

ISA GZFLS Assessment Policy

The importance of a school language policy is embedded in the IBO Programme Standards and Practices (2022) specifically Standard: Culture through policy implementation (0301) and Practice 0301-05 *The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an assessment policy or policies to help create a culture of continuous learning and growth.*¹

Why we assess

ISA GZFLS is committed to inspiring future focussed learners through agency and inquiry to follow their passions, while meeting their needs in an ever-changing world. Educating the whole child is central to this philosophy. Assessment is geared toward improving, rather than simply documenting, student performance by providing the students with opportunities to apply feedback and progress. The use of assessment to judge the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes allows teachers and students to identify their strengths and opportunities for development, alongside providing feedback on student progress. Furthermore, it is an essential tool to monitor the effectiveness of the programme and learn how best to modify instruction to promote learning.

How we assess

We are committed to providing students with a variety of assessments which measure both the product and the process of learning. Each subject area has a defined set of criteria with individual strands which will be assessed. The appropriate strands and process of any assessment will be clearly explained to the students through task specific rubrics in student friendly language. In addition to the criteria, the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills (thinking, communication, research, social, self-management) are used to support the understanding and development of the criteria across all subject areas.

A balanced, wide range of formative and summative assessment is used across all subject areas.

- **Formative assessment** is used to monitor students' progress towards meeting specific learning criteria and strands. This form of assessment always takes place during the learning process, is continuous and ongoing, and consists of a variety of forms beyond the traditional "point in time" test.
- **Summative assessment** is used to measure student understanding of specific learning criteria and strands. While it can represent the culmination of one aspect of the teaching and learning process by providing opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned, it also fulfils a formative role to shape future learning goals and student needs.
- **PACH assessment** is used to measure student Participation, Attendance, Classwork and Homework (PACH). This form of assessment encourages engagement, communication,

¹ Programme Standards and Practices, IBO, 2022 p11

motivation, response to feedback and attendance. Students are scored on a 7-1 grade scale and rubric which contributes to the overall grade for the semester.

Assessment as Learning

ISA GZFLS understand that effective assessments are built on the following principles of learning:

Authenticity:

Assessments

- promote a deep understanding of subject content by encouraging inquiry in real-world contexts
- inform and enhance planning and teaching
- are authentic to the task undertaken
- are honest, accurate, fair and reliable

Inclusivity:

Assessments

- are grade appropriate and reflect the development of the students within the subject
- are accommodated to suit different learning needs and styles
- include modifications made for students unable to follow the full programme and who are following individual learning plans (IEPs) (where appropriate)
- are clear, concise and as culturally inclusive as possible

Creativity:

Assessments

- use a wide range of strategies and tools
- are able to cover a broad spectrum of understanding, knowledge and skills
- promote the development of critical- and creative-thinking skills

Challenge:

Assessments

- assess student understanding, knowledge and skills
- provide opportunity for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines
- are significant, engaging, relevant and challenging
- are academically rigorous and become increasingly complex as students progress through their schooling

Independence and Interaction:

Assessments

- are varied to be completely individually as well as in groups, teams or partnerships
- have clear criteria related to learning outcomes that are known and understood in advance through task specific rubrics
- promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- are a continuous, ongoing process

Reflection:

Assessments

- support and encourage student learning by providing effective feedback on the learning process and outcomes

- engage the learner in the reflection of their learning
- are regularly and accurately reported to students and parents.

Procedure/Implementation

Planning

Standards and Criteria for assessment and achievement at ISA GZFLS follow, or are adapted from, the IB Diploma Programme. In Grades 11-12 the IB Diploma Programme Standards and Criteria are used. In Grade 10 the school uses criteria that have been adapted from Diploma Programme criteria, aims and objectives. Dependent on subject, the criteria in Grade 10 are also adapted from Cambridge IGCSE criteria.

