

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Purpose

This policy outlines our commitment to assessment and sharing tasks and assessment frameworks with the community so all stakeholders are clear about the task being set and the mode of assessment and the way the task will be graded for the programme being taught. We aim to make the role of all stakeholders clear and be transparent in our approach.

Rationale

We believe assessment at Nexus International School (Singapore) is used to take a snapshot of progress against a specific set of criteria at that moment in time. The outcome of this does not define who a child is as a learner but where they are in their learning journey.

Assessment Philosophy

Nexus embraces the IB rationale that the purpose of assessment is to inform learning and teaching. It involves the gathering and analysis of information about learner learning to inform teaching practice. It identifies what learners know, understand and can do at different stages in the learning process.

As Vygotsky shared, the teacher is seen as a supporter rather than a director of learning and should make use of assessment tasks and instruments that help the learner work in the “zone of proximal development”. This is the range of achievement between what the learner can do on his/her own, and what the learner can do with the support of the teacher.

Rights and Responsibilities

Leaders will

- Raise awareness of this policy in the community to ensure it is implemented consistently, evaluated and reviewed on a biennial basis.
- Provide training and support for all staff to assess the programmes they teach.
- Ensuring effective assessment approaches within programmes.
- Maintain robust internal quality assurance processes through Teacher Professional Assurance and Teacher Professional Enhancement processes and Learning Walks.
- Ensure staff conduct assessments fairly with appropriate levels of control for external qualifications.
- Provide meaningful collaboration time where teachers can moderate and standardise assessment.
- Share progress information with families at regular intervals.
- Be responsible for meeting all examination centre and programme requirements and disseminating this to staff.
- Provide more than one opportunity each year for parents to connect with their child’s teachers and discuss progress and engagement.

Staff will

- Provide a variety of formative and summative opportunities for learners to demonstrate learning.

- Administer assessment positively and consistently and not mark punitively.
- Give notice and calendar summative assessments.
- Explain what is required to fulfil the criteria for any assessed piece of work.
- Keep clear and accurate records of learners' progress throughout a programme.
- Grade learners appropriately for each criteria giving credit for what has been achieved.
- Feedback promptly in a constructive and supportive way showing they believe the learner can develop.
- Share academic concerns and recognitions with families as they arise.
- Authenticate learner work using integrity checks where appropriate.

Learners will

- Produce work to the best of their ability in the programme they are studying.
- Use assessments as an opportunity to demonstrate learning and show positively what they have achieved.
- Produce work that is their own and show academic integrity appropriate for their age, both at school and through their home learning.
- Use criteria to identify strengths and areas of development.
- Use feedback constructively to become the best learner they can be.
- Make improvements on a task when invited to do so by their teacher.
- Reflect on and evaluate progress and set goals for improvement.
- Be prepared to discuss their learning and next steps at home and in school.

Parents and Guardians should

- Support their child to learn by engaging with the school and the information provided.
- Work with teachers to support the best interests of their child as a learner.
- Support their child by providing the equipment and environment needed to complete learning at home.
- Contact the class teacher with any concerns they have about their child's learning or progress.
- Support their child to complete work without completing it for them.
- Ensure any external tutoring is working in line with school expectations.
- Ensure all work submitted by their child for external qualifications is genuinely the work of the child and has not been completed by anybody else.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Assessment is ongoing rather than episodic. Teachers provide informal verbal and written feedback throughout the programme of study to guide the learner. This is known as formative assessment and is diagnostic. It is used by the teacher and learners to provide data about the learner's readiness for further learning. If a teacher has concerns about a learner's progress, they share these as they arise.

Assessment tasks are common across groups, and the learners' work is moderated and standardised by the teams teaching them to ensure consistency of feedback. Progress information is shared at regular intervals throughout the programme, and families have an opportunity to discuss progress with teachers in learning conferences. Assessment feedback is used by learners to identify goals and next steps. Assessment data is used by teachers to inform teaching and intervention.

