

ISSH Whole School Assessment Policy

ISSH MISSION STATEMENT

The International School of Schaffhausen provides quality education in a warm and caring environment according to the philosophy and standards of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB).

We are an internationally minded community who develop responsible global citizens

- by inspiring students to recognize, pursue, achieve and increase their potential
- by providing a rigorous and challenging curriculum
- by promoting active, life-long learning and the attributes of the IB Learner Profile
- by applying a holistic and balanced approach to all areas of school life
- by encouraging responsibility for self, others and the environment
- We know that every student is unique and that

“EACH MIND HAS ITS OWN METHOD”

(Ralph Waldo Emerson)



IB MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate 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 organization works with schools, governments and international organizations 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.



At ISSH we believe that assessment is a vital part of the learning process, affording students and teachers the opportunity to reflect on student achievement and set goals for future development. Assessment is viewed as central to teaching and learning, serving to inform planning and ensuing learning experiences. Given the importance of its role in student development, we believe assessment should be ongoing, integral to the learning process and guided by clear criteria.

Why do we assess?

- To improve student learning and to help students develop into the best learners they can be by becoming knowledgeable, independent, internationally-minded, lifelong learners.
- All assessment is considered formative i.e. a learning experience, reflection upon which can improve the 'student-as-learner'. Students are encouraged to compare and develop against previous performance.
- To inform students, teachers, parents, school administrators and relevant external agencies about the 'student-as-learner' and their progress and achievement with respect to grade-level learning outcomes.
- To inform teachers and programme leaders about the courses they are responsible for designing and to allow for reflection on and revision of course design and delivery.

How do we assess?

- Assessment at ISSH is authentic in such as it is closely connected to the actual process of learning and is therefore relevant to the students.
- Assessment is a continuous, on-going process, not limited to certain times in the year.
- Design of assessment occurs during the planning process (backward design) with the learning outcomes in mind and a clear understanding of what 'good' will look like.
- All summative assessment at ISSH is criterion-based with the criteria shared with and understood by the students prior to assessment.
- Assessments are designed and executed with sensitivity to differences amongst children (e.g. age, development, culture, gender, linguistic, racial, medical and learning differences).
- Assessment is varied and balanced allowing students a number of ways to demonstrate and reflect upon their learning.
- Assessment is set at a challenging but appropriate level for the students. All assessments contribute to student learning.

Ways of assessing?

- Self-Assessment – where students assess their own learning. This is often backed up with the teacher making an assessment and discussing the two assessments together.
- Peer-Assessment – where students are encouraged to support each other and their own learning by assessing the learning of their peers. Again teacher assessment is often used to act as a discussion point.
- Informal Assessment – practice assessments (helping the student become used to a particular assessment task or as a means of reflection on learning); pre-assessments (assessing what

students know and can do before teaching so as to adjust courses to students' abilities and address misconceptions).

- Formal Assessment (used as summative assessment as well as for formative reasons) - various assessment tasks used to allow students to communicate their knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes against previously seen established criteria.
- External Assessments – Standardized assessment tools can be used to benchmark success

Primary School

ASSESSING - How we discover what the students know and have learned

What is assessment?

Assessment provides feedback on the learning process, not merely on the end-product. It shows the growth in learning.

Who is it for? What is its purpose?

Assessment presents information on progress to all involved in the learning process: the child, the teacher and the parents. It also serves to inform planning and teaching as part of the learning cycle.

What kinds of assessment do we do?

Assessment is authentic, continuous, varied and reflective.

- Authentic in such as it is closely connected to the actual process of learning and as such relevant to the student.
- Continuous in such as it is on-going and not limited to certain periods of time.
- Varied in such as it uses a wide range of strategies and tools such as rubrics, anecdotal records checklists, benchmarks, continuums and portfolios of work.
- Reflective as it also contains elements of peer-assessment and self-assessment for students and teachers.

What is the planning procedure for assessment?

