Akal Academy, Baru Sahib

ASSESSMENT POLICY

IB 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 programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Akal Academy Mission Statement

Akal Academy aims at developing young people who have cultivated mind imbued with a spirit of inquiry, thirst for knowledge, respect for diverse world cultures and a keen desire to serve the community in which they live and work, as well as aspire to serve humanity at large through their spiritual values and knowledge acquired through modern education.

Akal Academy Vision

Our vision is to establish permanent peace in the world through value based education and spiritual rejuvenation, creating good global citizens.

IB Rules Regarding assessment

Rule 5.5 **-** Schools must ensure that teachers of the IB programme(s) are knowledgeable about the curriculum and assessment requirements set out in the programme(s) guides and supporting materials. To this end, it is the school's responsibility to ensure access for teachers to all relevant, up-to-date programme guides and supporting materials from the IB.

Rule 5:15 – Schools are responsible for ensuring that legal guardians are properly informed about the curriculum framework, including assessment guidelines and the requirements of the programme.
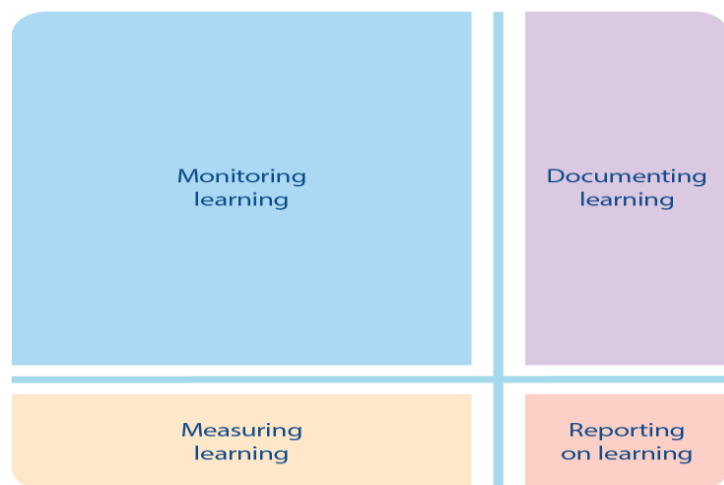
Our Assessment Philosophy:

At Akal Academy we believe that assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. It shapes our understanding of learner and his needs and our own instructional practices. Most importantly, assessment drives instruction. Assessment is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the essential elements of learning. We strongly agree that assessment advance learning, not merely audit absorption of facts.

Assessment should:
• assess what the student can do and how he can do it
• assess application of knowledge and skills and not just recall
• involve student participation and reflection
• allow student to analyse his own learning in order to become a lifelong and independent learner
• inform teacher, student and parent about the teaching-learning process reflect an agreed and consistent set of objectives and standards
• be varied and ongoing
• be clearly understood by all
• should be used for accountability purpose

Assessment at Akal Academy

Assessment has four dimensions: monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting on learning. Each of these aspects has its own function, but all aim to provide evidence to inform learning and teaching. Although the four dimensions of assessment are not weighted the same, each dimension has its own importance and value.

(*Assessment, From Principles into Practice, 2019*)

Assessment Methods

All assessment and the recording of assessments are based upon the IB philosophy on assessment. The school uses different types of assessment to support students' learning process:

Pre- assessment:
Assessment for learning is a collaborative effort that starts with assessment of prior knowledge to determine what students already know and what they are able to do with further guidance (Griffin 2014).
Since students come with different prior knowledge and learning experiences, teachers assess the prior knowledge of students formally at the time of admission and at the beginning of each Unit of inquiry. Pre-assessment strategies need to be such that they assess the students" prior knowledge and give the teacher an appropriate entry point into the unit/concept. Based on students' response, teachers at Akal Academy make necessary adjustments to the plan in horizontal and vertical collaborative planning and reflection meetings. Since Pre-assessment is primarily to inform teaching, it need not be reported formally.

Formative Assessment:
This is an ongoing assessment for/as learning done during and at the end of each line of inquiry or stand alone units, as deemed necessary by the student/teacher. Its goal is to support students in learning how to become a self-regulated lifelong learner. Teachers formally assess students to gauge their progress and identify learning gaps, if any. This is formally recorded using the appropriate tool and reported in the UOI report. This information is used by the teacher to plan the next stage in learning and help students

understand his learning needs as he/she prepares for future inquiries by making necessary changes in the planner.

