Diploma Programme Assessment Policy

International School Nadi

Last revised March 2015

The development of this document was a collaborative effort between the Programme Coordinators, Heads of Department and individual subject teachers. Feedback was sought by all stakeholders and the document was revised 3 times before the document was finalised. This policy will be reviewed at the beginning of 2016.

The IBO mission statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization 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 IBO 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.

International School Nadi mission statement

Within a positive and nurturing environment, we will empower students to be well-rounded, broadminded individuals able to live constructively in today's fast changing multicultural world.

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Purpose

The purpose is of the document is to:

- Articulate the underlying philosophy and principles relating to all aspects of assessment at International School Nadi

- Ensure that all assessment practices align with the standards, practices and content of the International Baccalaureate Programme

- Explain the purpose of assessment and outline indicators of effective assessment practices

- Provide consistency of teaching and learning in the IB Programme

- Provide distinction between formal IB assessment and the supporting formative and summative processes that the school implements

- Describe how International School Nadi records, reports and communicates assessment results

- Serve as a guideline for assessment practices for students, teachers, administrators and parents

Philosophy of Assessment

Assessment plays a crucial role in supporting learning as well as measuring learning. It also plays a key role in achieving our whole school mission to '*empower students to be well-rounded, broadminded individuals able to live constructively in today's fast changing multicultural world'*.

By implementing effective assessment procedures, in varying forms, students, teachers, administrators and parents are able to reflect on each student's progress towards achieving their learning goals. At International School Nadi we view assessment as a collaborative effort whereby all stakeholders are committed to the development of lifelong learners. All teachers at International School Nadi use criterion based assessments that are supported by the following principles.

Principles of Assessment

Assessment practices at International School Nadi are guided by the following principles:

- All students are able to learn and all students can be assessed
- Teachers should be facilitators rather than directors of learning
- Assessments are critical tools used to develop effective teaching and should provide parents, teachers, and administrators with information to support student learning.
- A diverse range of assessments can and should be used for a variety of purposes
- Assessment should support curricular goals and be closely aligned with the standards, practices and philosophy of the IB programme
- Assessment should be criterion related and student work should be judged in relation to identified level of achievement as opposed to the work of other students
- Assessment practices should be a collaborative effort that involves all stakeholders that is, teachers, students, parents and administrators
- In order to achieve their learning goals, students must have a good understanding of the assessment criteria
- Students should be given the opportunity to self-assess their work and to assess the work of their peers

Aims of Assessment

Assessment can be used for a range of purposes. At International School Nadi assessment has the following aims:

- To expose students to a rigorous, challenging and varied assessment curriculum that is closely aligned to the expectations of the IB Diploma programme
- To help teachers to evaluate to what extent the educational objectives are met by the programme both in terms of curriculum and instruction and to enable them to revise instruction to meet student needs
- To provide students and parents with opportunities to determine the degree to which students have mastered content knowledge and skills and to reflect on how student capabilities may be further supported
- To encourage the development of higher-order cognitive skills including synthesis, reflection and evaluation

- To promote good organisational skills and to encourage students to become lifelong learners who exhibit intercultural awareness along with the characteristics of the IB learner profile

- To include a suitable range of assessment tasks and instruments to ensure that all of the course objectives are assessed in each subject group

- To provide ongoing assessment overtime to provide continuous and timely feedback to support learning

- To develop an assessment curriculum that provides a valid and reliable demonstration of student performance

- To involve students in the assessment process by learning how to be reflective and to self-assess their own work, assess their peers and set goals for improvement

Types of Assessment

International School Nadi uses a wide variety of formative and summative assessment methods. Assessment in its various forms is a critical component of the educational journey and can be used for a variety of purposes. The aim of an assessment will have a significant impact on its style and format. Assessment is ongoing and is integrated with instruction. Types of assessment that are used include, but are not limited to:

- Class discussions and/or Socratic Seminars
- Essays
- Experimental investigations
- Fieldwork
- Group and individual oral presentations
- Oral commentaries
- Multimedia presentations
- Multiple choice style questions and quizzes
- Online discussion forums
- Journals
- Studio work
- Class debates
- Tests and examinations
- Exhibitions

Formative Assessment

The primary goal of formative assessment is to provide detailed feedback to students and teachers about the knowledge, skills and understanding that students should develop as opposed to accurately measuring each students' level of achievement. The information gleaned from formative assessment can be used to develop student capabilities and to facilitate success. The focus therefore is more on what knowledge and skills the student should develop rather than measuring the current level of achievement. Formative assessment occurs continuously and is integrated into daily instruction. Formative assessment may include structured or spur of the moment observations, verbal assessments, pre-tests, formal and informal interviews or discussions, student reflections, ongoing class projects and various forms of short answer testing. Formative assessment should be set at the right level of challenge and should be adjusted as the student progresses.

