



AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Revised: June 2026

American Curriculum | Grades KG–12

Under the Athena Education Framework

1. Introduction

American International School (AIS) provides an American-based curriculum within a framework of traditional Islamic values. Grounded in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), C3 Framework for Social Studies, CASEL Social-Emotional Learning standards, and WIDA English Language Development standards, AIS is committed to developing students to their fullest academic and social potential in preparation for membership in the global community.

Our American curriculum framework reflects the rigorous, standards-based expectations of leading US schools while honoring the cultural context of Dubai and the UAE. Staff development remains integral to school success, ensuring differentiated, high-quality instruction aligned to US curriculum expectations.

2. Assessment, Grading, and Reporting Defined

Assessment

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering evidence of student learning to guide instruction, inform decisions about individual students, and evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional program. At AIS, assessments align with American curriculum standards (CCSS, NGSS, C3, CASEL, WIDA) and range from teacher-designed to commercial standardized instruments. Each assessment is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding and application of concepts, contexts, and skills.

Grading

Grading is the evaluation of student performance—expressed numerically or as a letter—in relation to their demonstrated understanding or application of standards-aligned concepts and skills. Grades are one channel through which teachers communicate progress and achievement to students and parents, covering both academic and non-academic domains.

Reporting

Reporting is the communication of grades and progress based on formal and informal assessments to students and parents through progress reports, report cards, parent-student-teacher conferences, and regular updates via the school portal.

3. Purposes of Assessment

At AIS, we consider assessment to be an integral part of effective, standards-aligned instruction. Teaching, learning, and assessing are interdependent. Our assessment practices are guided by the following principles:

- Assessment reflects how well a student has attained the aims and objectives of a course of study aligned to American curriculum standards.
- Assessment is standards-based. Students are assessed against learning outcomes that are available to parents and students in advance.
- Assessment accounts for a variety of learning preferences and modalities.

For Students

- To inform and enable students to monitor their current skill and knowledge levels.
- To empower students to develop as independent, self-reliant, and self-critical learners.
- To help students set goals and develop learning strategies.
- To build positive self-esteem and a sense of achievement.

For Teachers

- To recognize students' academic strengths and areas for growth to better design classroom instruction.
- To ascertain prior knowledge and determine appropriate standards-aligned instruction.
- To gauge the effectiveness of classroom instruction and adjust accordingly.
- To provide feedback that helps students improve and achieve learning goals.
- To strive for consistent and reliable understanding of student work across subject areas.
- To identify student support needs and refer appropriately.
- To provide external confirmation of classroom practices through standardized assessments.

For Families

- To communicate the strengths, weaknesses, progress, achievements, and areas for growth of their child.
- To develop the partnership between home and school in supporting student learning.

For Teachers and Administrators

- To deliver longitudinal data for analyzing and evaluating current programs and informing the curriculum review process.
- To generate information through ongoing internal research and analysis to develop future school plans.
- To plan appropriate staff development programs aligned to American curriculum needs.

4. Types of Assessment

There are two primary categories of assessment at AIS: Internal and External. All assessments are aligned to American curriculum standards.

Internal Assessments

Formative Assessment (70% of Final Grade)

Formative assessments monitor progress and provide ongoing feedback to both teachers and students. Aligned to CCSS, NGSS, and other American curriculum standards, formative assessments help identify where students need enrichment or intervention. They are not included in the final grade calculation but are critical to guiding learning.

Examples include: quizzes, teacher observation, projects, copy-book review, questioning and discussion, exit slips, peer/self-assessment, white boards, KHLQ charts, Frayer models, CSI (Color, Symbol, Image).

