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# OTR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

*Policy Review: September 2022*

## **Our Mission**

OTR International School provides quality education to pre-school, primary and lower secondary level pupils within an inspiring, challenging, multilingual and international environment by ensuring individual follow-up and the well-being of each student. Our students are encouraged to become active and lifelong learners who show empathy, compassion and respect and help to create a better world.

## **Our Vision**

OTR International School seeks to create a community of lifelong learners who are confident, balanced, caring and inspired to thrive in their life and workplace. Our school accepts children from the age of three offering a multilingual education. Pupils develop their bilingualism every day with qualified teachers whose mother tongue corresponds to the language chosen. Our school puts more emphasis on students' personal development by encouraging them to be more creative and prepare them for life by making practical connections between their studies and the real world. We aim to further incorporate in our school's mission and vision and cultivate as many of the properties and values outlined in the IB learner profile.

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## **Our Philosophy**

Assessment is a key element in the educational process that affects all stakeholders of the school, including students, teachers and parents. Assessment policy outlines the way that teaching and learning is evaluated in OTR International School, with the purpose always being to assess students' performance and to enhance the teaching and learning process following the philosophy of the IB Organisation.

Assessment in OTR International School is an on-going process that supports the school's management, teachers and parents monitor the performance of students. Moreover, it plays an important role in the evaluation of the educational process overall, including the outcome of the teaching process, the skills developed by students and the areas for improvement of the curriculum as a whole. Specifically, assessment procedures at OTR School:

- Help students monitor their performance and become aware of their strengths and weaknesses regarding their learning at any given point
- Help students develop critical thinking and become independent thinkers
- Help teachers evaluate the performance of students
- Help teachers and management evaluate and improve accordingly the curriculum followed
- Help both students and teachers discuss on the efficiency and development of the learning and teaching process through the results of assessment tasks
- Help parents remain informed at pre-determined periods on how well their children perform in lessons
- Help management evaluate the development of general practices in OTR School

Overall, the assessment process is important as it facilitates and enables both students reflect and review their own performance and teachers provide targeted feedback to students.

## **Assessment practices**

Following the IB "Principles of MYP Assessment", in OTR assessment procedures follow specific criteria and rubrics. As per the instructions of the IB, each subject area comprises four distinct assessment criteria that need to be assessed more than once per year. The criteria per subject group, as defined by the IB, are shown in the table below:



## Criteria per subject

	A	B	C	D
<b>Language and literature</b>	Analysing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
<b>Language acquisition</b>	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
<b>Individuals and societies</b>	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
<b>Sciences</b>	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
<b>Mathematics</b>	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
<b>Arts</b>	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
<b>Physical and health education</b>	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
<b>Design</b>	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
<b>MYP projects</b>	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting
<b>Interdisciplinary</b>	Disciplinary grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting

*MYP: From Principles into Practice*, Cardiff: IBO. 2014 (updated 2017), p. 81

All aforementioned criteria are subject group specific and each one of them includes two or more strands that further determine them. All criteria, strands and assessment objectives are clearly explained by teachers to students at the beginning of the year and prior to any major assessment task. The purpose of such an analytical description and discussion on assessment criteria is for students to understand how they are related to the whole assessment process and how they can be associated with the development of important skills, as per subject and unit taught.



At the beginning of the school year, all teachers explain in detail to students how assessment takes place within the MYP, with practical examples of aims, criteria and rubrics. A detailed handout outlining assessment criteria has been compiled and discussed with all academic staff and other stakeholders of the school.

In OTR School, it is essential that students understand well the importance of assessment by the application of different criteria and the way that grades will be given, based on a scale of 0-8 per criterion (0-7 for the Year Grade and report). Depending on the MYP year and subject, rubrics with analytical description of achievement levels (grades) and level descriptors per criterion are shown and explained to students.

