

Assessment Policy

The International Academy- Amman

May 2011

IAA ASSESSMENT POLICY

(to be read in conjunction with 'IAA Assessment Guidelines')

Preamble

The central focus of education at IAA is to facilitate student learning and personal development. In order to ascertain the success of teaching strategies, levels of student achievement and to meet ongoing student educational needs it is necessary to measure and report on these.

IAA has established Assessment Guidelines which all Faculty is expected to adhere to (see 'IAA Assessment Guidelines').

Policy XXX

Assessments

Assessments will be linked to specific curriculum outcomes and objectives. Summative assessments will be communicated to students in a timely fashion. All assessments should be transparent in grading requirements, with objectives shared with the student and students aware of the required standard. Assessments shall allow for a variety of learning styles, backgrounds, experiences and needs.

All assessments will follow the guidelines outlined in the 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

In allocating assessments, teachers will ensure students have adequate time to complete the required assessments. The number of concurrent assessments allowable for a Grade will be determined by Principals of School.

Policy XXX

Report Cards and Conferences

IAA will report student progress to the students and to their parents or guardians as appropriate. Principals of School will develop progress report forms or cards in accordance with school procedures. It is essential that student's progress in the Academy be fully communicated to their parents. The following specific requirements are established:

- Parents will be informed regularly as to the progress their child is making
- Parents will be alerted and conferred with as soon as possible when a child's performance or attitude becomes unsatisfactory or shows marked or sudden deterioration.

- Academy staff members will take particular care to explain to parents the meaning of marks and symbols as they apply to student achievement.

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled throughout the year to allow teachers and parents to discuss student's performance, needs, and methods of cooperation with the parents to promote the academic and social-emotional growth and development of the student. All parent-teacher conferences will be conducted in privacy and with confidentiality.

Report cards will carry information that is not only clear, concise and accurate but which also outlines a student's strengths, areas in need of remediation and strategies to be used in order to improve a their performance. Reporting will follow the established procedures as outlined in the 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

Policy XXX

Lateness Policy

Late submission penalties for assessments/tasks are determined by Grade level and are outlined in the 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

Policy XXX

Grading and Record Keeping

Grading of student work will be completed according to the requirements of the respective programmes and as outlined in the 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

All teachers are expected to maintain clear and accurate mark/grade books- either electronic or paper.

Policy XXX

Access to Records

Upon request, teacher grade books may be viewed and copied by their Line Managers. Teachers leaving IAA at the end of year will be required to hand their grade book/s to the Principal.

Parents have the right to view the assessment record of their own child and students to view their own record; however, they do not have the right to a copy.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Malpractice (be it collusion or plagiarism) is a serious breach of school rules and for IB DP student breach of contract. IAA has an established Academy Honesty Policy. Any student who is in breach of this policy will suffer the consequences. Consequences are determined according to Grade level and are outlined in the Policy. Parents will be contacted at each instance, no matter what Grade level.

Policy XXX

Absences and Make-Up Work

Depending on Grade level and only in special circumstance will missed work not be made up. The procedures for Absences and Missed Work are outlined in the 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

For work missed due to illness, students will present a medical note. For other absences, work will be graded according to late submission rules outlined in 'IAA Assessment Guidelines'.

Depending on Grade level, special arrangements for exams will only occur due to sickness (accompanied with a doctor's certificate) or bereavement; otherwise the student will not sit the exam and will receive no mark for that paper.

Policy XXX

Homework

Homework is an integral and important part of every student's learning experience. It is defined as any work planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the students outside regular class time in order to practice, reinforce or apply newly-acquired skills and knowledge and to learn necessary skills of independent study.

Homework will be assigned according to the maturity, special needs, potential, and achievement level of the students. It should not carry the stigma of punishment. Its assignment should be specifically addressed to the objectives of the instructional program, and, in addition, students should develop responsibility for actively pursuing knowledge without immediate supervision outside as well as within the classroom. Homework may be diagnostic, formative and/or summative in nature.

IAA has written homework guidelines (see 'IAA Homework Guidelines').

IAA ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Rationale:

The central focus of education is to facilitate student learning and personal development. In order to ascertain the success of teaching strategies, levels of student achievement and to meet ongoing student educational needs it is necessary to measure and report on these.

