



# Mokopane English Combined School

EMIS 991102504  
Umalusi Registration 18SCH01 00585 PA



POLICY NAME	ASSESSMENT POLICY		
Effective Date	25 October 2023	Authorised by:	Principal
Next Review Date	25 October 2026		

## INTRODUCTION

MECS supports the concepts of 'Assessment for Learning' and 'Assessment of Learning.' These concepts underline the belief that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning, as well as providing ways to ascertain and develop the academic standards in each grade. Students are given regular feedback on their learning; so that they can better understand what it is that they need to focus on to develop their skills and knowledge more effectively. Through continuous assessment, teachers are able to adapt their teaching, using a detailed knowledge of each student. Parents receive regular reports on their child's progress so that all stakeholders are able to work together to continuously develop the academic proficiency in all students.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a process of gathering valid and reliable information about the performance of the student on an ongoing basis (School-based Assessments) against clearly defined criteria, using a variety of methods, tools, techniques, and contexts, recording the findings, reflecting, and reporting by giving positive, supportive, and motivational feedback to students, other teachers, parents, and other stakeholders.

- Assists students to understand what they need to do next to improve their knowledge and skills, as well as what they need to do to achieve excellence.
- Provides the Executive Head, Management, and Board of Trustees with information that allows them to make judgments about the effectiveness of teaching and learning at the school.

### 1. THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

The general aim of assessing students is for growth, development, and support. The purpose of assessment is to monitor a student's progress through an area of learning so that decisions can be made about the best way to facilitate further learning in terms of expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values.

#### Assessment serves to:

- Provide information about learning difficulties and remedial action necessary to support students who may be experiencing learning difficulties and is more about progression than about promotion.

- Determine whether the learning required for the achievement of specific outcomes is taking place and whether our students are encountering any difficulties that should be addressed.
- Report to our parents on the levels of achievement during the learning process and build a profile of each student's achievement across the curriculum.
- Provide information for the evaluation and reviewing of learning programs used in the classroom.
- Prepare students for the unknown, to inform future learning.

#### **a. TYPES OF ASSESSMENT**

Teaching at Mokopane English Combined School is effective because teachers are aware of what students know and can do. Assessment takes place at the start of learning units (baseline assessment), continues through units (formative assessment), and/or takes place at the end of a learning unit (summative assessment).

Students are involved in assessing themselves and are allowed to identify personal targets, motivating them to learn as these targets are achieved.

Summative Assessments (tests) are only one aspect of assessment; rather, continuous and integrated assessment is used to provide a platform on which students can build to perform to the best of their ability.

The purpose of assessment is to measure the extent to which our students have achieved the Learning Outcomes at a given point in time. For this reason, while we carry out assessments throughout the year, the assessments completed toward the end of the year are of most importance.

The following types of assessment are used:

- Baseline assessment to identify and recognize prior learning.
- Formative assessment to assess learning during a unit, so as to identify areas for development and to plan subsequent teaching.
- Diagnostic assessment to identify difficulties students may be experiencing.
- Summative assessment for recording overall competence.

#### **b. CRITERION-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT**

Students are assessed against specific criteria. For each activity, students are informed of what Learning Outcome/s or goals are to be assessed and what Assessment Standard/s will be used. Students understand clearly:

- What is being assessed
- Why it is being assessed and
- How it will be assessed

#### **c. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT**

Assessments are:

- Systematically planned within grades and subjects.
- Relevant and appropriate.
- Fair, manageable, and integrated into learning.
- Criterion-referenced.
- Flexible, meaningful, and motivating.



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- Integrated into the learning process.
- A measure of progress and achievement.

In addition, sufficient evidence of learning which is gathered is:

- Valid.
- Current.
- Authentic.

Assessment at Mokopane English Combined School must:

- Provide information about how our students learn.
- Monitor and maintain rigorous academic standards.
- Contribute to the efficiency of the academic program.
- Incorporate higher-order thinking skills.
- Motivate both teachers and students to provide opportunities for identifying areas of concern, as well as to show how weaknesses can be improved.
- Be reflective of, and involve, components of self-, peer-, group and teacher evaluation.

