



**INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF UGANDA**

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ISU SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

Policy - January 2014 reviewed September 2015

To be reviewed September 2017

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To be reviewed September 2020

ISU School Assessment Policy

Assessment Statement

Assessment is integral to teaching and learning. It enables both teachers and students to be reflective and informs curriculum innovation and development. As a supportive process, assessment generates evidence of learning, guiding the progress of our students. Assessment is based on clearly communicated learning expectations promoting transparency and consistency.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to:

- Evaluate student learning
- Provide feedback to students and parents that will impact student learning
- Inform instruction and promote effective practice
- Improve the quality of learning programs.

Assessment promotes student learning when:

- Assessment of prior knowledge and experience inform instruction
- Summative assessments are designed and communicated in advance
- Assessment is directly linked to learning expectations
- Clear and regular feedback are linked to criteria
- Students reflect on their learning and assessment
- Assessment is embedded in the curriculum across grade levels
- Assessment is transparent to students, teachers and parents
- Assessment is responsive to our diverse student body
- Students are actively involved in the assessment process.

Information about student learning is provided through:

- Examples of students' work or performance
- Data based on explicit criteria, rubrics and standardised testing
- Formal written reports
- Parent / student conferences
- Student review meetings
- Regular communication.

Principles of Assessment:

Effective assessments enable students to:

- Understand the purpose, goal or objective
- Know the criteria of assessment and understand what is expected
- Reflect on their progress as an individual learner
- Analyse their learning and identify/understand areas of improvement
- Demonstrate the range of their conceptual understandings, knowledge and skills
- Synthesise and apply their learning
- Participate actively in the planning and creation of assessment tasks
- Base their learning on authentic experiences that can lead to other questions to ask or problems to solve
- Produce a quality product or performance
- Highlight their strengths and demonstrate mastery and expertise
- Express diverse points of view and interpretations
- Reflect on feedback.

Effective assessments enable the teacher to:

- Plan instruction and build assessments into the learning
- Account for different learner interests, needs, and styles
- Gather evidence throughout the teaching and learning process
- Assess all necessary elements of the program
- Reflect on the teaching and learning
- Provide specific feedback on learning, attributes and outcomes
- Check teaching objectives against learning outcomes
- Act as a feedback mechanism for curriculum development
- Plan further learning engagements.

Junior School Assessment Procedures

General guidelines

In support of the ISU assessment policy, the procedures section outlines the school's expectations as well as best practice for teachers in support of student learning

Why we assess:

Best practice in assessment requires the integration of these three stages

Assessment for learning

To provide information on student knowledge, skills and behaviours to inform the next stage of learning.

Assessment as learning

To provide feedback and opportunities for student reflection and/or self-assessment to support future learning.

Assessment of learning

To provide information about what students have learnt in relation to the curriculum standards.

When we assess:

Prior to, or, During Admission

All students complete admissions assessments to review skills in mathematics and language. These are completed by the Learning Support Team and are used to guide planning for new learners.

Pre-assessment

Students' prior knowledge and skills are assessed before embarking on a new area of study.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what has been learned, in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. Formative assessments include both pre-assessment and ongoing assessment strategies that inform teachers and students of areas for further growth in learning.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is based upon the accumulated learning that has taken place over a period of time, and can also be diagnostic in nature. Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning processes and gives students opportunities to demonstrate their progress against the unit goals and objectives.

Summative assessments may include any of, and any combination of, the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and processes.

Who assesses:

In addition to assessment of student learning by all teachers involved, there should be opportunities for self and peer assessment by students.

What we assess:

These Assessment strategies will be used to assess understanding of concepts, knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as subject specific expectations including personal, social and physical development.

Common Assessments**Math:**

Teachers use pre-assessments, and, formative and summative assessments for Grades 1 to 5, on the Math expectations covered. Informal assessment of students' mathematical thinking, conceptual understanding, knowledge, skills and problem solving ability is carried out on a regular daily basis.

