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1. Statement of Intent

GESM is committed to using assessment to drive teaching and learning practices. This policy is primarily for teachers in the IBDP/CP program, but the philosophy of assessment also applies to all members in the English Section of Primary and Secondary Schools. This document will be made available to students and their parents. It will provide a reference point for situations of conflict. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Academic Integrity Policy as well as the Admissions Policy.

2. Purpose of Assessment

GESM believes that assessment provides students with a chance to receive feedback on their learning; it provides an opportunity for self-reflection and serves as a starting point for new goal setting.

For teachers, assessment offers the opportunity to reflect, monitor, and modify the internal curriculum and teaching strategies. Teachers offer different ways of assessing in order to cater to different learning styles and to aim for an holistic approach. Teachers use assessment data to adapt their pace and structure of delivery, as well as advise students on the next steps in their learning.

For students, assessment offers the opportunity to reflect on their learning. It shows them a way of monitoring their own progress and setting ambitious yet realistic goals. While grades are often seen as absolute within a class, personal growth should be in focus.

Parents will be able to understand better the learning process of their child and to see the progress regarding learning objectives.

Overall, assessment is seen as an assessment of learning (summatives/ class tests showing achievement levels), assessment for learning (formative/ quizzes et al. to feedback and “feed-forward” next steps for learning) as well as assessment as learning (as a tool using self-/peer review and developing criteria).

3. Common Practices

All subjects follow the syllabi provided by the IBO. Depending on the nature of the subject, pace and structure may vary but there are some prerequisites that are non-negotiable for teaching and assessing the DP/CP.

3.1. Criterion-referenced

Authentic assessment is criterion references and, wherever possible, not norm referenced. These criteria are known to the students prior to any assessment. Teachers use a “best-fit” approach to determine the achievement level of the work provided for each criterion. Students must provide evidence that teachers will use to determine the marks.

After all criteria have been marked according to the rubric, a grade will be given that reflects as clearly as possible the actual DP exam situation regarding the weighting of the assessment criteria. That said, for the purpose of transparency, accessibility, and comparability, the GESM internal grade boundary is based on percentages and is applied uniformly to all subjects and assessment tasks.

3.2 Formative/ summative assessment

As Hattie states, frequent formative feedback is the one decisive factor that improves students' performance (Hattie, 2009) At GESM, a variety of formative assessment tasks inform students and teachers; quizzes, homework tasks, short presentations, group work, or discussions are samples of formative tasks that are partially factored into the semester grade. The feedback on these tasks determines the next steps for students and teachers to adjust their learning and teaching. Formative assignments can be set without prior notice to the students.

Summative assessment tasks are usually end-of-unit tests, longer projects, IB-related coursework, or End-of-Year exams. They are cumulative tests that should provide the opportunity to apply learned knowledge, skills, and understanding to new contexts. They are announced to give students time to ask clarifying questions, prepare, and study. Usually, there is a one-week notice prior to a summative task; a coursework calendar is in place for long-term assignments (i.e., IB-mandated work).

3.3 Marking

Marking is done by the subject teacher. All work, except for longer pieces, (e.g., Extended Essay, ToK Essays, or longer coursework), should be marked and returned with feedback within ten working days. The extent and mode of feedback can vary but it is vital, that students receive and understand feedback. To echo its significance, "Marks are how far a candidate has walked, but grades take into account how steep the path was" IBO (2023). This means that marking is done against criteria, whenever possible, and grades are the summed up result in a numerical grade 1-7. It is part of the philosophy of the IB to mark positively and not punitively.

4. Feedback

4.1 to students

The form of feedback can vary. It can be extensive, short, written, or orally shared depending on the assessment task. For feedback to be effective, it needs to be clear, focus on mistakes, and ideally point out concrete steps to work towards the next achievement level. Students should be familiar with the rubrics and criteria used and teachers should make clear references to specific criteria when giving feedback.

A formal way of feedback are reports. These are given twice a year.

4.2 to parents

While parents do not have access to the school's administrative software where grades are stored, Parent-Teacher-Conferences (twice a year) allow for regular feedback. Additionally, semester grade reports inform parents and guardians about the progress of their children.

