



مركز القياس والتقويم التربوي

The Center for Educational Assessment
and Measurement (CEAM)

ننقدم بثقة
Moving Forward
with Confidence



سَاطَنَةُ عُمَانْ
وَزَارَةُ التَّحْرِيمِ وَالتَّعْلِيمِ

Student Assessment Handbook

ENGLISH Language (Bilingual Private schools)

September 2021

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY	p. 2-3
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	p. 4-9
A. Background	p. 5
B. Assessment Principles	p. 5-7
C. Learning Outcomes (Overview)	p. 8
D. Planning for Assessment	p. 9
<u>PART ONE: GATHERING INFORMATION</u>	p. 10-19
1.1 During Everyday Teaching:	
1.1.1 Day-to-Day Observation	p. 11-12
1.1.2 Classroom Questioning	p. 12-14
1.1.3 Written Work	p. 15
1.2 Through Testing	
1.2.1 Semester Tests	p. 17-18
1.2.2 Classroom Tests	p. 19
<u>PART TWO: RECORDING INFORMATION</u>	p. 20-23
2.1 Formal Record-keeping	p. 21-23
2.2 Informal Records	p. 23
<u>PART THREE: USING INFORMATION</u>	p. 24-38
3.1 Formative Assessment	
3.1.1 Adaptation of Teaching	p. 25-26
3.1.2 Giving Feedback to Students	p. 26-28
3.1.3 Student Self-Assessment	p. 29-30
3.2 Summative Assessment	
3.2.1 Rating Scales	p. 32
3.2.2 Making Decisions on Marks	p. 32-35
3.2.3 Moderation	p. 35-38
APPENDICES	p. 39-53
1. Learning Outcomes & Rating Scales	p. 40-47
2. Mark Sheets for Continuous Assessment	p. 49-50
3. Exam Specifications	p. 52-53

GLOSSARY

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	Statements which describe what students should <i>know</i> , <i>understand</i> and, especially, <i>be able to do</i> . Outcomes can be grouped together into 'elements' (e.g., Writing).
<i>Assessment</i>	A range of techniques designed to gather useful information about students' achievement of learning outcomes.
<i>Summative Assessment</i>	Assessment <u>of</u> student learning. Its purpose is to <i>measure</i> and report on standards of learning. Typically done by awarding marks and grades. Also involves reporting to the Ministry and to parents.
<i>Formative Assessment</i>	Assessment <u>for</u> student learning. Its purpose is to <i>improve</i> students' learning. Typically done through adaptation of teaching, giving feedback, student self-assessment, etc.
<i>Continuous Assessment</i>	Assessment that is conducted — in schools, by teachers — <i>throughout</i> the school year, rather than just at the end. Provides a fairer, more balanced picture of students' attainment. Also allows the inclusion of skills (e.g., Speaking) which are difficult, for reasons of practicality, to assess by means of formal testing. Can be used for both Formative and Summative purposes.
<i>Self-Assessment</i>	Assessment by students of their own strengths and weaknesses, their own learning strategies, and the quality of their own work.
<i>Self-Monitoring</i>	A particular kind of self-assessment, in which students assess the quality of their own work <i>while they are actually doing it</i> .
<i>Peer-Assessment</i>	Assessment by students of each other's work. A useful bridge to self-assessment.
<i>Test/ Exam Specifications</i>	A formal set of instructions for test-writers, providing information about various features of a particular test: duration, elements to be tested, formats & materials to be used, types of student response, marks to be awarded, etc.
<i>Washback Effect</i>	The impact that assessment has on what happens in the classroom, especially on the strategies that teachers and students adopt for language-learning. This impact can be either 'positive' or 'negative' or 'neutral'.

<i>Moderation</i>	A range of (Final & Continuous) procedures designed to ensure that marks awarded to all students are fair and consistent in all schools throughout the country.
<i>Stakeholders</i>	Individuals and institutions which are affected by — and so have an interest in — the education system and its procedures and outputs. These include everyone employed by the Ministry, as well as students, parents, employers, the wider community, etc.
<i>Feedback</i>	Comments from other people to students about the quality of their work with the aim of improving it. The work may be either already completed or still in progress.
<i>Presentation</i>	An activity in which a speaker addresses an audience — typically, the rest of the class — for an extended time. He/She can present information, ideas and/or opinions, after which he/she is expected to answer questions from the audience.
<i>Informative Writing</i>	Writing in which the main purpose is to communicate information. Includes a wide variety of texts, such as descriptions, reports, articles, summaries, leaflets, etc.
<i>Interactive Writing</i>	Writing which is intended to communicate directly with other individuals, usually as part of an <i>exchange</i> . This includes letters, e-mails, invitations, etc, as well as replies to these texts.
<i>Narrative Writing</i>	Writing which tells a story (in the past tense). Typical texts include accounts of real-life experiences or events, news reports, biographies, historical texts, etc.
<i>Persuasive Writing</i>	Writing in which personal opinions are expressed and justified. Typical texts would be in essay form, and would involve, discussing pros and cons, commenting on issues, giving advice etc.
<i>Writing about Literature</i>	Differs from other types of writing in that it should be a personal and creative response to poetry, prose and drama. It is NOT just summarizing. It requires an understanding of literary elements and the ability to analyse the text, evaluate the language used, and interpret the text's overall meaning in relation to the student's own life and culture.
<i>Literary Elements</i>	Aspects found in all literature, such as style, character, setting, point-of-view, conflict, theme, etc.
<i>Figures of Speech</i>	Stylistic uses of language, such as metaphors, symbols, images, similes, puns, etc,

