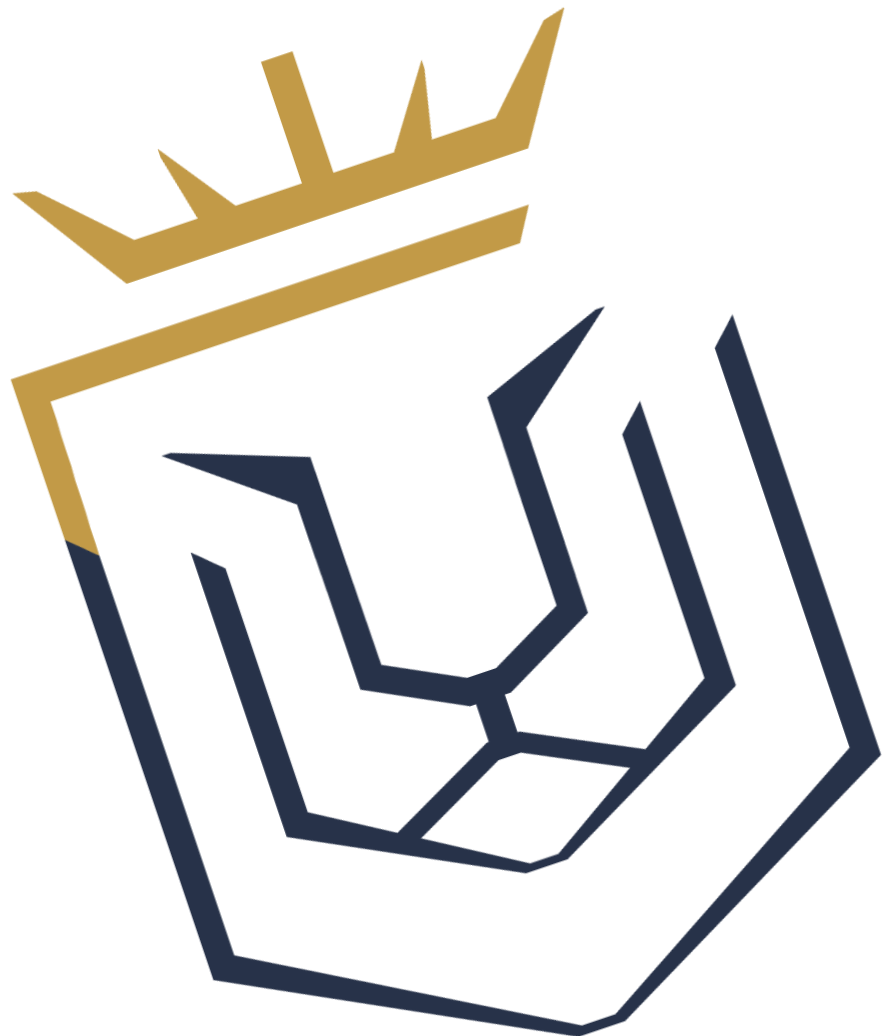




Assessment Policy

Date: 2024

Review: 2025





INTRODUCTION

Nobel Algarve British International School aligns its assessment practices with the mission, philosophies, standards and practices of the National Curriculum for England, the International General Certificate Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the International Baccalaureate (IB). Policies at our school are developed in collaboration with teachers, students and parents to ensure that our policies reflect the needs and values of our community. Our policies are intended to embrace our mission to *to prepare each student to become a global citizen who can shape the world*. Our core values nurture a community that promotes us to:

- **Be excellent:** We do challenging work and achieve incredible things. Excellence is one of our core values.
- **Be supportive:** We support each other as we grow. Globeducate values a culture of discipline, teamwork, respect, perseverance and determination.
- **Be a pioneer:** We innovate and push for boundless creativity, through proactivity, responsibility and passion.
- **Be global:** We know no bounds to shape the world. We embrace different cultures through diversity and inclusion.

CONTEXT

Nobel Algarve British International School is a Nursery through Year 13 day school with an enrollment of 425. The Primary School offers classes from Nursery through Year 6, and the Secondary School caters for students in Years 7 through 13. The English National Curriculum is in place for the Primary School, a specialised middle school programme for years 7 through 9, the IGCSE in Years 10 and 11, and the Diploma Programme for Years 12 and 13¹.

ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

At the Nobel Algarve, assessment is viewed as integral to all teaching and learning: planning, teaching and assessment are considered interconnected processes. Assessment identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages and defines future learning needs. We believe that assessment should be a motivating, positive experience that improves student learning, providing students with strategies for continuous improvement; therefore, teachers and

¹ Nobel Algarve British International School, Almancil is a Candidate School for the IB Diploma Programme (*), pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy; a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education, that we believe is important for our students. Our school also has received recognition to conduct International GCSE and GCSE exams with Pearson.

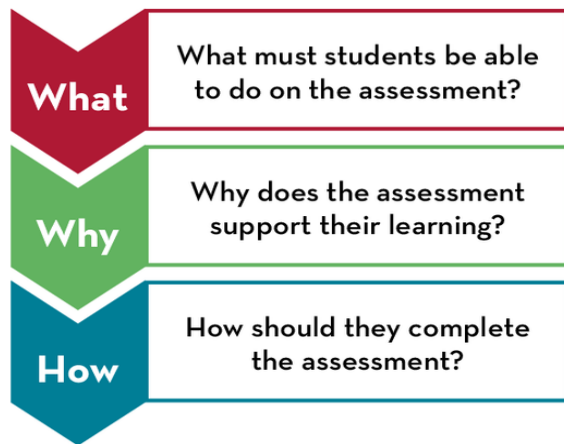
(*) Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme, or the Career-related Programme (CP). Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted. For further information about the IB and its programmes, visit www.ibo.org





students are considered partners in the assessment process which includes meaningful feedback and reflection.

Our assessment philosophy is aligned with the IB programme's Approaches to assessment (0404).



PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

We agree to:

- Plan assessments before teaching
- Collaborate to develop and moderate summative assessments
- Show criteria and models
- Communicate objectives in advance of assessment
- Assess before teaching
- Offer appropriate and varied choices for all learning styles
- Create reliable, valid and fair assessments
- Use assessment results to frame meaningful performance goals
- Provide ongoing quality and timely feedback
- Bring students into the assessment process
- Allow new evidence of achievement to replace old evidence

FEEDBACK

Quality feedback has long been recognised as the single most effective classroom intervention for high performance learning and continuous improvement (Hattie, 2008). Whether oral or written, feedback must be clear and specific to the student's work and identify areas of success and examples of how to improve.





FEEDBACK TO ENHANCE LEARNING

Purpose:

To reduce discrepancies between current understandings/performance and a desired goal



This discrepancy can be reduced by:

- Providing appropriate challenging and specific goals
- Assisting students to reach them through effective learning strategies



Effective feedback answers three questions:

<i>Where am I going?</i> (the goals)	Feed up
<i>How am I going?</i>	Feed back
<i>Where to next?</i>	Feed forward



Each feedback question works at four levels:



Task level How well tasks are understood/ performed	Process level The main process needed to understand/ perform tasks	Self-regulation level Self-monitoring, directing and regulating of actions	Self level Personal evaluations and effect (usually positive) About the learner
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Source: Hattie and Timperley, 2007, p.87.





Inclusion

Assessment at Nobel Algarve understands inclusion is an ongoing, flexible process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.

Inclusion is an organisational paradigm that involves a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students in a holistic manner. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment.

Definition of Learning at Nobel Algarve

High quality learning is a transformative experience in which learners engage actively with challenging concepts and experiences to construct knowledge, understanding and skills, as well as dispositions that enable them to reach their individual potential.

We know that high quality learning happens when:

Learners actively engage with challenging experiences and take responsibility for their learning
Learners are inspired and supported
Learners feel happy
Educators lead learners to self-empowerment and to reach their potential by responding to their individual learning styles and providing them with constructive feedback
A safe, respectful, caring learning environment nourishes a growth mindset
The learning environment broadens the mind through diversity and international mindedness/global citizenship
The community becomes lifelong learners and shares the responsibility to promote values such as respect, acceptance, social responsibility and commitment

Global Competence²

Assessment for global competence covers a range of assessment strategies and outcomes that may include:

- Demonstration of intercultural understanding
- Authentic local and/or community engagement
- Digital Citizenship
- Initiatives associated with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals

² Nobel Algarve British International School defines global competence as an ongoing process to critically understand the connections between environmental, economic and social forces, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, to engage in respectful, open interactions with people from different cultures in recognition of our shared humanity and guardianship of the planet, to carefully evaluate causes and possible solutions to local and global issues and to act ethically for collective wellbeing, peace and sustainable development.





ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The academic programmes offered at Nobel Algarve encourage students to inquire and to think critically and creatively, and to present their thinking in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to make their thoughts and their learning visible and explicit, show how they have constructed their ideas, and demonstrate the views they have followed or rejected. This is essentially what scholarship and academic honesty are: making knowledge, understanding and thinking transparent. An essential aspect of this is an understanding of the technical aspects of academic honesty, of citing and referencing.

Academic integrity is an essential principle of the school's academic programme and values. As stated in the IB Learner Profile, all members of the Nobel Algarve community strive to be "principled", acting with "integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities".

All students submitting work for assessment understand the principles of Academic Integrity as "a guiding principle in education and a choice to act in a responsible way whereby others can have trust in us as individuals. It is the foundation for ethical decision-making and behaviour in the production of legitimate, authentic and honest scholarly work" (Academic integrity, International Baccalaureate Organization 2019).

Reporting

Nobel Algarve uses specific and constructive school-based reporting to provide students, parents and teachers with information that can be used to improve learning, teaching and assessment.

CONFERENCES AT NOBEL ALGARVE INCLUDE:

Teacher-student: These are designed to give students clear, focused, meaningful feedback in relation to defined criteria so they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills.

Three-way: 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.

The written report: Written reports are seen as a summative record for students, parents and the school of a student's progress. Reports will clearly indicate areas of strengths, areas for improvement, and are helpful as aids to a student's development.





ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN THE PRIMARY

The purpose of assessment in the Primary is to improve student learning, to provide information on student learning and to contribute to the efficacy of learning programmes. Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering evidence for and of learning. This evidence will be used to give recognition and timely feedback to the learners. Assessment will reflect best practice that supports the learner and the teacher in the promotion of student achievement.

The main aim of assessment in the Primary section is to provide feedback on the learning process to inform further learning. Students and teachers are actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self assessment skills. The assessment component in the school's curriculum can itself be subdivided into three closely related areas.

- **Assessing** – how we discover what the students know and have learned
- **Recording** – how we choose to collect and analyse data
- **Reporting** – how we choose to communicate information

1.1. ASSESSING

The assessment of the students' development and learning is an essential component of the curriculum, and helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching. Students are observed in a variety of situations and a wide range of assessment strategies are implemented. Our classroom's employ a range of formative and summative assessments, which demonstrate student achievements.

Summative assessment: aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. It can assess several elements simultaneously: it informs and leads to improvement in student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea, and prompts students towards action.

Formative assessment: provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognise the criteria for success.





ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM INCLUDES:

- collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- engaging students in reflecting on their learning
- students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- developing clear rubrics
- identifying exemplary student work
- keeping records of test/task results

1.2. Reporting

Reporting on assessment includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting involves parents, students and teachers as partners and is honest, comprehensive and understandable to all parties. Reporting to parents, students and teachers occurs through:

- Parent Information sessions
- Conferences
- Formal reporting three times a year
- GL Standardised Tests

Parent Sessions: Parents gain information about the school from the Director of the School; Head of Primary and classroom teachers regarding the curriculum and classroom routines via this important evening that is held at the beginning of Term 1.

Conferences: Parents are given the opportunity to meet teachers twice a year to discuss their child's progress and attitude to learning. The conference is a formal reporting sessions to parents.

Formal Reporting: These include formal grading and comments based on the curriculum thematic units.

GL Standardised Tests: Standardised assessments are used as a part of the whole school assessment policy in an effort to gain as much information as possible about the student as a learner and about the programme. Standardised assessments are specifically used for the following reasons:

- To inform teaching
- To provide information which shows growth over time
- To provide comparison with a peer group
- To inform decisions about programmes
- To form part of the process of reporting to parents _





MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Introduction

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance with regard to the rationale, principles, strategies and expectations of effective marking and feedback for the Primary section of Nobel Algarve.

This policy will be:

- Consistently applied by all staff
- Clear in its purpose
- Manageable
- Productive in raising achievement
- Informed by pupils' individual learning needs and prior assessments

Rationale

Nobel Algarve is committed to providing relevant and timely feedback to pupils, both orally and in writing. Marking intends to serve the purposes of valuing pupils' learning, helping to diagnose areas for development or next steps, and evaluating how well the learning task has been understood. Feedback and marking should be a process of creating a dialogue with the learner, through which feedback can be exchanged and questions asked; the learner is actively involved in the process.

