Assessing learners' learning and progress

Holistic assessment @ HVBGA

1. Assessment in Grades 1 through 7

To ensure that our assessment methodology is consistent with our holistic approach to teaching and learning, we have adopted a staged and multi-component assessment model **for Grades 1 through 7**. For these grades, assessment comprises three components: internal assessments (IAs), assessed activities, and assessed projects. Together, these components enable us to assess various aspects of learners' progress and construct a more comprehensive and realistic picture of earner's development. This also model of assessment is also differentiated by design. Please note that we do not have semester or final exams for these grades. Given below is a brief description of the three components of assessment model:

Internal Assessments	These are tests that learners take after having learned certain concepts/topics. Learners and parents are given IA dates at the beginning of the semester. However, the syllabus for an IA is decided and conveyed to the learners and parents one week prior to day when IA is to be conducted. **Contributes 60% to the final semester grade**
Assessed Activities	These are the regular learning activities the teacher uses in classroom to teach a specific topic or concept. These activities are a part of the classroom teaching-learning process and are included in the lesson plan. Activities enable us to assess aspects of skills such as thinking, teamwork, metacognition, etc. that pen-and-paper based tests do not allow. Activities are assessed using rubrics. **Contributes 20% to the final semester grade**
Assessed Projects	There is one project every semester which begins at the start of the semester and concludes at the end of the semester. We view project as a portfolio of learning, progress and development that has taken place throughout the semester. Therefore, a project is compilation of several different **complex but age-appropriate** tasks based on concepts taught in the class. A project must comprise at least three such tasks distributed across the semester. Projects are assessed using rubrics. **Contributes 20% to the final semester grade**

The figure on the following page depicts timing and scope of these assessment components.

Overview of assessment for Grade 1 to Grade 7

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>:
:</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">End of topic 1</td><td rowspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Beginning of topic 2</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Day 1</td><td>Lesson 1
Start
Middle Learning activity 1
End</td><td rowspan="8">Assessed Activities
Any one or two of these learning activities may be assessed</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Day 2</td><td>Lesson 2
Start
Middle Learning activity 2
End</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Day 3</td><td>Lesson 3
Start
Middle Learning activity 3
End</td><td rowspan="7">Assessed project work
may be based on concepts from one or more topics</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Day 4</td><td>Lesson 4
Start
Middle Learning activity 4
End</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">End of topic 2</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">At least ONE WEEK gap between the completion of a topic</td><td colspan="2">Beginning of topic 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Day 1</td><td>Lesson 1
Start
Middle Learning activity 1
End</td><td rowspan="3">Assessed Activities
Any one or two of these learning activities may be assessed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Day 2</td><td>Lesson 2
Start
Middle Learning activity 2
End</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>:
:</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

and IA on that topi c			
IA on topic 2 and on some concepts from topic 1			
	: :		

2. Assessment in Grades 8 and 9

For Grades 8 and 9, performance grades are determined by Internal Assessments (IAs) and the Semester exams only. There are no graded activities and projects.

IAs contribute 20% whereas **Semester exams contribute 80% to the final grades.**

3. Assessment in Grades 10 (IGCSE), AS and A Levels

For Grades 10, AS and A Level, performance grades in Semester 1 are determined by Internal Assessments (IAs) and the Semester exams. There are no graded activities and projects. **IAs contribute 20%** whereas **Semester exams contribute 80% to Semester 1 grades.**

In Semester 2, IAs are conducted but they do not contribute to a final grade. Instead, there are two Preliminary exams in the month of December and January. A student's forecast grades will be determined by his or her performance in these exams.

For more details about the schedules of assessments, please refer pages 8, 9, 10 and 11.

