

Mission

Our mission is to provide international education for children of the multicultural community in order to prepare them for life in the 21st century.

Vision

Our vision is to be a regional centre for educational excellence and IB best practice.

Purpose

The primary purpose of assessment is to support and improve student learning. As all students have different learning styles, experiences and abilities, hence the assessment and evaluation of their learning must be fair and demonstrate a full range of best practices.

The purposes of assessment at Stonehill encompass the following:

- provision of feedback on the learning process
- recording and celebrating learning and success
- enabling students to practise skills, and facilitating the learning process
- enabling teachers to adapt to the needs of their students
- enabling the identification of effective teaching strategies and informing future teaching
- informing school policy and enabling the identification of training needs
- serving as a basis for communication with parents and outside institutions
- provision of information to facilitate transition of students between sections within the school, between schools, and between school and university

The Nature of Assessment

All assessments are based on an understanding, shared between student and teacher, of what should be assessed and how. This should not remove challenge, but should support students, as they become independent learners.

Assessment is followed by reflection on the part of student and teacher, on how to best facilitate further progress. The following criteria for effective assessments are applicable to both formative and summative assessment. It takes into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts. It uses scoring that is both analytical (separate scores for different aspects of the work) and holistic (single scores).

Assessment allows students to:

- know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiry
- demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- express different points of view and interpretations
- use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- share their learning and understanding with others
- participate in reflection, self- and peer-assessment
- analyse their learning and understand what needs to be improve

Teachers use assessment to:

- plan every stage of the teaching and learning process
- plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- develop criteria for producing quality products or performances
- gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community
- collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning

Assessment allows parents to:

- see evidence of student learning and development
- develop an understanding of the their son/daughter's progress

Assessment Strategies and Tools

The following methods of assessment have been identified as central to the work of Stonehill International School. It is essential that they be seen as a package since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of the child.

Formative Assessment: On-going assessment aimed at providing information to guide teaching and improve student performance.

Summative Assessment: The culminating assessment for a unit, term or course of study, designed to provide information on the student's achievement level against specific objectives.

Portfolios

These are collections of children's work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of an active mind at work. Portfolios should provide students with an opportunity to articulate their learning.

Open-ended Tasks

These are situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer can be represented in a way selected by the student using one of the identified multiple intelligences. Examples include investigation, research project and experimental work.

Selected Responses

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

Process-focused Assessments

The students' skills are observed often and regularly and the observations are recorded by noting both typical as well as non-typical behaviours. Teachers collect multiple observations to enhance reliability and synthesise evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories, narrative descriptions, fieldwork and journal writing are common methods of collecting these observations.

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, performance and presentations are often useful for this kind of assessment.

Observations

All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from 'wide angle' focusing on the whole class or group work, to 'close-up' focusing on one student or activity, and from 'non-participant' to 'participant' (interacting or being a part of observing from within).

Planning of Assessments

As the teaching programme is designed, assessments should be designed concurrently. Assessments should be both formative and summative and viewed as authentic, essential, rich, engaging and feasible, allowing the student to become part of the process.

The taught curriculum and the tools used to assess student performance and understanding emphasize important principles of international education as prescribed by the IB. These principles include the development of inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

In all three IB programmes student performance and progress is assessed based upon clear and explicit criteria in subject domains identified by the school. Evidence is collected about other essential elements of the programme especially in relation to the trans-disciplinary skills and/or the integration of particular skills. Student learning is promoted through planning the teaching and learning in order to meet all of these objectives in a manner that takes into account both individual and group needs.

Good assessment practice requires the teacher to build assessment in from the earliest stages of curriculum planning and link assessment tasks to the central idea of the unit under study or the curriculum-learning outcome. The quality of any assessment depends first and foremost on the clarity and appropriateness of the purpose. With these outcomes, central ideas and assessment tasks in mind, activities and resources can then be selected.

(Bavarian International School)

In the Primary Years Programme (PYP) teachers are expected to clearly outline assessment tools and strategies in Units Of Inquiry and single-subject planning. Planning should be accessible for the PYP coordinator, the Primary Principal, the relevant year team teachers and should be saved in a way that will facilitate collaborative planning.

The following can be viewed as an essential practice checklist when planning for assessment:

- ensure that each assessment tool is aligned with the criteria it is designed to assess
- assess what is most essential to assess
- plan backwards: design major assessments ahead of teaching
- provide students with clear criteria for success at the beginning of the learning process
- provide students with clear models of success at the beginning of the learning process
- ensure the assessment tool provides 'best' evidence of the criteria being assessed

In the Middle Years Programme (MYP) when creating units, teachers must ensure that assessments:

- are integral to the learning process
- are aligned with subject-group objectives
- gather information from a variety of perspectives, using a range of tasks according to the needs of the subject and the nature of the knowledge, skills and understanding being assessed
- are appropriate to the age group and reflect the development of the students within the subject
- provide evidence of student understanding through authentic performance (not simply the recall of factual knowledge)

In the Diploma Programme (DP) most formal assessment is external, and includes examinations or work completed during the course and then sent to an external examiner. Some formal assessment is internal, requiring the teacher to mark the work before it is moderated by an external moderator.

