Assessment Policy

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Guiding Statements

Mission

International School Suva is a beacon of education, diversity, and innovation committed to shared responsibility and growth.

Vision

Navigate. Nurture. Aspire.

Philosophy Statement

International School Suva (ISS) provides holistic international education for children ages 4-18, authorised by the International Baccalaureate (IB) and accredited by Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC). ISS is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. The school is non-discriminatory and open to all backgrounds without regard to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational, admissions, or employment policies. It is an expectation of the school that all community members embrace the principles of the IB mission statement, ASC WASC guiding principles, and mission and vision of ISS.

Policy Review

A formal policy review involving various stakeholders in a committee takes place every 4 years as part of the reaccreditation and curriculum review process.

Purpose

The purpose of the ISS Assessment Policy is to guide the International School Suva (ISS) school community about the approaches to assessment and procedures, as highlighted by the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC).

Principles of Assessment

At International School Suva, assessment is viewed as an essential and integrated part of teaching and learning. It is embedded in everyday practice and plays a central role in supporting student growth. The school believes in a student-centered approach to assessment that recognizes and responds to the diverse learning styles and needs of each individual. A variety of assessment strategies and tools are used to ensure a balanced and comprehensive understanding of student progress. This approach reflects the school's commitment to meaningful learning experiences that are responsive, inclusive, and reflective.

Assessments are used to inform and enhance all aspects of the learning process. Assessment data guides teachers in planning effective instruction, helps identify students' individual learning needs, and evaluates the success of learning experiences. It also provides valuable feedback to students and parents about progress and achievement. Additionally, assessment supports broader program evaluation and review, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant, engaging, and responsive to the needs of the learning community.

The following IB statement informs our approach:

Meaningful assessment supports curricular goals. In IB programmes, assessment is therefore ongoing, varied and integral to the curriculum. IB schools use a range of strategies and tools to assess student learning. Emphasis is placed on the importance of analysing assessment data to inform teaching and learning, and on recognizing that students benefit by learning how to assess their own work and the work of others. (IB, What is an IB Education?, p. 5)

Students and teachers should collaboratively participate in evaluating the student's progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-management skills (IB, *What is an IB Education?* p. 5-6).

Assessment is a necessary evaluation of students' academic learning that should be rigorous, engaging, and equip students for the future.

ISS commits to the following practices:
- Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the program(s).
- Assessment at the school is integral with planning, teaching, and learning.
- Assessment addresses all the essential elements of the program.
- The school provides opportunities for students to participate in, and reflect on, the assessment of their work.
- Appropriate and meaningful reporting of assessment.

Effective Assessment

According to the IB (*Assessments in the PYP*, p. 2-3), highly effective assessment shares some key characteristics (Adapted from Clark, 2012).

Authentic: It supports making connections to the real world to promote student engagement.

Clear and specific: This includes desired learning goals, success criteria and the process students use to learn.

Varied: It uses a wider range of tools and strategies that are fit for purpose in order to build a well-rounded picture of student learning.

Developmental: It focuses on an individual student's progress rather than their performance in relation to others.

Collaborative: It engages both teachers and students in the assessment development and evaluation process.

Interactive: Assessment encompasses ongoing and iterative dialogues about learning.

Feedback to feedforward: It provides feedback on current learning to inform what is needed to support future learning (Hattie, Timperley 2007) and raises students' motivation.

Assessment strategies may include (but are not limited to):
- Observation/anecdotal records
- Open-ended tasks

- Performance tasks / goal directed tasks that entail application of skills to authentic challenges and problems
- Selected Responses-Tests/quizzes
- Teacher/student/peer reflections
- Portfolios
- Standardized Assessment

