



Effective From	AY 2024/25 (Fall term)
Compliance From	AY 2025/26 (Fall term)

SCHOOL POLICY

on

ASSESSMENT



Introduction

Assessment is one of the most important tools for educational improvement as it helps create a culture of using data and evidence to evaluate and enhance the performance of students, staff, and schools. In a school environment as diverse as Abu Dhabi's, the standardization of assessment data equally allows for the establishment of a common ground to drive change. This policy sets out the basic requirements for the creation of a culture of assessment in schools.

Purpose

- Define expectations related to assessment: the evaluation, measurement, and analysis of academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisitions, values/attitudes, and the educational needs of students.
- Identify high-quality internal and external assessment methods that use data-driven decision-making processes to inform teaching and learning and raise the level of student achievement.
- Specify the ADEK-mandated external assessments which need to be implemented and used as indicators of student progress and attainment in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- Require that assessment data is analyzed, monitored, and shared with relevant stakeholders.

Definitions

Accommodations and Modifications of Assessments	Any adjustments to the way assessments are conducted to enable access, without changing the demand of the assessment. Accommodation and modification should be aligned with the needs of the student and any disability or impairment (e.g., screen reading technology, extended time, scribe, and enlarged font). All accommodations and modifications to external assessments should be in line with guidelines of assessment providers/examination boards.
Additional Learning Needs	Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented). For example, a student with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.
Assessment	Any quantitative or qualitative information, scores, results, or indicators obtained through an assessment that forms the body of evidence to inform decision-making.
Documented Learning Plan	A plan which outlines any personalized learning targets, modifications to curriculum, additional support, or tools for learning which are agreed by school staff, parents, and students (where appropriate), including Individual Educational Plans (IEP), Individual Support Plans (ISP), Individual Learning Plans (ILP), Behavior Support Plans (BSP), Advanced Learning Plans (ALP), etc. This may be to address any specific identified academic, behavioral, language, or social and emotional need.
External Assessments	An assessment designed by an external provider used to measure student learning, achievement, skills development, and/or values/attitudes. This includes standardized benchmark assessments, international assessments, and/or board exams and other pre-collegiate exams.
Internal Assessments	Ongoing school-based assessments that measure student learning, achievement, skills development, and/or values/attitudes. Internal assessments include diagnostic, placement, screening, pre-, formative, and summative assessments. This also includes any interim assessments that may use external instruments.

Policy

1. School Assessment Policy

- 1.1** Policy Requirements: Schools shall develop and implement an Assessment Policy which includes the following elements:
- 1.** Approaches to utilizing internal and external assessments to continuously improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning and student educational outcomes.
 - 2.** Applicability to all grade levels (Pre-K/FS1 to Grade 12/Year 13).
 - 3.** Identification of the assessment methods to be used, appropriate to the age/stage of students.
 - 4.** Alignment to quality assurance (inspection, accreditation, affiliation, and/or authorization) standards.
 - 5.** Implementation of ADEK-mandated external assessments, including a focus on achieving the school's international assessment targets.
 - 6.** Provision of accommodations and modifications of assessments for students with additional learning needs, aligned to their individual needs.
 - 7.** Commitment to sustainable assessment practices (e.g., use of digital formats where appropriate, reduction of paper usage, etc.).
 - 8.** Fostering a culture of assessment and assessment best practices involving the entire school community by:
 - a.** Requiring educators to be aware of the school's assessment goals and targets, attend relevant training, and provide opportunities for students to:
 - Become familiar with different assessment practices and protocols.
 - Practice digital literacy skills.
 - Gain exposure to critical thinking and reasoning skills by embedding them across the curriculum in daily teaching and learning.
 - b.** Promoting "assessment-capable learners" by ensuring that students understand what they should learn, monitor their own progress, set goals, and reflect on their learning.
 - c.** Motivating students to engage fully throughout the duration of the assessments.
 - d.** Engaging parents as active partners in promoting the success of their child on internal and external assessments.

