



# International School of Estonia PYP Assessment Policy



Updated May 2016

## **ISE Mission - who we are and what we do**

- Develop inquirers, communicators, risk-takers and leaders
- Provide an environment of creativity, innovation and care
- Foster intercultural understanding and respect
- Empower students to implement positive change in the face of future challenges

**Our Core Values** - the qualities that must be in place and actively followed in order for ISE to accomplish its Mission

In all that we do, we value -

- care and compassion - We believe that we have an obligation to listen thoughtfully to others, to consider their points of view and to treat them with kindness and empathy.
- the pursuit of high quality - We set high but realistic standards for everything at ISE. We regularly assess how we are progressing towards those standards and constantly seek to improve. We encourage asking, "How can we do that better the next time?"
- inquiry-based learning - "Why?" is our favorite question. We see ourselves as life-long learners, and developing a joy of learning is essential to what we do.
- taking action - We are committed to making a difference. Therefore we work hard to connect learning to service. We look beyond ourselves and seek to make genuine, positive changes in the world around us.

**Our Vision** - ISE is internationally recognized as a school that develops and empowers future innovators and leaders

The core of International Baccalaureate programs is the **IB Learner Profile** and the International School of Estonia celebrates the promotion of these student attributes:

- **Inquirer** - Acquires skills for purposeful, constructive research
- **Thinker** - Applies thinking skills critically and creatively to solve complex problems
- **Communicator** - Receives and expresses ideas in more than one language including the language of mathematical symbols
- **Risk-taker** - Approaches unfamiliar situations with confidence
- **Principled** - Displays integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice
- **Caring** - Develops a sense of personal commitment to action and service
- **Open-minded** - Respects the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and is accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view
- **Balanced** - Understands physical, mental and personal well-being
- **Reflective** - Analyzes own strength and weaknesses

ISE in support of the Learning Profile and our IB curriculum, also champions the aims and goals of the International Baccalaureate Mission:

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## What to assess

The school curriculum provides the opportunity for learners to construct meaning, principally through **structured inquiry**, and emphasizes the connections between **concepts** and **subject-specific knowledge, skills and attitudes**. The units of learning provide a focus for student inquiry, while literacy and numeracy provide the tools for inquiry. Therefore, feedback is given on student progress and performance in each of these areas.

At ISE, student progress and performance is assessed in the following **areas**:

### Preschool - Grade 5

- Attitudes
- Transdisciplinary skills
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Music
- Visual Art

### Grade 1 - Grade 5

- French Language
- Estonian Culture
- Estonian Language (if applicable)

Comments are provided on the completion **Units of Inquiry**.

Additionally, feedback is provided on the attributes listed in the **IB learner profile**. This profile serves to increase the learners' awareness of, and sensitivity to, the experiences of others beyond the local or national community, thereby promoting an understanding that there is a commonality of human experience.

## Attitudes

While recognizing the importance of knowledge, concepts and skills, these alone do not make an internationally minded person. It is vital that there is also focus on the development of personal attitudes towards people, towards the environment and towards learning, attitudes that contribute to the wellbeing of the individual and of the group. The **attitudes are appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect, and tolerance**. The attitudes are also assessed at the end of each semester.

## Transdisciplinary skills

Within their learning throughout the programme, students acquire and apply a set of five **transdisciplinary skills: social, communication, thinking, research, and self-management**. These skills are valuable, not only in the units of inquiry, but also for any teaching and learning that goes on within the classroom, and in life outside the school. This is another area that is assessed in the report.

## How to assess

### Formative assessment

Formative assessment is **ongoing** and interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what the students already know in order to plan the next stage of learning.

### Summative assessment

Summative assessment takes place **at the end of the units** and gives the student opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Summative assessments may include any combination the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge, skills and processes.

An essential summative assessment is the required **PYP exhibition**<sup>1</sup>, an extended collaborative inquiry undertaken by students in their final year of the PYP, which provides the culminating experience of each learner's engagement with the PYP.

The *assessment strategies and tools*<sup>2</sup> form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> See more detailed information in Appendix 1

<sup>2</sup> See more detailed information in Appendices 2 and 3

## When and how to report

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of students' learning, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to the consolidation of the entire school community. Because feedback is the component of assessment that lets us make sense of judgment and improve our work we encourage both assessment and feedback.

Students are assessed at various times throughout the year.

Formative	Ongoing
Summative	At the end of each unit
End of Semester Report	Twice a year: December and June
Student-Parent-Teacher Conference	October
Student-led Conference	April

## Managebac

ISE utilizes an integrated information system, ManageBac for gathering and reporting assessment information. This formative and summative assessment information is accessible to parents and teachers.