5. Reporting

5.1 Composition of grades

Formal reports are issued twice a year. They consist of a grade per subject (scale 1-7) and an effort grade (A-E) which reflects participation in class. These effort grades are based on the holistic judgment of the teacher on the level of engagement students exhibit during a given rating period. The composition of semester grades vary slightly for each semester and is published in the coursework calendar. For 2023/24, 80% of the semester

1 grade is based on summative assessment (minimum of two class tests) and 20% of formative grades. The G11 semester 2 grade is based on class tests (summatives) with 40%; the End-of-Year exam with 50%; and formative work with 10%. The G12 semester 2 grade is determined 100% by mock exam results. In addition to numeric grades, written feedback for each subject is part of the report cards, outlining strengths and identifying further steps for improvement. While report card grades are based on evidence and therefore non-negotiable, they provide opportunities for dialogue between teachers, students, and their parents.

The G11 semester 2 report also contains a Predicted Grade. The purpose of this is to give students a projection of their potential at this point in time. Predictions might be adjusted later as needed. The June predictions are usually used for university/college applications. Teachers base these grades on evidence and their professional judgment of the potential achievement level of the student.

Semester 1 (11/1)	Semester 2 (11/2)	Semester 3 (12/1)	Semester 4 (12/2)
Summative 80% Formative 20%	Summative 40% Formative 10% Exam 50%	Summative 80% Formative 20%	Mock Exam 100%

5.2 Grade Boundaries

From 2023/24 on, GESM uses harmonized and agreed percentages for all assessments. As a general rule, the following percentages have been agreed upon **100-85% $\hat{=}$ 7; 84-70% $\hat{=}$ 6; 69-55% $\hat{=}$ 5; 54-45% $\hat{=}$ 4; 44-30% $\hat{=}$ 3; 29-15% $\hat{=}$ 2; \leq 14% $\hat{=}$ 1**. The purpose of the agreed-upon boundaries is to evaluate performance, not predict outcomes. For grade 12 mock exams, as they are based on past papers, the corresponding authentic grade boundaries will be used.

Percentage	Numerical grade
100-85%	7
84-70%	6
69-55%	5
54-45%	4
44-30%	3
29-15%	2
14 and below	1

5.3. Conferences

There are several conferences that are used in conjunction with assessment.

In Student Growth Conferences, teachers analyse students' levels of attainment and performance and discuss next steps.

In Report Card Conferences, teachers analyse and reflect on the semester grades and potential alternatives (changing to courses).

In Parent-Teacher-Conferences, teachers meet with students and their parents/guardians to talk about subject-specific achievements and steps for improvement.

6. Standardization

GESM offers a broad range of subjects. This leads to small groups that are often taught by just one teacher across the two years. Therefore, setting up fixed protocols for standardization is challenging. There are different modes of standardization:

Peer Standardization (samples, ideally assessed before the marking starts);

Blind Remarking (without knowledge of the first marks); and

Confirmatory Review (a second assessor confirms the marks against known standards).

For all submissions to the IB (coursework), a standardization of marks is mandatory. Students' work needs to be reviewed, standardized confirmed by a second teacher. Procedures for standardization are determined by each subject group.

7. Documentation of data

For grade keeping, the school uses an administrative software, which will, according to the set parameters, determine a final semester grade. This grade is calculated by the internally agreed percentages (Please refer to item 5 on Reporting) and works with percentages per assignment.

8. Missed work

Students will be given the chance to show their progress in learning in at least two summative assignments per semester. Additionally, there is IB-mandated coursework in various stages outlined in the Coursework Calendar published at the beginning of the two-year course.

If a student misses a class test, a chance will be given to sit an identical or similar test, at the discretion of the teacher. For non-submission or absence from an announced class test or IB set work (e.g., Language Oral presentations), a written note from a doctor is necessary. If the student fails to submit this, a grade "0/zero" will be given for that piece of assessment and factored into the final semester grade as well as into any upcoming Predicted Grade (Uni or IB).

When deadlines for coursework are not adhered to, the protocol outlined in 10.1 will apply.

9. ANP, EAL (Access conditions)

GESM is a non-selective school. For internal candidates, there are set standards coming up from the IGCSE to select certain courses (especially for choosing a subject at higher level). A wide range of students are admitted to either the DP or CP and most students get the chance to start with and try the full Diploma program. The GESM's Admissions Policy provides more details.

A certain level of English is necessary to access the curriculum. For predominantly German-speaking students, the German IB or GIB (Gemischtsprachige International Baccalaureate) offers a wide range of subjects taught in German, but generally, in order to be able to access the full DP, all students need to be on a B1 or English B SL level to access subject and core components.