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

All schools will employ a blended learning methodology during this period to facilitate teaching and learning. Blended learning is an educational approach in which students learn via electronic and on-line platforms, distance learning in addition to learning through the more traditional face-to-face teaching methods.

The Ministry of Education stresses the importance of teacher planning and preparation for implementing the Continuous Assessment (CA) tools. As blended learning methodology is being applied in all schools throughout the Sultanate of Oman, teachers need to carefully plan and prepare assessment tools that align with the teaching methods being employed such as on-line learning platforms, distance learning through e-mails, and traditional face-to-face teaching methods.

B. ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

(Jessup, 1991): *'The measure of success for any education system should be what people actually learn from it.'*

- The aim of assessment is to provide **useful information about students' learning**.
- Assessment therefore focuses on the **learning outcomes** which students are expected to achieve.
- Learning Outcomes are statements which describe what students should know, understand and be able to do.
- In a skill like language-learning, the most important thing is what students are actually able to **do**. So, outcome statements typically begin with: "**Can...**". However, knowledge, understanding and awareness also play an important role in supporting and enabling these skills.
- Learning outcomes go hand in hand with assessment because they focus:
 - (i) not on *what the teacher does*, but on **what the student learns**.
 - (ii) not on what happens in the classroom (activities, tasks, teaching materials) but on the **impact** that this has **on student achievement**.

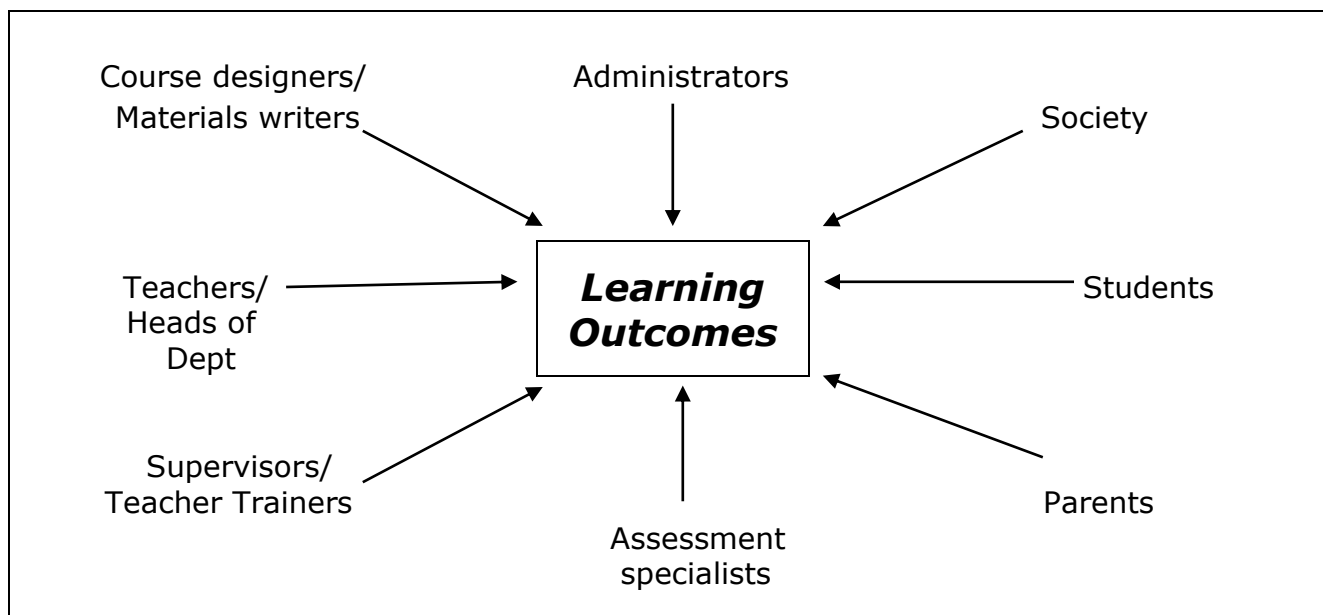
- Three other features of learning outcomes are relevant to assessment:
 - (i) '**Transfer**': *'an important quality of learning, i.e., a crucial indicator of whether a student understands (and can do) something is whether he or she is able to apply it in different circumstances.'* (Gipps, 1994)
 - (ii) Language learning as a **cumulative** process: in order to be useful, recently-learnt skills must be combined and integrated with previously learnt skills.
 - (iii) Larger outcomes (e.g., 'Can give presentations') are made up of smaller outcomes (e.g., 'Can establish and maintain contact with the audience'), which

