



«SHIRAKATSY LYCEUM» INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX»

Primary School

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. Philosophy

Our mission is to develop future leaders, intellectuals, and citizens who respect national and global human values, and for this reason we are committed to carrying out an **engaging, appropriate, challenging, and meaningful** learning and teaching at the primary school of Shirakatsy Lyceum.

To measure our achievements, we consider assessment as an integral part of the whole teaching and learning process. It is central to the PYP goals to purposefully and effectively organize students learning in accordance with the five essential elements of the PYP:

- knowledge acquisition
- understanding concepts
- development of skills
- developing IB learner profile attributes and attitudes (values)
- promoting Agency
- taking meaningful actions

The main objective of assessment in the PYP is to provide feedback on the learning process and its results.

In general, assessment is aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- to identify and reveal the initial level of students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to apply a constructive approach in carrying out the learning and teaching process
- to monitor the learning process and to record learners' progress

- to provide a holistic and valid report to teachers, school administration, parents, and external institutions
- to make reflections upon and to improve the content of the syllabuses
- to share facts about each student's learning and progress with his/her parents
- to ensure communication among the sides interested in the development and progress of the school.

Assessment in PYP is the process of gathering and analyzing information upon the learning process, which reveals what students know and what attitudes they manifest, how they understand and interpret different phenomena and concepts, what they can do at different stages of their learning. In other words, assessment provides feedback on the learning process by its **diagnostic (pre-assessment)**, **formative**, and **summative** types.

2. Assessment principles

Assessment is an ongoing process of gathering facts and reliable all-round data about the learning and teaching process intended to develop and improve the teaching process. It must reflect the current practice, present it from different perspectives, and motivate the development of effective cooperation between students and teachers.

2.1. The primary school of the Anania Shirakatsy Lyceum carries out assessment *firstly*, to improve the learning process, *secondly*, to ensure that students' achievements meet the requirements of both the PYP and the national curriculum, and *thirdly*, to share information about the learning process and its results with the school community.

2.2. An effective assessment should be:

- Appropriate
- valid
- feasible
- manageable
- impartial
- fair
- reliable
- secure
- transparent¹

In the assessment process, the school highlights the important to focus on each student's learning by/through the units of inquiry and relies on the quality of both **the course** and **the results** of the learning process.

3. Who assesses?

Assessment is a collaborative and informational process, that involves the entire school community: students, families, teachers.

3.1. The role of the students

Students are involved in the process of assessment to analyze the learning process, to manifest their own understanding of concepts and different phenomena, and to develop the skills of active involvement, critical thinking, and self-assessment.

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- ¹ Isabel Nisbet (Cambridge Assessment; former Ofqual chief executive)

3.2. The role of students' families

Students' families are informed about their child's/children's knowledge and skill levels, attitudes, (values) and actions that are performed at school. They receive reliable and complete information from teachers about their child's/children's development and learning, to support that process and the work of the school in general. Families have the opportunity to learn about their child's/children's achievements and difficulties, becoming a witness and a direct participant of the learning process through regular visits.

3.3. The role of the teachers

Through assessment, teachers (1) inform families and the administration about each stage of teaching and learning, including planning, implementation, and assessment, (2) provide evidence that will better introduce the process to the school community, (3) cooperatively monitor and analyze students' progress and ways of its presentation, (4) improve learning, considering various types of teaching and learning as well as students' peculiarities/characteristics.

3.4. The role of the pedagogical leadership:

The pedagogical leadership supports the development of a proper school community, by providing all its members with the necessary and reliable information about teaching, students' learning, and assessment results, to keep them informed of the school's progress and to directly involve them in the process.

4. What and how we assess?

Students' learning is organized through the planning and improvement of the learning process, tailored to their individual or group needs. We assess students' knowledge and achievements by focusing on the key components (essential elements) to the IB PYP curriculum.

4.1. The whole process of assessment is divided into three interrelated stages:

Assessing - how we discover what the students know and have learned.

Recording - how we choose to collect and analyze data

Reporting - how we choose to communicate information.

Depending on the purpose and stage, **preliminary or pre-assessment, formative, and summative** assessments are used.

4.2. Preliminary assessment/ Pre-assessment

Pre-assessment is a special type of assessment that is used at the beginning of the learning phase to identify students' needs and to guide the learning process accordingly.

At the beginning of the inquiry of each transdisciplinary theme, teachers discover students' prior knowledge and experience before immersing themselves in new work and experience. It provides an opportunity to pay attention and consider each student's individual learning experiences, requirements, needs, learning styles, and interests. It gives the opportunity to rely on students' prior knowledge and to be guided by a constructive approach while planning.

4.3. Formative assessment

Formative assessment provides information that is used to plan the next stages of learning. It is interwoven with the learning process, enabling teachers to find out what students know and what they can do. The main of the formative assessment is to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. This helps students to improve their knowledge and understanding, to foster self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning, as well as to make self-

reflection analysis, develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to explore the criteria for success. Teachers constantly monitor, record, discuss with each other, and describe students' achievements, strengths, and weaknesses using descriptors, they guide students to improve their own learning process and plan or review their steps accordingly.

