

International School of Schaffhausen Assessment Policy

ISSH Mission Statement

Be Unique + Achieve Potential + Take Responsibility

The International School of Schaffhausen provides quality education in a nurturing and inclusive environment. We are an internationally minded community which fosters intercultural understanding and respect.

We develop responsible global citizens

- by inspiring learners to discover, unlock and develop their potential
- by providing a challenging curriculum that stimulates critical and creative thinking
- by promoting active, life-long learning
- 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

“Each mind has its own method”

(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

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ISSH Assessment Philosophy

At ISSH we believe that assessment is a vital part of the learning process, affording students, teachers and parents the opportunity to continually reflect on student achievement and set goals for ongoing growth and development. Assessment is 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.

Purpose Of Assessment

The purpose of assessments at ISSH is to support students in understanding that in order to achieve their potential, they shall take responsibility for their learning. We understand that Each Mind has its own Method and value the uniqueness of each of our learners.

Students

- To support learning through timely and constructive feedback
- To highlight their strengths and demonstrate mastery and expertise
- To indicate areas of growth
- To reflect on their progress and set further goals for learning
- To take part responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers

- To provide a rich, student-centred learning experience that encourages self-reflection to identify next steps in the learning process
- To gather evidence to monitor, document and measure learning to inform future learning and teaching
- To provide opportunities for support and to celebrate student learning
- To collaboratively review and reflect on student learning and progress
- To take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- To offer timely and constructive feedback to better support learning.

Parents

- To inform the learning community about the 'student-as-learner' and their progress and achievement with respect to grade-level learning outcomes
- To communicate consistent, timely feedback and provide opportunities for communication
- To provide ways of supporting further development
- To understand the child in a holistic manner.

International School Child Care and Early Learning Center

In the first 6 years, children make huge leaps in their development. Therefore, all learning experiences and assessments in the Early Years Centre are planned by the educators based on their deep understanding of where each child is working developmentally. We aim to provide a setting where children can explore, discover, experiment and engage deeply with their peers in an imaginative, creative, social and collaborative environment. We endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where children can develop at their own pace, nurturing their individuality and instilling a passion and love of learning, whilst supporting their growing independence and self-confidence.

Monitoring learning -Children are natural inquirers from birth; they use their senses to explore the world around them and, as they get older, they begin to make sense of the world through their play. Play is the most vital component for development. It enables the children-it lights them up. Play is creativity, risk, collaboration, interpretation and reinterpretation. Play provides first hand opportunities for children who can explore and develop their wonder, love, joy and curiosity for learning, and teachers become co-players. At the same time, through our close daily observations of the children, we are able to structure challenging activities that guide them towards building new understandings and skills.

Documenting learning -*“The documenting of learning is the compilation of the evidence of learning. Documentation can be physical or digital, and can be displayed or recorded in a variety of media forms. Documentation of learning is shared with others to make learning visible and apparent.” (IBO)*

- **Parent learning updates** - shared regularly via the Family App to inform families about teaching and learning.
- **Displays** - highlighting learning happening within the classrooms
- **Monthly school wide bulletin** - articles on different learning engagements provide an insight into learning and teaching
- **School social media platforms** - a forum to share evidence of learning with the wider community
- **Portfolios (Journey on the Family App)**- evidence of learning in digital formats

Measuring learning -Early learners are measured against individual developmental milestones and celebrate achievements at times that are pertinent to them.

Through assessment, our educators:

- build a clear picture of the student and their interests
- identify what and how the student is thinking and learning
- support student assessment practices, including reflection and feedback, through modelling
- track the development of skills and dispositions
- assess the effectiveness of the learning environment on the student's learning
- plan learning engagements for individuals, small groups and the entire learning group.

Reporting on learning - Assessment is communicated in numerous ways. All serve as means with which to communicate and provide feedback on student learning. "Reporting on learning informs the learning community and reflects the question "How well are we doing?" It describes the progress and achievement of the students' learning, identifies areas for growth and contributes to the efficacy of the programme.

- **Learning Journeys** are collections of students' experiences highlighting growth, thinking, creativity and reflection. This is a celebration of learning, but also a tool for assessment and next steps.
- **Written Reports** - teachers give feedback to students and parents through written reports. These reports serve to document student learning (areas of growth) and identify areas requiring more focus (areas for development).
- **Conferences** - provide an overview and an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on students' learning and areas for development.

Primary School - Grades 1-5

“The PYP approach to assessment gives the students a vital role in the assessment process and engages the teachers in considering assessment as fit for purpose. Effective PYP assessment practice holistically integrates assessment for, of and as learning (Harlen, Johnson 2014) to support effective learning and teaching. These practices may be formal or informal and internal or external. PYP students’ learning is evaluated through a combination of these practices.” (IBO)

“While school accountability reforms in many countries have put a spotlight on standardized assessments (assessment **of** learning), education scholars are increasingly calling attention to the need to focus on assessment that connects student learning in a meaningful way (Stiggins 2002; Absolum et al. 2009)”.