in

turn is made up of even smaller outcomes (e.g., 'Can make effective use of eye contact'). At different times and for different purposes, assessment will focus on either the larger or the smaller outcomes. (See 'Introduction to Part Three'.)

- However, learning outcomes are not only for assessment. **Clear, explicit outcome statements** play a central role as the focus for the contributions of all the various participants in the educational process. They are also essential for **transparency** and **accountability**.

This role can be pictured as follows:



- Assessment of students' achievement of these learning outcomes is based on the conscious, systematic **gathering of information**.
- A wide variety of **sources of information** are available. Each of these sources has its own strengths and weaknesses, so in order to arrive at a properly balanced picture, teachers should make use of as many **different** sources as possible.

- Teachers can **use** the assessment information which has been gathered for **two** main purposes:
 - **Summatively**: to measure (and report on) students' learning. Typically, this involves awarding marks and grades. This information is then passed on, as appropriate, to the Ministry, parents and other stakeholders.
 - **Formatively**: to improve students' learning. Typically, this involves adapting lessons, giving feedback to students, encouraging self-assessment, etc.
- Both Formative and Summative Assessment are **necessary** and **important**; neither should be neglected.
- Outside the classroom, other important **decisions** are also made on the basis of assessment information, sometimes with a major impact on the future of individual students and other stakeholders.
- For all these reasons, the **quality** — i.e. the truthfulness and reliability — of the information provided by assessment is crucial.
- The whole way in which assessment is conducted can also have an important impact on teaching and learning practice. This impact on what happens in the classroom is known as '**washback effect**'. This effect can be either 'positive' or 'negative'. Assessment procedures and practices should, of course, aim for the former, and avoid the latter.
- One crucial element of this 'washback effect' relates to **attitudes** towards learning and towards the purpose of assessment. Teachers naturally wish to **help** their students, but in order to promote positive, productive attitudes, what form should this assistance take?

A) 'HELP' > > > > > > > > > > > > > > Teacher 'gives' Sts
good marks

B) HELP > > > > > Sts learn > > > > > Sts earn good marks

Model 'B' is the proper model because it focuses on learning and on genuine achievement. Model 'A', on the contrary, leaves out both of these essential elements.

C. LEARNING OUTCOMES (OVERVIEW)

The Learning Outcomes for Grade 12 are grouped into **four** elements:

Speaking

Reading

Writing

Literature

- A total of **ten** key outcomes have been identified:

Elements	Key Learning Outcomes
SPK	(1) Can give presentations.
RDG	(2) Can understand a variety of written texts.
WRT	(3) Can write and respond to letters and e-mails. (<i>Interactive</i>)
	(4) Can write texts with the purpose of providing information. (<i>Informative</i>)
	(5) Can write stories and narrate events in the past. (<i>Narrative</i>)
	(6) Can write texts which express and justify opinions. (<i>Persuasive</i>)
LIT	Can engage with and write about literary texts:
	(7) Poetry (8) Drama (9) Short Stories (10) Novels

- Marks are awarded for these outcomes on the basis of **two** methods of assessment: Continuous Assessment (CA) and End-of-Semester Tests (SMTs).
- Different elements are assessed in different ways: some using only CA, some using only SMTs, others using a combination of both methods. The weightings for each element in Grade 12 are as follows:

Elements	Continuous Assessment (CA)	Semester Test (SMTs)	TOTAL
Speaking	10%	—	10%
Reading	5%	25%	30%
Writing	10%	20%	30%
Literature	5%	25%	30%
Total	30%	70%	100%

D. PLANNING for ASSESSMENT

NOTE for ENGLISH TEACHERS:

*At the **start** of the school year, you should:*

- Make yourself thoroughly familiar with the contents of the BIL-SAH.
- Pay special attention to:
 - Strategies for Conducting Formative and Summative Assessment
 - Learning Outcomes
 - Rating Scales
 - Semester Test Specifications
- Make sure that your students know:
 - How assessment will be conducted and what rules will be applied
 - The criteria for awarding marks
 - The formats used in the Semester Tests
- Prepare the relevant mark sheet for formal record-keeping and read the guidelines on how to fill it in correctly.
- Make a note of important dates and deadlines.

