

YEW CHUNG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

I. Introduction

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning, and guide students toward the understanding of concepts, acquisition of knowledge, mastery of skills, and development of positive values, attitudes, and character. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, and requires a common language to facilitate effective communication across the YCIS community.

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and identifies what students know, understand, and can do. Information collected through assessment helps teachers determine student strengths and weaknesses in the achievement of expectations in all areas of the curriculum. Assessment information is also used for the purpose of guiding teachers to adjust instructional practices, adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all students, and evaluate the effectiveness of curricular programmes.

The terms 'assessment' and 'evaluation' are often interchanged, with different meanings in different contexts. In order to promote consistency across the Schools, these terms are defined as follows:

- **Assessment** is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources in order to determine how a student is meeting curricular expectations at different stages in the learning process. Students, parents, and teachers are involved in assessment process, with teachers providing descriptive feedback aimed toward improvement in student learning.
- **Evaluation** refers to the process of using assessment results for the purpose of reflecting on and recording student learning, and guiding teaching and learning toward continuous student growth. Evaluation implies judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent the criteria. Without careful evaluation of assessment results, the purpose and value of assessment are diminished.

By providing a variety of authentic assessments and timely, positive and meaningful feedback, students have the greatest opportunity to develop into responsible and caring global citizens with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to succeed in a rapidly changing society.

II. Purpose

- This guideline is applicable to all YCIS schools and shall be used to guide school stakeholders toward maximizing and improving student learning.
- The purpose of this guideline is to provide principles, expectations, and procedures that ensure a common understanding of assessment and its uses across YCIS schools.
- Ongoing assessment data gathered during the learning process shall be analyzed and used to inform teaching, and drive differentiated instruction and appropriate interventions aimed toward continuous improvement in student learning.

III. Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Children in ECE shall be authentically assessed through ongoing observations and reflections of 'children in action' that provide a snapshot of their growth and development over a period of time.

Portfolios shall be used as the evaluation tool to provide a focus for identifying, collecting and describing the evidence of learning in an objective and non-judgmental manner. Portfolios shall include the gathering of multiple examples of active learning, reflecting the knowledge, skills and understandings gained by individual children over time.

The purpose of the portfolio shall be to:

- Provide an overall picture of the child
- Reflect the social, cognitive, physical and emotional growth of the child
- Show change over time
- Provide a basis for planning curriculum
- Involve the child and family
- Create memories for reflection

IV. Primary and Secondary Education

YCIS schools shall develop a continuous school-wide assessment programme for students in Years 1-13 that includes the following:

- **Pre-Assessment**

Pre-assessment occurs before embarking on new learning to determine prior knowledge, skills, concepts and experiences. Typically, pre-assessment is completed at the beginning of a new unit and acts to inform and guide the teacher in the planning, teaching, learning, and assessment cycle.

- **Formative Assessment for Learning**

Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning, designed to help students improve their achievement of intended instructional outcomes. Formative assessments include:

- Questioning
- Discussions
- Learning Activities
- Feedback
- Conferences
- Interviews
- Student Reflections

Formative assessment is found at the classroom level and happens minute-to-minute or in short cycles. The feedback involved in formative assessment is intended to be descriptive in nature so that students know what they need to do next to improve learning.

Formative assessments are interwoven throughout the teaching and learning process to provide regular and frequent feedback to students, oral or written, with commendations on success or suggestions for improvement. Teachers utilize formative assessments to guide unit planning, differentiate instruction, and make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching strategies.

- **Summative Assessment of Learning**

Summative assessment measures achievement and determines what students know, understand, and can do at the end of a learning experience. The intent of summative assessment is to measure higher level thinking processes that students develop through learning in an international context. Summative assessment provides evidence of student competence and instructional effectiveness, and is used to determine grades for reporting feedback to students and parents.

Examples of summative assessments include:

- Selected response Items: Multiple-choice, true/false, matching
- Short answer items: Fill in the blank, 1-2 sentence responses
- Extended written responses
- Performances, presentations, and projects

Summative assessments assess the concepts, skills, and knowledge explicitly taught and learned during a specified unit of study, programme of instruction, or period of time. Summative assessments include unit tests, performance tasks, presentations, projects, internal mid-term/semester exams, internal end-of-year exams, and external curricular exams (i.e. IGCSE, IB, A-Level).

Summative assessments may be graded and used in accountability systems. The information gathered from summative assessments is evaluative in nature, and may be used to categorize students and compare performance among students.

- **Diagnostic Assessment**

Diagnostic assessments are utilized to determine placement, monitor progress, and set learning targets for individual students. Diagnostic assessments are also used to identify strengths and weaknesses of students with learning difficulties or whose first language is not English.