## End of Semester Report

At the end of each semester a digital report card is sent home. The ManageBac system creates this report that is specifically designed for the IB PYP program and will help promote an in-depth evaluation of a student's learning. The goal is to provide greater insight to your child's abilities along the learning continuum. There is a criteria explanation for each letter (E, C, B, NE) and parents are encouraged to contact the homeroom teacher if they need further discussion and explanation.

## Assessment Criteria

Abbreviation	Title	Description
E	Established	Students demonstrate mastery. Students can do this independently.
C	Consolidating	Student demonstrates understanding, but still requires some guidance.
B	Beginning	Student shows limited understanding and requires lots of guidance.
NE	Not Evident Yet	Student not able to demonstrate understanding, and requires re-teaching.
NA	Not Assessed	The area has not yet be taught in class therefore not able to be assessed.

## Conferences

The purpose of conferences is to give information to both students and parents. The **student portfolio**<sup>3</sup> plays a central role in these conferences. Portfolios are collections of students' work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of an active mind at work.

Portfolios are maintained throughout the year. At elementary level, portfolios, which include examples of self, peer and teacher reflections, are shown to parents at least two times a year:

- Student-Parent-Teacher conference

These are formal conferences and are designed to give the parent(s) information about the student's progress and needs. Teachers take this opportunity to answer the parents' questions, to address their concerns and to help define their role in the learning process. The student portfolio plays a central role in these conferences.

- Student-led conference<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See more detailed information in Appendix 4

<sup>4</sup> See more detailed information in Appendix 5



These are formal conferences during which students are involved in discussing their work and their progress with their parents. The students, with the support and guidance of their teachers, select the work to be discussed and/or presented. The format of these conferences depends on the age of the student, and all of the participants are helped to understand the format and their roles prior to the conference. The value of student-led conferences is that the students reflect on and consolidate their progress and share the responsibility of informing their parents.

## Appendix 1. PYP Exhibition information

### The PYP Exhibition

#### Structures

The entire ISE community is aware of the importance of the PYP exhibition. The PYP coordinator works closely with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher to ensure that the expectations, requirements, and needs are met for a successful Exhibition. The IT department has, in the past, supplied extra computer workstations to the fifth grade classroom for student research during the exhibition. The entire staff is informed about the exhibition and mentors are selected based upon their knowledge and experience and the students project.

#### Briefing

Parents and students are informed early on regarding the Exhibition and how it works. *See the information below.* As the school is small, the process for briefing mentors is informal with the fifth grade teacher meeting with each mentor individually, several times throughout the process to discuss the student's project as well as the student's strengths and weaknesses.

#### Assessment Processes

We assess the **process** more than the product. The students should keep a journal throughout exhibition that shows how their thinking and goals have developed. This journal may include pictures, diagrams, poems, timelines and writing. The mentors keep a journal that monitors student progress against a timeline. There will be six rubrics per inquiry. The students and teachers will design the rubrics. Each rubric will assess a different aspect of the Exhibition:

- The journal
- The final product
- Research skills
- Self management skills (e.g. time management)
- Social skills (e.g. group work).
- Effort

#### Parent and Student Information

##### What is the PYP Exhibition?

- an individual or group inquiry
- an inquiry that starts from personal interest and passions, but extends into real world issues
- a way to demonstrate independence and responsibility for one's own learning
- an inquiry that requires students to apply their learning from previous years
- a 'rite of passage' from PYP to MYP

##### The topic of the Exhibition needs to be:

- Significant - contributes to an understanding of meaningful, important life experiences.

- Relevant- is linked to the learners prior knowledge and experiences, represents a big idea, has value beyond the classroom.
- Engaging - has the potential to interest the student and actively engages them.
- Challenging - required uncovering new information, or misunderstood information. Has the potential to extend the student's prior knowledge and experience of the students.

#### **Non negotiable features...**

- The focus will be on a personal issue or interest and will come under the heading "What matters to me...."
- The central idea is: When people identify issues and interest that are significant to them, they can use this interest to research, gain knowledge and share with others.
- Students will identify their own inquiry into points.

#### **Students must be involved in all stages of planning:**

- Identifying the significant concept
- the learning outcomes
- the activities
- the assessment.

#### **The Exhibition should include:**

- examples of written work
- oral presentations
- examples of technology
- performances in any medium - dance, drama, film, video, mixed media.

**Students must show an understanding of the main concepts:** form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility, reflection.

**Students must use skills from all 5 areas:** social, research, self management, communication, thinking.

**Students must show positive attitudes:** appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, confidence, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect, tolerance.

