



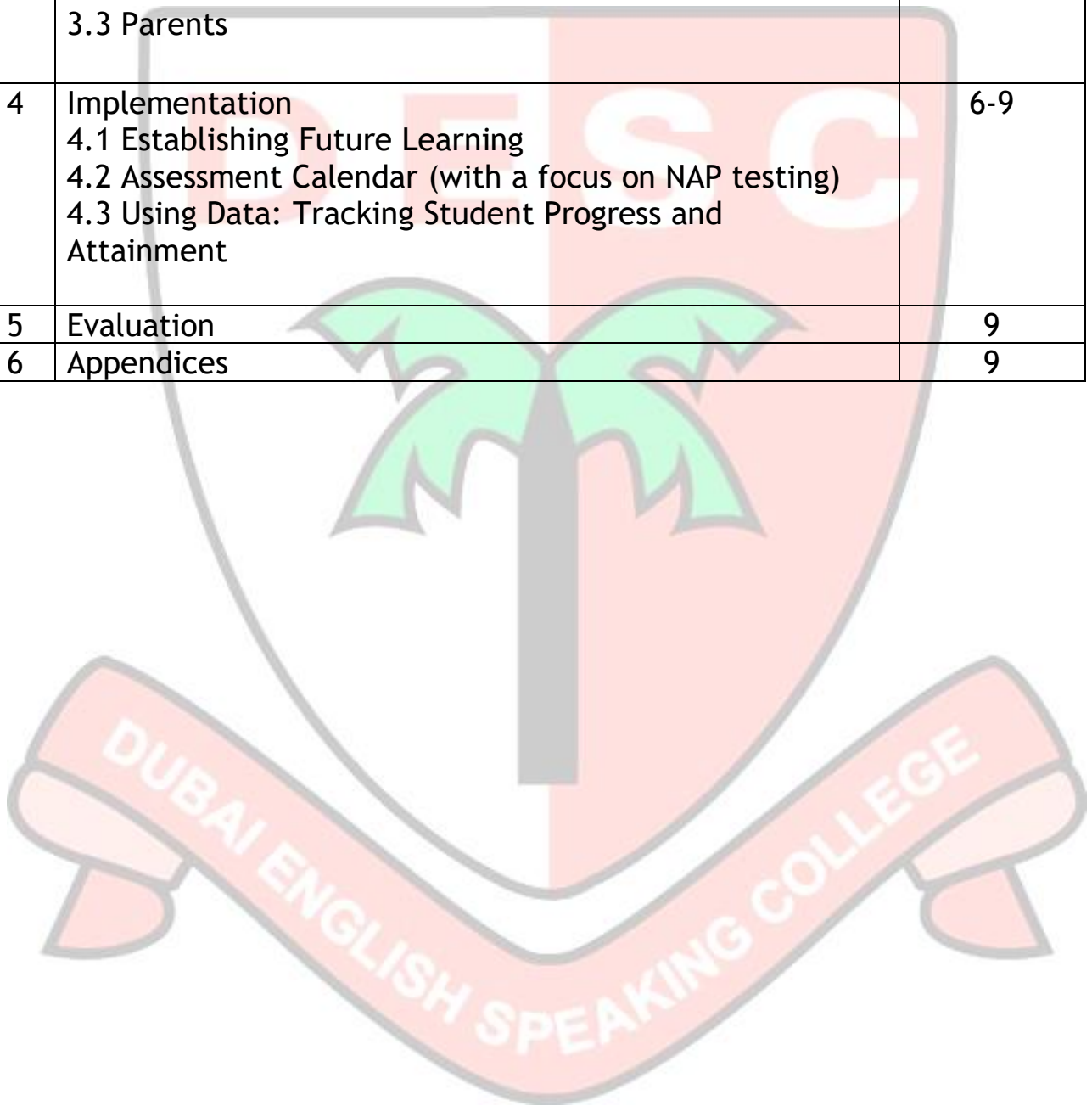
Dubai English Speaking College

Assessment Policy

2023 - 24

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ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. RATIONALE

The Trustees and staff at DESC understand that assessment is crucial to ensuring that we continue to cultivate a culture of academic excellence throughout our provision. We understand that assessing student progress and attainment plays a pivotal role in ensuring that we understand the strengths and areas for development of individual students, cohorts and year groups.

Assessment is the process by which students, teachers and parents are able to make judgements that allow them to monitor progress, evaluate the learning experience, improve planning, diagnose difficulty, identify progression, assist personalisation and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Carefully tailored assessment procedures and methods thereby assist teachers in modifying and adapting their pedagogical approaches and ensuring that teaching and learning responds to the requirements of our students. We see a distinction between the assessment of learning (summative assessment) and assessment for learning (formative assessment) and understand that there is a constructive place for both within our provision.

