



İDF ÖZEL BİLKENT MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

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I.D.F. Özel Bilkent Middle School

Assessment Policy

Introduction

IB philosophy is an integral part of the teaching, learning, and assessment process across Özel Bilkent Middle School. Subject group members collaboratively create tasks and task specific clarifications based on the subject criteria that are defined in IB MYP Subject Guides (2014/2015). Assessment at Özel Bilkent Middle School systematically measures a student's learning by using a variety of *valid, reliable, authentic, and appropriate* tools and tasks based on standardized criteria. All tasks and criteria are introduced and discussed with students before they start working on the assigned task.

There are eight subject groups (See Table 1) that are defined by the IB Middle Years Programme. Each subject group has specific learning objectives that align with subject specific criteria for MYP Years 1-5.

Table 1.
MYP Subject Groups

Language and literature
Language acquisition
Sciences
Mathematics
Individuals and societies
Arts
Physical and health education
Design

In Turkey, Middle School consists of four-years of education upon completion of Primary School. Bilkent Primary School has been offering IB PYP and Bilkent High School has been offering IB DP as authorized IB World Schools. In order to align all three programmes (PYP, MYP, DP) with the Turkish National Education system, the Middle Years Programme is offering the traditional five-year Middle Years Programme as a six-year programme. Upon graduating from PYP in Grade 4 all students start the MYP in Grade 5. Although Grade 5 is seen as a transition from PYP to MYP, all requirements of MYP are met starting from this point.

Development of assessment policy

The assessment policy was developed with a steering committee that consists of representatives from each subject group, Curriculum Coordinator and the MYP Coordinator. Before the committee started developing the assessment policy, the committee:

- a. Analyzed the related IB documents to find out the expectations for schools' assessment policy
- b. Analyzed PYP and DP assessment policies to better create a link between the two IB programmes
- c. Had regular meetings to conduct a feasibility study in order to find out what needs of the school in terms of assessment

After creating the Draft version of Assessment Policy (April 2017), the committee was able to modify the policy based on the feedback from the school's MYP consultant. The steering committee will continue to meet on a regular basis and revise the policy. The policy is communicated to the school community through school's website and meetings are arranged with parents to communicate the policy.

1. Assessment Criteria and Achievement Levels

In order to ensure the alignment of assessment with IB MYP requirements, all teachers at Bilkent Middle School are responsible for: Using the MYP subject group assessment rubrics that are provided in the most recent Subject Guides.

- Developing and implementing assessment tasks collaboratively with reference to both relevant MYP guides and subject group overviews.
- Assessing all strands of all **four** criteria at least **two times** in an academic year
Making assessment criteria available to students and parents.
- Writing assessment tasks and rubrics using student-friendly language.
- Being knowledgeable about the command terms of MYP (2014/2015) and using them in the rubrics.
- Holding standardization sessions to set the expectations for achievement, compare grading practices and agree on a common level for each summative task.

2. Assessment strategies

Özel Bilkent Middle School's assessment philosophy and policy align with our values and policies, and with the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate. We believe that the student should be central in all kinds of assessment. Assessment at Bilkent Middle School is constructivist in its approach and requires students to use high order thinking skills such as application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation rather than only demonstrating knowledge through multiple choice/short answer questions.

Differentiation is also an assessment strategy which we believe in at Özel Bilkent Middle School. Through differentiation students are given an opportunity to participate in determining what they learn, how they learn, and how they show what they have learnt.

Each unit includes both formative and summative assessment of content, skills and attitudes.

2.1 Pre-assessment: The purpose of pre-assessment is to determine students' prior knowledge to explore what students want to learn and to identify what they need to know.

During this stage of assessment, teachers can use a variety of techniques to encourage students to retrieve and use their prior knowledge. These strategies may include brainstorming, mind maps, anecdotes, concept maps, writing inquiry questions, wonder walls, etc.. Pre-assessment provides opportunities for teachers to build on students' existing knowledge and understanding and to identify in post-assessment how far each student has come.