Backward Design Process:

- Identify desired results.
- Determine acceptable evidence.
- Plan learning experiences.
- Plan for assessment at the same time as planning for learning.

Further points of consideration:

- We have clear objectives for learning and assessment and share these with the pupils. "What will *good* look like?"
- Students are encouraged to better their own previous performance.
- Assessment is used to identify next steps in learning.

RECORDING - How we collect and analyse data

Assessment at ISSH is an ongoing process. Pre, formative and summative assessment data is collected by teachers. This data highlights students' progress and is used to inform teaching and planning.

1.1 Common Assessments

Common assessments are whole school assessment strategies such as standardized tests in reading or maths, unaided writing or portrait work in visual arts.

The purpose of common assessment is

- to monitor progress
- to provide students, teachers and parents with information on the process of learning
- to identify problems in a diagnostic sense
- to be able to bench mark in regard to other schools.

What does common assessment look like in the Primary Section?

Beginning of the year

Baseline Assessments: Language

At the beginning of the year (and when a new child comes in), students' reading ages and comprehension are assessed. Transition (when applicable) and Grade 1 use PM Benchmarks and Grades 2 - 5 use the PROBE tests as the assessment tool.

Additionally, students from Grades 1 - 5 are required to produce a piece of unaided writing which is then assessed with guidance from the '6 Traits of Writing' rubric. This is used as a guide for teacher planning and target setting for each student. This assessed writing piece should appear in the student portfolio.

Students from Grades 2 - 5 also complete the SAT spelling test for their grade level.

Baseline Assessment: Mathematics

For Mathematics, students take SAT papers from the previous grade level (e.g. upon entering Grade 5, students sit the Grade 4 SAT paper). Results are analyzed with students and targets set as a result of these findings. The completed SAT paper is placed in the student portfolio.

Baseline Assessment: Visual arts

Every student draws a self-portrait at the beginning of the academic year. This self-portrait is put into the Student Portfolio.

End of the school year

At the end of the school year, students from Grade 3 upwards sit the International Schools' Assessment (ISA) tests (online assessments) for mathematics and language.

Use of data gathered from common assessments

The results of school-wide common assessments (excluding the visual arts assessment) are formally recorded and subsequently analyzed by both teachers and administration. Trends are identified and areas of focus for classroom practice and ongoing staff professional development aligned accordingly. Results of baseline language and mathematics assessments are shared with parents during the student-parent-teacher conference held in semester one (see 2.3a below).

1.2 Pre-assessment

Before a new unit of learning begins (be it a unit of inquiry, language, PE, music etc.) students are assessed on their existing understandings. The task(s) set may assess subject specific knowledge or understanding of concepts to be addressed, for example. Having analyzed the results of the pre-assessment tasks, teachers then tailor subsequent learning experiences accordingly.

1.3 Formative assessment

Students are assessed in an ongoing manner during units of study. Such formative assessment allows both the teacher and student to track their developing understandings and enables teachers to provide additional targeted support or extension as required.

1.4 Summative assessment:

At the end of each unit of study, students complete a summative assessment task which requires them to show their learning; assessment criteria are shared with students prior to starting the task. Teacher feedback on the completed summative assessment tasks highlights students' areas of growth and areas in which they can continue to develop.

REPORTING - How we communicate assessment information

At ISSH, assessment is communicated in numerous ways. Portfolios, written reports, student-parent-teacher conferences, student-led conferences, learning showcases and the Exhibition in 5th Grade, all serve as means with which to communicate and provide feedback on student learning.

2.1 Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of students' work designed to demonstrate growth, thinking, creativity and reflection. The portfolio is a celebration of learning, but also a tool for assessment and target setting. Evidence of reflection/development of the learner profile, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and action, in addition to subject knowledge (the essential elements of the Primary Years Programme) is reflected in the student portfolio.

2.2 Written Reports

Twice a year, teachers feedback to students and parents through written reports. These reports serve to document student learning (areas of growth) and identify areas requiring focus (areas for development) in line with ISSH's philosophy of assessment.