Summative Assessment (30% of Final Grade)

Summative assessments evaluate student attainment at the end of an instructional unit against American curriculum benchmarks. Summative assessments must:

- Be standards-based and aligned to the American curriculum; TLCs pool questions and the Head of Subject selects final questions adhering to this policy.
- Contain a question type blend: 20% Multiple Choice, 20% Complex Multiple Choice, 20% Closed Constructed Response, 20% Short Response, 20% Open Constructed Response.
- Include the Athena Assessment Cover Sheet / DOK Analysis Sheet.
- Follow DOK levels: DOK 1: 40%, DOK 2: 40%, DOK 3: 20%.
- Be taken under controlled conditions and graded by the teacher.
- Be directly linked to American curriculum standards.
- Contribute to the end-of-semester report card.
- Account for 100% of the overall summative grade (including the external MAP assessment for applicable grades).

American Curriculum Standards Alignment

All internal assessments at AIS are designed in alignment with the following American curriculum frameworks:

Framework	Subject Area	Grades
CCSS – ELA & Literacy	English Language Arts, Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science & Technical Subjects	KG–12
CCSS – Mathematics	Mathematics	KG–8 (HS courses: Algebra I/II, Geometry, Pre-Calc)
NGSS	Science	KG–12
C3 Framework	Social Studies	KG–12
CASEL	Social-Emotional Learning	KG–12
WIDA	English Language Development	EAL students

External Assessments

External assessments benchmark AIS student performance against international standards for American curriculum schools. The following table details all external assessments administered at AIS.

Assessment	Purpose	Target Grades
NWEA MAP	Measures of Academic Progress: adaptive tests measuring what students know and are ready to learn next in Math, Reading, Language, and Science.	3–9
CAT4	Cognitive Abilities Test: Fourth Edition measuring developed reasoning abilities free from curriculum constraint.	3, 5, 7, 9
PSAT	Preliminary SAT: standardized College Board test serving as SAT preparation. Aligned to College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards.	10
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test: standardized test for college and university admissions; a pivotal component of college applications.	10, 11, 12
NGRT	New Group Reading Test: standardized assessment of reading skills (phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, inference, grammar) for ages 5–16.	1–9
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study: international reading achievement study administered every 5 years.	4
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study: monitors international trends in Math and Science every 4 years.	4, 8
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment: two-hour paper-based test in Mathematics, Science, and Reading. Administered every 3 years.	10

Assessment	Purpose	Target Grades
ABT	Arabic Benchmark Test: assesses proficiency in Arabic Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking.	1–12
ISBT	Islamic Benchmark Test: online assessment covering six elements of the Islamic curriculum, available in Arab and Non-Arab versions.	1–12
SSBT	Social Studies Benchmark Test: assesses Geography, History, National Education, and Economics.	1–12
Pre/Mid/Post Tests	Standards-based checkpoint assessments to determine students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions at different points in the academic year.	1–12

5. Purpose of Assessment – Mark Distribution

The following framework governs mark distribution across assessment types:

Component	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Formative Assessment	70%	70%	70%
Summative / End-of-Semester Exam	30% (30% Final Exam + 70% Project)*	30%	30%
MAP Testing	Fall: Diagnostic; Winter: RC1; Spring: RC2	Fall: Diagnostic; Winter: RC1; Spring: RC2	N/A (non-MAP subjects: exams, projects, writing)

* Elementary summative: 30% Final Exam + 70% Project. Non-MAP subjects are evaluated through exams, projects, writing, dictation, and recitation.

6. Grade Reporting and Scale

Reporting

AIS understands that an effective reporting process provides accurate and honest information about student progress and achievement based on American curriculum standards, supported by an open two-way dialogue between teachers and parents. Report cards are issued twice per year at the end of each semester. Grade 12 students receive a high school transcript displaying academic accomplishments across all four years of high school.

Reporting of student progress includes formal end-of-semester report cards, progress reports, portal updates, and parent-teacher meetings. Progress is measured against curriculum standards and formal report card grades are composed of 100% summative assessment results. Progress reports inform parents of concerns throughout the year.

Target-Setting

AIS is committed to giving all students every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. Target-setting identifies specific and measurable goals to improve attainment for individual students, groups of students, and whole cohorts. Targets are aspirational and challenging but realistic, taking each student's starting point into account.