***During** the school year, you should:*

- Take part in assessment-related meetings, workshops and other activities organised by your Head of English and/or your supervisor.
- When preparing lessons, anticipate opportunities for both Formative and Summative Assessment; when teaching, take full advantage of these opportunities.
- Use the official mark sheet to record provisional, and then final, marks awarded to students according to the relevant Rating Scales.
- Keep regularly updated written notes and collect appropriate samples of student work in preparation for the Formal Moderation visit.
- Reflect on and evaluate the professional quality of their own assessment work and take steps to improve it.

PART ONE
**GATHERING
INFORMATION**

Section One
**DURING
EVERYDAY TEACHING**

INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

- *Part One of this handbook is divided into two sections, which deal with ways of gathering information about students' learning.*
- *Both sections have the same overall aim: to provide information and guidance which will help teachers to maximize the quantity and quality of the assessment information that they gather.*
- *The first section deals with various ways of gathering assessment information while the main focus is actually on teaching.*
- *This section emphasizes the need for teachers to conduct constant, on-going assessment of both individuals and the whole class, so that they can note progress and identify problems and solutions. This kind of assessment is **an integral part of successful teaching and learning**.*
- *The second section deals with tests, i.e., instruments and procedures which are designed specifically for assessing student learning.*

1.1.1 DAY-TO-DAY OBSERVATION

Definition

To 'observe' is '**to watch (and listen to) someone or something carefully**'.

Teachers should observe not only individuals, but also groups and the whole class.

In doing this, they should pay close attention to:

- what students say
- what students write
- what students do
- which strategies students use to carry out tasks
- how students react to new input
- how students interact with each other
- what is revealed by their facial expressions and body language
- what is revealed by their self-assessments

None of these 'indicators' is perfectly reliable on its own. However, **combined together**, they provide a very rich source of (diagnostic) information about student learning.

Teacher Qualities

In order to become skilful observers, teachers need to develop a combination of personal and professional qualities. This can be achieved by a process of self-observation and reflection, followed by targeted action:

Teachers need to be:	Requirements
1) ... aware	<i>Know what they are looking for; be fully familiar with the learning outcomes; be able to recognise valid indicators.</i>
2) ... alert	<i>Keep their eyes (and ears) open; notice what is going on in the classroom.</i>
3) ... well-organised	<i>Manage the classroom efficiently, so that they can create and take full advantage of opportunities for observation.</i>
4) ... tactful	<i>Observe in a discreet, inconspicuous way, so that students are not disturbed or distracted from what they are doing.</i>
5) ... objective	<i>See clearly what is actually happening, without pre-conceptions (positive or negative) about the class or about individual students.</i>
6) ... genuinely interested	<i>Care about and stay focused on student learning; think about and try to understand what has been observed.</i>
7) ... pro-active	<i>Take conscious, active steps to investigate and find out what students actually know, understand and can do.</i>

1.1.2 CLASSROOM QUESTIONING

Content

One of the most important ways of investigating student learning is by means of *Classroom Questioning*. The main aim of any question is to supply the teacher with reliable, useful information. In order to do this, the question needs to be well-chosen and appropriate. So, what is asked — its content and exact form — is very important.

When deciding on the form or wording of any particular question, the teacher must first have a clear idea of what exactly he/she wants to find out. **A different focus of attention requires a differently worded question.**

In evaluating the wording of any question, the teacher should consider the following points:

Relevance	<i>Is the question directly related to the specific point that I am interested in?</i>
Clarity	<i>Is it concise, simple and clear, so that (all) the students will understand it?</i>
Response Validity	<i>Will students' responses to the question actually <u>tell</u> me anything? Will they provide me with reliable information?</i>

This evaluation will need to be made again in the classroom, immediately after the question has been asked. One of the advantages of classroom questioning — compared with a written test — is that, if the first question does not work as expected, the teacher can 'try again' by re-formulating the original question or by asking a new, follow-up question.

Strategies

Just as important as **what** the teacher asks is **how** he/she asks it. It is, unfortunately, not unusual to see classroom questioning conducted in a way which has a **negative** impact on the intended goal of gathering information about student learning.

One all-too-common example is known as 'Initiation-Response-Feedback' or 'IRF':

- 1) Teacher asks the class a question — typically, a question with a single correct answer.
- 2) Some of the students volunteer to respond by raising their hands (and possibly also by calling out).
- 3) Teacher selects one of these volunteering students.
- 4) The selected student responds to the question.
- 5) Teacher either: (i) indicates that the response is correct and praises the student.
or: (ii) indicates that the response is wrong and corrects the student.

