

Hongqiao International School

PYP Assessment Policy

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Introduction

The Assessment Policy brings together the Mission Statement, our Core Beliefs about Learning and Assessment document, and a previous iteration of the Hongqiao International School (HQIS) Assessment Policy. With the above as our guide, this revised Assessment Policy addresses the following questions:

- Why do we assess?
- What do we assess?
- When and how do we assess?
- How do we report student's learning?
- How do we document student's learning?

The purpose of the Assessment Policy is to guide assessments in the Primary Years Program of HQIS as well as to inform parents about the kinds of assessments that take place during the year. Published on the HQIS website (www.HQIS.org), the Assessment Policy will be reviewed annually.

At HQIS we use both external and internal assessments in Kindergarten through Grade 12. External assessments are assessments that use criterion- or norm-referenced standards to evaluate students' learning. External assessments allow us to monitor students' learning in a larger context beyond HQIS. They also allow us to determine how well students are achieving relative to other students nationally and internationally. Internal assessments are assessments predominantly developed and administered by teachers. Some of these assessments have standardized benchmarks (e.g., MAPS²-DRA³ used in the Primary School, or International Baccalaureate); others use benchmarks set by the teachers.

We hope and expect that the Assessment Policy will increase the consistency and reliability of good assessment practices, making these practices explicit to the whole school community.

August, 1,2021

² MAPS: Measure of Academic Progress

³ DRA: Developmental Reading Assessment

I. Philosophy and Core Beliefs About Learning and Assessment

Statement of Philosophy

Hongqiao International School recognizes that teaching, learning and assessment are fundamentally interdependent. Assessment measures students' learning by recording the range of student understandings, knowledge and skills. It also informs instruction and guides curriculum review. Assessment is most effective when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote growth, as well as when the programs it seeks to improve have clearly, explicitly stated purposes. Through assessment, educators meet their responsibilities to students.

Core Beliefs About Learning and Assessment

These core beliefs will be published on our website:

<http://www.HQIS.org>

Hongqiao International School is committed to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program standards and practices and ensures that the Assessment Policy is implemented, understood and supported by all staff members. Parents will be informed about the policy through parent meetings, the school website and at student/parent/teacher conferences.

II. Why Do We Assess?

A. Purposes of Assessment

Assessment is an essential part of the instructional cycle. It provides information about student learning and development, as well as a framework for planning, self-reflection, and collaboration for teachers.

Student learning is promoted through:

- Assessing prior knowledge and experience
- Differentiating instruction to meet individual needs
- Engaging learners in reflection to determine strengths and weaknesses and to set goals
- Providing feedback for students
- Expanding student learning opportunities
- Building a profile of children's understanding.

Information about student learning is provided through:

- Examples of student work or performances
- Statistics relating to benchmarks and/or rubrics or test scores
- Test results.

Program evaluation uses a variety of student assessments to:

- Assess the levels of students' current knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning
- Assess new learning
- Guide teacher planning and presentation
- Assess student performance relative to Common Core standards
- Focus on closing the achievement gaps among students
- Inform all stakeholders.

B. Principles of Assessment

General Principles:

- Assessment is any means of collecting evidence of, reporting and recording progress toward desired learning outcomes; evaluation is the process of making a judgment about the results of assessment
- Assessment is designed to improve student knowledge and understanding
- Assessment should be sensitive to cultural, linguistic, racial, class, learning, physical and gender differences
- Reflection is an integral part of assessment
- Assessments are anchored in authentic tasks
- Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time

- Assessment requires attention to outcomes but equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. It should be ongoing, not episodic
- Assessment has criteria that are known and understood in advance
- Assessment is a means to determine the learning styles and individual differences of the students in order to differentiate instruction.

Principles for Students

Effective assessments allow the students to:

- Have criteria that are known and understood in advance
- Analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved
- Demonstrate the range of their conceptual understandings, their knowledge and their skills
- Synthesize and apply their learning not merely recall facts
- Base their language on real-life experiences that can lead to other questions to ask or problems to solve
- Focus on producing a quality product or performance
- Highlight their strengths and demonstrate mastery and expertise
- Express different point of view and interpretations
- Promote reflection, self and peer-evaluation

Principles for Teachers:

Effective assessments allow teachers to:

- Plan and build them into the learning, not add them after the fact
- Identify what is worth knowing and assess it
- Include collaboration between the student and the teacher or among children
- Take into account different cultural contexts and different ways of learning and knowing
- Use scoring that is both analytical and holistic
- Produce evidence that can be reported and understood by students, parents, teachers, administrators and board members
- Inform every stage of the learning and teaching process
- Plan further activities which address areas of interest for the teacher and the students.