4.4. Summative assessment

Summative assessment aims to provide information about the results of the teaching and learning process. It is the culmination of a specific part of the learning process, during which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their achievements in all elements of the PYP. Summative assessment involves information about several elements simultaneously: the knowledge acquired by students, the abilities and skills built into them, the attitudes expressed, the level of perception of key ideas and ways of behaviour, as well as the depth of understanding of the central idea, and prompts students towards action.

In the 4th grade, the summative assessment is also carried out on a unit basis to ensure the smooth transfer process to the Middle school (Appendix 1).

5. Reflections on IB Learner Profile

For all the three International Baccalaureate Programmes building and development of international-mindedness and learner profile attributes is crucial. The evaluation of the IB Learner Profile attributes and analysis of the information are performed by various means:

- Keeping a personal diary
- School meetings and discussions
- Action wall
- Assemblies
- Report Cards
- Through fairy tales created for that purpose (Kindergarten and 1st grade)
- Keeping the PYP Exhibition diary

6. The final achievements of the PYP students are exhibited through the PYP Exhibition.

The PYP exhibition is an example of a summative assessment. Year 4 students are expected to develop and present their own or collaborative projects within the frames of transdisciplinary

themes that demonstrate engagement with the essential elements of the IB PYP (knowledge, ATL, concepts, agency, and action). This is an opportunity for the students to monitor the level of development of the IB Learner Profile attributes.

The PYP Exhibition Evaluation Approaches and Principles are included in Appendix 1.

When the students' individual or collaborative projects are ready, the school celebrates the event with parents, teachers, the staff, and guests. DP and MYP students, teachers, and members of the pedagogical leadership take part in the process.

7. Graduation exams

According to the RA Law on Education, students take exams at the end of each educational level.

At the end of grade/year 4, students take final exams in "Native language: Armenian" and "Mathematics". The exam points are filled in the final description and handed over to the middle school.

8. The assessment strategies and tools

8.1. Teachers are free to choose the assessment strategies as well as to use any type of assessment to assess students' individual work or group work. Students are actively involved in the assessment process, too. They may select assessment tools and develop relevant materials/ pieces of work. (Table 1).

Assessment strategies and tools					
Assessment Tools	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal records	Continuums
Observations	√		√	√	√
Performance assessments	√	√		√	√
Process-focused assessments	√		√	√	√
Selected responses		√	√		√
Open-ended tasks	√	√		√	√

- 8.2. Each student's learning process is reviewed, analyzed, and recorded by teachers. Homeroom teachers provide parents with the necessary information about the process orally or in writing (diary entries, emails, phone calls, etc.).
- 8.3. At the end of each transdisciplinary theme teachers write report cards (summarized information on the learning process and results) for each student, which also include the PYP elements and IB Learner profile attributes. These report cards are then sent to parents by email. Assessment is carried out by means of a special electronic form. Homeroom teachers then send it to parents within a week time after the completion of the inquiry.
- 8.4. At the end of the semester (for the 1st semester until January 30, the 2nd semester until June 15) a report on each student's progress is provided to parents and students.
- 8.5. A three-way conference, which involves the student, parents, and the teacher, are organized at least once a year to discuss the issues about the process and progress of teaching and learning.
- 8.6. Teacher-parent meetings are held three times a year (September 1-15, February 15-28, June 15-20) to discuss general issues related to the educational process and organizational issues. Parent meetings can also be held as needed.

9. Documentation

The documentation of the evidence of student learning is an assessment strategy relevant to all students throughout the PYP. Teachers use a range of methods to document students' learning as a means of assessing student understanding. This may include, but is not limited to, videos, photographs, and teachers' notes.

Documentation used includes the following:

- Journals
- Report cards for each semester
- Report Cards for each unit of inquiry
- Portfolio
- Individual diaries

For students with special educational needs, different strategies, and approaches are being developed and documented (Inclusive Education Policy document).

10. Portfolio

The school is responsible for the provision of the evidence on students' learning. A portfolio is one of the best alternatives for collecting and registering information on students' progress and development. It is the "learning story" of each student, which demonstrates the evidence of his/her personal development and growth of creativity with exact examples and reflections.

The portfolio is used for one academic year. It is given to students at the end of the year during the parent-teacher meeting.

11. Overall, the effective assessment allows

11.1. Students to:

- demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skills by using a variety of learning styles and intellectual abilities.
- know, understand, or choose in advance the criteria to produce a quality piece of work or performance, analyse their learning and learning of others, and understand what needs to be improved
- share their learning and understanding with others
- be assessed based on special educational needs (speech therapy, psychological, etc.)