## 2. WHOLE-SCHOOL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

At Mokopane English Combined School, assessment takes place at every grade level on a continuous basis. Assessment occurs across two cycles; one of which is a full-scale examination session. Assessment is formally reported to parents at the end of each of these cycles.

### 1. PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT

Faculty Heads have the authority and freedom to plan teaching and learning within Faculty areas. This is usually done in consultation with the relevant subject teachers. Such planning identifies opportunities for assessment. The Learning Programme and Assessment Programmes of individual subjects areas tie in with the Whole-School Assessment Programme.

- The National Curriculum Statements and IEB, suggest Assessment Guidelines to support teaching. The National Protocol on Assessment and subject-specific CAPS are used to plan teaching, learning, assessment and to assist with identifying and describing each student's level of attainment. Subject Heads ensure that all staff, teaching their subject, are in possession of these documents and that they comply with the requirements.
- Each lesson is planned with clear and expected learning outcomes of topics. These are based on the teacher's detailed knowledge of each student. A note is made on the individual students who do not

achieve at the expected level for the lesson, and this information is used when planning for the next lesson. This information is kept, as a record of the progress made by the class.

- Assessment tasks in all subjects are carried out during each cycle, according to cognitive levels based on the subject's taxonomy. A record of each student's attainment is recorded as a percentage. This is an indication of the level achieved by our students as a representation of the level which has been attained.

## 2. DESCRIBING PERFORMANCE

The following codes and percentages for recording and reporting students' performance in Grade 7 - 12:

RATING CODE	DESCRIPTION OF COMPETENCE	PERCENTAGE
7	Outstanding achievement	80 - 100
6	Meritorious achievement	70 – 79
5	Substantial achievement	60 – 69
4	Adequate achievement	50 – 59
3	Moderate achievement	40 – 49
2	Elementary achievement	30 – 39
1	Not achieved	0 – 29

## 3. EXPECTATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

### 3.1 Expectations of Mokopane English Combined School students

- Students have a clear idea of the knowledge and/or skills that are being assessed and are always aware of the weighting of each assessment in the subject's overall assessment program.
- Students receive clear and motivated feedback regarding a mark or level that has been awarded and have full access to each graded assessment task.
- Students are provided with the opportunity to have their performance assessed qualitatively.
- Students have access to all criteria and assessment tools that teachers use in the assessment.
- Students do not expect that every task or test completed will be formally assessed. They understand that some work is completed for the purposes of formative assessment, and that positive and supportive feedback will be provided to assist them to improve their areas of challenge.
- Students are given advance warning of any assessment for which preparation is necessary and are clear about the date of the assessment.
- **Students are aware that failure to meet set deadlines could result in reduced levels of performance.**

### 3.2 Expectation of teachers

- Teachers hold regular planning meetings at subject and grade level and negotiate and agree upon due dates and deadlines in the light of the students' workloads in other subjects and in light of their extracurricular commitments.
- Teachers provide students with adequate time for the completion of out-of-class assessments and are not unreasonable when circumstances demand an extension of deadlines.
- Teachers make every effort to facilitate cross-curricular assessments tasks to lighten students' workloads.



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- Teachers use student performance as a feedback mechanism to initiate refinements to, or changes in, learning programs and their delivery.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools.
- Teachers guard against over-assessment.

### 3.3 Expectations of Mokopane English Combined School management

- Management produces examination/test timetables with enough notice for students and teachers to formulate a revision program.
- Management keeps records of attainment and acknowledges academic achievement.
- Management strives for an organizational structure that ensures the efficient and effective enactment of the external assessment activities of the IEB.

### 3.4 Expectations of parents

- Parents support all policies of Mokopane English Combined School, particularly those that relate to learning.
- Parents support their child in meeting deadlines set for work.
- Parents help to motivate their child.
- Parents help create an informative environment that is to the benefit of their child.
- Parents ensure that they receive, sign, and return reports each cycle.
- All the above expectations exist to ensure that all students reach their full potential.

