

TASOK Assessment Policy and Guidelines

At TASOK we BELIEVE in... *Excellence, Integrity, and Inclusivity*

Our Mission for Excellence: The American School of Kinshasa provides dynamic and individualized educational challenges and opportunities that promote diversity and empower each of its students to develop into independent global community leaders.

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Philosophy and Principles

Philosophy

TASOK views assessment as an integral part of all teaching and learning. Assessment involves the systematic collection, review, and use of information undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning. It allows teachers to identify what students know, understand, value and can do at various stages of the learning process.

Aim of Assessments

The aim of the assessments are to support and encourage student learning and growth while informing and enhancing our teaching. Assessments must be varied, balanced, and purposeful, and appropriate to the widest possible range of students to allow them to demonstrate their personal levels of achievement.

Principles

At TASOK, we ground our thinking in the following principles of effective assessment.

The TASOK Assessment Policy:

- Improves student learning. Assessments are designed to measure intended learning outcomes in accordance with the MYP and Diploma/Course practice and requirements. Assessments are implemented as tools of learning and for learning.
- Recognizes learning differences. Understanding that students vary greatly in interests, aptitudes, and development, our assessment tasks offer opportunities for all students to demonstrate their skills and understanding.
- Is valid, reliable, and consistent. Our teachers aim for assessments to directly and regularly measure what they are intended to measure.
- Is fair and ethical. Our assessments measure what students have learned. They are presented in a manner that accounts for socio-cultural differences among students, does not infringe on students' individual rights and freedom of expression, considers all students' learning needs, considers the environment students are learning in, and holds all students equally accountable.
- Is administered in a variety of ways. A single assessment instrument does not give all of the information that we seek regarding student learning. For this reason, our teachers use a variety of assessment tools aligned to the specific information they seek and differentiate according to students' needs.
- Is authentic and contextual. Our assessments emphasize the importance of understanding and applying the acquired knowledge and skills in real-world situations.
- Involves feedback and reflection. Our assessment tools allow students to get detailed feedback on their performance. Students are given time to reflect on the learning while teachers consistently use assessment results to reflect on their practice.
- Is ongoing. Student learning is best fostered when assessment involves a linked series of activities and opportunities over time. Our teachers monitor student progress regularly as students strive to meet the intended learning outcomes of each unit.
- Is criterion-related, as opposed to norm-referenced or criterion-referenced
- In addition to these stated principles, teaching, learning and assessment for students with diverse learning needs are guided by our Inclusion and Language policies.

Purpose of Assessment

Assessments can be used for a variety of different purposes. The intended purpose will affect how the assessment is designed. Assessments must be planned and conducted with the following purposes in mind:

For students

- Gives the opportunity to demonstrate learning

- Gives the opportunity to understand their own progress and plan the next stages of their own learning
- Gives the opportunity to understand, set, and achieve learning goals

For teachers

- To determine degrees of prior knowledge before connecting new learning
- To identify and support learning differences and learning styles
- To plan, monitor, and adapt our curriculum, our teaching, and our assessment practices

For parents

- Provides the opportunity to be partners in the learning process
- Provides accurate information on their children's progress
- Provides accurate information on their children's strengths and areas in need of support

Planning and Conducting

TASOK Requirements:

- Each teacher must administer a minimum of four and a maximum of seven summative assessments per semester.
- Summative assessments for multi-section classes must be common assessments.
- Students must be informed one week in advance of summative assessments. These are to be placed on ManageBac.
- No more than two summative assessments can be scheduled for any student on the same day.

Types of Assessments

We recognize and implement three main categories of assessment: formative, summative, and external. Assessment comes in many forms to meet these purposes:

Formative

- The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning.
- These can come in a variety of forms, and can be both informal and formal assessments.

Summative

- The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning most often used at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.
- Summative assessments do not have to be the end of a unit and can be used to further inform the teacher of student progress. If it becomes clear that students need

additional time or practice on the learning being assessed, a summative assessment can become a formative assessment.