DP assessments measure students' achievement levels against published criteria that are derived from the course aims and objectives. The assessment expectations, standards

and practices are introduced early in the course and are the focus of class and homework activities. Teachers design and provide formative assessment structures and practices that help students improve their understanding of what constitutes excellence and where their own work stands in relation to this. Formative assessment is also important for the teacher, as it provides detailed feedback on the nature of the students' strengths and limitations. The emphasis here (a key component of learning how to learn) is on making the student a better judge of their own performance and then helping them develop strategies to improve. Formative assessment focuses on assessment as an essential learning process. The school uses a number of practices and instruments to support this, including: student self-evaluation supported by the teacher.

Expectations for Teachers and Students

Good record keeping is vital for building a clear profile of student understanding. Whether done electronically or otherwise, recording offers the evidence about the strengths and weaknesses of the individual student. However, it is not enough for this information to remain with the teacher, this information has to be shared if it is to effect change. (Bavarian International School)

Recording of Secondary Assessment

Teachers are required to record continuously the progress of students. These records should be available to show to the individual student or parent. Records need to:

- be simple, clear and precise
- be on-going and cumulative
- be accessible
- be based on a range of evidence
- cover achievement in the IB Programmes
- show a range of other additional developmental achievements
- give dates and titles of individual tasks

Assessment Expectations for Secondary Staff

The following points are intended to clarify for teaching staff what the expectations are in relation to assessment, recording and reporting students' performance.

- At the start of the course, provide all students with the assessment objectives, so that they know what is expected of them. If possible, provide examples of work at different grade levels. In MYP assessment tasks are clearly linked to criteria descriptors and this is made clear to students during the assessment.
- Provide written formative assessment on a regular basis.
- Student's work is marked with positive, constructive feedback and returned in a timely manner.
- Assessments are varied and differentiated to allow for students demonstrating personalised learning.
- When assessments indicate that a student has not achieved the required learning, there is an obligation on the part of the teacher to support that student and ensure that learning is takes place.

- A system for identifying and dealing with underachieving students, coordination with the HOD and appropriate Programme Coordinator is a critical part of this process.
- Summative assessments with associated deadlines known and understood by the students in advance are placed on the secondary assessment calendar per year group.
- Identify a clear diary of target dates for the completion of assessment, records and standardisation.

Recording of Primary Assessment

Teachers are required to keep on-going data and a variety of records of student achievement that are accessible for the PYP Coordinator and Primary Principal. The Assessment data should be regularly updated and passed onto the new Class Teacher at the end of the academic year.

We keep a record of assessment for the following reasons:

- to provide evidence of student progress and attainment
- to provide evidence that supports the judgments made when reporting to parents
- to gain data which, when evaluated, will enhance learning and guide teacher planning
- Primary teachers should maintain:
 - an on-going record of test/task results that demonstrate student progress and attainment
 - evidence that supports the judgments made in student reports
 - data from whole school standardized assessment

The Primary Student Portfolio

Portfolios are used as part of a process of reflection and review. They are a purposeful collection of work that celebrates the process and products of learning. They belong to the student and will go home at the end of the school year. Portfolios should be visible and accessible in the classroom either in folders or electronically. For further details please refer to the Primary Student Portfolio Essential Agreement.

Primary Literacy Profile

Literacy Profiles are used throughout the Primary School to show a clear progression of reading and writing development across the primary years. The Literacy Profile will stay with the child from year to year and will contain writing samples and reading assessment sheets (running records and miscue analysis). The writing sample and a Probe or PM Benchmark record sheet will be collected each quarter prior to the reporting period and will be stored in each student's Literacy Profile Folders.

Early Years Assessment Profile

An Early Years Assessment Profile is used to record children's development in key areas of Language, Mathematics and Personal, Social and Physical Education. The continuums

should be updated quarterly before each reporting period to provide a record of the on-going formative assessment in class.

Primary Standardised Assessment

Standardised assessment is used in the primary school to:

- provide an external benchmark of student attainment and progress
- enable teachers to triangulate assessment data to increase the credibility and validity of their results
- track students' progress over time
- highlight strengths and weaknesses in curricular provision
- compare cohorts of students (EAL, gender, nationality etc.)

