

# ASSESSMENT POLICY

## 1 INTRODUCTION

École Jeannine Manuel (“the School”) is an independent co-educational school for pre-K-12 students with campuses in Paris and in Lille. The School is consubstantially a bilingual French school and an international school. As a French school, it is accredited and subsidized by the Ministry of Education. As an international school, it is a UNESCO “associated” school, and an IB World School also accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and by the Council of International Schools (CIS).

The School’s mission statement is: **To promote international understanding through the bilingual education of a multicultural community of students, and to foster pedagogical innovation by exploring best practices in an ever-changing global environment.**

## 2 PHILOSOPHY

The School believes that assessment should be a means for both teachers and students to evaluate the student's knowledge and learning, so as to support every student in achieving his/her learning potential, as well as a means for teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

Assessment should guide and contribute to both learning and teaching practices.

The School combines the rigor of the French curriculum with the holistic approach of the IB curriculum to inform its assessment practices. Educators and administrators at the School innovate continuously in an effort to help students learn in better ways. Assessment does not always lead to a grade. Evaluation in general should always lead to constructive feedback and nourish a student’s appetite for learning, curiosity and growth.

As an essential component of the learning cycle, the School uses assessment **for**, assessment **as** and assessment **of** learning, both formally and informally. Assessments of learning, or summative assessments, occur at defined key points and evaluate achievement against outcomes and standards. The School’s pedagogical practices especially emphasize assessments for learning, or formative assessment, and assessment as learning, such as peer assessment, which helps students take more responsibility for their own learning.

## 3 ASSESSMENT TYPES AND AIMS

### 3.1. Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic assessment at the School provides information to teachers and students about prior knowledge and is a way for teachers to gauge the level of the students upon admission, before starting a learning unit, or when they are assigned to proficiency or academic support groups.

Diagnostic assessment can take on many different forms at the school, from testing primary school children for reading fluency to asking the students to access an interactive exercise platform to small quizzes at the beginning of a lesson. Diagnostic assessment occurs informally at the beginning of virtually every lesson.

### 3.2. Formative Assessment

Formative assessment at the School takes place almost constantly during a learning period in order to give teachers and students an idea of what students know and what still needs to be learned. This type of work may or may not lead to a grade. Because formative assessment leads to summative assessment, teachers strive to cater to different learning styles in their approaches. Thus, formative assessment can take the form of group work, in which the collaborative aspect contributes to students' ability to enhance their knowledge of a topic, or self-evaluated work, in which a student can reflect on his/her own learning by assessing it against a table of clearly defined criteria.

Because the School is home to teachers from different countries, there is great diversity and creativity used in the types of formative assessment. The frequency of formative assessment is high, as it can take the form of group work, oral work, peer-evaluated work, self-evaluated work, homework, classwork, debates, or inter-disciplinary group research projects.

### 3.3. Summative Assessment

In the Middle School (*Collège* | Grades 6-9 | Years 7-10) and in the Upper School (*Lycée* | Grades 10-12 | Years 11-13), the end of each learning cycle is marked by internal summative evaluations that assess the skills and knowledge students are expected to have mastered. A General Exam Session (GES) takes place twice per year, generally in December and March/April.

In the Upper School, the aim of these examinations is to help prepare students for their final (externally evaluated) exams, in both the French baccalaureate track and in the IB Diploma Programme (DP). Accordingly, GES are mock exams that follow the format and schedule of the real examination so students are well prepared. The school also organizes regular practice exam sessions for individual subjects between the two GES.

In addition, students have practice examination sessions for various other official (external) examinations, such as the IGCSE (English Language and Literature), HSK and YCT (Chinese – Confucius Institute), DELE (Spanish – Cervantes Institute), and the Goethe Institute examinations (German).

### 3.4. School Self-Assessment

GES results, as well as results obtained in external evaluations, provide the pedagogical leadership team rich and crucial opportunities to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching practices within the School. Additionally, external evaluations assess the overall performance of students, measured against national and international benchmarks.