	Assessment for learning	Assessment of learning	Assessment as learning
Purpose	Also known as formative assessment. Its goal is to inform teaching and promote learning.	Also known as summative assessment. Its goal is to certify and to report on learning progress.	As part of the formative process, its goal is to support students in learning how to become a self-regulated lifelong learner.
Timing	It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is iterative and interactive.	It is typically conducted at the end of a unit, year level or developmental stage, or programme.	It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is iterative and interactive.
Features	<p>Student involvement</p> <p>Quantitative and qualitative data</p> <p>Written and oral artefacts</p> <p>Observations and feedback</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Teacher/student dialogues/conferences</p> <p>Context-based</p> <p>Informal</p> <p>Indication of process</p> <p>Indication of knowledge/skill application</p>	<p>Limited student involvement</p> <p>Quantitative data</p> <p>Tests, exams, standardised tests</p> <p>Indication of skills and knowledge acquisition or mastery</p> <p>Based on teacher judgement</p> <p>Norm- or criterion-referenced</p>	<p>Students are active agents in their own learning by developing and using meta-cognitive strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● plan learning goals ● monitor goals ● reflect in order to modify learning and to adjust learning. <p>(Clark 2012; Earl 2012)</p>

Assessment in the Primary School is authentic and integral to the teaching and learning process. It is a continuous, on-going process that offers students the opportunities to co-create assessments, providing greater ownership and motivation for their learning. Assessments are designed and executed with sensitivity to differences amongst children and are set at a challenging but appropriate level for all students. Assessments are varied and balanced, allowing students access to relevant support materials, resources and processes, so that they can demonstrate and reflect upon their learning in a variety of ways.

The four dimensions of assessment

“Assessment provides evidence to inform learning and teaching. Both students and teachers are continually asking themselves the questions “Am I making progress? How do I know?” They gather evidence of learning to answer these questions”. (IBO-From Principle into Practice)

Assessment is categorised into four dimensions: monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting on learning. Each dimension has its own function, however they are not weighted the same. All aim to provide evidence to inform learning and teaching. The PYP chooses to put emphasis on monitoring and documenting learning, as these dimensions are critical in providing meaningful feedback for the learner.