Primary School

It is assumed that the elements of the PYP will be developed over the course of the course. Assessment should effectively guide learners through these different elements of the PYP framework:

- the understanding concepts
- the acquisition of knowledge
- the mastering of approaches to learning
- the decisions to take action as a result of learning

Effective Assessment

The purpose of assessment in the Primary School is to provide feedback on the learning process and the development of the different elements to inform future learning and teaching. As such assessment for learning is the most appropriate approach. Learners, teachers and parents are actively engaged in this process.

Effective assessment that achieves this purpose provides valuable information to understand what constitutes learning and how to support it, and is meaningful to all members of the learning community. (Learning and Teaching, IBO, 2018)

The key characteristics of effective assessment are that it is authentic, clear and specific, varied, developmental, collaborative, interactive, and provides feedback and feed forward information. (Taken from 'Learning and Teaching, IBO, 2018)

The approach to assessment recognises the importance of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the products of inquiry.

The assessment capable teacher needs to consider:

- if the nature of learners' conceptual inquiry develops over time—if they are asking questions of more depth, that are likely to enhance their learning substantially
- if learners are becoming aware that real problems require solutions and they take action accordingly

- if learners are demonstrating mastery of the approaches to learning
- if learners are accumulating a comprehensive knowledge base and can apply their understanding to further their inquiries successfully
- if learners are demonstrating the attributes of the learner profile.

Collecting and Recording Evidence

Teachers will use various tools and strategies to assess learning and progress. Tools may include rubrics, exemplars, checklists, anecdotal records, continuums and standardised tests. Strategies include observations, performance assessments, process-focused assessments, selected responses and open-ended tasks. Details of these may be found under the 'How to Assess' within the Assessment section of the 'Learning and Teaching' document. (IB 2018)

Evidence may include, but is not limited to, videos, audio, photographs and graphic representations. Teachers may also use written records of learner conversations, comments, explanations and hypotheses as well as annotated pieces of learner work that may form part of a learner's portfolio of learning.

The minimum expectations for assessing PYP learners are as follows:

- For each unit of inquiry evidence of learning will be gathered as the unit progresses in line with identified success criteria and using a range of tools and strategies as mentioned above. These success criteria will be co-constructed alongside learners where appropriate and shared with learners/students in order for progress to be visible. Success criteria can take into account the process of learning, knowledge, conceptual understanding, approaches to learning, the attributes of the learner profile and learner initiated action.
- Within 6 weeks of arriving in Kindergarten, learners will be assessed on their understanding of Concepts About Print. This assessment will be repeated at regular intervals through the year until all areas are completed. Concepts About Print will be repeated within 6 weeks of joining Year 1.
- Children in Years 1 (starting as soon as appropriate) to 6 are regularly individually assessed for reading using the PM benchmark assessment tool. As a minimum this takes place in Terms 1, 2 and 3 and 4, but more frequently for learners below age expectations for reading as defined in the Language Arts Scope and Sequence. All learners new to the school in these year groups will be assessed within a month of arriving at the school.
- Children in Nursery (starting Term 3) to Year 2 are regularly individually assessed for phonics using Little Wandle materials. As a minimum this takes place once each term. All learners new to the school in these year groups will be assessed within a month of arriving at the school. In Year 2 this assessment will take place as a minimum in Term 2 and Term 4.
- Children in Years 3 to 6 are regularly individually assessed for word study using Steps Web spelling programme. Initial assessment occurs at the start of the academic year, and continues with ongoing assessments as the learners progress through the programme.
- Writing will be regularly assessed against the expectations in the Language Arts Scope and Sequence and rubric created for the appropriate genres. Writing will be moderated using exemplars developed by the Language Arts team.
- Formative assessment in Mathematics will be carried out regularly using pre and post inquiry

assessments (these may take the form of rich maths tasks, performance tasks or diagnostic interviews). These will be assessed against the expectations in the Mathematics Scope and Sequence.

- Concepts and skills in Music, Visual Arts, PHE and LOTE are regularly assessed against the relevant scope and sequence documents.
- Standardised assessments for Reading and Mathematics will be carried out bi-annually for Years 3 to 6 using an internationally benchmarked assessment tool, Quest Assessment.
- A Cognitive potential assessment will be held in Term 1, for Year 3 & 5 and for any new learner between Year 3-6 using an internationally benchmarked assessment tool, Quest Assessment

Homeroom teachers will be responsible for recording assessment information for all the learners in their class. Specialists will be responsible for all the learners in their groups. The Primary Leadership Team will have access to all assessment information. However to ensure robust conversations and open communication, information is shared widely across the Primary School.

