ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

FROM PRE-K TO GRADE 5

2019-2020

Brighter Horizons will be a model Islamic educational system, within which learners may develop to their fullest potential and become a generation of leaders and individuals who are highly motivated to be successful in this life and beyond.

The International Baccalaureate's 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 programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Brighter Horizons Academy's Mission Statement

Brighter Horizons Academy aims to develop practicing Muslim leaders who are lifelong learners that serve their diverse community and global society as respectful citizens.

Brighter Horizons Academy's Vision Statement

Brighter Horizons Academy is a model educational institution that produces generations of leaders to be successful in this life and the Hereafter

The IB Learner Profile

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

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Caring: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers/Courageous: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, (spiritual) and emotional— to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Purpose for assessment
Why do we assess?

The prime objective of assessment at the BHA is to provide feedback on the learning process. Assessment **is integral to all teaching and learning,** and it is central to the IB PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning: the *understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes, and the decision to take action.*

What do we assess?

Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform and evaluate student growth.. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-evaluation skills.

Principles of assessment
What are the characteristics of effective assessment?

Student learning is promoted through planning and refining the teaching and learning process to meet individual or group needs. Assessing the students' **prior knowledge** and **experience** as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period will enable teachers to plan and refine their planning accordingly. A well-designed learning experience provides data on students' conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills, and is consequently a vehicle for formative or summative assessment.

Summative assessment aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into a *students' understanding.* Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process which allows and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. It can measure several elements of the programme simultaneously. It informs and improves student learning, performance, understanding of the central idea, and prompts students toward action.

Formative assessment will provide information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is embedded with learning and helps teachers and students find out *what the students already know and can do*. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving *ongoing feedback.* This helps learners to improve, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to evoke thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success. There is evidence that increased use of formative assessment particularly helps students are low achievers to make significant improvements in their understanding.

Effective assessments allow students to:

● know and understand the criteria for producing a quality product or performance, in advance

● share their learning and understanding with others

● demonstrate conceptual understandings, a range of knowledge and skills

● consolidate their understandings in a variety of ways

● utilize a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding

● participate in reflection, self- and peer assessment

● base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries

- express different points of view through multiple perspectives
- analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved

ASSESSMENT PRACTICE

How do we assess?

Strategies of observations
Assessment of response (writing, talking, diagram, drawing, or solution) to a stimulus initiated by teacher, student or a peer. All children are observed often and regularly.
Observation of (including, but not limited to)
- 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
- Student health and circumstances
- Exit Tickets
- Plickers
- KWL Charts

What are the characteristics of effective assessments in the PYP?
- Have criteria that are known and understood in advance
- Allow children to synthesize and apply their learning, not merely recall facts
- Promote student reflection and self-evaluation
- Focus on the production of quality products or performances
- Highlight children's strengths and allows them to demonstrate mastery and expertise
- Allow children to express different points of view and interpretations
- Provide feedback regarding every stage of the learning/inquiry cycle
- Based on student needs, interests and learning styles (student-driven) (student choice, voice & ownership)
- Involve collaboration between students and teachers
- Produce evidence of student growth and learning that can be clearly reported and understood by children, parents, teachers and administrators
- Begin with the end results in mind (backwards design – what students should be able to know or do by the end of a learning unit, lesson or process.

Types of Assessments

Performance Assessments
The assessments of goal-directed tasks with established criteria, that are authentic challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the challenges/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and many skills required. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment. In performance based assessment it is important to focus on both the process and the end product.
Assessment of:
● Role-play
● Presentation
● Demonstration
● Problem-solving
● Response to challenges
● Unit work
● Research effectiveness
● Attitudes and behavior over time
● Attitudes and behavior in different contexts with synthesis of evidence

Interaction with Student
Assessment through discussion of activities and product
Analysis of Student Reflections
Assessment through journal writing and discussion

Second Opinions
● Student self-assessment
● Peer assessment
● Parental reflection

Selected Responses
Single occasion, one-dimensional exercise. tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.
Assessment of:
● Test performance (written)
● Test performance (oral)
● Quiz responses
● STAAR
● MAP
● Benchmarks
● AR
● ARP

Possible tools for recording assessments
● Rubrics
● Benchmarks/exemplars
● Checklist of desired behavior
● Anecdotal records
● Rating scales

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- Focus grids
- Continuums
- Previous student records
- Records of previous learning experiences

How do we set criteria or benchmarks for our assessment?
A benchmark = a standard or point of reference against which things may be compared or assessed.

- IB PYP overall expectations in each grade level(TEKS)
- Sharing student work in grade level meetings to determine the expectations
(High achiever, middle and low)
- Through school reports (What these children have been learning before)
- Through parent conferences (What parents can tell us about students skills)
- In discussions with students

Comparison
- Between prior and current knowledge, performance and learning experiences
- Between individual and group work
- With other students in a group
- With class-wide levels of performance
- With previous records
- Between in-class and out-of-class behaviors (playground, field trips, interactions with parents)

How do we determine assessment marks/indicators of student progress for the report card
We follow the principles of the IB PYP in assessing student learning. The mark or indicator of student progress is determined by using the range of strategies introduced above. The assessment is integral and ongoing to all teaching and learning instead of scheduling designated review and assessment weeks. The evidence of student learning has to be based on grade level expectations as identified in the scope and sequence documents and the acceptable evidence agreed in the grade level meetings conducted by the PYP Coordinator and in liaison with the Principal.

