



مدارس الإمارات الوطنية
Emirates National Schools

Abu Dhabi City Campus Primary Years Programme Assessment Policy

*Policy Developed: May 2013
Next Policy Review: June 2014*

Abu Dhabi City Campus' Mission Statement

The mission of Abu Dhabi City Campus, an internationally-minded learning community, is dedicated to the development of inquiring, critical thinking, globally responsible citizens who are challenged to realize their full potential through authentic learning experiences.

The International Baccalaureate's Mission Statement

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 programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

1. Philosophy

At Abu Dhabi City Campus assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning: the acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action. The prime objective of assessment in the PYP is to provide feedback on the learning process.

Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers will be actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills.

Teachers need to be mindful of the particular learning outcomes on which they intend to report, prior to selecting or designing the method of assessment. They need to employ techniques for assessing students' work that take into account the diverse, complicated and sophisticated ways that individual students use to understand experiences. Additionally, the PYP stresses the importance of both student and teacher self-assessment and reflection.

2. Purpose of Assessment:

The purpose of assessment in the Abu Dhabi Campus Primary Years Programme (PYP) is to validate and verify student learning, and to provide information on student learning to students, parents, teachers, administration, and community stakeholders. The process of assessment looks deeper into the understanding and implementation of the 5 essential elements. Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering evidence for and of learning. This evidence will be used to give recognition and timely feedback to the learners and all other stakeholders. Assessment will reflect best practice that supports the learner and the teacher in the promotion of student achievement. ²Everyone concerned with assessment, including students, teachers, parents and administrators, should have a clear understanding of the reason for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success, and the method by which the assessment is made. The entire school community should also be concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the program.

¹ Extract from 'Making the PYP Happen' book page 44

² Extract from 'Making the PYP Happen' book page 44 & 45

3. Definition of Assessment:

³“Assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes.”

Assessment provides:

- **teachers** opportunities to uncover misunderstandings and discover enduring understandings; and
- **students** opportunities to choose learning activities, act on the learning presented and reflect on learning that has been completed.

In Abu Dhabi City Campus we believe assessment is an integral element to all teaching and learning that takes place. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning. ⁴The five essential elements of PYP are:

- acquisition of **knowledge**
- understanding of **concepts**
- mastering of **trans-disciplinary skills**
- development of **attitudes**
- decisions to take **action**

4. ⁵Principles of Assessment

Based on teachers' input in the assessment survey, our assessment system incorporates strategies that assess students in many different ways, catering for different learning styles and the needs of our students. As a school we are exploring other reporting systems that will allow us more freedom to accurately assess our students based on the five essential elements of the PYP. Assessment will be completed on a continuum of learning which is focused on individual growth regardless of the students' initial academic abilities. Assessments are linked to our Units of Inquiry which have been developed to correspond with the Abu Dhabi City Campus standards.

Effective assessments allow students to:

- share their learning and understanding with others
- demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding

³ 2006, Council of Chief State School Officers

⁴ Extract from 'Making the PYP Happen' book page 46.

⁵ Extract from the 'Making the PYP Happen book' page 47

- know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- participate in reflection, self- and peer-assessment
- base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries
- express different points of view and interpretations
- analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved.

Effective assessments allow teachers to:

- inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- 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
- take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- use scoring that is both analytical (separate scores for different aspects of the work) and holistic (single scores).

Effective assessments allow parents to:

- see evidence of student learning and development
- develop an understanding of the student's progress
- provide opportunities to support and celebrate students' learning

Things to remember:

The assessment of the development and learning of young students is an essential component of the curriculum, and helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching. Students should be observed in a variety of situations, and a wide range of assessment strategies should be implemented. The teacher observes the young student in order to:

- build up a clear picture of the student and his or her interests
- identify what and how the student is thinking and learning
- assess the effectiveness of the environment on the student's learning
- extend the student's learning.