Targets are set using formative and summative data and reviewed termly. Children are involved in the target-setting process and are encouraged to set targets for themselves. Initial parent-teacher meetings in mid-October provide an opportunity to share and discuss targets.

AIS Proficiency Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	4.0 Scale	CAT4 Stanine	MAP Percentile	DTI / Differentiation
A+	97–100	4.0	9	>80th	Gifted & Talented
A	93–96	4.0	8	>80th	Gifted & Talented
A-	90–92	3.7	7	61–80th	Enrichment
B+	87–89	3.3	6	61–80th	Enrichment
B	83–86	3.0	5	41–60th	Enrichment
B-	80–82	2.7	4	41–60th	Whole Class Instruction
C+	77–79	2.3	4	21–40th	Whole Class Instruction
C	73–76	2.0	3	21–40th	Whole Class Instruction
C-	70–72	1.7	3	21–40th	Whole Class Instruction
D+	67–69	1.3	2	<21st	Intervention
D	63–65	1.0	2	<21st	Intervention
D-	60–62	0.75	1	<21st	Intervention
E	55–59	0.5	1	<21st	Intervention
E-	51–54	0.25	1	<21st	Intervention
F	Below 50	0.0	1	<21st	Intervention

7. EAL and SEND Student Assessments

EAL and SEND students are provided with modified curriculum and assessments aligned to WIDA English Language Development standards and their individual learning profiles. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are designed for identified students with special needs to inform the planning, delivery, and assessment of the student's educational program. The Learning Support Plan (LSP) is developed by teachers in collaboration with parents and appropriate stakeholders.

IEP modifications may include a reduction in the number or length of assessment tasks, provision of extra time, or provision of individualized assignments. Students on IEPs receive the full range of reports provided to other students. Two to three formal parent-teacher meetings are scheduled annually to evaluate progress, with parents encouraged to contact teachers at any time.

8. Remote Learning and Contingency Assessment Policy

8.1 Sudden Transition to Remote Learning

American International School recognizes that unforeseen circumstances may require a sudden, partial, or full transition to remote/distance learning. Such circumstances may include but are not limited to: government directives, public health emergencies, inclement weather, force majeure events, or localized school closure orders.

In the event of a sudden announcement requiring remote learning, the following protocols apply immediately:

- The Principal and SLT will communicate the transition to all staff, students, and parents within 24 hours via official school channels.
- All teachers will activate the school's established remote learning platform within one school day of the announcement.
- Scheduled summative assessments that fall during a remote learning period will be postponed, rescheduled, or converted to an approved alternative assessment format as outlined below.
- Formative assessment continues through the remote learning platform without interruption.
- MAP testing windows affected by remote learning will be rescheduled in coordination with the NWEA MAP Testing Policy (Section 10).
- TLCs will communicate adjusted timelines and expectations to their departments within 48 hours of a transition announcement.
- Attendance, participation, and submission records during remote learning are maintained and reported in the same manner as in-person records.

8.2 Assessment During Remote Learning Periods

During sustained remote learning periods (exceeding five consecutive school days), the following assessment adjustments apply:

- Formative assessments continue through designated online platforms and are not counted in grade calculation.
- Summative assessments due during the remote period are postponed to the earliest feasible in-person opportunity unless an approved alternative assessment format is authorized by the Head of Section.
- Project-based or performance-based assessments that can be authentically completed remotely may proceed as scheduled, subject to VP approval.
- All assessment integrity measures remain in effect during remote learning. Academic honesty is expected and monitored in the remote environment.

★ NEW | NEW PROVISION — Out-of-Country Project-Based Assessment Route

8.3 Out-of-Country Student Assessment: Project-Based Assessment Route

Purpose

In exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to be physically present in the UAE or at AIS for a verified legitimate reason, the school may authorize a Project-Based Assessment (PBA) as an alternative assessment route. This provision ensures that students are not academically disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control while maintaining the integrity of the American curriculum standards.