Assessment is the process by which student achievement and progress is measured. It is also a tool that informs the ongoing teaching and learning process. The purpose of reporting is to provide feedback, oral and/or written, to the students, teachers and parents.

General Principles:

Assessments are intended to:

- Be linked to Grade specific curriculum outcomes and/or objectives
- Be integral to the teaching and learning process
- Be designed to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do in relation to the curriculum objectives
- Provide valid and accurate information, be appropriate to the grade and ability level of the student and reflect the actual learning outcomes
- Be inclusive and fair in order to ensure equal opportunity for success and appropriate to the student's level
- Be transparent in grading requirements, with objectives shared with the student as well as students being made aware of the required standard
- Be varied to allow for multiple student learning styles, backgrounds, experiences and needs
- Be on going, student centred and engaging
- Use criterion related with rubrics shared with students (if applicable and according to grade level)
- Promote reflection on the part of the teacher and student
- Track students in order to ascertain development and inform direction for student learning
- Be used to determine the next stage for student learning, including progression from one level to another

- Assess knowledge, skills, attitudes and use appropriate assessment tools such as Bloom's Taxonomy

Types of Assessments:

Teachers will use a variety of assessments/tasks appropriate to the Grade level and task. In general, the following types of assessment/tasks will be used at varying times appropriate to the Grade level and need:

- Diagnostic- IAA teachers will use a number of diagnostic tools including IAA developed testing tools; online externally moderated tests and for learning support a range of specialized assessments
- Assessment for Learning or formative (AfL)- IAA uses AfL to: set targets and provide ongoing learning experiences informed by present student achievement levels; identify gaps in student learning; determine student readiness to proceed to next level of learning; boost student self esteem and motivate students; enable students to reflect on their own learning; to learn about student learning and to help students take responsibility for their own learning.
- Assessment of Learning or summative (AoL)- takes a number of forms at IAA including (but not limited to) traditional testing, project work, portfolios, exhibitions, moderated and/or standardized tests and projects
- Self and peer assessment- students at IAA will be expected to engage in reflection of their own learning in order to set personal goals, identify areas of strength and need. The type of reflective tool used will vary according to Grade level; however, the reflection process will occur on a regular basis at all Grade levels.
- Standardised assessments- from time to time, students will be given standardized assessments in order to ascertain their level when compared to similar students in Jordan or internationally. These assessments may be internationally benchmarked and may involve students sitting international tests. Students will also sit IAA standardised tests to appropriate courses and levels.

Numbers of Assessments/Tasks:

These shall be determined according to programme requirements and Grade level. The following principles will, however, be adhered to:

Secondary assessments/tasks:

- For external moderation at IB MYP Grade 10 and IB Diploma level assessments will be set according to an annually published assessment calendar

- Will be posted electronically in the case of homework, projects and/or ongoing assessments that are not tests
- Will be set according to homework timetable (Grades 6-8)
- For Grades 9-12 will be set to ensure that students are not overloaded with too many assessment tasks due at the same time. Teachers will be required to ensure this prior to setting assessment tasks. There will be times when two or more assessments/tasks will be due at the same time, students are expected to plan accordingly

At Secondary level, students will be informed :

- When a task will take place
- What will be the nature of the task
- What criteria which will form the basis for grading
- Of the impact the task will have ie will it be used in formulating their final grade for the semester.

Secondary tests and exams:

- Students will be informed of Secondary exams periods well in advance
- Exams will be conducted using the standards and procedures as outlined by the IB Exam protocols (see attached)

Primary assessments/tasks:

- Will be set according to published weekly schedule.
- Are ongoing and include two formal assessment periods per year

Responsibilities of Teachers, Students, Parents and Home Tutors

Secondary students will:

- Be fully prepared for assessments and class work
- Ensure that they note, in their diaries, any assessments/homework set and due
- Consult the electronic homework calendar to ensure assessments are handed in on time
- Submit required work (homework, class work, assignments and projects) on time and with due diligence.
- Follow IAA's Academic Honesty Policy with references to Wikipedia not acceptable.
- Present work neatly and appropriately and if requested by teacher, hand written
- Analyze formal and informal assessment feedback to monitor their personal growth.
- Work with teachers to identify challenging goals for their own learning.
- Act upon feedback given