When observing, the teacher should monitor carefully what the students say. By listening carefully, the teacher can learn about their current interests, knowledge base, level of involvement and social skills. The teacher should share these observations with the student, analyze the interactions within a group, discover the student's strengths and difficulties, and reflect on the effectiveness of the practices used to implement the programme of inquiry and other classroom experiences.

It is important to identify the needs of each student and to view learning as a continuum, with each student achieving developmental milestones in different but relevant ways. Through listening and observing, areas of learning that the students particularly enjoy can be identified, and stimulating experiences can be planned to consolidate or extend the learning further.

How do we plan for Assessment at Abu Dhabi City Campus:

At Abu Dhabi City Campus, we believe that in the earliest stages of curriculum planning, good assessment practice requires that teachers ensure the **summative assessment** tasks are linked to the central idea of either the unit of inquiry or of any teaching outside the programme of inquiry. This summative assessment should provide varied opportunities for the students to show their conceptual understanding. With these central ideas and assessment tasks in mind, activities and resources can be selected.

Teachers should develop ways to assess prior knowledge and skills in order to plan the inquiry. Teachers should also consider ways of assessing students' learning in the context of the lines of inquiry that support the inquiry into the central idea (**formative assessments**).

Continuous assessment provides insights into students' understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is also a means of exploring the learning styles and individual differences⁷ of the students in order to differentiate instruction.

When planning for assessment, teachers should think like assessors rather than activity designers, clearly setting the criteria that distinguish students' understanding of the central idea or learning objective. The teacher must constantly look for evidence that meets the criteria. Students should be involved whenever possible in the planning of an assessment task.

In planning for assessment, it is important to ask these questions:

- What is the function of the assessment?
- What central idea or learning objectives are being assessed?
- What evidence of the learning will be looked for?
- How can the evidence be collected?
- What experiences are being provided/supported to help the students be successful with the assessment?
- Will the assessment task demonstrate understanding?
- Is the assessment reliable enough to allow sound conclusions to be drawn?
- How will the assessment data be analyzed and recorded?

⁶ Extract from 'Making the PYP Happen' book page 31

⁷ Mentioned by the teachers in the Policy 1st draft Review

- How and when will feedback be given?

5. Elements and Types of Assessment:

Abu Dhabi City Campus' approach to assessment recognizes the importance of assessing the *process* of inquiry based instruction as well as the *products* resulting from inquiry based instruction. The main goal of assessment in the PYP in Abu Dhabi City Campus is to provide feedback on the learning process and the development of the five essential elements to inform further learning. Students and teachers are actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-assessment skills.

⁸The assessment component in the school's curriculum can itself be subdivided into three closely related areas.

- Assessing – how we discover what the students know and have learned
- Recording – how we choose to collect and analyze data
- Reporting – how we choose to communicate information

Assessing:

The assessment of the students' cognitive and affective development and academic learning is an essential component of the taught curriculum, and helps to inform teachers and parents of continued cognitive and affective development, academic learning and teaching strategies to be employed. In assessing students' work, knowledge and attitudes (behaviors) students are observed in a variety of situations and a wide range of assessment strategies are applied. In Abu Dhabi City Campus the classroom employs a range of formative and summative assessments, which demonstrate student achievements.

Formative assessment: Formative assessment provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning or to modify the approach used in the delivery of teaching. Formative assessment can help teachers and students find out what the students already know and can do and as a result adapt the strategies and outcomes for learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together.

Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback to the student on their achievement throughout the learning process. The formative assessment process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success. There is evidence that increased use of formative assessment particularly helps those students who are low achievers to make significant improvements in their understanding.

Summative assessment: Summative assessment aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding of what has been learned cumulatively. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned to a set final point in time. Summative assessment can assess several elements of the learning target simultaneously. Summative assessment can inform future instruction and lead to improvement in student mastery of the learning targets and improve the teaching process. Summative assessment monitors the progress of the learner and measures student attainment of academic content standards, understanding of the central idea, 5 essential elements, especially the key concepts and prompts students towards action.