2.2 Formative Assessment: Formative assessment is an important feature of teaching and learning in the MYP and it is vital to the learning process. The purpose of formative assessment is to check students' understanding, to provide students with regular constructive feedback and with opportunities for refining their ideas and work and to integrate needs and interest that arise during the learning process into future planning. Formative assessment is an ongoing process that provides students with the support and scaffolding necessary to be successful in their summative assessment tasks. Each formative assessment task includes a clearly written task prompt and task-specific criteria both of which are made available and clear to the students before they are assessed.

2.3 Summative Assessment: Summative assessment tasks measure students' overall achievement level from the beginning of a unit till the end. For all summative assessment tasks, subject specific criteria are used from related MYP Subject Guide and MYP Year. Summative assessment criteria include Task Specific Clarifications, which are designed by and commonly agreed upon by all teachers using the same assessment task.

3. Assessment Tools

A variety of assessments tools are used to evaluate student achievement and to provide student with feedback about their performance. The feedback that is provided through assessment aims to take learning forward. Within this respect, teachers are encouraged to use assessment tasks that are constructivist in nature. Teachers should design authentic assessment tasks and tools - which provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-life situations. Such assessment tools may include (but are not limited to):

- Rubrics / Rubrikler
 - i. Self-assessment / Öz değerlendirme
 - ii. Peer-assessment / Akran değerlendirmesi
- Checklists / Kontrol çizelgeleri
- Exit cards
- Discussions/Interviews
- Written assignments
- Written exams
- Presentations Journals / Günlükler
- Teachers' notes / Öğretmen notları
- Open-ended questions / Açık uçlu sorular
- Projects / Projeler
 - (a) Projects in different subjects and at different grades / Her seviyede yapılan projeler
 - (b) Community Project (End of Grade 8) / MYP Toplum Projesi (8. Sınıfın sonunda)

- (c) Personal Project (End of Grade 10) / MYP Bireysel Proje (10. Sınıfın sonunda)
- Performances / Performans görevleri
 - LAB tasks
 - Quizzes / Testler
 - Products (posters, diagrams, field notes, observation notes, comic strips, pieces of art, etc.)

There is no end to the possibilities As Bilkent Middle School, we see assessment as a learning tool which encourages students and teachers to be reflective about the learning taking place.

4. Assessment Cycle

There are common practices that teachers follow throughout the assessment cycle to ensure collaboration, standardization, and validity.

4.1 Preparation

Formative as well as summative assessment tasks are prepared collaboratively, whenever possible, with all teachers in a subject level. Task prompts are prepared for each assessed task as well as Task Specific Clarifications of the MYP criteria being assessed. All assessment tasks are prepared with the MYP 8-band criteria and objectives in mind.

In the case of exams, local Ministry of Education regulations stipulate that no exam should exceed 40 minutes (1 class period). MYP formative assessment tasks, or summative assessment tasks which are not exams do not have any specified time constraints.

The printing and distribution of Formative Tasks is the domain of the instructor. Summative assessment tasks depending on their nature may be printed and distributed by the instructor or, in the case of exams, may be centrally printed and packaged by the school's Administrative Assistant. In the case of exams, a master copy of the exam should be submitted to the Administrative Assistant one week prior to the exam.

Separate formative and summative assessment tasks are prepared for any SEN students in accordance with their annual curriculum and abilities.

4.2 Administration

Prior to any assessed formative or summative tasks, both a task prompt and the task specific clarification of the assessed MYP criteria are shared with students. These documents should also be made available to parents via class Moodle pages.

In the case of exams, invigilation is centrally arranged by the school's Administrative Assistant. Exam packs are collected and returned to the Administrative Assistant's office. Subject teachers collect exam packs from and return exam packs to this office.

During the administration of exams, students are seated individually in rows and invigilators closely monitor the exam.

In some cases, dictionaries or other books/notes may be allowed. Any special allowances or regulations will be communicated to both students and parents (via the online academic system) prior to the assessment.

All assessed formative and summative tasks are to be completed inside the classroom/school to ensure that the work is that of the student. Summative assessment tasks are individual in nature.

Provisions are made for any SEN students in accordance with special needs and may include doing the task in a separate room, having extra time allotted for completing the task, the aid of technology, or human assistance.