Evidence of learning is recorded either on the mark centre or in separate files to enable teachers, students and parents to evaluate student learning and make any necessary adjustments. Students are encouraged to adopt a proactive approach to formative assessment of their own learning and are given opportunities to evaluate both themselves and their peers. Teachers provide students with continuous descriptive feedback with the aim of providing students with an understanding of what they are doing well as well as areas for improvement. Formative assessments are not usually used to determine grade levels.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is used for different purposes. These may include measuring student achievement, certification of students and as a driving force for curriculum reform. Summative assessment occurs at the end of a teaching unit or concept for the purpose of evaluating mastery of the skills and knowledge that has been covered. It is a means to gauge, at a particular point in time, student learning relative to the pre-defined criteria communicated to students prior to assessment. Summative assessments are given periodically to determine at a particular point in time and are used as part of the grading process. Examples of summative assessments include, but are not limited to, semester examinations and tests, final drafts of research reports or essays, and practical lab reports.

Formal IB Assessment

Internal Assessments

Internal assessments are mandatory assessments completed during the final year of the IB Diploma programme. These assessments are graded by the classroom teacher using the criteria published by IB. The internal assessment scores are submitted to IB for moderation to ensure all internal assessment scores worldwide are consistent. Examples of this type of assessment include, but are not limited to, oral presentations, science lab reports, math portfolios, and other major projects. Internal assessments can serve as both classroom assignments which contribute to the students' school grades as well as assignments that contribute to the students' IB score for that subject.

External Assessments

External IB assessments are mandatory assessments that are completed during the final year of the Diploma programme that are not scored by the classroom teacher. These assessments are IB exams that are administered during the November testing session and essays that are sent directly to IB examiners for evaluation. It is very important to note that students must sit the IB examinations on the assigned test date. All external assessments are conducted in a manner that abides by the *Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma programme.*

Awarding of the IB Diploma

In order to achieve the IB Diploma a candidate must fulfil certain requirements; at its most basic a candidate must achieve at least 24 points from their combined grades in six subjects, together with their grades for theory of knowledge and the extended essay, and also complete the Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) element. However, to ensure a diploma reflects sufficient breadth in achievement across subjects and the core there are particular requirements stated in articles of the *General regulations: Diploma Programme.* Below is the matrix for the Extended Essay and TOK elements of the IB Diploma.

ToK/EE	A	B	C	D	E
A	3	3	2	2	
B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition
C	2	2	1	0	
D	2	1	0	0	
E	Failing condition				

Supporting Assessment from ISN

In addition to the formal IB assessment, International School Nadi implements a range of summative and formative assessments throughout the two year programme. These include internal examinations that take place on a semesterly basis. All internal examinations are modelled around IB external examinations and are assessed against the criteria published by the IB. Examples of other types of supporting assessment include, but are not limited to, oral presentation, essay responses, lab reports, portfolios and service learning projects. Supporting assessments are designed with individual subject aims and assessment objectives in mind.

Academic Conduct

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. International School Nadi expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarise, or commit other acts of academic dishonesty.

International School Nadi believes that promoting academic honesty is the responsibility of the whole school community. Regulations concerning academic honesty are outlined in the school's academic honesty policy and are communicated to students at the beginning of each semester.

In order to facilitate academic honesty, International School Nadi has a site license with Turnitin.com. Both students and teachers are encouraged to use Turnitin regularly to ensure the academic integrity of student work. Work submitted that does not meet the standards for academic honesty will not be assessed and the teacher will assign a zero for the work in question. In addition the teacher will notify both the parent/guardian and the IB Diploma coordinator.

Meeting of Deadlines

At International School Nadi, we encourage our students to be balanced and principled. a key aspect of this is to promote meeting of deadlines. This also serves to prepare students for further education beyond the IB Diploma programme.