Determining the mark - general descriptors of performance at different levels

Highest Mark	100
Lowest Mark	50

95-100 --- The student's performance is outstanding and the student performs above the expectations consistently in all areas of learning. The student's contribution to the learning engagement has enriched the curriculum and the learning of other students as well. The student demonstrates his/her understandings by using several of the six facets of understanding with great confidence.

90-95 --- The student's performance has exceeded expectations and the student performs above expectations in most areas of learning. The student demonstrates his understandings by using at least two facets of understanding with confidence

80-85 --- The student's performance is consistent and there is plenty of evidence of progress in skills, knowledge and understandings by using one or two facets of understanding.

70-75 --- There is some evidence of progress and the student's performance is consistent. However, there are some gaps in skills, knowledge and understandings that students were expected to develop/acquire during the unit/quarter. The student demonstrates his/her understandings by using one or two facets of understanding.

60-65 --- There is some evidence of progress but the student's performance is consistent and there are some gaps in skills, knowledge and understandings that students were expected to develop/acquire during the unit/quarter. There are some attempts to demonstrate understandings by using one or two facets of understanding.

50 --- No evidence of progress. No attempts to demonstrate understandings by using any of the six facets of understanding.

Six Facets of Understanding

Student demonstrating understanding

- can **explain it by** making connections, giving examples and providing facts, data and illustrations

- can **interpret it by** telling meaningful stories, translating it, making it personal, and using images and models

- can **apply it by** using the knowledge in new and real situations

- have **perspective** and we see and hear different points of view

- show **empathy** by finding value in what others might find odd or implausible and we rely on direct experience

- have **self-knowledge** of how we learn and think and reflect on our learning and experiences.

How do we record?

- Collecting and retaining work samples
- Reading records
- Progress charts
- Photographing or videoing activities, art work etc
- Audio-taping activities
- Running records
- Anecdotal note-taking
- Scores

How and when do we report?

1ˢᵗ quarter report card + parent-teacher conference   October/November
2ⁿᵈ quarter report card
3ʳᵈ quarter report card + parent-teacher conference   April/May

End of school year report card   June
After every UOI   6 times a year
                                                                     4 times a year for Pre-K & KG

What do we report?
The IB learner profile
The development of conceptual understanding, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and possible action through units of inquiry
Language development (including English and Arabic): content and progress
Math development: content and progress
Quran: content and progress
Islamic studies: content and progress
The Arts (drama and visual arts): content and progress
PE: content and progress

How do we store the data?

Portfolios (online)
Assessment of collection of student's work to demonstrate success, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. Portfolio will follow the student throughout the school from KG to Grade 5 (Seesaw, managebac & sycamore)

Report cards
Copy of each report card is stored in school files (four times per year), on Sycamore and ManageBac

Rubrics, running records, observation charts, Benchmarks, tests etc.
Teacher establishes a folder where all the assessment documents are stored. In addition, teachers should attach the most successful assessment tools to the unit planners/subject planners.

How is student growth reported to parents and students?
Report card (four times per year)
IB learner profile development (included in the Unit of Inquiry progress report at the end of each unit in student planner)
Parent-Teacher, Teacher-Student and Parent-Teacher-Student conferences (held throughout the year)
Unit of Inquiry progress reports (sent home after each unit of inquiry)
Teacher communication with parents via notes home, newsletters, emails and phone calls.

How do we plan for assessment?

The summative, formative and prior knowledge assessment tasks should:
● be consistent across the year level
● be planned at the start of the unit
● be a learning experience in itself
● be built into learning activities (meaning no exams or assessment weeks)
● be student-friendly
● be teacher-friendly

- be continuous throughout the learning process
- be authentic (based on real, or realistic, problems or situations)
- serve a worthwhile purpose
- be varied
- cater to different types of intelligence
- help develop our understanding of the whole child, ie his or her academic, social and emotional characteristics
- be as simple as its purposes will allow

Portfolios

A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. 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, parents and peers 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 a period of time. 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 can be used as a tool for assessment and reporting purposes for students, parents, teachers and administrators.

How does it work?

Things to consider are:

• the criteria for selecting pieces of work
• who will select the pieces of work
• what will accompany the selected pieces of work (for example, self-assessment, reflections, assessment tools, teacher comments)
• how to establish what is to be included and what will be removed
• when and how portfolios are to be used (for reporting purposes, student-led conferences, parent–teacher interviews, report writing)
• the format the portfolios will take (for example, electronic, binder, folder)
• where the portfolios will be housed
• who has access to the portfolios
• who the portfolio ultimately belongs to.