- **Standardised Assessment**

Standardized assessments provide a common measure of student, group, and school-wide performance, and are utilized to:

- Measure individual student achievement and progress over time.
- Measure year-level, subgroup (e.g. EAL, Learning Support), and school-wide achievement and progress over time.
- Inform and guide curriculum planning and teaching strategies.
- Evaluate curriculum, programme, and school-wide effectiveness and progress toward established goals.
- Measure student and school performance across YCIS schools, and in relation to other international schools.

As part of school-wide assessment planning, YCIS schools shall regularly assess student, subgroup, and school-wide performance through the use of standardized assessments. To measure individual student academic performance, schools may select from a variety of criterion-referenced standardized assessments, such as:

- **Years 4-9:** Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) and/or assessments from GL Education, to include New Group Reading Test (NGRT), Progress in Maths (PiM), and Progress in English (PiE).
- **Years 11-13:** IGCSE, IB, and A-Level external examinations.

To analyze student performance across YCIS schools, and compare student performance with other international schools, the following assessments shall be administered:

- **International Schools Assessment (ISA):** The ISA shall be administered to all students in Years 4-10 in mathematical literacy, reading and writing in October. The data obtained shall be used to gain descriptive information about the performance and progress of individual students, groups of students, and the school. The results shall be equated from year to year to provide longitudinal data used to track performance and progress over time at the individual, subgroup, school, and foundation-wide levels.
- **International Test of English Proficiency (ITEP):** The ITEP shall be administered in Years 7-10 in reading, listening, grammar, writing, and speaking in September for the purpose of measuring student performance and progress, evaluating readiness for IGCSE/IB coursework, and guiding instruction and curriculum development. It should also be used for determining appropriate placement of new students in English/EAL classes.

V. Special Assessment Arrangements

Assessments shall be differentiated for students with diagnosed learning difficulties, and/or students for whom English is not their first language, by providing appropriate accommodations and/or modifications as warranted.

- **Assessment Accommodations:**

Assessment accommodations include alterations in testing conditions, not content or rigor. Alterations in testing conditions include such provisions as large print, additional time, use of technology, separate testing room, oral responses, and tests read aloud.

- **Assessment Modifications:**

Assessment modifications imply a substantive alteration in content and/or rigor, such as reduced and/or easier content, alternative tasks, assessment substitutions, and/or practical assessment. If the regular course curricular content and assessment is modified, an alternate course code shall be utilized to denote a modified curricular course (M), English as an Additional Language (EAL), or Learning Support (LS).

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

- Utilize assessment to inform the teaching and learning process.
- Ensure assessment is an ongoing cumulative process that demonstrates a student's learning journey.
- Ensure assessments are fair and equitable for all students, and consider a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences, abilities, and cultural contexts.
- Explicitly teach students how to assess their own learning and establish learning goals and strategies.
- Develop criteria for producing quality assessments.
- Share success criteria with students and parents, ensuring that this is well understood.
- Collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress.
- Use assessment data as one piece of evidence, verified with other assessments and tasks.
- Record data in a manageable, organized, and timely manner.
- Maintain accessible records of assessment for all stakeholders.

Co-Principals, Vice-Principals, and Coordinators:

- Develop a comprehensive school-wide assessment plan that measures student, subgroup, and school-wide performance and progress over time.
- Regularly communicate assessment expectations and results to parents and the school community.
- Monitor the implementation of assessment policies and procedures by teachers and staff.
- Structure collaborative planning time for teachers to review, analyze and use assessment data to impact teaching and learning.
- Utilize scoring that is analytical (separate scores) and holistic (single scores).
- Collect and collaboratively review feedback from stakeholders before making decisions.
- Provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the school community and external agencies.

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- Ensure that parents and primary/secondary students review and sign the Home-School Partnership / Charter for Success annually.

Students:

- Take responsibility for personal learning; share learning with others.
- Be proactive in accelerating personal learning and seeking advice and support.
- Reflect on personal learning; identify strengths and needs.
- Initiate new learning experiences.
- Participate actively in personal learning, parent-teacher conferences and specified programmes, as requested.
- Value and respect differences in students and staff.
- Know and understand in advance the criteria for producing quality work.
- Demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skills.
- Use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences, and abilities to express understanding and learning.

Parents and Guardians:

- Acknowledge specific learning styles, strengths, and needs of their child.
- Actively seek feedback from teachers when needed.
- Support each child at home, as advised by teachers and other professionals.
- Ensure regular attendance at school.
- Provide opportunities to support and celebrate learning.
- Review and sign the Home-School Partnership / Charter for Success annually.