Language

In Kinder to Grade 5, formal running records, using *Teachers' College Reading and Writing Project* materials, are carried out twice per year. This equates to a *Fountas and Pinnell* reading level. Either the short or long form may be used initially but the long form should be used in the last quarter. The information from these assessments are passed on to the next teacher. The assessment materials are in the [PYP Staff folder](#). Students are assessed on each writing unit. These assessments should include student self-assessments, peer assessments and teacher assessments using rubrics and/or checklists which are developed with the students. Initial and follow-up assessments of EAL students' language proficiency levels are conducted using the WIDA. Further assessments of progress include many of the strategies listed in the section below.

Units of Inquiry

Pre, formative and summative assessments are documented on the Unit planners.

External Assessment

Students from Grades 3-5 are assessed using MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) in mathematics, reading and language usage. Following guidelines published by NWEA, students with special needs may be read the questions in the Language Usage and Maths assessments but NOT the Reading assessment. If a student is unable to access the Reading assessment without assistance they should be excused from the assessment.

Early Childhood Assessments

These are ongoing and formative. The EC teachers are active listeners and observers, noting growth and developing a culture of thinking and exploration in their homerooms. The recorded assessment strategies used by the EC team during their observations of students in a wide range of learning contexts include tools such as annotated photos, video clips, anecdotal notes and learning journey logs/portfolios. The teachers promote students' conceptual understanding and open ended inquiry by providing a variety of materials and provocations while asking focused questions.

Learning support teachers will conduct assessments to identify learning needs of those referred.

Some of the resources we use are:

- In class observations
- Catch Up Literacy
- Dyslexia Screening Test
- Work samples
- Catch Up Numeracy
- Alpha to Omega
- High Frequency Words
- MAP scores
- Teacher / Parent interviews

Strategies in Effective Assessment

Assessment covers a broad range of approaches in order to provide a balanced view of the student. A range of assessment strategies are outlined below. These are adapted from the IB “Making the PYP Happen.” Taken together, the assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment. Students, peers and teachers should be involved in these.

Observations

All children are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle – focusing on the whole class – to close-up – focusing on one child or activity, and from non-participant – observation from without – to participant – observation from within.

Performance Assessments

These are assessments of goal-directed tasks with established criteria that are authentic challenges and problems. There are numerous approaches to the challenges/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

Process-focused Assessments

The students’ approaches to learning and other skills are observed often and regularly. Conferencing with individuals and groups of students is also an important aspect of gaining an understanding of their competence in the process of learning.

Selected Responses

These are single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.

Open-ended Tasks

Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution.

Tools in Effective Assessment

Assessing for different aspects of the student work yields more information than a grade and can be used for diagnostic purposes to give specific feedback on strengths and weaknesses. Assessment tools are used to support learning and provide ways of recording for information. A range of assessment tools are outlined below. These can be designed by students and/or teachers and completed by combinations of self, peer and teacher assessment.

- Rubrics
- Expectations/exemplars
- Checklists
- Anecdotal records
- Continua (with Anchor papers to support understanding of the continua)
- Reflections

More information on these Assessment Tools and Strategies can be found in 'Making the PYP Happen' page 48-49.

Record Keeping of Assessment Information

Teachers keep records of student achievement and learning that can both inform teaching and be used as evidence to support reporting to parents and giving feedback to students. These can be recorded either in hard copy or digitally. It will include a range of assessment data. Data that you will most likely have is given below but it can include any other evidence that can help you plan instruction effectively or back up what you are reporting out to parents.

