ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

AISCT
AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF CAPE TOWN

www.aisct.org

Assessment of student learning at AISCT involves teachers, students, and parents. The primary purposes of assessment and grading include providing feedback to students for self-assessment and growth and encouraging student progress and self-monitoring of learning. The focus is always on the learning first and not the score or mark.

AISCT'S DEFINITION OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the continuous process of gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to identify a student's progress towards and attainment of specific learning goals. This allows for students and teachers to make informed decisions that enhance student learning.

STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTION AND GRADING

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows or is able to do in relation to pre-established learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned or not learned in a specific course.

CORE BELIEFS ABOUT ASSESSMENT

At AISCT, we believe that seven key principles define effective assessment.

1. Benefits students
2. Involves students
3. Supports teaching and learning goals
4. Is planned and communicated to the students
5. Is suited to the purpose
6. Is valid and fair
7. Is embedded in the school ethos

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

Summative assessments summarize what students have learned at the conclusion of an instructional segment. These assessments are designed to assess student learning against specific curricular standards.

Formative assessments occur concurrently with instruction. These ongoing assessments provide specific feedback to teachers and students for the purpose of guiding teaching to improve learning.

Expected Learning Behavior (ELB) or ESLR data collection is ongoing, providing information about key dispositional variables that contribute to the academic success of a student. AISCT reports separately on academic and ELB/ESLR grades in the grade book and on the report card in all divisions.

External Standardized Assessments are administered to students in grades 2-12. The assessments provide additional data that contributes to the student's academic profile.

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COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT

EXPECTATIONS

ECD/Elementary School

Assessment expectations for each grade level are shared with parents. Teachers explain assessment expectations to students for individual tasks or projects.

Middle School

Assessment expectations for each course are posted on each class's Google Classroom site. In addition, teachers provide the students with rubrics before a task so that students have a clear understanding of the target for each task.

High School

Assessment expectations are made clear through syllabi that are distributed at the start of a course and posted on Google Classroom. Specific assessment criteria for each task are also provided prior to the assignment of the task.

REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

AISCT is committed to strong home-school communication taking multiple forms as outlined below.

- **Progress Reports** provide a snapshot of a student's progress. In Elementary, Middle, and High School, progress reports are sent home at the end of Terms 1 and 3. These are not final grades but rather an indication of student achievement at that point in the semester.
- **Report Cards** provide feedback and grades for an entire semester. These semester grades reflect the student's final level of achievement against a particular set of standards covered throughout the semester.
- **Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences** take place in October. Students are encouraged to take part as they reflect on their learning.
- **Student-Led Conferences** take place in April when students take the lead in discussing their progress with their parents/guardian.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Proficiency levels are based on collective judgments about what students should know and be able to do relative to the body of content reflected in each subject area assessment. Levels of proficiency are essentially the same.

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL			
4 – EXEMPLARY	**3 – PROFICIENT**	**2 – APPROACHING**	**1 – BEGINNING**
Students demonstrate deep understanding of the assessed standard(s) and are able to creatively apply this understanding to new, authentic situations. They are able to accurately self assess and reflect on their own learning.	Students independently and consistently demonstrate competence and sound understanding of the standard(s) assessed. With assistance, they can creatively apply this understanding to new, authentic situations.	Students inconsistently demonstrate understanding of the assessed standard(s) and require assistance to reach proficiency. Students have a basic understanding but are not yet able to apply their understanding beyond this basic level. These students will occasionally demonstrate learning at the proficient or beginning levels.	Students require extensive support in order to demonstrate a basic understanding of the assessed standard(s). There is limited connection to related or previously learned concepts. Even with assistance, the students are not able to demonstrate a proficient level of understanding.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING SYSTEM

Academic achievement is assessed solely on a student's achievement against the learning standards. AP Classes receive a grade interval boost. For example, if a student earns a B in a class, the reported grade will be a B+.

> " The real goal of assessment is to improve student performance, not merely audit it."
> **Sousa and Tomlinson**

*GPA is the grade point average used for college/university applications.

PERCENTAGE	LETTER	GPA*
96,49 to 100	A+	4.3
92,49 to 96,48	A	4.0
89,49 to 92,48	A-	3.7
86,49 to 89,48	B+	3.3
82,49 to 86,48	B	3.0
79,49 to 8,482	B-	2.7
76,49 to 79,48	C+	2.3
72,49 to 76,48	C	2.0
69,49 to 72,48	C-	1.7
66,49 to 69,48	D+	1.3
62,49 to 66,48	D	1.0
59,49 to 62,48	D-	0.7
0 to 58,48	F	0.0