



Al Zahra College

PYP

Assessment Policy

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Table of Contents

Al Zahra College Vision	2
Internationalism at Al Zahra College.....	2
IB Mission Statement.....	2
Introduction.....	2
Purpose.....	3
Assessing.....	3
Staff Responsibilities	4
Recording.....	5
Reporting.....	5
Portfolios.....	6
Written Reports.....	7
Parent-Teacher Meetings	7
PYP Exhibition	7
Standardised Achievement Tests	7
Procedures for the analysis of data in the PYP	8
Process and Procedures.....	8
Appendix I – PYP Assessment Data Collection	9
Appendix II – PYP Common Grade Scale	10
Appendix III – Glossary.....	11
References.....	12



Al Zahra College Vision

Al Zahra College will provide, for all students, an outstanding learning environment that offers high quality educational programs, encourages each student to pursue personal and academic excellence, develops a strong and productive relationship between our staff and our parents, and provides students with an excellent foundation for lifelong learning.

Internationalism at Al Zahra College

At Al Zahra College, we believe that global citizenship is an integral part of education. To be a global citizen is to understand and promote basic human rights, to know the nature of our physical and social world, and to be aware that our actions impact others and the planet. This goal is best accomplished by knowing ourselves and knowing our place in the world through the cultural backgrounds of all members of our community. Through this knowledge, we strive for a level of empathy that will direct our actions.

IB 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 IB works with schools, governments and international organisations 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 (IBO)

Introduction

Assessment at Al Zahra College is an integral part of the planning, teaching and learning process. Teachers at Al Zahra College are engaged in assessment for learning, assessment of learning and assessment as learning, which occurs throughout the academic year. Assessment is central to the goal of guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

- The acquisition of knowledge
- The understanding of concepts
- The mastery of skills
- The development of attitudes
- Decision to take action



Through thoughtfully constructed, regular assessments that nurture authentic learning and reflect the learning objectives, teachers enable students to develop and build on course specific skills and knowledge.

- Pre-assessment
- Self/ peer assessment
- Formative assessment
- Summative assessment

Purpose

The purpose of assessment is to promote student learning and provide information about student learning to inform teaching practice. Assessment enables the College to monitor the effectiveness of teaching programs, and inform decisions about students' future learning. It provides students with the opportunity to show what they know and what they can do. Assessment practices also enable the College to ensure that IB PYP and NESAs curriculum outcomes are addressed.

Assessing

The assessment of students' development and learning is a fundamental part of the curriculum, and assists in informing continued development, learning and teaching. Assessment practices incorporate a range of strategies, and summative and formative assessments are utilized to demonstrate student achievement. Effective assessment practices include the following:

- Explicit links to PYP and NESAs outcomes
- Assessment instruments are valid, and assess what they are designed to assess
- A range of formative and summative assessments tasks
- Clear, transparent criteria for what aspect of learning is being assessed for parents and students
- Free from bias and provide evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills
- Opportunities for peer and self- assessment
- Prior knowledge is assessed before introduction of new knowledge
- Regular feedback on learning provided to students
- Assessment data used for to inform teaching and learning, including identifying student



strengths and learning needs

- Assessment used to evaluate curriculum effectiveness

Summative Assessment

The aim of summative assessments is to provide teachers and students with clear indication of students' learning. Summative assessment happens at the end of the teaching and learning process and gives the students the opportunity to demonstrate and reflect on what has been learnt. Summative assessment is an 'assessment of learning.' It refers to those assessments that are used to evaluate student learning for the purposes of reporting and certification. The action component of the PYP, a significant form of summative assessment is considered the most significant summative assessment of the effectiveness of the programme, and of students' learning.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is often described as 'assessment for learning.' It encompasses those tasks and activities used to monitor student progress and to gather data to evaluate and modify teaching and learning. Because of its regular nature and direct alignment to the broader curricular goals expressed in summative assessments, formative assessment is an invaluable means through which students can evaluate and direct their own learning.

Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what the students already know in order to plan the next stage in learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked: neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. This form of assessment aims to promote learning through regular and frequent feedback. Assessment in the classroom includes:

- Collecting evidence of students' understanding
- Documenting learning processes
- Encouraging student reflection on learning
- Student self-assessment and peer assessment
- Developing clear rubrics
- Identifying exemplary student work
- Record keeping of test / task results

Staff Responsibilities



All teachers are expected to engage in regular assessment that aligns with the curricular goals of the programme. The assessment must be integral to the learning process and have a clear purpose. Assessment must demonstrate student understanding of knowledge and attainment of skills rather than their capacity to simply recall factual knowledge. Effective assessment recognises that students express their learning in different ways and acknowledges the importance of empowering students to conduct self-assessments in order to become active participants in their learning journey. For this reason, teachers are expected to use a diverse range of valid, reliable and accurate assessment instruments and to provide opportunities for students to engage in teacher-supported self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

Recording

Al Zahra College staff use various methods and approaches to collect data about students' learning. Teachers record the assessment data using a range of applicable or relevant tools, which are the instrument used to collect data. See Appendix III for Glossary of terms.

Assessment Strategies and Tools					
	Rubrics	Exemplars (benchmarks)	Checklist	Anecdotal Records	Continuums
Observations	✓		✓	✓	✓
Performance assessments	✓	✓		✓	✓
Process-focused assessments	✓		✓	✓	✓
Selected responses		✓	✓		✓
Open-ended tasks	✓	✓		✓	✓

Reporting

Reporting on assessment at Al Zahra College consists of communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting involves parents, students, and teachers as partners, which is comprehensive, honest, fair and credible. The reporting process informs future teaching and assessment practices.

At the end of each semester, students will receive a final achievement from the PYP Grade Scale (see appendices). Student achievement is reported to families in the following ways:

- Semester reporting
- Teacher emails, phone calls and meetings
- Parent teacher conferences
- Individual Education Plans



Portfolios

The Portfolio is a celebration of learning. It encourages reflection not only on the quality of their work, and the learning and thinking involved. The portfolio represents development over a period of time and is student- owned document. It forms the basis of their reflections during student-led conferences and should stimulate ongoing discussions about learning, strengths, weaknesses, successes and goals between the child and their teacher and parents.

A combination of drafts, work from various stages in the process, published work, photos, pictures and reflections. Work chosen by the children and teachers should demonstrate the development and progress of the student. They should be items that reflect the five essential elements of the PYP; concepts, skills, attitudes, action and knowledge. E-portfolios also enable video and audio work samples, and reflections. Items included in portfolios must include either student or teacher reflection/evaluation of the work. Teachers and children could also think about what skills, attitudes, concepts and knowledge they were using or learnt as part of the process.

For the parents, the portfolio is an audiovisual representation of their child's process of learning. It will help build a picture of their child's learning and progress over a period of time and, through the reflections, how well the child understands how they learn and the thinking that is taking place.

The portfolio will be used for reporting purposes at parent/teacher interviews or student led conferences and when writing mid-year and end of year reports. Portfolios will be provided to parents at the end of each semester (only) for sharing with parents.

Portfolio content at each year level should include the following per semester:

- At least one piece of work from each Unit of Inquiry (6 in total for the year).
- A reflection on the Unit of Inquiry, what they have learnt, what they struggled with, what they enjoyed and what changes it might promote in their behaviour. This could be a summative assessment task or a student reflection.

Each semester, two of the following pieces of work need to be included:

- Writing (may be linked to Unit of Inquiry)
- Reading sample or reading response
- Maths – 2 sets of work samples per strand (Number, measurement and geometry, statistics and probability)
- UOI- summative assessment task that also demonstrates other aspects of the essential



elements other than knowledge (skills, attitudes, concepts, action).