In Primary, we aim to:

- Provide consistency and continuity in marking throughout the school so that pupils have a clear understanding of teacher expectations and how to respond to next steps.
- Use the marking system as a tool for formative ongoing assessment
- Improve standards by encouraging pupils to give of their best and improve on their last piece of work in a specific way.
- Ensure that all practitioners use marking to inform future planning so that next steps and common misconceptions are addressed.
- Develop pupils' self-esteem through praise and valuing their achievements
- Create a dialogue, which will aid progression

Effective marking should:

- Be manageable for staff
- Be positive, motivating and constructive for pupils
- Be at the pupil's level of comprehension
- Not penalise pupil's attempts to expand their vocabulary
- Be written in handwriting that is legible and a model for the pupil





- Every piece of work is to be marked before pupils use them in the next session.
- Allow specific time for the pupils to read, reflect and respond, in purple pen to marking comments
- Involve all adults working with pupils in the classroom
- Give pupils opportunities to become aware of and reflect on their learning needs
- Give recognition and appropriate praise for achievement
- Give clear strategies for improvement

Effective Marking and Feedback Strategies

The following strategies can be used to mark, assess and provide feedback.

Verbal Feedback

This means the discussion of work and direct contact with the pupil. It is particularly appropriate with younger, less able or less confident children.

Peer Marking

From Year 1, pupils are encouraged to support each other and give feedback on each other's work. Pupils should be given the opportunity to act as response partners and pair mark work. Pupils should first point out things they like then suggest ways to improve the piece but only against the learning objective

Pupils could highlight evidence of success Y1/Y2 or write a comment(s) in another pupil's book in a different coloured pencil (Y3-5)

Self-assessment

Children are also sometimes asked to assess their own learning in order to identify how they have progressed.

Quality Feedback Comments

Personalised Quality Feedback Comments should be used frequently to extend learning and must be differentiated appropriately. When marking, staff may see a piece of work that requires clarification or is a good opportunity to extend that pupil's learning. The emphasis when marking should be on both success and areas for development against the learning objective. A focused comment should help the pupil in "closing the gap" between what they have achieved and what they could have achieved.





Useful “Closing the Gap” comments are:

- *A reminder prompt – e.g. “What else could you say here?”*
- *A scaffolded prompt- e.g. “What was the dog’s tail doing?”, “The dog was angry so he...”, “Describe the expression on the dog’s face”.*
- *An example prompt – e.g. “Choose one of these or your own: He ran around in circles looking for the rabbit / The dog couldn’t believe his eyes”*

Time is then given for the pupil to respond to the written prompt, thus enabling them to ‘close/bridge the gap’ and improve their work further.

Hot Marking

‘Hot Marking’ is the process of the teacher moving around the classroom during a period of the lesson to check and briefly mark children’s work. This marking should ensure that all children are making progress during the lesson and that they are extended or supported where necessary. Children find this type of marking very beneficial as it provides them with instant feedback. When used well, hot marking is an effective form of assessment and will also reduce the quantity of marking at the end of lessons. In mathematics, hot marking may just be used in the form of highlighting correct calculations and dotting incorrect calculations for the pupil to go back and correct. It may also be used to provide an example to show the pupil how to improve.

Middle & High School ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a transition from Primary the Middle School and High School (IGCSE and IBDP) the school has the responsibility to equip students with the skills and attributes to ‘become creative, critical and reflective thinkers’ who understand and apply the principles of academic integrity, developing skills in Information Literacy: research, quoting, sourcing, etc. is embedded throughout our curriculum across all subjects and disciplines. Training in Academic Integrity begins in Year 7 and is integral to the inquiry process throughout the programmes in the way that we:

- *Provide advice on and/or examples of what constitutes academic misconduct, intellectual property and authentic authorship*
- *Provide examples of conventions for citing and acknowledging original authorship*
- *Provide guidance on the distinction between legitimate collaboration and unacceptable collusion.*

At the beginning of the academic year, students sign the Academic Integrity Policy as an agreement to adhere to the principles of academic integrity as a foundational value in academic scholarship.

Upon evidence of plagiarism, there will be prompt feedback from the teacher and the student will rewrite the plagiarised extract.