Each unit is structured around a set of essential understandings. In the earliest stages of curriculum planning, teachers link the summative assessment tasks to these essential understandings. Teachers should develop ways to assess prior knowledge and skills in order to target their teaching. Continuous assessment provides insights into students' understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is also a means of exploring the learning styles and individual differences of the students in order to differentiate instruction. When planning for assessment, teachers should set clear criteria to distinguish student's progress towards the essential understandings, constantly looking for evidence that meets the criteria.

In planning for assessment, it is important to ask:

- What is the purpose of the assessment?
- What central idea or learning objectives are being assessed?
- What evidence of the learning will be looked for?
- How can the evidence be collected?
- What experiences are being provided/ supported to help the students be successful with the assessment?
- Will the assessment task demonstrate understanding?
- Is the assessment reliable enough to allow sound conclusions to be drawn?
- How will the assessment data be analysed and recorded?
- How and when will feedback be given?

Evidence

The main purposes of assessment are to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to contribute to the desired outcomes of the programme in order to evaluate and improve the overall curriculum and curriculum delivery.

Student learning is promoted through:

- Assessing the students' prior knowledge and experience brought to the topic or task
- Planning the teaching and learning to meet individual or group needs
- Building a profile of student understanding by providing evidence concerning the strengths and areas for improvement of the individual students

- Engaging students in reflection on their learning and in the assessment of their work and the work of others
- Providing positive motivation and reinforcement for students who strive to reach their personal best
- Providing future targets and realistic goals for students, and teachers to amend teaching methods
- Providing reports for parents and students outlining progress and performance in relation to learning outcomes

Information about student learning is obtained from:

- Examples of student work or performance or action.
- Statistics based on explicit benchmarks and/or rubrics.
- Formative and summative assessments to show the process as well as the product

Academic Integrity

In line with the school's Academic Integrity policy, all stakeholders in the child's learning are expected to be academically honest at all times. Further information on what constitutes academic integrity and academic dishonesty can be found in the school's *Academic Integrity Policy*.

Assessment strategies

The following assessment strategies are not used in isolation but are seen as a range of approaches and therefore provide a balanced view of the whole child:

- Examinations
- Assignments
- Individual and group work tasks
- Observations
- Open-ended tasks
- Performance task assessments
- Portfolios
- Selected responses

Assessment tools

Examinations - Examinations require the student to perform under controlled conditions such as in response to unseen questions, context or under timed conditions.

Rubrics - The descriptors tell the student and the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale.

Checklists - A list of criteria which students are assessed. (e.g. information, data, attributes, or elements that should be present)

Observations and Anecdotal Notes - These are brief written notes based on observations of students.

Running Records - A test that allows assessment of reading behaviour as students read from developmentally appropriate texts.

Self-Assessments - A chance for the students to reflect on their own work.

Peer-Evaluation - A chance for the students to review and comment on each other's work.

Tests - A set of questions, problems where the answers are used as a means of evaluating the abilities, aptitudes, skills, or performance.

Projects - An assignment necessitating personal initiative, undertaken by an individual student or a group of students.

Benchmarking and Moderation

Teachers are expected to benchmark and moderate assessment for all subjects across all grades. The process for this may vary dependent on the requirements of the subject, assessment and Department, however, benchmarking and moderation is expected to happen after each assessment block as well as after all grade level assessment.

Reporting and Recording

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of children's learning and identifies areas for growth. In Grades 10-12 we use the IB 7-1 Grading Scale.

Grading Scale (Grades 10-12)

		Explanation:
Exceeding Expectations	7	Always produces work of excellent quality, demonstrating excellent knowledge and understanding of subject
	6	Always produces work of high quality, demonstrating very good knowledge and understanding of subject
Meeting Expectations	5	Usually produces work of high quality demonstrating sound knowledge and understanding of subject.
	4	Usually produces work of satisfactory quality, demonstrating adequate knowledge and understanding of subject.
Approaching Expectations	3	Produces work of inconsistent quality, demonstrating some knowledge and understanding of subject.
Developing Towards Expectations	2	Generally produces work that demonstrates only basic knowledge and understanding.
	1	Only produces work that demonstrates rudimentary knowledge and understanding

Feedback

At ISA GZFLS, all stakeholders involved in student learning are responsible for student development based on feedback from summative and formative assessment, observation, and anecdotal evidence.

