

Assessment Policy

I. Philosophy of Assessment

Saints Coeurs Ain Najm's philosophy of assessment embodies a profound commitment to meaningful learning. We assert that assessment transcends the mere determination of whether students arrive at the "correct answers"; it encompasses a comprehensive understanding of their thought processes, the skills they cultivate throughout their educational journey, and their capacity to apply knowledge in practical contexts. We believe that most valuable attributes of education such as critical thinking, resilience, creativity, and problem-solving are challenging to quantify through traditional assessment methods. Ultimately, this philosophy concedes to “assessment for learning” rather than “assessment of learning.”

II. Alignments with IB standards

This assessment policy is in support of and fully aligned with the philosophy, principles, and standards of the International Baccalaureate, namely the IB Learner Profile and the assessment requirements as described in the DP curriculum guide. Moreover, this policy outlines specific assessment techniques and expectations at the IBDP program level, such as IBDP's internal assessments.

III. Purpose and Scope of Assessment

This assessment policy has been developed to provide a coherent framework within which the Saints Coeurs Ain Nam Assessment Practices for **Lebanese students** will take place. It is intended to make the process of assessment serve the growth of students, develop in them a culture of inquiry, encourage habits of reflection, and be part of the teaching and learning process.

In compliance with the directives of the **Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education**, *History* and *Civics* have been incorporated into the curriculum. Arabic B HL stands as a mandatory subject for students holding the Lebanese passport. These subjects will undergo internal evaluation and grading, with the corresponding results to be submitted to the Ministry of Education for official review and documentation.

The scope of this policy encompasses all types of assessment within the Diploma Program for **Lebanese students**. It includes the different types of assessment, such as diagnostic, formative, and summative, across all subjects.

IV. Principles of Assessment

1. Clarifying Key Terms in Student Evaluation: Test, Examination, and Assessment.

For many people the words “assessment”, “examination” and “test” have a similar meaning and are used somewhat interchangeably. For the purposes of this policy, more specific meanings are necessary and the following will be adopted throughout.

Test: A collection of many short-answer questions (either selected-response/multiple-choice questions or questions requiring only a few words in response) that students must answer under controlled, isolated conditions in a set time. Often marked (or graded) automatically.

Examination: A collection of one or more tasks of various types (short-answer, extended-answer, problem-solving or analytical questions; sometimes practical or oral tasks) that students must respond to under controlled, isolated conditions in a set time. Generally marked/graded by examiner (or rater).

Assessment: A term used to cover all the various methods by which student achievement can be evaluated. Assessment instruments may include tests, examinations, extended practical work, projects, portfolios and oral work, some carried out over a prolonged period and sometimes marked by the student’s teacher.

2. Purposes of Formative and Summative Assessments

Assessment can be used for a variety of purposes.

The intended purpose for a given system of assessment will have a major impact on its style and format.

- **Diagnostic Assessment:** Diagnostic assessments are essential tools used at the beginning of a unit of study or course to determine what a student can and cannot do or know. In the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, these assessments help identify students' prior knowledge, skills, and learning needs, enabling teachers to tailor instruction to address individual student requirements effectively. By pinpointing learning gaps early on and providing appropriate support,

diagnostic assessments ensure optimal progress. Additionally, they inform planning and establish a baseline for measuring future growth, ultimately enhancing the overall learning experience.

- **Formative Assessment:** The main purpose of formative assessment is to provide detailed feedback to both teachers and students regarding students' strengths and weaknesses, helping to develop their capabilities. Direct interaction between teacher and student is crucial, with the teacher acting as a supporter rather than a director of learning. Utilizing assessment tasks that align with Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" the range between what students can do independently and with teacher support is essential. This concept parallels "scaffolding," where the teacher provides support while the student constructs their learning.

Formative assessments should be appropriately challenging and adjusted as the student progresses. The focus should be on identifying the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students need to develop, rather than on measuring their achievement levels accurately. Thus, validity is more important than reliability in formative assessment.