This procedure has certain advantages: it meets with traditional expectations, and it keeps the lesson moving along efficiently. However, if whole lessons are conducted in this way *without any variation*, the limitations of 'IRF' as a tool for gathering information become clear. The quality of this information is affected by three main problems:

Problem	Description
LIMITED QUANTITY	<i>The teacher is doing most of the talking, so he/she does not get to hear (or see) much evidence about student learning.</i>
LIMITED SPREAD	<i>The teacher only gets information about <u>some</u> of the students (typically, only those who 'volunteer').</i>
LIMITED QUALITY	<i>The information remains shallow and superficial because deeper issues (such as understanding) are left unexplored.</i>

However, educational researchers have suggested a number of possible solutions:

	Strategy/ Solution	Description
QUANTITY	(a) <u>Don't Tell — Elicit!</u>	<i>T uses a range of elicitation techniques; gets Sts to talk; doesn't tell them what <u>they</u> could tell him/her.</i>
	(b) <u>Open Pairwork</u>	<i>T stays out of the interaction and improves the STT:TTT ratio by setting up 'open pairwork' in the classroom.</i>
	(c) <u>Closed Pairwork/ Groupwork</u>	<i>T improves the STT:TTT ratio even more by setting up regular group-work (or 'closed pairwork') activities.</i>
SPREAD	(d) <u>Open Qs</u>	<i>T includes questions to which there are many possible (correct) answers.</i>
	(e) <u>No Hands</u>	<i>T doesn't allow Sts to raise their hands; selects for him/herself which student(s) should respond.</i>
	(f) <u>No Calling Out</u>	<i>T allows Sts to raise their hands but doesn't allow them to call out.</i>
	(g) <u>'No Comment'</u> <u>>> Peer-Correction</u>	<i>T withholds or delays feedback on the correctness of the response. Instead, he/she invites other students to either confirm the first student's response or correct it.</i>
QUALITY	(h) <u>Genuine Qs</u>	<i>T includes questions to which he/she <u>doesn't</u> already know the answer.</i>
	(i) <u>Thinking Time</u>	<i>T pauses after questions to allow Sts time to think about their response.</i>
	(j) <u>Check/ Confirm</u>	<i>T asks follow-up Qs to make sure that he/she has really understood a response.</i>
	(k) <u>'Why?'</u>	<i>T asks students to explain or justify the response they have just given.</i>
	(l) <u>'No Comment'</u> <u>>> Self-Correction</u>	<i>Instead of correcting, T merely indicates that there is a problem and invites the student to try again.</i>
[<u>Note</u> : T = Teacher; Sts = Students; Qs = Questions; TTT = Teacher Talking Time. STT = Student Talking Time]		

Teachers are advised to:

- try out these various techniques,
- evaluate their effectiveness, *and*
- combine those which work best.

1.1.3 WRITTEN WORK

The teacher can also gather useful information by looking closely at students' written work — whether this work has been done in class, as homework, or as a combination of the two.

Written work of this kind has four main advantages:

- It provides detailed information, especially about students' writing skills and their awareness of literature.
- It provides an easily-accessible and permanent record, which shows students' progress over time.
- It can be looked at when and where the teacher chooses, so he/she is able to concentrate fully without distractions.
- It provides concrete evidence which is of use in evaluating the accuracy of marks awarded (see 'Formal and Informal Moderation').

However, because of the time-consuming nature of the task, much of this written work will actually be produced, at least in part, *outside the classroom*. So, an important principle needs to be established:

- The teacher must make every effort to ensure that all written work has ***genuinely*** been done by the individual concerned, without (inappropriate) assistance from any outside source. Fortunately, it is usually fairly obvious when this is not the case — and if in doubt, the teacher can easily check.
- He/She should then adopt a strict policy of ***not accepting*** any work which is not genuine. This policy should be made clear (and explained) to students from the very start of the school year, and then applied consistently.

If, on the contrary, this policy is not followed, and non-genuine work is accepted, there will be (at least!) three negative consequences:

- Marks awarded will be false, unfair and meaningless.
- The honest students in the class are likely to be de-motivated.
- Worst of all, the dishonest student's own educational progress will be held back. If work is not genuinely attempted by a student, then he/she has no chance at all of actually *learning* anything from it.

PART ONE
**GATHERING
INFORMATION**

Section Two
**THROUGH
TESTING**

INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE, SECTION 2

- A 'test' is a specially designed procedure for gathering information about students' achievement of learning outcomes. It is not part of teaching in the same way as the approaches just described in Section One.
- In a typical testing situation:
 - The same tasks are carried out by all of the students.
 - There is a time-limit within which the tasks must be completed.
 - Students must work independently.
 - There is a marking guide, with either the correct responses or a rating scale (set of criteria) for judging the quality of students' responses.
- In more formal kinds of test (i.e., exams):
 - There is a relatively large number of students.
 - There is a fixed timetable.
 - There is a strict set of standardized procedures for administration and marking.
 - More time is allocated and there is a wider coverage of learning outcomes.
 - Testing materials are produced centrally, according to a set of prescribed Exam Specifications.
- In this section, two different types of testing are described: **Semester Tests** and **Classroom Tests**.