External

- The goal of external assessment is to improve teaching and learning as well as match student performance to cumulative data through the use of standardized assessments developed and administered by an outside source.
- External assessments can be used as indicators of both the educational achievement of students and the quality of instruction in the school.

Accommodations and Modifications for Learning Support Students and EAL students

TASOK Requirement:

- Teachers are responsible for providing appropriate accommodations or modifications on assessments to meet the requirements of students' IEPs or Language Profiles.
- Accommodations and modifications align with the guidelines of the Inclusion and Language policies.

Students that are eligible for Learning Support and/or English as an Additional Language and have either an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Language Profile with accommodations that apply in the classroom and on assessments. Accommodations depend on the students' needs and are determined by the external educational psychologist's report or internal language assessments (WIDA). Students who require accommodations or modifications are provided assessments that meet the individual's needs, designed by the subject teacher with support from the school's Learning Support Coordinator or EAL teacher.

The Diploma Programme allows accommodations for DP assessments for students who qualify. The Learning Support coordinator and DP coordinator will discuss with the appropriate students and families to provide more information on the inclusive access arrangements available, and the requirements for applying for those accommodations.

For further guidance on how to best accommodate students or modify assessments to meet student learning or language needs, please refer to the "TASOK Inclusion Policy and Guidelines", and/or the "TASOK Language Policy and Guidelines"

Admissions

Assessment plays a role in admissions to TASOK at all levels. The school relies upon both internal and external assessment data to determine candidate eligibility for admissions and placement. For more information, please refer to the "TASOK Policy Manual" or visit the school website to learn more about the admissions process.

Diploma Programme (DP) Admissions

The DP admissions process is open and transparent, accepting both internal candidates that enter the DP from TASOK’s Middle Years Programme (MYP), or external candidates joining us in grade 11 at the start of the DP.

For more information about the role of assessment in Diploma Programme admissions, please see the “TASOK DP Admissions Policy”

Middle Years Programme

TASOK Requirements:

- Each criterion must be assessed at least twice per semester.
- Each strand of each criterion must be assessed at least once per semester.
- Summative assessments must include task-specific clarification of the selected criteria and strands.

The objectives of any MYP subject group state the specific targets that are set for learning in that subject. They define what the student will be able to accomplish as a result of studying the subject. These should guide how assessments are planned and what form that they should take.

These objectives are used as assessment criteria in each class for Grades 6-10 in the Middle Years Programme. Within each subject area of the MYP, there are four distinct criteria.

| | Criterion A | Criterion B | Criterion C | Criterion D |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Language and Literature | Analyzing | Organizing | Producing text | Using language |
| Language Acquisition | listening | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
| Individuals and Societies | Knowing and understanding | Investigating | Communicating | Thinking critically |
| Sciences | Knowing and understanding | Inquiring and designing | Processing and evaluating | Reflecting on the impact of science |
| Mathematics | Knowing and understanding | Investigating patterns | Communicating | Applying mathematics in real-world contexts |
| Arts | Knowing and | Developing skills | Thinking | Responding |

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | understanding | | creatively | |
| Physical and Health Education | Knowing and understanding | Planning for performance | Applying and performing | Reflecting and improving performance |
| Design | Inquiring and analyzing | Developing ideas | Creating the solution | Evaluating |
| MYP Personal Project | Planning | Applying Skills | Reflecting | ----- |
| Interdisciplinary | Disciplinary Grounding | Synthesizing | Communicating | Reflecting |

Diploma Programme

TASOK Requirements:

- Assessments must align with the markschemes, markbands, or criteria of each subject group

Similar to the MYP, each subject in the DP has a number of objectives that are the specific targets that are set for learning in that subject. They define what the student will be able to accomplish as a result of studying the subject, aligned with the formal internal and external assessments that determine their final scores in the program for the IB Diploma or Courses.

