



THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL

# Assessment Policy

## Primary Years Program Academic Session (2021-2022)

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**THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL**

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## 1- Mission Statement IB (International Baccalaureate)

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## 2- Mission Statement TDS (The Democratic School)

The school aims to prepare free individuals who are moderate, creative, collaborative, skillful, confident, self-motivated and critical thinkers through educational democratic values to produce global citizens with entrepreneurial and leadership qualities having strong cultural and social foundation.

## 3- School Philosophy

We believe in the wholesome and balanced development of learners that equips them with the wisdom to live well. We value the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development of learners.

We understand the value of a challenging, engaging and critically thinking environment for excellence in all dimensions of life. We understand that every learner is unique with certain learning needs and must be provided opportunities for one’s voice, choice and ownership. We believe to prepare young minds for work, vocation and entrepreneurship; that can co-exist in different cultures as global citizens.

## 4- Purpose of Assessments

Multiple assessment methods are developed to address the student learning objectives. Parents are regularly informed about their children’s strengths and areas that need improvement, along with suggestions about further improvement and enhancement. Remedial classes are conducted for students according to their individual learning needs. Each and every student’s achievement is celebrated, heartily, with the sole purpose of inculcating a sense of achievement and pride in these future leaders of the world. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning at school. It improves teaching and learning practices measuring student’s achievements at different stages of learning process. Assessments entail feedback and feed forward as a logical sequel to teaching and learning. The fundamental characteristics of the complex series of processes involved are outlined below:

## 5- Characteristics of Assessments:

- 5.1. It is authentic because it supports making connections to the real world to promote student engagement.
- 5.2. It is clear and specific about the desired learning goals and the success criteria and the process students use to learn.
- 5.3. To build a well-rounded picture of student learning, it uses a wide range of strategies and tools and hence is considered varied.
- 5.4. The main point of focus is individual student's progress rather than his performance in relation to others. Thus, the process of assessment is developmental.
- 5.5. Both teachers and students are engaged in the assessment development and evaluation process which makes the assessment a collaborative exercise.
- 5.6. It is interactive because it encompasses ongoing and interactive dialogues about learning.
- 5.7. It raises student's motivation because it provides feedback on current learning to inform what is needed to support future learning.

## 6- Assessments in the Primary Years Program

### 6.1. The Three Assessment Practices

	Assessment for learning	Assessment of learning	Assessment as learning (Clark2012;Earl2012)
<b>Purpose</b>	Also known as formative assessment. Its goal is to inform teaching and promote learning.	Also known as summative assessment. Its goal is to certify and to report on learning progress.	As part of the formative process, its goal is to support students in learning how to become a self-regulated, life-long learner.
<b>Timing</b>	It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is <u>iterative</u> and interactive.	It is typically conducted at the end of a unit, year level or developmental stage, or program.	It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is <u>iterative</u> and interactive.
<b>Features</b>	Student involvement Quantitative and qualitative data Written and oral artifacts Observations and feedback Questionnaires Teacher/student dialogues/ Conferences Context-based Informal Indication of process Indication of knowledge/skill application	Limited student involvement Quantitative data Tests, exams, standardized tests Indication of skills and knowledge acquisition or mastery Based on teacher judgment Norm- or criteria-referenced	Students are active engaged in their own learning by developing and using meta-cognitive strategies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan learning goals</li> <li>• monitor goals</li> <li>• reflect in order to modify learning and to adjust learning.</li> </ul>

## **6.2. The Exhibition in PYP V**

**6.2.1.** IB Primary Years Program culminates in exhibition. The learners synthesize the knowledge gained throughout the program and apply it independently.

**6.2.2.** The exhibition is an authentic summative assessment for the final year of program. The learners choose the subject based on real world problem which essentially involves investigations. The PYP exhibition unites learners, teachers and families in the celebration of their learning journey in this final event. The event encourages the younger learners to look forward to their final year of the program and, through it, participate in the community at large.

## **6.3. Essential Components:**

- Application of all concepts
- Involvement of all transdisciplinary skills
- Demonstration of attitudes
- Engagement in action plan
- Application of all PYP themes

## **6.4. Assessment Tools:**

We implement the assessment strategies through appropriate assessment tools. An assessment strategy can use more than one assessment tools. It is finally the teacher's judgment to choose and effectively use the most appropriate tool in a given situation. For a holistic picture of each student's progress according to the established criteria, documentation is emphasized. At The Democratic School, various assessment strategies are put in place using the following assessment tools

### **6.4.1. Rubrics:**

For scoring or rating a student's tests, portfolios and performances, rubrics are established sets of criteria. The descriptors inform both the assessor and the assessed what characteristics to look for in a work and how to rate that work on a pre-determined scale. The rubrics can be developed both by students or teachers. Rubrics may be used as an assessment tool for a variety of assessments. Summative assessment explicitly establishes a criterion /scale for subject specific progress and thus may be a guideline for summative assessment. Rubrics can assist formative assessment because they provide guideline about how tasks are to be completed. Students establish and assess the characteristics of their own work which provides an opportunity for self-assessment. The rubric moves from an evaluation tool for printing a number on student to a practical and strong vehicle for feedback, self-assessment and goal setting because the rubric template provides space for feedback comments in student's goals and action steps. Students and teachers have a continuous focus on clearly stated assessment criteria for each lesson. Thus, rubrics may improve learning outcome.