Assessment in the Primary School

III. What Do We Assess in the Primary School?

Through the IB Program of Inquiry (PYP) HQIS strives to provide the opportunity for learners to construct meaning primarily through structured inquiry. This is accomplished by emphasizing the connections between subject-specific knowledge and transdisciplinary skills and themes. The transdisciplinary themes – Who We Are, Where We Are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works, How We Organize Ourselves, How We Share the Planet – provide a focus for inquiry, while literacy and numeracy provide the tools. Feedback is given on student progress and performance in each of these areas.

Additionally, feedback should be provided on the attributes listed in the PYP Learner Profile: Inquirer, Communicator, Thinker, Risk-Taker, Knowledgeable, Principled, Caring, Open-Minded, Well-Balanced, and Reflective. This profile serves to increase the children’s awareness of, and sensitivity to, the experiences of others beyond the local or national community, thus promoting an understanding that there is a commonality of human experience.

Of course we also assess performance and progress in each of the following subject areas: language (English, Chinese), math, science, social studies, physical education, art, music, technology and information, social skills and work habits. We continue to incorporate student attitudes and attributes into everyday learning.

IV. How Do We Assess Students' Learning?

Assessment is viewed as an integral part of the teaching-learning process. It involves collecting evidence of learning over a period of time, using a variety of assessment methods. The goals are to provide feedback on both the ongoing process and the end-product in achieving the outcomes. The following are principles underlying classroom assessment:

A. Types of Assessments

Pre-assessment All teachers assess students' prior knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning.

Formative Assessment Formative assessment is woven into the daily learning process. It provides teachers and students with information about how the learning is developing. It helps the teacher to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessments for the Units of Inquiry will be done in both languages, as the languages might teach different skill sets at different times.

Summative Assessment Summative assessment occurs at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by applying their knowledge in new and authentic contexts. The summative assessment for the Units of Inquiry can be done in one language, or it can be shared by the two languages as this is not a language assessment but linked to the central idea of the Unit of Inquiry. It should be used to assess the conceptual understandings and not the language skills.

The 5th Grade Exhibition The Exhibition is the culminating experience for the IB Primary Years Program. It requires students to synthesize their prior knowledge and to apply it in a self-directed manner. The exhibition provides an authentic summative assessment for the PYP years. The subject of the Exhibition is a student-selected, real-world problem that warrants extended investigation. It is a celebration which unities students, teachers, and families in an activity representing the essence of PYP. Transdisciplinary skills are embedded in the Learner Profile and Attitudes.

Student Self-Assessment Student self-assessment is interwoven throughout daily learning to engage students in reflection and assessment on their own learning. The students are given time to reflect on the progress in all subject areas, including the attributes expressed in the Learner Profile. After each Unit of Inquiry, students need to be given the opportunity to reflect on their learning using a reflection sheet develop by the teachers.

B. Assessment Strategies

It is important that all teachers use a variety of assessment strategies. They assess the common areas of the student profile, attitudes and transdisciplinary skills and share the information gathered with students, parents and teachers to promote student learning.

Observations:

- are made often and at regular intervals
- are made of individuals, groups and whole class
- are made in different contexts to increase validity

- are used to assess a single concept
- are used to assess a skill
- are used to assess more than one concept and/or skill at the same time

Performance Assessments:

- are goal directed tasks with established criteria • offer authentic challenges and opportunities for problem solving
- use multiple skills
- have more than one correct response
- may consist of audio, video, and/or narrative records

Process-focused assessments:

- are used like observations to synthesize evidence from different contexts

Selected responses:

- are used to determine how much a student knows or can perform certain skills
- consist of tests quizzes, dictations etc.

Open-ended tasks:

- are used to stimulate an original response by students

C. Assessment Tools

Rubrics:

- are established sets of criteria used for scoring or rating students work in all areas of the curriculum
- use descriptors that tell the student and the teacher what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale
- can be developed by students as well as the teacher

Exemplars:

- are samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged
- can be used in conjunction with rubrics or continua

Checklists:

- are a list of criteria that can be 'checked' off as they are met
- may include information, data, attributes or elements that should be present in the work

Anecdotal Records:

- are brief written notes based on observations of students

V. How Do We Report Students' Learning?

A. Conferences

The purpose of conferences is to give information to both students and parent. At the Primary School we offer three different types of conferences:

Teacher-Student Conferences These conferences are usually informal. They are incorporated into the regular classroom routines and are meant to provide the students with feedback on their progress. These conferences also allow students to reflect on their own work and to make decisions regarding their portfolios.

