

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

## Preamble

Assessment at Enko Riverside School brings about benefits for students. Assessments must have clear benefits, such as in direct services to the student or in improved quality of educational programmes.

### **1. General principle**

The following general principles guide both policies and practices for the assessment of High School students:

Assessment should bring about benefits for students. Gathering accurate information from students is difficult and potentially stressful. Assessments must have a clear benefit - either in direct services to the student or in improved quality of educational programmes. Assessment should be tailored to a specific purpose and should be reliable, valid, and fair for that purpose. Assessments designed for one purpose are not necessarily valid if used for other purposes.

Assessment should be age and level appropriate in both content and the method of data collection. Methods of assessment should recognize that younger students need familiar contexts to be able to demonstrate their abilities. Older students need to be able to perform both in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Assessment should be linguistically appropriate, recognizing that to some extent all assessments are measures of language. Regardless of whether an assessment is intended to measure reading skills or learning potential, assessment results are easily confounded by language proficiency, especially for students who come from home backgrounds with limited exposure to English, for whom the assessment would essentially be an assessment of their English proficiency. Each student's first- and second-language development should be taken into account when determining appropriate assessment methods and in interpreting the meaning of assessment results.

The key aim of Enko Riverside School is that every child will achieve his or her full potential. We believe that this will be accomplished through a close partnership with parents, pupils taking responsibility for their own learning, and highly motivated, highly skilled staff. The purpose of the Assessment Policy is to help pupils know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. The knowledge gained will be used to inform teaching and to direct learning.

### ***Good assessment practice Include:***

- clear learning intentions
- integral part in classroom activities
- appropriate to the task
- a focus on learning processes as well as learning outcomes
- drawing upon a wide range of evidence
- placing achievement in context
- indicating strengths and weaknesses
- pupils' reflection and review
- tracking performance of pupils over time and trends in subject performance

### **1.1 Purposes of Assessment**

Assessment is an integral part of instruction, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Assessment affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, funding. Assessment inspires us to ask these hard questions: "Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?" "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?" "Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?"

### ***Assessment enables the Admissions Officer, Programme Coordinators and the Head of School to***

- determine appropriate placement of new students
- provide guidance for the choice of courses/subjects

### ***Assessment enables teachers to:***

- focus on what a pupil can or cannot do (diagnostic)
- decide what a pupil needs to learn next (formative)
- sum up a pupil's progress so far, in order to inform students, parents and teachers on what has been achieved (summative)
- identify students' varied learning needs
- refer children and, as appropriate and with the support of the Counsellor, their families for additional support, including from external specialists
- Identify the most effective methodologies to get the best from the student
- alternate teaching methods to facilitate student learning and understanding

### ***Assessment enables students to:***

- know how well they are achieving in relation to international standards and pupils of similar age
- know how rapidly they are progressing
- know their strengths and weaknesses
- set targets using reliable information

### ***Assessment results enable families to:***

- keep track of their children's progress and learning
- relate school activities to home activities and experiences
- collaborate with teachers to enhance students learning

## **1.2 Expectations of Stakeholders**

### ***Expectations of students***

- Students seek a clear understanding of the knowledge and/or skills that are being assessed and are always aware of the weighting of each assessment in the subject's overall assessment programme.
- Students make good use of all feedback regarding a mark or level that has been awarded and review all graded assessment tasks.
- Students use all opportunities to have their performance assessed.
- Students review all criteria and assessment tools that teachers use in the assessment.
- Students do not expect that every task or test completed will be formally assessed. They understand that some work is completed for the purposes of formative assessment, and that positive and supportive feedback will be provided to assist them to improve their areas of challenge.
- Students seek to meet all deadlines for assessment tasks.
- Students seek to be well prepared for the summative examinations

### ***Expectation of teachers***

- Teachers, facilitated by Programme Coordinators, hold regular planning meetings at subject and grade level and negotiate and agree upon due dates and deadlines in the light of the students' workloads in other subjects and in light of other commitments.
- Teachers provide students with adequate time for the completion of out-of-class assessments.
- Teachers use student performance in order to inform future teaching and learning.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools.
- Teachers record assessment results promptly in Ed-admin.
- Teachers alert Programme Coordinators to any concerns regarding the performance of students in a timely fashion.

### ***Expectations of Coordinators, the Head of School and the IT Manager***

- Coordinators, supported by the Head of School, produce examination timetables with enough notice for students and teachers.
- The IT Manager supports teachers with keeping records assessment results in Ed-admin.
- The IT Manager supports Programme Coordinators with extracting assessment statistics from Ed admin.

### ***Expectations of parents***

- Parents understand and support all policies of the School, particularly those that relate to learning.
- Parents support their child in meeting deadlines set for work.
- Parents help to motivate their child.
- Parents help create an informative environment that is to the benefit of their child.
- Parents promptly contact the school as and when questions or concerns arise.

