



## Shahid Mahdavi Educational Complex

### Assessment Policy

This document clarifies the understanding of the assessment process within our school setting. It is a constantly evolving document that reflects our school's unique assessment needs. Our assessment philosophy applies to the whole school and is to be communicated to and understood by all continuing and new teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

#### Purposes of assessment

The main purposes of assessment are to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to contribute to the efficacy of the program. The following outlines why we assess work at the SMEC.

- To guide our planning and instruction so that we can support and enhance student learning, rather than to simply generate a grade. Assessment acts as a foundation on which to base our future planning and practice. We believe the ultimate purpose of assessment is to guide instruction.
- To build a profile of student understanding by providing evidence concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the individual student.
- To provide positive motivation and reinforcement for students who strive to reach their personal best.
- To assess student performance in relation to the general and specific learning outcomes of the program.
- To provide evidence of teaching effectiveness and methodology in meeting the needs of the individual student.
- To promote higher standards for the pupils and teachers and improve performance.
- Support continuity and progression throughout the school.

#### What do we assess?

At SMEC we assess performance and progress in all the essential elements of the program:

- Knowledge of the subject areas from the scope and sequence documents
- Skills that are subject specific as well as transdisciplinary
- Concepts, central ideas and lines of inquiry of the Programme of Inquiry
- Attitudes and Learner Profile attributes



## What types of assessment do we use?

We believe that teachers are professionals with the ability to make valid and "weighty" assessments, and that parents also can and do contribute valuable assessment data, which should be actively sought. In addition assessment should allow the students to become part of the evaluative process engaging students in reflecting on their learning and in the assessment of their work and the work of others. Therefore we use:

1. **Self assessment**
2. **Peer assessment**
3. **Teacher assessment**
4. **Parental assessment**

Assessment can evaluate the students' individual or team learning:

1. **Individual assessment**
2. **Group assessment**

Assessments should be done on three occasions:

1. **Pre assessment** is used to diagnose and invoke students' prior knowledge. We believe that the teaching/learning cycle starts with assessment, rather than teaching, because if you don't know what students already know and can do, you don't know where to start that teaching. This is the student's ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT.
2. **Formative assessment** is interwoven within the daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what they have learned in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. It is encouraged that a balance of individual and group assessments is used for the formative assessments.
3. **Summative assessment** takes place at the end of the teaching and learning process, and is done to assess the enduring understanding of the central idea, lines of inquiry, concepts, skills, etc. Enduring understanding has happened when students are able to apply and explain what they have learned. Therefore:
  - a. Summative assessments should have *both a written and a spoken component*.
  - b. The six units of each grade should have six different summative assessment tasks.
  - c. Each summative assessment should have its own assessment tool (e.g. rubric) attach to it.
  - d. It is discouraged for the summative assessments to be group assessment. It is better they are individual assessment.
  - e. Summative assessment tasks should be done entirely *in the class*.

## What are the steps of assessment?

1. **Assess:** discover what is learned; first, you define outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes) and design the strategy i.e. what will you hear and see the student do that will convince you that they have learned.
2. **Record:** select and collect data; here you decide about the tool you will use to record the assessment, set up criteria for success, and present to students prior to task. We believe



that it is necessary to make sure the students know in advance the exact criteria, based on which they will be assessed.

3. **Report:** communicate the result of assessment to inform others, including students, colleagues and parents.

### How do we assess:

Teachers employ a variety of strategies to form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment and represent the school's commitment to provide a balanced view of each of its students. These assessment strategies include:

1. Observations
2. Performance assessments
3. Process-focused assessments
4. Selected Responses
5. Open-ended tasks
6. Portfolios

### 1. Observations

All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from nonparticipant to participant.

#### Observation of:

- Individual behaviors
- Student interactions
- General class behaviors
- Reading skills (individual, both silent and aloud; partnered; group)
- Logical thinking skills
- Lateral thinking skills (eg in brainstorming sessions)
- Study skills
- Listening skills
- Response to instructions
- Student application of what has been learnt

### 2. Performance Assessments

The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

- Role-play



- Presentation
- Demonstration
- Problem-solving
- Response to challenges

### **3. Process-focused Assessments**

Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviours, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting these observations.

Assessment of:

- Research effectiveness
- **Project work**
- Transdisciplinary skills
- Typical and non-typical behaviors
- Behaviors over time (i.e. multiple observations)
- Behaviors in different contexts, with synthesis of evidence

### **4. Selected Responses**

Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests, oral questioning and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.

### **5. Open-ended Tasks**

Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram, a model or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.

### **6. Portfolios**

A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work. It provides a picture of each student's progress and development over a period of time both as individual and group learners. It enables students to reflect with teachers, and parents in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement, and then to set individual goals and establish teaching and learning plans. Evidence of learning in a portfolio should be from a range of experiences and curriculum areas. The portfolio is used to show the development of knowledge, conceptual understanding, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes



and the attributes of the learner profile over one academic year. It may also be used to document student action. Portfolio entries should document both the process of learning and the product, including images and evidence of students in the process of constructing meaning. It is a tool for assessment and reporting purposes for students, parents, teachers and administrators.

#### Student Portfolios Guidelines:

- One per child made by the class teacher and given to the child at the end of the year
- A Binder of pages separated by tabs into subjects
- Cover page: name, class, school, year, and perhaps a self-profile
- Table of content
- Class picture
- Philosophy page
- Assessment page
- POI page: the central idea and lines of inquiry of the six units of the POI of the grade
- A balance of teacher-selected and student-selected work depending upon developmental stage of child. Use comment tags.
- Students should be able to explain why specific materials are in their portfolios
- All works dated, assessed, and clearly show improvement
- Should have a balance of: Pre, formative and summative assessment samples, and group, and individual work.
- Evidence of Development in:
  - Reading (both Farsi and English): Book/text Responses
  - Writing (both Farsi and English and French): Evaluated Writing Samples
  - Mathematics: Problem Solving Pieces
  - POI: One student-generated work for each unit or a student's response to a piece of work from the unit of inquiry
  - PYP Learner Profile Reflection: Students assess and report on their own learning and development related to all attributes of the IB learner profile.
  - Assessed Work from single subjects in French, Art, Koran, ICT and PE

#### How do we record?

Teachers use many techniques to gather information about students' learning. Data is recorded using a variety of tools to ensure that assessment shows the process and product of learning.

Some of the tools to use may include:

- Rubrics
- Checklists
- Anecdotal records
- Continuums



## How do we report?

There are four reports per year – approximately every two months. Each report is given in varied formats and serves to give parents the full picture of their child’s learning during the year.

1. November: Parent-teacher conferences to give the parents information about the student’s progress development and needs, and about the school’s program + a short written report
2. January: Full written report showing assessment in all areas + mini exhibition of the last unit + teacher conference
3. March: Student-led conferences led by students who take responsibility for their learning by sharing the process with their parents + a short written report
4. June: Final written report sent home to parents which includes a full assessment review of all essential elements of the program + mini exhibitions of the last unit + handing over the student portfolios
5. May: Exhibition of grade five. The school ensures that all students can demonstrate consolidation of their learning through the completion of the PYP exhibition.

Parents are welcome, at any time of the year, to communicate with teachers about their child’s progress.