Secondary School

Our ambition is for learners to own their progress.

All teachers are responsible for integrating and explicitly teaching ATL skills in all programmes.

Over time, learners should develop clear and sophisticated understandings of how they learn best and how they can evaluate the effectiveness of their learning. This kind of self-regulated (independent and autonomous) learning helps learners:

- reflect purposefully on their learning (metacognition)
- understand the diversity of learning needs
- evaluate and provide evidence of their learning
- meet subject aims and objectives
- share responsibility for creating productive, cooperative and safe learning environments
- develop the confidence to try new strategies and explore new concepts and contexts for learning
- prepare for further study and responsible participation in local and global communities

Effective Assessment

The purpose of assessment in secondary school is twofold. For formative assessment, the aim is to provide detailed feedback to teachers and their learners on the nature of learners' strengths and areas for development, so this information can be used to inform practice. Summative assessment focuses on measuring **what** the candidate can do, typically to demonstrate the completion of a programme and/or readiness to progress to the next stage of education. Assessment at Nexus is valid, varied, fair, reliable, criterion-based, accessible, and designed to be completed with integrity.

Valid assessment tools means the extent to which assessments measure the stated learning outcomes.

Varied assessment tools means learners can demonstrate their understanding in several ways. (eg written tasks, oral tasks, and through different media)

Fair assessment means that it must not be biased (e.g. gender, ethnicity, etc.) so that all learners have an equal chance of performing well.

Reliable assessment tools mean they are consistent over repeated use or within the same subject group and against the standards of external assessment.

Criterion-based assessment is based upon predetermined criteria that all learners should have access to. The level of learner success in reaching the outcomes and/or criteria is measured in terms of levels of achievement described in each assessment criterion.

- In the MYP, this refers to Criteria A-D, specific to each subject
- In the IGCSE, this refers to the Assessment Objectives specific to each subject
- In the DP, this refers to the subject group [grade descriptors](#)

Accessible in that they give all learners the opportunity to reach all levels of achievement appropriate to the course requirements and or limitations.

With integrity, in that the assessment processes cannot be bypassed or manipulated unfairly. See the **Academic Integrity Policy** for further guidance.

Qualitative teacher judgements on learner progress will be made and recorded termly. These are shared with learners and used to inform approaches to teaching and learning.

Collecting and Recording Evidence

Typically, work will be submitted during timetabled lessons. On occasion, it may be necessary for a deadline to be set outside of the scheduled lessons. On those occasions, the deadline will only be set for a time within the school day. Work should be returned to learners within two weeks and at least one piece of personalised feedback should be given each term. AI should be avoided for this feedback.

Recording of assessment

Teachers will allow sufficient curriculum time for learners to complete tasks, and learners should make every effort to meet deadlines. If an assessment task is not submitted by the due date and no extension is granted, the learner will receive a zero until the work is submitted. Teachers will record this and follow up with interventions as needed, and at the discretion of the Learning Area Leader, may grade work submitted depending on the nature of the task and context of the learner.

Teachers should avoid giving zeros inline with IB/MYP best practice. Extensions may be given in cases of ill health or bereavement, and the learner or their family must seek agreement with the teacher before the deadline. It is appropriate for the families of younger learners to request an extension to a deadline. Older learners should take on this responsibility themselves. In addition to

grading learner work, teachers should record grades in the LMS or departmental gradebooks as required by the Learning Area Leader. Grading should be available to SLT and co-ordinators at any time.

The progress of Secondary learners will be tracked against the Cognitive Abilities Test v. 4 (CAT4). CAT4 is a standardised test of a learner's developed abilities and indicates potential academic attainment. CAT4 will be re-evaluated as learners enter each new programme to ensure learners' cognitive growth is accounted for. This data does not limit the attainment of any learner and is used to initiate conversations around capabilities. CAT4 enables Nexus to personalise tracking of individual learners' progress and identify where provision will be made to further support and challenge learners.