#### **How much time do students spend working on the Exhibition?**

- The students will start brainstorming ideas and thinking about concepts in January.
- The students will then spend about 7 weeks working on their inquiries.
- The students will still have some math and literacy lessons during the Exhibition time, but the majority of each day will be used working on inquiries.
- There will be 'mini skills' workshops that will help inquiries progress.

#### **What about homework?**

- The children will have less homework during this time.
- Some homework in math/spelling may be given each week.
- The children should use their time at home to **research** and **prepare** for the work in class.

### The Roles:

#### How can teachers help?

- To initiate, facilitate and guide the exhibition process
- Provide support for student inquiries, enabling students to overcome any problems encountered in the process
- Encourage students to use a balance of primary and secondary resources, help students access information; and ensure students cite sources
- Empower the students to feel able to take action as a result of the exhibition
- Keep detailed records of the processes involved including ongoing reflections

#### How can mentors help?

- Help students set and meet their goals by asking questions
- Suggesting resources
- Help to interpret difficult information
- Help facilitate interviews or telephone calls
- Maintaining ongoing records, completing the record sheet which reviews the progress, contains a to do list, and mentor comment section
- Mentors can be older students, teachers, other students' parents or members of the community that share the same interest as the student's inquiry.

#### How can parents help?

- Keep being informed about the process by reading newsletters and attending meetings
- support and encourage their children
- provide knowledge
- help to locate resources - people, places, media and information
- encourage independent inquiry and respect student ownership of the process
- celebrate with the students by attending the final presentations.

#### How do we mark students work?

- *“Exhibitions are the best way to measure learning because they put the kids right in the midst of their learning” Dennis Littky*
- We assess the **process** more than the product.
- The students should keep a journal throughout exhibition that shows how their thinking and goals have developed.
- This journal may include pictures, diagrams, poems, timelines and writing.

#### Who will mark the work?

- Children will self assess using the rubric.
- The class teacher will also use the rubric to assess.

**Will there be a grade?**

- The mentor and class teacher will each write a short summary of their observations. These summaries and the rubrics will constitute the final assessment.
- There will not be one final grade at the end.
- Something for us all to remember...
- As with any inquiry there will be times when it seems that students are not being very productive.
- Sometimes there will be lot of discussion and thought but this will not result in anything that can be seen.
- Students (and adults) need time and space to wonder about things and consider their plans.
- This is why we place so much emphasis on the journals. They will show the understanding of concepts and application of skills (e.g. problem solving) more than the final product.

## Appendix 2. Assessment strategies from the IBO PYP Assessment Handbook (2001) p.7

### Strategies

The following methods of assessment have been identified as central to the work of primary school teachers. They cover a broad range of approaches, from the more subjective and intuitive to the more objective and scientific. It is essential that they be seen as a package since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of the child.

**Observations** - All children are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle focusing on the whole class close-up focusing on one child or activity, and from non-participant observing from without to participant observing from within.

**Performance assessments** - These are assessments of goal-directed tasks with established criteria, that are authentic challenges and problems. There are numerous approaches to the challenges/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

**Process-focused assessments** - The students' transdisciplinary skills are observed often and regularly and the observations are recorded by:

- noting both typical as well as non-typical behaviours
- collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability
- synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity.

A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions are common methods of collecting these observations.

**Selected responses** - These are single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.

**Open-ended tasks** - These are situations in which children are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution.

**Portfolios** - These are collections of children's work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of an active mind at work.

It is important to consider, in the case of each assessment strategy, the role of each individual in the learning partnership of child, teachers and parents. The PYP promotes the view that all three have a significant role to play in student learning.

Taken together, the assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment and represent the school's answer to the question How will we know what we have learned?

## Appendix 3. Assessment tools from the IBO PYP Assessment Handbook (2001) p.8

### Tools

The previously listed assessment strategies may be put into practice using the following assessment tools.

**Rubrics** - Rubrics are established sets of criteria used for scoring or rating children's tests, portfolios or performances. The descriptors tell the child and the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by children as well as by teachers.

**Benchmarks/exemplars** - These are samples of children's work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Benchmarks/exemplars can be used in conjunction with rubrics or continuums. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and useable within their particular school context.

**Checklists** - These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A markscheme is a type of checklist.

**Anecdotal records** - Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of children. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.

**Continuums** - These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a child is in a process.

These assessment tools can provide holistic and/or analytic scores. **Holistic** scores are single scores, typically based on a four to six point scale. They are based on the overall impression of a sample of work, rated against established criteria. **Analytical** scores are separate scores for different aspects of the work. They yield more information than holistic scores and are often used for diagnostic purposes or when children need specific feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.