1.2.1 SEMESTER TESTS

General

- The Semester Test (SMT) is a formal examination given at the end of each semester.
- It covers three of the four elements of the Grade 12 course: **Reading, Writing & Literature**.
(Note: Speaking is not included in the test, for reasons of time and practicality.)
- The duration of the Semester Test is **three hours**.
- The test accounts for **70%** of the total marks awarded as part of the General Education Diploma awarded to students on completion of Grade 12.
- Students who fail to achieve the overall pass-mark for a semester's work (CA and SMT combined) will have the opportunity to take a **Second Session** exam.

Preparation

- Semester Test papers are prepared and administered **centrally** (by CEAM at the Ministry of Education).
- All questions must conform to the official Exam Specifications, details of which can be found in Appendix Three of this document.
- In order to provide a valid assessment of students' language skills, Reading texts which students have already seen are not included in the exams. Only unseen texts are used.
- In the interests of quality, test-writing is done in a **collaborative** way, with a team of test-writers and reviewers working closely together and supporting each other.
- Teachers should make sure that their students are familiar, in advance, with all the test formats (task-types) which appear in the Specifications. They should, in particular, make sure that students understand the task instructions, and know what to do, where to write, etc. Students will also need to know on what basis marks will be awarded in the tests.

Marking

- Marking is centrally organized and involves a team consisting of assessment officers from CEAM, teachers from bi-lingual schools, and staff from the Directorate-General of Private Schools.
- Training activities will be organised in order to familiarise team members with the procedures and criteria for awarding marks for the relevant exam paper.
- Each paper consists of two very different types of items, each with a different procedure for marking.
- Reading tasks are of the objectively marked, 'right-or-wrong' type.
 - The Multiple-Choice items in RDG 1 and True/False items in RDG 2 are machine-marked automatically.
 - The short answers which students write to Wh-Qs in RDG 2 are scanned and then checked on-screen by two different markers. Any discrepancies which may occur between the two markers are referred to and resolved by the Head of English Marking, in a process known as 'adjudication'.
- The Writing and Literature sections, on the other hand, require extended responses, where there is no 'correct answer'. As with Wh-Qs, the responses are scanned and then judged independently by two markers. However, any disagreements between the two are handled in a different way: (a) If there is a small difference in the marks awarded, the system automatically averages the two scores. (b) If there is a large difference, the case is adjudicated by the Head of English Marking.

1.2.2 CLASSROOM TESTS

Main Features

- Classroom Tests (CTs) are a more **informal** type of test conducted by the teacher during teaching-time.
- However, if the resulting marks are to be relied on as evidence of student achievement, certain aspects of more formal tests will need to be observed, e.g., no copying from other students.
- Unlike Semester Tests, CTs do not receive a specific proportion of the marks awarded. Any assessment information gained from them should be combined with all the other information which has been obtained from other sources. Together, this will form the basis for awarding Continuous Assessment marks according to the relevant Rating Scale.

Purpose & Use

- Classroom Tests can be a useful tool for gathering additional information about students' learning. However, such tests should have only a **limited** role to play in awarding Continuous Assessment marks. They should **not** become the main — and certainly not the only — assessment tool used by the teacher.
- There are a number of reasons for this:
 - An assessment process which is reduced to administering tests on a small number of specific occasions is clearly **not** Continuous Assessment.
 - Day-to-Day Observation and Written Work are rich sources of assessment information, which should not be under-estimated or neglected.
 - A major advantage of these two forms of information-gathering is that they are **an integral part of teaching**, and can be carried out without spending valuable time on activities specially designed for Summative Assessment.

Another possible use of classroom testing is as a way of preparing students for the end-of-semester exams. This may have some value in giving the students a chance to familiarize themselves with the instructions and the types of tasks in the exam, and — if properly done — can help them to develop useful test-taking strategies.

However, teachers are advised not to overdo this type of exam practice, which can distract students' attention away from the real goal of **improving their actual skills and abilities**. This kind of improvement is also probably a more reliable way to achieve satisfactory exam results!

PART TWO
**RECORDING
INFORMATION**

2.1 FORMAL RECORD-KEEPING

- The **Semester Test** component of Summative Assessment is **centrally** organised and administered and does not require any official record-keeping by the teacher.
- However, the **Continuous Assessment** component does require teachers to complete an official **mark sheet** for each of their classes. These marks are then reported to the Ministry, which will combine them with the Semester Test marks.
- The mark sheet has learning outcomes down the side and student names across the top. At the bottom, there is space for each student's overall CA score.
- All marks awarded on this sheet should be based on the criteria shown in the official Rating Scales. Only the marks specified on these scales should be awarded, **without the inclusion of 'in-between' half- marks**.
- This also means that a mark of 'zero' should not be awarded for any outcome, except in very exceptional circumstances. (Note: See DGEE's overall assessment document for further information.)

