



مدرسة دبي للتربية الحديثة  
Dubai Modern Education School

# Assessment Policy



## School Vision

Empower learners to contribute to the global community through innovation, exploration, and citizenship.

## School Mission

DMES cultivates reflective scholars, bold innovators and passionate leaders equipped with the content knowledge, skillset, and ethics to make a positive contribution to society. The learning environment prepares students for lives of meaning and purpose emphasizing academic excellence, high expectations, and enthusiasm for life. Our school emphasizes the development of a character loyal to GOD and country identified by integrity through self-discipline and tolerance.

Through our authentic programs, conducive learning environment, and strong partnerships with families and the wider community, our learners experience rich language acquisition, appreciation for diversity, and become lifelong learners.

## Core Values

-  Citizenship
-  Respect
-  Leadership
-  Responsibility
-  Tolerance
-  Commitment
-  Excellence
-  High Expectation

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## Assessment Policy

### 1.0 Primary Value

The primary values underpinned in this policy are 'excellence' and 'high expectation' - recognizing that teaching, learning, and assessment are highly interdependent in optimizing student achievement and progress.

### 2.0 Rationale

Assessment holds an integral part of the learner's overall educational experience. It is a fundamental process that involves gathering, recording, analyzing, and making informed judgments to raise student attainment and secure good progress for all students. At DMES, we recognize the significance of assessments in evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum, informing planning and instruction, and measuring and maximizing student's potential. We promote the assessment principles and practices that are grounded in the academic development and achievement of students throughout the course of learning. Our assessment philosophy is focused on the reinforcement of learning outcomes and objectives. We believe that providing authentic and varied assessments allows our students to actively demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, skills, and abilities against curriculum standards.

### 3.0 Purpose

The assessment policy clarifies the school's internal and external assessment principles, target setting, record keeping, and reporting to the stakeholders. It outlines our practices, tools, and strategies in measuring, evaluating, and uplifting student's performance and achievement. DMES seeks to design and deliver effective assessments which shall:

- inform curriculum planning and instruction
- encourage and engage students in becoming independent and accountable for their own learning.



- promote continuous improvement and progress through feedback and self-reflection.
- be ongoing, is standards and/or outcomes-based
- build learner's confidence, self-esteem, and metacognition abilities
- provide teachers and parents with clear and reliable information about the student's achievements and performance.
- create opportunities for authentic or contextualized evaluation of learning

#### 4.0 Aims

Assessments at DMES shall be:

- valid, reliable, fair and equitable
- accurate, consistent, and cumulative
- authentic and related to real-life situations
- aligned with internal curriculum standards and international standards
- integrated and test a range of knowledge and skills using Depth of Knowledge (DOK) 1, 2, 3, and 4
- used to set specific learning targets for improvement
- inclusive to cater for the range of student learning styles, needs, abilities and attitudes
- supportive of achieving progress
- challenging to develop 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning skills with emphasis on critical thinking, innovation, and creativity
- contextualized by connecting the content to real-world situations
- accessible to parents and students in a clear, informative and timely manner



## 5.0 Definitions

**5.1 Achievement<sup>1</sup>:** The success that students gain in any area of learning or life, for example, academic, sporting, artistic and creative

**5.2 Assessment – formative<sup>2</sup>:** Regular oral or written evaluation of students' learning, including oral or written feedback on how to improve

**5.3 Assessment– internal<sup>3</sup>:** Formative and summative assessment tasks and tools created by the school and its teachers

**5.4 Assessment - self/peer<sup>4</sup>:** A process whereby students evaluate the quality of their own and others' work

**5.5 Assessment – summative<sup>5</sup>:** A formal process at the end of a unit of work, term or school year, often taking the form of examinations or internal unit tests, after which a number, letter or adjective is used to designate how well students have achieved the curriculum expectations

**5.6 Assessment information<sup>6</sup>:** Information about the knowledge, skills, and understandings that students have acquired over a lesson, unit of work, term or school year

**5.7 Assessment<sup>7</sup>:** A process of finding out what students already know, what they have learned, how they have learned it and how they apply it

**5.8 Attainment<sup>8</sup>:** The curriculum standards that students have reached, usually described by using numbers, letters or adjectives

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<sup>1</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>2</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>3</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>4</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>5</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>6</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>7</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 121