Homeroom Teacher Assessment records

Grade 1 to Grade 5 teachers' records of student learning and achievement may include:

- Reading assessment data from the bi-annual assessments
- Class developed rubrics/ checklists using the grade-level benchmarks together with the writing samples they pertain to
- Reading and writing workshop conference notes
- "Words Their Way" assessment of spelling level
- Record of books being read
- Student Goals and reflections
- Written, photographic, video or other digital records of work together with the completed rubric or assessment of them.
- Teacher anecdotal notes of student achievement
- Portfolios

Early Childhood Teachers Assessment records

Early Childhood teachers' records of student learning and achievement may include:

- Annotated photographic evidence of the learning process and skills developed
- Anecdotal records of students actions and words showing evidence of learning
- Tick sheets of assessment of student achievement showing beginning, developing or secure
- Student created pieces including drawings, 'writing' and 3D models
- Beginning of year Parent Surveys

Single Subject Teachers Assessment records

Single subject teachers' records of student learning and achievement may include:

- Anecdotal records where appropriate
- Contributions to student portfolios and digital platforms, such as "SeeSaw"
- Examples of student work: in exercise books, sketchbooks, folders, videos, performances, photographs, podcasts, etc.
- Record of progress towards different learning outcomes.

Personal Learning Profiles

Personal Learning Profiles are used to give teachers a holistic picture about the child. It includes important biographical information, a history of interventions through their school life, the student's reading level, links to any standardised scores, a writing sample, the student's perspective about themselves as a learner and the teachers' perspective on their areas of strengths, challenges and strategies to support learning.

Portfolios

Portfolios are a tool that are used primarily to show student learning over time and to help students to reflect on and share their learning. They can be digital, hardcopy or a combination.

Purpose of Portfolios:

- Give students a voice and be used as a tool to reflect
- Record and show growth or development throughout the year/school journey.
- Report learning and celebrate success with parents.
- Show the breadth of learning across the curriculum
- Show both the process and product of the learning journey.

Portfolio Guidelines

Both student and teacher may select work, items to be left out are negotiated between teacher and student. Items can be selected either because they show the process of learning or the product of learning.

Each item selected should include a reason for or description of the selection either through a student reflection or teacher note; other supporting information such as rubrics, self-assessments or other tools may be included.

The medium of portfolios will be mainly shared through an electronic format that allows for web-based continuous access for parents, students and teachers. This should enable the portfolio to move with the child. These might also be supplemented with hard copy documentation.

The portfolio should be used throughout the school year and should be regarded as a tool to facilitate reflection and communication with parents to highlight a student's learning journey. It could be referred to at both the Three-Way Conference and the Student Led Conference and may be used during Grade Level Teas.

Each grade level, including the Single Subjects, have agreements on posting within digital portfolios with regards to the quantity, frequency and quality of posts.

Parents a chance to learn how to navigate and access the digital portfolios through the Open-House evening and through parent workshops before the JS Assembly.

Reflecting and Reflections – Opportunities for, and records of, student self - assessment

Reflecting on learning and becoming reflective are core characteristics of a PYP Student and a PYP School. The concept of reflection is listed as one of the eight key concepts of the programme and students are expected to become reflective learners as stated as one of the ten learner profile attributes. The definitions from Making the PYP Happen are given below.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Description from the IB Learner Profile

Reflection	
Key question	How do we know?
Definition	The understanding that there are different ways of knowing, and that it is important to reflect on our conclusions, to consider our methods of reasoning, and the quality and the reliability of the evidence we have considered.
Rationale	This concept was selected for a series of interrelated reasons. It challenges the students to examine their evidence, methods and conclusions. In doing so, it extends their thinking into the higher order of metacognition, begins to acquaint them with what it means to know in different disciplines, and encourages them to be rigorous in examining evidence for potential bias or other inaccuracy.
Examples of related concepts	Review, interpretation, evidence, responsibility, behaviour.

Definition of the concept of Reflection

“We learn by doing if we reflect on what we do.” John Dewey

Reflection as part of Learning

Students should regularly have opportunities to think about what they have understood, what they have not understood and are still questioning. They should consider what they can now do or can do better and they should reflect on who they are becoming and what they were like

before. Considering these three areas of what I know or understand, what I can do and what I am becoming incorporates the 5 essential elements of the PYP and the IB Learner Profile. Graphic organisers, to help students reflect on their learning, are saved in the Assessment folder in the PYP staff folder.