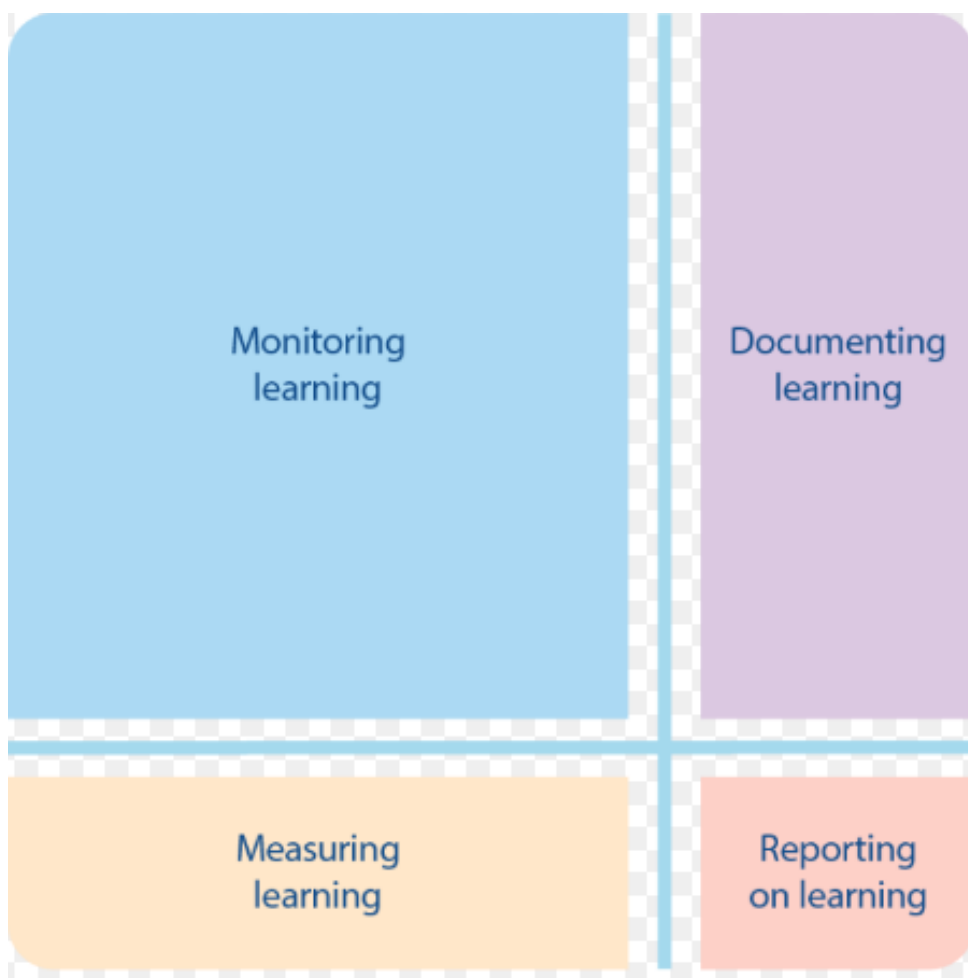


Figure AS03 Assessment to inform learning and teaching

Monitoring learning - “Monitoring of learning aims to check the progress of learning against personal learning goals and success criteria. It occurs **daily** through a variety of strategies: observation, questioning, reflection, discussing learning with peers and teachers, and well-considered **feedback to feed forward** for next steps in learning.” (IBO)

- **Pre-assessment** - Before a new unit of learning begins (be it a unit of inquiry, language, PE, music etc.) students’ prior knowledge is assessed. The task(s) set may assess subject specific knowledge or understanding of concepts to be addressed. Having analysed the results of the pre-assessment tasks, teachers then tailor subsequent learning experiences accordingly.
- **Formative assessment** - Students are assessed in an ongoing manner during units of study. Such formative assessments allow both the teacher and student to track their developing understandings and enables teachers to provide additional targeted support or extension as required.
- **Self-Assessment** - supports students in reviewing, evaluating and reflecting on their knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills. This also assists students in adjusting their learning and setting goals for further development.
- **Peer-Assessment** - students are encouraged to support each other and their own learning by assessing the learning of their peers.

Documenting learning - “The documenting of learning is the compilation of the evidence of learning. Documentation can be physical or digital, and can be displayed or recorded in a variety of media forms. Documentation of learning is shared with others to make learning visible and apparent.” (IBO)

- **Parent learning updates** - shared fortnightly to inform families about teaching and learning.
- **Seesaw** - student and teacher selected evidence of learning
- **Displays** - throughout the school, highlighting learning happening within the classrooms
- **Monthly school wide bulletin** - articles on different learning engagements provide an insight into learning and teaching
- **School social media platforms** - a forum to share evidence of learning with the wider community
- **Portfolios**- student and teacher selected evidence of learning in physical and/or digital formats

Measuring learning - “The measuring of learning aims to capture what a student has learned at a particular “point in time”. Not all learning can be, or needs to be, measured. Measurement tools can be school-designed or commercial, but each measurement tool used provides further data to support a larger picture of student achievement and progress in learning”. (IBO)

- **Internal Ongoing Assessments** - school-designed assessment tools (rubrics, self and peer reflections, checklists, observations) used to inform teaching and learning
- **External Assessments** – Standardised assessment tools are used to benchmark success (International School Assessment, Grade 3, 4, 5).

Reporting on learning - 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. “Reporting on learning informs the learning community and reflects the question “How well are we doing?” It describes the progress and achievement of the students’ learning, identifies areas for growth and contributes to the efficacy of the programme. *Reporting is perhaps the most public aspect of assessment, and therefore needs careful consideration in order to provide clear information that is useful to students and parents.*” (IBO)

- **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 is reflected in the student portfolio.
- **Written Reports** - twice a year, teachers give feedback to students and parents through written reports. These reports serve to document student learning (areas of growth) and identify areas requiring more focus (areas for development).
- **Conferences** take place three times a year (parent teacher conferences in semester one, student-parent-teacher conferences in spring 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.
- **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 through an assembly. This showcase is shared with parents and provides a further way to demonstrate student learning in relation to specific areas of work studied.
- **Grade 5 Exhibition** - in Grade 5, students carry out a six-eight 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.

Secondary School - Grades 6-12

There are many ways in which performance can be measured. Throughout their years of study at ISSH, students will undergo many different types of assessments. These can be formal tests, examinations, projects, practical and oral work. Some types of assessment are spread out over an extended period of time, others take the form of a shorter timed assessment.

Within the IB Diploma strand of study, students will be continually monitored throughout the years at ISSH and assessed aligned with the IB Diploma requirements. Teacher feedback is essential for informing students about their learning experiences and skill development throughout the pre-Diploma and Diploma years.

Assessment will guide our school and our student body in deciding which strand they follow. Students can either fulfil the IB Diploma requirements, or they can study Courses in addition to our US Middle States Association.

