ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION

Introduction
The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. Information collected through assessment helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in their achievement of the expectations in all areas of the curriculum. This information also serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and in assessing the overall effectiveness of programmes and classroom practices.\(^1\)

Assessment is an integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the IBPYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding children through the five essential elements of learning: the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes, the decision to take responsible action and demonstration of the Learner Profile.\(^2\)

Assessment is used to gather information about individual pupils and cohorts, to inform teachers and to inform administration when developing a strategic plan for long term school development.

The terms ‘assessment’ and ‘evaluation’ are often interchanged with each used to mean different things in different contexts. In order to promote consistency at CDNIS, the terms are defined as follows:

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources in order to determine how a student is meeting curriculum expectations at different stages of the learning process. As part of assessment, teachers provide students with descriptive feedback that guides them toward improvement.

Evaluation refers to the process of using assessment results for the purpose of reflecting on student learning and the Teaching and Learning Programme for the purpose of continued growth. It may mean judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that criteria. Without careful evaluation of assessment results the purpose and value of assessment is lost.

By providing students with authentic assessments and timely, positive and meaningful feedback, they have the greatest opportunity to develop into responsible global citizens with the “knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed in a rapidly changing society.”

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\(^1\) The Ontario Curriculum, 2000
\(^2\) IB Assessment Handbook
**Rationale**
In order to develop to their full potential, students need to be part of a positive learning environment in which varied assessment strategies are valued and addressed.

It is the aim of CDNIS Lower School to provide authentic tasks and outcomes to constantly improve teaching and learning, those that are congruent with the International Baccalaureate and School Mission Statements.

**Policy**
Assessment will be an integral part of the teaching and learning process, with a common language of assessment facilitating effective communication within the school community.

Ongoing assessment data gathered during the learning process, will drive differentiated instruction and interventions, as we aim for exemplary levels of learning.
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

It is essential that the assessment of student progress is viewed as a community responsibility with teachers, students, parents and administrators working together in the best interest of each and every student. Assessment, in the first instance, occurs in classrooms using a range and balance of strategies.

Each student's individual situation will be taken into account and evaluated accordingly. Students are seen as individuals having a variety of educational or social needs that must be addressed through adaptations or alternative approaches to both teaching and assessment.

**Essential Agreements**

Students will self assess every assessment task before the teacher gives any feedback

Rubrics will be addressed to 'you' or 'I' never the student

Rubrics will address the highest level in the first column

(to be further developed in consultation with Assessment and Reporting Committee)

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Teachers**

Teachers are expected to develop a clear assessment plan when designing units in all subject disciplines

1. Focus on what is essential for learning
2. Plan for assessment as the learning is planned, integrating assessment into normal classroom activities
3. Develop a clear assessment plan for all learning
4. Establish the criteria for making judgments; what’s good enough?
5. Develop authentic assessments that address the five essential elements
6. Ensure assessment is an ongoing cumulative process showing the student's learning journey
7. Share success criteria with students and parents and ensure it is well understood by students before they begin tasks
8. Ensure all students understand how to complete assessment tasks and know the purpose of the assessment
9. Record data in a manageable and organized manner
10. Maintain accessible records of assessment for all stakeholders
11. Keep samples of students' work that provide evidence of their achievement and to compare progress over time
12. Ensure assessments are fair to all students and meet various learning needs and styles
13. Allow students to give further evidence of their learning in other ways if their outcome of a task is not indicative of their understanding.
14. Explicitly teach students how to accurately assess their own and their peers learning and how to develop learning goals and strategies
15. Check your interpretation of students’ work is accurate by discussing the work with students and other teachers
16. Use the assessment data as one piece of evidence and verify it with other data and assessment tasks
Students
1. Be proactive in accelerating personal learning or seeking advice and support
2. Reflect on personal learning, identify strengths and needs and independently seek support if needed
3. Initiate new learning experiences
4. Demonstrate attributes of the Learner Profile
5. Participate actively in parent-teacher conferences when requested
6. Participate actively in specified programmes
7. Value the differences in other students

Parents
1. Acknowledge the specific learning styles, strengths and needs of the child
2. Actively seek feedback from the Homeroom Teacher and Specialists
3. Become familiar with the Lower School Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Essential Agreement
4. Participate in Learning reviews with an open mind
5. Support each child at home, as advised by the school staff and outside professionals
6. Ensure regular attendance at school is maintained

Administrators
1. Communicate expectations of the CDNIS Lower School Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Essential Agreement to the school community and monitor and evaluate its implementation
2. Ensure that staff are following the policy and procedures
3. Ensure that appropriate assessments resources if requested are obtained
4. Collect feedback from all stakeholders and review with an open mind before making decisions
5. Ensure regular review of the Lower School Policy Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Essential Agreement in order to reflect the changing needs of the School community

How Do We Assess in the Lower School at CDNIS?