6. Reporting Strategies and Descriptors of Methods of Student Assessment:

Reporting on assessment in Abu Dhabi City Campus includes communicating what students know, understand, and can do as it relates to the learning target to be achieved. Reporting, on the learning act, involves parents, students and teachers as partners and is intended to be honest, comprehensive and understandable communication to all parties.

Reporting to parents, students, and teachers occurs through:

- Back to School Night and Parent Development Sessions
- Conferences (parent-student-teacher, parent-teacher, student-teacher and student led)
- Quarterly Progress Reports, Child Observation Records, and Portfolios
- Student Data Folder
- PowerSchool Parent Portal
- Parent Communication Office meetings for individual conferences
- The Student Developed Exhibition

Recording the Information:

The Abu Dhabi City Campus' community uses a range of methods and approaches to gather information about student learning. They record this information using a variety of methods and tools including:

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Assessment Methods and tools

⁹ Extract from 'Making the PYP Happen' book page 48 & 49

Assessment tools					
Assessment Methods	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal records	Continuums
Performance Task Assessments	•	•		•	•
Observations and Guided Practice	•		•	•	•
Formative/Summative Assessments	•	•		•	•

Formative and Summative		Performance Task	Independent Practice
Selected Response	Constructed Response	Product/Performance	Guided/Independent Practice
Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Oral Language • Anecdotal notes • Multiple Choice • True/False • Matching • Fill in the blank • Spelling Test • Math Facts • Quiz • Daily Oral Language 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short answer • Non-linguistic Representations • Drawing/Writing Sample • Anecdotal Notes • Extended Essays • Research Paper • Sketch Book • Writing Sample • Oral Report • Personal Reflections 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-World Problem-solving Tasks • Projects • Music/Drama Performance • Portfolio pieces • Complex Real-World Problem-solving Tasks • Presentations • Music Performance • Speech/Debate • ICT Design Projects • Art Portfolio • Wellness Plan 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Observation Record • Confering/conferencing • KG Daily Routine: Daily Message • Large Group Inquiry Time • Small Group Inquiry Time • Choose, Reflect, Act (PDR) • Oral Question-response • Homework • Classroom Work: Cooperative Group, Engaging Activities, Table Team Tasks , Academic Games

Teachers use a range of methods to document evidence of student learning and understanding. In addition to traditional assessment methods (constructed/selected response), teachers may use video, audio, photographic, artifacts, presentations, projects and graphic representations. In the process of assessing students, teachers produce written records of anecdotal notes of standard conversations, comments, explanations and hypotheses as well as annotated pieces of students' work that form part of a student portfolio which demonstrates more comprehensive student learning.

Assessment Methods¹⁰	
Observations	All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from nonparticipant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).
Performance assessments	The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They

¹⁰ Teachers' Survey

	are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.
Process-focused assessments	Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviors, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing 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 and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting observations.
Selected responses	Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.
Constructed Response	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. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, is included in a portfolio.
Assessment tools	
Rubrics	An established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well.
Exemplars	Samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric.
Checklists	These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present and accumulate over time as students add to their knowledge. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.
Anecdotal records	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.
Continuums	These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

Parent/Teacher Communication:

- All primary and kindergarten teachers are responsible for informing parents about the PYP and their program of inquiry units for the year using the forms of communication identified below. The PYP coordinator will provide regular information about the PYP using a range of communication strategies through school newsletters, parent workshops, and formal presentations.
- Class Newsletters and emails sent to parents and students.
- Inviting parents to view the learning of their children formally to school (mini-'exhibition' or celebration of learning events) or informally (when parents visit classes or student learning is sent home to share).

Back to School Night and Parent Education Evenings:

Parents gain information about the school from the Principal/Head of KG or Primary and classroom teachers regarding the curriculum, assessments and classroom expectations at the beginning of every year. Additional Parent Education sessions are offered throughout the year to address programs, policies and practices in teaching and learning within the school.