Summative Assessment:
This assessment of learning is also considered as another formative assessment done at the end of each Unit of Inquiry and standalone units. Teachers assess the students' understanding of the Central idea and elements of IB PYP using appropriate assessment tools. This is pre-planned collaboratively. Students' learning, conceptual understanding and abilities are formally recorded and reported in UOI reports and shared with parents.

Assessment of the Elements of PYP:
There are both formal and informal assessment of students attainment and progression along development of Approaches to learning, knowledge and concepts through regular self, peer and teacher assessment such that student becomes aware and takes ownership of further development. Some of these are in the form of reflections in portfolio/inquiry journals, anecdotal records, wall displays, report card etc.

Assessment Strategies and Agreements:
Teachers use a balance of individual, pair and group work, as deemed suitable, enabling the students to become independent and collaborative learner. Students have opportunities to assess their work by self, peer or by the teacher.

Working on the principles of "backward design", teachers plan assessment tasks bearing in mind the whole child and the entire learning spectrum (knowledge, conceptual understanding, skills, behaviour, attitudes and learner profile attributes).

While preparing PYP planner (both transdisciplinary and standalone) the following influence the selection of the assessment methods:
1. What do the students already know about the unit, generally speaking?
2. What do we want students to understand and be able to do?
3. Why are we assessing?
4. How will the assessment information be used?
5. For whom are the assessment results intended?
6. What evidence must students demonstrate/provide to convey satisfactory accomplishment?

Fair, valid and reliable assessment strategies can be the following:
- Provocation
- Observation
- Essays
- Interviews
- Performance Tasks
- Exhibitions and Demonstrations
- Portfolios
- Journals
- Teacher-created Tests
- Constructed Responses
- Project Work
- Role Play

Assessment Tools: Evaluation tools are determined largely by the assessment approach and objectives of assessment. For performance-based assessments, the following evaluation tools are to be used:
- Rubrics (teacher & student generated)
- Scoring guides
- Rating Scales
- Checklists (teacher and student generated)
- Comments- Oral and Written
- Anecdotal Records

- Continuums
- Observations

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Effective feedback offers opportunities for self-reflection and taking action. Feedback on knowledge, concepts and approaches to learning supports students moving towards their learning goals (From Principles into Practice, Assessment, Feedback, 2020). When giving feedback, teachers focus on feedback on the learning process and feed forward on co-creating goals and next steps.

Feedback might be formal and/or informal and is given throughout the learning process. Types of feedback include teacher, peer, and parent feedback and student self-reflection.

Feedback & Feed forward (*From Principles into Practice, Assessment, 2020*)

Recording and Reporting Student Assessment

Students and teachers make agreements on keeping record of assessments to document student academic performance, learning goals, questions reflection and evidence of learning using various formats, such as:

❖ **Portfolios:**
Purpose - Portfolio aims at celebrating and encapsulating the students" growth by providing a continuum of the learning process. It provides data to parents, teachers and students on student progress for individual reflection, Student-led conferences, parent-teacher interviews and teacher reflection/data collection.
Contents - It includes the following sections:
Self-reflections: A piece created by the student about themselves at the beginning and end of each school year. It can be in the form of text, drawings etc.
Showcase Work: This section is for the student to "show-off" the work that they are most proud of. Minimum one piece from each of the unit of inquiry is expected.
Units of Inquiry: All student reflections and student selected work from all the six trans disciplinary themes during the year including other subject areas like the Arts and PSPE
Format: The portfolio is a pocket folder, transferred to an electronic portfolio in a phased manner. The portfolios are kept with the class teacher for the academic year and then stored in the record room. The portfolio ultimately belongs to the student that he/she takes with him/her when he/she leaves the school or passes out of Grade 5.

Selection/Collection Process:
The contents of the portfolio are decided by the students with the guidance of the teacher. The work reflects the growth of the student as an inquirer/ learner. The work selected is justified in an age appropriate reflective attachment to the work. This serves the purpose of reference for the student in the future and others at any point of time.
Time:

The student portfolio is created when the student joins Akal Academy gathering various work samples over the year. If a new student brings a portfolio from another school that aligns with the School portfolio it will be included in the student's portfolio at Akal Academy with the teacher's notation.