Formal Testing
A final unedited writing sample and a reading assessment is administered and collected at the end of each year from every student. Overseen by the Learning Services Team to ensure consistency across grade levels, these are passed on to teachers in the next grade level for the purpose of evaluation before putting class teaching and learning programmes in place.

Standardized Tests
Grades 3 and 6 participate in the International Schools' Assessment (ISA); reading, writing and mathematics; the purpose being to compare CDNIS student achievement levels with other "like schools" internationally. Detailed results are shared with all stakeholders. Teachers evaluate the results as a means of reflecting on their Teaching and Learning Programme and identifying possible strengths and weaknesses of individual students. The ISA allows parents to see a snapshot of their child's performance in the disciplines tested.
Assessment Within the Teaching and Learning Programme

The focus is on formative assessment as a means of improving student learning. Considered as ‘assessment FOR learning’ it cannot be separated from teaching and learning, as explicit feedback focused on the individual student is the key to student achievement.

Engaging in formative assessment means giving continual, descriptive feedback directly related to the task in order to assist students to understand where they are going, where they are at a given time and how to close the gap.

Teachers need to establish a classroom climate that is cooperative rather than competitive, where teachers and students are partners in the learning process. Students need to feel safe and comfortable to both give and receive constructive feedback.

Essential Elements
Five essential elements are assessed through the teaching and learning programme
1. Knowledge
2. Understanding
3. Skills
4. Attitudes
   Student reflections and teacher observations are documented. These records show the development and demonstration of the targeted attitudes over time, for both spontaneous and planned activities.
5. Action

Learner Profile
It is a requirement of the International Baccalaureate that teachers, on behalf of students, assess and report on progress in the development of the attributes of the learner profile. This may be done in the form of self and peer assessment, as the basis for learning reviews, and/or in portfolios and Progress Reports.

The Exhibition
The Exhibition is the culminating experience for the IB Primary Years Programme. It requires students to synthesize their knowledge and understanding and to apply it in a self-directed manner.
The Exhibition provides an authentic summative assessment of the Primary Years Programme and so is applicable for Grade 6 students only.

Self Assessment
Pupils can only achieve a learning goal if they understand that goal and can assess what they need to do to achieve it. So self-assessment is essential to learning. Teachers must guide students through the process of learning to self-assess through specific teaching and learning experiences within the context of meaningful content and self-assessment contexts. Self assessment has benefits to both teacher and student as unlike other assessment data it gives the teacher an insight into the student’s own beliefs about their learning and performance.

Peer Assessment

3 Black & William 1998
The process whereby students make evaluations and determine another student’s level of achievement, this supporting the learning of all students involved in the process.

**Peer Feedback**
Students give each other advice on how to improve quality of work. It usually refers to what has been done well in relation to success criteria, what needs to be done in order to meet the success criteria, and advice on how to achieve that improvement.

**How Do We Plan for Assessment?**
Teachers are expected to develop a clear assessment plan, before teaching begins.

A quality assessment plan is developed in collaboration with other team members and should include:
- what students should accomplish by the end of a unit
- what knowledge, understanding, skills will be assessed
- the tasks that will be assessed and the learning style they cater for
- success criteria
- assessment strategies and tools to be used

Before assessment is determined a performance standard should be agreed upon by the team after discussion and reflection on samples of student work.

**How Do We Evaluate Student Achievement?**

**Achievement**
Student achievement is measured against a set of descriptors (Appendix 1) according to whether they are exceeding, meeting or approaching grade level expectations as determined by the grade level team, in consultation with other grade levels.

Knowledge, skills and understanding are considered when evaluating a student’s overall achievement. As the benchmark is expected to be high it is assumed there will be very few students who exceed expectations, something that should be made clear to all stakeholders. Too many students being rated as ‘exceeding’ indicates the grade level expectations are not of a high enough standard.

**Effort**
By including effort as part of the Teaching and Learning Programme and a measurable indicator in the reporting process, our goal is to encourage a student’s belief about their ability to achieve successful outcomes in various areas, show students and other stakeholders the link between effort and achievement and stress the importance that effort and achievement are equally as important.

When measuring effort goal-setting, commitment to a task, diligence, persistence, willingness to problem-solve, seeking new challenges and striving for personal best should be considered.
REPORTING

Introduction
Reporting is an integral part of the learning process and is used as a means of providing feedback from assessment. As it is cyclical and does not signal an end to the learning process, reporting is used as a means of identifying areas for growth and contributing to the consolidation of the entire school community. Students and parents should have ongoing experiences with reporting, not solely with culminating activities.