Each semester students and parents are provided with an Assessment Outline which details upcoming summative assessments for each subject area. Deadlines for assignments that are to be submitted to the IB are outlined on the IB Diploma Calendar which is provided by the curriculum coordinator. At the beginning of each school year, teachers work collaboratively to ensure that deadlines for different subject areas are distributed in a manner that supports student success.

Academic Conduct

Extensions for submission of assignments are based on individual circumstances and should be worked out with the teacher well before the deadline. Unauthorised late submission of assignments will result in a 10% deduction from the final mark for each day that the assignment is late. If the assignment is more than 5 days late then the student will be awarded a zero for the assignment in question. Parents are notified of any late submissions.

Responsibilities of key stakeholders

Due to the essential role of assessment certain expectations are assumed by all those committed to the International School Nadi Diploma Programme to ensure that students meet their learning goals.

Responsibilities of the student

- To successfully complete all set assessments by the given deadline
- To produce work of a high quality that reflects the best of their ability
- To develop effective time management and study skills
- To be principled and to adhere to the requirements for academic honesty as outlined by the Academic Honesty policy
- To develop and maintain a positive working relationship with the CAS and EE supervisors
- To strive to demonstrate the characteristics indicated on the IB learner profile
- To adopt a proactive approach to seeking help, monitoring their progress and reflecting on areas for improvement through assessment
- To engage in meaningful self and peer assessment

Responsibilities of the teacher

- To ensure that assessment tasks support the curricular goals of the IBDP programme
- To inform students on the assessment criteria both of their subject and of all work that is assigned
- To design formative assessment activities to help students understand what is expected and how they can progress

- To incorporate the results of formative assessment activities into their everyday planning

- To provide timely written and verbal feedback for assessment to students on a systematic basis throughout the year

- To provide and discuss exemplars with students to illustrate different levels of achievement against set criteria

- To follow deadlines outlined by the Internal Assessment Calendar and the Assessment Outline

- To submit appropriate documentation to the IB Coordinator by prescribed deadlines, i.e. mark centres, predicted grades and Internal Assessments

- To maintain appropriate communication regarding student progress with IB Coordinator to adequately monitor student progress

- To communicate with students and parents frequently regarding student progress

- To work collaboratively with other teachers to assess instructional strategies leading to student achievement

- To use a variety of instructional and assessment strategies to differentiate instruction

- To utilise the IB Online Curriculum Centre often in order to stay current on curriculum and assessment changes

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- Monitor student progress using the reporting system and through effective communication with subject teachers

- Discuss assignments and assessments with student frequently to show support and encourage student achievement

- Contact the teacher if questions or conflicts arise so teacher will have the opportunity to address the issue in a timely manner

- Attend all parent meetings and information evenings

Responsibilities of IB Diploma Coordinator

- Distribute IB assessment materials and other IB documents to teachers

- Schedule IB training for all new IB teachers

- Schedule IB training and Professional Development for IB Diploma teachers when the subject curriculum is revised or changed

- Arrange IB teacher collaboration meetings to plan and reflect on teaching and assessment strategies

- Register students for IB examinations

- Set deadlines to ensure all IA assessments, extended essay, and sample sets arrive at the appropriate destinations on time

- Supervise IB testing and monitor testing conditions

- Monitor the extended essay process

- Monitor CAS progress

- Cultivate a culture that prioritises assessment for learning and assessment of learning

- Review the assessment policy with Diploma staff at the end of each academic year

Induction of New Staff

International School Nadi provides a supportive and welcoming environment for staff that are new to the team. Staff are provided with training and assistance to ensure that they are able to meet all requirements of IB assessment. This includes an induction day for new staff at the beginning of the school year in addition to working closely with the IB Coordinator and relevant Head of Department throughout the year. Staff will also be given to opportunity to participate in IB workshops that are relevant to their subject area.

Recording System

All Diploma teachers keep up to date and accurate records of student assessment. In addition to maintaining a standardised excel Mark Centre for all supporting summative assessments, teachers are also expected to maintain written notes regarding formative assessment. All assessment records are stored on the school server and are checked periodically by both the

Heads of Departments and the IBDP Coordinator. All assessment records are used to inform future teaching and to provide meaningful feedback and guidance to students.