- **Summative Assessment:** Summative assessments are the final examination, usually external, and end-of-term projects, reports, and presentations, which are assessed against clearly defined criteria. Summative assessment is used for quite different purposes, including the provision of information about student achievement, the certification and selection of students, an accountability mechanism to evaluate teachers and schools, and a driving force for reform of curriculum.

- **Recording and Reporting Progress**

Student progress is monitored and communicated regularly to ensure clarity and ongoing support. The key components are as follows:

- **Number of Terms:** The academic year is divided into **three terms**.
- **Report Cards:** Students receive **three report cards**, one at the end of each term, providing comprehensive academic feedback.
- **Parent-Teacher Conference:** **One conference** is held during the year to discuss individual progress and address any specific needs.
- **Individual Reflections:** Students complete reflections on their learning throughout the year to encourage self-assessment and goal setting.
- **Communication with Parents:** Updates are shared with parents via **ManageBac** on a regular basis, including assessment results and teacher feedback.

- **Summative Assessments:** Each student completes **three summative assessments per subject**, one at the end of each term, in alignment with Diploma Program requirements.
- **Frequency of Formative and Summative Assessments per Subject in the IB Diploma Programme**

Subject	Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments
Language A (Language & Literature)	Two per term	End-of-term
Language B (Foreign Languages)	Two per term	End-of-term
Mathematics	Two to Four per term	End-of-term
Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)	Two to Three per term	End-of-term
Individuals and Societies (Business)	Bi-weekly tests	End-of-term
The Arts (Visual Arts)	Bi-weekly portfolio reviews	Final exhibition
Theory of Knowledge (TOK)	Monthly tests	TOK Essay
Extended Essay	Monthly feedback	Final extended essay submission (externally assessed)

3. Assessment Models

In order to provide for the formal assessment of the program, assessment models are devised for each level (HL and SL) of each subject and also for each of the core requirements except CAS. Each model will consist of a few different assessment components, usually including a range of different tasks.

- **External Assessment**

The majority of assessment components are examination papers, made up of a wide variety of question types to suit the requirements of the subject. Question types include multiple-choice questions (used in only a small number of papers), short-response questions, structured problem-solving questions, open-ended problem-solving questions, essay questions, data-analysis questions, case studies and commentaries on supplied texts. The examinations are taken under controlled conditions, with student responses being marked externally by independent examiners.

There are other tasks/components undertaken by students, with the guidance of their teachers, over an extended period, which are also externally marked by examiners. These include language A1 world literature assignments, language A2 written tasks, music investigations, theory of knowledge essays and extended essays. The assessment focus for all of these is on the quality of a finished written product, which makes them suitable for external assessment.

The main purpose of external assessment is to review how well the students have mastered the content and skills described in the IB curriculum and to ensure worldwide consistency of assessment standards.

- **Internal Assessment**

Internal assessment is a key component of the Diploma Program (DP), allowing for student work evaluated by teachers and subject to external moderation. It is included in most courses to assess skills not suited for external examinations, such as project work, fieldwork, and laboratory practicals. Internal assessments can take various forms, including oral presentations for language courses and research workbooks in visual arts. For example, the group 4 internal assessment in experimental sciences consists of selected pieces from a portfolio of practical work, accounting for 25% of total teaching time. Internal assessments should be integrated into regular classroom activities, focusing on skills rather than content, and can serve both formative and summative purposes. Teachers may support students during the assessment process, but final submissions must be the student's own work. A fixed set of assessment criteria specific to each course guides the evaluation process, ensuring students understand the expectations. This aligns with the approach for externally marked components, where teachers provide guidance while students complete their work independently.

- **Standardization of Assessment**

For fairness, consistency, and reliability in internal assessment, the school maintains a systematic process respective of teachers' understanding and application of assessment standards.

- 1. Collaborative Standardization Sessions**

- Parallel teachers will meet on a regular basis to mark and discuss students' work.
- These sessions will allow teachers to compare judgments, discuss where there are differences, and reach a common understanding of performance levels.

- 2. Individual Calibration**

- Teachers will acquire example of marked examinations to reflect and compare their own marking with established standards in private.
- This process will help to clarify any discrepancies of interpretation and standardize individual practice against agreed on criteria.