In order to develop to their full potential, students need to be part of a positive learning environment in which a range of reporting strategies is implemented. It is essential, therefore, that the reporting of student progress is viewed as a community responsibility with teachers, students, parents and administrators working together in the best interest of every student. Communication is most effective when everyone has the opportunity to participate by asking for clarification, examining particular examples and knowing they've been heard by others involved.

Since students are at the centre of all reporting, it follows that they should be an integral part of the reporting procedure.

A range of reporting methods allow students to be an integral part of the process while encouraging them to be reflective learners who strive to extend their learning.

Rationale
Reporting is a means of communicating, both formally and informally to all stakeholders. It is meant to foster cooperation in the student's learning process. Reporting provides feedback from assessments, which give insight into individual achievements and strengths, identifies areas of growth and offers recommendations for future development of the student.

The Lower School at CDNIS addresses reporting procedures within the context of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme and the CDNIS Mission Statement.

Policy
At CDNIS student progress is reported in a range of ways and provides clear, consistent and fair representation of student knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and action, determined by established outcomes.
REPORTING PROCEDURES

Essential Agreements

Effective reporting will:
- reflect what the School values
- involve parents, teachers and students as partners
- be honest, fair and comprehensive
- give a holistic view of the student as a learner, at a given point in time
- outline strengths and progress in specific areas
- be constructive and focus on recommendations for future improvement in specific areas
- be clear and understandable by all stakeholders

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers
- Maintain security and confidentiality of information
- Be positive but constructive
- Assist students learning how to self-evaluate and report on their process
- Use of professional language and avoid jargon where possible
- Provide timely and appropriate feedback to students and parents
- Inform parents of students’ progress on a regular timely basis as required
- Review progress with the student and set goals
- Inform the next teacher or the next school
- Evaluate assessment results of each student and the whole class to inform future teaching and learning

Students
- Be accountable for self-assessment process
- Reflect on report comments and set realistic and appropriate goals

Parents
- Be aware of LS assessment and reporting policy and procedures
- Be open-minded and prepared to listen to all points of view
- Share insights that may help teachers meet the needs of their child but maintain a realistic perspective of their child’s abilities
- Provide teachers with the cultural context of the student's learning
- Discuss results with their child and celebrate achievements and progress
- Support their child in setting goals for future learning and progress
- Attend conferences and collaborate with teachers and/or student to identify strengths and areas for improvement

Administrators
- Ensure reporting procedures are transparent to all stakeholders
- Liaise with IT Department to keep template up to date
- Liaise with LTT regarding professional development
- Update the Reporting Style Guide as required
How Do We Report Student Achievement?

3-Way Learning Review
Three way reviews are an excellent way to keep everyone informed and allow children to see the most significant adults in their lives showing an interest in their learning and demonstrating a commitment to supporting them. The 3-Way Learning Review, conducted in the fall each year, has a focus on goal setting based on the needs of the student as seen by the student, parents and teachers.

Student-led Learning Review
Student-led Learning Reviews engage the student fully in their own learning and progress. They provide the opportunity for students to reflect carefully on their learning styles, habits, and growth and allow them to set personal learning plans or goals. The child is no longer just a product of their classroom environment but a fully active participant in their own learning and on the way to becoming a lifelong learner. The Review empowers them to independently share their reflections and plans with their parents.

Portfolios
Students in Pre Reception through Grade 6 keep and maintain a portfolio. The portfolio contains a variety of examples of the students' work from all areas of the curriculum. Students reflect on each piece and use the portfolio as a learning tool. Teachers are required by the PYP to assess the collection of work in the student portfolio.

Progress Reports
Formal written Progress Reports are issued twice per year to show overall effort and academic achievement in the curriculum areas of: Inquiry, Literacy, Numeracy, Chinese Studies, PE, Music (French Grades 5 and 6 only).

Reporting Timeline
Just as assessment is ongoing, reporting student progress and development should be too. Students and parents receive regular feedback from teachers regarding academic progress and commitment as well as personal and social development. Communication is ongoing particularly where a pattern of difficulty is noted, whether academically, emotionally or socially.

A timeline for reporting in a more formal manner is issued at the beginning of each school year.

Celebration of Achievement
CDNIS values acknowledging students who are demonstrating the attributes of the Learner Profile and modeling the CDNIS Mission Statement.

Teachers regularly celebrate individual students' success within the context of the classroom. Regularly, classes come together in assemblies to recognize achievement on a larger scale. Often students receive tangible awards. However, the development of intrinsic motivation in students is also encouraged and teachers use positive feedback to note successful moments.
Grades 5 and 6 have an Achievement Assembly at the end of each formal reporting period. The purpose is to acknowledge responsible global citizens and leaders as well as academic excellence.

