



Assessment Policy
English Section – Secondary

Last updated: September, 2024

Table Of Contents

1. Statement of Intent.....	3
2. Purpose of Assessment.....	3
3. Common Practices.....	3
4. Feedback.....	4
5. Reporting.....	5
6. Passing and Promotion to the IBDP (Grade 11)	6
7. Documentation of data.....	7
8. Missed work.....	7
9. ANP, EAL (Access Conditions).....	7
10. Coursework.....	7
11. References	8
12. Publication Information.....	8

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

1. Statement of Intent

GESM is committed to using assessment to drive teaching and learning practices. This policy is primarily for teachers in the English Secondary School, but the philosophy of assessment also applies to all members in the English Section of Primary and IBDP/CP program. This document is available to students and their parents. It will provide a reference point for situations of conflict. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Academic Integrity Policy as well as the Admissions Policy.

2. Purpose of Assessment

GESM believes that assessment provides students with a chance to receive feedback on their learning; it provides an opportunity for self-reflection and serves as a starting point for new goal setting.

For teachers, assessment offers the opportunity to reflect, monitor, and modify the internal curriculum and teaching strategies. Teachers offer different ways of assessing to cater to different learning styles and to aim for a holistic approach. Teachers use assessment data to adapt their pace and structure of delivery, as well as advise students on the next steps in their learning.

For students, assessment offers the opportunity to reflect on their learning. It is a way to monitor their own progress and set ambitious yet realistic goals. While grades are often seen as absolute within a class, personal growth should be in focus.

Parents will be able to understand better the learning process of their child and to see the progress regarding learning objectives.

Overall, assessment is seen as an assessment of learning (summative, cumulative i.e. class tests and examinations showing achievement levels), assessment for learning (formative/quizzes) as well as assessment as learning (as a tool using self-/peer review and developing criteria).

3. Common Practices

All subjects follow the syllabi provided by Cambridge International in grades 6-8 and Pearson Edexcel in the IGCSE program (grade 9 and 10). Depending on the nature of the subject, pace and structure may vary but there are some prerequisites that are non-negotiable for teaching and assessing in the English Secondary School.

3.1. Criterion-referenced

Whenever possible, authentic assessment is criterion referenced as opposed to norm referenced. These criteria are known to the students prior to any assessment. Teachers use a "best-fit" approach to determine the achievement level of the work provided for each criterion. Students must provide evidence that teachers will use to determine the marks.

After all criteria have been marked according to the rubric, a grade will be given that reflects as clearly as possible the actual level of the student against Cambridge Progression/Checkpoint tests in grades 6-8 and IGCSE specification on grades 9-10. That said, for the purpose of transparency, accessibility, and comparability, the GESM internal

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

grading scale is based on percentages which are applied uniformly to all subjects and assessment tasks.

3.2 Formative/ summative assessment

As Hattie states, frequent formative feedback is the one decisive factor that improves students' performance (Hattie, 2009). At GESM, a variety of formative assessment tasks inform students and teachers; quizzes, homework tasks, short presentations, group work, or discussions are samples of formative tasks that are partially factored into the semester grade. The feedback on these tasks determines the next steps for students and teachers to adjust their learning and teaching. Formative assignments can be set without prior notice to the students.

Summative tasks are usually end-of-unit tests, longer projects, IGCSE-related coursework, while cumulative are Mid-Year or End-of-Year exams. They are tests that should provide the opportunity to apply learned knowledge, skills, and understanding to new contexts. They are announced to give students time to ask clarifying questions, prepare, and review. Usually, there is a one-week notice prior to a class test and examinations weeks are scheduled at the start of the school year.

3.3 Marking

Marking is done by the subject teacher. All work, except for longer pieces, (e.g., coursework) should be marked and returned with feedback within ten working days. The extent and mode of feedback can vary but it is vital that students receive and understand feedback. To echo its significance, "Marks are how far a candidate has walked, but grades take into account how steep the path was" IBO (2023). This means that marking is done against criteria, whenever possible, and grades are the summed-up result in a numerical grade 1-9. Teachers will apply component weights whenever necessary. It is part of the philosophy of the IGCSE and GESM to mark positively and not punitively i.e. students should receive credit for what they are able to do as compared to the official Cambridge and Pearson grades descriptors.

4. Feedback

4.1 to students

The form of feedback can vary. It can be extensive, short, written, or orally shared depending on the assessment task. For feedback to be effective, it needs to be clear, focus on growth areas, and ideally point out concrete steps to work towards the next achievement level. Students should be familiar with the rubrics and criteria used and teachers should make clear references to specific criteria when giving feedback.

A formal way of feedback are reports. These are given twice a year.

4.2 to parents

While access to Atlantis, the school's official grading application, is restricted to faculty members, Parent-Teacher-Conferences (twice a year) allow for regular feedback. Examinations papers and class tests once marked must be signed by parents. Additionally, semester grade reports inform parents and guardians about the progress of their children.

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

Finally, teachers use their discretion to inform parents whenever a student is exhibiting prolonged difficulties or a sudden change in performance.