- Be expected to reflect in their own learning either formally or informally

Primary students will:

- Record work in the student organizer
- Hand work in on time
- Complete the task independently
- Present work neatly and to a comparable class standard
- Seek advice from the class teacher if they do not understand

Teachers will:

- Provide timely feedback to students and parents on in-class work and homework
- Provide for a range of assessment tasks that are meaningful and reliable in order to facilitate student learning
- Identify student areas of need and provide remediation strategies
- Ensure that Grade level appropriate assessments and learning tasks are set according to programme needs
- Ensure that any external requirements for assessment are met in a timely and professional manner
- Ensure that feedback on Assessment for Learning (AfL) tasks/assessments includes a comment which indicates what the student did well, where they need to improve and a strategy for improvement as well as reference to any criteria and/or descriptor
- Ensure that feedback on Assessment of Learning (AoL) tasks/assessments includes a comment, referenced to the criteria and/or descriptors and a clear indication of a grade (if applicable)
- Use meaningful and reliable assessments
- Use assessment data to identify patterns in student performance and needs
- Provide for differentiated assessments according to Grade level and student needs
- Ensure that criteria and/or descriptors are included on all assessment tasks including tests
- Set and design assessment tasks according to criteria
- Adhere to the principles as outlined in this document and the 'IAA Assessment Policy'

Parents will:

- Provide for a quiet space at home and allow for adequate time for students to complete their schoolwork
- Ensure that students have internet access on a home computer
- Offer constructive and positive support to their children; however, this support will not go as far as compromising the integrity of the work submitted
- Ensure that home tutors understand their role in student assessment/tasks and/or homework
- Follow up on homework/assignments by checking student diaries

Home Tutors are expected to:

- Not compromise the integrity of student assessments and tasks by providing answers and/or assistance to the student that makes the submitted tasks not wholly student work
- Endeavour to communicate with the student's class teachers in order to ascertain student needs and levels and to ensure the appropriateness of their assistance
- Act as a 'tutor' and not take the role of 'teacher'

Planners/Organiser

All students from Grade 1 onwards will be issued with a school planner/organiser at the beginning of the year. For Grades 1 -12 it is their responsibility to ensure they bring their diaries/ planners to school, fill in homework and have parents sign each week. For Reception students, parents are provided with the Home School Record in which activities are inserted.

Home Room Teachers in Secondary and Class Teachers in Primary are expected to check, regularly, that homework diaries/ planners have been signed by parents. If no signature is there, they should contact the parent/s. For Secondary this is weekly; for Primary, daily.

External Assessments

Secondary

The IB set out very clear and precise guidelines regarding individual curriculum assessment and procedures. Secondary teachers are expected to refer to their respective handbooks. Secondary students will undertake internationally benchmarked evaluations (ISA) as well as IB MYP Moderation and IB DP exams and internal assessments.

Primary

No external assessments are required; however Primary students will undertake internationally benchmarked evaluations (ISA, SATs, INCAs).

Grading Policy

Grading of student work will be completed according to the requirements of the respective programmes. There are, however, general principles for grading:

- Not all assessments need a grade, however, all assessments/tasks require correction and/or comment
- AoL (summative) assessments will be graded according to either a pre determined rubric/target and/or learning outcome which has been shared with students

- For semester reporting purposes, a 1-7 scale will be used

For IB MYP and DP students:

Final grades (out of 1-7) will be awarded according to pre determined boundaries which are shared with the student at the beginning of the course. For IB DP students, conversion to a 1-7 grade will be based on pre published percentages. For IB MYP, grades will be based on criteria and the pre determined grade boundaries. For Ministry of Education grades the 1-7 scale will be converted into a percentage.

Teachers will mark work positively and consistently, giving students credit for what they have achieved as opposed to what has not been included. Marks will not be subtracted for material which is irrelevant or incorrect.

At IB DP level, the award of a '1' is given if the work has been genuinely attempted, but no relevant material is correct.

For Reception and Primary students:

Standardised assessments are leveled according to the National Curriculum leveling and the grade of 1-7 is awarded for effort on the December formative reports and final grade on the June summative reports.