Teacher Comments:

Teacher comments are posted in the PowerSchool Student Information System for parents to access at the end of each quarter. Within the academic content areas, teacher's comments include the student's progress related to acquisition of knowledge, concepts, and skills. The comments include references related to progress on the IB Attitudes, the trans-disciplinary skills, and the Action Components of the PYP, where appropriate. Single-subject teachers will also comment on IB attitudes and trans-disciplinary skills within their quarterly reports.

Conferences:

Parent-Teacher Conference: Parent-Teacher conferences are formal reporting sessions where the student may or may not be present. The session aims to clarify learning expectations for the year and describes the current level of proficiency. This session is also used to express initial concerns or commendations regarding academics and behavior.

3-Way Conferences: 3-Way Conferences are formal reporting sessions for parents, led by the teacher with the active participation of the student. The focus of the Three-way Conference is on students' progress over time, academic and social, that has occurred within the school setting. This encourages the student to become more actively involved and committed to their learning.

Student Led Conference: Student led Conferences are formal reporting sessions for parents that are led by the student during which time the student shares their progress using a portfolio as the central tool for reflection. The teacher's role in this process is to guide and prepare the student for communicating their progress in meeting learning expectations. The emphasis, for the conference, is on the discussion that occurs between a child and his/her parent on the learning that has taken place. This conference serves as a "Celebration" of student learning throughout the year, and helps students assume responsibility and accountability for their learning.

Parent Communication Office Meetings:

This is an optional interview where the teachers, parents, PCO's and sometimes students meet to discuss additional behavioral and academic learning needs, interventions, and/or remediation concerns.

Portfolio:

The portfolio is a learning evaluation tool for teachers, students and parents. The portfolio assists teachers, parents and students by historically presenting a continuum of student artifacts that reflect the progress that has been made in achieving the learning targets, and also serves as a guide to possible teaching and learning strategies that will further develop the student's learning. The portfolio is an important part of the school's academic reporting program. The portfolio provides a record of student effort and achievement in selected areas of the school's curriculum. The portfolio also provides a dynamic means of three-way communication between parents, students and teachers. Each teacher and/or student shares the work within the Portfolio with parents of the individual, three-way and/or Student-led conference three times a year. Students reflect on, discuss their work, and select samples to place in the portfolio under the guidance of teachers. Student self-reflection of the attributes of the IB Learner Profile is an integral component part of the portfolio. The portfolio is sent home at the end of the year with the student. Essential agreements developed within each school provide the details of portfolio form and function.

The PYP Student Exhibition:

Students in the final year of the PYP carry out a student-driven unit of inquiry, referred to as the PYP Exhibition. At Abu Dhabi City Campus, this Exhibition occurs during the final term of the school year in grade 5. The Exhibition Unit is designed to be a culmination of the PYP and provides a forum for students to showcase the development of the five essential elements of the PYP. Other key purposes include providing opportunities for students to:

- Research and present on an in-depth, collaborative inquiry based project;
- Explore multiple perspectives of their topics through individual research
- Demonstrate independence and responsibility for their learning;
- Synthesize and apply their learning of previous years, and to reflect on their journey through the PYP;
- Providing an authentic process for assessing student understanding;
- Demonstrating how students can take action as a result of their learning;
- Unite the students, teachers, parents and other members of the school community in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP;
- Celebrating the transition of learners from PYP to MYP education

Student Data Folder:

The purpose of the student data folder is to collect and forward end-of-year assessment information to the teacher the student will be engaged with at the next level of their academic progression. This is specific information in addition to data found in the PowerSchool Student Information System:

- Online COR Report (KG Level)
- Reading Level (Concepts of Print, Emergent, through Fluent)
- Grade 1 end-of-year Everyday Math summative assessment

- Writing Prompt from final Unit of Inquiry (Introduction by student to teacher)
- Grades 2-10 (NWEA MAP Reading, Language, and Math - Individual Student File)
- General comments on learning and behavior, commendations and/or concerns

Criterion-Referenced Achievement Tests:

NorthWest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in Reading, Language, and Mathematics, are used as a part of the whole school assessment policy in an effort to gain as much academic and achievement information as possible about the student as a learner and about the program efficacy compared to international norms.

