

# Secondary School Assessment Policy

La Garenne International School



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## Statement of Assessment Philosophy

La Garenne International School prides itself on being a learning-focused community where students are encouraged to show resilience and where a sense of positive esteem is derived from personal growth and achievement. This philosophy is summarised in our school motto *'Be happy and never, never, never give up.'* We believe that effective assessment is central to this process. At La Garenne we foster a holistic view of education and we place primary emphasis on ensuring that our students acquire the skills necessary to be effective life-long learners. Through ensuring that our highly skilled staff have a clear understanding of how assessment improves teaching and learning, we aim to produce reflective and self-regulating learners who are able to identify personal goals and plan strategies for growth.

## The Aims of Assessment

In addition to our view of assessment as a means of encouraging reflection and growth, assessment is also a vital tool for:

- Informing academic staff about individual learner's level of understanding and, consequently, identifying how they can improve.
- Identifying general trends across the age ranges and subjects that may inform wider targets for improving teaching and learning.

## Objectives and Principles

Our Assessment Policy is based on the approach to learning outlined in our core aims:

- Give each child individual attention: striving to make them feel appreciated, and to keep them happy, motivated and healthy.
- Teach children how to live in an international community: developing tolerance and respect for others, thereby developing compassion and inter-cultural understanding.
- Guarantee a high-quality, holistic learning environment: combining inspirational, enquiry-based learning and an enriching extra-curricular programme to promote the development of the whole child and to provide each individual student the opportunity to flourish in exceptional surroundings.
- Instil a life-long passion for learning: stimulating the children to be curious, creative, and independent critical thinkers.

Our approaches to assessment are a central factor in meeting each of these aims and, particularly, in ensuring that the curriculum is learner-centred, challenging, inquiry based and encourages reflection.

## Links to other school policies

This policy is revised annually to ensure that it aligns with other school policies.

*Language Policy:* Formal assessment reporting takes place within the primary language of study at the school (English) as this is the language most understood by our school community. Assessments which take place in languages that cannot be facilitated by the school, namely for planned School Supported Self-Taught DP languages, will be assessed in consultation with the students allocated tutor and written in the reporting language of the school by the school based SSST coordinator.

*Admissions Policy:* As La Garenne International School believes in an inclusive school environment, our admissions policy follows the principles outlined in our assessment philosophy.

### **Procedures in the IB Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme age ranges**

The Curriculum Coordinator, in collaboration with the Head Teacher, is responsible for:

- Establishing time-frames for formal assessment practice
- Establishing procedures for assessment
- Policies regarding assessment in the MYP and DP
- Identifying wider targets and strategies based on the analysis of formal assessment data
- Monitoring the reporting process
- Ensuring that teachers follow assessment procedures
- Analysis of assessment data
- Ensuring that teachers are using a wide range of assessment methods and allow this to inform teaching and learning
- Monitoring tracking of learners
- Implementation of CAT 4 assessment
- Annual review of the Assessment Policy

### **Assessment Practices**

Assessment may take different forms depending on the context in which it is being undertaken. These forms of assessment can vary between subjects and age-ranges. However all assessments are based on the aims, objectives and principles outlined in this document. La Garenne acknowledges that good assessment practice involves a range of assessment methods which may include:

1. oral feedback
2. self-assessment
3. peer-assessment
4. group/whole class assessment
5. written marking of work
6. teacher/learner questioning
7. assessment of exemplar work of different levels
8. use of assessment criteria and examination materials

La Garenne recognises that effective assessment practice must include a combination of both **formative** and **summative** assessment methods. Formative assessment should always focus the students on the next steps needed to advance according to the assessment criteria on the summative assessments.

## **Formative Assessment**

The School allows for a degree of flexibility regarding the formative assessment methods used within differing age ranges and subject areas. The nature of the formative assessment given, however, is expected to be carried out with a specific aim which may consist of:

- To ensure clarity of factual information
- To comment on how the learner's practice can be improved through the use of target setting
- To acknowledge that a learner's work has been checked and understood

To provide an evaluation of the level of the learner's understanding it is expected that each learner should have their work subject to a range of assessment tools and methods. Formative assessment should be a feature of every lesson with its primary purpose being to inform the students how they can advance their learning. Formative assessment strategies evident in lessons may include but are not limited to:

- Peer-assessment
- Self-assessment
- Visualisation of understanding
- Verbal comments and discussion

## **Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment takes place throughout the school year. The levels that learners obtain in summative assessments are reported to parents on Report Cards and also at teacher-parent conferences which take place at the end of each term following the release of Report cards. The formal assessment for the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme reflect the IB-specific assessment criteria as shown in each of the subject guides.

