Osaka YMCA International School

Fully accredited (PK-7) by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Assessment Policy 13-14

OYIS Mission Statement

Osaka YMCA International School provides for the educational needs of students, supported by their families, who have a demonstrated need for an English-based, international education.

OYIS offers a well-rounded curriculum emphasizing global awareness in its students. Students are active participants in their education, developing personal responsibility for their learning and actions.

Section 1: Philosophy

Assessment identifies where students are in the learning process and through reflection helps to set goals for learning and growth. Assessment allows students to become active participants in their education, developing personal responsibility for their learning and actions.

At Osaka YMCA International School (OYIS), we believe that through the use of various methods of assessment we can facilitate the progression of learning and gauge programme effectiveness. Everyone concerned with assessment – students, teachers, parents, and administrators– must have a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the method by which the assessment is made. This is an ongoing process of tracking progress, giving feedback, reporting progress and improving practice.

Purpose for Assessment

- To support and encourage effective teaching and learning
- To encourage independence and the ability to work collaboratively
- To assess and prioritize students' needs
- To assess the students' levels of engagement against the OYIS curricular documents
- To assess students' inquiry development over time
- To provide feedback on the learning process
- To evaluate the efficacy of our programme

Section 2: Assessment Types and Effectiveness

There are three types of assessment. Pre-Assessment is used to find out what the students already know. Formative assessment is used by teachers/students to inform and support the teaching/learning process. Summative assessment is assessment of learning. It is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding of what has been learned.

Assessment in the classroom will include:
- using representative examples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- engaging students in reflecting on their learning
- students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- developing clear checklist, rubrics and continuums
- identifying exemplar student work
- keeping records of test/task results

Effective assessments
Effective assessments allow students to:
- share their learning and understanding with others
- demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- participate in reflection, self- and peer-assessment
- base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries
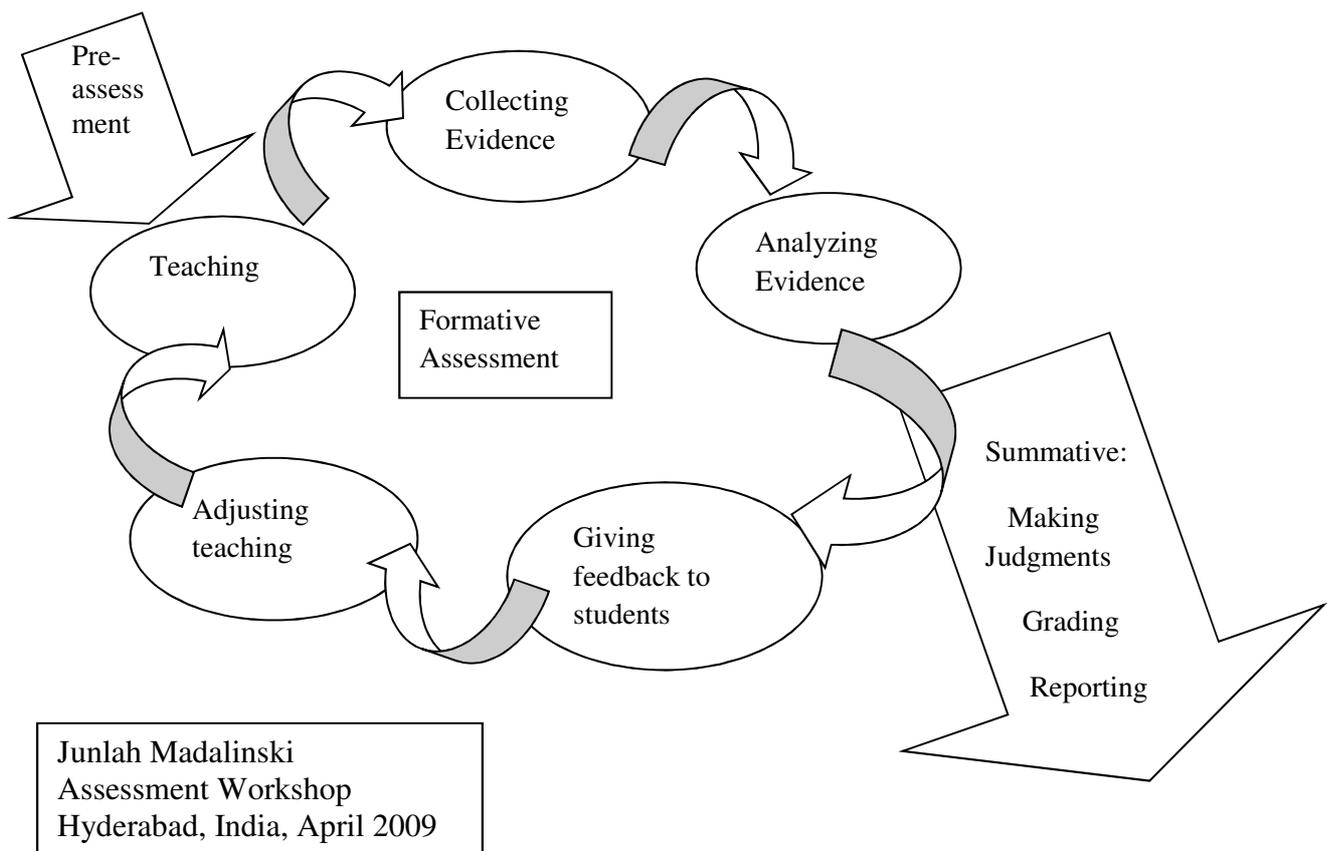
- express different points of view and interpretations
- use metacognition by analyzing their own learning and understanding of what needs to be improved.

