



AKAL ACADEMY BARU SAHIB

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Our Assessment policy is a working document prepared by the core committee of teachers under the leadership of the Coordinator after getting written and verbal inputs from all PYP teachers. We have used a variety of references in order to prepare this document, including the best practices of PYP schools.

This is the reviewed version of the Assessment Policy (2012) and will come into effect from February 2017.

Our beliefs about assessment:

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 should 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 analyze 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 is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

- the acquisition of knowledge
- the understanding of concepts
- the mastering of skills
- the development of attitudes
- the decisions to take action

Assessment at Akal Academy

Pre-assessment:

Since students come with different prior knowledge and learning experiences, PYP teachers assess the prior knowledge of students formally at the beginning of each UOI and new topic. 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/topic. Special attention needs to be paid so that the teacher does not provide any information after reading a book or experience after watching a video about the unit of inquiry. Ideally, it should be a provocation.

Based on students' response, PYP teachers at Akal Academy will make necessary adjustments to the plan in collaborative planning meetings.

Since Pre-assessment is primarily to inform teaching, it need not be reported formally.

Formative Assessment:

During the UOI or topic, the teachers formally assess students to gauge their progress and identify learning gaps, if any. This must be done at the end of every LOI for UOI and in the middle of the topic for standalone or as deemed necessary by the teacher. This must be 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 to the teaching-learning plan.

Summative Assessment:

At the end of each UOI and standalone topic, teachers assess the students' understanding of CI and five elements of IB PYP using appropriate assessment tool. This is preplanned collaboratively. Students' learning/understanding, abilities and attitudes are formally recorded and reported in UOI reports and shared with parents.

Assessment of Essential Elements:

There are both formal and informal assessment of students attainment and progression along development of PYP attitudes, transdisciplinary skills, knowledge, concepts and action through regular self, peer and teacher assessment such that student becomes aware and takes ownership of developing these within him/her. 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.

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, behavior, attitude and learner profile traits).

While preparing PYP planner (both transdisciplinary and disciplinary) 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

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

Depending on the assessment outcomes, purposes, audience and tools, assessment can involve others, besides the teacher. Self and peer assessment practices create a sense of ownership and involvement among the students leading to improvement in the quality of their learning and work. Teachers also involve colleagues in the evaluation of student products and performances. There must be a balance of self, peer and teacher assessment.

Documentation

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 (2 piece per year).

Showcase Work: This section is for the student to "show-off" the work that they are most proud of (6 pieces per year – 1 per UOI; 4 pieces for Nursery – 1 per UOI).

Units of Inquiry: All student reflections and student selected work from all the six planners during the year. (2 - 4 pieces per UOI).

Language Arts: Includes any work from Language Arts - reading, writing, oral language etc. (3-4 pieces per year)

Math: Includes Math problem solving work with reflections (3 – 4 pieces per year).

Others: This is for reflections done in other subjects or during standalone lessons (3-4 pieces per year).

Format:

The portfolio is a pocket folder, transferred to an electronic portfolio in a phased manner over 2017-18. 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 and it will follow the student year after year, gathering various work samples over time. If a new student brings a portfolio from another school that aligns with the Akal portfolio it will be included in the students' portfolio at Akal Academy with the teacher's notation.

Accessibility:

The students' portfolio is available to any student, teacher or other school, visitor or parent. However, our formative assessments, records kept aside for

student's portfolio, is only accessible to the student, teacher, parent and any staff member that works with the student and administration. These records are otherwise considered confidential and not shared.

Coordinator's Record of Assessment:

Homeroom teachers will provide the 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, there will be 2 standardized tests- first, at the end of first Semester and second, at the end of the second semester. These tests measure the proficiency and achievement of Math and Language (first, second and additional language). This differentiated, yet standardized test is recorded in the form of individual score and reported to parents along with UOI report.

Besides, every grade has Language and Math test every month to quantify students' foundational knowledge of spellings (letter sound correspondence), times table, numeracy, writing, reading etc.

Reporting:

A comprehensive report at the end of every UOI is prepared to apprise the parents about the students' learning during the UOI. At the end of each Semester, teachers prepare Semester Report reflecting the students' progress along Language and Mathematics. The UOI reports will be completed by the classroom teacher, reviewed and signed by the Coordinator. The Semester report will be completed by the classroom teacher, reviewed by the Coordinator and signed by the Principal.

Conferences:

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 lapsed term.

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 Coordinator in consultation with the teachers. This is an opportunity for the student to celebrate and lead conference to discuss/demonstrate their own learning and progress to their own parents. The students plan their own presentation with teacher modeling/assistance.

SLC for Grade 5 students is merged with the Exhibition.

Student/teacher Conference: These are ongoing conferences held throughout the school year, almost on a daily basis, as a part everyday best teaching practice. The teacher gives useful feedback to the student about his learning and the student gets a better understanding of his learning.

Review:

As a staff body, we will review our assessment policy annually.

Reviewed annually by: Head of School, PYP Coordinator and all PYP Teachers