<sup>8</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 122



- 5.9 Benchmark<sup>9</sup>:** Comparing students' levels of attainment with those of other students in similar circumstances or following the same curriculum
- 5.10 CAT4<sup>10</sup>:** Cognitive Abilities Test from GL Education of reasoning ability, not curriculum content.
- 5.11 Data<sup>11</sup>:** Factual evidence a school has as evidence of its performance – often numerical or statistical (attendance or assessment information) – measurements used to make reasoned calculations/conclusions about school effectiveness
- 5.12 Groups<sup>12</sup>:** Significant categories of students, for example, those with SEN, girls, boys, high attainers, gifted and talented, additional language learners – group work involves learning activities carried out by a number of students working together
- 5.13 MAP<sup>13</sup>:** Measures of Academic Progress, a standardized testing programme from the USA
- 5.14 Profile<sup>14</sup>:** An overall assessment of a student to provide a full picture of his or her learning capabilities so that needs can be understood and acted upon
- 5.15 Progress<sup>15</sup>:** Changes in students' knowledge, skills, and understanding, measured against a starting point and/or against a learning objective, and sustained over a period of time (such as a lesson, unit of work, term, year of phase of schooling)
- 5.16 Reliability<sup>16</sup>:** The extent to which a test gives consistent results if administered by different people and under different circumstances

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<sup>9</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 122

<sup>10</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 122

<sup>11</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 123

<sup>12</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 124

<sup>13</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 125

<sup>14</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 126

<sup>15</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 126

<sup>16</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 126



**5.17 Standardized<sup>17</sup>:** In testing, using the same measures to ascertain what students in different times and locations have learned

**5.18 Validity<sup>18</sup>:** The extent to which a test measures what it claims to or is intended to measure (see also reliability)

## 6.0 Types of Assessments

Assessment supports and promotes quality teaching and learning and provides evidence on how to ascertain student achievement. Assessments have various types such as baseline, diagnostic, formative or summative:

### 6.1 Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning – AfL)

Formative assessment occurs throughout the teaching and learning process to optimize learning and augment student achievement. It creates opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice and plan to modify future lessons accordingly. AfL focuses on practices that clarify what the students are aiming for, where the students (progress) are in line with their aims, and what they need to accomplish those aims.

Formative assessments are used to:

- identify the students' strengths, the learning gaps, and the areas of improvements
- provide students with skills and strategies to set targets and steps for learning
- inform planning and modify teaching according to the needs and abilities of the students
- encourage students' self-reflection and peer dialogue about learning
- monitor and track student progress according to specific skills or age-appropriate standards

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<sup>17</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 127

<sup>18</sup> UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, p. 128



- enable exploration of future teaching and learning strategies
- evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of instructional strategies
- identify individual needs to design the appropriate intervention program

## 6.2 Summative Assessment – (Assessment of Learning – AoL)

Summative assessments are substantial in informing key stakeholders about the attainment and progress of the students. Summative assessments are administered at the end of a period of teachings (e.g. end of a unit or semester) to provide a coherent account of the learner's achievement against some standards or benchmarks. Information from summative assessments allows teachers, students and parents to make informed decisions and set future targets in learning.

Summative assessments are used to:

- assess knowledge and understanding at a given point in time
- identify student attainment through standardized benchmark tests such as MAP, IBT, TIMSS, SAT, IELTS, etc.
- provide standardized information according to student's age profiles
- record student performance in a record card/transcript by the end of every semester or quarter
- provide end of grade and/or benchmark data against which the school shall plan for and shall be evaluated.

## 6.3 Baseline Assessment

Baseline assessment is used to collect information on the grade entry levels of the students upon admission to the school. Baseline assessment establishes a point from which achievement and progress are monitored and evaluated.