- 3. Cross-School Engagement**

- Teachers will be invited to attend association events, workshops, and subject forums in order to share practices with other school professionals.
- External institutional collaboration will bring in new ideas and help fit into broader educational standards.

V. Assessment's Key Features and Grading References.

The assessment policy in the International Baccalaureate is designed to support and enhance student learning, promoting a comprehensive approach to evaluating students' progress and achievements. It aligns with the IB's philosophy, focusing on developing students' skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities. The policy ensures that assessments are used as tools to guide learning, inform teaching, and help students reflect on their progress.

Key features of the IB assessment policy include:

- **Clarity and Transparency:** Clear and transparent assessment criteria are communicated to students, helping them understand expectations and guiding their learning journey.

- **Holistic Evaluation:** Assessments aim to evaluate students' understanding, critical thinking, creativity, and ability to apply knowledge in real-world contexts, rather than just rote memorization.
- **Formative and Summative Assessments:** The policy emphasizes both formative assessments, which inform ongoing learning, and summative assessments, which evaluate final achievements. A variety of methods are used to assess student progress, including diagnostic, formative, and external assessments.
- **Global Consistency:** Through external assessments and moderation, the IB ensures that assessments are consistent and comparable across schools worldwide, maintaining high standards of academic integrity.
- **Feedback and Reflection:** Continuous feedback is provided to help students reflect on their learning, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for further progress.
- **Focus on Understanding and Skills:** Assessments should focus on students' understanding, critical thinking, and ability to apply knowledge, rather than just memorization of facts.
- **Equity and Fairness:** The assessment policy ensures that all students, regardless of their background or abilities, are assessed fairly. Accommodations are made as needed to support diverse learning needs.

The IB assessment policy fosters a learning environment where assessments serve as tools for growth, allowing students to develop a deep understanding and become lifelong learners.

The IBO uses two principal methods of guiding examiners in the allocation of marks: analytic mark schemes and assessment criteria (which itself has a variant called mark bands).

- **Analytic mark schemes**

Analytic mark schemes are developed for examination questions that anticipate a specific type of response and/or a predetermined final answer from candidates. This principle is particularly significant in technical subjects such as science and mathematics, as it allows examiners to award credit for partial success.

- **Criteria of Assessment**

In instances where an assessment task is sufficiently open-ended, resulting in a prospective variety of valid responses that precludes the formulation of analytical mark schemes, assessment criteria are applied as an alternative. These assessment criteria do not pertain to the specific content of a candidate's answer; however, some may necessitate that candidates demonstrate specific types of content knowledge.

- **Mark bands**

The mark bands effectively represent a singular holistic criterion applied to the entirety of the work, which is assessed as a whole. Given the necessity for a reasonable range of marks to differentiate candidate performance, each mark band level descriptor corresponds to a specific number of marks. The descriptors are typically extensive, encompassing a spectrum of potential qualities observable in candidates' work, and they are directly aligned with the objectives of the course. Examples of mark bands can be found in the Diploma Program History guide (IBO, 2001a).

VI. Assessment Procedure

Responsible Party	Action	Remarks
HOD	Communicate term's assessment calendar	"Calendar posted on the website and communicated to teachers, supervisors, and concerned individuals. CYC-DOC002 Exam Room Plan Board."
Teacher	Prepare assessments	"CYC-MOD001 Assessments' Header CYC-REG011 Assessments' Nomenclature Inform students a week in advance of the topics to be reviewed."
Coordinator	Review and approve assessments	
Coordinator	Submit assessment to HOD by mail at least 48 hours before the assessment's due date	"To the HOD, the subject teachers, and the executive secretary"
Executive Secretary	Print and securely store assessments	"Retrieval of exam papers on the day of the evaluation (10 minutes before the start of the evaluation)"
Student	Complete assessment	"Distribution, collection, and storing of assessments' in briefcases and handed over to the HOD"
HOD	Hand in copies to teacher	"Verification of the number of exam papers and teacher's signature on the CYC-REG004. Submission of the papers to the HOD"
Teacher	Correct assessment and analyze results	DARS Report

Coordinator	Review marking practices	"Two copies of each level (good, average, poor)"
Coordinator Teachers	Analyze results and initiate make-up sessions	Remediation
Teachers	Hand in papers and discuss outcomes	"The teacher hands over the exam papers to the CPE, who signs the CYC-REG004 register."
Teachers	Distribute corrected assessments to students within 7 to 10 days from the assessment date.	"Ensure the follow-up of the remediation."

