



ASSESSMENT POLICY

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1. Philosophy and Principles:

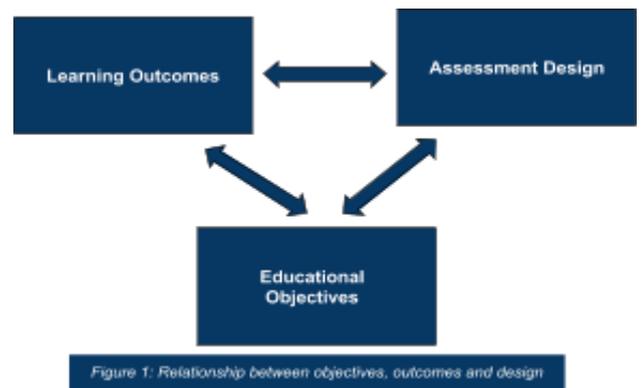
At Fundación Colegio Americano de Quito (FCAQ) we believe assessment should reflect student learning and development. Assessment is more than taking a measure of student achievement; assessment is a means to encourage and empower student growth. With this in mind, assessment is used to:

- 1) gather, analyze, reflect and act on evidence of student learning to inform teaching
- 2) inform teachers, students, parents and administration about the students' learning as it relates to established learning outcomes
- 3) guide curriculum development
- 4) employ effective instructional strategies; and
- 5) modify instruction so it is appropriate to the needs of each student. ¹

Assessment tools should provide ongoing feedback to teachers, students and parents in order to enhance student learning. Feedback should allow opportunity for the student to consider their thinking process as well as work towards their own academic goals. As such, students are encouraged to participate in self-assessment and peer-assessment and even, in some cases, in co-creating assessment tasks.

To these ends, assessment at our school is based on the following objectives (Figure 1):

1. Assessment supports the curricular goals at all levels and in all sections, to encourage student learning.
2. Assessment must make allowance for students working in a second language or with special needs. (Using the guidelines established in our Language Policy and Special Education Policy).
3. Assessment in the long-term (a course, a grade level) must involve a variety of types, orders of cognitive skills and a variety of tasks and components to ensure all learning outcomes for a specific subject are measured.



Assessment can mean many different things.

Assessment occurs when teachers and students gather information to monitor student progress and plan their teaching or learning (*formative*); evaluation occurs when teachers measure students' degree of achievement of learning outcomes for the purpose of reporting out to the school community (*summative*).

¹ IBO. Learning and Teaching. October 2018



In accordance with the American School of Quito's Mission Statement, assessment should be created in an environment which encourages liberty, responsibility and democracy. With that, in order to develop students who are well-rounded human beings with integrity, assessment should be created using professional judgment and should reflect the intercultural dimensions of the IB Programmes.

We believe that assessment's purpose, "dictates how assessment is constructed and used. If the purpose is enhancing learning, the assessment needs to give students an opportunity to make their learning apparent without anxiety or censure. If the purpose is checking learning for reporting, teachers need to be especially concerned about the quality of the assessment, and how it might be used by others. It is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to serve three different assessment purposes at the same time. It is important for [us to] recognize the need to balance among them, know which one [we] are using and why, and use them all wisely."²

Assessment principles are what we think are important in creating, delivering, marking and grading qualifications and assessments. They come from what we think is important about an IB education and the most important principle is that assessments should support education, not distort it.³

Assessment practices are the way in which we deliver our principles in a meaningful and practical way. They take into account the conflicting demands and practical limitations of working in the world while maintaining the IB philosophy of being principled.⁴

2. IB Assessment Profile

Some key features of IB Programme of assessment include the following:

1. support and encourage student learning by providing feedback during the learning process,
2. inform, enhance and improve the teaching process,
3. promote positive student attitudes towards learning,
4. promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real world contexts,
5. promote the development of higher-order cognitive skills by providing rigorous final objectives that value these skills,

² IB MYP Coordinators Handbook. (2012-2013). "Assessment Procedures: Introduction." F1.1.

³ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017, pg. 21

⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017, pg. 21



6. reflect the international-mindedness of the Programme by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts, and
7. support the holistic nature of the programme by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student.

3. Forms of Assessment

Authentic Assessment - the use of learning activities, relating to real-life situation where possible. To assess student competency in designated skills, what a learner understands and can do. ⁵

Common Assessment - when appropriate, each course uses consistent inquiry questions and assessment criteria across classes and teachers assess (at least a sample) together in order to ensure consistency in the application of the criterion.

Criterion - referenced approach - the style of assessment that measures how well a student performed against an objective or criterion rather than in comparison to another student. Criterion-referenced classrooms are mastery-oriented. Informing all students of the expected standard and teaching them to succeed on related outcomes.

Formative Assessment - occurring during the learning process with the purpose of informing students and teachers as to the student's progress so that teachers may design their lessons appropriately and students may better self-regulate.

Summative Assessment - occurs at the end of the learning process in order to assess students' achievement against the criterion for each learning objective.

4. Assessment Methods

Diagnostic Evaluation - help to obtain information about the cognitive level, ability and skill of each student in order to inform instructional practices.

Evaluation of student growth and standardized tests - help to inform student performances against established (national or international) benchmarks/norms.

Quimester Exams - distributed twice a year, Quimester exams assess student learning over a 5-month period in any given course.

Rubric Use: Assessment Rubrics are used to grade assignments and tasks

- Rubrics are aligned to content-area standards
- Rubrics are explained to students when the task is assigned
- Rubrics, when possible, will be teacher and student generated unless they are from the IBO
- Students self-assess themselves on the rubric during their learning as well as prior to submitting the work and receive feedback from the teacher
- Peer assessment via the rubric is recommended as well

⁵ IB MYP Coordinators Handbook. (2012-2013). "Assessment Procedures: Introduction." F1.1.1.



Other Assessment Methods: Other assessment methods listed below are also used, in alignment to content-area standards, ATL skills, and/or age-specific development standards

- Checklists
- Observation sheets
- Anecdotal records

5. Special Needs

The American School of Quito has a great deal of experience working with students with learning differences. Teachers consistently work with the Counselors and LD Specialists to provide necessary modifications, accommodations or IEPs as necessary. (Further details can be found in our SEN-Special Educational Needs Policy)

6. Collecting Data and Data Analysis

Analyzing data is an essential tool to reflect on the evaluation processes in place and provides important feedback to teachers and students. The school has a standardized format in place for analyzing data. Every year, teachers/administrators decide what evaluation data will be used for analyzing the results. After a detailed analysis is completed, each teacher creates SMART goals and will modify curriculum and instruction as needed. Additionally, established teams (grade level, departments, etc.) work together to examine school-wide or grade-wide trends in data in order to inform teaching and learning strategies.

7. Ecuadorian Ministry of Education Approaches to Assessment

Per the Ministry of Education norms, the school year will be divided into 2 5-month terms (quimester) with 3 partials in each. The grade of each partial is made up of the results of formative and summative assessments. The quimester grade is calculated with 20% of the quimester assessment and the 80% from the average of the 3 partials. To be promoted to the next level, the student must have a yearly average of 7.0.

8. Recording and Reporting

The American School of Quito considers the evaluation system to incorporate all activities that show the level of student development during the learning process. The main objective is to accommodate the teaching process to the needs and personal growth of the student.

The School has a RAE (Registro Academico Estudiantil) which contains confidential



information about each student from every year. Access to this data is restricted to Guidance Counselors, LD Specialists and Administration. The DSIS (Data Student Information System) serves as the operative system which contains all academic records of students.

The Student Card, which is a digital tool to view the different summative assessments, reports final grades, standardized testing, writing samples and reading records. This tool displays student progress over their academic career at FCAQ.

Reporting

Each section of the school conducts reporting in a different manner according to the needs of the students.