The mark sheet is to be completed in **three** stages:

Stage 1: During the semester	(i) (ii) (iii)	Early on in the semester, use the relevant Rating Scale to decide on a provisional mark for each learning outcome. Enter these marks on the sheet in pencil . Then, as you gather further information during the semester, review the marks regularly and amend them as necessary.
Stage 2: End of semester	(i) (ii)	Make your final decision about the mark for each learning outcome. Enter these marks in ink .
Stage 3: Round-up	(i) (ii) (iii)	Total the marks for each element [e.g., 'WRT: Total (10)']. Add together the SPK, WRT and LIT totals ['Total Mark (30)']. Enter this overall 'CA Total' in ink .

Note: These guidelines refer to 'pencil' and 'ink'. However, records may also be kept **electronically**, with 'provisional' and 'final' marks being indicated in other ways — i.e., by means of fonts, colours, italics, bold, etc.

Here is an **example** of the three stages outlined above, showing the marks of an imaginary student:

MARKS << CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT			Stage 1 - During the semester - Provisional marks (in pencil)	Stage 2 - At the end of the semester - Final marks (in ink)	Stage 3 - Totalling of marks - Overall CA mark (in ink)
BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS (Details of grade-level, school year, semester, class and teacher)					
WRITING	"Can"	(5)	3	4	4
	"Can"	(5)	3	4	4
	WRT: Total	(10)			<u>8</u>
SPK	Outcome # 3: "Can" SPEAKING: Total	(10)	6	8	<u>8</u>
LITERATURE	"Can"	(5)	2	3	3
	"Can"	(5)	3	3	3
	LIT: Total	(10)			<u>6</u>
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT: Total (30)					<u>22</u>

Further Notes

- During the semester, when entering a provisional (pencilled-in) mark for a particular student, the teacher may still be in some doubt as to the correct mark. In this case, he/she can add simple symbols (e.g., '?', '+', '-', '^', etc.) as a reminder to review the mark again. Any such **annotations** should, of course, be removed at the end of the semester, after the final (inked-in) mark has been awarded.
- The guidelines state that the first (provisional) marks for outcomes should be inserted '**early on**' in the semester. In practice, this normally means that, **by the end of the first month**, there will already be a complete set of pencilled-in CA marks for each student.

- However, it will also happen that a particular outcome cannot be assessed at this very early stage, because it has not yet been introduced. In this case, the teacher should, of course, **postpone** the awarding of any provisional marks until the students have started actual work on the outcome in question.
- There are two possible situations in which a 'pencilled-in' mark should be **amended**:
 : (a) The student's level of achievement in the outcome has changed.
 Or: (b) The student's level has not actually changed, but, on the basis of new information/observation/consideration, the teacher has realised that the previously awarded mark was inaccurate.

2.2 INFORMAL RECORDS

The mark sheets issued by the Ministry have a simple, but useful function. However, they do not contain all the information needed. It is strongly recommended that teachers also keep Informal Records — using whatever format they prefer — concerning each of their individual students. This recommendation is based on three important needs:

Need	Rationale
(a) To Have Easy Access to Accurate, High-Quality Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both Formative and Summative Assessment require that you know your students well; in particular, that you are well-informed about your students' progress and current level of achievement. - Formal mark sheets contain <i>some</i> information, but <i>nowhere near enough</i> for you to carry out Formative and Summative Assessment effectively.
(b) To Overcome the Limitations of Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You are probably able to keep quite a lot of this additional information stored 'in your head'. However, it is very difficult — in fact, impossible — for any teacher to retain all the necessary information in this way, and the more students you have, the more difficult this becomes!
(c) To Communicate Effectively with Other Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents, Heads of English, school principals, and Supervisors have the right to ask you questions about your students and their learning. They also have the right to expect credible, convincing answers. - If you have all the relevant information available 'at your fingertips', you will be able to answer these questions confidently and convincingly. - In addition, when the questioner <u>sees</u> that you keep detailed written records, this will in itself make a good impression, and so help to make your replies more convincing!

PART THREE
**USING
INFORMATION**

Section One
**FORMATIVE
ASSESSMENT**

INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

This part of the handbook deals, in turn, with Formative and Summative uses of the assessment information which has been gathered.