Formative and Summative Assessments

ISS teachers use formative and summative assessments as part of effective assessment practices. According to the IB, "In formative assessment, it is more important to identify correctly the knowledge, skills and understanding that students have not yet developed, rather than to measure accurately the level of each student's achievement" whereas "…[S]ummative assessment focuses on measuring what the candidate can do, typically to demonstrate the completion of a training programme and/or readiness to progress to the next stage of education" (IB, *Assessment Principles and Practices*, 2023, pg. 25). Figure 1 below shows the difference in intended outcomes for each type of assessment.
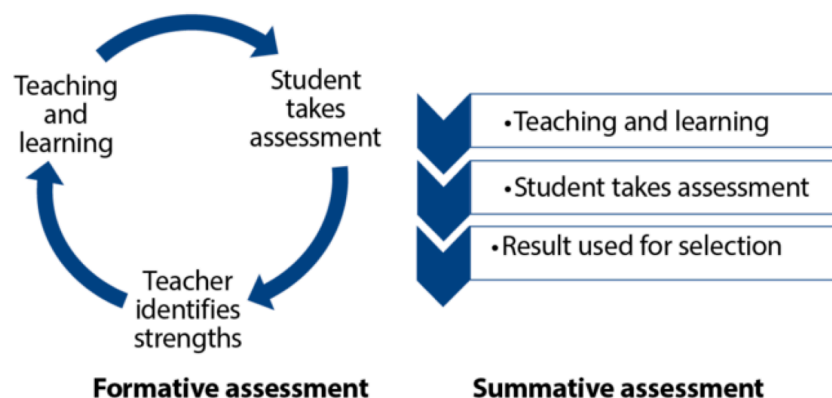

Figure 1. International Baccalaureate. *Assessment Principles and Practices – Quality assessments in the digital age*. (2023, pg. 26)

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is also crucial to effective assessment practices at ISS. From PYP, MYP, and DP/HSD, academic integrity is explicitly taught through information literacy, media literacy, and ethical use as part of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) research skills scope and sequence. Along with the curriculum coordinators, the school librarian, ATL coordinator, EE Coordinator, and subject area leaders, work towards consistent vertical and horizontal alignment. For more information please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy on the school website.

Teacher Rights & Responsibilities

Teachers and staff at ISS play an important role in creating a collaborative culture with authentic learning within their classroom and beyond. Teachers enable students to develop their intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills for lifelong learning by giving adequate preparation time and providing achievable expectations for assessments. Teachers have the right to be appropriately trained in-house and through IB professional development workshops to nurture this type of classroom environment. The school has teacher coaches who specialise in inquiry-based pedagogy and didactics, supported by our curriculum coordinators, as well as relevant.

Parent / Legal Guardian Rights & Responsibilities

At ISS, parents and legal guardians play a vital role in fostering a rich and supportive educational environment. They have the right to be informed about the IB curriculum and assessment practices, and are encouraged to attend parent-information workshops held throughout the school year or access the presentations available. Alongside these rights comes the responsibility to understand and uphold all IB regulations that apply to both the school and its students.

The IB also recognises the important role parents and legal guardians play in nurturing student independence. They are encouraged to help their children manage their study time effectively and to promote ownership of their own learning. However, this support

must remain fair and ethical—parents should not write, over-edit, or otherwise contribute to student work, nor misrepresent language proficiency or learning needs.

Student Rights & Responsibilities

ISS encourages students to become responsible learners who take ownership of their personal growth and learning, supported by their parents or legal guardians and the wider school community. To fully benefit from the inquiry-based IB curriculum, its conceptual framework, and assessment expectations, students have the right to be guided by appropriately trained IB educators. They also have the right to contribute to the learning process through collaboration in environments that promote the IB Learner Profile (IBLP) attributes and Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. Furthermore, students have the right to create authentic work and to develop their independence as learners, free from undue parental or external academic assistance.

In turn, students share the responsibility to follow IB subject guidelines and to use feedback from both formative and summative assessments to set and achieve their own learning goals.

Assessments in PYP

Assessment in the PYP is a continuous, reflective process that is visible, meaningful, and grounded in the belief that students are active participants in their own learning. It supports inquiry, growth, and student agency by encouraging learners to engage with feedback, reflect on their progress, and take ownership of their learning journey. Assessment is not only a tool to inform teaching, but a powerful means to empower students. The school values a strong partnership between students, teachers, and families in understanding and celebrating learning. Through purposeful practices such as portfolios and student-led conferences, students are supported in developing pride, independence, and clarity about their learning. Assessment is communicated in clear, timely, and developmentally appropriate ways to ensure a shared understanding of progress and achievement.

Assessments in MYP

Assessments in the MYP are designed to support and enhance learning by aligning with subject-group objectives and focusing on student understanding through authentic performance. The school values assessment as an integral part of the learning process, encouraging a variety of assessment tasks that reflect the development and needs of students. Feedback is timely, consistent, and meaningful, supporting student progress and fostering reflective learners. Assessment in the MYP promotes student growth by gathering evidence from multiple perspectives to provide a comprehensive view of learning.