Academic integrity

The learners must ensure that any work they submit for assessment is authentic and that they have followed age-appropriate citation conventions. It is the responsibility of the teacher to use plagiarism software to ensure that academic integrity has not been violated. Software is used to provide authentication of learner work in accordance with our [Academic Integrity Policy](#). All staff are responsible for teaching academic integrity and providing learners with the knowledge needed to abide by the academic integrity policy, including referencing. The Teacher Librarian supports this work. Responses to issues of academic integrity are detailed in our Academic Integrity Policy and it is the teacher and Learning Area Leaders responsibility to check work and ensure it complies with the academic integrity standards required by our examination boards.

Standardisation and Moderation of Assessment

Standardisation is the process by which teachers at NEXUS share their expectations and understanding of common criteria and standards with each other to improve the consistency of their decisions about student learning. [Standardisation](#) helps teachers increase the reliability and consistency of the assessment information they gather so that it can be used to guide and improve teaching practices and enhance learner learning. Standardisation ensures that teachers are accountable for the accurate and consistent assessment of learner work. Teachers change over time, but the standard and consistency of assessment must remain consistent.

The Benefits of Standardisation 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. Standardisation supports teachers to make consistent grading decisions over time. Consistent and secure standardisation protocols used over time can prevent unreliability in grading in a number of ways:

- Applying the same standardised protocols ensures consistency across the Secondary school
- Allowing the creation of exemplars that can become 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 acclimate themselves to the teaching standards within the school.

Internal Moderation is the process by which the assessment judgements of a teacher are quality assured by another colleague(s) from the same subject or course. Teachers share their understanding of grading criteria and examples of work they have assessed to validate their judgments. Internal standardisation ensures that the grading process is uniform and shares a consistent interpretation of the IGCSE, International Baccalaureate MYP and DP criteria. The learning area keeps records of standardisation processes and examples of work at different levels to support future standardisation. Evidence of internal moderation for externally assessed work at IBDP needs to be accessible to the IBDP coordinator and SLT.

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

Nexus is offering a three-year MYP programme for years 7 to 9. This programme culminates with a Community Project. Nexus follows the International Baccalaureate grading system for the MYP subjects and Community Project.

There are three aspects of developing an MYP unit: establishing the purpose of the unit; defining the process of teaching and learning through inquiry; and reflecting on the planning, process and impact of the inquiry. These aspects are developed by placing elements of “backwards planning” (Wiggins and McTighe 2005) in an MYP context. The relationship between these aspects of teaching and learning is dynamic, and any aspect might provide the point from which teachers begin their planning. In curriculum planning, teachers often move between inquiry, action, and reflection; these inquiry-based aspects of curriculum planning are iterative and interrelated rather than strictly linear.

MYP Assessment Procedures

In the MYP, teachers make decisions about student achievement using their professional judgment, guided by mandated criteria that are public, known in advance and precise, ensuring that assessment is transparent. Teachers are required to devise various valid assessment tasks that will allow learners to show clearly what they know and can achieve.

Valid assessment tasks must address at least one MYP objective and in using the appropriate criteria allow all learners access to all levels of achievement. Teachers use descriptors to identify learners’ achievement levels against established assessment criteria. MYP summative assessment uses a “best-fit” approach in which teachers work together to establish common standards against which they evaluate each learner’s achievement holistically (Principles to Practice 2014).

Teachers are expected to plan for assessment of learning during the initial stages of developing the unit of work. Students must be able to recall, adapt and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts. Students need to understand assessment expectations, standards and practices, which teachers can introduce early and naturally in teaching, as well as in class and homework activities. Where appropriate, teachers endeavour to use the MYP command terms when designing assessments. MYP assessment criteria should be accompanied by Task-Specific Clarifications (TSCs) to support the learner in understanding how the learning can be demonstrated through this particular task.

Formative assessment is characterised by the teacher continuously monitoring a learner's readiness, skill development, and concept understanding to continually inform his/her teaching and planning. It is drawn from a range of assessment activities, including the use of assessment descriptors, self-evaluation, peer assessment, and developmental portfolios. To support this process, formative assessment will be intentionally planned into units of inquiry.