9. Expectation to implement cognitive assessments of the school's choice for students in grades 3-9/years 4-10.
10. Analysis and utilization of internal and external assessment data to develop interventions and plan provision for students with additional learning needs.
11. Inclusion of all the areas identified in the remainder of this policy.

2. Internal Assessments

- 2.1 Use of Internal Assessments: Schools shall implement different forms of internal assessments as required or deemed appropriate according to curriculum, age, purpose, and need, such as those indicated in Table 1. Types of Internal Assessments:

Table 1. Types of Internal Assessments

Type of Assessment	Description
Cognitive	Used to evaluate a student's reasoning and general thinking ability (e.g., to learn, memorize, and judge).
Diagnostic	Used to identify student strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills.
Placement	Used to "place" students into a course or academic program. Placement assessments are administered before a course or program begins to match students with appropriate learning experiences.
Screening	Used to determine whether students need specialized assistance, interventions, or services, or whether they are ready to begin a course or academic program. Screening assessments take a wide variety of forms (e.g., developmental, physical, cognitive, or academic).
Pre-assessments	Used to establish a baseline against which educators measure learning progress over the duration of a course or program. Pre-assessments are administered before students begin a unit, course, or academic program.
Formative	Used as periodic evaluations to give educators in-process feedback about student learning so that instructional approaches, resources, and academic support can be modified.
Summative	Used to evaluate student learning at the conclusion of a unit, course, term/semester, program, or school year. Summative assessments are typically scored and graded to determine whether students have learned what they were expected to learn during the defined instructional period.

2.2 Specific Requirements for Formative Assessments: A school's Assessment Policy shall include specific requirements on formative assessments with guidelines for educators on:

1. Carrying out regular, continuous assessments of all students.
2. Sharing learning outcomes with students and parents in addition to the assessment criteria used to evaluate the student's work.
3. Creating opportunities for peer and self-assessment to enable students to think critically and metacognitively about their own work in relation to success criteria and next steps for learning.
4. Ensuring instructional planning includes a variety of means to assess student progress (e.g., observation, questioning, classroom discussions, digital quizzes, problem-solving activities, and other learning engagements).
5. Provision of accommodations and modifications for students with additional learning needs to enable the equitable participation of all students.
6. Working with students to help them set challenging learning targets for themselves, monitor their own progress, and continuously improve.

2.3 Specific Requirements for Summative Assessments: The school's Assessment Policy shall include specific requirements on summative assessments with guidelines for educators on:

1. Assessing student progress through a variety of methods, including selected/constructed response and performance tasks and project-based assessment aligned to the school's curriculum standards.
2. Adapting assessments to cater to students with different abilities, including appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with additional learning needs, aligned to their individual needs.
3. Analysis and use of the results of assessments to inform teaching and learning.
4. Examples of rubrics and/or grading criteria used.
5. Moderation protocols and a commitment to ensuring grading consistency.
6. Invigilation protocols and a commitment to ensuring assessment integrity.

2.4 Quality Assurance Mechanisms: Schools shall adopt and implement a rigorous quality assurance process for internal assessments including regular reviews of assessment types, moderation of marking to ensure consistency and fairness, and calibration sessions to align their assessment practices with established standards and expectations to ensure validity and reliability.

- 2.5 Academic Grades: Schools shall ensure that final grade/marks are solely reflecting student achievement towards standards and learning outcomes. Components such as attendance, behavior, and other non-academic factors, should be reported separately, in line with the [ADEK School Student Performance Reports Policy](#).

