



Assessment Policy





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Introduction

- At Al Ain American School, we believe that all our students are entitled to the highest education in which assessment and record keeping are integral parts to quality teaching and learning. At Al Ain American School, teachers use agreed best practice which supports lessons based on ambitious **learning objectives** and which sets challenging personal targets alongside rigorous assessments to ensure maximum student progress.
- Assessment information at the school enables teachers to plan the most appropriate **next steps** in students' learning and to provide support and extension materials as required.
- Assessment also provides information for students, which enables them to learn more effectively.

Aims

Our aims for assessment at Al Ain American School are to:

- Recognize and celebrate a wide range of achievements
- Motivate students to improve their learning by involving them in goal setting
- Build an expanding collection of evidence which gives a broad picture of each student's growing academic, social and physical achievements
- Establish a more effective partnership involving the student, parent and teacher
- Facilitate continuity and effective transfer of information between Grades
- Ensure teachers are aware of student's achievements in order to guide **future planning**
- Ensure **effective progression** in learning and to facilitate

- identification of areas of **strength** and **weakness**
- Ensure **equal access** to the curriculum for all students in the school
- Support the school in benchmarking progress and attainment against **international standards** through participating in MAP testing and PIRLS

At Al Ain American School, assessment is used consistently across the school to raise achievement and record individual student progress. Our assessment policy and practice is underpinned by the firm belief that every learner can **improve** and can **achieve success**.

Although different stages of the school will vary slightly in recording methods and frequency of assessments, all will use the following whole-school framework to ensure rigour and validity of assessment judgments.

When do we assess?

- As part of every lesson
- At the end of a focused piece of writing
- At the end of a topic or unit of work
- At the start of the new school year (Baseline)
- When a pupil is new to the school
- Formally towards the end of the school year
- In the period leading up to a reporting time

What do we assess?

- Social behaviors
- Students' attitude to learning
- Students' individual achievements

Who devises procedures and carries out assessments?

- Class teachers
- Vice Principal/Head of Curriculum/Arabic Coordinator
- SEN Coordinator/support teachers – ASL and Reading
- Teaching assistants assist with the process
- Students – self assessment and peer assessment

Key characteristics of assessment for learning

- Sharing learning objectives and goals
- Clear success criteria – differentiated for three ability levels
- Using consistent feedback and marking strategies
- Student self-assessment and peer assessment
- Using effective high order, differentiated open ended questioning
- Target setting and effective use of target cards that are shared with the students

At AAAS, it is accepted and understood that the principals of good assessment are based upon:

- **Clear learning objectives.** Setting clear learning objectives in our planning and sharing these with the students is the starting point to good assessment. Learning objectives must be explained to students clearly in a language they understand. In each lesson the learning objective should be displayed and explained, then re-visited during the plenary to see if they have been achieved. Mid lesson plenary sessions are also encouraged at AAAS
- **Identification of clear success criteria / steps to success.** Success criteria may be written or verbal and should outline for students exactly the steps they should take in order to be successful in a lesson. Success Criteria should link directly to the learning objective and be used by teachers when marking and responding to students' work.
- **On-going formative assessment.** The Student Portfolios which were introduced in October 2015, remain the key tool for capturing and recording students' Formative Assessment materials. Formative, on-going assessment is linked to the work in progress and must be a part of every lesson. It involves on-the-spot interpretation and analysis of what is happening in the classroom and how learning is taking place.
- **Focusing on the learning process as well as learning outcomes.** Assessment should highlight the students' learning that is revealed in their work and the processes involved in its completion. Often students explain how or why they completed it that particular way and this identifies the learning that has taken place. This type of assessment requires skilled observation, thoughtful listening and perceptive questioning by the teacher. We should assess what is important, not what is easily assessable.
- **Allowing for the unexpected as well as intended outcomes.** Learning is unique to every student and often unpredictable; particularly true in Kindergarten. The real curriculum is not what we intend students to learn but what they actually take away.
- **A wide range of evidence.** Although tests provide important evidence of learning, internal classroom based assessment offers teachers wider opportunities for judging students' performance. Therefore, the wider the range of evidence sought, the greater the opportunity for students to reveal the full extent of their achievements.
- **Using effective questioning.** Teachers should ask high order, differentiated questions to find out what students know, understand and can do. Questions should also be open ended and not closed. Quality questioning can also reveal misconceptions to allow teachers to target and structure future lessons more purposefully and effectively.

