Learner Support Services

Sam Weavers – MYP Curriculum Coordinator

Kenneth Kanyesigye – DP/A Levels Curriculum Coordinator

Date of Review: April 2022

Next Review Due: August 2024