2. AIMS

- Provide baseline information for all new students that enter the College.
- Assist in the prediction of future attainment and setting of Minimum Expected Grades (MEG).
- Diagnose specific strengths and areas for improvement for all our students for all their subjects.
- Monitor the academic performance of students as they move through the College
- Encourage the use of assessment as a tool in students' learning
- Develop students' ability to become expert peer and self-assessors
- Ensure that all departments are consistent in their approach to assessment
- Use data effectively to inform teachers' planning so that it responds to the needs of the students

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 DESC STAFF

Headteacher (HT) will:

- work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all staff, students and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- ensure assessment is a priority of the College Development Plan;
- provide resources to support this policy;

Assistant Headteacher (AHT) will:

- work closely with the Headteacher and Senior Deputy Headteacher;
- have in place an effective system to monitor pupil progress;
- ensure statutory assessment is fully complied with;
- report achievements to students and parents;
- provide data information to external agencies when requested
- lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
- work closely with the Head of Inclusion;
- oversee, review and refine the Data Cycle annually;
- monitor the use of data across the College (Data Driven Instruction)
- provide assessment guidance and support to all staff;

- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- review and monitor this policy;
- ensure that this policy is aligned with UAE educational regulations, vision and strategies (and is reformed where appropriate in line with changes to the National Agenda)
- work with the AHT i/c of the National Agenda to ensure that the College adheres to NAP requirements

Heads of Department (HoDs) will:

- coordinate all areas of assessment within their department
- ensure that assessment planning (long, medium and short) is completed in line with the ethos of this policy
- adhere to the KS3, 4 and 5 Curriculum and Assessment Calendars
- assist in the production and ongoing maintenance of KS3 / 4 / 5 assessment documentation (e.g. Recognise Sheets and C&A Calendars)
- establish and adhere to a clear set of principles underpinning departmental assessments
- ensure that departments review assessment procedures regularly
- continually check consistency of assessments in their subject area
- produce an assessment calendar for KS4 and 5 (in a timely fashion for the AHT i/c of Assessment)
- systematically coordinate data across all teachers using Go4Schools
- refine, review and evaluate the Data Driven Instruction
- delegate responsibility for assessment planning within their department where appropriate
- ensure that all assessment procedures are rigorous (e.g. standardisation, moderation, sampling of work)

Heads of House will:

- monitor student progress and attainment in each House
- support HoDs/teachers in ensuring that DESC intervention strategies are robust and effective
- liaise with form tutors and ensure that form tutors receive Progress Report information
- Liaise with HoDs to ensure that student progress is discussed, analysed, monitored and acted upon.
- Develop and refine effective and complimentary pastoral systems to support student progress and attainment

Data Manager will:

- Line manage the Data team and work closely with the AHT i/c of Assessment
- monitor the effectiveness of data systems
- coordinate Progress Report data
- report to parents on PT and CAT4 data
- process and analyse all assessment data (in liaison with the AHT and HoDs)
- enable students to be tracked by HODs, HOH and teachers
- follow the Data Cycle as published start the start of each academic year

Form Tutors will:

- spend time with each student in their form after each of the parental reporting periods to discuss the outcomes of the report. This REVIEW session follows the REPORTING session at each point; the aim is to evaluate the positive and negative aspects of the report.
- assist their tutees in the production of a set of targets for the next period of learning time. This should not be a long list - it should be restricted to no more than 3 personal targets.

All Staff and adults within the DESC community will be committed to:

- the belief that assessment is central to enhancing learning
- the belief that all students can improve in their learning through the use of assessment
- the belief that the main benefits of assessment are pedagogical, rather than managerial
- building upon a student's strengths and developing their areas of weakness
- developing students with the skills necessary to be successful learners beyond formal education
- implementing regular, planned assessment events for all of our students that focus on learning, rather than performance goals
- using all available data sources to set students demanding targets that are specific, realistic and achievable, as well as regularly monitored (including National Agenda Parameter Data)
- the use of 'Box & Bubble' to provide consistent and valuable advice to students
- collaboration across departments on good assessment practice
- providing teachers with baseline data on all students entering the school
- informing students and their parents when progress is less than expected
- providing parents and students with timely and high-quality intervention when appropriate
- maintaining records of key assessments held at least once per half-term
- ensuring standards of assessment are standardised within department

3.2 DESC STUDENTS will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- track their own progress and attainment through the online data tracking system (**Go4Schools**).
- produce work of a high standard;
- listen carefully to all feedback given by the teachers regarding their work;
- ask for further help if they do not understand;
- participate in discussions concerning progress and attainment;
- discuss what they have already experienced, know and understand;
- discuss and identify what they need to do to improve;
- self-assess their work;
- discuss their work with a peer
- hand in homework properly completed and on time;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys regarding assessment at the College
- actively reflect following key assessment opportunities (such as Progress Weeks)

Key Term: Go4Schools

Go4Schools is the name of the data tracking software that the College uses to store and analyse student data, track and monitor their progress across all subjects and provide information for parents regarding student attainment (reports).