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

1. Role and responsibilities of students:

Students are at the center of the assessment process. They are the ones being assessed and who are most directly affected by the results of the assessments. Their role includes:

- Participating actively in the assessment processes, such that they complete the assigned assignments, projects, and tests within the set timeframe in line with directions and instructions.
- Reflecting upon learning and progress throughout the experience, bringing out their good and bad points regarding strengths and areas for development that they have a personal responsibility to develop.
- Adopting a mindset to see assessments not as a measure of their learning outcomes only, but as a valuable tool for their ongoing learning journey.
- Seeking clarification and/or feedback from teachers where necessary to understand where they have done well or need to improve.
- Preparing properly for any assessments through studying, practicing, and engaging with learning materials.
- Upholding academic integrity by completing work honestly without plagiarism or cheating.
- Using active feedback to improve future learning outcomes; goals set based on assessment results.

2. Role and Responsibilities of teachers:

The teacher is expected to construct, conduct, and interpret assessments to support the learning of students. Major roles a teacher could play include:

- Constructing fair assessments that are curriculum-aligned, representative of the intended learning, and considerate the varied learning styles of students offering different assessment modes, such as formative, summative, and peer review.
- Providing clear directions to students about what is being measured, the criteria and standards of success are, and how exactly assessments will measure attainment of the learning goals.
- Conducting constant formative assessment of students' progress on the learning curve, quizzes, discussions, and assignments, among others that happen regularly with teaching strategies adjusted as needed.
- Giving feedback in due Course to facilitate students' understanding of their high points and areas of improvement.
- Supporting learning by utilizing assessments to guide teaching practices and identifying those students who may require help or additional resources.
- Maintaining Transparency by clearly showing criteria for assessment, grading rubrics, and, where necessary, changes to policies related to assessment.
- Promoting a growth mindset by assisting students in believing that assessment points to their learning and also promoting a classroom culture where mistakes are an essential part of learning.

3. Role and Responsibilities of Parents:

The role of parents in the whole assessment process is very supportive, as they are able to make a positive and productive learning environment at home. Their roles include:

- Supporting students' preparation through helping them study and preparing upcoming assessments by providing a quiet, well-equipped place to study and promoting good study habits.

- Promoting a positive attitude to assessment by helping students understand the purpose of assessments as a tool for learning, not just evaluation, and emotionally supporting them through the stress associated with assessments.
- Maintaining open communication with teachers regarding assessment results, understanding areas where additional support may be needed for a student, and asking for help if needed.
- Providing encouragement, praise, and constructive feedback in order to handle setbacks as well as successes.
- Ensuring the assessment process addresses students' needs. This might involve facilitating requests for accommodations for students with learning differences or special needs.
- Establishing the overall progress of students at school, such as through regular review of assessment, grades, and teacher reports to show early intervention if it appears performance or well-being are suffering.

This is further based on the policy of assessment, which is a corporate responsibility where each group plays its different but related role. Students are responsible for their learning and assessment, teachers for designing and leading the assessment, and parents for support and encouragement. These three arms put together to construct an assessment system that fosters growth, equity, and achievement for all learners.

VII. Review and Evaluation of the Assessment Policy

The review process shall be for the purpose of determining the effectiveness of the policy in supporting student achievement, guaranteeing consistency in assessment practices, and meeting IB program requirements.

This review identifies areas that need improvement due to feedback from stakeholders and changes in IB policies or educational best practices.

The review cycle of this assessment policy is annual, with a full review, consistent with the IB evaluation cycle, every three years.

Additional reviews may take place if changes in significant IB guidelines or objectives make it necessary to revise the policy.