Accessibility:

The students' portfolio is available to the student, teacher, parent or visitor. However, assessment records are maintained separately and are only accessible to the student, teacher, parent and any staff member who works with the student and administration. These records are otherwise considered confidential and not shared.

- ❖ **Digital Portfolio:** The purpose of a student portfolio is to help students reflect on their learning, to show growth over time and to show development of the whole child both inside and outside of the Program of Inquiry in all subject areas. The portfolio is student-driven and allows all those involved in the learning process to see a true picture of the child. It may also serve to help the teacher reflect, assess and teach.
- ❖ **Learning Journals and Logs:** The purpose of learning journals is to record reflections and feedback of student learning.
- ❖ **e- Portfolios:** e-Portfolios are the collection of evidences to demonstrate the inquiry cycle, learning teaching process of each unit. It's a teacher created digital portfolio for each grade level.

Coordinator's Record of Assessment:

Homeroom teachers will provide the PYP Coordinator with samples of all the assessments. This is to include rubrics, tests, summative and formative assessments etc. Documents may be sent as a hard copy or email. These are then be maintained in the grade level folders/binders.

Evaluation:

Often used synonymously, evaluation and assessment are not necessarily the same. The former is fixed and judgmental assessment of learning while the latter is assessment for, of and as learning.

At Akal Academy, we have been working on reducing the focus on standardized tests but skill based assessments for literacy and numeracy are done twice a year keeping the local requirements and preparing students for future assessments in higher grades.

Reporting:

UOI Report: A comprehensive report at the end of every UOI is prepared to apprise the parents about the students' learning during the UOI. The UOI reports will be completed by the classroom teacher, reviewed and signed by the PYP Coordinator.

Semester Report: At the end of each Semester, teachers prepare Semester Report reflecting the students' progress in literacy and numeracy. The Semester report will be completed by the classroom teacher, reviewed by the PYP Coordinator and signed by the Principal.

Conferences:

Students learning is informed and enhanced through the following conferences:

1. **Student - Teacher Conference:** These are ongoing conferences held throughout the school year, almost on a daily basis, as a part of the learning and teaching process. The teacher gives thoughtful feedback and feed forward to the student about his learning and the student gets a better understanding of his learning.

2. **Student-led Conference:** Every grade has two student-led conferences per year at the same time as parent-teacher conference. This is during the months of May/June and August/September, unless decided otherwise by the leadership in consultation with all concerned. This is an opportunity for the students to celebrate and lead conference to discuss/demonstrate their own learning and progress to their parents. The students plan their own presentation with teacher modelling/assistance. SLC for Grade 5 students is merged with the PYP Exhibition.

3. **Parent - Teacher Conference:** Every semester report card is accompanied with a parent-teacher conference where the parent and teacher discuss the students' learning/growth during the period.

4. **Three - way Conference:** Wherever necessary, the 3-way conference is held together with the Student led conferences that takes place twice a year.

Assessment - Rights and Responsibilities:

- **Students:** We believe that the students should be aware of the assessment's success criteria and they partner with teachers to design their learning goals and success criteria. Students receive meaningful feedback to feed forward and adjust their learning to reach higher levels of achievement by setting short and long time goals. Students are given ample opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment which helps them to enhance their learning.

- **Parents :**We believe that the parents are the integral part of the school community and can contribute a lot in the learning of the child .The assessment policy is shared with the parents and they are informed about the learning progress of the child at each stage. They contribute in the learning process of the students through interviews, participation in surveys etc.

- **Teachers:** Teachers at Akal Academy understand the importance of differentiation .They evaluate students' needs prior to the assessment and plan multiple opportunities for success by using differentiated assessments (portfolio, performance, written, oral etc.) . Inclusive access arrangements, such as extended time, frequent breaks, individualized/small group setting, etc., are also provided as per the need of the student. The success criteria are co-planned with students and meaningful feed forward is given for the success of the child.

- **The school:** The school provides safe and stress free environment for the overall development of the child. The child is given opportunity to choose the appropriate environment to complete the assessment tasks. All the resources like books, use of assistive technology devices, etc. are made available to the students so that the children are able to reflect on their learning effectively.