### **Summative Assessment in the MYP**

Summative assessment in the Middle Years Programme takes place at the end of each unit of study in each year of the programme. Summative assessments in the MYP are based on the subject-specific assessment criteria A, B, C and D for each area. Each of the 8 MYP subjects are assessed out of a total of 7.

The assessment criteria which are used for years 1,3 and 5 of the programme are determined by the IB organisation. For years 2 and 4 of the programme, teachers have the option to either combine assessment criteria from the year above or below, or alternatively, to use the criteria in full from the years above or below. The school does not want to prescribe the approach that teachers will take here but will allow teachers to exercise their professional discretion given the context. Each criterion and strand must be assessed twice throughout each year.

To ensure that summative assessment clearly supports our school objectives and principles, at the end of each unit of study, students are assessed using performance-based assessments which focus on skill acquisition by engaging learners in real-life problem solving activities.

## **MYP 4 & 5**

In order to help prepare the students in MYP 4 & 5 for Diploma assessment practices, students in MYP 4 & 5 will also sit a formal examination paper, taken under exam conditions, at the end of each academic year.

All students will start the MYP Personal Project during MYP and will complete this at the end of MYP 5. The Personal Project will be assessed in accordance with the assessment criteria outlined in the MYP Projects guide.

### **Summative Assessment in the DP**

In the Diploma Programme, summative assessment will also take place a minimum of five times throughout each year and is always based on the assessment criteria specified in the subject-specific IB guide.

Diploma Programme students are also awarded a numerical summative assessment grade from level 1-7 in their 6 subject areas (7 reflecting the highest level of attainment). In addition to this they are awarded a grade A-E for the Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay core components. For the 'Creativity, Activity, Service' component of their course, the summative assessment will indicate Y: Yes or N: No to reflect whether pupils are on target. The maximum number of points available for the Diploma Programme is 45 as the core aspects of the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge combine to offer an additional 3 points. A score below 24 points is considered a failing grade. All students will be encouraged to complete the core components of the Diploma Programme, including the Extended Essay, where appropriate.

### **Grade Descriptors**

The following grade descriptors are a generic outline of the level of achievement required to meet each level in **both the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme**:

- 1 Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
- 2 Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
- 3 Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
- 4 Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.

- 5 Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
- 6 Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
- 7 Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

### **Standardisation of Grades**

Standardisation is an essential requirement and takes place as often as possible to ensure accuracy of marking. Where there is more than one teacher of a subject area, standardisation is compulsory following each of the summative assessment periods. Standardisation is also compulsory for the MYP Personal Project in addition to the DP Extended Essay.

### **Effort Grades**

Students in the MYP and the Diploma Programme are awarded an effort grade in addition to their summative assessment grade for each subject. These effort grades are awarded to ensure that the school and parents are aware of the effort the teacher feels that the student is making in the subject, in addition to encouraging the student to reflect on their efforts in their subjects and consider how this may be improved. The effort grades are based on the following scale:

<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	All work is attempted to the best of the pupil's ability
<b>B</b>	<b>Good</b>	Most of the work is attempted to the best of the pupil's ability
<b>C</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	Acceptable work, but it could be improved with more effort
<b>D</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Work shows a lack of care and attention
<b>E</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	Little or no effort demonstrated

## **Reporting of Summative Assessment and Effort Grades**

In order to ensure that parents are given a clear indication of their child's academic progress as soon as possible upon starting a new academic year, a mid-term report is issued prior to the October half-term break. Following this reporting periods are at the end of each subsequent term throughout the year:

Report 1: October (Mid-term)

Report 2: December (Term 1)

Report 3: March (Term 2)

Report 4: June (Term 3)

Teachers also have the opportunity to report further on summative and formative assessments during Teacher-Parent conferences which take place at the end of each school term - three times throughout the year. Should parents have additional questions the school has an open door policy and can arrange to meet with parents at any time.