Shaping the world





ASSESSMENT IN THE DP

Internal Assessment

Assessment tasks must provide a fair opportunity for all students to demonstrate their skill and understanding. With this in mind, the following guidelines apply when teachers utilise an examination as the assessment task:

- Internal examinations utilise a criterion-related approach aligned with the external assessments used by the relevant curriculum;
- Student achievement is measured using the assessment criteria and level descriptors specified in the relevant publications, but may be tailored to be task specific;
- Different versions of examinations are used when exams are scheduled for different times and advance knowledge of the content invalidates the results; and
- Teachers make the final judgement of the student's level in each criterion.

End of Year Examinations constitute a purposeful component of the preparation for external examinations and high stakes testing. The examination format, length, and environment replicate and build toward what students experience in Forms 5 and 7 and should enable students to become confident in their approach to exams. To that end:

- A specific timetable for end of year exams replicates external exam timetables, though it is structured to be developmentally appropriate and in context of transportation practicalities;
- Examinations are developmentally appropriate, increasing the scope of what is included as students progress through the academic programmes at LBIS;
- Teachers focus students on their process of preparation, strategies for test taking, and mindsets; and,
- Environmental factors, such as desk spacing and invigilator instructions, mimic what happens with relevant external exams.

End of year examinations assess the most recent learning of students and do not count for anything more than a normal summative assessment. They do not determine advancement to the next form level and not every subject must offer an exam. Decisions regarding which subjects set an examination are made by department heads and programme coordinators after consideration of the learning outcomes sought for that form level.





MODERATION & STANDARDISATION OF WORK

IB Diploma teachers will be provided with meeting time to moderate student work, at the end of each term. In the case of a teacher not having a peer to moderate with, they will be assigned to another school in the Globeducate group.

USE OF IB COMMAND TERMS

Command terms are embedded in the objectives and assessment criteria of each subject group when assessing in the DP. “Command terms are key terms and phrases used in the syllabus content and in examination questions to indicate what is required in response to a particular command. This also suggests the type and depth of response that is expected.” (IBO, 2018, p. 136).

Specific practices:

- Teachers explicitly use, explain, and differentiate the command terms included in assessment tasks; and
- Command terms are made available in a glossary format for stakeholders to access.

External examinations

Students sit for external examinations in Years 11 and 13 as part of outcome assessments to verify student learning at the conclusion of a programme of study. The weight of each examination varies in each subject course and programme.

Special Examination Arrangements

As covered in more detail by the Inclusion Policy, students who need a different assessment format from the common method receive special examination accommodations. These arrangements are applied to internal and, if approved, to the external examinations and assessments.

Our inclusion department will help ensure student needs are identified and the proper documentation submitted. Parents should contact our head of inclusion for further details.

Assessment in the Diploma Programme (DP)

Assessment in the DP programme is continuous and varied. Assessment tasks can be taken from past examination papers in order to better prepare the students for examinations. Students are assessed using published IB mark schemes for their Internal Assessments. At the end of each semester, they are awarded a grade using the 1 – 7 IB grading system (Appendix A). IB DP students sit for a Mock Examination session in the second year of their studies. Students’ work is graded using predefined assessment criteria and descriptors. In the case of tasks which are taken from past examination questions, mark schemes are used for assessment.





Appendix A: IB Grading Scale

Grade 7: Outstanding - Earning a 7 indicates that a student has demonstrated exceptional mastery of the subject. This score is typically reserved for those who exhibit an in-depth understanding of the material, exceptional critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply their knowledge effectively.

Grade 6: Very Good - A score of 6 signifies a high level of competence and understanding. Students receiving this grade have demonstrated a strong command of the subject matter and have exhibited critical thinking skills above the norm.

Grade 5: Good - A grade of 5 reflects a solid understanding of the subject. It suggests that a student has met the program's requirements and possesses a good grasp of the material.

Grade 4: Satisfactory - A grade of 4 indicates a satisfactory performance. While not exceptional, it signifies that the student has met the IB program's standards and requirements for passing.

Grade 3: Mediocre - A score of 3 suggests a basic understanding of the subject but falls below the program's preferred standard. It implies that further development and improvement may be needed.

Grade 2: Poor - Earning a 2 signifies significant challenges in mastering the subject matter. It is a clear indication that more attention and effort are required for improvement.

Grade 1: Very Poor - A grade of 1 is the lowest on the IB grading scale and reflects a minimal understanding of the subject. Students receiving this score may need substantial academic support and intervention.