Effective assessments allow teachers to:
- inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community
- collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- use scoring that is both analytical (separate scores for different aspects of the work) and holistic (single scores)

Effective assessments allow parents to:
- see evidence of student learning and development
- develop an understanding of the student's progress
- provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning
- understand assessment criteria

Pre-assessment

Collecting Evidence

Teaching

Analyzing Evidence

Formative Assessment

Adjusting teaching

Giving feedback to students

Summative:

Making Judgments

Grading

Reporting

Junlah Madalinski
Assessment Workshop
Hyderabad, India, April 2009

Section 3: Recording

The OYIS community uses a range of methods and approaches to gather information about a student's learning. This information is recorded using a variety of tools.

Assessment strategies and tools					
Assessment tools Assessment strategies	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal records	Continuums
Observations	✔		✔	✔	✔
Performance Assessments	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Process-focused Assessments	✔		✔	✔	✔
Selected responses		✔			✔
Open-ended tasks	✔	✔		✔	✔
Student Assessment	✔	✔	✔		✔

N.B. Items in yellow are in the process of implementation.

Assessment strategies	
Observations	All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from nonparticipant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).
Performance assessments	The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They provide authentic and significant challenges; problems are frequently transdisciplinary in nature. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.
Process-focused assessments	Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviors, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are methods of collecting observations.
Selected responses	Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment. These occur on occasion but are not a significant basis for student evaluation.
Open-ended tasks	Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.
Student Assessment	Students frequently self and peer assess on formative and summative tasks. They also provide feedback on the writing process.