Reporting System

Communication about assessment is regular and clear. Informal reporting of student achievement occurs throughout the academic year; formal reporting of student achievement occurs at regular intervals.

Timing of Formal Reports

Semester One

End of Term 1: All students receive an interim report to indicate progress

End of Term 2: All students receive a full report

Semester Two

Term Three: Final year Diploma students receive a grade card following the IB Mock examinations during a scheduled meeting with the principal and the IBDP coordinator.

Term Four: All students receive a full report

Grading

Grades for subject groups are reported using both an alphabetical system and the IB numerical scale. Teachers use the subject specific grade descriptors published by the IB in order to determine student performance based on the IB 1-7 scale with the exception of TOK and the Extended Essay which are graded A-E. Published subject reports and grade boundaries are then used to calculate an alphabetic achievement level using the following format.

Conversion of IB Grades to Achievement Levels	
IB Grade	**Achievement Level**
6-7	A
5-6	B
4-5	C
3-4	D
1-2	E

Achievement Grade Descriptors

Grade	Description
A	**Very high achievement** • demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of subject matter • organises and applies information with a very high degree of success • displays a very high level of practical and creative abilities
B	**High achievement** • demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of subject matter • organises and applies information with a high degree of success • displays a high level of practical and creative abilities
C	**Satisfactory achievement** • demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of subject matter • organises and applies information with some success • displays a competent level of practical and creative abilities
D	**Less than satisfactory achievement** • demonstrates a limited knowledge and understanding of subject matter • organises and applies information with limited success • displays a limited level of practical and creative abilities
E	**Is having difficulty with this subject** • demonstrates little or no knowledge and understanding of subject matter • organises and applies information with little or no success • displays little or no practical and creative abilities

Effort Grade Descriptors*

Grade	Description
5	**Excellent** • always conscientious and self motivated • always participates cooperatively in class activities • always well organised and prepared
4	**Very good** • consistently conscientious and self motivated • consistently participates cooperatively in class activities • consistently well organised and prepared
3	**Good** • usually conscientious and self motivated • usually participates cooperatively in class activities • usually well organised and prepared
2	**Poor** • seldom displays any self motivation • sometimes participates cooperatively in class activities • sometimes organised and prepared
1	**Unsatisfactory** • very rarely displays any self motivation • very rarely cooperative in class activities • very rarely organised and prepared

*effort grades are included in interim reports only

Additional Report Criteria

Full reports also include learning outcomes that are specific to each subject in addition to four personal skills: is well prepared for lessons; participates readily in class activities; submits work on time; and works cooperatively as part of a team.

Full reports also include a written summary of performance from each subject teacher as well as a general comment from the pastoral teacher.

Parent & Student-Teacher Meetings

Throughout the Diploma programme the school organises several meetings where parents and students meet individually with teachers to receive feedback and to discuss student

reports. These meetings take place at the beginning of term 2 and term 3. Final year Diploma students and parents are also invited to meet with the IB Diploma Coordinator following the IB mock examinations that take place in Term 3.

In addition to these scheduled times, International School Nadi operates an 'open-door policy' whereby both teachers and students are encouraged to schedule additional meetings with subject teachers if they wish to do so. Additional meetings may also be arranged for students of concern at the discretion of the IB Diploma Coordinator.

Frequency of Assessment and Homework

Teachers work collaboratively when planning the assessment schedule to ensure that summative assessments for different subjects are distributed evenly throughout each semester. At the beginning of each semester students are provided with an assessment outline which details what assessments will be due, deadlines and assessment weighting. The IB Diploma is a rigorous academic programme and in addition to summative assessments students may be given additional homework tasks to complete to support learning. This may include, but is not limited to: reading of set texts, participating in online discussion forums, research tasks and answering set questions.

Connection to other policies

- Academic Honesty Policy – Students will adhere to all requirements of the Academic Honesty Policy while completing assignments, homework, formative assessments, summative assessments, and all IB Diploma requirements including Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge, and CAS.
- Language Policy – All student language needs will be considered when creating and implementing assessments. All teachers are viewed as language teachers and should offer feedback to students about their use of language
- Special Educational Needs Policy – Assessments will follow all requirements outlined by the student's IEP and the SEN Policy of International School Nadi