Additional learning needs should be disclosed during the admission process in order to put in accommodations. The collaboration with the parents is vital, as a proper assessment of the learning needs must be documented early in the two-year program to have access to the accommodations outlined in the IB "IB Access and Inclusion Policy."

Extended time and the use of a word processor can be independently introduced and monitored by the school before IB approval for school assessments. This also applies to the use of calculators, small room setting and preferred seating arrangements.

10. Coursework

Coursework is a set of mandatory assessment tasks for each subject. The nature of coursework varies. They include essays, field studies, laboratory work, case studies, and/or artwork. To be spaced out effectively and to structure the preliminary work and the finals, the school shares a coursework calendar with the students. This also includes the Extended Essay. All work submitted for feedback or review must be submitted electronically in PDF format (to avoid access and download issues causing planned or accidental deadline extensions).

10.1 Calendar

Work. Deadlines in the coursework calendar are binding. The IB mandates schools to set deadlines. Students are strongly encouraged to pace and organize their work toward these deadlines. Mandatory deadlines may include the submission of a (research) question, an outline, parts of the work, and/or a full draft. Teachers will give written feedback on this full draft. A final deadline is set for submission of the work. It is vital that students stick to deadlines; as teachers need to be able to authenticate the final product and to standardize assessment, especially IAs.

If a student misses a deadline, feedback will still be given, but it is up to the workload of the teacher when this will be done. Yet, the next deadline, especially for handing in finals will still apply. Late or no submission of work results in academic recovery time in the DP/CP coordinator's office to produce the missed piece of work. The privilege to leave campus early will be withdrawn until the work is submitted.

10.2 IA – Internally assessed work

Internally assessed coursework is standardized by at least one other teacher. Students will receive their preliminary, internally standardized results for transparency. That said, there is the caveat that these grades are subject to change. Results are kept on file and sample students' work will be uploaded to IBIS as necessary. Examiners from the IB will then moderate the work. Feedback to teachers about the accuracy or deviation of the standard will be made available by the coordinator toward the end of the (re)marking period.

10.3 EA - externally assessed work

Externally assessed work is fully marked by the examiner team from the IB. This includes the Extended Essay and the TOK essay. While there is no need to internally mark the assignment, at GESM, teachers will give feedback on the full draft and give a (predicted) grade for the final submission. For full transparency, this grade is shared with the student with the caveat, that this might not be the accurate grade that will be determined by external IB examiners.

The submission of the complete draft for the internal and external assessment component can be counted as one of the two summative items necessary for the composition of the semester grade. A final draft only counts for the semester when it is due (i.e., the EE for the corresponding subject for semester 3 (G12 semester 1)).

11. DP / CP/ GIB

The German IB ("Gemischtsprachiges IB) offers a unique opportunity to competent German speakers to take subject classes with the response language German (currently, Math AA, Biology, and History). The GIB diploma ensures swift recognition in Germany as equivalent to the Abitur (Hochschulzugangsberechtigung) and includes the certification of German language proficiency, expected by German universities. Another variant of the IB diploma is the Bilingual Diploma, certified by the IBO: Studying two Language A courses or a Human Science or Natural Science in a language other than the A Language will automatically lead to the Bilingual Diploma.

11. 1. The core

For the DP, the core consists of CAS, ToK, and the EE. For the CP, the core consists of Personal and Professional Skills, Service Learning, Language Development, and the Reflective Project. While Creativity, Activity, and Service are internally assessed and effort grades are given, ToK has one internal and one external assessment component. Both, the Extended Essay, and the Reflective Project are fully externally assessed. Throughout the two years, no numerical grade will be given for the Core components, but effort grades (A-E) will reflect effort and progress.

The components of the CP core are assessed within school.

11.2 Portfolios

Portfolios offer the opportunity for students to document their growth. There often is a personal approach to the tasks and development of the portfolios (e.g., Lang A, CP Language Development, and CAS). These portfolios are internally assessed and stored. They are not submitted for external moderation.

12. References

Hattie, John (2012). Visible Learning for teachers. Routledge

IBO (2023). IB Assessment principles and practices, A guide to assessment for teachers and coordinators.

IBO (2022). Access and inclusion Policy.

The Franconian International School (2021). Assessment Policy.

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