3. Policies concerning IAs

Following are a few important points in regard to IAs:

- IA dates are to be decided and shared with parents at the beginning of the semester.
- IAs are to be evenly distributed throughout the semester.
- syllabus for an IA is to be communicated to learners and parents one week prior to date at which IA is to be conducted.
- **IA dates cannot be changed.**
- Students detailed feedback for improvement (in class) in accordance with mark scheme or rubric within a week after completion of an IA.
- After students have viewed IA and feedback is given, subject teacher collects the graded IA papers. We do not allow students to take the graded IA paper back home.
- Parents come to school on a scheduled date and time, and IA performance are discussed, and IA is file shown.
- IA papers are signed by parent, and parent feedback/concerns/suggestions are noted.

Absence during an IA

If a student is absent during an IA and the leave of the student was approved, the student will neither get any marks, nor be allowed to take a re-test, and will score '0'.

If the student is absent because of a medical condition and produces a medical certificate on the day of absence, the student will be marked 'Sick' for the IA in Edusprint.

4. Policies concerning graded activities and projects

Activities and projects are graded internally using rubrics pre-approved by our heads of departments.

Please note that we **do not** share activity and project assessment methodology with parents, nor do we show graded activities and projects. However, we do share with parents feedback from these assessments along with recommendation to make improvements in students' performance.

5. How we design and assess activities

For Grades 1 to 7

What is an activity?

The objective of any classroom activity is to provide learners an engaging environment and experience that would best enable them to make sense of a given concept and incorporate this new learning into their existing understanding of the world around them.

An activity is essentially anything a learner does in the classroom to learn a concept or a topic. This may include observing and recording in the form of table, analyzing data by plotting a graph, thinking like a scientist or mathematician, doing an experiment, writing a report, making sense of a given information and drawing conclusions, reflecting, listening to the teacher and peers, presenting, making a model, and so on.

What are assessed activities?

Assessed activities are the activities that teacher plans as a part of her regular classroom teaching-learning. As shown in the figure on page 8, the activities to be assessed for a given topic is chosen from the learning activities included in the lesson plan for that topic.

Why we assess activities?

Assessing activities enable us to measure and monitor aspects of learners' progress that a conventional pen-and-paper based tests/exams do not include. For instance, how well a learner is able to observe and record a phenomenon, how well a learner is able to make a complex physical model, how well a learner is able to work in a team are but some of the abilities that cannot be assessed using conventional tests.

Including these abilities in assessment criteria makes the assessment process more inclusive and differentiated and gives us a more comprehensive view of how a learner is progressing and how we might support them best.

How are activities assessed?

Because activities include skills that do not themselves to straightforward evaluation. For this reason, to assess a learner's performance on activity we formulate a rubric that defines the specific parameters on which learner's work needs to be assessed and how it is to be assessed. Following a rubric ensures that the learners are assessed objectively conforming to predefined standards.

When assessing a skill (say plotting a bar graph or drawing inference or recording observation), please ensure that the learners have been taught that skill in earlier class session. We cannot assess learners on a skill that we have not trained them for. This does not mean that we include questions in activity that are identical to the questions covered in the class. Rather, **questions must always demand learners to apply their skill in a novel situation**.

Please ask your HOD for further guidance on designing activities and rubrics. There are exemplars which you may refer to gain a better understanding on assessment of activities.

6. How we design and assess projects

For Grades 1 to 7

At HVBGA, we have one project every semester which begins at the start of the semester and concludes at the end of the semester. We view project as a portfolio of learning, progress and development that has taken place throughout the semester. Therefore, a project is compilation of several different **complex but age-appropriate** tasks based on concepts taught in the class that learners work on.

We adopt a standardized approach to design tasks for project-work. When designing a project, we focus on three primary aspects of learning and development:

1. **knowledge and understanding** of the objects, facts, conventions, definitions, laws, concepts, phenomena included in the curriculum
2. **skills** both cognitive and affective including research, thinking, language and communication, writing, teamwork and others that we deem important for the given age groups
3. **imagination and creativity** (the two are different) – Of the two, we give precedence to creativity.

Creativity vs imagination—what's the difference?