Moderation (Standardization)

Moderation of student assessments will be undertaken at all Grade levels but not necessarily for all assessment tasks.

Reporting

i. Report Cards

The report card is one of the most important documents that a school produces. It is not just a record of a student's academic progress it is also the means by which a school can communicate with parents and students about effort and academic and social issues. The report card is also a document that other institutions may request prior to admitting a student.

With the above in mind, a school's report card indicates much about the institution that the student is at or has come from. Subsequently, any report card will be at all times professionally completed and presented in a way that is readily understood and which can provide the basis for student improvement and information for parents and students on student achievement and effort. It will also be the basis by which teachers and parents can begin discussions at the Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Report card should follow the following guidelines:

- Be constructive in its comments; ensuring that parents are given an accurate and true picture of student achievement
- Provide ongoing learning goals and/or set targets for further student development
- Indicate student achievement according to criteria
- Provide validated information on student progress
- Be written in a clear and professional manner, avoiding idioms and colloquialisms
- Be completed according to the published schedule
- Convey meaningful and useful information about the course and student achievement

ii. Reporting Schedule

Reports will be issued according to a pre determined schedule as shown on the Academic Calendar issued at the beginning of each year. Mid semester reports are intended as an indicator of student achievement to that date. Semester reports indicate the final grade awarded for that semester based on on-going assessments and tests/exams.

In Secondary, the end of year report for Grades 6-10 will report on student achievement for semester two only. It is not an average of semesters.

For students in Grade 11, the end of year report will incorporate student achievement based on the whole year and include exams and internal assessments according to the assessment criteria and breakdown as supplied by the IB.

For Secondary, reports will be issued according to the following schedule:

- Grades 6-10 will receive four reports a year: two each semester.
- Mid Semester I reports for Grades 6 and 12 will include a comment; Grades 7-11 will include grades only.
- End of Semester I and II reports will include a grade and comment
- Mid Semester II reports for Grades 6-11 will include grades only. Grade 12 will have an additional report issued after the Mock Exams.

In general, Primary will have two formal reports in a year. The first report card issued at the end of Semester I will give details of a student's progress and set targets for the next semester (it is formative). The second report (summative), issued at the end of the academic year will outline student attainment over the year.

Progress reports, in Primary, will be issued mid semester for students who are of concern only. Parents will be requested to attend an interview to discuss student progress and strategies for improvement.

Parent Conferences

Formal Parent Teacher Conferences will be held as appropriate to grade level and as determined by respective schools. Parents and teachers may request meetings during the year in order to discuss student progress. Parents are required to make an appointment and teachers are required to be available.

For Secondary, these follow the reporting schedules. In Primary, in September/October parents receive a verbal report with targets. Parents of students of concern will be required to attend. Written reports are issued at end of semester.

Ideally, at Parent Teacher Conferences, students may be included. It is hoped that students will take an active role in the Parent Teacher Conference especially in the upper grades.

All Parent Teacher Conferences should be conducted professionally. Teachers should refrain from using idioms and colloquial expressions. Any conferencing with parent/s, either scheduled or not, should be documented with date, time, topic, discussion and follow up. The 'negative sandwich' is a recommended method to be used in parent-teacher conferences.

Faculty should have available at Parent-Teacher conferences:

- Grade/mark books and/or tracking documents such as reading and writing levels. These should indicate how and why the grade was awarded
- Samples of student work (usually already in a 'best work' folder or portfolio)
- Overviews of curriculum including assessments for that semester

Faculty should also note which parents arrived and what, if any, issues or concerns were raised.

The Home Room Tutor and/or Grade Leader should be alerted to any general areas of concern raised by parents such as peer issues; homework etc.

Record Keeping

Record keeping is a strict requirement of teaching. All teachers are expected to maintain clear and accurate grade/mark books and/or tracking documents. This is to ensure that when final grades are produced there is clear and accurate evidence for awarding of grades.

All teachers will be expected to:

- Maintain records which should include levels and/or standards of summative assessments
- Maintain either summative and/or formative records (in the case of Secondary) of student homework including completion and attainment (if graded).