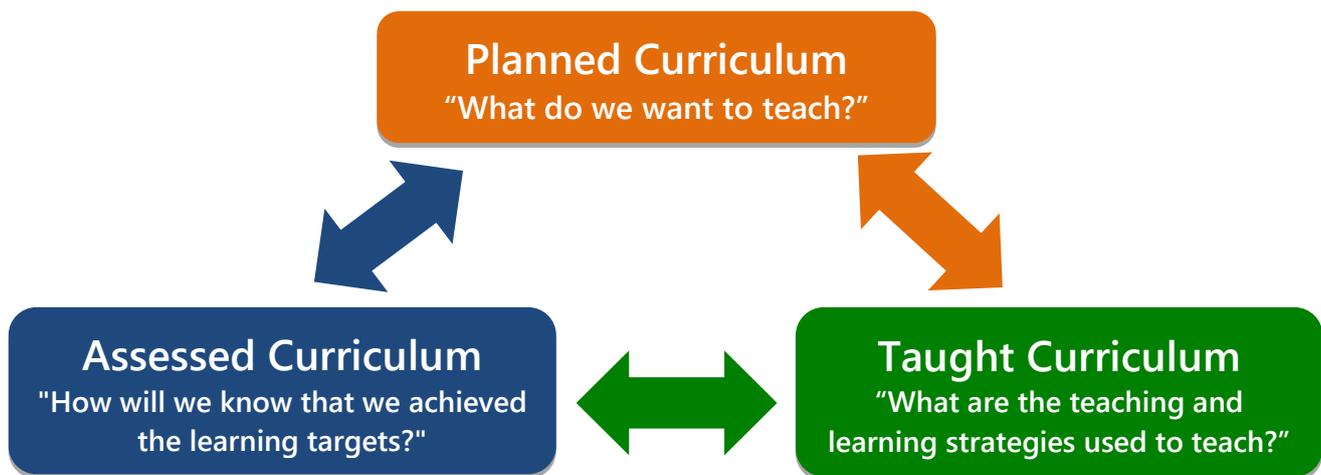
## 6.4 Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic assessment is an individualized and targeted form of assessment which identifies, scrutinizes and classifies learning difficulties to ensure that sufficient remedial support and guidance are provided. Diagnostic assessments are used to

determine whether the school and its programs cater for the educational needs of each individual student.

## 7.0 Assessment Model

Assessment provides all students (irrespective of race, abilities, and special education needs) with opportunities to demonstrate achievement, attainment, and progress. It involves a rigorous process of collecting, analyzing and sharing data based on student performance against standards and the student's mastery of the learning objectives. It provides the data to inform planning and to adjust the instructional strategies used to deliver the content knowledge. Assessment tools and strategies are utilized to empower students throughout their educational journey. As one of the strongholds in education, assessment is vital in reviewing the effectiveness of the written curriculum in relation to the pedagogical practices used to support the delivery of curriculum content.



## 8.0 Essential Components of Assessments

Assessment lies at the heart of the teaching and learning process. It is outlined in five areas for the purpose of this assessment policy:



## 8.1 Planning

Planning for and designing the assessments are done concurrently with the development of the school's teaching program. The assessments shall be transparent, authentic, engaging, inclusive, and feasible to influence decisions regarding opportunities for increased student achievement.

Formative and summative assessments comprise the assessment plan. Assessments conform to the expected learning outcomes in specific content areas, to the marking schemes, and to the reporting criteria for parents.

To ensure a balance between curriculum, teaching, and assessments, teachers engage in assessment practices which involve building assessments simultaneously with curriculum planning and constructively aligning assessment tasks with the expected curriculum outcomes. The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate students' achievements against age-appropriate curriculum standards. There are several steps required for planning assessment tasks: define intended learning outcomes, design the assessment task, set up the success criteria and present it prior to assigning the task to students.

## 8.2 Evidence

Assessment is a continuous process that is integral to teaching and learning. To establish a starting point in a student's learning journey, pre-assessments are conducted to inquire about the student's prior knowledge, skills, and experience. Assessments are undertaken at various points during the course of this journey to support teachers in monitoring student progress.

The measures of learning employed to acquire evidence of student achievement include:

- Classroom-based formative assessments
- Summative assessments
- Student portfolios
- Projects with explicit rubrics and exemplars



- External assessments
- International benchmark tests
- Performance-based evaluation

Assessments create opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice and to use the data analysis to inform planning. Students are involved in the assessment process through self-assessment and peer-assessment tasks which empower them to become independent responsible learners.

### 8.3 Feedback

Teachers shall give constructive feedback to students in order to help them draw their own learning paths and set future learning targets. Students become able to achieve the best performance based on their abilities, interests, and cognitive potential. Effective and constructive feedback shall address the students' strengths, identify areas for improvement to encourage them to think deeply into their learning and plan for the next steps that they should take. Feedback shall take on three directions: teacher to students, students to teacher, and student to student. Feedback shall also be established as timely, challenging, and developmental. The school shall share the feedback with students and parents through verbal, written or electronic forms.