When using standardised assessment data it is important to consider the following:

- standardised testing is one small part of a comprehensive process of assessment
- we use standardised tests with the understanding that they are simplistic and generic but they also provide quick and easy way to measure basic skills in core subjects
- teachers should not 'teach to the test'

We use the following standardised tests in the Primary School:

- New Group Reading Test (NGRT)
- This adaptive online reading assessment is completed in August, December and May.
- Children in P4-P8 complete this assessment.
- Progress In English
- This online assessment is completed in August and May. Children in P4-P8 complete this assessment.
- Progress in Mathematics
- This online assessment is completed in August and May. Children in P4-P8 complete this assessment.

Internal Standardization

In the different subjects teachers engage in internal standardization. The process involves teachers meeting to come to a common understanding about the criteria and achievement bands and how they are applied. In so doing, teachers increase the reliability of their judgments. Standardization throughout the school year promotes consistency and builds common understanding.

Each department should have a set of subject specific guidelines to encourage consistency in designing and marking assessment tasks e.g. agreed grade boundaries at DP based on averages from exams in recent years.

Reports

The three major stakeholders in any student's learning are the teacher, the student and the parents. Keeping parents up to date is vital to maintaining progress and, when

needed, intervening to support the students progress. Reporting performs this key function, providing parents and students with an up to date outline of their performance in relation to learning outcomes and identifying where their strengths and weaknesses lie. To this end reporting is seen to be the formal component of the feedback process. Effective reporting provides positive motivation and reinforcement for students who strive to reach their personal best and supports continuity and progression throughout the school. (Bavarian International School)

Secondary Reports

During the course of the school year we report formally to all parents on four occasions. There are two diagnostic reports, known as Semester 1 and Semester 2 Reports and two Mid-semester 1 and 2 Reports, which are known as Grade Cards. The writing of these reports is a professional responsibility of all teachers and the final document is to be of the highest quality.

The Diagnostic (Semester) Report will be made up of one sheet per subject on which we will record the following information:

- An IB grade (1-7) based on performance to date
- An examination grade (1-7) if applicable
- Approaches to learning expectations
- MYP/DP Assessment Criteria
- This includes comments specifically on achievement, performance and the progress made (not general comments). The last part should have areas of strengths and weaknesses, specific areas for improvement or how to maintain the achievement, ways to help the student continue to learn and develop their ATL skills. The comment section must not simply use vague and unhelpful terms like satisfactory progress, could do better, but give concrete assessment feedback based on the assessment criteria.
- Grade Cards provide a summary overview of assessment. A grade for Achievement (IB 1-7 scale) is given as well as an Effort grade. The grades represent two stand-alone semester grades, with the first and third quarter grades being interim grades. Student transcripts only record the semester grades.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep in regular communication with teachers in the partnership process. Teachers are encouraged to use non-contact periods to book consultation meetings with families in case of concerns. There are two Parent-Teacher-Student conferences per year.

Reports should enable the recording of a range of achievements in both subject areas and in ATLs and related to the learner profile.

Primary Reports

The purpose of the Primary Student Report is to support learning by providing information to students and parents about achievement and progress, and to indicate areas for further development. It serves as a formal record at a point in time of a student's progress and achievement. Teachers are responsible for providing accurate and comprehensive information about the student's academic, social and personal development. Furthermore, reporting on student achievement in the Primary School provides a measure of school accountability for student learning and progress.

Four Primary Student Reports are issued during the academic year, consisting of two mid-semester reports and two end of semester reports. Mid-semester reports offer feedback pertaining to student numeracy, literacy, units of inquiry, and personal and social development achievement. End of semester reports document numeracy, literacy, units of inquiry, personal and social development as well as single subject disciplines. There is one student-led conference (SLC) per year. There are two parent, teacher, student conferences (PTSC) per year.

Appendix 1

Using MYP Assessment Criteria

The MYP assessment criteria across subject groups can be summarized as follows:

	A	B	C	D
Language and literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Language acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
Individuals and societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Sciences	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Mathematics	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Physical and health education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
MYP projects	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting
Interdisciplinary	Disciplinary grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting

Schools must regularly report student progress towards the MYP objectives using the prescribed subject-group assessment criteria. The criteria for each subject group represent the use of knowledge, understanding and skills that must be taught. They encompass the factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive dimensions of knowledge. Assessment criteria for years 1, 3 and 5 of the programme are provided in MYP subject-group guides, and their use is mandatory.

Appendix 2

MYP General Grade Descriptors

To arrive at a criterion levels total for each student, teachers add together the student's final achievement levels in all criteria of the subject group.

Schools using the MYP 1–7 scale should use the grade boundary guidelines table that follows to determine final grades in each year of the MYP. The table provides a means of converting the criterion levels total into a grade based on a scale of 1–7.

Grade	Boundary guidelines	Descriptor
1	1–5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6–9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10–14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15–18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19–23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24–27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28–32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

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