

2026



Al Zahra College

## PYP Assessment Policy

Reviewed March 2026





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## Rationale

Assessment at Al Zahra College is an integral part of the planning, teaching and learning process. It reflects the school's commitment to the International Baccalaureate philosophy where students actively construct understanding through transdisciplinary experiences, while assessment is integral to learning, using ongoing formative feedback and criterion-based approaches to support student growth and agency. Consistent with the College vision, assessment supports:

- Continuous learning and growth
- Student agency and reflection

Development across the five essential elements of the PYP:

- Knowledge
- Conceptual understandings
- Skills
- Dispositions
- Action

Assessment is viewed as:

- Assessment for learning (formative)
- Assessment of learning (summative)
- Assessment as learning (student reflection and self-regulation)

The College recognises that effective assessment drives continuous improvement in both student learning and teaching practice.

## Alignment with IB and NESA Requirements

The school adheres to International Baccalaureate requirements by implementing inquiry-based, concept-driven assessment practices, using a balance of formative and summative assessment strategies, and embedding opportunities for student reflection and agency throughout the learning process. Compliance with NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements is ensured through the use of the NESA common grade scale for reporting purposes, providing formal reports to students and parents twice yearly to ensure consistency, transparency and comparability of student achievement.

## 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 NESA curriculum outcomes are addressed.



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## Assessment Strategies

### 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



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## Assessment methods

Teachers at Al Zahra College use a variety of assessment methods that are intentionally aligned with stated learning objectives and outcomes. When the focus is on developing conceptual understanding, students may be asked to explain ideas through written responses, discussions or presentations. For objectives centred on skill development, such as problem-solving in mathematics, students demonstrate their thinking through multi-step tasks or real-world applications.

Observations are used across year levels, particularly in the PYP, to assess skills such as collaboration, communication and inquiry in authentic learning contexts. Process-focused approaches, including journals and learning logs, support the monitoring of student thinking and reflection over time, especially when developing metacognitive skills. Selected response tasks, such as quizzes or short tests, are used to assess the acquisition and understanding of key knowledge and concepts.

Within Units of Inquiry, assessment is often integrated, allowing students to apply their knowledge, concepts and skills in meaningful contexts through projects, models or presentations. In all cases, assessment methods are purposefully selected to align with intended learning outcomes and to reflect the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate.

## Feedback for Learning

Students and teachers use feedback as a central tool to improve learning, teaching and assessment. Feedback is provided regularly and is specific and constructive, ensuring that it is clearly aligned with learning objectives. Through this process, students are supported to reflect on their learning and take action to improve their understanding and performance. School-based reporting further strengthens this process by providing meaningful information that guides improvement. This includes semester reports, parent-teacher conferences and meetings, as well as ongoing communication such as emails and phone calls, all of which contribute to a continuous cycle of feedback and growth.

## Varied and Fit-for-Purpose Assessment

Teachers use a wide range of assessment methods that are aligned with learning outcomes and objectives to ensure a comprehensive understanding of student learning. These methods include observations, performance assessments, open-ended tasks, selected response tasks and process-focused assessments. Such approaches are intentionally designed to capture the diverse ways in which students demonstrate their learning, support differentiation to meet individual needs, and ensure alignment with curriculum expectations. This variety ensures that assessment is inclusive, meaningful and responsive to the learning context.



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## Data-Informed Practice

Teachers systematically document and analyse student learning over time in order to inform teaching and improve student outcomes. This process enables the identification of student strengths and areas for improvement, supports the design of future learning experiences, and allows for the tracking of student progress and growth. Data-informed practice includes the use of assessment data and standardised testing, ongoing documentation of student learning, and collaborative analysis led by PYP leadership. This ensures that teaching practices remain responsive, evidence-based and focused on continuous improvement.

## Recording and Documentation

Teachers at Al Zahra College use a range of tools and strategies to systematically record assessment data, including anecdotal records, rubrics, checklists, digital systems and ManageBac as a central platform for documenting learning, recording assessment evidence, tracking progress and communicating achievement. This documentation plays a critical role in supporting the monitoring of student growth over time, enabling evidence-based decision making and informing ongoing curriculum evaluation. Through consistent and purposeful documentation practices, teachers are able to build a comprehensive understanding of each student's learning journey and respond effectively to their needs

## Reporting

Reporting at Al Zahra College is comprehensive, fair and transparent, with a clear focus on student growth and achievement. It is designed to provide meaningful information that informs future learning and supports continuous improvement. Reporting methods include semester academic reports, parent-teacher conferences, Individual Education Plans, and the use of ManageBac for ongoing communication, documentation of learning progress and the sharing of assessment information with families. These processes ensure that students, parents and teachers are actively engaged in understanding progress and collaboratively setting future learning goals.

To support fairness, consistency and reliability in assessment, teachers engage in collaborative moderation processes. This includes the use of shared rubrics, exemplars and professional discussions to align expectations and ensure that assessment judgments are valid and consistent across the school.

## Portfolios

Portfolios at Al Zahra College are a celebration of learning and serve as a meaningful record of student progress over time. They include reflections and a range of evidence that demonstrate learning, supporting student agency and ownership of their educational journey. Portfolios typically contain work samples across subject areas, reflections on Units of Inquiry and multimedia evidence through e-portfolios for Arabic and Islamic Studies. This approach allows



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students to showcase their development while encouraging deeper reflection on their learning experiences.

## **Assessment Data and Standardised Testing**

Standardised assessments form an important component of the school's overall assessment framework. They are used to track student growth over time, provide comparisons against national benchmarks and inform teaching and program development. When used alongside formative and summative assessments, standardised data contributes to a well-rounded understanding of student achievement and supports informed decision making at both the classroom and whole-school level.

## **Creating a Positive Assessment Culture**

Al Zahra College actively fosters a positive assessment culture by valuing assessment as a tool for growth and continuous learning. The school encourages student voice and agency, promotes strong collaboration among teachers, students and parents, and ensures that all assessment practices are fair, inclusive and transparent. Through this approach, assessment becomes a meaningful and supportive process that enhances learning and strengthens the overall school community.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Students**

Students are expected to engage actively in all assessment processes and take increasing responsibility for their learning. They reflect on their progress, set meaningful learning goals, and participate in both self-assessment and peer assessment to deepen their understanding and support continuous improvement.

### **Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for designing and implementing a range of varied, valid and reliable assessment strategies that align with learning objectives. They provide timely and constructive feedback to support student growth, use assessment data to inform and adapt their teaching practices, and foster student agency by encouraging reflection and active involvement in the learning process.

### **School Leadership**

School leadership ensures that all assessment practices are aligned with the philosophy and requirements of the International Baccalaureate and the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). They support staff through ongoing professional development and are responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing assessment practices to ensure consistency, quality and continuous improvement across the school.



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## **Parents**

Parents play a vital role in the assessment process by engaging with school reporting structures and communications. They support their child's learning and reflection at home, contributing to a collaborative partnership that enhances student achievement and wellbeing

## **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

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.

## **Policy Implementation and Review**

This assessment policy is developed collaboratively with staff and leadership to ensure shared understanding and consistency in practice. It is communicated to the school community through multiple platforms, promoting transparency and accessibility. The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the philosophy and requirements of the International Baccalaureate and relevant local authorities. The College is committed to ongoing evaluation and refinement of its assessment practices in order to sustain a culture of continuous improvement.

## Appendix – 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.

### References:

**International Baccalaureate Organisation.** (2020). *Programme standards and practices*. International Baccalaureate Organisation.