MAP assessments are criterion referenced based assessments specifically used for the following reasons:

- To provide teachers, parents, students, and administration with information to track and monitor academic progress, provide instructional interventions, and monitor academic progress.
- To compare individual and group student performance with an internationally normed group, as well as system-wide and grade level comparisons.

7. Future Directions

The assessment committee will invite more representatives from the KG and Primary school to work on the following:

- i. Finalizing the report format
- ii. Looking at other online/software to record and report
- iii. Giving detailed procedures to the teachers for the assessment of 5 essential elements
- iv. Refining portfolio agreements, keeping in mind more opportunities for student reflection
- v. A timeline will be issued to the teachers in order to finish the reports in a timely manner.
- vi. Guidelines to report on 5 essential elements will be created by the Assessment Committee and shared with the staff members.
- vii. Report format should be finalized for the next academic year.
- viii. Rubrics and checklists to be developed for regular use in the classrooms. These should be used when the quarterly reports are written.

Appendix 1 - Reporting at Abu Dhabi City Campus

The following gives parents a guide to Reporting at Abu Dhabi City Campus over the period of the school year.

Grade	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
KG1 – KG2	Parent Conference Portfolio (baseline	Parent Conference Online COR Family	Parent Conference Portfolio (Growth	Complete Online COR Report

	skills)	Report	from Q1)	Portfolio (exit skills)
Grade 1-5	Parent –Teacher Conference Portfolio (baseline skills) PowerSchool Progress Report Learner Profile Self Assess	3-Way Conference Portfolio (Growth since Q1) PowerSchool Report Card Learner Profile Self Assess	3-Way Conference Portfolio (Growth since Q2) PowerSchool Progress Report Learner Profile Self Assess	Student-led Conference Portfolio (exit skills) PowerSchool Report Card Learner Profile Self Assess

Appendix 2 - School Data Collection

Grade	By End of 1 st Quarter	By End of 2 nd Quarter	By End of 3 rd Quarter	End of Year
KG1	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-50%Indicators collected (Priority in Language and Math)	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-100%Indicators collected	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-50%Indicators collected (Priority in Language and Math)	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-100% Indicators collected
KG2	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-50%Indicators collected Priority in Language and Math UOI Common Assessments	ES Concepts of Print (English and Arabic) Letter Naming/Sound Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-100%Indicators collected UOI Common Assessments	Running Record: (Early Emergent) Recognizing Sight Words in context Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-50%Indicators collected Priority in Language and Math UOI Common Assessments	Running Record: (Early Emergent) Letter Naming/Sound Recognizing Sight Words in context Writing Prompt w/Uol Online COR-100%Indicators collected UOI Common Assessments
1	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment
2-5	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment NWEA MAP Criterion Referenced tests: Math, Reading, Language Usage	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment NWEA MAP Criterion Referenced tests: Math, Reading, Language Usage	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment NWEA MAP Criterion Referenced tests: Math, Reading, Language Usage	Reading Sight Words Running Record/Comprehension Writing Prompt w/Uol UOI Common Assessments EDM Unit Assessment NWEA MAP Criterion Referenced tests: Math, Reading, Language Usage

References

1. Making the PYP Happen (2009)
2. IB Standards and Practices
3. Teachers' Survey

Assessment Committee Members:

Ms Nicola Mina – *KG 1 Teacher*
Ms Sue Ann Jones – *KG 2 Teacher*
Ms Kenda Zaitoun – *KG Arabic Teacher*
Ms Lorissa Gaber – *Grade 1 Teacher*
Ms Sana Zamzam – *Grade 2 Teacher*
Mr Paul Moore – *Grade 3 Teacher*
Mr Joshua Van Bommel – *Grade 4 Teacher*
Ms Nashreen Brey – *Grade 5 Teacher*
Mrs. Saher Gilani – *Head of Kindergarten*