Figure 1 shows which assessment strategies are most effective in gathering information about the learner. The check marks indicate the tools likely to be most relevant to each strategy.



<b>Assessment tools and techniques</b> <b>Assessment strategies</b>	<b>Rubrics</b>	<b>Benchmark/ exemplars</b>	<b>Checklists</b>	<b>Anecdotal records</b>	<b>Continuums</b>
<b>Observation</b>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Performance</b>	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Process-focused assessments</b>			✓	✓	✓
<b>Selected responses</b>		✓	✓		✓
<b>Open-ended tasks</b>	✓	✓		✓	✓

Figure 1 Assessment tools and techniques for implementing strategies

## Appendix 4. Portfolio requirements and Schedule

### Lower School Portfolios

The portfolio is a purposeful collection of a student’s work that is designed to demonstrate learning, successes, growth, PYP attitudes, trans-disciplinary skills, and reflection. They allow for the sharing of processes of learning as well as the products that are created.

#### Purpose of portfolios:

- Empower students to be active participants in their own learning.
- Encourage reflection on the learning process and achievements.
- Encourage students and parents to see learning as a continuous process.
- Encourage a sense of pride in one’s work and thereby build self-esteem.
- Encourage the collaboration of students, teachers and parents in the assessment process.
- Encourage emphasis on process as well as product.
- Give evidence and celebration of achievement.
- Allow students to retain ownership of their work.
- Facilitate ongoing assessment.
- Examine growth over time.
- Provide information for the receiving teacher/school.

#### General Agreements:

- Students (K-5) work towards maintaining their own portfolios with appropriate levels of support from the teacher.
- The portfolios should reflect the student and his/her learning and development therefore the portfolios will look different from each other.
- Portfolios are ongoing throughout the year.
- Portfolios include IB Learner Profile and Attitudes

#### Portfolio Process

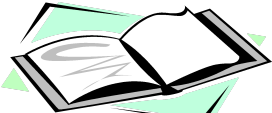






Time		Pre 3- Reception	Grade 1-2	Grade 3-5
Beginning of the year	Homeroom	Introduce portfolios: create cover page, include initial pieces like self-portrait, interviews, dreams, hopes, and/or goals		



Fall	Homeroom	Teacher selects the portfolio work and includes students when possible	Teacher selects	Student selects with teacher support
	Specialists	Teacher selects	Teacher selects	Student selects with teacher support
Student-parent-teacher conferences				
Spring	Homeroom	Teacher selects the portfolio work and includes students when possible	Student selects	Student selects
	Specialists	Teacher selects the portfolio work and includes students when possible	Student selects	Student selects
Student-led conferences				
End of the year	Homeroom	End of a year celebration		

## Appendix 5. Example of the Student-led Conference Schedule

### Student-Led Conference: Grade 3 March 24, 2016

Please bring your portfolio to the Conference

Activity		Check
<b>Welcome</b> Bring your parents into the classroom.		
<b>Literacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read aloud and talk about the text (favorite book, Literature Circle book, read aloud book)</li> <li>Share about writing process and craft</li> </ul>		-:00
<b>Math</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>solve addition and subtraction problems, explain your thinking,</li> <li>show what you learned about describing and comparing shapes</li> </ul>		-:10
<b>Unit of Inquiry</b> Share with your parents what you have learned about Energy		-:20
<b>Library</b> Share your Evernote portfolio reflection about the the unit of your choice with your parents. Units "Innovation: eBooks and printed books" or "Sites I like".		-:30
<b>Art</b> Share the chosen art piece - Show the other art pieces that you made in the class, the art book and explain how you created them.		-:35
<b>Estonian</b> Show your folder to your parents. Show and explain about the piece of work that you liked the most and are proud of (in your iPad). Tell about Estonian field trips and activities.	TERE !	-:40
<b>Music</b> Demonstrate the chosen piece - play the piece on the instrument (recorder or pitched percussion) and explain what you are able to do.		-:45

<p><b>French</b>  <i>Show your portfolio and your notebook to your parents. Share the piece of work you liked the most.</i></p> <p><b>ELL</b>  <i>Present your classwork and demonstrate your reading skills</i></p>		<p>-:50</p>
<p><b>PE</b>  <i>Show your parents what your favorite piece of PE equipment is and what you can do with it. You can also explain to them how to play your favorite game. Make sure you place all things back to the right place once you are done.</i></p>		<p>-:55</p>

**Thank you for coming. I hope you enjoyed the conference!**