All feedback should be delivered as constructively as possible with the goal of improvement. At no times should feedback be from a deficit model.

Assessment Feedback

It is expected that teachers provide feedback on all summative assessments. Feedback can be provided in many ways including written comments, oral feedback, checklists or annotated work. At all times, a student should be able to identify their strongest attributes and the areas for improvement in any subject. Teachers are expected to place both grades and comments on Managebac for all summative assessments. Managebac comments are available to students and parents at all times.

Scheduled Student-Led Portfolio Conference

This portfolio conference is a formal conference between students and parents. The students will, with the support and guidance of the teacher, select the work to be discussed. They reflect on their progress towards the goals defined earlier in the year and share the responsibility of informing their parents. Student-led portfolio conferences take place twice a year at the same time as the written reports (January/February and June).

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal school-wide Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice per year in November and April. Student progress will be discussed and the conferences will be used to set achievable goals for the students. These conferences are also an opportunity to celebrate student success and retain transparency between the school and home. Additionally, at any time during the year, both teachers and parents can request a conference to discuss the progress of or challenges for a student.

If needed, someone to translate will be available for the meeting. Members of the Leadership team will be asked to join if required.

Teacher-Student Conferences

At any time during the year, both teachers and students can request a conference with one another to discuss any concerns or pieces of ongoing work. Teachers also conference informally with each of their students at regular intervals throughout the year.

Report Cards

An overall achievement grade for the semester and comments by the teacher are included on formal report cards which are distributed twice each academic year: end of Semester 1 and end Semester 2. Parents are also able to track their child's progress through the Gradebook on Managebac.

Managebac

Managebac is the online curriculum and assessment tracking tool/grade book for the ISA GZFLS. Units of Study and Summative and Formative assessment tasks will be planned, assigned and graded through Managebac to provide a transparent ongoing record of student learning for parents, staff and students.

Student support

Inclusion

ISA GZFLS supports the IB in its view that “all candidates should be able to demonstrate their understandings under all assessment conditions that are as fair as possible”². This reflects in our assessment practice in a variety of ways:

Differentiation Where appropriate, students may be permitted to use a variety of methods to show learning in an assessment (for example knowledge may be demonstrated through a video, presentation, essay or other format, essays can be typed instead of handwritten, students can receive extra time for assignments). This may not be appropriate where, for example, the skill is the essential understanding (correct essay structure, application of scientific method).

Scaffolding Assessments should be structured in a way that scaffolds learning and application of skills within the assessments. For some students this may lead to different assessments that focus on their particular learning within a unit or part of a unit.

Access Arrangements

In Grade 10 students with Inclusion/Special Educational Needs can be granted particular access arrangements to assessments based on the ISA GZFLS Inclusion and Diversity Policy

The procedure to apply is as follows:

1. Student provides a diagnosis from a medical professional - translated into English, not older than 2 years
2. Coordinator reviews and decides on the access arrangements granted to the student in line with the Tier system in the school’s Inclusion and Diversity Policy.
3. Coordinator informs all teachers of any accommodations or modifications made, including additional in-class support.

In Grades 11-12 students with Inclusion/Special Educational Needs can be granted particular access arrangements to assessments based on the IB Diploma Programme policy. Details of the available arrangements can be found in the IB Access and Inclusion Policy (Feb 2022) which can be obtained from the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator. The procedure to apply is as follows:

1. Student/Parents/Guardian meets with the DP Coordinator to determine appropriate access arrangements in line with the external policy (note: additional documentation concerning diagnosis may be required).
2. The Coordinator will submit all required documents to IBO on registration for the external examinations.