3. External Assessments

- 3.1 Use of External Assessments: Schools shall implement different forms of external assessments as required or deemed appropriate according to curriculum, grade, purpose, and need, such as those indicated in Table 2. Types of External Assessments:

Table 2. Types of External Assessments

Type of Assessment	Description
Standardized Benchmark Assessments (SBA)	Assessments (e.g., ACER-IBT, Ei-ASSET, GL-PTs, NWEA- MAP Growth) developed by an external assessment provider that are administered annually and used to determine student attainment and progress. These are mandated based on curriculum.
International Assessments	Assessments (e.g., PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS) developed by external assessment providers administered periodically that are used to compare student performance nationally and internationally.
Board exams (and other pre-collegiate exams)	Formally designed, quality-assured assessments marked by an exam board or independent organization (e.g., ACT, AP, CBSE, EmSAT, IB DP/IB CP, GCSE/IGCSE, AS /A Level, SAT). These are high stakes standardized assessments that validate the completion of a secondary certificate or that are prerequisites for or enhance the prospect of university admissions.

- 3.2 Board Exams: Schools shall register all eligible students for board exams, as required, to obtain high school equivalency in accordance with the latest UAE ministerial resolution concerning the system of equivalence of school certificates.
- Schools shall encourage high-performing students to sit for the highest-level options for their board exams.
 - Schools shall communicate this recommendation to parents and engage with them to encourage students to choose this option.
 - Schools shall document the communication, recommendation, and final decision taken by the student and their parents.
 - Schools are permitted to charge parents fees for board exams for which a student is registered.

- a. Schools shall publish, on their website, their board exam fees as per the quotations from the assessment provider for that year.
 - b. Schools may charge an administrative fee in line with the [ADEK School Fees Policy](#).
- 3.3 Study Leaves:** Schools are authorized to grant study leave for students to prepare for board/pre-collegiate examinations for a maximum of 4 weeks annually when approved by ADEK. Study leave days shall be marked on the Enterprise Student Information System (eSIS) as online attendance.
 1. Schools shall remain open for learning during study leave and shall ensure that adequate support is provided to students who are not taking leave.
- 3.4 Examination Leaves:** Schools are authorized to grant examination leave for board and pre-collegiate examinations (when approved by ADEK) if a student is unable to undertake the examination on school premises.
- 3.5 ADEK-Mandated SBAs:** Schools shall administer the ADEK-mandated SBAs as indicated in Table 3. Mandatory SBA by Curriculum (see appendix).
 1. New schools must adhere to the policy starting from year 1 of operation if students are being admitted to the applicable grades/years.
 - 2. Non-Arabic/English Medium Schools:** Schools where the language of instruction is another language (e.g., French, German, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish) shall administer an annual SBA appropriate to their language and curricula or their national exams, if available.
 - a. Student performance on these assessments shall be reported to ADEK annually for tracking on eSIS and monitoring of progress.
 - b. The chosen assessments by the school (whether SBAs or national exams) require ADEK approval.
 - 3. Arabic Language Assessment:** Non-MoE curriculum schools with native Arabic speakers shall additionally administer a standardized assessment of their choice for Arabic.
 - a. This assessment shall be administered to all students in grades 3-9/years 4-10 who are native Arabic speakers.
 - 4. External Assessment Guide Requirements:** The External Assessment Guide provides additional guidance and specific requirements for the implementation of SBAs. Any requirements identified in the External Assessment Guide are an extension of this policy and schools shall ensure compliance with those requirements.
 - 5. Student Participation:** Schools shall register and administer the mandatory assessments to all students within the target grades as indicated in Table 3. Mandatory SBA by Curriculum.
 - a. Schools with multiple curricula shall choose their SBA from the list provided in [Table 3. Mandatory SBA by Curriculum](#) and obtain ADEK approval.
 - b. Schools shall explain to parents the purpose of assessments utilized and how they will be used to inform their child's future learning.

