

International School Rheintal

# Assessment Policy

Reviewed March 2017

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# ISR Guiding Statements

## International School Rheintal Vision

ISR is the school of choice in the Alpen Rheintal region providing a high quality international education in English for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, inspiring international-mindedness, academic and personal excellence and responsible engagement.

**Reviewed June 2023**

## International School Rheintal Mission

ISR is a supportive, challenging and student-centered environment. We encourage each student to reach their potential whilst promoting international-mindedness, empathy and life-long learning. Through teamwork and individual endeavours, members of the school community should:

- Respect and take responsibility for themselves, others and the environment
- Appreciate and respect diversity
- Think critically
- Reflect thoughtfully
- Communicate effectively
- Celebrate success

**Reviewed June 2023**

# International School Rheintal Assessment Philosophy

The school's assessment practices reflect the school and IB philosophies. Assessment adds to the development of a supportive, challenging environment where each student may reach his or her potential. It is integral to all teaching and learning. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process. It provides a reliable measure of, and feedback on knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes at different levels of student learning. This feedback promotes life-long learning, open-mindedness, tolerance, and respect and responsibility for themselves, others, the environment and encourages students to think critically, reflect thoughtfully, communicate effectively, appreciate and respect diversity and to celebrate their successes.

## Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to promote student learning, promote student self-awareness, to provide information about student learning, and to contribute to the development of the program.

### **This can be done through:**

- Assessing the student's prior knowledge and skills
- Assessing the students ongoing development and learning
- Differentiated learning experiences
- Communication of student understanding through varied learning styles
- Formative and summative assessments
- Engaging students in reflection on their learning
- Records of individual student development and progression

# ISR Assessment Practices

## General ISR Assessment

- Assessment allows the school to monitor effectiveness of programs and provides direction for teachers, students, parents, administration and overall school development
- Assessments should be sensitive to and reflect, cultural, linguistic, racial, class, learning style, physical and gender differences
- Assessment should use a variety of tools and strategies – both formal and informal
- Formative and summative assessments should be used
- Assessment should allow for all students to be successful
- Assessment should be differentiated to meet students' needs
- Assessment should be transparent to all stakeholders, noting the criteria needed to succeed
- Assessment should assess all aspects of the program – not only skills and knowledge
- Reflection is an essential process of assessment and indicates understanding over time
- Assessment provides students and teachers with feedback to revise performance and improve learning and teaching
- Timely, direct, specific and appropriate feedback is central to all learning and teaching
- Assessment is designed to improve student learning and understanding
- Assessment is anchored in authentic and valid tasks

## Standardized Testing

The school participates in the International Schools Assessments. Each year, students in Grades 4, 6, 8 and 10 and any new students in Grades 5, 7, and 9 will participate in these. Results will be analyzed and compared with internal assessments. Individual results are used internally and not shared with parents. Overall school results are shared with parents through the newsletter.

### **Further information for the individual programs follows:**

Primary Years Programme (PYP)	4
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# Primary Years Programme (PYP)

Effective assessments allow the child to:

- Have expectations that are known and understood in advance
- Analyse their learning and understand what needs to be improved
- Demonstrate the range of their conceptual understandings, their knowledge, their skills and their attitudes
- Be able to use and apply their learning, not merely recall facts
- Ask further questions, base their learning on real-life experiences, to problems they would like to solve
- Focus on the learning journey of producing a quality product or performance
- Highlight and celebrate their strengths to demonstrate mastery and expertise
- Express different perspectives
- Promote reflection, self- and peer-evaluation.
- Assessment expectations refer directly to discipline strands and their phase continua

Assessment in the classroom includes:

- Representative examples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- Evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- Documentation of the learning process for groups and individuals
- Engagement of students in reflecting on their learning
- Students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- Development of clear rubrics
- Identifying exemplar student work and sharing
- Records of test/task results

Continuous assessment provides insights into children's understanding, knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. It is a means of exploring the learning styles and individual differences of the children in order to differentiate instruction. Feedback from assessment allows for the improvement of the overall programme.

Effective assessments allow the students to:

- Share their learning and understanding with others
- Demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- Use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- Know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- Participate in reflection self- and peer-assessment
- Base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries
- Express different points of view and interpretations

Effective assessments allow the parents to:

- See evidence of student learning and development
- Develop an understanding of the student's progress
- Provide opportunities to create informed dialogue with the teacher to support and celebrate student learning

Effective assessments allow the teachers to:

- Inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- Plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- Develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- Gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- Provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community
- Collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- Take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- Use scoring that is both analytical and holistic

Effective assessments allow the administrators to:

- Have a clear overview of student progress
- Anticipate and plan for future needs of the Primary Years Programme
- Provide objective information for use in teacher, curriculum and school evaluation.