## **2 Purpose of assessment**

Assessments are carried out for a variety of purposes in Foundation, IGCSE and IB Diploma classes. Broadly speaking two main purposes can be identified:

- Assessments that inform students, teachers and parents about the learning students have completed at the end of a unit or the end of the term or year. The outcomes of such assessments will usually not directly impact on the learning in future lessons and are merely a summary of the learning that has happened (or not happened). These assessments are called summative assessments.
- Assessments that inform – primarily – teachers, but also students and parents, about the on-going learning process continuously provide feedback about successes and failures students are experiencing. This information is vital for the teacher as this feedback will directly impact on the planning of future teaching and learning activities. Such formative assessment can take the form of oral presentations, quizzes, mini tests, etc.
- Diagnostic assessments are used, for example, in the admissions process and help the school decide which grade level would be best for a student, and which course or subject choices – as far as available – are most suitable.

Many types of assessments – depending on the situation – can serve summative and formative purposes to varying degrees.

## **3. Assessment at Enko Riverside School**

### ***Types of assessments:***

Enko Riverside School uses two types of assessments which are: Summative and Formative assessment to assess all areas of understanding, skills and competencies.

### **Summative assessment**

The goal of summative assessment is to *evaluate student learning* at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

Summative assessments are often *high stakes*, which means that they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include:

- Tests, examinations, projects, oral presentations, scientific experiments, research papers, etc.

### **Formative assessment**

Formative assessment is an on-going process to evaluate students' academic achievements in progress, to improve teaching and learning and provide on-going feedback. More specifically, formative assessments:

- help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need to be worked on
- help teachers recognize where students are struggling and seek ways of addressing the problems immediately

Summative assessments will be given at least 4 times a year and Formative assessments will be given at least bi-weekly depending on the content that has been covered, level, grade of students and time of year (i.e. towards external exams)

### **3.2 Internal Exam Sessions**

Internal examinations at Enko Riverside School take place as mid-year and end-of-year examinations. Internal examinations simulate the conditions of external examinations and help the students to prepare for those.

### **3.3 External Exam Sessions**

External examinations at Enko Riverside School include the Cambridge Checkpoint examinations for Foundation 2 in October, the Cambridge IGCSE examinations for IG2 in April/May as well as in October/November and the IB Diploma examinations for IB2 in October/November. Enko Riverside School fully complies with the exam regulations for Cambridge Checkpoint, Cambridge IGCSE and the IB Diploma Programme.

## **4. Programme specific matters assessment**

### **4.1 Foundation**

Cambridge Lower Secondary testing structure assesses learner performance and reports progress to teachers, learners and parents. The Cambridge Lower Secondary assessment uses internationally benchmarked tests, giving parents extra trust in the feedback they receive. There are two assessment options:

- Cambridge Lower Secondary Progression Tests (marked in school)
- Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint (marked by Cambridge examiners). Cambridge Lower Secondary Progression Tests provide valid internal assessment of knowledge, skills and understanding in English as a first or second language, mathematics and science.

The tests:

- Enable learning to be assessed each year, provide detailed information about the performance of each learner for stages 7, 8 and 9.
- Enables teachers to give structured feedback to learners and parents
- Enable teachers to compare the strengths and weaknesses of individuals and groups
- Are marked by teachers at the school
- Can be used any time in the year, as many times as needed

At the end of the year, teachers can upload learners' test results and then analyse the results and create and print reports. Teachers can also compare a learner's results against their class, school or other schools around the world and on a year-by-year basis.

Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint is a diagnostic testing service that helps learners by giving comprehensive feedback on their strengths and weaknesses in each subject area. They are usually taken at the end of Cambridge Lower Secondary. The tests are marked by Cambridge and each learner receives a statement of achievement and a diagnostic report. The school uses the feedback from Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint Test to make strategic decisions, drawing upon a pool of information and specialist reporting tools that are built into the tests. The Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint feedback reports enable teachers to:

- Tailor individual learning programmes
- Monitor group and individual performance
- Compare the performance of all learners taking tests in that session
- Manage learning programmes within schools and as learners move between schools.

## **4.2 Cambridge IGCSE**

Cambridge Assessment was established to promote educational excellence and high-quality learning through the use of assessment. In order to achieve this, Cambridge Assessment is committed to ensuring that all its assessments are fair, have sound ethical underpinning, and operate according to the highest technical standards. Cambridge Assessment designs and administers assessments which have a formative function, as well as those with a predominantly summative function.

**Assessment instruments developed by Cambridge Assessment fall into the following main categories:**

### **Objective-response items**

Where candidates are required to provide a highly defined response, such as adding a line to a diagram, completing a number sequence, and completing a statement.

### **Multiple-choice items**

A specific form of objective-response item, where the candidates' responses are constrained to a given list of alternatives, selecting the response which best completes a statement or answers a question.

### **Short-answer items**

Where candidates have to provide succinct, specific responses to questions, but where the marking scheme allows some variation in those responses.

