European Schools

Office of the Secretary-General

Pedagogical development Unit

Ref.: 2011-01-D-61-en-4

Orig.: EN

Assessment Policy in the European Schools

APPROVED BY THE JOINT TEACHING COMMITTEE ON 5 AND 6 OCTOBER 2011 IN BRUSSELS

Entry into force September 2012

Assessment Policy in the European Schools

Assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning. It takes into account the needs of the diverse community of learners in the European Schools and is based on a common assessment approach.

This assessment policy is consistent with the provisions of the Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools and is in line with the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. The learning objectives are the basis for assessment. They are established in the rules of the European Schools and are to be developed in the European Schools' curriculums and syllabuses. They include pupils' competences - knowledge, skills and attitudes.

General idea of assessment policy:

Assessment provides pupils with appropriate feedback in order to help them to develop both academically and personally in line with educational expectations.

Assessment processes, practices and results are important for the pupils, teachers, parents, schools and the European Schools system.

Aims of assessment:

- to inform about individual pupils´ strengths and weaknessess
- to inform about pupils' development and ability to meet the objectives set
- to engage pupils to improve the quality of their achievements
- to engage pupils in their own learning process and to enable them to improve their learning strategies
- to motivate and guide pupils towards further learning
- to improve the quality of teaching by modification of teaching strategies in relation to achieved results
- to provide a record of each pupil´s achievements; especially for making decision about promotion to the next class
- to provide a record of each pupil´s achievements for parents
- to provide a record of each pupil' s achievements at the European Baccalaureate
- to evaluate[1] the quality of education and assessment at the school level and within the European Schools system

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[1] Annex I, Evaluation

<u>Types of assessment:</u>

- formative assessment (including diagnostic assessment and self-assessment)
- summative assessment

<u>Criterions for assessment</u>

Quality assessment meets the aims ountlined above. In general, the following criteria are met: <u>validity, reliablility, transparency</u>.

Annex I: Descriptions

Formative assessment

Formative assessment draws on information gathered in the assessment process *to identify learning needs and adjust teaching and learning*. The pupil´s *self-assessment is a fundamental part* of formative assessment. Formative assessment is linked to pre-determined learning objectives and systematically built in to the curriculum. It requires defining of clear assessment criteria. Formative assessment provides the pupil with information during the process of learning when he/she can still improve the performance. It provides the pupil with systematic reflection of his/her knowledge, skills, attitudes and learning strategies and helps him/her to achieve determined objectives. Formative assessment motivates the pupil and significantly contributes to the development of his/her personality.

Diagnostic assessment provides teachers with information about *pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes in certain periods of process of their learning*; often at the beginning of a new level of education, at the beginning of the school year (entry assessment), during the school year, when a new child comes into the class (ongoing assessment) etc. It proceeds with use of special methods with the aim to draw conclusions and take measures. It helps teachers to set appropriate learning strategies for each pupil and to modify the course and/or teaching approaches. Diagnostic assessment can be a basis for providing the pupil with appropriate support (LS, SEN, SWALS).

Initial assessment identifies the strengths and weaknesses of a pupil's knowledge or skills at the beginning of the learning process. It is carried out to ensure that pupils are on the right programme and properly supported while on it. It provides a baseline for further assessment and evaluation of the pupil's progress.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment refers to summary assessments of pupil's performance. It is conducted *at the end of some period of learning*, e.g. after acquirement of some part/issue of the curriculum or in the certain period of the school year when there is a need to get an overal overview/information about the pupil´s performance. Summative assessment can be used for promotion, certification or admission to higher level of education.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a process of reflecting upon all the data the teacher/the school has collected. Teachers and school management refer to data on school and pupils performance *to identify areas where they are performing well and where they may need to improve.* The school evaluates its work towards its educational conditions and uses the data for future work, setting priorities, developing planning and implementation etc.

Validity

The tool must measure what is intended to be measured in order to draw appropriate conclusions. For example when an instrument for assessment is used to assess active listening, this instrument should really assess the skill 'active listening'. The more an instrument reaches its purpose the more validity it has.

Reliability

Is the extent to which identical results would be achieved every time a pupil is assessed under the same conditions.Even if validity can be considered as the most important requirement of assessment, assessment can never be valid when it is not at the same time reliable.

Reliability means that the results of assessment can be trusted. Reliability is important because decisions that have to be taken following assessment must be based on data that does not depend on different coincidences.

Transparency

Transparency means that the pupils have all the necessary information at their disposal to fulfil the assessment tasks. Learning objectives, assessment criteria, time of assessment and learning outcomes are clearly outlined.

Competences

Competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. (Key Competences for Lifelong Learning - European Reference Framework)

Annex II: Background

I.   Strategic EU documents:

1) Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006, on key competences for lifelong learning (Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006)

2) Commission of the European Communities, Improving Competences for the 21st Century, Brussels, 3.7.2008 COM (2008) 425 final: Implementing Key Competences

3) Education and Training ET 2020, Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020) (Official Journal C 119 of 28.5.2009)

II.   Valid European Schools′ documents

- Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools (Official Journal L 212 , 17/08/1994 P. 0003 – 0014)

- General Introduction to the Nursery and Primary School Curricula (Ref.: 2004-D-207-en-7)

- Quality Assurance and Development in the European Schools (Ref.: 2000-D-264-en-2)

- Structuring of the Syllabuses for the Subjects Taught in the European Schools (1999-D-109)

- Guidelines for Primary Education (Ref.: 2006-D-105-en-5)

- Guidelines for Nursery/Primary/Secondary Transition (Ref:2007-D-4210-en- 3)

- Integration of Pupils with Special Needs into the European Schools (Ref.: 2009-D-619-en-3)

- Learning Support in the Nursery and Primary Cycles. (Ref.: 2009-D-669-en-2)

III.   Requirements for assessment in existing ES syllabuses and draft syllabuses

IV.   Experience with existing assessment:

- Conclusions and recommendations of the team inspections

- Experience of the schools with existing assessment