Formative and summative assessments are planned using past papers and IB Diploma-style questions and tasks that align with these objectives.

Marking & Grading

TASOK Requirements:

- All summative assessments must be graded using the programme-specific requirements
- All formal assessments be include written and/or verbal feedback
- Uphold academic integrity by following the “TASOK Academic Integrity Policy”

When marking, students are given credit for the work that they have produced against the expected outcome. This is an indication of the degree of the assessment task they got right. The mark itself has no other meaning. When grading, teachers make a judgment on the quality of the student’s work against a defined standard which takes into account the difficulty of the task as well as the proportion of the task that was completed. If there is any suspicion of academic misconduct in any assessment task, teachers should refer to the “TASOK Academic Integrity Policy”.

Revised September 2021. To be reviewed September 2023

Standardization and Moderation

TASOK Requirement:

- Each teacher has a summative assessment standardized once per semester

TASOK teachers are expected to standardize their assessments throughout the school year. This practice involves teachers coming together to use a common rubric on several samples of student work. They discuss scores and develop a shared understanding of how to apply the criteria to assessments. This develops consensus on scoring, so that reliable data can be generated for teachers, students, and parents. It also acts as a quality check to ensure that assessments and grades are at the level defined by the school.

Middle Years Programme

TASOK Requirements:

- Summative assessments are graded using the assessment criteria of each subject-group
- Formative assessments, if graded, are done so with either the subject-group criteria or an indication that the work exceeds, meets, or approaches the expectations for the assessment.

Diploma Programme

TASOK Requirements:

- Summative assessments are given a grade out of 7 based on the DP grade descriptors
- Teachers must provide students with markbands, markschemes, or rubrics that show how grades are determined on summative assessments.
- Formative assessments, if graded, are done so with the relevant markband, scheme, or criteria

Recording and Reporting

TASOK Requirements:

- All summatives and formal formatives are entered on ManageBac as tasks
- Grades and feedback for summatives are provided within one to two weeks of completion of the assessment, depending on the length of the assessment.
- Feedback for formative assessments is provided within one week of completion of the task

Recording and reporting assessment grades and feedback

Grades and feedback are provided to students by their teachers on ManageBac. Those grades are indicators of student performance against the expectations of the teacher for the given assessments.

TASOK teachers are required to give descriptive and effective feedback to students on their learning. When providing feedback, teachers include the learning goals, the progress made toward the learning goals, and the activities that need to be undertaken to improve. Students should be given opportunities to act on feedback to close the learning gaps. Students need to be taught how to interpret feedback. In addition, feedback should be continuous and delivered in a timely manner.

TASOK teachers are asked to evaluate their feedback to students using the following questions:

1. Does the feedback assist the learner to understand the learning criteria?
2. Does the feedback offer the learner specific strategies on how to close the gap between the desired learning and his/her present position on that learning?
3. Is the feedback understandable to the learner?
4. Does the learner have the opportunity to act on the feedback without penalty?
5. Is the feedback timely? Does feedback occur during learning?
6. Does the feedback promote self-reflection?

Recording and reporting term grades and feedback

At the end of each semester, students are issued a term report through ManageBac. This report includes both a final grade as well as narrative feedback on the students performance, their strengths and areas for growth, and ways in which they can improve.

Learning Habits

For both progress reports and end of term reports, students receive feedback on their learning habits, which include organization, engagement, and initiative.