Reporting Practices

Feedback (assessment/evaluation) on the grade level subject benchmarks will be provided regularly to both students and parents

Feedback to Parents

Parents receive formal feedback on student progress 4 times per year:

- Three Way Conferences / Parent-Teacher Conferences for EC (October)
- First Semester Report card (December)
- Student-Led Conferences (March)
- 4. End of Year Report Card (June)
- 5. Individual Education Plans (for children Tier 2 and above) see Learning Support Policy & Procedure

Written Reports

There are two written reports completed at the end of each semester using ManageBac. Teachers select benchmarks and skills they will be reporting on for each unit. In the report, the teacher then indicates whether the student is not yet meeting (NY), moving towards (T), meeting (M) or exceeding these (E). The Learning Support Team collaborate with homeroom teachers to compile these reports. The report deadlines are listed on the calendar. All comments must be proofread by another teacher before being submitted to the Principal's Office, with a final review and any amendments made by the author before submission. The Principal and Assistant Principal will read and review the reports. Reports that contain a great many editorial or content concerns will be returned to the teacher, after an appropriate discussion.

Three-way Conferences

Three-way conferences between students, parents and teachers are held at the end of the first quarter of the school year and are used for the students, teachers and parents to reflect on specific areas of strength and successes as well as areas for student growth. Beforehand, teachers and students prepare notes on this. Students identify particular skills and attitudes as their chosen goals and develop an action plan. These are shared with Single Subject teachers, and students reflect how they might achieve these. Single Subjects teachers should be prepared to meet with all students and their parents.

EC Parent Teacher conferences

Early childhood classroom teachers will share with parents how the children have been settling in to the early childhood school environment. It is an opportunity for parents to share their hopes and dreams for their child with the school and teachers.

Student Led Conferences

An important component of the PYP philosophy is the development of students who are actively engaged in building on their previous knowledge and experiences and applying new understandings to become reflective, self-directed learners.

Student-led conferences are conferences in which the student leads their parents through activities and work samples to show what they have learned and the growth they have made throughout the school year. The benefits of holding student-led conferences include:

- Teaching students to reflect more deeply on their progress and to set goals for continued personal, social and academic growth
- Giving students increased ownership of their academic progress
- Providing a forum for students to share the contents of their portfolios with their parents
- Developing students' communication skills
- Honoring the role of all subject areas (including Art, Music, PE, ICT and Languages) as contributing to the development of well-rounded students and people

Student-Led conferences are held at the end of the 3rd quarter of each year, usually before the midterm break. Teachers are expected to prepare students throughout the year to be able to articulate their learning, to build a portfolio and to understand the expectations of the learning on the conference day: this may include leading activities, demonstrating skills etc.

Grade Level Teas

Grade Level Teas happen two to three times per year. Parents are invited to come to the class and the students share what they have been learning with them. They are an opportunity for parents to find out more about the learning in the class from the student and to celebrate that learning. They are also an opportunity for parents to get to know each other.

Feedback to students

Teachers will provide regular, timely and accurate feedback to students against the learning goals. Students will be able to articulate their learning and understanding in light of the information shared by the teacher.

Handover information for the next teacher

The Personal Learning Profile contains information for the next homeroom teacher. Single Subject teachers should also have access to this document. Hard copies of Reading Assessments should also be passed on.

Senior School Assessment Procedures

Types of Assessment

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is assessment *for* learning. Teachers constantly monitor how well students are developing and students regularly reflect on the skills and content they are learning. Formative assessment comprises of ongoing and continuous skill building tasks that include, but are not restricted to:

- Completion of exercises to practise specific content or skills
- Research skills
- Partner quizzes peer teaching
- Group work
- Vocab quizzes
- Class discussion
- Clear notes in notebook
- Self-assessment
- Sharing/presentation of information collected to class

Formative assessment should not be reported through grades on ManageBac as it is considered a continual process.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is assessment *of* learning. Summative assessment is used after a significant period of learning to gain evidence on how the student is meeting the programme objectives. Summative tasks include but are not restricted to:

- Investigations or explorations
- Presentations- eg. speeches, debates, dramatic performances
- Tests or exams
- Essays and other formal writing tasks
- Technology integrated presentations – e.g. videos/recordings,
- Design portfolios

Summative assessment should be reported through grades on ManageBac using IB criteria.

