

# **GERMAN EMBASSY SCHOOL TEHRAN**

## **INTERNATIONAL SECTION**

### **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

Last modified September 2017





## **Introduction**

Assessment is the **gathering and analysis** of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at various stages in the learning process.

It is the means by which we analyze student learning and the effectiveness of our teaching and it acts as a foundation on which to base our future planning and practice. It is central to our goal of guiding the child, from novice to expert, through the learning process. (Primary Years Program Assessment Handbook, January 2000. International Baccalaureate Organization)

At the International Section of German Embassy School Tehran we believe assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

- the acquisition of knowledge
- the understanding of concepts
- the mastering of skills
- the development of attitudes
- the decisions to take action

The International Section's approach to assessment recognizes the importance of assessing the process of teaching and learning as well as the products of teaching and learning. The main aim of assessment is to provide feedback on the learning process and the development of the five essential elements to inform further learning.

The assessment component in the school's curriculum can itself be subdivided into three closely related areas.

- Assessing – how we discover what the students know and have learned
- Recording – how we choose to collect and analyze data
- Reporting – how we choose to communicate information

## **Values and Beliefs:**

- Every student is a complex individual with a broad spectrum of abilities, skills and knowledge.
- Assessment shall consider a wide range of relevant performance information, formal and informal, formative and summative.
- Assessment shall be based on valid standards such as grade level expectations and/or appropriate reference groups.
- Assessment shall be systematically linked to analyses of teacher and school performance and instructional improvement.
- Assessment data shall be communicated to students, parents, and community on a timely basis.
- The teaching/learning cycle begins with assessment and that assessment is on-going.





- Assessments should be as authentic as possible.

### **Purpose of Assessment**

The purposes of assessment are the following:

To promote student learning and growth by:

- Assessing prior knowledge
- Planning the learning process to meet individual or group needs
- Making decisions about subsequent teaching and learning practices
- Engaging students in assessment and reflection on their learning
- Celebrating what students can do

To provide information on student learning by:

- Assessing a student's acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes
- Collecting examples of work and performance and action being taken
- Interpreting statistics based on standards, benchmarks and /or rubrics
- Studying and analyzing results
- Utilizing a variety of tools and strategies

To contribute to the effectiveness of the program by:

- Matching student performance to the school's standards and expectations
- Comparing results of different classes or groups
- Informing stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, other institutions...
- Reviewing the curriculum and instructional practices in light of students' performance

### **Characteristics of effective assessments:**

The following criteria for effective assessments are applicable to both formative and summative assessment.

Effective assessments allow students to:

- Share their learning and understanding with others
- Demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- Use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- Know and understand in advance the criteria for producing quality work
- Participate in reflection, self-assessment and peer assessment



- Base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to future inquiries
- Analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved
- Allow children to synthesize and apply their learning
- Express different points of view and interpretation

Effective assessments allow teachers to:

- Inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- Plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- Develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- Gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- Provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community
- Collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- Take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- Use scoring that is both analytical (separate scores of different aspects of the work) and holistic (single scores)
- Analyze assessment data in order to evaluate and modify the program
- Identify what is worth knowing and assess it

Effective assessments allow parents to:

- See evidence of student learning and development
- Develop an understanding of the student's progress
- Provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning

### **Establishing essential agreements- When and How to Assess**

It is essential that the school establishes essential agreements for assessment that are in alignment with the school policy. Essential agreements should be reached collaboratively and should be few in number, concisely written, refer to how something is done, be binding to all teachers and reviewed regularly.

### **Strategies and tools**

Assessment of students should be formative and summative.

**Summative Assessment** aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned.



**Formative Assessment** provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. This helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success.

Strategies:

- **Observations:** All students are observed regularly with a focus on the individual, the group, and/or the whole class.
- **Performance Assessments:** Students are presented with a task that represents the kind of challenges that adults face in the world beyond the classroom. It requires using a repertoire of knowledge and skills to accomplish a goal or solve an open-ended problem. In addition, it entails the thoughtful application of knowledge rather than recalling facts. It has an identified purpose or audience, involves a realistic scenario, it has an established criteria and requires developing an authentic product or performance.
- **Trans disciplinary Skills Assessments** (Research, Thinking, Communication, Self-Management and Social Skills): The focus is on the process and skill application rather than on the product. These skills are regularly observed in real contexts using checklists and anecdotal records.
- **Open-Ended Assessments:** Students are presented with a challenge and asked to provide an original response.
- **Selected Response Assessments** (Tests/Quizzes): These single-occasion assessments provide a snapshot of students' specific knowledge.
- **Portfolios:** An ongoing, purposeful collection is composed of selected student work and is designed to demonstrate growth, creativity, and reflection.

Tools:

- **Anecdotal Records:** Anecdotal records are used to record specific observations of individual student behaviors, skills and attitudes. They are brief, written notes based on observations of students. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.
- **Exemplars:** samples of assessments. These are samples of student's work that serve as concrete standards against which other examples are judged.
- **Checklists:** These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present.
- **Continuums:** These are visual presentations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.
- **Rubrics:** Rubrics are established sets of criteria used for scoring or rating student's tests, portfolios or performances. The descriptors tell the student and the assessor what



characteristics or signs to look for and how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as teachers.

## **Reporting**

Reporting on assessment at the International Section of German Embassy School includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting involves parents, students and teachers as partners and is honest, comprehensive and understandable to all parties.

Reporting to parents, students and teachers occurs through:

- Parent- Teacher Conferences
- Student led conferences; “Student-led conferences involve the student and the parents. The students are responsible for leading the conference, and also take responsibility for their learning by sharing the process with their parent. The conference involves the student discussing and reflecting upon samples of work that they have previously chosen to share with their parents. These samples have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher, and could be from the student’s portfolio.” (*Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, 2009*)
- Three way conferences: A Three Way Conference actively involves parents, students and teachers in reflecting on student achievement, discussing work samples and setting future learning goals.
- The written report; twice a year
- The Portfolio
- The Exhibition: once a year in IS 5