2.3 Conferences

Conferences take place twice a year (student parent teacher conferences in semester one and student led conferences in semester two). In addition to providing an overview of students' learning and areas for development, these also provide an additional opportunity to assess students' depth of knowledge and metacognition.

2.3a Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Three way student-parent-teacher conferences promote an open dialogue between student, parent and teacher as to the student's strengths and areas for development. Students are asked to critically reflect on their learning and identify future goals with the teacher's support.

2.3b Student-Led Conferences

Student-led conferences provide students with the opportunity to take complete responsibility for sharing and reflecting on their learning with their parents. Having completed the conference students are required to critically reflect on their performance, thus using the conference itself as an assessment opportunity.

2.4 Learning Showcase

In addition to their contributions to the parent-student-teacher conferences and leading the student-led conference, once a year students formally showcase their learning. This showcase is shared with parents and provides a further way to demonstrate student learning in relation to specific areas of work studied.

2.5 Grade 5 Exhibition

As the penultimate unit in Grade 5, students carry out a six week in-depth study encapsulating all of the essential elements of the Primary Years Programme. This project is the culmination of their learning

in the Primary School. Students are formally assessed on each of the programme's elements and their learning is reported and shared with the entire school community during the Exhibition Open Days.

Secondary School

Assessment and reporting are critical elements of the learning process that act as a reflective tool to aid the learner and those who can help the learner develop holistically. A range of strategies to assess learners are integrated within the secondary school to ensure accurate individual achievement levels are established and reported. Throughout their schooling, students can expect to undergo:

Formative Assessment (assessment for learning)

Assessment that helps direct and modify learning activities and develop a successful path of academic progression for students. Formative assessment strategies may include, though are not limited to, self-assessment, peer-assessment, homework, practice tasks and pre-assessments. In cases where students assess their own learning or the learning of peers, feedback will often be consolidated with any evaluations or observations made by the teacher.

Summative Assessment (assessment of learning)

Assessment for reporting purposes that allows students to communicate their knowledge, understanding and skills against IB criteria. Summative assessment tasks may include investigations, essays, presentations, field work, projects, tests and examinations. In the final year of the Middle Years Programme (MYP), students complete the *Personal Project*, an externally moderated component of the IB. Throughout the Diploma Programme (DP), students are continually assessed in each of their Diploma subjects, with two examination sessions held in Year 1 of the Diploma Programme and a mock examination session held in Year 2. Other than Art, the Diploma Programme concludes with an externally assessed examination determined by examiners appointed by the IB.

The Diploma Programme

IB-certified grades stem from both internal and external assessment. As explained to students at the commencement of the course, internally assessed student work is assessed against a set of subject criteria, which are available in the Subject Guide for each subject.

- **Internal Assessment**
 - Contributes to 20 – 30% of the final grade in each subject.
 - Assessment type will vary depending on subject and could include projects, oral presentations, investigations or portfolios.
 - Is supervised and assessed by the subject teacher and moderated externally.

- **External Assessment**
 - Contributes to 70 – 80% of the final grade in each subject.
 - Examinations occur at the conclusion of the two-year course.
 - Examinations require students to respond to a variety of question types, including case-study and data--based questions, multiple choice questions and essays.
 - Additionally, there are three core elements of the Diploma Programme that students are required to complete. *Theory of Knowledge* (TOK) and the *Extended Essay* (EE) are assessed externally by the IB, while *Creativity, Activity, Service* (CAS) is assessed on a pass or fail basis.

Building Quality and Authentic Assessment

Central to the identification of student understanding is the design of authentic assessment tasks

within each course that are aligned with established objectives and subject-specific criteria produced by the IB. Individual teachers and learning areas develop quality assessment tasks with the aid of published IB tasks and documentation from the *Online Curriculum Centre*. To ensure assessment criteria are applied both accurately and consistently, teachers meet within learning areas to standardise summative tasks and develop a common understanding of command terms and expectations. Teachers and learning areas also receive feedback from monitoring of assessment in the Middle Years Programme, moderation of results for the *Personal Project* and formal assessed results in the Diploma Programme.