Assessment tools	
Rubrics	Rubrics use an established set of performance criteria for rating students in all areas of learning. The descriptors show/indicate a positive continuum of learning, which promotes learning[1] and tells the assessor and students what characteristics to look for at each level on the rubric when rating student work. Rubrics can be developed independently or collaboratively by students and teachers. *See Appendix One for rubric writing format and instructions.
Exemplars	Exemplars are samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric. OYIS plans to set benchmarks that are appropriate and usable within its particular school context.
Checklists	These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.
Anecdotal records	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.
Continuums	These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.
Assessment Tools for Longitudinal and Placement Purposes	
ACER ISA norm-referenced testing	This Australian based norm-referenced test assesses children from Grades Three to Six in Mathematics, Narrative and Expository Writing and in Reading. The ACER results are used as a form of system wide monitoring for the school, and used by teachers to improve teaching and follow-up with individual students[2].
Writing Task	Each October and May the teachers from Grades One to Grade Seven use a standardized method to analyze and report on student writing based on the 6+1 Traits and Rubrics.
Woodcock-Munoz Language Assessment	The Woodcock-Munoz Language Assessment is a standardized test used to determine the entrance level of new EFL students to OYIS. The test is also used at the end of Kindergarten B to determine the entry level of the students into grade one in the following year.
LAS Links Language Assessment	The LAS Link's Language assessment is a standardized test used to help determine the ESS level of all students. In June, all students take this test. The results help determine their English support level for the following year.
Houghton-Mifflin Reading Test	Houghton-Mifflin Leveled Reading test data is gathered for each student from Grade One through Seven, and this helps indicate student progress through the Grades. **This test will be phased out in 13-14 in favour of using the *Fountas-Pinell Benchmark Assessment.*
Fountas-Pinell Benchmark Assessment	Fountas-Pinell Leveled Reading test data is gathered for each student for Grade One, Grade Six and Grade Seven, and this helps indicate student progress through the Grades. **This test will be fully adopted 13-14.

N.B. Items in yellow are in the process of implementation.
Footnotes: [1]Tierney, R., & Marielle, S., 2004; [2]Kennedy, Chan, Fok & Yu, 2008, p. 203

Assessment (Evaluation) Process Review Strategies	
Peer-to-Peer Review	Teachers meet once a term for a Peer-to-Peer review. The review checks the validity, reliability and acts as a professional development review for assessment. For validity, it explicitly compares the teacher's learning goals to the items or tasks, alignment with the curriculum. For reliability, it acts as an interrator review which checks the extent to which a group of teachers can agree on the same score using a rubric (assessment tool) for three to four student work samples[3]. After the interrator review, the rubrics are adjusted according to the advice of the teachers present. In regards to professional development, it serves to review authenticity of the assessment tool design, clarity and criteria of the rubrics and increases the validity of assessments. The Peer-to-Peer framework is based on the Collaborative Assessment Conference developed by Steve Seidel and Harvard Project Zero colleagues.
Collaboration	During collaboration meetings, teachers discuss assessment for unit planning both in terms of summative and formative assessment.

Footnotes: [3]Cizek, 2009, p.67

Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of children's work that celebrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. The portfolio is an exhibition of an active mind at work.
(OYIS Essential Agreement, 2010)

The Purpose of Process Portfolios

Process portfolios show the development of the whole child, both within and outside of the Programme in all subject areas. The contributions to the portfolio are chosen specifically to show student learning at various stages of development, providing the evidence of growth. The portfolio shows the development of knowledge, conceptual understandings, transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and the attributes of the learner profile over a period of time.

Portfolios are used by students to share their learning and development with parents. In addition, the portfolio is used for ongoing communication between students, teachers and peers throughout the school year. In early childhood, the portfolio is used in place of a report card. As such, the portfolio is sent home for review at the end of each term and discussed at parent/teacher and student-led conferences. Portfolios are formally presented at student-led conferences at the end of the school year and selected portfolio pieces are presented to parents along with student goals at the end of second term for three-way conferences.

Management Guidelines:
Students should, in a developmentally appropriate way, understand the purpose of process portfolios, the process used to compile them, and be able to explain why specific materials are in their portfolios. They are intended to be student-managed with teacher guidance so students take ownership. Teachers should help students learn how to thoughtfully choose and reflect on which items to include/keep in their portfolios and provide students with opportunities to thoughtfully remove items also. Portfolios should be easily accessible to students in the class.

Portfolio content need not be limited to written work. A variety of media can be represented to reflect different learning styles and experiences, including drawings, photos, voice recordings, videos,

and other media. At OYIS, we actively look for ways to make the portfolio incorporate multimedia using both paper and electronic means.

The portfolios are presented in any binder system approved by the school. The school provides the binders based on the needs of the class. The portfolios cover a one-year segment of a child's learning and are returned to the student at the end of the first term in the following school year. This allows students to make comparisons with their learning in the last year and gives the succeeding teacher a point of reference on each child's learning when they are beginning a new school year. Students transferring to another school may take their portfolio(s) on departure from OYIS. OYIS has begun trialing portfolio content in on-line portfolios. Class teachers are doing this on a voluntary basis.