11.2. Teachers to:

- be informed about every stage of the teaching and learning process taking into consideration students' needs and requirements and teachers' analysis.
- develop effective teaching and learning approaches taking into consideration each student's peculiarities, abilities, and different cultural contexts/ values.
- collaboratively review and reflect on students' performance and progress
- enhance and foster creativity

11.3. Parents to:

- see the evidence of their child's/ children's learning and development
- contribute to school activities
- be in constant contact with the school and the teachers

Assessment policy review

The school reviews the essential assessment agreements and the assessment policy every second year as well as needed.

Sources:

Making the PYP Happen, 2009

State Standards on Education, Republic of Armenia, 2011

Assessment Policy Appendix 1:

Considering the Middle School (MYP) assessment policy, which summarizes student's progress by numerical assessment or simply with grades, as well as for ensuring the smooth continuity of the student's transfer from the Primary School (PYP) to the Middle School(MYP), students' performance is graded in year 4 (Table 1).

1. Only the performance in Native Language (Armenian), Mathematics, Foreign Language(English, French,..) and Russian/ the Russian Language is graded (scores/grades are used in this case).
2. The student's term grade is formed by the arithmetic mean of all the grades got in the term according to Table 2.
3. The student's annual grade is formed by the arithmetic mean of the grades of the two terms. In some cases, when a student studies a subject for one term, the grade got during that term is considered to be final.
4. According to the RA Law on Education, students take final exams on "Native Language: Armenian" and "Mathematics"at the end of grade/year 4. Exam points/grades are averaged over the learner's annual grade, completed in the final profile, and transferred to the Middle School.
5. During the distribution of co-financing and paid places for students in the Middle School, the educational rating of students is calculated according to Annex 1.1
6. The assessment of students working with an individual program is carried out considering the principle of comparative growth.
7. The final assessment of the students who work with an individual curriculum/ programme is carried out in accordance with the **Inclusive Education Policy**.
8. If the student was absent for a good reason and did not complete the summative assessment task, tests, he / she should complete the test/task within at least two weeks after attending school.
9. The assessment is carried out on a 10-point system, 4 points are considered positive (4 points are a pass) (see Table 1).
- 10.A certain number of grades in each subject is defined to be assessed for students (see Table 3).
- 11.For all the works assessed in points, an identification process is conducted, where the final results are matched according to the accepted point scales (see Table 2).
- 12.The final assessment of the IB PYP Exhibition is carried out only with the help of verbal descriptors according to the rating chart. The results of the IB PYP Exhibition are compared with students' other achievements when calculating the educational rating.

Rating Chart

<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Exclusive	Excl.	10	Creatively uses the acquired knowledge and skills to create something new and make discoveries independently.
Excellent	Excl.	9	Completely and thoroughly masters the intended knowledge and skills, and uses them appropriately in familiar and unfamiliar situations.
Very Good	VG	8	Completely masters the intended knowledge and skills uses them appropriately in familiar situations.
Good	G	7	Masters the intended knowledge and skills, uses them partially in familiar situations.
Satisfactory	Sat	6	Partially masters the intended knowledge and skills but has difficulty in using them appropriately.
Positive	P	5	The knowledge and skills meet the minimum requirements of the intended criteria but there is some progression.
The Least Positive	LP	4	The knowledge and skills meet the minimum requirements of the intended criteria.
Not assessed	NP	1,2,3	Is not assessed for this period of time.

Table 2. Assessment Identification

Points		Grade
10,0	20,0	10
8,5-9,9	18,5-19,9	9
7,5-8,4	16,5-18,4	8
6,5-7,4	14,5-16,4	7
5,5-6,4	11,5-14,4	6
4,5-5,4	9,5-11,4	5
3,5-4,4	7,5-9,4	4

Table 3. Type and quantity (number) of works assessed during the term

Type of the work	Subject			
	Quantity (number)			
	Native language	Mathematics	Russian	Foreign Language
Oral Quiz	8-14	6-8	6-7	6-7
Thematic Work	4	4	3	3
Practical work	1	1	-	-
Term work	1	1	1	1

Annex 1.1. Calculation of students' academic rating at the end of 4th grade

Students' academic rating is calculated at the end of the Primary School taking into consideration the students' academic progress in the subjects of Native Language: Armenian, Russian Language, Foreign Language, Mathematics and the final result of the IB PYP Exhibition, expressed in a percentage.

The rating is calculated according to the following formula:

$$R = \frac{\frac{NLag + NLeg}{2} + \frac{MTHag + MTHeg}{2} + FLag + RLag + ExF}{50} \times 100\%$$

Where:

R- rating,

NLag-Annual Grade of the Native Language,

NLeg-Exam Grade of the Native Language

MTHag-Annual Grade of Mathematics

MTHeg- Exam Grade of Mathematics

FLag-Annual Grade of the Foreign Language

RLag-Annual Grade of the Russian Language

ExF-The final result of the PYP Exhibition according to the ranking, expressed in points/ grades.