Teacher-Parent Conferences These are formal conferences with both language teachers, any support teachers who work with the student, and the parents to provide feedback about the student's progress and needs. Teachers take this opportunity to answer parents' questions, to address their concerns and to help define their role in the learning process.

Student-Led Conferences These are formal conferences between students and parents. The students will, with the support and guidance of the teacher, select the work to be discussed. Students reflect on their progress and share the responsibility of informing their parents.

During any time of the year, both teachers and parents can request a conference to discuss the progress, or lack of thereof, of the student. Both language teachers must be present at these conferences. Support teachers can be asked to join as needed.

B. Celebrations of Learning

Grade level teams and specialists target specific Units of Inquiry to share with parents in a celebration of learning for that unit. These take place throughout the year.

C. The Written Report

We send out two written report cards, in December and in June, to report back on student progress. Each report card is written by both language teachers, and these two teachers meet to discuss students' progress in both languages as well as the Units of Inquiry. A progress report is sent prior to the student-led conferences. At the Primary School we do not use letter or number grades to report the progress of the student. On our report card we provide feedback on student's learning using a scale.

IV. How Do We Document Students' Learning?

A. Portfolios

What are Portfolios?

"A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, high-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work" (*Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2007*).

Portfolios at the Primary School

The purpose of the portfolio is to reflect student's learning and growth. The portfolio highlights a student's internalized learning process. It is an excellent way for students to articulate their growth and share personal reflections about their learning.

During the year teachers and students select pieces of work to be added to their portfolio and the students write reflections by the work selected. The portfolio contains samples of all work a student has done during the year to show the progress he/she has made. Once a year, as part of the student-led conference, students share their portfolio with their parents.

Essential Agreements:

- the portfolio will reflect a student's growth over time (the portfolio is a growth/process portfolio)
- the portfolio will show a holistic picture of the student
- portfolio pieces will be selected by the teacher or by the student with guidance from the teacher
- the student will complete a reflection for each selected piece
- all entries will be dated
- in the spring, the student will reflect upon the portfolio itself and will share the portfolio with his/her parent(s) during the student-led conference
- portfolios will be sent home at the end of the school year
- the portfolio will include various pieces of evidence in each area of learning.

IX. Resources

International Baccalaureate Organization, *IBPYP Assessment Handbook*, Geneva, Switzerland 2001

International Baccalaureate North America, Primary Years Programme; *Experienced Teachers' Workshop (Level 2): Assessment in The PYP*, Savannah, Georgia, December 2006

International Baccalaureate Organization, *Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education*, Geneva, Switzerland, January 2007

International Baccalaureate Organization, *Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme: Towards a Continuum of International Education*, Cardiff, Wales, September 2008

International Baccalaureate Organization, Standards F1 and F2

Tomlinson, C.A., and McTighe, J., *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design*, ASCD: Alexandria, VA, 2006

XI. When and How Do We Assess?

Assessment is viewed as an integral part of the teaching-learning process. It involves collecting evidence of learning over a period of time, using a variety of assessment methods. The goals are to provide feedback on both the ongoing process and the end-product in achieving the standards. The following are principles underlying classroom assessment:

A. Types of Assessments

Pre-assessment (Diagnostic) Teachers assess students' prior knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning.

Formative Assessment (Ongoing) Formative assessment is woven into the daily learning process. It provides teachers and students with information about how the learning is developing. It helps the teacher to plan the next stage of learning.

Summative Assessment Summative assessment occurs at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by applying their knowledge in new and authentic contexts.

IBO Learner Profile Assessment The Learner Profile is posted around the campus and serves as an aspirational set of dispositional outcomes for students in the school. Teachers might use it for informal observations as a lens through which they give feedback to students, but actual assessment comes in the form of self-assessment. Students should reflect on their development on targeted or selected aspects of the profile. This reflection will vary according to age groups and language abilities.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment An assessment in which an individual's performance is compared to a specific learning objective or performance standard and not to the performance of other students. Criterion-referenced assessment tells us how well students are performing on specific goals or standards rather than just telling how their performance compares to a group of students nationally or locally. In criterion-referenced assessments, it is possible that none, or all, of the examinees will reach a particular goal or performance standard. IB Diploma courses have externally set criterion-referenced assessments.