Measuring learning

- **Pre-assessment** | Before a new unit of learning begins students' prior knowledge is assessed. The task set may assess subject specific knowledge or understanding of concepts that either will be explored or have been explored in a previous academic year. Having analysed the results of the pre-assessment tasks, teachers can then tailor subsequent learning experiences or pacing accordingly.
- **Formative assessment** | Students are assessed in an ongoing manner during units of study. Such formative assessments allow both the teacher and student to track their developing understanding and enables teachers to provide additional targeted support or extension as required. Forms can include self or peer-assessed work and both formal and informal teacher-lead assessment.
- **Summative assessment** | Student progress throughout a unit is formally assessed through the completion of a large-scale task, be it a test, report, essay, field work, project, IA or a form of examination. Unlike other assessments, summative tasks act as a final indication of knowledge and skills developed throughout a unit or the academic year. Formal guidance for each summative task is provided by the teacher. Tasks are marked using a best fit approach.
- **Official IB DP assessment** | IB-certified grades stem from both internal and external assessment. Internally assessed student work is assessed against a set of subject criteria, which are available in the Subject Guide for each subject. All of the compulsory summative assessments are indicated on the DP calendar. In preparation for final examinations teachers guide students according to IB Diploma assessment expectations throughout the course. Failure to submit any summative assessment may result in failing the entire IB Diploma. 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. Students who study mother-tongue literature with an online tutor will have their summative tasks administered in school.

- **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.
 - IB Examinations occur at the conclusion of the two-year course.
 - IB 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.

Monitoring learning

- **Informal methods** | Student progress is consistently monitored within the classroom, often driving the direction and pace of lessons, while also enabling teachers to better differentiate to meet student needs. The personalisation of the learning experience that stems from a clear and regular understanding of student ability encourages finer and more immediate improvements to be made and greater progress to occur. Teachers can employ a wide variety of informal methods, which will vary depending upon the subject and cohort.

- **Formal methods** | Student progress is monitored using formally assessed work. Formally assessed work is any task which receives written or graded feedback and could be both formative or summative. Examples include examination grades, project progress, homework comments and notebook checks. These tasks are tracked in Managebac allowing for student progress over a term to be understood at a glance.

- **Long-term methods** | In order to keep a track record of student progress over time, school documentation is kept for student development. This is used to inform teachers of the status and progress of individual students over a long period of time. This type of documentation involves both assessment outcomes and information on student aptitude. 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.

Documenting/Reporting on learning

- **Continuous Reporting on Managebac** | 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.
- **Formal Reporting to Parents** | 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 Middle School and DP coordinators may request an update of progress at any time.

Grades 6 - 11/DP1

November	February	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/DP2

October	December	March
ATL skills report Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	Report of summative grades and teacher comments to prepare for final semester.	Report of current prediction and mock examination results

- **External Reporting** | 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.
The official IB Diploma results will be communicated to students on July 5th of the graduation year.

Further guidance

- **Grading** | Teachers collate grades from the completed assessment tasks and follow the official processes for ascertaining the final grades as outlined in their subject guide. An achievement level of 1-7 is then awarded and a breakdown of the components of that grade is reported. Grading of assessment tasks is guided by task-specific criteria. Percentage boundaries for each grade are set by subject teachers and defined on Managebac. Some assessments are moderated in various subjects for standardization purposes.
- **Homework policy** | There are a number of homework tasks and/or homework hours assigned per week/night deemed appropriate for each grade level. Teachers record homework tasks on Managebac in order to provide students with the ability to manage their time. Homework is meant as consolidation of learning and not as a supplementary task. Teachers take into consideration the workload of students before setting homework.
- **Semester Examinations** | At the end of each semester the students sit examinations in various subjects (languages, humanities, sciences, mathematics). The examinations are 90 minutes long for each subject and consist of the skills and content from either the semester or academic year.
- **Assessment Load** | As a general guidance, students are only supposed to have a maximum of 3 summative assessments per week and no more than 2 per day to make sure students are able to manage academic load, however there may be some exceptions made to at the discretion of the teachers for longer term projects, such as in fine arts. There is an internal assessment calendar for the IB Diploma students.
- **Plagiarism (Academic Integrity Policy)** | If there is a failure to comply with our academic integrity policy, there will be disciplinary action. Within the IB Diploma Programme, failure to comply may result in being disallowed from ever receiving an IB Diploma. Please refer to our [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

References:

IB, 2010, Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme

IB, 2015, Diploma Programme: From principles into practice

IB, 2019, What is an IB education?

IB, 2020, Guide to programme evaluation, Switzerland.

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Policy revised during the 2022-2023 school year

Next policy review June 2024