### 8.4 Recording and Reporting

Recording and reporting assessment results provide clear and meaningful information about student progress and achievement to students, parents, teachers, and other relevant external audiences. To effectively monitor student progress and evaluate teaching practices, teachers consistently record and document all assessment information from formative and summative assessments. Assessment records support teachers in improving learning experiences, setting future learning targets, and providing basis for student reports include:



- marks derived from formative and summative assessments recorded in the grade book
- assessment rubrics with annotated teacher comments
- observation and anecdotal records (e.g. learning journey)
- student portfolios of compiled homework, projects, and other work exemplars
- reading and writing tracking forms and checklists
- standardized and external benchmark assessment data results

Moderation is done to ensure that students' work is marked fairly against the set grading criteria and curriculum standards. Departmental grading committees are formed to ensure that the marking process is consistent, fair, and thorough. Teachers engage in the data triangulation process based on students' internal assessment data, MAP, and CAT 4 data to ensure that internal assessments are in line with the internal curriculum and international standards.

Reporting allows effective communication and collaborative partnership between parents, students, and teachers. Parents are entitled to and are regularly updated on their children's attainment and progress, including the learning gaps and challenges which need to be addressed through remedial and other intervention support programs. Reporting to parents, students, and teachers is done through:

- parent weekly plans uploaded to the school portal
- student attainment and progress reports
- student portfolios with rubrics
- MAP and CAT4 student reports
- weekly Monday parent drop-ins
- verbal, written, and digital forms of feedback from teachers to students
- individual parent-teacher, parent-counselor meetings
- phone calls to report regressions/progress



## 8.5 Evaluation

Assessment data provides evidence about students' performance, the effectiveness of instructional strategies, and the impact of the school improvement plans. Assessment procedures, reviews, and analyses secure reliable assessment information about student performance in line with curriculum standards and expectations. Through these systems, the effectiveness of curriculum content and instructional strategies are evaluated to improve learning outcomes for underachieving students, to extend learning for high-performing students, and to raise overall student attainment and progress.

## 9.0 Effects on Learning

All assessment data results and analysis are shared with the teachers, MLL, SLT, and parents. The Heads of School and the HODs act as the external moderators of the students' progress and attainment. Through the assessment evidence and records, teachers design appropriate lesson plans, refine their strategies and set future goals and targets for learning.

The SLT/MLL shall undertake data-driven decisions to refine the school self-evaluation process. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) shall document the actions to be taken based on the assessment results. SLT/MLL and teachers shall use the internal and external assessment information in relevant school documentation. Tracking sheets and data analysis triangulations are used to compare students' achievements in various assessment types.

## 10.0 Audience reported to

### 10.1 Governing Board

Reports to the governing board include comprehensive information on internal and external assessment results. On this account, governors should <sup>19</sup>ensure accountability for the school's educational performance through effective data analysis and reporting. It is the board's responsibility to evaluate the school's

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<sup>19</sup> The Gift of Good Governance, page 20



performance based on all information available, including the internal school reporting, school inspection reports, TIMSS and PISA results, data from the Dubai Student Wellbeing Census, and feedback from parents.

## 10.2 Parents

At the end of each quarter and semester, student reports with a detailed description of students' academic achievements are given to parents. Students who are underperforming against the curriculum standards and expectations are identified and their parents are invited for a meeting to plan for intervention support whenever needed. Parents are informed immediately about their students' academic performance in case there are unusual surprises whether by phone or by e-mail.

## 11.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### 11.1 Students

Students are expected to:

- Be accountable and responsible for undertaking assessment tasks.
- Reflect on his/her achievements and set learning targets for further development.
- Seek guidance to improve the academic performance based on written/oral constructive feedback.
- Demonstrate learning through a variety of assessment models such as formal or informal assessments, self-assessment, peer review, and performance-based tasks.
- Commit to achieve the targets outlined in the ILP/IEP.
- Take on challenges and engage in assessment opportunities to meet high expectations in learning.
- Understand the constructive feedback based on assessment results.
- Adhere to all the assessment procedures of DMES.



## 11.2 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Understand and support all policies of the school, particularly those that relate to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Support their child in his learning and work as a team with school leaders and teachers to improve progress or solve any concerns identified through assessment data.
- Access information on their child's progress towards specific learning targets.
- Have a clear understanding of their child's strengths and areas for growth across subject areas.
- Assist their child in areas of need as well as developing their strengths.

## 12.0 Related Policies

The Assessment Policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Feedback Policy