4.3 Determining Achievement Levels/Grades

Prior to the evaluation of summative assessment tasks, teachers at that subject/level meet to standardize their expectations and to discuss any issues that may have occurred during the assessment. Several sample tasks are collectively evaluated and answer keys (if applicable) are finalized.

Whenever possible, summative assessment tasks are double-marked. Packs are first graded by another teacher at that subject/level and are then second graded by the class teacher. The best fit method is used by all markers to determine the most appropriate assessment level (1-8) of the task.

After a task has been placed into the appropriate band (1-8), a percentile grade may be calculated, if necessary to contribute to local Ministry of Education requirements.

All assessment levels and/or grades are indicated on a task specific clarification of the criteria. Teacher's also complete a Teacher Reflection of the student's performance.

At the end of each academic year, achievement levels are calculated for each subject group's criteria (A-D) using the Best Fit approach.

Fig 1: Example of one subject's achievement levels by criteria

Criteria A	Analyzing (1-8)	7
Criteria B	Organizing (1-8)	6
Criteria C	Producing text (1-8)	8
Criteria D	Using language (1-8)	5
Overall grade(1-7)		6

A final grade (1-7) is then awarded to indicate the overall achievement level of the student for the year in each subject using the IB MYP Final Grade Boundaries. Final grades are determined by calculating the sum of the 4 criteria (A-D) grades.

Fig. 2: IB MYP Final Grade Boundaries

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1-6	6-9	10-14	15-18	19-23	24-27	28-32

Aside from formative and summative assessed tasks, there are additional grades which will contribute to Ministry of Education Report Cards. These include participation in class and in out-of-class activities (DEK grades) and Ministry of Education external exams.

There are 3 different DEK grades, which include;

- Academic engagement
- Performance
- Intellectual Engagement

Each of these three areas is awarded a grade out of one hundred by each subject group. DEK grades are based on extensive record keeping by teachers. All teachers across Özel Bilkent Middle School follow the DEK manual (See Appendix).

4.4 Recording and Reporting Student Achievement

As Özel Bilkent Middle School we meet both IB MYP and MEB requirements for recording and reporting student achievement. Achievement levels are recorded on each assessed task along with Teacher and Student reflections.

Teachers are responsible for recording/reporting the assessment levels of any assessed tasks on a regular basis. Teacher report assessment levels of tasks:

- to students in the classroom,
- to parents via the online academic reporting system,
- in MEB report cards twice a year,
- in an MYP Progress Report at the end of each academic year.

In addition to teachers recoding achievement levels, students also record their own progress in their MYP portfolios.

MYP Progress Reports include both assessment levels and teacher comments for each subject as well as grades and comments for any interdisciplinary units the student may have taken part in. Additionally, teachers will report on the Approaches to Learning (ATLs) students focused on over the academic year in each subject group through an ATL chart. ATL charts are supported by teacher comments as well as advice for improvement, where applicable. It is important to note that ATLs are not graded, but the use of these skills will contribute to the success of any assessed tasks students do.

Ministry of Education Report Cards are prepared following the Turkish Ministry of Education (MEB) requirements for reporting student achievement. Teachers report grades through the national online academic system (E-Okul) as well as through MEB report cards, which are given twice a year. MEB report cards include grades for each subject (exams, quizzes, project, and other assessed tasks) and general comments from the classroom teacher. MEB reports also include behavior grades and assessment of students' participation in lessons and activities (DEK grades).

Appendices

Appendix A: DEK Guide

Background

DEK is an acronym that stands for “Participation in Lessons and Activities” in Turkish. DEK assessment is a requirement of the MoNE (Ministry of National Education) and covers 50% of each semester’s grade. For this reason DEK criteria have been developed by the department/school to standardize the way DEK grades are awarded across the Middle School and provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own thinking.

Introduction

DEK assessment in our school is viewed as a learning opportunity both for students and teachers. Through DEK assessment we aim to:

- Encourage students to think about their own thinking (metacognition)
- Reflect on the impact of their experiences on their own learning and others’
- Provide opportunities for students to improve their learning and skills by drawing and following action plans
- Practice self-regulation skills by drawing and following action plans

DEK criteria include three sections: DEK 1, DEK 2, and DEK 3. DEK 1 and 2 includes standardized items which are valid for all subjects and grade levels (*See Appendix for sample DEK criteria*).