Deadlines and Accountability for Summative Assessments

If a student continues to fail to meet deadlines for a summative assessment, the student will be placed in Study Hall to complete work and gain support for organisation skills. Students in the Diploma/Courses programmes who continually miss non-negotiable deadlines will receive an internal suspension until work has been completed.

Use of ManageBac

Guidelines are set for the placement of graded work and homework on ManageBac. Details of the responsibilities and expectations are described in the *ISU Parent-Student Handbook*.

ISU Examinations

External Examinations/Moderation

Students in Grade 12 sit the IB examinations in May of each year. These are externally assessed by the IB.

MYP eAssessments

Held in May, the MYP on-screen exam and ePortfolio for Grade 10 students provide IB validated grades and recognition of achievement. Students in grade 10 will also submit Personal Projects which are internally assessed and then sent to the IB for verification.

Internal Examinations/Tests

Students in Grades 6-8 sit internal mid-year and end of year tests/assessments. However, assessment remains an ongoing process and may take various forms. Students from Grade 9-11 sit internal mid-year and end-of-year unit tests and/or examinations towards the end of each semester. Since Grade 10 students sit the eAssessments in May they are not required to sit the internal ISU exams at the end of the year. Students in Grade 12 undertake mock IB examinations in February of their final year.

Prior to or During Admission

Students may be requested to complete admissions assessments to review skills in mathematics and language. This helps to inform placement and subject choice.

Standardisation

Where more than one teacher is teaching the same subject group, the process of internal standardization must take place before final achievement levels are awarded. Internal standardization of assessment is also required for the personal project. The process involves teachers meeting to come to a common understanding on the criteria and achievement levels and how they are applied. In doing so, teachers increase the reliability of judgements.

Standardization takes place throughout the school year to promote consistency and builds common understandings about student achievement with respect to MYP objectives

Page 84 MYP Principles into Practice

At ISU standardisation primarily takes place at a department level with department meetings or collaborative planning sessions used for standardisation. It is the responsibility of the SAL to ensure that the subject groups' objectives are discussed and it is the teachers responsibility to ensure that assessments are standardised before work is returned to the student. It is important to note that not all pieces of work have to be standardised but a selection across the classes so that it is understood how the achievement levels are to be awarded.

With regard to the ePortfolios and the Personal Project, time will be allocated during the Wednesday meeting times to help facilitate the standardisation of this work before the sample is sent to the IB for moderating.

Accommodations and Modifications (Learning Support and English as an Additional Language)

Students that are eligible for Learning Support have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with accommodations that apply in the classroom and on assessments. Accommodations depend on the students' needs and are determined by the external educational psychologist's report.

Students who require modifications are given them on specific tasks and assessments when necessary. This work receives a modified grade which is indicated on the report card.

The Diploma Programme allows accommodations for DP exams for students who qualify. In Grade 11 applications are made to the IB for accommodations and all DP assessments will be taken with those accommodations. See IB documentation for details.

Gifted and Talented Students

Any students who are identified as Gifted and Talented will be assessed using the same assessments as the rest of their class. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the assessment is written so that the highest achievement levels can be reached. Gifted and Talented students may be set project work during units of work so that they are stretched in other ways. It is not mandatory to assess this work using IB grades.

