Assessment Policy at the International School of Iceland

At the International School of Iceland (ISI), we strive to uphold our core values of respect, creativity, and self-efficacy. We encourage students to respect themselves, others, and the learning space by completing each task to the best of their ability. We create opportunities for curiosity, originality, and academic risks. We plan and structure our classes so that students have what they need to confidently take on tasks.

We view assessment as integral to accomplishing these goals. Assessment guides our planning and instruction, creates opportunities for feedback between students, teachers, and families, and facilitates meaningful opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts.

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Assessment Philosophy

At ISI assessment is used to gather information about student learning. Teachers use assessments to provide feedback to students and families about their performance and next steps. Assessment provides invaluable information to teachers about student understanding, informing curriculum development and reviewing units or reteaching skills. Through assessment, students are given meaningful opportunities to grow and develop skills, apply their knowledge, and deepen their understanding of content.

Our practices of assessment aim to guide students through essential elements of the learning process:

1. Learning and growing new knowledge and skills
2. Adapting and applying skills in a variety of contexts
3. Developing as critical and creative thinkers
4. Promoting a deeper understanding of the world by exploring questions in real-world contexts

Principles of Effective Assessment

Effective assessments:

- gauge student understanding and support the learning process.
- provide evidence of student learning and opportunities for dialogue between students, families, and school staff.
- are planned, purposeful, and written into the curriculum, with transparent goals towards which both students and teachers work.
- are meaningful, and provide opportunities for synthesis and application of skills to real-world contexts.
- are numerous and encompass a range of formative and summative opportunities that account for different ways of learning and knowing.
- provide opportunities for individualized feedback on a range of skills.
- are a regular part of the learning process, and can occur at any point in a lesson or unit.
- utilize a rubric that reflects the most accurate demonstration of student performance (summative).
- utilize standards, benchmarking, and backwards planning, and Universal Design for Learning strategies. .
- are continuously reflected on and improved to best meet the needs of students.
- are administered in a caring and thoughtful environment that cultivates a positive attitude towards learning.

Formative and Summative Assessments

Formative and summative assessments are labels that describe how assessments function in classrooms. They can and should be designed to meet one of three purposes: assessment *for* learning, assessment *of* learning, and assessment *as* learning.

Formative assessments (assessment *for* learning) provide information about student progress. They can and should be numerous and incorporate a range of learning styles. They function as practice opportunities aligned to the final summative assessment. They provide next steps for learning.

Summative assessments (assessment *of* learning) determine a student's achievement level at the end of a period of learning. They show what students can do, provide evidence of student learning, and demonstrate to what extent they have achieved the intended learning outcomes. They provide opportunities to check for understanding and learning.

Assessment *as* learning can be part of a formative or summative assessment. Rather than being teacher-driven, these assessment opportunities allow for students to take ownership of their own process and progress towards a final product. Assessment *as* learning can include checklists, student-driven criteria, peer feedback, goal-setting, etc.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at ISI and Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)

UDL allows students to pursue and achieve appropriate learning goals in varied ways. Teachers may utilize UDL tactics in teaching as well as in assessing students, following the UDL Principles of: Engagement (design multiple means of engagement), Representation (design multiple means of representation), and Action & Expression (design multiple means of action and expression).

Teachers may provide interventions/support in the classroom by providing examples (work samples or other models to help clarify criteria), offering structured support (graphic organizers, sentence frames, intentional pairing or peer relationships) or flexible deadlines, as well as adjusting pacing. These supports benefit all students, regardless of their tier within the MTSS framework. Teachers may also provide interventions/support based on individual learning plans. Push-in and pull-out support is offered as needed.

Within the primary school, teachers use their best judgment in assessment design based on individual student needs. All students within the IB program are assessed against the same criteria. However, assessments may be differentiated (that is, the format may be altered or specific supports may be provided) so that students fully understand and are able to meet the learning objectives. Teachers may also offer alternate modes of presentation for their performance of understanding (for example, oral presentation or writing).

For more information about MTSS and UDL, refer to the whole school inclusion policy and language policy.

Standardized Testing

Beginning in grade 3, students are assessed twice per year using the NWEA MAP testing platform (MAP testing is also given as a benchmark test to all new students in grades 4 and up). These tests have been developed to support schools in understanding students' developed abilities, identify aspects of content where further teaching is needed, and to showcase student growth over time. Results from MAP testing can reveal necessary interventions, allow for progress monitoring and goal setting, and increase student investment.

In addition to MAP testing, students in the Bilingual Stream in the Primary grades and students in MYP Icelandic, Phases 3-6 will undertake various standardized tests through the Icelandic system. These tests include reading comprehension (Lesskilningur) and competency (Lesfimi) tests, as well as math (Stærðfræði) tests for certain grades. These tests, in addition to being required by the Icelandic government, also help us to inform our Icelandic curriculum and the learning needs of the individual students and Icelandic program as a whole.

Reporting of Progress to Students and Families

Reporting at ISI is used to provide regular feedback to parents about students' progress. Reporting on assessment includes communicating about what students know, understand, and can do. Reporting should be accurate, comprehensive, and understandable to both students and families.

Report cards are published twice per year. They contain information about assessment and grading for each class as well as teacher comments on student performance.