Each semester, two of the following pieces should also be included:

- CAPA
- PDHPE
- Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- Digital Technologies (embedded in portfolios)

Academic Reports

The written reports have a summative grade based on NESA requirements and the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards (See Appendix II). In addition, detailed written comments are provided on the students' learner profile attributes, the ATLS, skills and attitudes. Students also contribute a personal reflection on their learner profiles. Academic reports are distributed to parents at the end of Semesters 1 and 2.

Parent-Teacher Meetings / Student Led Conferences

These are formal reporting sessions for parents. These meetings are scheduled for the end of Terms 1 and 3. These meetings provide a platform for parents to discuss their child's learning, their strengths and areas of need. The College also facilitates student led conferences, which give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning with parents and their teachers.

PYP Exhibition

The PYP Exhibition celebrates the culmination of our students' learning journey in the PYP. The process demonstrates Year 6 students' journey in undertaking an in-depth, collaborative inquiry. It demonstrates student independence and responsibility and capacity to take action. It also enables students to explore multiple perspectives, and to synthesise and apply their previous learning.

Standardised Achievement Tests

Standardised achievement tests are a part of the whole-school assessment process. Standardised tests include commercially available tests, and national standardized testing (See Appendix 1: PYP Assessment Data Collection). AZC utilise standardised assessments in conjunction with other summative and formative assessment strategies in order to:

- Inform teaching and learning
- Inform the direction of the programme



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- Provide comparison with peers and national standards
 - Track student learning growth over time
 - Inform our processes for identifying learning needs

Procedures for the analysis of data in the PYP

Analysis of the students' and cohort's performance throughout and at the conclusion of the programme is an important means through which the effectiveness of teaching and learning can be assessed. It is therefore important that staff in the PYP engage in careful analysis of data relating to student results. This process should be ongoing, and will be overseen by the PYP executives.

Process and Procedures

This Assessment Policy has been developed and revised in consultation with the Executive team and staff at Al Zahra College, in accordance with IB regulations. Al Zahra College's Executive team and staff will meet at the beginning of each year to discuss its implementation and monitoring. The policy is scheduled to be reviewed and updated by the Executive team and staff at Al Zahra College in 2023. The Assessment Policy will be communicated to the Al Zahra College community on the Al Zahra College website, SkoolBag, ClassDojo and at during information sessions with parents.



Appendix I – PYP Assessment Data Collection

Year Level	Term	Assessment	Assessor
3 – 4 Year olds	Twice yearly	Development Milestones Ages 3-5 (based on Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Standards (NQS)) Physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language	Educator
	Kindergarten	Every term	ESTA-L (Phonological Awareness and Phonics Skills Test)
	Term 3 - 4	Running Records	Teacher
Year 1	Ongoing	Running Records	Class Teacher
	Term 3	PAT Maths, PAT-R Comp	Coordinator
Year 2	Term 3	PAT Maths, PAT-R Comp	Coordinator
Year 3	Term 2	NAPLAN	Class Teacher
	Term 3	PAT Maths, PAT-R Comp	Coordinator
Year 4	Term 3	PAT Maths, PAT-R Comp	Coordinator
Year 5	Term 2	NAPLAN	Class Teacher
	Term 3	PAT Maths, PAT-R Comp	Coordinator
All years - Based on Referrals		Diagnostic Spelling / Reading WARL, WARP, MacqLit Placement Test	Learning Support



Appendix II – PYP Common Grade Scale

Grade	Criteria
A	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.
B	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.
C	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.
D	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.
E	The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

Appendix III – Glossary

Assessment Strategies	
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 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 behaviours, 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.
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. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be 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 as by teachers.
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. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and usable within their particular school context.
Checklists	These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist, which includes criteria for each grade scale.
Anecdotal Records	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analysed 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.

Source: pp. 48 – 49. International Baccalaureate Organisation.(2007). *Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*. International Baccalaureate Organization.



References

- International Baccalaureate Organisation (2014). IB Programme Standards and Practices. Geneva, Switzerland.
- International Baccalaureate Organisation (2007). Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education. Geneva, Switzerland.