Eligibility and Approval

Access to the Project-Based Assessment route is strictly subject to approval by the Vice Principal and Principal. A student may be considered eligible only when ALL of the following conditions are met:

- The student is formally enrolled and fully registered at AIS under all KHDA requirements.

- The student's reason for being out of the country is verified as genuine and documented. Acceptable documentation includes but is not limited to: medical certificates, official travel documentation, family emergency records, or legal documentation — as appropriate to the circumstance.
- The student's attendance record is otherwise in good standing and does not violate the school's attendance policy.
- The student's parent or legal guardian has contacted the school in writing (via official email) at the earliest possible opportunity to notify of the situation and request the alternative assessment route.
- The request is reviewed and approved in writing by both the Head of Section and the Principal before the alternative assessment is assigned.
- The student has not misrepresented their circumstances at any prior point in the academic year.

Project-Based Assessment Structure

When approved, the Project-Based Assessment will:

- Culminate all the key standards that would have been assessed in the relevant summative assessment period, ensuring full curriculum coverage.
- Be designed by the relevant TLC (Head of Subject) in collaboration with the classroom teacher, ensuring alignment to American curriculum frameworks (CCSS/NGSS/C3 as applicable).
- Include a clearly outlined, standards-referenced rubric shared with the student and parent at the time of assignment. The rubric will specify performance descriptors aligned to AIS proficiency levels.
- Be assigned as a single, cohesive project that integrates skills, content knowledge, and application — rather than multiple separate tasks — so that it represents a genuine culmination of learning.
- Include defined submission deadlines communicated clearly at the time of assignment. Extensions are not granted except under exceptional circumstances and with Head of Section approval.
- Be subject to academic integrity requirements identical to those for in-person assessments. All submitted work must be the student's own. Any evidence of academic dishonesty will result in a zero and disciplinary consequences as per the Academic Integrity Policy.

Grading and Reporting

- The PBA grade is recorded as the summative assessment grade for the relevant period and contributes to the report card in the same manner as a standard summative assessment.
- The report card will not distinguish between a PBA and a standard summative assessment; the grade reflects performance against the same standards.
- If a student fails to submit the PBA by the agreed deadline without a subsequent verified reason, a grade of 'I' (Insufficient Evidence) is recorded, consistent with AIS's Underlying Principles for Assessment.

Process Summary

Step	Action	Responsible Party
1	Parent/guardian notifies school in writing of out-of-country situation and requests PBA route.	Parent / Guardian
2	School verifies documentation and legitimacy of reason.	Head of Section
3	Head of Section and Principal provide written approval of PBA route.	Head of Section + Principal
4	TLC and classroom teacher design the PBA, including all relevant standards and rubric.	TLC / Teacher
5	PBA and rubric are shared with student and parent with clear submission deadline.	Teacher

Step	Action	Responsible Party
6	Student completes and submits PBA by the agreed deadline.	Student
7	Teacher grades PBA using the shared rubric and records the grade.	Teacher / TLC
8	Grade is reported on the report card in the standard manner.	Assessment Coordinator

Important: The Project-Based Assessment route is an exception, not an entitlement. It is strictly subject to approval and will not be granted where the reason for absence cannot be verified or is deemed non-legitimate. The school reserves the right to decline any request that does not satisfy the eligibility criteria above.

9. Re-Assessment and Final Exam Re-Sit Policy

Re-Assessment Procedures

Re-assessment is available to students who have not mastered the standards being assessed and have demonstrated completion of all formative assessments. The final decision is determined by the Head of Section. The following conditions apply:

- Teachers will determine when and how re-assessments will be administered.
- Students absent on the day of a summative assessment have two days upon return to complete it, then follow the regular re-assessment process if needed.
- Re-assessments apply to summative assessments only.
- The student's highest earned grade for the summative assessment is recorded.
- Students may not be re-assessed more than once on the same summative assessment.
- Re-assessments must be completed within the grading period; no re-assessments during the last week of a grading period. Semester and final exams are not re-assessed.