- Maintain records in a clear and organized manner taking care to indicate date of assignments/tasks/homework and/or any criteria covered (Secondary), lateness or not handed in
- Maintain documentary evidence for effort and/or grades eg samples of work
- Be prepared to share mark books and records with supervisors and senior academic staff
- Be prepared, upon request, to share individual student records with the parents and the student concerned in the request
- Have a variety of tasks on which final assessments are made and not just tests and/or homework
- Complete on going assessments (continuous assessment) with records indicating this either in student's copy book or teacher's records.

In general, it is expected that when teachers record grades, especially for summative pieces of work, they record the name of the task, date, criteria applied (Secondary) and final grade.

The academic year 2011-2012 IAA will introduce electronic record keeping. This will make the grading process simpler; but as before, Faculty must remember that in most settings, their grade books are legal documents and can be used in courts of law. Faculty is reminded that no student records - either electronic or paper form are to be left open for anyone to see. When electronic records are not in use, Faculty should ensure that these are logged off or if hard copy, under lock and key.

Access to records

Parents have the right to view the assessment record of their own child; however, they do not have the right to a copy.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Malpractice (be it collusion or plagiarism) is a serious breach of school rules and for IB DP student breach of contract. IAA has an established Academy Honesty Policy. Any student who is in breach of this policy will suffer the consequences. Consequences are determined according to Grade level and are outlined in the Policy. Parents will be contacted at each instance, no matter what Grade level.

Late Submission

Late submission penalties are determined by Grade level.

For Primary, Reception-Grade 4, there are no late penalties for work. In preparation for Secondary, Grade 5 students who hand in work late will be required to finish it in their own time at school.

For Grades 6-12 and for non IB final examination/assessment material: work will be graded if it is less than two days late. If a piece of work is handed in less than 24 hours late (by 4.00 pm of the following school day) it will be marked but 10% will be deducted. If a piece of work is handed in two days late (by 4.00 pm two school days after the deadline date) then it will be marked but 20% will be deducted from the final mark. After two days the teacher will not mark the work and zero will be recorded as the mark for that particular task.

For IB examination material/assessments: this is work that is internally marked and externally moderated. Work that comes in after the deadlines stated on the Internal Assessment Calendar will be marked and penalized by 5% for late submission. If the piece of work is called for submission then it will be sent as 'a-typical' work so that the work of other students is not affected by the lower grade. This course of action is only possible if the work is marked and reaches the IB MYP/DP Coordinators before all the marks are sent to the IBO otherwise the student will be recorded as 'non-completed' and will fail that element of the course. Parents of students for whom we have a concern that final pieces of work may not be submitted on time will be forewarned in order to help their child meet the deadline.

Students are not awarded Level 1 if work is handed in over 48 hours late or if the teacher suspects that a candidate is guilty of malpractice. In this case, teachers refer to the school's Academic Honesty Policy.

Absences and Make-Up Work

Primary- make up work is only given in the event of long term absences.

Secondary- students are responsible for finding out about any and all work missed, including assessments, tests and assignments. All missed work must be made up.

Work due during an absence is due on the first day the student returns to school. A student must present a medical note if the absence is due to illness. The teacher will then grade without penalty to the student. For absence due to other reasons, the work will be graded according to late submission rules.

Work assigned during an absence is due on its regular due date unless prior arrangements are made with the teacher.

If a student is present in class when a test is announced and subsequently misses the test due to illness, the student is expected to take the test on the day of his or her return to school, according to teacher request.

Special arrangements for exams will only occur due to sickness (accompanied with a doctor's certificate) or bereavement; otherwise the student will not sit the exam and will receive no mark for that paper.

Assessment Quality

For Secondary students, teachers may request a student to re-submit any assessment that is not presented to the required standard. This will take place in the student's own time, ie during a lunch break or after school. The original grade awarded, however, will stand.

Review Date: May 28th 2011.