- **School leadership:** Our leaders support teachers through collaborative planning and reflect on developing consistent assessment practices. School ensures access for teachers to all relevant, up-to-date programme guides and supporting materials from the IB. Short PD modules on assessment strategies and tools are held during collaborative planning meetings. They closely monitor the communication on assessments and inform parents through various methods and platforms for feedback

Assessment and the Learner profile

Knowledgeable: We understand that good assessment allows students to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and conceptual understanding across all subject areas.

Principled: We believe that assessment involves honesty and integrity. Students are expected to act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Communicators: We understand that assessment is the communication of understanding, which can happen in many different languages and formats.

Reflective: Students give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Risk-takers: We believe that assessment involves courage as students must apply knowledge in unfamiliar situations. They should be guided to function independently, exploring new situations with confidence to show their understanding

Connections to other policies
Assessment and Inclusion
IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is created for the students with identified learning difficulties and they are allowed inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (e.g. additional time, use of assistive technology, breaks, etc.) for all assessments in one or more subjects throughout the year, as appropriate to their needs.

Assessment and Language
Assessment of language learning is an on-going process throughout the school year in both formal and informal ways. All language skills - reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and presenting as well as the students' knowledge of grammatical structures and their ability to use them correctly, are assessed regularly at levels appropriate to the students' language phase and abilities.
Student language level and ability is acknowledged and incorporated into the planning of assessments. Additionally, whenever reading, writing, listening or speaking tasks are assigned, expectations are set according to the student's language level. A range of formative and summative assessment measures are used.

Assessment and Admissions
For admission to Nursery class Informal interaction is done with EY Mentor to assess very basic comprehension of day to day instructions .This involves a conversation with the parents / guardians to understand the family background and development of the child thus far .For LKG to Grade V written assessment is conducted to check the proficiency along literacy, numeracy and non-academic benchmarks for the last grade that the student has completed.

Assessment and Academic Integrity
At Akal Academy, we strive to develop in students the skills needed to demonstrate integrity when completing assessments. Students are explicitly taught to be principled and honest about their work while appreciating and formally acknowledging the work of others. We encourage teachers to design assessments that lead students to produce original and authentic work.

IB Standards and Practices for Assessment

Culture 5: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews an assessment policy or policies to help create a culture of continuous learning and growth. (0301-05)
Culture 5.1: The school implements and reviews an assessment policy that makes the school's philosophy clear and is aligned with the IB philosophy concerning learning and assessment. (0301-05-0100)
Culture 5.2: The school identifies in its assessment policy all necessary local and IB requirements, and outlines how the school is adhering to these requirements. (0301-05-0200)
Culture 5.3: The school describes in its assessment policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states what constitutes good assessment practice. (0301-05-0300)
Culture 5.4: The school ensures relevant support materials, resources and processes are implemented for fair and valid assessment. (0301-05-0400)
Culture 5.5: The school describes in its assessment policy the value of assessment for continuous learning and growth. (0301-05-0500)

Culture 6: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews its IB mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy. (0301-06)

Culture 6.1: The school implements processes with consideration of the relationship between its IB mandated policies. (0301-06-0100)

Culture 6.2: The school documents its IB-mandated policies and communicates them to the school community. (0301-06-0200)

Culture 6.3: The school considers physical and virtual spaces in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0300)

Culture 6.4: The school articulates a planned integration of human, natural, built, or virtual resources in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0400)

Culture 6.5: The school considers the learner profile in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0500)

Culture 6.6: The school considers international-mindedness in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0600)

Approaches to assessment 2: The school uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives. (0404-02)

Approaches to Assessment 2.1: Teachers use a variety of assessment methods that are connected to state learning objectives and outcomes. (0404-02-0100)

- PYP 1: Teachers document and analyse student learning over time to design learning experiences based on data. (0404-02-0111)

Review Cycle

Following a full review by Teachers, Parent representatives, Mentors and the Pedagogical Leadership Team, this policy was first adopted in 2013; reviewed and updated annually in February / March with updates as and when required.

References:

➢ Rules for IB World Schools document 2020
➢ PYP – From principles into practice (Learning and teaching) 2018
➢ Assessment principles and practices - A guide to assessment for students and parents/guardians
➢ Assessment policy samples of other schools
➢ IB Standard and Practices document 2020