Preschool: Assessment is an ongoing process based on classroom observation. Teachers keep records of every student's performance, both academic and social skills. Periodic assessment is done in order to follow students' progress throughout the year.

Assessment is formally reported to parents several times in the year (one per partial). During the year parents, meet with teachers and other education specialists to offer a report of the student's achievements and needs. Teachers also share with parents the student's work and portfolios. When needed, meetings with parents are scheduled more often.

Primary: Assessment is reported to parents during the year (minimum one per partial). During the year, parents meet with teachers and other education specialists to offer an assessment of the student's achievements and needs. Teachers also share with parents the student's work and portfolios. When needed, meetings with parents are scheduled more often.

Secondary: There are several parent conferences during the year. During this time, teachers are available to answer any questions, doubts or concerns regarding the students' progress. In the MYP, portfolios are sent twice a year electronically to show student progress on each subject. These portfolios contain sample work and their grading according to each subject criterion.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR NURSERY AND PRESCHOOL

QUALITATIVE SCALE	
Acquired	A



In process	IP
Beginning	B
Not assessed	NE

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

QUALITATIVE SCALE	QUANTITATIVE SCALE
Masters the required skills	9.0-10.0
Meets the required skills	7.0-8.99
Is close to achieving the required skills	4.01-6.99
Does not achieve the required skills	0-4.00

9. Further Considerations (International Baccalaureate Program)

All assessment tasks in PYP, MYP and DP must take into consideration the following 5 underlying principles of IB assessment. IB assessment must:

- A. Be valid for the purposes for which they are intended. This means they must be balanced between the conflicting demands of construct relevance, reliability, fairness (that is, no bias), comparability with alternatives and manageability for candidates, schools and IB.
- B. Have a positive effect in which the design must encourage good quality teaching and learning.
- C. Be appropriate to the widest possible range of candidates, allowing them to demonstrate their personal level of achievement.
- D. Create an opportunity for student agency.
- E. Be part of the context of a wider IB programme, not considered in isolation. Teachers should consider if assessment supports concurrency of learning and the overall learner experience.



F. Supports the IB's wider mission and student competencies, especially inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators and internationally minded ⁶

As an IB school, MYP and DP Programs assess student learning through the specific IB Assessment Criteria. Due to Ministry of Education requirements of reporting grades over 10.00, the American School of Quito works with a Conversion Table to transform IB grades into academic grades. This Conversion Table is reviewed every year by every Subject Area, using the IB Diploma world benchmarks from the previous year.

Teacher Standardization occurs with assessment. Teachers moderate work and agree on established norms of assessment for IB rubrics. This process includes the grading and deliberation of student work, it concludes with the creation of mark schemes that all teachers apply in the same way. Teachers use the IB tasks and evaluation feedback to inform their standardization of assessment. Not only do teachers apply the standardization of tasks in their own subject, but all teachers participate in the standardization of evaluating core assessment (Exhibition, Personal Project, Extended Essay, Internal Assessments) tasks with an IB rubric.

In the Diploma Programme, an important consideration is the Internal vs. External Assessments. Students must complete all required work and achieve a passing score of 24 points in order to obtain the IB Diploma. In each IB class students complete work that is internally assessed by their classroom teachers; they also complete work and take the final exams that are externally assessed by international evaluators. The culmination of this work results in a 0-7 score for each of the six subjects along with extra points for CAS, Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge assignments.

10. Reviewing Assessment Policy

As part of our continuous school improvement, the American School of Quito will review and monitor the Assessment Policy every three years to ensure we are providing students with the instruction and support needed for understanding assessment and meets the IB requirements and those of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador. This policy will be reviewed, updated if necessary, and approved by the Assessment Review Committee before submission to the Board of Administration. The Committee will include the Director General, National and International Section administrations, and IB Coordinators. If no changes are made, the policy will remain in effect as last approved.

⁶ International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017, pg. 107.



11. References

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Last updated June, 2019