Organization - time management, preparation, strategies for learning, goal setting

- On time for class and ready to learn
- Follows up thoroughly after absence
- Prepared with all materials
- Hands in complete assignments and homework
- Hands in assignments and homework on time

Engagement - participation and involvement in learning, reflection

- Attentive and actively engaged in learning activities and discussions
- Listens carefully to instructions and feedback
- Prioritizes responsibilities and uses class time wisely

- Collaborates well with others
- Participates positively and makes valuable contributions
- Is respectful to individuals, the class, and guidelines

Initiative - working cooperatively, respecting others, shared decision making, taking action

- Sets goals and strives to achieve them
- Displays confidence to positively take on new challenges
- Demonstrates honesty and integrity in learning
- Pursues inquiry and curiosity within learning
- Asks for assistance when challenged with work
- Reflects on learning and takes action to improve

The feedback is given using the following level indicators:

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| EE | Exceeding Expectations |
| ME | Meeting Expectations |
| AE | Approaching Expectations |
| NI | Needs Improvement |

It is important for students and their parents to carefully read these reports to understand what the student knows and is able to do.

Contesting reported grades

In any instance where a student or parent wishes to contest a reported grade, they should refer to the “TASOK Complaints Procedures” for more information about the process.

Middle Years Programme

The final grade a student receives in each subject is determined using the level achieved in relation to each criterion, valuing the most accurate demonstration of student performance, rather than just averaging attainment grades over the reporting period. Those 4 criteria scores are then added up and the following boundaries are used to award the final grade and descriptor of achievement in that course. These grade boundaries are set by the IB and are subject to change.

| Grade | Boundary guidelines | Descriptor |
|--------------|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | 1-5 | Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and skills. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills. |

| | | |
|----------|--------------|---|
| 2 | 6-9 | Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills. |
| 3 | 10-14 | Produces work of acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations. |
| 4 | 15-18 | Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations. |
| 5 | 19-23 | Produce generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations. |
| 6 | 24-27 | Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence. |
| 7 | 28-32 | Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations. |

Diploma Programme

DP report grades are a representation of the students ability against subject-specific grade descriptors, using all summative tasks completed in the assessment period as evidence to determine the best-fit for a student on the descriptors. Students also receive feedback on their achievement against each of the objectives for that subject.

| | Objective A | Objective B | Objective C | Objective D |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Group 1: Language and Literature | Knowledge and understanding | Interpretation | Analysis and evaluation | Communication |
| Group 2: Language Acquisition | Knowledge and understanding | Language usage | Organization | Communication |

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|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Group 3: Individuals and Societies | Knowledge and Understanding | Application and analysis | Synthesis and evaluation | Communication and interpretation |
| Group 4: Sciences | Knowledge and Understanding | Application | Analysis and evaluation | Communication and Investigation |
| Group 5: Mathematics | Knowledge and Understanding | Reasoning and problem solving | Investigation | Communication and interpretation |
| Group 6: Arts | Knowledge and understanding | Application and analysis | Synthesis and evaluation | Application of skills and techniques |

Late Work & Reassessment

TASOK Requirements:

- Students must be given the opportunity to submit late work and reassess, without penalty, unless they have not met the requirements set out in this section of the policy

Late work

Dealing with non-submitted and late work will be considered consistently across all subjects and grade levels. Teachers should insist that all work is submitted on time and is representative of the student's best ability. Late and non-submission of work is recorded and reported through students' learning habits.

If a student has not demonstrated that they have met the learning objectives due to non-submission of an assessment task, where possible, the student should be given opportunities to receive an extension in order to demonstrate meeting the objectives within a reasonable time frame without penalty. There are some assessments for which students cannot receive an extension of the original deadline, and students must be made aware of that in advance. The grade students receive on work submitted late must not be penalized in any way.

If students do not submit the work by the original deadline then the following guidelines should be used:

Stage 1: The teacher must meet with the student and devise a reasonable timeline for the extension.

- This will not exceed 5 days for bigger projects or summative assessments.
- Teacher will notify parents that work has not been completed and the plan made with student to complete the missing work

Stage 2: The student will be expected to attend the 'Get it Done Club' held on Tuesday and Thursday in the library from 3.15-.4.25pm.

Stage 3: The teacher should inform the Principal when a student does not submit the work by the new deadline. The Principal will notify parents.