IB Diploma Programme Assessment Calendar

ISA recognises the need for a comprehensive and calculated internal assessment calendar to support students of the Diploma Programme. Each year the Internal Assessment calendar is reviewed by the

² *Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes*, IBO, 2016 p.10

Academic Affairs Office, and along with feedback from teachers, the university counselling team and students, the calendar is revised and published for the following year.

The Internal Assessment calendar purposefully spaces the assessments out across in order to relieve some of the academic stress on students. Additionally, in recognition that some months are congested with university applications, the internal assessment calendar is purposefully light at these times.

How does this policy link to other policies at ISA GZFLS?

Admissions Policy: Upon admission, students and parents are made aware of the academic rigour of the program including the assessments that form part of the teaching and learning process at ISA GZFLS. Prior to admission, students undergo assessment to determine a baseline of the previous achievement prior to joining the school. The baseline data can be used to indicate the student's growth as they progress through the programs.

Language Policy: The school recognises that language of instruction at ISA GZFLS is a second or other language for most students. All assessments with the exception of mother tongue and foreign language assessments will be delivered in English. Where appropriate, teachers use mother tongue support in assessments which may include such things as the translation of command terms or metalanguage associated with course content.

ISA GZFLS practices immersion in subject teaching with the goal of students become increasingly independent in their English language use.

Inclusive Assessment: At ISA GZFLS there are formal processes to recognise inclusive access arrangements for internal and externally moderated assessment. The Assessment policy should be read in conjunction with the ISA GZFLS Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

According to the Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures Section C6.1, *“The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of access arrangements may be authorized. Candidates eligible for inclusive assessment arrangements are those with individual needs such as:*

- *Learning disabilities*
- *Specific learning difficulties*
- *Communication and speech difficulties*
- *Autism spectrum disorders*
- *Social, emotional and behaviour challenges*
- *Multiple disabilities and/or physical, sensory, medical or mental health issues.*³

³ *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, 2023 p131*

In addition to the standard list of arrangements, reasonable adjustments that are uniquely planned for a candidate based on individual need can also be considered (Section C6.3) ⁴

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the specific requirements which are described in the IB Access and Inclusion Policy (Feb 2022) are followed so that we remain compliant with IB processes for examinations. Some arrangements are permitted without authorization while other arrangements will require authorization prior to the examination. Examples will inclusive accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Extra time
- Use of a calculator, spell check or dictionary
- Readers and scribe
- Modified furniture
- Scheduled breaks

For arrangements requiring authorization, the IBDP Coordinator will complete and submit the request for access arrangements on IBIS at least six months prior to the examination upon receipt of the required documentation and approval from parents. Medical documentation from the parents and/or guardians will be required along with educational evidence. The IBDP Coordinator will work with the family to provide assistance in gathering the necessary documentation.

Academic Integrity Policy: The school applies the same expectations for all students with regard to assessment and academic malpractice. Students are expected to adhere to guidelines to prevent academic malpractice as support will be given to ensure they can meet the assessment criteria with integrity.

How is this policy reviewed?

This policy is under continuous review from the ISA GZFLS Leadership Team on an annual basis to ensure current practices are being followed and there is compliance from all stakeholders. The policy is also subject to a detailed review in line with the ISA GZFLS policy review cycle every 2-3 years (dependent on need).

Author / Reviewer:	Joe Caruso (Dean of Academic Affairs) Mr. L. Sanders (Executive Principal)
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Board committee responsible for oversight:	Academic Committee
Board Leader of committee:	Joe Caruso
Date of next review by committee:	March 2025

⁴ *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, 2023 p133*

Bibliography

- IBO (2016) *Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes*, International Baccalaureate Organization, p10.
- IBO (2022) *Programme Standards and Practices*, International Baccalaureate Organization, p11.
- IBO (2022) *Access and Inclusion Policy*, International Baccalaureate Organization.
- IBO (2023) *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures* International Baccalaureate Organization, p131, p133.