### **Formative and Summative assessment**

Subject teachers use formative and summative assessment tasks in OTR school. Formative assessment is used throughout teaching and learning and forms the basis on which students will develop the skills required for summative assessment. Formative assessment in OTR school comprises of diverse activities, which facilitate the differentiation between students of different academic level. Formative assessment tasks focus on specific criteria and strands each time they are set, which are clearly explained to students. The correction of formative assessment can be done in class with the guidance of the teacher, but also in the form of self-reflection by students themselves or even as peer-reviewed tasks in class.

Summative assessment in OTR school takes place at the end of each unit of instruction. Summative assessment is immensely important for teachers (and students) to be able to identify the level of achievement that students reached at the end of a full unit. This type of assessment evaluates skills, knowledge and understanding and is directly related to the statement of inquiry, as has been set for a given unit. It also addresses specific criteria and strands that have been clearly explained to the students. Summative assessment tasks are planned in advance and well defined in the unit plans that have been composed by teachers prior to the start of a unit. As such, most tasks set by teachers during the teaching of a unit aim to enhance students' understanding and prepare them better for the relevant summative assessment to come. Summative assessment may take several forms, including, among others:

- Essays
- Projects
- Oral Presentations
- Experiments
- Real-life situations problem solving activities (e.g. debate)

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#All tasks chosen and set by teachers as summative assessment activities need to be directly associated with achievement descriptors and evaluate as many descriptors as possible to the greatest extent. Teachers and students discuss the results of the summative assessment and meaningful feedback is always provided for the benefit of the students.

Finally, it has to be noted that teachers in OTR school use a “best-fit” approach when awarding a grade. In OTR, assessment tasks are given a grade based on the level descriptors that best describe the performance of a student. Teachers start evaluating from the lowest to the highest grade descriptor (i.e. starting from 0, then moving to 1-2, then to 3-4 and so on), and they award the grade that corresponds to the descriptor that “best-fits” the performance of a student in the task under assessment.

Nevertheless, while at the term/trimester reports include grades on the scale of 0-8, at the end of the school year students receive their Year Grade on the scale of 0-7. The Year Grade is adjusted accordingly based on the IB official publications (subject reports and results per subject area) and they are discussed and agreed upon by the academic staff of OTR school, before being finalized and distributed to parents and students. (Appendix 1: Sample OTR MYP Report Card).

### **How we collect and analyse data**

In OTR school, there are regular weekly meetings where academic staff discusses important issues for the MYP. It is common practice that results of summative assessments are discussed on designated class councils that take place at least three times per year, before the award of report cards.

Moreover, in OTR there is regular internal standardisation procedures that take place in all subject areas where there are more than one teachers teaching a subject. In this case, teachers of the same subject or subject meet, discuss and assess representative sample work of students until they reach a consensus on the grade awarded and on the process followed towards this purpose. In subjects where there is only one teacher involved, standardisation takes place by using the relevant resources provided via the MyIB portal, including the exchange of relevant information and feedback provided by other colleagues in the “discussions” section of “MYP Programme Communities” on MyIB.

### **How we communicate relevant information**

The management and teachers of OTR school always aim to keep parents informed of the assessment results of the students. Towards this purpose, in OTR school:

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- There is one designated teachers-parents meeting that takes place during each term of every school year. Teachers are there to meet parents both as a group and in short individual meetings.
- Teachers could be made available for face-to-face meetings during the school year upon request by parents and booking of individual appointments.
- Teachers are available for parents to contact via emails. Teachers may reply to parents' messages only during regular school hours.
- The MYP report cards distributed in OTR school contain many information, including criteria-referenced grades, descriptors and comments on the academic performance of the students, as provided by teachers.

### **Review of the policy**

This document will be reviewed collaboratively with all MYP staff in 2022.

### **Resources**

*MYP: From Principles into Practice*, Cardiff: IBO. 2014 (updated 2017)

*Programme Standards and Practices*, Cardiff: IBO. 2014 (updated 2016)

"MYP Subject Area Guides" *MYP Resources*, IBO, <https://resources.ibo.org/myp>. Accessed 4 November 2019.