Student-led conferences provide the opportunity to share student achievements and challenges with their parents and teachers, as well as to set goals for future work. Students in grades 3-6 in primary and grades 7-10 in the MYP program also receive a Midterm Effort Report each semester that enables teachers to give feedback on student performance so far that year. Within

the MYP program, these Midterm Effort Reports are inspired by MYP Approaches to Learning (ATLs).

Teachers are encouraged to regularly communicate with parents about student progress and challenges in the classroom outside of these two formal opportunities.

The timeline for reporting is communicated through the school calendar on the school website.

Reporting Schedule

Reporting to students and families occurs at the following points in the year:

- Student-led conferences are held in October and March
- Report cards for semester one are published in December, and report cards for semester two are published in June.
- Midterm Effort Reports are shared in October and March (grades 3 and above)

Parent-teacher conferences are offered at parent or teacher request. Teachers are encouraged to create open lines of communication between themselves and families.

The reporting timeline is published yearly on the school calendar on the website.

Midterm Effort Reports

Twice per year, students in grade 3-10 receive Midterm Effort Reports. These reports provide teachers the opportunity to give feedback on students' effort in class, and, within the MYP, their practices of various Approaches to Learning.

In grades 3-6, students are evaluated on criteria such as showing a growth mindset, working effectively with others, and engagement in learning.

Students in grades 7-10 are assessed on criteria such as meeting deadlines, working effectively with others, showing a growth mindset and engagement in learning.

Assessment Practices in the Primary Program at ISI (grades K-6)

In grades K-6, AERO Common Core Standards are used to assess student performance. The grading system below has been developed from the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) guide (2019-2021). Students receive the following grade categories:

N: Not ready/area of concern
B: Beginning, early stages of development
D: Developing, appropriate for age
D+: Developing, appropriate for age
M: Master. Secure, at or above grade level

These grades allow teachers and students to evaluate progress with skills related to the learning goals of their classes.

Students who are awarded an N typically have not begun to build the foundation of knowledge needed for the skill. Students who are awarded a B are at the beginning stages of growing and mastering a skill. They are building a foundation of knowledge. Students awarded a D are gaining comfort and confidence using the skill; they show mastery in simple situations, but teacher support is needed in more complex situations. D+ indicates that the student is approaching mastery in the skill. Students awarded an M have gained independence and mastery of the content.

Assessment Practices in the MYP Program at ISI (grades 7-10)

Subject-Specific Criteria for Evaluating Students

At ISI teachers regularly report on students' progress towards MYP objectives using the prescribed subject-group assessment criteria. Each subject is divided into four assessment criteria where students can receive a maximum level of 8. Subject groups must assess all strands of all four assessment criteria at least twice in each year of the MYP.

The MYP subject specific assessment criteria are shown in the following table. More detailed descriptions of each can be found in their corresponding IB subject guide.

	A	B	C	D
Language and literature	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Language acquisition	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
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 the real world
Arts	Investigating	Developing	Creating	Evaluating
Physical and health education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analyzing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating

Use of Assessment Criteria Rubrics

The IB subject guides provide clear assessment criteria rubrics for MYP years 1, 3, and 5. At ISI the students in MYP year 3 (7th and 8th graders) are assessed based on the IB MYP 3 subject-criteria rubrics. In year 4 and 5 (9th and 10th grade) teachers use the subject rubrics provided for MYP year 5.

Each criterion is divided into various achievement levels (all numeric) that appear in bands. Each strand from the MYP has a corresponding strand within each band. Bands contain general statements about performance, called level descriptors. The levels 1 and 2 appear in the first band, levels 3 and 4 in the second band, etc. Level 0 is available for work that does not meet any of the level descriptors. MYP assessment criteria are equally weighted.

Determining Overall Achievement Levels

Throughout any given unit, assignments will be scored using the MYP 8 point grading scale. This grade corresponds to an established local grade.

At the end of a unit, teachers must determine students' overall achievement level in the assessed subject group criterion. This is generally achieved through a summative assessment, but can also be informed by formative assessments administered throughout the unit.

When determining final achievement levels at the end of a larger period of learning (the end of the marking period or the end of the school year), teachers make professional judgments based on evidence from multiple summative tasks aligned with each assessment criteria. Teachers utilize backwards planning and year overviews to ensure that each assessment criteria is assessed at least twice in order to provide multiple data points.

Best Fit Approach

For each criterion within each subject group the student earns a level of achievement. This achievement level is not judged against the work of others or an average of scores on various assignments. Rather, teachers take into account patterns of growth over time. The level of achievement students earn at the end of each term is based on the "best fit" approach. In order to determine best fit, a teacher reviews all the work completed throughout the period of learning for a given criterion and determines the overall level of achievement that most accurately represents the students' ability over time.

MYP Grade Descriptors

The MYP program uses a final grade scale of 1-7. To arrive at a final grade or criterion level for each student, the teacher adds together the students' final achievement levels in all criteria of the subject group. The following grade boundaries are used to determine the final grade in each year of the MYP. The overall achievement level per criterion adds up to an overall grade based on the following grade boundaries:

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.

Approaches to Learning

Student progress in developing Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills is documented in the effort reports shared prior to student-led conferences. ATL skills will be implemented in a variety of ways based on the course.

Review of this Policy

This document will be reviewed biennially by the school leadership team in conjunction with the MYP coordinator.

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