- DEK 1 – Academic Engagement, which includes behavior and attitude to learning grades
- DEK 2 – Performance, which includes assessed and unassessed formative assessment grades
- DEK 3 – Intellectual Engagement, which includes participation and contribution grades as determined by both teachers and students DEK 3

includes intellectual engagement and students' contribution to their own learning and that of others. DEK 3 can vary according to subject group and grade level. In the 3rd section of DEK criteria, the statements should involve two aspects: the impact of students' actions on their own learning and the impact of students' action on others' learning. These two aspects of learning should be integrated in DEK 3 by all subjects in all grade levels.

Each of these DEK grades is calculated as a percentage and then, an average of the summative assessment grades and DEK grades is awarded as a final semester grade. DEK grades are assigned 2 or 3 times a year depending on the allocated teaching periods; once at the end of the first semester, and once or twice during the second semester.

The importance of keeping records for DEK assessment

As the assessment of DEK 1 and 2 is based on the observed actions of students (e.g. come to the class prepared, come to class on time etc.) all teachers are encouraged to keep their own records of students' actions. Each subject group or each teacher can decide on their own way of keeping records of actions. However, it is important to keep the records until the end of the academic year and standardization of the final grade may be necessary if two or more teachers teach the same group of students for the same subject. Then, before assigning the final grade for DEK 1, 2, 3 the teachers who teach the same group of students the same subject group come together and agree on the grade that they think would reflect the students' performances the best.

Grading DEK 1, 2, and 3

DEK 1 grades should be awarded based on teachers' daily records of preparedness, punctuality and attitude to learning. As grades need to be substantiated, it is essential that teachers keep detailed daily records.

DEK 2 grades are the average of formative assessment tasks and homework submission records. All grades as well as homework submission data need to be entered on a regular basis into the school messaging system. The homework submission grade is determined by taking the average of submitted to assigned homework tasks.

DEK 3 grades are comprised of both teacher assessment and student self-assessment of intellectual engagement. DEK 3 assessment grades are negotiable based on discussion. If student and teacher grades differ substantially, teachers should meet with students to discuss the differences; however, grades may or may not change as an outcome of these meetings.

Introducing the DEK to students and parents

Each subject should introduce the DEK to students and parents at the beginning of the year. The DEK criteria together with a brief explanation of how it will be used to assess the students' participation in lessons and activities should be announced to the parents clearly. This action can be fulfilled through Moodle, school's parent messaging system and/or during parent meetings. Responding to parents' questions and keeping records of the communication attach importance for the implementation of the process.

As in all student assessment, criteria should be shared and discussed with students prior to being used. Having students' voice in constructing DEK 3 will likely to help students build sense of ownership. This also aligns with our beliefs on constructivism and learner centeredness. Prior to discussing DEK 3 with students, each subject group (teacher/s) is expected to come up with their own DEK 3 criteria which includes

aspects of metacognition and interdependence. Then based on the discussion with students each subject group should come to a mutual outcome in terms of a list of criteria to be assessed during the course of the academic year. The teacher/s teaching the same subject group at the same grade level should standardize the criteria based on their and students' learning expectations.

Drawing and following actions based on DEK 3

Based on students' and teachers' reflection on students' DEK 3 criteria, teachers arrange short conferences with the students whose DEK 3 self and teacher assessment shows discrepancy to a larger extent. The discrepancy aspect is subjective to the specific grade level and learning expectations. Therefore, it is up to the teacher/s to decide whether drawing further actions can help students improve their learning or not. It is important that students and teachers come to an agreement on the final assessment of DEK. If there is an action taken by the student, teacher should observe, record, and discuss any actions taken by the student to improve their learning.

Conclusion

Keeping regular and systematic records of learning and participation will provide teachers the evidence needed to assess the DEK criteria regardless of subject group. Besides, making DEK criteria visible and accessible for students at all times and for parents will likely to help us build a culture of metacognition and reflection across our schools as well as meet the MoNE's (Ministry of National Education) requirement in a more constructivist approach.