Results are analysed during department meetings and at back-to-school and end-of-year seminars. The discussions and reflections which emerge from these meetings shape the aims and goals of the School's teaching and learning strategies, impact professional development decisions and nurture the on-going quest for best practices and pedagogical innovation that remain a core element of the School's mission statement.

## 4 PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

In the Primary and Middle School years, no grades are given and evaluation is skills-based. The Primary years mostly focus on reading, writing, comprehension and oral expression in both languages, maths fundamentals and, broadly speaking, achievement standards in maths and scientific literacy as well as early Chinese (Mandarin) language acquisition.

Teaching and learning differences in cultural and pedagogical perspectives on assessment are reflected in our dual language teaching. The French and Anglo-Saxon points of view enrich the learning experience of students through their contrast and complementarity. The positive tension between these approaches presents cognitive challenges as well as social and emotional learning opportunities.

During the Primary and Middle School years, the following progress descriptors are used:

- **Not yet:** The skills required are not yet in place
- **Emerging:** The skills required are improving, but remain tentative
- **Proficient:** The skills required are confidently applied to familiar situations
- **Very Proficient:** The skills required are applied effectively to new situations

## 5 UPPER SCHOOL ASSESSMENT AND GRADING SYSTEMS

In Upper School, grades are given according to the French system, i.e. out of 20. The School's grade conversion scale for grades given out of 20 is based on the scale suggested by the French Embassy in the US and endorsed by the Fulbright Commission.

- A+ 16-20
- A 14-15
- A- 13
- B+ 12
- B 11
- B- 10
- C+ 9
- C 8
- C- 7
- D+ 6
- D 5
- D- 4

IB DP students are assessed according to the IB scale, which corresponds to the following descriptors:

- 7 Excellent
- 6 Very good
- 5 Good
- 4 Satisfactory
- 3 Mediocre
- 2 Poor
- 1 Very poor
- N No grade given

## 6 ASSESSMENT COHERENCE

In order for testing and assessment to be fair and robust, teachers and department heads write examinations, establish grade or achievement boundaries and discuss expectations as a department. Each department holds moderation meetings in which teachers grade each other's papers in order to ensure harmony in grading methods and point attribution. In preparation for the baccalaureate exams, some departments have papers graded externally, so as to provide useful benchmarking for teachers and students alike.

## 7 ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

### 7.1. Pre-assessment

General course criteria and expectations are presented to and discussed with students and parents at the beginning and end of a programme. These can take the form of a progression map, which students and parents have access to in order to understand the aims of a particular course, or presentation meetings for parents at the beginning of a school year. Specific grading criteria are also consistently made available to students before an assessment is given.

### 7.2. Post-assessment

Feedback is given to students after each type of assessment. This may take the form of a class correction, one-on-one feedback during office hours, or an official grade posted on the department website or on *Pronote*, the online agenda. Grading criteria should be stapled to the student's work in order for learning objectives to be clear. Grades and evaluations of competencies are recorded on *Pronote*, accessible online to students and parents. Hence, parents and administrators have an overall view of a student's progress which forms the basis for assessment in report cards that are written at the end of each term.

## 8 ASSESSMENT AND WELLBEING

### 8.1. Catering to Different Needs

In order to cater to students' varying learning needs, the School strives to use diverse methods of assessment including oral, written, individual, group work, self-assessed, peer-assessed, short-term and long-term assignments.

### 8.2. Avoiding work overload

Teachers and students at the School use an online agenda. Teachers use it to post homework assignments and deadlines, while students and parents use it as an online calendar in order to manage deadlines and stay organized. The School's policy is to give work at least one week in advance and to always announce deadlines in class. Google docs-type calendars may be used in some classes for major assignments so that teachers can gain perspective on a student's assessment timetable before assigning work.

Homeroom teachers (*professeurs principaux*) have access to individual students' online agendas to manage assignment schedules for their class and avoid overload. Student Council representatives are also involved in helping manage the scheduling of major assignments.