## 4. ASSESSMENT METHODS AND TOOLS

The following methods of assessment are central to the work of Mokopane English Combined School. It is essential that these tools are seen as a package since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of each student.

### 4.1 Observations

On a daily basis, teachers will use observation to identify the interests of individual students, particular strengths that can be built upon, and areas where further opportunities and encouragement, support, or motivation is needed.

### 4.2 Formal written and oral examinations

For Grades 8-11, two examination sessions are scheduled during the course of the year. Grade 12s write Pre-Preliminary Examinations at the end of the first term and Preliminary Examinations at the beginning of the third term. These are scheduled on an annual basis.

Examinations are written in a controlled environment that adheres to Mokopane English Combined School's examination procedures and are aimed at measuring students' performance in work taught to date.

In addition to continuous assessment, oral examinations in English and Afrikaans or isiZulu are conducted, and practical examinations are written in the subjects which require them to be completed at the end of Grade 12. These are scheduled by the relevant Subject Heads in negotiation with Mokopane English Combined School Management.

Cycle Tests are written each Term. Electronic copies of the Examination and Cycle timetables are posted on Google classroom and emailed to parents. Electronic copies are available for download as posted on Mokopane English Combined School High School's website.

### **4.3 Class tests**

Subject teachers regularly conduct class tests as formalized, in-class and controlled activities. Students are given at least two weeks' notice. Subject teachers ensure that there is a reasonable interval between tests, and students do not write more than one class test a day.

Class tests measure students' performance on work that has been taught, and the duration of the test is never more than a double period. On occasion, staff may make use of a test/quiz, which assesses skills and content addressed during the previous lessons. These may sometimes take the form of a "surprise" test.

### **4.4 Investigations**

An investigation task is a piece of structured work, not necessarily linked to specific subject content, but is linked to learning outcomes. Problems are often "open-ended" with students achieving results through investigative work.

### **4.5 Essays**

An essay is an extended piece of independent work. It can reflect a pupil-generated title, a teacher-set title, be open or closed in nature and may have guiding questions. As students progress in age, these activities develop from descriptive and observational to analytical or evaluative tasks. They are designed to be increasingly more formal and academic.

### **4.6 Research project**

Research projects involve both teacher-guided and/or independent work done both in class and/or as homework. It requires appropriate referencing of research and referencing skills should, wherever possible, form part of the assessment.

The product may be in any defined medium: oral presentation, written work, video, computer presentation, or appropriate combinations.

### **4.7 Journal writing**

Journals form part of continuous-assessment activity and can be part of class work or homework. Criteria, guiding how students' performance will be determined, will be made available prior to the beginning of the activity.

### **4.8 Fieldwork**

Fieldwork comprises off-site data collection or research data for analysis and interpretation.

### **4.9 Practical/experimental work**



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Practical and experimental work involves both teacher guided and/or independent work. It is usually conducted in a laboratory or specialist room involving specialist equipment. Clear criteria, stating how performance will be measured, should be available prior to the activity.

## 4.10 Performance/presentation

This is usually part of a continuous activity. Clear criteria, stating how performance will be measured, should be available prior to the activity.

## 4.11 Group work/class activities

Group work and whole-class activities are usually part of a continuous activity or are part of other assessment tools. Wherever possible, the performance of individual students will be acknowledged, as well as group performance.

## 4.12 Short Exercises, Worksheets, and Discussions

This is work usually done in class and/or as homework and should form part of a larger assessment and reinforces taught material and/or develops specific skills.

## 4.13 Portfolios (SBA)

This is a collection of various activities done in class or as homework. It may include class tests and examinations. Students are informed of portfolio requirements at the start of each academic year and must know when activities/assessments are to be counted as a portfolio piece. Clearly defined criteria are required.

## 5. PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Feedback to students is vital, as it tells them how well they have done and what they need to do next in order to improve their work. An agreed code for marking is used, as this ensures that marking occurs in the same way across subjects and grades.

Students are given personal, verbal feedback on work whenever possible. This usually occurs when the students are working during the lesson, although sometimes feedback on a particular lesson/topic will be given at the beginning of the next one. When lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, comments are written on the student's work during marking.