## Pre-Assessment

All teachers will assess student prior knowledge and experience before introducing new concepts and skills.

## Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and children monitor learning development in order to plan the next stage of learning. It should allow for practice with feedback for skills expected on summative assessments. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked.

## Summative assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning processes and gives the children opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Students should have opportunities to create expectation rubrics, exemplars, checklists, anecdotal comments, and continua when possible.

Clear expectations will be communicated, and given to students using PYP curriculum documents: discipline strands phases. Value-laden language should be avoided at all times. Reflection of student learning is an important part of the learning process and should consistently happen throughout formative and summative assessments.

## Strategies used in Assessment

### **Observations**

All children are observed regularly with the teacher focusing on varying aspects of the child, i.e. as an individual learner, as part of the whole class, in a group situation, and in specific skill development.

### **Performance assessments**

These are assessments of goal-directed tasks with established criteria, which are authentic challenges and problems. There are numerous approaches to the challenges/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. Audio, visual and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

### **Process-focused assessment**

The students' transdisciplinary skills are observed often and regularly and the observations are recorded by:

- Noting both typical as well as non-typical behaviors
- Collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability and validity

### **Selected responses**

These are single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.

### **Open-ended tasks**

These are situations in which children are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate a response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution.

### **Tools Used in Assessment**

The previously listed assessment strategies are put into practice using the following assessment tools:

### **Rubrics**

Rubrics are an established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that the work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by children as well as by teachers.

### **Exemplars**

Exemplars are samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and useable within their particular school context.

### **Checklists**

These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.

### **Anecdotal records**

Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.

## **Continuums**

These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

## **Portfolios**

Seesaw is the tool used for students' portfolios for Kindergarten 3 to Grade 6. In Kindergarten 1 and 2 students maintain hard copy portfolios.

A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designated to demonstrate success, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work. It provides a picture of each student's progress and development over a period of time both as individual and group learners. It enables students to reflect with teachers, parents and peers in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement, and then to set individual goals and establish teacher and learning plans.

### **The portfolio should:**

- Document a range of experiences and curriculum areas
- Show the development of knowledge, conceptual understanding, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and attributes of the learner profile over a period of time
- Be used to document action
- Document both the process of learning and the product – including images and evidence of students in the process of constructing meaning
- Be used as a tool for assessment and reporting purposes for students, parents, teachers and school administrators
- (Primary Years Programme The Primary Years Programme: A Basis for Practice)

### **The purpose of a Portfolio at ISR is:**

- It is a reflection of a student's work, development and progress
- It is a document that reflects ongoing acquisition of skills, knowledge, action, concepts and attitudes
- It is a document that allows students to reflect on, and celebrate, his/her work and share it with others
- It is evidence of learning and growth
- It is a document that is celebrated by the child, teacher, peers and family – the portfolios will be shared with their communities: homeroom sharing, assemblies and during conferences

## **PYP Portfolio Teacher Agreements:**

- Children will select the work to go in their portfolios
- All Homeroom and Single Subject Teachers will contribute to the portfolios
- Teachers will ensure all work is dated
- Teachers or students will annotate their reflection for why they chose their work and attach this reflection to their work sample
- The portfolios will be worked on throughout the year as an ongoing process

## **Agreements about the Format of their Portfolios**

### **Common agreements for all grades:**

- All students in the PYP programme will have a portfolio
- All students will have portfolio samples from each school year at ISR
- All students will celebrate their portfolios with their parents/friends/family

### **Common Organization for All Grades**

The introduction of portfolios in grades 1-6 start at the beginning of the first unit of inquiry. Students will use the first unit work to assess, reflect on and put in the portfolio. A binder is to be used for each student's portfolio.