Recording and Reporting Assessment

For summative assessment tasks, student achievement levels and teacher feedback are recorded on Managebac for both students and parents to view. This process of continuously providing constructive feedback enables students to assess their performance and to subsequently set definitive goals for their future learning and academic development. Official reporting of student progress occurs four times per year. Twice per year, students receive holistic feedback on their *Approaches to Learning* (ATL) skills, which coincides with subsequent Parent-Teacher Conferences. Students also receive a mid-year and an end of year report, complete with summative grades and teacher comments. Throughout the year, students, parents, the principal or MYP and DP coordinators may request an update of progress at any time.

Reporting Assessment: Middle Years Programme

For each summative assessment task, the teacher will establish task-specific clarifications that directly align with the published MYP criteria. This provides a common understanding of what is expected of the student and how the achievement level has been determined. The published criteria for MYP Years 1, 3 and 5 are used for Grades 6, 8 and 10 respectively, while for Grade 7 and 9 the teachers within departments select the most age-appropriate criteria to use. Each criterion in each learning area is summatively assessed at least once before the mid-year reports to determine an interim grade, and at least twice by the end of year report for determining a final achievement grade. The teacher will use the best-fit approach to determine the final grade for each criterion, using evidence from a range of summative and formative work. A grade is then awarded using the MYP 1–7 scale according to the MYP grade boundary guidelines. For information on progression between grade levels in the MYP, please refer to the Student-Parent Handbook.

November	January	April	June
ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	Mid-year report of summative grades and teacher comments	ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	End of year report of summative grades and teacher comments

Assessment of non-MYP language courses

Though not assessed according to MYP criteria, students will receive a written comment from their teacher to report on their ability and progress in the other language classes that the school offers. A grade may be given, if relevant, at the end of the school year. The two classes that will follow this system of reporting are:

- Mother-tongue support: languages other than English or German
- Additional support classes in English or German as a foreign language, for students who join the school with limited knowledge or experience.

Reporting Assessment: Diploma Programme

November	January	April	June
ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	Mid-year report of summative grades and teacher comments	ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	End of year report of summative grades and teacher comments

Grade 12

October	December	March
ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	Mid-year report of summative grades and teacher comments	Report of summative grades, teacher comments and mock examination results

Teachers collate grades from the completed assessment tasks and follow the official processes for ascertaining the final grades as outlined in their subject guide. A grade from 1-7 is then awarded and a breakdown of the components of that grade is reported. In conjunction with subject grades and comments, Diploma Programme reports also include teacher comments on student progress in the CAS programme, TOK and the Extended Essay. For students who choose to study an online course in the Diploma Programme through the established provider *Pamoja*, reports are generated by their online teachers and subsequently copied into the ISSH school reports. Summative examinations and mid-year report grades are also uploaded to Managebac so parents can monitor student progress. For students studying Literature in their native tongue and who converse with online tutors, their summative assessment tasks are administered in school and student progress is reported to the school. For university applications, reports that include predicted grades can be requested, while predicted grades are also submitted to the IB nearing the conclusion of the two-year course. In both cases, the grades are communicated to the student and parents.

Analysis of Assessment Results

Reflecting upon assessment results is a vital element of academic progression and is an opportunity for student and teacher to reflect on a range of issues. Together, the student as a learner is discussed and modifications are made to suit the learning style of the student. Further discourse may concern the development of specific concepts or skills pertinent to the subject, homework or organisational patterns or the teacher as a facilitator.

At the conclusion of each semester, assessment data is analysed by the principal and teachers to identify students who may:

- be underachieving at any level
- potentially fall below exit criteria levels
- have common assessment patterns across several areas of learning

Students and parents are encouraged to analyse reports to detect areas for improvement and reflect on strategies to help improve student learning that are discussed at parent--teacher-conferences.

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Next full policy review: Academic year 2020 - 2021

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