For each criterion within every subject group, students are awarded a level of achievement that reflects their demonstrated ability and performance in relation to that specific criterion and the overall summative assessment. These achievement levels represent the teacher's best-fit judgment of the student's performance at the end of the term and cumulatively throughout the academic year. To determine the best fit, teachers review all relevant summative assessments completed during the term and the year for each criterion, then assign the level of achievement that most accurately reflects the student's current ability.

Standardization in MYP occurs through collaborative unit planning within departments, ensuring there is a shared understanding of the learning outcomes within the unit, and the awarding of achievement levels is clear and aligned. Moderation of assessments happen when subject teachers of the same grade level review assessments in order to align on achievement levels with similar learning outcomes. Teachers take student examples of high, middle, and low achievement levels and determine if their expectations and marking are aligned.

Along with summative assessments during the academic term, there are two assessment weeks for students in Year 10, 11, and 12. These assessment weeks are under exam conditions in order to prepare students for the DP / HSD examinations. The aim of assessment weeks is to help students develop self-management skills such as study skills, as well as stress management skills to take exams with time constraints.

Assessments in DP & HSD

Teachers design assessments in Diploma Programme (DP) and High School Diploma (HSD) to enable students to demonstrate understanding and application of concepts, focusing on academic integrity, preparation for external examinations, and students' development as lifelong learners. Feedback is constructive and timely, allowing students to reflect and improve. The school upholds the principles of fairness, consistency, and alignment with IB course requirements and HSD course requirements.

DP assessment criteria are derived from the course objectives and focus on key learning outcomes, including conceptual understanding and evidence of evaluative thinking. At ISS, teachers use these criteria to communicate clear expectations, assess student progress, and provide constructive feedback to support ongoing growth. Each DP course includes a combination of internal and external assessment components. Internal assessments are initially marked by ISS teachers and subsequently moderated by the IB to ensure global consistency and fairness. External assessments are evaluated directly by IB examiners from around the world.

The IB and ISS DP teachers assess these internal and external components in two ways:

1. Assessment criteria
Assessment criteria are used when the task is open ended. Each criterion has a set of hierarchical level descriptors. Each criterion is applied independently using a best-fit model. The marks awarded for each criterion is added together to give the total mark for the piece of work.

2. Analytical mark schemes
These are used in examinations where the examiner expects a particular kind of response. Examiners are given detailed instructions on how to award marks for each response. Each assessment component is worth points and is weighted allowing for the calculation of an overall point score. Examiners set grade boundaries at a post-examination meeting once all components have been marked. The grade boundaries allow for a conversion from the total points awarded from the assessment components into a scoring system of 1-7 points per subject with the exception of Theory

of Knowledge and the Extended Essay core components which are worth a combined total of 3 points.

The 6 subjects and core components allow for a maximum of 45 points. To be awarded the Diploma there is a minimum requirement of 24 points along with other specifications. Below are the additional requirements to qualify for the IB Diploma, based on the latest *DP Assessment Procedures* (2025, pg. 11). The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate providing all the following requirements have been met:

- CAS requirements have been met.
- There is no "N" awarded for TOK, the EE or for a contributing subject.
- There is no grade E awarded for TOK and/or the EE.
- There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (SL or HL).
- There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (SL or HL).
- The student has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects. (For students who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count.)
- The student has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects. (Students who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL.)
- The student has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.

For students to be promoted from DP1 to DP2, a minimum of 24 subject points is required, along with 90% attendance.

The termly DP predicted grades take into account the progress made by the student throughout the two year programme for all relevant assessment components (internal assessments and external assessments).

As DP grade boundaries differ per subject, per exam session, and per component, DP teachers discuss grade boundaries expected per cohort (whether students are in Year 11 or Year 12), being more lenient yet realistic in Year 11. As the students continue through the programme, stricter grade boundaries are applied, especially for assessment weeks (end of Term 2 and Term 4), as well as the mock examinations in Term 4 of Year 12.

These assessment weeks are under exam conditions in order to prepare students for the DP examinations. The rationale is to help students develop self-management skills such as study skills, as well as stress management skills to take exams under time constraints.