Further information regarding student awards is available in the Lower School Student Recognition Policy

**Policy Review**
This policy will be reviewed by the Lower School Leadership Team in consultation with the Lower School Assessment and Reporting Committee and other staff in accordance with the Lower school Policy Review Schedule.
Appendix 1

Lower School Achievement Descriptors

Achievement descriptors refer to the student’s knowledge, understanding and skill as commented on in the Learning Update and subsequent Progress Reports.

Knowledge is defined as:
Significant, relevant content the student needs to know

Skills are defined as:
The capabilities the student has acquired in order to prepare them for lifelong learning

Understanding is defined as:
Having made sense and developed accurate meaning of an idea or concept and is therefore, able to explain, support, justify, theorize and/or defend it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Approaching Expectations</th>
<th>Meeting Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeding Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Demonstrates a basic level of competency, measured against grade level expectations</td>
<td>Demonstrates the required level of competency, measured against grade level expectations</td>
<td>Demonstrates an advanced level of competency, measured against grade level expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge is shown through the recall of some ideas and facts and the use of some specific terminology</td>
<td>Breadth of knowledge is evident through the recall of ideas and facts and the accurate use of specific terminology</td>
<td>Breadth and depth of knowledge is extensive; Specific terminology is used accurately in context</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Plain descriptions and brief explanations may be supported by irrelevant examples</td>
<td>Detailed descriptions and explanations are supported by relevant examples</td>
<td>Comprehensive descriptions and explanations are supported by a variety of relevant examples</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Acquired knowledge may be used to solve simple problems</td>
<td>Acquired knowledge is used to solve simple and more-complex problems</td>
<td>Information is independently analyzed and evaluated to solve challenging problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Skills are demonstrated when applying learning in familiar contexts, though support may be required</td>
<td>Skills are demonstrated when applying learning in familiar contexts</td>
<td>Skills are demonstrated through the transfer of learning to new contexts</td>
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Assessment Strategies
The ways in which educators collect data about student achievement and performance. These can include:
- Observation
- Process-focused
- Selected response
- Open-ended task
- Test/Quiz
- Portfolio
- Performance task
- Transdisciplinary Skills assessment

Assessment Tools
Assessment tools are the ways in which educators record student assessment data and include:
- Rubrics – holistic, analytic, developmental
- Anecdotal records
- Continua
- Checklists

Authentic Assessment
Focuses on real-life issues or events and is intended for real audiences. Usually results in a product or performance. Students generally apply their understanding in a new context and demonstrate a range of important learning objectives. Students are actively involved in making choices about the assessment. Authentic assessments require students to be effective performers with acquired knowledge through a full array of tasks that prepare them for the priorities and challenges of the world around them.

Formative Assessment
Ongoing and regular assessment used during the teaching and learning process in order to improve student learning. Often referred to as “assessment FOR learning”. Formative assessment and teaching practice are directly linked, providing feedback that is responsive to student needs and informs teaching practice. Formative assessment articulates what effective teachers do in their search for best practice and allows students to set realistic goals. The process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. It involves ongoing conversation about learning, the goal being to give explicit feedback to students in order to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve student achievement of intended instructional outcomes.

Performance Assessment
Gathering information about student learning based on students demonstrating what they can do. Values process as well as product.
**Portfolio**
A learner-centred assessment and reporting product. A collection of student work and other assessment records that provide a clear picture of student progress. Provides concrete, direct evidence of student learning over time.

**Pre-assessment**
A pre-assessment determines what the student already knows, understands and can do. Teachers carry out pre-assessments in order to identify students’ learning needs and differentiate the Teaching and Learning Programme to meet those needs prior to embarking on new learning.

**Self Assessment**
Students reflect on their personal performance products, thinking, skills and learning, monitor what they are doing, evaluate the quality of their work against set success criteria, set realistic goals and plan how to achieve these goals. Requires students to use both reflective and metacognitive skills though specific teaching and learning experiences are required to develop these skills. Provides valuable insights into a student’s thinking and learning.

**Self Evaluation**
Students are challenged to set learning goals and evaluate their achievement of those goals in terms of established criteria in order to empower them in their learning journey.

**Student Led Conferences**
A discussion between a student and his or her parent in which the student and parent engage in open communication about the students learning and their attitude to learning.

**Summative Assessment**
Summative assessment is “assessment OF learning” and determines what students know, understand and can do by the end of a learning experience. The summative assessment is planned for at the beginning of a unit and is designed so that students can demonstrate their learning in authentic contexts and apply it in new ways.

**Traditional Assessment**
Assessment whereby students are typically asked to recognise or recall what has been learned, complete paper and pencil tests, and often answer one-answer questions. Students are required to select or write correct responses or regurgitate facts that often assess static and simplistic elements.

**Understanding**
Means much more than recalling. It means the learner has “wrapped around” an important idea, has incorporated it accurately into his or her inventory of how things work. The learner owns the idea. (Tomlinson)