3.3 DESC PARENTS

- be made aware of this policy;
- comply with this policy by:
 - attending parent-teacher consultations
 - being aware of their child's MEGs and understand how MEGs work
 - monitor their child's progress through online data tracking system (Go4Schools)
- encourage effort and achievement;
- encourage completion of homework;
- provide the right conditions for homework to take place.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Establishing future learning

Key Term: CAT4 testing

'CAT4' stands for **Cognitive Abilities Testing**. Four main 'batteries' form the basis of the testing - spatial, verbal, non-verbal and quantitative.

- Initial **CAT4 testing** is conducted for all new students on entry to DESC (See Table 1).
- These tests help to provide a consistent baseline and we can use the data to understand the potential for academic attainment across all students. As cognitive ability is not particularly curriculum related, the results are not significantly influenced by previous schooling or subject knowledge. These tests help to formulate students' **Minimum Expected Grades (MEGs)**.

Minimum Expected Grades

Key Term: Minimum Expected Grades

CAT4 testing at DESC generates **Minimum Expected Grades (MEGs)** for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Unlike the 'target grades' approach under the previous GCSE grading system, these grades refer to the minimum expected progress of students in each subject as they move through the College. These are in the form of numbers for KS3/4 (9-1) and letters for KS5 (A*-E).

- MEGs are initially based upon CAT4 'Most Likely' grades. These benchmark grades fulfil our compliance obligations to the National Agenda Parameter. As an inclusive school, DESC students will have different MEGs.
- The calculation of the Minimum Expected Grade is a **rough scale** and it is important to stress that **it is only approximate**. It will, however, help to contextualise the data.
- A student would be seen to be making expected progress should they achieve their MEG.
- Importantly, it is expected that all DESC students aspire to excellence and the MEG is the grade upon which to build. A student who continually improves beyond the average rate of progress will see their grades rise.
- Individual MEGs will be reviewed each year, based upon a range of assessment data to ensure that they are appropriate to each student. Subsequent MEG adjustment is considered in Term 3 or earlier depending upon the individual, teacher, HOD, tutor and HOH feedback. This is authorised by the AHT in conjunction with HoDs following careful consideration of evidence, context, and current attainment.

4.2 Assessment Calendar

Key Stage 3

Progress Weeks

Key Term: Recognise Sheets

Recognise Sheets detail the content and skills that are due to be assessed by subjects during Progress Weeks. This information is provided for students/sent home to parents in advance of Progress Weeks to ensure that sufficient preparation time is available.

- There are five calendared Progress Weeks per academic year.
- Core subjects will conduct Progress Weeks on all five occasions. Emirati, Specialist and Diverse subjects will have three Progress Weeks. Progress Weeks only apply to non-Core subjects at the end of Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- When non-Core Subjects do not have Progress Weeks, they must not conduct any assessments.
- A mixture of formative and summative assessments are provided by all subjects.

- Departments create accurate and informative **Recognise Sheets** that form the basis of the content and skills that students will be assessed on in their Key Stage 3 studies across all subjects.
- Departments must decide which assessments will contribute towards students' current attainment.
- Departments should then ensure that the assessments are carefully mapped out on Go4Schools and that there is a clear plan that matches the naming conventions identified in the Recognise sheets (please see Section 4.3 Tracking Student Progress and Attainment).

Progress Week assessments

HoDs and teachers will choose from a variety of different formats when planning their assessments:

Summative assessment - often referred to as assessment of learning. This covers those assessment events that aim to provide information about how much a student has actually learned at the end of a particular section/unit of work. Our end-of-year exams are summative assessments

Ipsative assessment - assessing a student's performance based on their previous attainment, normally over a number of assessment events. This can be highly motivational as there is no direct comparison with other students.

Formative assessment - often referred to as assessment for learning. *'This is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers to decide where the students are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there'* (William, 2017)

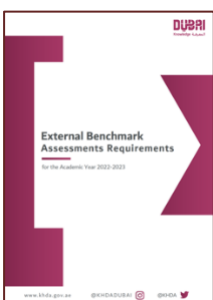
Diagnostic Assessment - Any assessment event that seeks to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses.