MYP External Assessment (eAssessment)

Students seeking IB MYP Certificates at the end of Grade 10 must complete the necessary eAssessments in all MYP subjects

eAssessment: On-Screen Examinations

On Screen examinations are undertaken in English Language and Literature, Individuals and Society, Mathematics, Science and Interdisciplinary Learning. Students registered for the completion of the MYP must complete on-screen examinations in May in which they can demonstrate their achievement of subject group objectives. The examinations are externally marked. Successful results contribute to students' attainment of their MYP Certificates.

eAssessment: ePortfolio

Students seeking MYP Certificates must complete and pass an ePortfolio in Language Acquisition and a choice of Design, Arts or PHE, and the Personal Project in which they can demonstrate their achievement of subject group objectives. The ePortfolio is marked by the students' teachers, following the school's internal standardisation of tasks and judgments against the criteria for year 5. A process of external moderation assures accurate and consistently applied global standards.

External Assessment: Students from Grades 6-10 are assessed using MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) in mathematics, reading and language usage. Following guidelines published by NWEA, students with special needs may be read the questions in the Language Usage and Maths assessments but NOT the Reading assessment. If a student is unable to access the Reading assessment without assistance they should be excused from the assessment.

DP Examinations and Internal Assessment

Usually, the Internal Assessment (IA) is a major "project" that requires students to apply the content knowledge and skills learned in the course. It is usually worth between 20% and 30% of the overall course grade. The IA is internally graded by the teacher and the IB then moderates samples of work, to ensure that the teacher is applying criteria and achievement levels accurately, adjusting them, if necessary. This ensures that the teacher's assessment standards are in sync with those set forth by

the IB and applied worldwide. Examples of IAs include oral language exercises, oral presentations, practical laboratory work, fieldwork, mathematical investigations, historical investigations and artistic performances.

The External Assessment is usually in the form of exams taken in May of Grade 12.

They are usually worth between 70% and 80% of the overall course grade. The exams are based on all content knowledge and skills learned in the previous two years and will require extensive revision and preparation. The exams are created by the IB and sent to schools around the world, to be taken at the same time on the same day. The exams are then externally assessed by trained examiners all over the world, according to published grading criteria and mark schemes. Some external assessments are not in the form of exams but are still graded by external examiners.

These include the Language A Works in Translation Essay, TOK essay, Visual Arts Exhibition and the Extended Essay.

Specific details on Assessment Criteria for DP Core elements (TOK, EE, and CAS) are clarified in the *IB Diploma Handbook*.

Grades and Reports

Students receive a narrative report at the end of each semester which includes grades for the work completed in that semester. A progress report is generated at the end of each quarter which details development in specific Approaches to Learning (ATL) areas and comments for improvement. DP students will receive grades in all reports which are used to guide and monitor progress.

Use of Criteria in the MYP

Each subject is assessed using 4 criteria which increase in complexity from MYP1 (grade 6) to MYP5 (Grade 10). Each assessment is explained to the student through task specific clarifications.

Grades are determined by:

- Best fit judgement
- At least three judgements for each strand, for each criterion, over the course of an academic year
- Equal weighting of each criterion
- The final grade reflecting the student's level of achievement throughout the academic year
- Trends, not averaging

Use of Criteria in the DP

Grades are determined through the use of Assessment Rubrics in the Subject Guides and Past Exam Mark-bands to create a 'best fit' IB Diploma 1-7 score. Teachers are also expected to use their professional experience to come to these grades.

Summative tasks are created using past papers and IB Diploma style questions.

Report grades are a representation of all summative tasks completed in the assessment period.

Honour Roll

In recognition of outstanding student achievement, ISU provides students the opportunity to be placed on the Honour Roll at the conclusion of each marking period (after each semester). In order to be eligible for the Honour Roll, students must maintain an average grade of 6 in all courses, with no grades lower than a 5 in any given course.

Academic Honesty and Ethical Practice in the MYP and DP

Details of these policies are described in the *ISU Senior School Academic Honesty Policy* and *International Baccalaureate Academic Honesty Policy* documents.

ISU High School Diploma Graduation Requirements

Details of these policies are described in the *Senior School Parent and Student Handbook*

Placement of Students in Extended Classes in Grades 9 and 10

Details of these policies are described in the *Senior School Parents and Student Handbook*