Home learning is an integral part of formative assessment practices. It is seen as a meaningful vehicle for developing wider ATL skills and, as such, should be designed to reinforce classroom learning.

Summative assessment occurs at the end of a specific teaching period and is the culmination of skills and knowledge learnt in a particular topic. It is designed to provide evidence for evaluating student achievement using the required MYP subject-group-specific assessment criteria. Summative assessments should be completed during class time.

Summative and formative assessments are closely linked, and teachers must use their knowledge of IB assessment expectations and practices to help learners improve performance through consistent, timely and meaningful feedback.

Reporting MYP Assessment

Each [subject area](#) has four assessment criteria, each marked out of 8. The scores for each criterion are then added to arrive at the learner's final achievement level for each subject. MYP grades range from 7 (high) to 1 (low) using the IB general grade descriptors in Principles into Practice (p.92-95).

For MYP, we report criteria grades against the rubric as they occur. Subject groups must assess each criterion once per semester and at least twice yearly. An indicative MYP grade is derived from the four criteria in semester one, while the final MYP grade for the year is calculated at the conclusion of semester two. In preparation for semester reports, teachers are required to inform parents of the learner's achievement level in each criterion within the 8 MYP subject groups.

To determine a level of achievement for specific criteria, teachers must gather sufficient evidence to determine whether a learner is working at a descriptor's lower or higher end. Achievement levels are described as a whole number, and the final level of achievement determined for the End of Year Report is NOT an average of the achievement levels recorded over the year. The final level of achievement is based on the teacher's professional and informed judgement of the learner's performance, reflecting the level descriptors for each criterion. Once the level of achievement has been determined for each criterion, the final levels achieved are summed, and the total is applied to a set of grade boundaries. (see relevant section of the MYP coordinators handbook for grade boundaries)

The learner portfolio provides evidence of each learner's learning journey and is central to the parent, teacher, and learner conference. Where more than one teacher is teaching the same subject or subject group, the process of internal standardisation will take place regularly throughout the year before levels of achievement are awarded and reported to parents.

Tasks	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Research Project	6	5	5	
Posters	7		6	
Timeline				7
Oral Presentation		7		6
Test	6			8
Final levels	6	6	6	7
Criteria level total		/32	Final Subject Grade	6

Final Subject Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Boundaries	1-5	6-9	10-14	15-18	19-23	24-27	28-32

MYP Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor
7	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.
6	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
5	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
4	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.

3	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
2	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
1	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.

IGCSE

For IGCSE we use Edexcel and CIE as awarding bodies. Each subject is awarded a grade separately. CAIE award grades A*-G and Edexcel award grades 1-9.

CAIE and Edexcel use different grading systems for IGCSE

CAIE	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	
EdExcel	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U

Where there is more than one teacher teaching the same subject or subject group, the process of internal standardization will take place regularly throughout the year and before levels of achievement are awarded and reported to parents.

IB Diploma Programme (DP) and IB Courses

Nexus follows the International Baccalaureate grading system for the Courses and IB Diploma Programmes. This is a criteria-referenced scale ranging from 7 (high) to 1 (low). Each subject area has [published grade descriptors](#) from IB and these are expected to form the basis for any grades that are awarded. The IBDP coordinator will work with Learning Area Leaders to ensure teams follow this policy with the outcome that:

- Assessments are designed in line with IB criteria/requirements
- DP assessments are assessed against published criteria / previous grade boundaries
- IB Markschemes/rubrics are used where possible
- Termly reports use IB grades, using IB grade descriptors
- The full range of grades are accessible for the whole 2 years in all assessments
- DP assessment criteria are known and understood by the community
- Internal assessments are internally moderated

- Trial exams are run twice over the 2 years
- Predicted grades are based on a comprehensive range of evidence, not single assessments. They are produced consistently and fairly and are used to inform learners and learning
- Learners will produce work that is their own and show academic integrity appropriate for their age, both at school and through their home learning.
- The process of internal standardization will take place regularly throughout the year and before levels of achievement are awarded and reported to parents.

REVIEW AND REVISION

This policy will be reviewed once every two (02) years or as required to reflect updates to the relevant legislations, Taylor's Schools group policies or internal school governance standards where applicable