5. Reporting

5.1 Composition of grades

Formal reports are issued twice a year. They consist of a grade per subject (1-9) and an effort grade (A-E) which reflects participation in class. These effort grades are based on the holistic judgment of the teacher and on the level of engagement students exhibit during a given period.

Grade components

Grade 6-9	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Class Tests 30%	Class Tests 30%
Mid-Year Exam 40%	End-of-Year Exam 40%
Formative Assessment- Classwork 30%	Formative Assessment- Classwork 30%
Total 100%	Total 100%

Grade 10	
Semester 1	Semester 2
Class Tests 30%	n/a
Mid-Year Exam 40%	Mock Exams 100%
Formative Assessment- Classwork 30%	n/a
Total 100%	Total 100%

5.2 Grade Boundaries

Percentage	Numerical grade
90-100 %	9
80-89 %	8
70-79 %	7
60-69 %	6
55-59 %	5
50-54 %	4
30-49 %	3
20-29 %	2
10-19 %	1
Below 10%	Ungradable (not enough material to arrive at a grade)

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

5.3 Grades Description

Grades Scale and Descriptions

PASSING						NOT PASSING		
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
90-100	80-89	70-79	60-69	55-59	50-54	30-49	20-29	10-19
Excellent		Good		Satisfactory		Insufficient	Poor	Unsatisfactory
Expectations have been met with great success.		Expectations have been completely met.		Expectations have been generally met.		Expectations have not been met but there is evidence of basic knowledge.	Expectations have not been met and basic knowledge is lacking.	Expectations have not been met and performance is inadequate.

A	B	C	D	E
The pupil is fully engaged in the vast majority of lessons and completes all work to a high standard.	The pupil is fully engaged in the majority of lessons and completes most work to a high standard.	The pupil is usually engaged in lessons and completes work of an acceptable standard.	The pupil occasionally engages in lessons and produces work that can easily be improved.	The pupil fails to meet some of our basic expectations concerning work, deadlines and lessons.

Effort Grades

5.4 Conferences

There are several conferences that are used in conjunction with assessment.

- In Grades Conferences, teachers analyse and reflect on the semester grades and potential alternatives (changing to courses or levels).
- In Parent-Teacher-Conferences, teachers meet with students and their parents/guardians to talk about subject-specific achievements and steps for improvement.

6. Passing and Promotion to the IBDP (Grade 11)

A pass in grades 6-10 is a grade of 4 and above as per the GESM internal grading scale. Promotion to an upper grade is based on careful examination of students' grades during the grade conferences. Students who fail to secure a grade of 4 in the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science) may have to repeat a grade. Promotion to grade 11 is conditioned by the passing of 6 IGCSE's including English and Math. Failure to do so will result in probational acceptance.

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

7. Documentation of data

For grade keeping, the school uses an administrative software, which will, according to the set parameters, determine a final semester grade. This grade is calculated by the internally agreed percentages (Please refer to item 5 on Reporting) and works with percentages per assignment.

8. Missed work

Students will be given the chance to show their progress in learning in at least 1 class test and 1 examination per semester. Additionally, teachers have the discretion to include formative work which they believe is a reliable and valid assessment item.

If a student misses a class test or an examination, a chance will be given to sit an identical or similar test, at the discretion of the teacher. For non-submission or absence from an announced class test, examination or important classwork, a written note from parents and/or a doctor is necessary. If the student fails to submit this, a grade "0/zero" will be given for that piece of assessment and factored into the final semester grade.

9. ANP, EAL (Access conditions)

GESM is a non-selective school; however, the school reserves its right to request that students with English difficulties (upon admission or internally) attend EAL classes. Students who are still experiencing gaps in their English proficiency upon starting their IGCSE program (Grade 9) may be asked to take IGCSE ESL (English as a Second Language) instead of English A.

Additional Learning Needs should be disclosed during the admission process to put in necessary accommodations. The collaboration with the parents is vital, as a proper assessment of the learning needs must be documented early to secure access to the accommodations outlined in the IGCSE Access Arrangement Policy.

Extended time and the use of a word processor can be independently introduced and monitored by the school before IGCSE approval for school assessments. This also applies to the use of calculators, small room setting and preferred seating arrangements.

10. Coursework

In grades 9-10 IGCSE Coursework is a set of mandatory assessment tasks for specific subjects such as Modern Foreign Languages, Geography, Visual Arts and Music. The nature of coursework varies. They include essays, recorded compositions and performances, orals, field studies, laboratory work, case studies, and/or artwork. The dates for submission of the coursework are set by Pearson Edexcel and cannot be negotiated. It is the teacher's responsibility to schedule the submission accordingly and communicate it clearly to the students. It is the students' responsibility to adhere to these dates.

ENGLISH SECONDARY POLICIES

11. References

Hattie, John (2012). Visible Learning for teachers. Routledge
IGCSE Pearson Edexcel Specifications
JCQ Instruction for Conducting Examinations
The Franconian International School (2021). Assessment Policy.

12. Publication information

Policy approved
Effective November
Review cycle two years, next review 2025