Standardization in DP occurs through collaborative unit planning within the subject teams, as well as reviewing DP Assessed Samples on MyIB. Standardization ensures there is a shared understanding of the learning outcomes within the unit, and the awarding of achievement levels is clear and aligned. Moderation of assessments happen when subject teachers of the same course review assessments in order to align on achievement levels with similar learning outcomes. Teachers take student examples of high, middle, and low achievement levels and determine if their expectations and marking are aligned.

Specifically for the DP Internal Assessments (IAs), moderation of internal marks is required before IAs are submitted to the IB. DP teachers also do this with some externally assessed components such as the TOK essay, Extended Essay, and Group 6 (Visual Arts & Music) components.

ISS teachers work closely with colleagues from other international schools to ensure further alignment. The Programme Resource Center and IB Exchange on MyIB, along with ongoing participation in IB professional development workshops also further deepen our understanding of internal standardization.

Standardized Testing & Data Analysis

Standardized assessments are also used at ISS to inform teaching and provide information which shows growth over time, provide comparison with peer groups or cohorts and to inform decisions about pedagogical practice.

At ISS, MAP Growth (NWEA) assessment data is collected twice per year from PYP Early Years 3 until MYP Year 10. With the MAP coordinator, teachers and departments analyse results per student and across year levels, as well as vertically. ISS MAP scores are compared against global data, both in IB and non-IB schools.

Other forms of standardized testing are done through external IB examinations. In MYP, Year 10 students also submit Personal Projects officially to the IB. In Year 12, DP results are calibrated against global benchmarks. MYP and DP teachers use this assessment data to improve the teaching and learning.

Recording & Reporting Student Achievement

ISS teachers are trusted professionals who align expected learning outcomes and interpret assessment data effectively. The school values reflection and evidence-based planning as essential to improving student learning. Moderation is recognized as a key practice to ensure fairness, accuracy, and consistency in assessment, supporting shared understandings of achievement standards across the school.

Recording and reporting student achievement allows teachers, students, and parents at ISS to openly communicate about progress in the learning. A fundamental part of reporting is the regular ongoing communication between class teachers (primary) and subject teachers (secondary). Teachers aim to provide regular, specific, and timely feedback within 2 weeks so that students know which areas to improve to achieve their learning goals. Teachers record these on our learning management system, which is available for students and parents to review. In MYP & DP subject areas, regular standardization of assessments and moderation of assessed work occurs during collaborative meeting times.

Each IB programme (PYP, MYP, and DP/HSD) has a schedule for formal reporting through written reports, student-led conferences (SLC), and parent-teacher conferences (PTC) in person.

In MYP & DP/HSD there are a number of opportunities to report on students' progress. In Term 1, the term reports are published, which focus on identifying strengths and areas for growth, as well as Approaches to Learning (ATL) development level. For each subject, teachers have identified one ATL skill that was explicitly taught in Term 1. Each student has been awarded a level (Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Approaching Expectations or Concern) based on their progress in developing these skills in the first term. In the first few weeks of Term 2, PTCs are held to discuss the students' progress and identify learning goals and other needs that may further support students.

At the end of Term 2, Semester 1 reports are published, which in MYP require 1-8 marks per criterion (A, B, C, D) based on best-fit marks. The final grade is calculated by adding the students' level of achievement for each criterion in a subject. Students earn a final grade for each subject ranging from 1-7, where a 7 is the highest grade and a 1 is the lowest. In the DP/HSD, teachers calculate a holistic best-fit 1-7 mark based on assessment data and the DP Grade Descriptors.

In Term 3, students participate in Student Led Conferences (SLC), during which students prepare a short presentation about their learning goals and achievements. In Term 4, Semester 2 reports are published, showcasing the students' overall performance during the academic year. In MYP this is another set of 1-8 marks per criterion (A, B, C, D) based on best-fit marks, and in DP, a more comprehensive overview of the students' progress using assessment data from semester exams and any applicable internal assessment data.

Students who receive inclusive access arrangements (IAA) such as extra time or a word processor do not usually have modified assessments and need to show full understanding of the learner outcomes and course objectives. Please review the Inclusion Policy on the school website for more information. Students who are in our English Language Acquisition (ELA) may receive differentiated assessments in order to fully access their capabilities. Please review the Language Policy on the school website for more information.

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