Stage 4: The Principal will call a meeting with the parents and student if necessary.

Stage 5: Any work that is still not submitted after the revised timeline set by the teacher will be recorded as a 0.

Reassessment

Reassessment is considered a safety net, not a crutch. Its purpose is to ensure students are able to demonstrate that they meet the learning outcomes of each class despite any challenges that they might face in school or in their personal lives. Its purpose is not to allow students to improve their grades, or to avoid responsibility for preparing for assessments.

If a student has not demonstrated that they have met the learning objectives on an assessment task, where possible, the student should be given opportunities to demonstrate meeting the objectives within a reasonable time frame without penalty. A reassessment should not be a duplication of the original assessment, but should be similar in nature and task. There are some external and summative assessments that cannot be reassessed, and students must be made aware before the assessments that there is no reassessment possible.

The following guidelines are used in order for a student to be eligible for reassessment.

- Student has demonstrated that they have not met the desired outcome for the assessment
 - MYP: a grade in any criterion below the 5-6 band.
 - DP: a final grade below a 4.
- The student must meet with the teacher for further feedback on why they did not meet the desired outcome, and steps they could take to reach it.
- The students are expected to complete any work the teacher deems necessary in order to reassess by the determined deadline set by the teacher.

Note: Reassessments are to be recorded in ManageBac as a separate task that includes the name of the original task plus reassessment. When considering final criteria grades for the semester, both assessments need to be taken into account as evidence of student achievement.

MYP and DP Coursework

There are certain assessments conducted at TASOK that are externally assessed or moderated by the International Baccalaureate. Non-completion of these assessments generally are considered failing conditions for both programmes. These assessments include:

MYP

- Personal Project report

DP

- Internal assessments
- Group 1 higher level essays
- Group 4 project
- Extended essay
- TOK essay
- Group 6 components

For these assessments, additional late-work consequences may include:

- Parent meetings
- Attending a supervised Saturday catch up session at TASOK
- Internally suspended for the day with final work being submitted by 3pm.

Reassessment for coursework is handled by the IB, and all inquiries and requests should be directed to the appropriate programme coordinator at TASOK.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the curriculum planned by teachers to closely correlate with classroom instruction. The following homework principles guide our program:

- The amount of time spent on homework is important. Times will vary according to the student's needs and skills.
- Homework assignments are purposeful and designed to reinforce classroom instruction, correlate with class work, and extend student learning beyond the classroom.
- Teachers will work together with parents and students upon request to answer questions and concerns regarding homework.
- If a student is continually overburdened with homework, the parent may request a meeting with teachers and the administration to determine the best course of action.
- Parental communication with students about their learning is strongly encouraged. However, completion and submission of homework is the responsibility of the student.

In addition to regular homework, it is highly recommended that students take the opportunity to read for pleasure each day in their first or second language, either independently or with an adult.

Middle Years Programme

Grade 6: Approximately 40 minutes per week for each subject.

Grades 7-8: Approximately 1 hour of homework per subject per week.

Grades 9-10: Approximately 30 minutes per subject per day

Diploma Programme

Grades 11-12: Varies depending on the nature of the DP course, and whether or not students are taking Standard Level or Higher Level courses, but students can expect up to an hour per subject per day.

Policy Stewardship

Roles and responsibilities for implementing, evaluating and reviewing the assessment policy and for training new teachers

- Implementing responsibility: SS Principal and Programme Coordinators.
- The Assessment Policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the Assessment Policy Team.
- The Assessment Policy will be introduced to new teachers during the Orientation Programme by the Principal and Programme Coordinators.
- Revisions and updates will be communicated to the SS Staff.
- The Assessment Policy will be introduced to parents and students at the beginning of the academic year.
- The Assessment Policy is published on the TASOK Website.

Review process:

Date revised: September 20th 2021

To be evaluated and reviewed: September 20th 2023 for whole-school policy