Looking at Student Work (LASW) A formal group process to elicit feedback from colleagues about student work that serves to guide and improve instruction. Ideally, teachers follow a protocol that examines specific aspects of a student's work and looks for evidence of understanding.

Student-Led Conferences These are held in the spring for students in grades 1-5. Parents hear from students about their learning over the course of the year.

Standardized Assessments M A P S (a standardized test) are administered in grades 1-5.

School Assessments Criterion-based assessment are used in each core subject for assignments such as homework, projects, tests, quizzes, and papers.

B. Assessment Strategies

Assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach and represent HQIS's response 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 the student:

- **Observations:** All students are observed regularly, with the teacher taking notes on the individual, group, and the whole class. Observations include how groups work and how well students assume various roles within the group.
- **Process Focus:** Students' skills and developing understanding are regularly observed in context and are documented through checklists, narrative notes, or inventories. The emphasis is on the process and skill application rather than the product.
- **Selected Responses:** Single 'snapshot' samples of what students know or are able to do. These might be in the form of tests and quizzes.
- **Open-Ended Tasks:** Students are given a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. No two students will have the same response. In this way a student's application of new knowledge can be individually assessed.
- **Performance Tasks:** These represent the kind of challenges that adults face in the world beyond the classroom; require using a repertoire of knowledge and skill to accomplish a goal or solve a problem; require thoughtful application of knowledge, rather than recall of facts; are open-ended, developing a tangible product or performance; have an identified purpose and audience; involve a realistic scenario; and have set criteria to be met.
- **Portfolio:** A collection of work, usually drawn from a student's classroom work. A portfolio becomes a portfolio assessment when: (1) the assessment purpose is defined, (2) criteria or methods are made clear for determining what is put into the portfolio, by whom, and when, and (3) criteria for assessing either the collection or individual pieces of work are identified and used to make

judgments about performance. Portfolios can be designed to assess student progress, effort, and/or achievement, and encourage students to reflect on their learning.

C. Assessment Tools

The previously identified assessment strategies are put into practice at HQIS by using the following assessment tools.

- **Performance Lists:** Performance lists offer a practical means of judging student performance based upon identified criteria. A performance list consists of a set of criterion elements, but not performance levels. These are used for students to know the criteria before embarking on their work, to assess that they met the criteria, but they do not measure how well the students perform.
- **Holistic Rubrics:** A holistic rubric provides an overall impression of a student's work; it yields a single score or rating for a product or performance and provides a quick snapshot or impact of overall performance. Holistic rubrics are used for complex performances in which the criteria amalgamation results in the impact (i.e., dramatic performance), or to get a general impression of a piece of work.
- **Analytic Rubrics:** An analytic rubric divides a product or performance into distinct traits or dimensions and judges each separately. Since an analytic rubric rates each of the identified traits independently, a separate score is provided for each. These are used for larger projects and summative assessments as well as for analyzing writing.
- **Benchmarks/Exemplars:** These are samples of student work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. These can be used in conjunction with rubrics or continua.
- **Anecdotal Notes:** Anecdotal notes are written notes based on observations of a student. These notes should be systematically compiled, organized, and analyzed.
- **Continua:** These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

XII. How Do We Report?

Reporting is a way of giving feedback from assessment. Effective reporting should:

- Involve parents, students, and teachers as partners
- Be comprehensive, honest, fair, and credible
- Be clear and understandable to all parties
- Allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice.

A. Conferences

Parents, students, and teachers are all valued partners in the reporting process and in sharing the responsibility both for learning and for accounting student progress. Pathways for communication need to be open and reciprocal.

HQIS builds into the school calendar parent-teacher conferences. In addition, we provide many opportunities throughout the school year for meetings between parents and teachers.

In the Middle School, each student in the spring leads a conference with parents and the student's advisor. Students work carefully throughout the year to choose examples of learning to include in a digital portfolio that is shared with parents.

B. Written Reports

Report cards are sent home twice a year, at the mid-year point and at the end of the year. At Tregaron, written progress reports are sent home in the middle of each semester, with special attention paid to each student's approaches to learning.

XIII. How Do We Follow a Student's Progress Over the Years?

- Digital portfolios (SeeSaw)
- HQIS progress reports and report cards
- MAPS Repts
- Transcripts of grades