### **6.4.2. Exemplar:**

Exemplars are samples of student's work and concrete standards against which other samplers are judged. Exemplars can be used in combination with rubrics or continuum. Exemplary benchmarks and scoring levels are closely linked in a rubric. Benchmarks are mostly appropriate in a particular school's context.

### **6.4.3. Checklists:**

Checklists are the lists of data, information attributes, or elements that should be present in student work or performance. Checklists are the threshold criteria for assessment.

### **6.4.4. Anecdotal Record**

These are written notes based on the observations of students' progress in a particular discipline. These records may reflect a demonstration of student understanding and application of specific subject matter learned as well as learner profile attributes. These records are documented for each class according to the subject area and are reflected in the report cards of each learner. Parents can also report these anecdotes because the students may demonstrate their learning outside the school where teachers are not present. The parents can communicate it through parent-teacher conferences, emails or instant messaging, etc. The teachers can record the anecdote in the prescribed format after discussion with the parents in order to provide the complete and comprehensive mapping of each student's learning and development.

### **6.4.5. Continuum**

It is a visual representation of the developmental stages of learning that shows a progression of achievement or identifies where a student is in the progress.

## **6.5. Assessment Strategies**

Assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach and represent the school's answer to the question, "How will we know what we have learned?" These methods of assessment include a broad range of approaches and have been selected to provide a balanced view of student learning.

### **6.5.1. Observations**

All students are observed regularly with a focus on the individual, the group, and/or the whole class. Observations may be at the individual level for each student as well as at the macro level, observing the whole classroom. These observations are conducted by home room teachers, subject specialists, PYP Coordinator, and the Head of school. Observations are a strategy for formative assessments and consequently are a continuous process of analyzing and assessing student learning.

### **6.5.2. 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 established criteria and requires developing an authentic product or performance.

### **6.5.3. Process-Focused Assessments**

Teachers observe students with a particular skill in mind, noting students who are meeting, exceeding or struggling to meet the expectations. Authentic activities are planned to keep this assessment purpose in mind.

#### **6.5.4. Open-Ended Assessments**

Students are presented with a unit or subject-specific challenges and asked to provide an original response.

#### **6.5.5. Selected Responses**

These single occasion, one-dimensional exercises, usually in the formative tests and quizzes, provide a snapshot of students' specific knowledge.

#### **6.5.6. Reporting/Feedback**

We report learner's performance in formative and summative assessments on ongoing basis. To ensure effective reporting, The Democratic School;

- Involves parents, learners and teachers as collaborators in planning, designing and implementing assessments.
- Reflects what the school community values allows teachers to include what they have learnt during the reporting process in their future teaching and assessment practices

#### **6.5.7. Suggested Structure for Giving Formal Feedback**

- Parent-teacher meeting
- Parent- teacher conference (newsletter)
- Teacher-student conferences (PYP IV onwards)
- Student-led conferences
- The written report
- Online reporting and collaboration platform (Toddle)

For learning about and recording student's progress, parents, learners, and teachers are all partners in reporting progress and sharing the responsibility. Pathways for communication are open and reciprocal. TDS builds an annual parent-teacher conference in the academic calendar. It also provides many opportunities for conferencing throughout the school year.

According to the purpose of the occasion or event, parents, teachers/learners participate in different events like exhibition awareness workshops, IB introductory sessions and other occasions of collaborations with parents.

#### **6.5.8. Portfolios**

- Portfolios are designed to demonstrate success, growth, higher order thinking, reflection and creativity. Thus, portfolios are a very purposeful collection of student's work.
- Portfolios are a cumulative collection of student's work and travel of the student from PYP Pre-Nursery to PYP V. These portfolios are housed in the learner's classroom and are accessible to them and their parents at any time during the school year.
- The portfolio is the property of learner and goes with him/her at the time of graduation.

Mediums to share the policy with the stakeholders:

- School website
- Online platform Toddle
- Frequent discussion in Parent-Teacher-Management collaborations conducted by the school
- Frequent discussions with the students on time-to-time basis.

## **7. Policy Review:**

The document will be reviewed by the PYP Coordinator, school head and teachers in May, 2022.

## **8. References:**

- International Baccalaureate Organization (website)
- International Baccalaureate resource document (Learning and teaching)
- Head start School Assessment Policy 2019-2020
- Angels International College Assessment Policy 2019-2020