Re-Sit Procedures

Students who fail their final exam(s) in any subject are subject to one re-sit exam based on their failing semester. All failing students undergo the same monitoring process by their designated Supervisor and Head of School.

10. Make-Up Exam Policy

The purpose of any make-up exam is to allow students with legitimate reasons for missing a scheduled exam to fulfill course requirements and avoid being penalized for factors beyond their control. Make-up exams are used only for circumstantial situations.

Eligibility Requirements

- The student must be fully registered under AIS and KHDA requirements.
- The student must have attended school regularly and not violated the attendance policy.
- Unexcused absences must not have exceeded 20 consecutive or 25 non-consecutive days (per Article 48, Clause 2, Section 8 of the BILO Private Education Law).
- The student may only be eligible for a make-up exam if they have failed 3 or fewer subjects. Failure in 4 or more subjects requires repeating the academic year.

- In case of illness or emergency, the parent/guardian must contact the school as soon as possible with a valid doctor's note, accident report, or other documentation. Failure to provide truthful documentation in a timely manner disqualifies the student.

Make-Up Exam Procedures

- If a student fails only one semester, the end-of-semester result remains failing and the student sits the make-up exam for that semester only.
- If failure is due to both Semester 1 and Semester 2, the student sits a comprehensive remedial make-up exam covering both semesters.
- Failing any make-up exam results in failure of the entire academic year.
- Make-up results appear on the final report card but do not affect the overall percentage or GPA calculation.

11. NWEA MAP Testing Policy

AIS administers MAP Growth tests to determine students' instructional level and measure academic growth throughout the year in Math, Science, Reading, and Language. Students in Grades 3–9 take the tests in Fall, Winter, and Spring each year. MAP results are incorporated on report cards to provide more accurate, precise information for both teachers and students.

- MAP Growth tests are adaptive: if a student answers correctly, the next question is more challenging; if incorrectly, easier.
- Retesting occurs only in rare circumstances (e.g., testing disruption, illness, student disengagement flagged in the NWEA administration window). Retesting is not triggered by a decline in RIT score.
- The Assessment Coordinator reviews all testing, oversees professional proctoring, and makes retesting decisions. A rationale must be documented in writing for any retest.
- Adequate examination conditions: minimum one teacher per class; a MAP test administrator monitoring engagement icons.
- Testing conditions and time duration are consistent across all three testing windows.
- Accommodations are assigned on a case-by-case basis by the SEN Department. Students with IEPs are assigned accommodations per their IEP. EAL students can be assigned accommodations per the English/EAL HOD.

12. Underlying Principles for Assessment

The following principles govern all assessment practice at AIS, aligned to American curriculum and best-practice assessment philosophy:

- Grades include only academic attainment and achievement.
- Grades reflect actual attainment levels. Academic dishonesty results in disciplinary consequences, not reduced grades.
- Clear descriptions of attainment expectations are provided to students in advance.
- Individual attainment evidence is included in grades. Group scores are not.
- Grades are not reduced for late work.
- Absences are not considered in grade determination; they are reported separately.
- Zeros should not be included in grade determination when evidence is missing except as a last resort. 'I' (Insufficient Evidence) should be used until work is completed.
- Formative assessment promotes success in summative assessments through direct feedback. Summative assessments determine final grades.
- Homework is formative, intended for practice, and not included in grades.

- All assessments assigned by a teacher must be completed by all students.
- Bonus points for above-grade-level work are not appropriate as they distort assessment of standards-aligned knowledge.
- Grade creation uses professional judgment, not solely mathematical means; the AIS proficiency scale is applied consistently for report card grades.

13. Academic Roles and Responsibilities

SLT

- Ensure a coherent strategy for effective management of performance data aligned to American curriculum standards.
- Set SMART, robust targets for cohorts and groups derived from school self-evaluation and international benchmarking.
- Provide leaders with training on data interpretation and use for target-setting and planning.
- Ensure all performance management dialogues include attainment and progress targets.
- Recognize and celebrate the effort and success of students and staff.
- Conduct Target Group meetings to analyze data, celebrate strengths, and identify individual needs.