### **To be Included in Each Portfolio:**

- Student reflections of each unit of inquiry
- Sample(s) of work from the unit of inquiry – formative or summative
- Samples of work from math and language arts – formative or summative
- Samples of work from single subject teachers (2 per year)
- Photographs
- Each sample of work chosen requires a written explanation of why it was chosen and a reflection
- Chosen pieces of work should include an annotation from student, peer, parent or teacher

## **Specifics to each grade:**

## Kindergarten 1 and 2

- Students will have portfolio workbooks that contain items of work from throughout the year. These pieces of work are reflected upon through questioning by the teacher and comments and reflections are annotated
- Photographs will be added regularly to the portfolios by the teacher as a record of successes
- K2 – at the end of K2 students will pick 3 pieces of work, which will be transferred to K3 and put into a PYP portfolio binder

## Kindergarten 3

- Students will choose and reflect upon 3 items of work to put into their PYP portfolios twice a year
- The teacher will choose 3 pieces of work, which may include photos, for each student to be included in the portfolio
- The PYP portfolio binder will be transferred to Grade 1 at the end of the year

## Grades 1 to 4

- Students will choose and reflect upon 6 items of work to put into their PYP portfolios from each semester – these may include any evidence of learning
- Teachers will also select work for the portfolios
- Who chose each piece of work will be identified
- Selections may be from unit related and stand alone work
- Selections can be made at any time and should be an ongoing process
- Students will become familiar with this process and develop independence
- Time will be set aside for portfolio development as portfolios are a working document

## Grades 5 and 6

- Students will choose and reflect upon 6 items of work to put into their PYP portfolios from each semester – these may include any evidence of learning
- Selections may be from unit related and stand alone work
- Selections can be made at any time and should be an ongoing process
- Students are independent with this process
- Time will be set aside for portfolio development as portfolios are a working document

## Single Subject Teachers

### The Arts, Languages, PSPE

- Students and/or teacher will select pieces of work, or evidence (this could be a video or photographs if appropriate)
- Teacher will encourage students to add pieces periodically where appropriate
- Pieces selected will be a record of growth and achievements
- Single subject teachers will confer with homeroom teachers for consistency with student reflection organization
- A minimum of two samples will be added per child per year – one sample of work per semester

### Reflection Organization

- Reflection will differ depending on age/grade of students, but will reflect these common attributes:
- Reason for selection with explanation of why
- Reference to Concept that drove the learning experience
- Reference to Learner Profile, PYP Attitudes
- Reference to Transdisciplinary Skills
- Reference to Knowledge learned
- Reference to Action

### Work from Previous Years

- Will remain at the school for the duration of the student's stay
- The portfolio will be given to the student when they complete their time in the PYP at ISR or transfers from our school
- Reporting

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of children's learning and identifies areas for growth.

## Effective Reporting

- Involves parents, children and teachers as partners
- Reflects what the school community values

- Is comprehensive, honest, fair and credible
- Is clear and understandable to all parties
- Allows teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice.

## Conferences

The purpose of conferences is to give information to children, teachers and parents.

At ISR the following four structures are used:

### 1. Teacher-Student Conferences (Informal)

These are designed to give students feedback so they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills. It is important that these individual conferences occur frequently in order to support and encourage the student's learning and teacher planning.

### 2. Teacher-Parent Conferences (Informal)

These are designed to give the parents information about the student's progress development and needs, and about the school's programme. Teachers should take this opportunity to gather background information, to answer the parents' questions, to address their concerns, and to help define their role in the learning process. The parents should take the opportunity to provide the teacher with the cultural context of the student's learning.

### 3. Student-led Conferences (SLC's) (March/April)

Student-led conferences involve the student and the parent. The students are responsible for leading the conference, and also take the responsibility for learning by sharing the process with their parents. It may involve students demonstrating their understanding through a variety of different learning situations. There may be several conferences taking place simultaneously. All participants will know the format of the SLC and their roles prior to the day.

#### **The ISR PYP Team has agreed:**

Students hold their SLC, near the end of the academic year, in order to celebrate their learning accomplishments.

Students are involved in planning and preparing for their SLC. Students will, with teacher guidance, be responsible for creating stations to share learning experiences. These stations

will be in their homeroom classrooms. Homeroom and single subject teachers will be present. Students will be responsible for leading their parents through the conference, discussing their development.

#### 4. Three-way Conferences

The three-way conferences involve the student, parents and teacher. Students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents and teacher, who are responsible for supporting the student through this process. Students are responsible for reflecting upon work samples they have chosen to share, that have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher and could be from the student's portfolio. The student, parents and the teacher collaborate to establish and identify the student's strengths and areas for improvement. This may lead to the setting of a new goal, with all determining how they can support the achievement of the goals. The teacher is an integral part of the process and takes notes of the discussion. These notes may then be used in the written report. All of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.