Content:

The portfolios will contain a mix student and teacher selected work samples. It is expected that as students develop in age, the amount of student-selected work will increase. Work samples should show a range of learning areas including unit work and all subject areas as outlined in the content sections below. They can include work in progress, final samples and/or assessment pieces. Portfolio pieces should be added throughout each term, beginning within the first three weeks of the school year.

Each piece of work should:

- Be dated.
- State whether it is student or teacher selected.
- Have information making it clear to the reader the learning experience and its purpose. This should come in the form of one or more of the following:
    - A teacher reference stating the purpose of the activity.
    - A reference to the disposition that the student demonstrated (in either the process or completed work) according to the elements of the school's programme such as the learner profile attributes, knowledge, skills, etc.
    - A statement that describes the level of achievement the student displayed in either the process or completion of the work.
    - A student reflection attached.

Early Childhood Portfolio Content Description

In each term, the portfolio will contain a Portfolio Cover Page containing the attendance information and comments on Personal and Social Development, Language, Math, Arts (Drama, Visual Arts and Dance), Arts (Music), PE and the IB Learner Profile. A unit of inquiry cover page will be put at the end of a unit of inquiry when it is completed. The Portfolios are taken home at the end of each term and returned to the school after a one-week period at the conference. The portfolios are then kept until the end of the first term in the following school year. Although Language, Math and Arts appear separate from the unit of inquiry on the list, the actual samples may be incorporated in the context of the unit of inquiry.

The work samples to include are:

Subject	Notes and minimum number of samples.
Unit of inquiry	- A cover page for each unit of inquiry stating the transdisciplinary theme, central idea, lines of inquiry and key concepts. - Comments by the teacher about student learning in regards to the learner profile and attitudes from the unit focus. These comments may be noted alongside a pertinent piece of work in the context of their learning. - Pieces of work and photos stating the purpose and relevancy to student development in terms of knowledge, skills or conceptual understanding. - A 'Unit of Inquiry' page with comments about student learning at the end of the unit. - A student reflection.
Personal and social development	- Comments at the end of every term on the Portfolio Cover Page.
Language	- Comments at the end of every term on the Portfolio Cover Page. - One piece of written work.
Math	- Comments at the end of every term on the Portfolio Cover Page. - One piece from each of the five strands per year.
Arts (Visual Arts, Drama & Dance)	- One piece per term.
Arts (Music)	- Comments at the end of every term on the Portfolio Cover Page. - Work samples in a Music portfolio.
PE	- Comments at the end of every term on the Portfolio Cover Page. - Reflections in the Sportfolio on the school website.
For PE and Music, see the Single Subject Teacher Content Description section.	

Elementary Portfolio Content Description

The Portfolio content for each grade level should include a cover sheet with a purpose in child friendly language along with a checklist detailing the following work samples. Although Language, Math and Arts appear separate from the unit of inquiry on the list, the actual samples may be incorporated in the context of the unit of inquiry.

Subject	Notes and minimum number of samples.
Unit of inquiry	One student work sample per unit. One reflection per unit. Student-initiated action (when/if it happens).
Language	One writing sample per term. This should include different forms of writing and at least one piece showing the draft stage to the final stage.

Subject	Notes and minimum number of samples.
Math	One for each of the five math strands by the end of the year.
Arts (Visual Arts, Drama and Dance)	One piece of work or reflection per term.
Student Goals	Student goals sheet at the end of term two for the Three-way Conference.

Junior High School Portfolio Content

The Portfolio content for each grade level should include a cover sheet with a purpose in child friendly language and a checklist detailing the following work samples to include:

Subject	Notes and minimum number of samples.
Science	One student work sample per unit. One reflection per unit. Student-initiated action (when/if it happens).
Humanities - Individuals and societies	One student work sample per unit. One reflection per unit. Student-initiated action (when/if it happens).
Language	One writing sample per term. One reflection per unit. These should include different forms of writing and at least one piece showing the draft stage to the final stage.
Math	One for each of the five math strands by the end of the year.
Arts (Visual Arts, Drama and Dance)	One piece of work or reflection per term.
Student Goals	Student goals sheet at the end of term two for the Three-way Conference.

