

## Assessment Policy

### What do we know about assessment?

*When planning for assessment, teachers should think like assessors rather than activity designers, clearly setting the criteria that distinguish students' understanding of the central idea or learning objective. The teacher must constantly look for evidence that meets the criteria. Students should be involved whenever possible in the planning of an assessment task.*

*Making the PYP Happen: An international curriculum framework for international primary education, IBO, p.31, 2009*

At ISZN, we view assessment as the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It provides us with evidence about what our students know, understand, can do and are feeling at different stages in the learning process. We know that successful assessment involves feedback, without which, the process is limited in its effect, importance and relevance.

We recognize that assessment is an integrated, ongoing process and should be used to inform all of our learning and teaching. We appreciate that it is a central element of the PYP's goal to thoughtfully and effectively guide students through the five essential elements of learning.

Our students come from a wide range of educational and culturally diverse backgrounds. It is therefore vital that our assessments are broad and include choice to recognize our students' varying strengths and learning styles. We do not view any one assessment as providing a comprehensive picture of learning.

Our teachers, as assessors, have the responsibility to be sure that they have a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment and the criteria for success.

Our students, as assessors, should be equipped with the necessary tools to make informed decisions about assessments and be given strategies that enable them to interpret the results to constructively inform their learning.

We are committed to developing assessment capable students and teachers. Both students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-evaluation skills. For teachers, it also provides evidence in order to evaluate the efficacy of our programme.

### What do we want to know through assessment?

At ISZN, we recognize that without a clear understanding of the learning that has and is occurring, we cannot plan for students to reach their full potential.

We assess to:

- evaluate learning
- assist students to reflect on their learning
- provide guidance for learning
- determine a student's progress weighed against prior knowledge
- address the essential elements of our programme; concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and action
- develop the whole student as an individual according to the IB Learner Profile
- know if our student's experiences are in alignment with our Philosophy and Mission Statements

The breadth and complexity of assessments should be dependent on purpose and duration. We also believe that assessment is best carried out in authentic contexts rather than in isolation.

## How will we know what we have learned?

Assessment is part of the learning process, rather than the product of learning. It should therefore encompass pre-assessment as well as formative, summative and self-assessment.

At ISZN, we acknowledge the following as recognized strategies to effectively assess:

- **Observations** – individual, group, whole-class in a variety of settings, with the Approaches to Learning giving guidance as to the purposes and types of observations
- **Performance Assessments** – role-play, presentation, demonstration, explanation, problem-solving, creativity and innovation are just some of the elements to be considered when designing the task
- **Process-focused Assessments** – especially effective as part of student's self assessments
- **Selected or Closed Responses** – traditional test papers and quizzes
- **Open-ended Tasks** - assessment of response (writing, talking, diagram, drawing, solution) to a stimulus

Used in conjunction with the assessment tools of:

- **Rubrics** – with established and collaboratively developed criteria to be achieved
- **Conferencing** - assessment through discussion of activities and product
- **Analysis of Student Reflections** - assessment through journal writing, written reflections and discussion
- **Exemplars** – providing samples of work to guide expected learning outcomes
- **Comparative Assessment** – carried out over a period of time to assess progress
- **Checklists** – recording an agreed or established set of criteria to be met or measured
- **Anecdotal, Audio, Video and Narrative Record Keeping** – about specified criteria or tasks
- **External or Standardised Examinations** – to inform in broader terms about the learning, adding additional perspectives and external benchmarks
- **Self, Peer, Group Assessment** – to ensure different perspectives and opportunities for different roles in the assessment process are available
- **Looking for Learning** – student and teacher observations and learning conversations

We therefore formally report and share the results of assessment through:

- Biannual/Semester Reports
- Parent, Teacher and Student Conferences
- Student Led Portfolio Conferences
- Exhibitions
- End of Year Handover data (Internal document)

These are in addition to the ongoing conversations, presentations and regular invitations, designed to involve all members of our learning community in the assessment and celebration of our learning.