- c. Schools shall follow up with parents to ensure maximum participation in external assessments. Make-up sessions shall take place to cover any emergency leave.
 - d. Exemption of a student from external assessments requires ADEK approval.
- 6. Administration and Invigilation Protocol: Schools shall follow the assessment administration and invigilation protocols set by the specific external assessment provider/exam board.
- 7. Accommodations and Modifications: To enable the equitable participation of all students, schools shall provide adjustments and accommodations for students with additional learning needs (aligned to their individual needs) and multilingual learners (where assessment providers allow for this), in line with the external assessment provider/exam board guidelines and in line with the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#).
- 8. Training: Schools shall ensure that staff at all levels are engaged in training on external assessment administration, analysis, and reporting. This training shall include a focus on the use of student-level data to inform instruction and enable staff to support parents and students in understanding results.
- 9. Fund Sourcing: Schools shall be responsible for all costs associated with the administration of any ADEK-mandated external assessments (SBAs). Schools are not authorized to charge separate assessment fees to parents.
- 10. Unique Student Identifiers: Schools shall provide school and student eSIS numbers, to be used as unique student identifiers, to external assessment providers to facilitate ease of data integration in ADEK's systems for tracking trends over time.
- 11. Data Sharing Agreements/Consents: All eligible student SBA data shall be shared with ADEK directly by external assessment providers, and schools shall sign third-party data-sharing agreements/consents with the providers for this purpose.
- 12. Data Analysis and Utilization: Schools shall analyze assessment results, set student, subject, and whole-school targets, and devise intervention strategies to close learning gaps and challenge high-performing students. Schools shall continually utilize assessment results to inform their curriculum design and teaching and learning practices.
- 13. Sharing Results with Students and Parents: Schools shall share student internal and external assessment results and/or assessment reports along with student performance reports, in line with the [ADEK School Student Performance Report Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Reporting Policy](#). Schools shall engage students and parents through direct communications, meetings, and/or training sessions in developing an understanding of assessment results and the next steps for learning.

3.6 International Assessments: Schools with English or Arabic as their language of instruction shall administer all international assessments required by ADEK (e.g., PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS).

1. Schools shall adhere to all requirements issued by ADEK regarding the administration of international assessments.
2. Schools shall analyze and review the international assessment school reports and utilize recommendations for school improvement planning and target setting.
3. Schools shall engage the whole school community in developing short- and long-term improvement strategies to meet their international assessment targets.

4. Accommodations and Modifications for Assessments

4.1 Accommodations and Modifications for Assessments: Students with additional learning needs and others who receive support in lessons shall receive accommodations in and modifications to exams and tests to ensure their “normal way of working” in class mirrors how they will be assessed, in line with the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#).

1. Schools shall keep records of the accommodations and modifications required by individual students and ensure that teachers and invigilators have access to these records.
2. Schools shall ensure that accommodations and modifications adhere to the regulations and guidelines stated by assessment providers to avoid unfair advantage.
3. Where a school considers that a student would benefit from accommodations and modifications, but the assessment provider states that these are subject to performance on standardized tests, schools shall administer such tests in-house whenever possible. If the required tests are not available in the school, the school shall advise the student’s parents of the eligibility criteria and the process for accessing the tests from an external provider.
 - a. Where the school is able to administer standardized tests to confirm eligibility in-house, the parents have the right to decline to pay additional fees for this service, on the understanding that this may impact the accommodations and modifications available to the student.
 - b. Where the standardized tests are sourced from an external provider, parents have the right to decline to commission this service, on the understanding that this may impact the accommodations and modifications available to the student.

5. Interventions

5.1 Designing and Implementing Interventions: Schools shall develop documented learning plans (DLPs) and implement interventions (processes and strategies) that enable the delivery of teaching and learning to maximize opportunities for all students, in line with the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Educational Risk Policy](#).

1. Schools shall analyze internal and external assessment results to develop tiered interventions that address all student needs and where appropriate, target different groups (e.g., gifted and talented, students at educational risk, and students with additional learning needs), or cater to individual needs.
2. When planning and reviewing any individualized intervention, schools shall involve the student in the process (particularly important for students in cycles 2 and 3).
3. Schools shall involve relevant internal and external stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers, relevant specialists) when planning interventions and when identifying appropriate external agencies where further specialist intervention is recommended.
4. Schools shall allocate resources to support individuals and groups of students, verifying that teaching staff provide the necessary teaching and learning accommodations and manage allocated resources.