Single Subject Teacher Portfolio Content

The Portfolio content for each entry should include a cover sheet with a purpose in child friendly language. Student work will be kept in a paper portfolio showing their selected pieces in the context of their learning throughout the year. Some student work may also be recorded in a digital format.

Subject	Notes and minimum number of samples.
Japanese	All work is kept in a paper portfolio. The following will be selected: Student goals sheet at the end of term two for the Three-way Conference. One of student improvement. Student selected and reflected on. One of something they do really well. Student selected. One sample of Japanese language. Teacher selected. 13-14 Standalone unit sample. (Added in May 16, 2013 collab.)
PE	On-line Sportfolio for Pre-school to grade seven.
Music	All work is kept in a paper portfolio. Summative comments written once a term for early childhood students and put on the Cover Page.
ESS After-school Club Students	All work is kept in a paper portfolio. Three student selections are shown in the context of their learning. The selections focus on an area of strength, an area of improvement and an area of difficulty with next-steps.

Section 4: Reporting

Reporting on assessment at OYIS includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting to parents, students and teachers occurs through conferences, portfolios and reports. In addition, the Exhibition is held with grade five students in May.

Conferences

The purpose of conferences is to share information between teachers, students and parents.

Student/Teacher Conferences:
These conferences are designed to give students feedback so they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills. These individual conferences, held on a just-in-time basis, occur in order to support and encourage the student's learning and teacher planning. These conferences may often be informal.

Parent/Teacher Conferences:
Parent/Teacher conferences involve parents/guardian and teacher. They are held at the end of the first term for preschool to grade seven and in the second term for the early childhood classes. These are designed to give the parents/guardians information about the student's progress, development and needs, and about the school's programme. Teachers take this opportunity to gather background information, to answer the parents' questions, to address their concerns, and to help define their role in the learning process. The parents should take the opportunity to provide the teacher with the whole-child context of the student's learning.

Three-way Conferences:
Three-way conferences involve the student, parents/guardian and teacher. They are held at the end of the second term for grades one to seven. Students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents and teacher, who are responsible for supporting the student through this process. Students are responsible for reflecting upon work samples they have chosen to share, that have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher and could be from the student's portfolio. The student, parents and the teacher collaborate to establish and identify the student's strengths and areas for improvement. This may lead to the setting of new goals, with all determining how they can support the achievement of the goals. The teacher is an integral part of the process and takes notes of the discussion. All of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.

Student-led Conferences:
Student-led conferences involve the student and the parent. They are held at the end of the school year. The students are responsible for leading the conference, and also take responsibility for their learning by sharing the process with their parents. The students demonstrate their understanding through a variety of different learning situations. This enables parents to gain a clear insight into the kind of work their child is doing and offers an opportunity for them to discuss it with their child.

The conference involves the students discussing and reflecting upon samples of work that they have previously chosen to share with their parents. These samples have been previously selected with guidance and support from the homeroom and single subject teachers, and could be from the student's portfolio. The student identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

The conferences are carefully prepared, and time is set aside for the students to practice their presentations. The format of this conference depends on the age of the student. There may be several conferences taking place simultaneously. In general, the teacher acts as a facilitator on the day.

<u>Report Cards</u>

Written reports are seen as a summative record for students, parents and the school itself of a student's progress. Reports clearly indicate areas of strength and areas for improvement. All reports address the essential elements and the IB Learner Profile attributes. The timing of the reports is summarized in the table on page 12.

Early Childhood:
At the end of Kindergarten B, a report card is issued. The report card has comments based on the OYIS scope and sequence documents. The report card includes sections on personal and social development, the subject areas, and the Units of inquiry. The Learner Profile is reported on in the context of the Unit of Inquiry.