Creativity means using **imagination AND knowledge and skills** to come up with novel solutions/approaches to a problem/task/challenge; whereas, imagination alone may or may not be concerned with solutions to real-life challenges. Creativity is usually objective-driven, grounded in reality, deliberate, and used to find novel useful solutions to existing problems; imagination is not. For instance, imagining oneself as a superhero is imaginative, not creative; whereas, using imagination to make "best out of waste" (say, a pen-stand out of waste cardboard) is creative (because imagination is used along with knowledge and skill to create something useful).

Assessing project-work

A project-related task is multifaceted – it requires learners to apply their knowledge and understanding along with various skills to achieve an objective. Therefore, the assessment must also be multi-faceted to properly gauge learners' level of competence in relation to different skills. We do this by making rubrics that clearly defines the criteria to determine how competent a learner is in each skill and how many points must be awarded to them. All rubrics must be specific, controlled and conveyed to students along with other **relevant aims and objectives**.

If you wish to see project and rubric exemplars, please visit the library, or ask your HOD.

We welcome suggestions that will help us improve our approach. If you have any suggestions, feel free to contact your HOD or coordinator.

6. Assessment schedules

Internal Assessment (IA)

Please note that

1. IA dates are to be decided and shared with parents at the beginning of the semester
2. IAs are to be evenly distributed throughout the semester
3. syllabus for an IA is to be communicated to learners and parents one week prior to date at which IA is to be conducted
4. once shared with learners and parents, **IA dates cannot be changed**

Grade 1 through 7 (Stage 2 through 8)

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Month</th><th colspan="3">Type of Assessment</th></tr>
<tr><th>Internal Assessment (IA)</th><th>Graded Activity</th><th>Project</th></tr>
<tr><td>March</td><td rowspan="5">5 IAs or 2 IAs in Semester 1
(see below)

60% weight

Plan one IA toward the end of each topic/unit</td><td rowspan="5">5 or 2 activities in Semester 1
(see below)

20% weight

Activities should be conducted during regular learning. Typically, an activity on a topic should precede IA on the topic.</td><td rowspan="5">1 project in Semester I

20% weight

Project should be inquiry-based encompassing all of the topics/units that are to be covered in semester I.</td></tr>
<tr><td>April
G6 Checkpoint</td></tr>
<tr><td>June</td></tr>
<tr><td>July</td></tr>
<tr><td>August: Week 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>August: Weeks 2 to 4</td><td colspan="3">Revision; Preparation of report card (marks and remarks)</td></tr>
<tr><td>September</td><td rowspan="5">5 IAs or 2 IAs in Semester 2
(see below)

60% weight

Plan one IA toward the end of each topic/unit</td><td rowspan="5">5 or 2 activities in Semester 2
(see below)

20% weight

Activities should be conducted during regular learning. Learners and parents should not have prior knowledge of which activities will be assessed.</td><td rowspan="5">1 project in Semester 2

20% weight

Project should be inquiry-based encompassing all of the topics/units that are to be covered in semester 2.</td></tr>
<tr><td>October</td></tr>
<tr><td>November</td></tr>
<tr><td>December</td></tr>
<tr><td>January</td></tr>
<tr><td>February</td><td colspan="3">Revision; Preparation of report card (marks and remarks)</td></tr>
</table>

Please note:

1. **5 IAs** and **5 graded activities** to be conducted for subjects that get **3 blocks or more per week**;
   2 IAs and **2 graded activities** to be conducted for subjects that get **2 blocks or less per week**.
2. **IAs:** Typically, an IA is conducted toward the end of a topic; whereas, activities on the same topic are conducted during regular learning sessions. Thus, in general, an activity on a topic should precede the IA on the topic. Further, IA design must follow the Checkpoint exam pattern.