- **An identification of strengths and weaknesses and setting clear targets** Assessment should take positive action to correct weaknesses, focusing on what the students have shown they can do and how well they can do it. It should clearly identify the skills they have developed, concepts and attitudes formed and knowledge acquired. The strengths of the students must be recognized as it increases their confidence and motivates them to learn more. The identification of learning difficulties, which all students have at some stage, is important if they are to be helped to overcome frustrations and make progress. Assessment should focus on students' performance in the classroom and take into account what they can do as well as those aspects of understanding which require further help.
- **Target Setting.** Teachers and students may set targets related to specific learning objectives and goals. Students should be encouraged to identify their own targets supported by the teacher and peers. Individuals and groups of students may have targets to work on related to learning across the curriculum.
- **Using consistent feedback and marking** – see Marking and Feedback Policy
- **Involving students in reflection and review.** Students of all ages should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and be involved in reflecting on their work and reviewing their own and peers' learning. Students themselves should know where and how to improve upon their performance - see below.

At AAAS, the collection of formative assessment evidence includes:

- Systematic observation of students while they are engaged in a particular task/21st century activity
- Unplanned observations of students who demonstrate significant achievement at unexpected times
- Working with, talking and listening to students while they are engaged in their work
- Setting practical or written assignments, including homework, to work on independently which can be marked and assessed by the teacher

At AAAS, the recording of formative assessment evidence includes:

- Setting practical or written assignments, including homework, to work on independently which can be marked and assessed by the teacher
- Observing significant achievement on post-it notes with the emphasis on quality rather than quantity, this is particularly relevant in Kindergarten

- Class record books and checklists, including reading records
- Annotating specific pieces of work with a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses
- Annotating class work and displays which reflect students' independent as well as collaborative work
- Photographs and videos of student participation and engagement

At AAAS, the collection of summative assessment evidence includes:

- Diagnostic Baseline Assessments at the beginning of term 1 and term 3
- KG 1 Developmental assessments (Readiness)
- Half term and end of term Core Subjects Assessments and Analysis
- End of Unit Assessments
- End of year Ministry of Education tests
- MAP Testing (Term 2)
- EMSA Tests (Arabic Term 2)
- PIRLS – Grade 4 (as per the arranged assessment cycle schedule)

The purpose of student self-assessment and self-evaluation

One of the purposes of the student self-assessment process is to help students move forward to the next goal. Self-evaluation improves achievement as the student is more focused, motivated and aware of his or her own capabilities and potential. Involving students in self- assessment enables them to fulfil their potential and raises self-esteem and self-confidence. This is also important for Gifted and Talented students who may otherwise become complacent.

When should students self-assess?

- During the plenary session of lessons, including mid-plenary sessions
- During the marking of work alongside students
- At the end of any piece of work
- At the end of a unit of work or topic

The use of assessment data and tracking

Teachers are responsible for administering the assessments and analyzing their own class assessment data which is provided by the school's Data Officer. The Vice-Principal, Head of Curriculum and Arabic Coordinator will further analyze assessment data to monitor progress across the school and plan support and intervention as necessary. This detailed analysis includes comparing different

cohorts in order to look for trends and patterns, leading to additional strategies being introduced to address any areas requiring development.

The SLT use data to track student progress towards targets and to monitor the effectiveness of policies and practices. Assessment data is also used as part of Self Evaluation and forms part of the annual whole school Self Review Process.

Teachers are required to complete tracking at the end of each term to identify progress towards end of year targets.

Moderation and review of students' work

The aim of moderation and review is to ensure that, at AAAS the assessment of every student is accurate and consistent. Moderation meetings are held each term to ensure that the teacher's understanding of the level at which every student is working at is accurate.

Monitoring & Review

This policy is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Created	Reviewed
10/09/2015	29/06/2016