Elementary:
There is one report card issued per term and it is graded according to the OYIS scope and sequence documents. The report card includes sections on personal and social development, the Units of inquiry and subject areas. The Learner Profile is reported on in the context of the Unit of Inquiry. The English Support Services department issues a Progress Report at the end of term one and an end-of-year report at the end of term three. Both reports focus on the students' progress in regards to language skills and comprehension.

Junior High School:
There is one report card issued per term and it is graded according to the OYIS scope and sequence documents. The report card includes sections on personal and social development, and the subject areas. The Learner Profile is reported on in the context of the science and social studies comments. The English Support Services department issues a Progress Report at the end of term one and an end-of-year report at the end of term three. Both reports focus on the students' progress in regards to language skills and comprehension.

<u>Exhibition</u>

In the students' final year of the PYP, there are five units of inquiry and the Exhibition. The Exhibition unit takes place under any transdisciplinary theme at the discretion of the school. Students are required to engage in a collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiry process that involves them in identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems. The central idea selected must be of sufficient scope and significance to warrant a detailed investigation by all students.

The PYP Exhibition has a number of key purposes including the following.
- For students to engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- To provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives
- For students to synthesize and apply their learning of previous years, and to reflect on their journey through the PYP
- To provide an authentic process for assessing student understanding
- To demonstrate how students can take action as a result of their learning
- To unite the students, teachers, parents and other members of the school community in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP
- To celebrate the transition of learners from primary to middle/secondary education

Summary of Reporting and Conferences at OYIS for 12-13

	Term 1	*Term 2*	*Term 3*
Preschool and Kindergarten A 3-5 years	- Portfolios sent home - Parent/Teacher Conferences	- Portfolios sent home - Parent/Teacher Conferences	- Portfolios sent home - Student Led Conferences
Kindergarten B 5-6 years old	- Portfolios sent home - Parent/Teacher Conferences	- Portfolios sent home - Parent/Teacher Conferences	- Portfolios sent home - Student Led Conferences - KB End-of-year Report card - ESS Grade One entry level report
Grades 1 to 5 6 - 12 years old	- Parent/Teacher Conferences - ESS Teacher conferences - Portfolios from the previous year returned - ESS Progress Report - Term One Report card	- Three-way Conferences - Term Two Report card	- Student Led Conferences with all teachers. - ESS End-of-year report - Term Three Report card
Grades 6 and 7 12-14 years old	- Parent/Teacher Conferences - ESS Teacher conferences - Portfolios from the previous year returned - ESS Progress Report - Term One Report card	- Three-way Conferences - Term Two Report card	- Student Led Conferences with all teachers. - ESS End-of-year report - Term Three Report card

Section 5: Review Cycle

The Assessment Policy is reviewed annually. The goals will be set forth in the action plan. Points to be reviewed in 2013-2014 are:
- How will the ESS Department report? Will it be expanded to all three terms?

Section 6: Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Rubric Design Criteria
All level indicator, qualifiers and descriptors should show a positive continuum of learning.

This is how we should think of rubrics.

Level indicators

Criteria	Measurement scale (MS)	Emerging A start	Developing ??Okay??	Achieving Good	Extending Excellent
Ex. Uses punctuation accurately.	Frequency	Qualifier			

What attribute are you measuring?	What measurement scale? (MS)	Qualifiers What qualifiers will you use in your descriptors?			
attention breadth	Amount (A)	limited none few little	some few some some	considerable some most most	thorough many all all
accuracy autonomy	Frequency (F)	seldom	sometimes	usually	always consistently
clarity relevancy organization effectiveness	Intensity (I)	limited slightly	some moderately	considerable mainly	high degree extremely

This is how a rubric should look:

Criteria	Emerging	Developing	Achieving	Extending
Uses punctuation accurately. MS Frequency	Seldom uses punctuation accurately.	Sometimes uses punctuation accurately.	Usually uses punctuation accurately.	Always uses punctuation accurately.

OR Depending on the situation it may clearer stated this way

Criteria	Emerging	Developing	Achieving	Extending
Uses punctuation accurately. MS-F	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always