### **Extended-response items**

Where candidates have to create a given amount of text and/or working, and which allow candidates to organise their responses and present material in an original way.

### **Coursework/non-examined and teacher assessment**

Where candidates produce written reports or complete structured activities which are typically marked by teachers and tutors who are also responsible for delivering the learning programmes in which the assessment is located.

### **Performance assessment**

Where performance in work tasks, or activities such as laboratory work are observed and scored/rated by a teacher or qualified assessor. Assessment in work contexts typically is guided by occupational standards.

## **Evidence accumulation**

Where candidates are responsible (with appropriate levels of support) for gathering evidence of performance in a range of activities and for assembling this evidence into a portfolio/record of evidence. This is then scored/rated by teachers or qualified assessors and subject to external moderation/verification.

### **4.3 IB Diploma Programme**

IB Diploma students are assessed in three ways:

- Final exams, externally assessed by the IB
- Internal Assessment, internally marked by teachers and validated through external moderation by the IB
- Quizzes, tests, written and oral tasks, mid-year and end-of-year exams which are all marked by teachers and used to generate mid-year / end-of-year overall term grades and exam grades.

Assessments listed under c) are used to inform students, teachers and parents about the progress students are making, and to evaluate how well students are doing in relation to the Grade Descriptors. Some of these assessments are mostly formative in purpose and influence the teachers' planning of further classroom activities. Other assessments, such as end-of-unit tests as well as mid-year and end-of-year exams are summative in nature.

In assessing students, teachers apply the approaches to assessment specified by general IB publications and the respective subject guides. Teachers use:

- Analytical mark schemes (e.g., in some Science and Maths exams/tests)
- Criterion-referenced assessment (e.g., in the languages and the Internal Assessments in all subjects)

The use of analytical mark schemes relies on the application of grade boundaries in the determination of marks out of 7, 7 being the highest and 1 being the lowest grade.

Criterion-referenced assessment involves the use of a best-fit approach in deciding which descriptor of a given assessment criterion best corresponds to the work a student has submitted. The criterion referenced assessment of internally assessed components (e.g., the Independent Investigation in the Science, the Maths Exploration, the Oral Commentaries in the Languages, the Historical Investigation in History, the Portfolio in Economics etc.) is validated through external moderation by IB moderators. Teachers educate themselves (e.g. through the use of the Teacher Support Material and other resources on MyIB) and collaborate with each other in subjects or subject groups in order to develop a complete understanding of the marking standards set globally by the IB. A consistent and accurate marking of the student's work is understood to be vital for teachers to be able to correctly evaluate tasks submitted by students, and in order to give appropriate feedback where that is needed and permitted.

When preparing assessment tasks teachers use examples from previous exam sessions and adapt those, as necessary, to fit the purpose of the assessment. The application of IBDP Grade Descriptors (verbal descriptors of grades on the 1-7 scale) stipulates that – for a “7” to be awarded in a given assessment – this assessment needs

to be sufficiently challenging. It may be that quizzes or other rather trivial assessments do not justify awarding a grade on the 1-7 scale. In such cases teachers have the option to combine the outcomes of several, trivial assessments into one grade out of 7 once it is clear that students had sufficient opportunities to demonstrate a performance that corresponds to a Grade Descriptor.

Work for Theory of Knowledge (presentation and essay) and the Extended Essay are graded using criterion-related assessment using a scale of A to E. The ToK essay and the Extended Essay are assessed externally. The ToK presentation is assessed internally and externally validated when this is requested by the IB.

## **5 Reporting / feedback and the use of Ed-admin and the Parent Portal**

Assessment results are communicated to students when the assessed (written) work is returned to the students, or when the (oral) work is evaluated by the teacher.

Teachers record all assessment results in their Gradebook in Ed-admin immediately after marking the work. The Gradebook is set up at the start of each term and maintained throughout the term to reflect

- Any assessments planned
- All assessment results collected

Coordinators and the Head of School regularly extract assessment results from Ed-admin. The assessment results inform Coordinators and the Head of School about the level of performance of individual students, but also of year groups or results in individual subjects. This feedback is regularly reviewed and influences decision making processes.

Parents can view their child's / children's assessment results via the Ed-admin Parent Portal. Parents are encouraged to regularly inform themselves about their child's / children's grades and raise any questions or concerns with the school, initially with the subject teacher.

Enko Riverside School issues mid-year and end-of-year report cards. These are released in mid-July and late November, soon after the respective internal exams. Report cards provide term and exam grades, as well as verbal comments. The latter inform parents about the learning activities in each subject, the respective student's strengths and weaknesses and include suggestions for any future learning.

Parents and students are invited to meet all teachers at the Parent-Student-Teacher conferences. The conferences provide opportunities for parents, with their child, to meet teachers for a 10-minute meeting and discuss any matters pertaining to the child's learning.