### 8.3. Unassessed work

The School believes that students learn through and participate in activities that are not subject to assessment. These activities can take the form of inter-school sporting events, drama workshops or DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), a daily reading activity for *sixième*, *cinquième* and *quatrième* (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade | Years 7-8-9), to name but a few.

## 9 RESPONSIBILITIES

In order for these practices to be of the greatest benefit, all parts of the learning community should be actively involved with assessment.

### 9.1. School Responsibilities

- To use a range of assessment strategies, practices and tools to ensure that assessment is appropriate to the needs and abilities of each student and informed by current findings in cognitive science
- To ensure that students understand the criteria by which they are being assessed. These should be clearly explained through class discussion and referenced to written mark schemes and grading rubrics
- To give feedback on assessed work in a timely fashion
- To record marks and evaluations of student progress in *Pronote* in a timely fashion, to complete mid-termly progress reports and termly reports
- To ensure that parents have access to *Pronote* and that they receive regular information about their child's progress
- To support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Assessment tasks should be adapted to accommodate SEND and use a range of tools and strategies to allow students to demonstrate learning
- To analyse and review assessment data regularly as part of a wider school evaluation and transformational process

### 9.2. Student Responsibilities

- To work diligently, submitting work by the due date and in the required format
- To interact with teachers to ensure they understand how their work will be assessed
- To ensure that all work complies with academic honesty policy guidelines

### 9.3. Parent Responsibilities

- To be familiar with and adhere to the School's assessment policy
- To support and encourage their children in good practices

## 10 ASSESSMENT POLICY AND IB STANDARDS

The development of this policy has been informed by the aims of the IB learner profile, particularly with respect to helping shape open-minded, reflective thinkers, inquirers and communicators. It has also been informed by IB standard C4 and by the IB publication: Diploma Programme assessment: Principles and practice. The School understands that:

Teachers have responsibility to design and provide formative assessment structures and practices that help students improve their understanding of what constitutes excellence and where their own work stands in relation to this. Formative assessment is also important for the teacher, as it should provide detailed feedback on the nature of the students' strengths and limitations. The emphasis here, a key component of learning how to learn, is on making the student a better judge of their own performance and then helping them develop strategies to improve. Formative assessment focuses on assessment as an essential learning process.<sup>1</sup>

## 11 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and the Head of School after consultation with the School's senior leadership team, teachers, parents and students.

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<sup>1</sup> The Diploma Programme From principles into practice, p. 39

## APPENDIX

### Planned Assessments (Partial list)

#### Diagnostic assessment

- Admissions tests: WIPPSI, WISC V, COREP
- Reading fluency tests
- Mid-term report cards and termly *conseils de classe*
- Placement tests (Math, English, French)

#### Internal assessment (Summative)

- Regular testing in class
- Practice exam weeks
- General Exam Sessions (GES) with use of a common marking scheme
- PISA-like scientific literacy test in *seconde* (10<sup>th</sup> grade | Year 11) (some years)

#### Internal assessment (Formative)

- *Chantier Calcul* (Math from *sixième* to *première* – 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade | Years 7-11)
- *Chantier Orthographe* (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades | Years 7-8) ; rewriting in French, writing workshops ; *chantier grammaire* (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades | Years 11-12)
- Differentiated groups of proficiency levels (English, French, Math) but same exam content to preserve the coherence of the school curriculum and better track students' progress and needs
- All forms of assessment aimed at detecting and helping students at all skill levels

#### External assessments

- French baccalaureate
- International Baccalaureate
- IGCSE English First Language and English Literature
- International competitions (e.g. Kangaroo Maths Competition)
- Language certifications:
  - Diplôme d'Étude en Langue Française (DELF)
  - Progetto Lingua Italiana Dante Alighieri (PLIDA)
  - Goethe Institute Deutsch Zertifikat
  - Cervantes Institute (DELE)
  - Confucius Institute (HSK & YCT)