#### Unit Planners

- Homeroom teaching teams, where applicable, will collaborate to write all unit planners
- Single subject teachers will enter their integrated programmes into the unit planners
- Single subject teachers will enter into the unit planners with their specific colours:
  - Additional Languages: Orange (French) and Red (German)
  - Arts: Dark Green
  - PSPE: Pink
  - Math: Bright Blue
  - Language: Dark Purple
- All teachers will use the guiding document for unit planner writing created November 2014 – norms created by whole PYP staff for each section of the planner – a guide can be found in each homeroom classroom and on the shared drive: Teacher -> IB Primary Years Programme -> PYP 2014-2015 -> Agreement-Policies
- Single subject teachers and homeroom teachers will create a stand-alone planner for any teaching and learning that is not integrated into the unit of inquiry
- Unit planners are due completed 2 weeks after the start of a new unit
- Planning and Reflecting for unit planners should happen with all teachers present who teach the grade
- Other PYP teachers and MYP teachers should be invited to relevant planning and reflection meetings to help facilitate on-going vertical articulation

- Upper grade PYP teachers should consult lower grade MYP teachers when planning and reflecting on all units to ensure vertical transitions

## Grade Level Expectations (GLE)

- A Grade Level Expectations document will be created by all teachers for all subjects during the school year.
- The GLE will be created from the PYP discipline strand phases and learning outcomes and follows students from Kindergarten 1 to Grade 6, then will be passed to their MYP homeroom teacher.
- The GLE will be linked to reporting and conferencing with parents, but not shared with parents.
- At the end of each academic year homeroom teachers will discuss individual grade level expectations with the homeroom teacher for the following year.

## Written Reports

Written report cards are sent home twice per year communicating student learning. Report cards should be written with due diligence to spelling, grammar, style and tact. The PYP Coordinator will read all reports before sending them to the director. Report cards will be written and sent to parents twice per year and used for assessment purposes as a formal communication with parents.

### **Be sure to:**

- Write all reports in Report Box
- Print all of YOUR sections of report box only
- Staple together and hand into PYP Coordinator's mailbox by 4pm on the due date
- See PYP Coordinator prior to the due date if this will be a problem
- Take corrections (done in red on the hard copy) and correct them electronically directly into Report Box – these must be completed within 3 days of receiving your corrections
- When corrections have been completed, inform by email the Director and PYP Coordinator

### **All report sections will include:**

- The learner profile is addressed
- The transdisciplinary units and subject-specific teaching are included – reference to strands and phases taught and learned
- All teachers involved in the student's progress have an opportunity to comment
- All the essential elements of the programme are included

## Units of Inquiry

- Teachers will use their 'Making the PYP Happen' document to guide them through their transdisciplinary units
- Teachers will use an inquiry cycle to guide teaching and learning for the unit of inquiry – 2014-2015 the ISR PYP Team agreed on using Kath Murdoch's Inquiry Cycle as our guide
- All units of inquiry taught will have a summative assessment task that will assess student's understanding of the PYP discipline strand phases covered
- All assessments must be clearly documented in the PYP unit planner in their appropriate sections \*(pre-assessments, formative and summative assessments)
- Homeroom and Single Subject teachers must keep clear records and samples of all assessments given over the year.

## Exhibition

As the culminating PYP experience, it is required that the exhibition reflects all the major features of the program. Therefore, it must include regular and carefully planned assessment. This unit of inquiry is in the last year of the PYP, and is the last unit. As such, it is the responsibility of the entire PYP team to contribute to the exhibition – either through their teaching of the PYP throughout the years and/or by volunteering to be a mentor for groups during the Exhibition unit itself. Staff should be prepared to take the role of mentor for an individual or group if needed. The PYP coordinator and the Grade 6 teacher will provide direction in the role of a mentor.

## The Key Purposes of the Exhibition

- For students to engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- To provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide students with an authentic process for assessing student understanding
- For students to synthesize and apply their learning of previous years, and to reflect on their journey through the PYP
- To demonstrate how students can take action as a result of their own learning
- To unite the students, teachers, parents and other members of the school community in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP
- To celebrate the transition of learners from primary to middle/secondary education

### **Changes to be made:**

#### **Unit overviews/feedback and Grading scheme**

**Seesaw**

**Portfolios**

**Written reports**

**Exhibition**

**Learning styles**

**Multiple intelligences**

**MB**

**Report cards are shared in the students' google folders**