   Activities: Learners and parents should not have prior knowledge of which activities are to be considered for grading

   Project work should include research work, presentation (written and oral), clear application of classroom learning in real life. A project should reflect a learner's learning journey and how they make sense of their real-life experiences using their classroom learning. Make use of multiple media for project work. Project

feedback should be staged throughout the semester.

Grade 8 and Grade 9

	Month	Type of Assessment
Sem 1	March	Internal Assessment (IA) **5 IAs or 2 IAs** in Semester 1 (see below) 20% weight in Sem 1 Plan one IA toward the end of each topic/unit
	April **G8 Checkpoint**	
	June	
	July	
	August	Semester 1 exam Follow Checkpoint Exam pattern (for Grade 8) Follow IGCSE pattern (for Grade 9) 80% weight in Sem 1
Sem 2	September	**5 IAs or 2 IAs** in Semester 1 (see below) 20% weight in Sem 2 Plan one IA toward the end of each topic/unit
	October	
	November	
	December	
	January	
	February	Semester 2 Annual exam Follow Checkpoint Exam pattern (for Grade 8) Follow IGCSE pattern (for Grade 9) 80% weight in Sem 2

Please note:

1. **5 IAs** to be conducted for subjects that get **3 blocks or more per week**;
   2 IAs to be conducted for subjects that get **2 blocks or less per week**.
2. Sem 1 and Sem 2 grades are independent. Sem 1 grades are not considered when calculating Sem 2 grades.

3. The week before the Sem 1 and Sem 2 exam is **reserved for revision only**. No new learning is to take place during this week.
4. Paper showing takes place within a week after the exam, and the preparation of report card (marks and remarks) takes place in the following week

Grade 10 (IGCSE)

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Month</th><th>Type of Assessment</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Sem 1</td><td>March</td><td rowspan="4">Internal Assessment (IA)

5 IAs in Semester 1
20% weight in Sem 1
Plan one IA toward the end of each month</td></tr>
<tr><td>April</td></tr>
<tr><td>June</td></tr>
<tr><td>July</td></tr>
<tr><td>August</td><td>Semester 1 exam
80% weight in Sem 1</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Sem 2</td><td>September</td><td rowspan="3">IAs conducted to check check learners' understanding but not included in final grade calculations</td></tr>
<tr><td>October</td></tr>
<tr><td>November</td></tr>
<tr><td>December</td><td>Prelim 1 (Sem 2) exam
100% weight in Sem 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>January</td><td>Prelim 2 exam
Must include full syllabus</td></tr>
<tr><td>February</td><td>IGCSE Board Exams</td></tr>
</table>

Please note:

1. For Grade 10, **Prelim 1 (Sem 2) (40% weight)** and **Prelim 2 (60% weight)** exam marks are considered for **Grade Forecast**. Find more information on Grade Forecast at the end of this section.

2. The week before the semester and prelim exams is **reserved for revision only**. No new learning is to take place during this week.
3. Paper showing usually takes place within a week after the exam, and the preparation of report card (marks and remarks) takes place in the following week

AS & A Levels

	Month	Type of Assessment
Sem 1	March **(A starts)**	Internal Assessment (IA) **3 IAs** in Semester 1 20% weight in Sem 1
	April **(AS starts)**	
	June	
	July	
	August	Semester 1 exam 80% weight in Sem 1
Sem 2	September	IAs conducted to check check learners' understanding but not included in final grade calculations
	October	
	November	
	December	Prelim 1 (Sem 2) exam 100% weight in Sem 2
	January	Prelim 2 exam Must include full syllabus
	February	**AS & A Board Exams**

Please note:

1. For Grade 10, **Prelim 1 (Sem 2) (40% weight)** and **Prelim 2 (60% weight)** exam marks are considered for **Grade Forecast**. Find more information on Grade Forecast at the end of this section.
2. The week before the semester and prelim exams is **reserved for revision only**. No new learning is to take place during this week.
3. Paper showing usually takes place within a week after the exam, and the preparation of report card (marks and remarks) takes place in the following week.