6. Examination Misconduct

6.1 Combating Examination Misconduct: Schools shall follow the requirements of the Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2023 Concerning Combating Cheating and Violation of Examination Systems.

1. Schools shall educate students about the importance of not cheating and preserving academic honesty at all times.
2. Schools shall make sure physical conditions (e.g., proper lighting, sufficient desk spacing) are set up to be conducive to conducting examinations in a credible and transparent manner.
3. Exam invigilators shall be trained to carry out their duties professionally and to be able to identify potential cheating occurring.
4. Students found to commit examination misconduct shall be subject to the penalties stipulated in the [ADEK School Student Behavior Policy](#).
5. Anyone other than a student who commits examination misconduct as per Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2023 Concerning Combating Cheating and Violation of Examination Systems shall be subject to the penalties stipulated therein.

6. Schools shall ensure that any examination violations are logged and reported to ADEK.

7. Security

- 7.1 Security and Integrity of Assessment Resources and Data: Schools shall ensure the integrity and security of assessment resources (e.g., instruments, confidential assessment materials) and data (e.g., individual and school-level data and records) in line with Federal Law No. (45) of 2021 Concerning the Protection of Personal Data and in line with the [ADEK School Digital Policy](#).
- 7.2 Schools are not authorized to share any student assessment data with third parties without the consent of parents and approval from ADEK.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 Schools shall develop internal indicators to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their Assessment Policy. This exercise shall inform the review of the policy.

9. Compliance

- 9.1 This policy shall be effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/2025 (Fall term). Schools are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/2026 (Fall term).
- 9.2 Schools shall comply with this Assessment Policy, which will be verified as part of the compliance process, in addition to the requirements set by the assessment providers, exam boards, and inspection, accreditation, and/or authorization bodies. Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with the ADEK's regulations, policies, and requirements, notwithstanding any other penalties imposed by Federal Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments or any other relevant law. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the school is found to be in violation of its obligations.



APPENDIX

Table 3. Mandatory SBA by Curriculum*

Curriculum	SBA Type	Mandatory Subjects	All Students in Target Grades
American (Charter Schools)	NWEA – MAP Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (Reading & Language Usage) Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten 2 to Grade 11
American	NWEA – MAP Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (Reading & Language Usage) Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
British	GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 4 to 10
Indian**	Ei – ASSET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
	OR ACER – IBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
International Baccalaureate**	NWEA – MAP Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (Reading & Language Usage) Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
	OR GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 4 to 10
	OR ACER-IBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
MoE	ACER – IBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arabic Mathematics (Arabic version) Science (Arabic version) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
SABIS**	NWEA – MAP Growth OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (Reading & Language Usage) Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9

	GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS) OR ACER-IBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 4 to 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
Other English Medium Schools** (Bangladeshi, Canadian, Pakistani, Philippine, etc.)	NWEA – MAP Growth OR GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS) OR Ei – ASSET OR ACER – IBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English (Reading & Language Usage) Mathematics Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GL – PT series (PTE, PTM, PTS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 4 to 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9
Non-Arabic/English Medium Schools	SBAs appropriate to their language of instruction OR Ministry of Education (or Other National Authority for Education) Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics Science (Exams may cover multiple subjects but only performance on the above subjects are required to be reported to ADEK, if available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 3 to 9 (if available)

*All schools, regardless of curriculum, shall administer standardized assessments in Arabic of their choice to Native Arabic-speaking students in grades 3-9/ years 4-10 (if available) as per Section 3.5.3.

**Chosen SBA is subject to ADEK approval.

References

- Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 on Private Education and its amendments.
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments.
- Federal Decree Law No. (45) of 2021 Concerning the Protection of Personal Data.
- Federal Decree Law. (33) of 2023 Concerning Combating Cheating and Violation of Examination Systems.

Publication

2024 (September) ADEK_School_Assessment Policy_v.1.1

Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)

This policy applies to Private and Charter Schools in Abu Dhabi. However, any circular issued prior to this policy or issued specifically for Charter Schools thereafter supersedes the requirements of this policy.

Past version:

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