

Manaret Heliopolis International School

MHIS Assessment Policy



Manaret Heliopolis
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

We, at the MHIS, understand that effective assessments improve and encourage student learning by providing effective feedback on the learning process and outcomes, assess student understanding, knowledge and skills, and engage them in the reflection of their learning. We realize that the assessment is a continuous, on-going process which is directly related to learning outcomes/curriculum standards.

We believe that assessment should include all PYP elements: skills, attitudes, knowledge, concepts, and actions, cover a broad spectrum of understanding, knowledge and skills, be clear, concise and as culturally neutral as possible. The assessment should be modified or accommodated to suit different learning needs and styles and authentic to the task undertaken.

MHIS PERSPECTIVE ON THE ESSENTIAL

COMPONENTS OF ASSESSMENT

1. Planning – how the school plans to incorporate assessment into the long range curriculum overview plans, unit plans and daily teaching program.
2. Evidence – how teachers discover what children have learned.
3. Feedback/Reflection – how students know how to improve.
4. Recording – how teachers record the evidence of learning.
5. Reporting - how teachers communicate recorded evidence to students, parents, teachers and external organizations.
6. Evaluation – how teachers judge the evidence of learning based on assessment data.

Looking at each area in more detail:

1. PLANNING

As the teaching program is designed, assessments should be designed concurrently. Assessments should be diagnostic, formative and summative and viewed as authentic, essential, rich, engaging and feasible, allowing the student to become part of the process.

Good assessment practice requires the teacher to build assessment in from the earliest stages of curriculum planning and link assessment tasks to the central idea of the unit under study or the curriculum learning outcome. The quality of any assessment depends first and foremost on the clarity and appropriateness of the purpose. With these outcomes, central ideas and assessment tasks in mind, activities and resources can then be selected.

Steps to assessment tasks:

- define outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes)
- design the task (what the teacher will hear and see the student doing that will convince the teacher that they know/ can perform with knowledge)
- set up criteria for success and present to students prior to task.

Designing assessment

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic Assessment occurs at the beginning of the teaching/learning cycle. This type of assessment will provide the teacher with an understanding of the prior knowledge and skills a student brings to a unit, as well as the strengths and specific learning needs of an individual or groups of students in relation to the expectations that will be taught.

Diagnostic assessment is conducted prior to and during teaching and learning to determine:

- *what existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests, and/or needs the student has*
- *the range of individual differences existing knowledge, skills, and attitudes*
- *what program plans and/or modifications are required to meet the needs of individuals or groups of students.*

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment allows the teacher to evaluate student understanding as well as instructional practices throughout the learning experiences during an instructional unit. This type of assessment allows for differentiation beginning with assessing the student's prior knowledge. With this information, teachers plan learning experiences that continue to foster student inquiry. Formative assessments are interwoven throughout learning experiences in order for both teachers and students to reflect on the student's understanding of the concepts and provide feedback.

Assessments could include but are not limited to:

- *Observations*

Observations allow teachers to evaluate specific behaviors as they pertain to learning. Teachers focus on one particular skill or concept and are often accompanied by a checklist or recording sheet in order to provide feedback.

- *Open-ended tasks*

An assessment where students create or respond to a problem or prompt where there are multiple correct answers.

- *Selected Responses*

Assessments including binary choice items (true/false), matching items and/or multiple choices in which one correct answer is required. These assessments are typically focused on a particular concept and/or unit of study. District assessments are also an example of selected response assessments.

- *State mandated tests*

The national assessment policy is assigned by the Egyptian Ministry of Education and applies to Religion and Arabic only. The students are assessed through both summative and formative assessments. Four summative assessments each year are represented by fifty percent of the whole grade. Formative assessment represents the other fifty percent in which students are assessed through oral quizzes, written quizzes and classroom activities.

Assessment tools used

- *Rubrics*

A rubric is a scoring tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, projects, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, etc. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts, or both.

- *Exemplars*

Exemplars are examples of the quality work that is expected of students. These could demonstrate what is required to achieve the highest score on a rubric. Exemplars offer open-ended performance tasks that encourage student's thinking.

Standards based rubrics are exemplars that focus on processes and communication and annotated anchor papers are exemplars that accompany problem solving tasks. Exemplars also offer differentiated problem solving.

- *Checklists*

Checklists are customized steps to help students reach larger learning goals. They create observable evidence of learning and clarify what students know and don't know. Checklists focus learning and help support students as they work toward specific learning. They help students synthesize knowledge and meaning and are building blocks that enable students to work through difficult concepts or processes to reach predetermined learning goals. Checklists are pathways that lead to depth and clarity in learning.