When feedback is given to a student, it is related to the learning objective for the lesson. In so doing, it is made clear as to whether the objective has been met or not, and evidence is produced to support the judgment. If it is considered that an objective has not been met, When lesson time does not allow for verbal feedback, comments are written on the student's work during marking.

When feedback is given to a student, it is related to the learning objective for the lesson. In so doing, it is made clear as to whether the objective has been met or not, and evidence is produced to support the judgment. If it is considered that an objective has not been met, it will be explained. In both cases, what the student needs to do next in order to improve future work is explained.

Students are encouraged to discuss their own work and the work of fellow students.

When returning work that has been assessed, time is allowed for the students to absorb any written comments. This is done to ensure that the times that teachers spend marking have an impact on the student's work.

A specified time period for returning assessed work of no more than one week is given to the teachers. When returning tests and examinations, discussion of the marking memorandum is done so the students can learn from mistakes. If there is time pressure, students will be provided with a written report on the test or exam in the form of a memorandum.

## **6. CONSISTENCY**

All subject heads moderate assessment tasks conducted by teachers. Tasks are moderated before they are completed by students (Pre-Moderation) and a sample of marked tasks by a colleague is also moderated (Post Moderation).

Teachers regularly discuss levels of attainment within a subject so that a common understanding of the expectations in each subject is reached. This ensures that consistent judgments are made about standards. Assessments are expected to contain adequate "higher-order" type questions.

Subject Heads take responsibility to ensure that portfolios are compiled for students in the subjects and grades in which they are required. Students' portfolios should reflect a full range of abilities within the subject. Wherever possible, students' best work is shown in portfolios. Wherever permissible, students are given an opportunity to resubmit work to improve performance.

## **7. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Faculty Heads and Subject Heads are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the school Assessment Policy. Subject Heads and management may request to inspect samples of students' work, talk to staff about teaching practice and to students about their learning, and may request teachers to observe the policy being implemented in the classroom.

## **8. REPORTING PERFORMANCE**

### **8.1 Reports**

Reports are issued at the end of each term. Final reports will be sent home in a report folder at the conclusion of the academic year.

### **8.2 Confidential Reports**

Confidential Reports are usually completed when a concern is expressed by a teacher or a parent. Tutor Reports usually reflect a student's latest performance in assessment tasks. As a general rule,

Tutor Reports are not given to students or their parents, although the content is shared with all stakeholders.

Grade Heads keep the Confidential Reports on file.

### **8.3 Parent/Teacher Evenings**

Parents' Evenings are arranged twice a year. At such an evening, parents are invited to meet with individual teachers to discuss their child's performance and progress.



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When concerned about their child's progress, parents may request individual meetings with a teacher. These meetings are held by appointment and focus on a student's performance and progress. Meetings are facilitated **by the Grade Head and may be called by the teacher, parent, or student.**

## 9. SOME ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Teachers must ensure that tests and exams are set to the required standard and that students are given an accurate description of the work required in preparation for each and every assessment. Tests should be so designed, so as to place the emphasis on the testing of academic skills and higher-order thinking rather than the mere recall of facts.

Assessments should be marked and returned to students (together with the prescribed cover sheet completed in all respects) as soon as possible, but in any event no later than two weeks after the assessment has been completed.

With the exception of Portfolio items, students should always be allowed to take home both test question papers and their own answer scripts. Staff are encouraged to ensure that these are signed and returned by parents.

Tests and Examination question papers are to be submitted to the Subject Head for moderation and checking prior to the papers being printed. This should be done two weeks before the writing of the cycle test and examinations one week before the start of the examination period.

Appropriately, collated and packed Exam Papers are to be placed in the storeroom before the start of the examination period.

During periods of invigilation, staff members are to ensure that every effort is made to ensure honesty among students. Students may not communicate with one another, nor bring books or notes into the Examination Room. Staff members may not engage in marking or in any other activity that might prevent them from being vigilant.

Any evidence of dishonesty must be brought to the attention of the Campus Deputy Head Academics or the Chief Invigilator immediately (Grade Head).

## 10. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed from time to time.