Appendix A

Secondary Exam Procedures

Timing

Assessment/exam weeks:

- Will be published annually on the School calendar
- Grades 9-11 will have an exam week at end of first semester
- Grade 12 will have Mock Exams- timetable to be published annually
- Grades 6-11 will have an end of year exam week

Procedures:

- All students will receive an exam timetable which outlines subjects to be tested, number of exams, length of exams
- No more than two exams per day
- Exams will assess knowledge and skills taught that semester
- Grades 9-12 may leave school for private study at home after first semester exams subject to approval from Director
- Grades 6-11 may leave school for private study at home after second semester exams, subject to approval from Director
- Heads of Department are to ensure that all procedures are followed to the letter and that test papers are handed to Principal (or designee) a week before exam date
- Exam packs will be clearly labelled with name of exam, duration, date, instructions, equipment needed, class list, name of teacher who has set the exam and to whom the exam must be returned
- Exams are to be handed, in a sealed envelope, to Principal (or designee) at least one week prior to the exam
- Teachers will ensure exams and marking scheme are included in each exam pack
- Examining teachers are responsible for collecting the exam prior to commencement and promptly returning, by hand, the exam to the teacher indicated on the exam paper front
- Exams will be held in a secure, central place
- Feedback on exams should be within the week after exams period
- Exams should be returned to students except in the case of internal and moderation tasks, standardised tests, or tests to be retained for student tracking purposes . Parents and students have the right to sight exams, except those for external moderation purposes and grades. These are confidential.

All procedures before, during and after exams follow the IB Guidelines for 'Conduct of Exams'. Collusion and/or cheating are not tolerated.

Glossary

Assessment

The different methods by which student achievement is measured . It may be formative (Assessment for Learning- AfL); summative (Assessment of Learning-AoL); Diagnostic; Peer and/or Self Assessment.

Assessments/assignments/tasks

Either formative or summative work set in order to ascertain a student's level of accomplishment

Criterion/criteria

Criteria (plural of 'criterion') are the main content and/or skills **areas** being assessed eg content, presentation, application. Criteria may vary according to subject and assignment.

Descriptor

For each criterium there are descriptors which 'describe' the level of accomplishment. A descriptor outlines in words what should have been included at that level in order to get the mark.

Diagnostic Assessment

This is assessment that 'diagnoses' what students know, understand and can do prior to the teaching of a unit. It informs the planning of teaching and shows the present level of student learning.

Evaluation

Uses 'assessment' as one of the tools for ascertaining student levels.

External assessment

This is assessment that is carried out by external examination boards. For IB DP external assessments are mandatory. These assessments take the form of exams which are held annually in May.

Formative Assessment

This is 'Assessment **FOR** Learning. It may include a wide variety of different assessments and/or activities. It does not require a grade, but always a comment. It is usually used to guide the next stage of teaching, ascertain student needs and review what students know, understand and can do. It is not used to give final grades.

Grade

This is the number that shows the level of a student's achievement. It is usually summative. The grade is achieved by referring to the grade boundaries. A grade can only be given when all criteria have been used for assessment. Grades are usually indicated on report cards.

Grade boundary

These are the highest and lowest levels for grading. The 1-7 grades are determined by groupings of grades according to each grade with 1 being the lowest and 7 the highest. Grade boundaries vary according to subject and grade level.

Internal assessment

This is assessment that is carried out within school. For IB DP and Grade 10 MYP, internal assessments are mandatory and are completed according to a schedule and grades by teachers. These may be moderated at school prior to sending for external moderation.

Moderation (Standardisation)

This is the process where a student's work is reviewed, discussed and sometimes graded by a group of teachers in order to gain consensus on a grade. Not all assignments are moderated.

Rubric

It is usually a table that shows the criteria and descriptors that will be used to grade the assignment/task. Teachers will often develop a 'task and/or assignment specific' rubric.

Peer Assessment

This is where students either discuss or assess each other. The aim is for students to give feedback and suggestions to their peers. It may involve student grading of peer work and/or use of rubrics.

Self Assessment

This is where a student reflects on their own work. It may involve the student in grading their own work according to a rubric. It is usually intended as a reflective tool.

Summative Assessment

This is 'Assessment **OF** Learning'. It may include a wide variety of different assessments and/or activities. It requires a grade and a comment. It is usually done at the end of the teaching of a unit, topic, skill. It is a 'snap shot' of the student knows at the time. It may also be used as 'formative' ie to guide the next stage of teaching. It is usually a final grade for that unit, topic and/or semester.