- *Anecdotal records*

Anecdotal records are notes recorded by the classroom teacher to adjust the instruction accordingly. These notes serve to document and describe student learning relative to concept development, reading, social interaction, communication skills, etc. Anecdotal records focus in on specific learning outcomes and are recorded frequently. Information about strengths and weaknesses are included and notes are recorded at various times to get a complete profile of learning.

- *Continuums*

A continuum reflects a progression of skills that are needed for all learners to be successful. Continuums are developed to provide teachers with a way of looking at what children can actually do and how they can do it, in order to inform planning for further development. Continuums make explicit some of the indicators, or descriptors of behavior, that will help teachers identify how children are constructing and communicating meaning of the specific subject or task.

Continuums can also aid communication with parents by helping teachers share specific information about what their child can do.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessments take place at the end of the teaching and learning process and gives the students the opportunity to demonstrate what has been learned over a period of time and give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned or how they have grown with regards to the knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes, and allow students to take action upon what they have learned in the unit.

Summative Assessment occurs at the conclusion of a particular unit and the central idea is the focus of these assessments and both teachers and students play an integral part in the creation and reflection of these types of assessments and their rubrics.

Summative assessments may include but are not limited to: acquisition of data, synthesis of information and application of knowledge.

Examples of summative assessments in an IB classroom:

- performance assessments:
 - *multimedia presentation of findings*
 - *creative presentation of information*
 - *oral presentation to class*
- *producing a model*
- *project*
- *argumentative/persuasive essay*

2. EVIDENCE

Assessment should be seen as a process that occurs throughout the learning process. To that end assessing a student's prior knowledge and experiences is vital to determining where to begin the journey of learning. At various points in this journey, assessment helps keep track of where the students are, and how teachers need to adjust the course to ensure students reach the intended learning outcomes.

Information about student learning should be obtained from a variety of measures including (but not exclusively):

- in-class formative and summative assessments
- comparisons of work against explicit rubrics and exemplars
- measures of work against external benchmarks and/or personal targets
- reviews of external assessment results

3. FEEDBACK/REFLECTION

Students should be given feedback in relation to a stated learning outcome as well as given advice on how to obtain this outcome. Feedback is given on the work submitted as well as during the process of achieving this. Feedback should be shared in a timely manner and could be oral, written or electronic.

Students' involvement:

- the peer reflection of each other's work
- the redrafting of work submitted in response to feedback given
- self-assessment - a tool to encourage students to reflect on their own learning

All of the above enable students to learn through the assessment process.

4. RECORDING

Through our recording practices, we provide a holistic view of each student. We strive to ensure that our recording practices are both fair and helpful for parents and students.

Grading or Scores Grades are not given in the primary years, although levels using rubrics may be assigned by teachers, students, or peers.

Terminology School progress reports identify student performance as:

Extending (4): Exceeds expectations for current grade level.

Student demonstrates a consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them **almost faultlessly** in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analyses, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight in **work of high quality**.

Applying (3): The student has acquired grade level essential skills and knowledge and developed conceptual understanding in this area.

Student demonstrates a **good general understanding** of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in variety of situations. The student **generally** shows evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate and **occasionally** demonstrate originality and insight.

Developing (2): The student is working towards acquiring grade level essential skills and knowledge and developing conceptual understanding in this area.

The student demonstrates a **limited achievement** against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some area. The student demonstrates **limited** understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in **normal** situations.

Emerging (1): The student has not yet acquired grade level essential skills and knowledge or developed conceptual understanding in this area. The student demonstrates **minimal** achievement against all the objectives. Has difficulties in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, **even with support**.

5. REPORTING

Methods for reporting include:

- *PYP Essential Elements Report*
- *Conferences:*
 - *Parent- teacher conference*
 - *Student led conference*
- *Portfolios*
- *Learning outcomes*

6. EVALUATION

Analysis of the data from reporting can reveal trends in student performance that can be followed up on. When picked up quickly, this encourages students to adapt their learning behaviors to more effective ones. Engaging students in a reflection on their learning or performance can help them to set meaningful goals to support their own progress.

Assessment should not only be used to assess the student but also to assess the curriculum. The same measures indicated above can be used to assess overall student performance in relation to either the specified learning outcomes of the program, or between other groupings (both internally and externally).

The use of the results of assessment as an instrument to better understand how to improve pedagogical instruction is included in “Teachers’ assessment strategies and expectation” document.

Assessment Policy Review Cycle

This Assessment Policy reflects current practice in the school. We acknowledge the fact that assessment practices do change over time. The next review of the policy will take place in August 2020.

References:

1. “Making the PYP Happen”
2. Wynne Harlen and Sandra Johnson “A review of current thinking and practices in assessment in relation to the Primary Years Programme”
<http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/ib-research/assessmentinthepypfinalreport.pdf>