Although it is Formative Assessment that is often referred to as Assessment for Learning (AfL), it is clear that diagnostic assessment must also fall within this sphere, although this is normally taken as read. What is also clear is that *'formative assessment...is at the heart of effective teaching'* (William, 2008).

RISE Weeks

- RISE Weeks are built into the DESC Curriculum and Assessment in order to ensure that students have time to reflect upon their Progress Week work. Assessments are marked and returned to students and data is gathered for all student work.
- Departments will plan in appropriate/curriculum-focused opportunities for engaging activities; thereby enabling students to further enhance their understanding of the assessed topics.

National Agenda Parameter requirements



- The following are part of the KHDA mandated National Agenda requirements. It is a combination of the AHT i/c of Assessment and AHT i/c of National Agenda to oversee this area of work, with particular focus on:

Progression in International Assessments: The College will focus on performance (progression) in successive international assessments - include meeting specific targets for international assessments.

Data Analysis and Curricular Adaptation: The College ensures that data taken from national and international benchmarking tests informs curriculum adaptation in order to build upon DESC’s recent success/ performance across international and external benchmark assessments.

Improving Reading Literacy (Reading Across the Curriculum): The College moved from Accelerated Reader to NGRT during 2021-22, and is dedicated to developing the reading skills of students to improve their access to the curriculum and international and other assessments.

The AHT i/c of Assessment therefore oversees the following key areas of National Parameter testing during the course of an academic year:

NAP Data	Description	Year Groups	Date (approximate)
CAT4	Measure of Cognitive Abilities	7, 10, 12 (and new in Years 8, 9, 11, 13)	September
PTE/M/S	Progress Tests in Science/Mathematics /English (GL)	Years 7-10	May
Arabic A and B / Islamic SEEN	Arabic and Islamic benchmark testing	Various	November / May
SEEN (New for 2023-24)	International benchmarking Tests in Arabic A and B	Years 7-10	November
NGRT	New Group Reading Test (GL)	Years 7-10	Once a term (x3)
PASS	Pupil Attitudes to Self and School Survey (GL)	All Year Groups	Twice a year
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment	Year 9	May (every four years)
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study	Year 10/11 (sample of 15 year olds)	May (every four years)

The above documents reference information taken from the following KHDA documentation:

[External Benchmarking Assessment Requirements 2022-23](#)

Key Term: Key Stage 4 and 5 Assessment and Curriculum Calendars

These are the calendars that are published and shared with students/parents regarding the key LIVE data releases that occur during the course of the academic year at GCSE and A Level. Each department will identify when assessments will take place (in line with the expectations of the exam boards) and will then decide on the live data releases on Go4Schools.

Key Stages 4 and 5

- Heads of Department work closely with teachers in their departments to identify appropriate assessment opportunities within the academic year.
- It is the responsibility of departments to pre-plan assessments for the year and populate these assessments on Go4Schools.
- This will lead to the publication of the **KS4 and 5 Assessment and Curriculum Calendars** (two separate documents) and these will outline for the entire academic year:
 - Content that will be covered by students
 - Key dates when assessments take place
 - Revision materials (in centralised area and produced 'in house')
 - Live data release dates (this is when data will be released on Go4Schools)

4.3 Using Data: Tracking Student Progress and Attainment

- All data will be stored, shared, reported on, discussed and analysed using Go4Schools
- It is the responsibility of HoDs and departments to ensure that Go4Schools is set up appropriate to the assessment and data demands of a particular subject, ensuring that marksheets outline all opportunities for assessment
- The weighting of assessments must reflect those weightings as stipulated by the examination boards where appropriate. For example, if the exam board has allocated 20% to Non-Examined Assessment (NEA - formerly 'coursework'), departments must ensure that this is reflected in a 'best fit' approach to weightings.
- All teaching staff should ensure that they are aware of the key dates when 'live' data releases will occur and ensure that data meets the deadlines set by the Data Manager and/or HoDs.
- Grade boundaries must reflect the appropriate examinations (HoDs may decide to enact a three 'year trend' approach to establish a 'best fit' when setting these grade boundaries

If students fall below their MEG or if students are awarded an A2L below 3 for a Progress Report:

- Teachers communicate with the parents of the student (initially by phone). This is recorded on Go4Schools as a behaviour events.
- If this continues, HoDs will arrange for a meeting to establish a clear plan for intervention

5. EVALUATION

- This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher in conjunction with the Data Team and/or the Senior Deputy Headteacher.

6. APPENDICES

TABLE 1: CAT4 Calendar

Year	Baseline	When?	Review
7	CAT4 (mandatory)	September	April
8			April
9			April
10	CAT4 (mandatory)	September	April
11			April
12	CAT4	September	April
13			April