TLCs (Heads of Subject / Department)

- Analyze performance data using all assessment sources and triangulate thoroughly, putting interventions into action promptly.
- Monitor student progress toward targets at regular intervals with immediate remedies.
- Evaluate attainment outcomes with reference to comparative data, focusing on trends and different learner groups (G&T, Emiratis, SEND, ELL, fragile learners).
- Deploy resources and identify staff training needs aligned to American curriculum goals.
- Orient new teachers on the assessment policy.
- Monitor policy implementation.
- Foster academic honesty guidelines per the Student Handbook.

Teachers

- Establish and clearly communicate expectations regarding assignments, including intended learning outcomes and success criteria.
- Set reasonable timelines and support students in meeting them.
- Use professional judgment to motivate students and maintain regular progress through strategies including timeline coordination, portal updates, and parental communication.
- Apply consequences for late and missing work appropriately and transparently.

Students

- Strive to acquire and demonstrate attributes of the learner profile.
- Behave ethically and with integrity as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Prepare for and participate in all formative assessments.
- Arrange to retake assessments or submit late assignments in the case of legitimate absence.
- Meet all deadlines set by the teacher or school, and contact the teacher in advance of any concern.
- Reflect on progress and seek teacher support when needed.

14. Academic Integrity

AIS maintains a zero-tolerance policy on cheating and academic dishonesty. All submitted work must represent the student's own effort. Academic dishonesty includes cheating (copying others' work, using unauthorized notes), lying (misrepresenting contributions), and plagiarizing (submitting another's work as one's own).

Teachers, HODs, and Administrators will:

- Communicate and reinforce expectations of academic honesty with students and parents.
- Respond appropriately to academic dishonesty, applying consequences including: parent contact, documentation in the student file, loss of extracurricular privileges, detention, and requiring the student to redo the work honestly.

15. Marking, Assessment, and Feedback

Principles

- Marking, assessment, and feedback are integral to the learning process.
- Feedback enables students to understand expectations, appreciate their performance, and identify the next steps to achieve their targets.
- Marking and feedback align with learning objectives and identify both strengths and areas for improvement.

TLC Responsibilities

- Monitor the standard and consistency of marking within their subject area each half-term, with evidence recorded.
- Conduct work scrutiny as part of the departmental cycle.
- Document evidence of learning walks within departments.
- Comment on assessment and marking quality during performance management reviews.

Teacher Responsibilities

- Provide time for students to act on their feedback immediately after return of assessed work.
- Ensure marking is active, not passive — students must be able to action and improve on feedback.
- Mark every piece of homework set, through teacher, peer, or appropriate AfL strategies.
- Make written formative comments at least once every two weeks for subjects taught more than once per week; once every three weeks for once-per-week subjects.
- Use WWW (What Went Well) / EBI (Even Better If) to give students actionable targets for improvement.

16. School Policy Development

This policy was originally developed in April 2019 in accordance with Athena school policies and has been revised iteratively since. It is reviewed every six months to ensure current and accurate assessment practices at AIS.

Schools operate in accordance with the principles laid out by the KHDA and in alignment with the United States Schools Curriculum Division. This policy reflects American curriculum standards and procedures and is formalized in conjunction with KHDA rules and regulations.

This policy will:

- Describe how students and parents are informed about the importance of submitting assignments on time and the consequences for late or non-submission.



- Provide clear procedures for determining marks when assignments are submitted late or not at all.
- Describe how academic honesty expectations are communicated and reinforced.
- Outline a range of consequences for academic dishonesty.
- Outline the process for promotion decisions, involving parents, teachers, and specialists, with support for intervention students.
- Include a protocol for resolving conflicts related to student progress, attainment, and retention/promotion.