- **Summative Assessment** is assessment of students' learning, with the aim of providing evidence for reporting to the Ministry, to parents, and to other concerned parties. Its purpose is to measure standards, typically by awarding marks and grades.
- This kind of assessment tends to focus on the larger (target) outcomes. It is less interested in the specifics of 'how' and 'why' learning is achieved than in the actual end-product: the students' ability to use the English language in different ways.
- **Formative Assessment** is assessment for learning, with the aim of helping students to achieve the relevant learning outcomes. Its purpose is to improve achievement, typically by intervening in some way in the teaching-learning process.
- This kind of assessment tends to focus on the smaller, enabling outcomes which contribute towards the achievement of the larger outcomes. It is especially interested in 'how' and 'why' learning is achieved, and in what specific action can be taken to change things — always remembering that the larger outcomes are the long-term target.
- Regarding the topic of this section, Formative Assessment, research conducted in various countries has consistently produced two contradictory findings:
 - (1) Genuinely formative assessment produces results, having a clear, positive impact on student learning.
 - (2) Nevertheless, it is frequently neglected by teachers. Even when conducting Continuous Assessment, much of what teachers do is actually summative, i.e., for the purpose of awarding marks, rather than formative.
- In other words, more time and attention are often paid to Summative than to Formative Assessment — when it should be other way round!

3.1.1 ADAPTATION of TEACHING

Whole Class

Assessment information which you gather may reveal:

Either: a particular problem which your students have in their learning

Or: a particular success which they have had, e.g., mastery of a literary concept

In either case, you may decide to adapt your teaching in order either to solve the problem or to build on the success.

There are two main ways in which this can be done:

- (a) BEFOREHAND: By making amendments (in advance) to your plan for the next lesson(s).
- (b) DURING THE LESSON: By taking action — *departing from* your lesson plan in some way — because of something which you have observed while teaching.

Note: Action of the second type — in response to something unexpected that happens during the lesson — may well have to be decided 'on the spot' and improvised. However, it is obviously better if you have anticipated the problem and included an alternative strategy in the lesson plan that you have prepared.

Individual Students

In other cases, the adaptation will only apply to individual students (or possibly small groups of students). You may, for example:

- hold meetings ('conferences') with the student.
- provide supplementary tasks or activities for the student to work on.
- (more formally), set up a whole plan — either 'remedial' or 'enrichment' — for the student.

In all cases, you will then need to evaluate the actual impact of what you have done, and then make further decisions as part of an on-going process.

3.1.2 GIVING FEEDBACK to STUDENTS

Feedback can be defined as: '*Comments to students about the quality of their work with the aim of improving it*'.

The model for providing useful feedback is based on three key requirements. In order for a student to improve, he/she must:

- have an idea of the desired standard of performance,
- be able to compare the actual performance with the desired performance.
- take action to close the gap between the two.

Before giving actual feedback, you will need to make a number of decisions:

DECISION:	MAIN OPTIONS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who shall I give it to? 	(i) To individuals (ii) To groups (iii) To the whole class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When shall I give it? 	(i) During the work (ii) Immediately after (iii) Later
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How shall I give it? 	(i) Orally (ii) In writing

Each of these options has its advantages and disadvantages, which you will need to bear in mind in particular cases. It is therefore recommended that you keep things fresh by *varying* your feedback strategies — and then evaluating how effective these strategies are with your students.

However, making the right decisions on these matters is still not enough. If feedback is to be really effective, it also needs to be:

Requirement	Notes	Comments
1. ... inclusive	Remember that <u>all</u> your students — including the 'excellent' ones — can benefit from useful feedback, so as to do (even) better.	<i>No students should be forgotten or taken for granted.</i>
2. ... selective	Do not give students feedback on every single activity, performance or piece of work done.	<i>Focus on the <u>quality</u> of feedback rather than the quantity.</i>
3. ... knowledgeable	Your feedback should be based on a sound <u>knowledge</u> of: (a) the English language in particular, and: (b) effective language-learning strategies in general.	<i>Acquiring this kind of knowledge should, of course, be part of your on-going professional self-development.</i>
4. ... clear	Communicate effectively in language which is clear and can be readily understood by students.	<i>Also, try to present your feedback in a way which makes it <u>memorable</u>.</i>

5. ... specific	Give students a clear idea of what to do in order to improve. Make specific, concrete suggestions as to where and how the work could be improved.	<i>Simply using marks or very simple comments ('Good') is <u>not</u> sufficient.</i>
6. ... supportive, but honest	State your comments, suggestions and criticisms honestly, but do this in a tactful, patient and pleasant manner.	<i>The whole <u>atmosphere</u> in which feedback is given should be, in a word, <u>professional</u>.</i>
7. ... open / interactive	Try to avoid always 'handing down' your feedback as if students were just 'empty containers' waiting to be 'filled'. Before making your own comments, ask questions, encourage self-assessment, involve students in identifying problems and solutions.	<i>This type of interactive feedback is often neglected, whether because of traditional views of the teacher's role, or because of a tendency to under-estimate the students, or simply because of 'lack of time'. However, it is potentially very valuable and very productive.</i>

Two further points should be made regarding feedback:

- **Peer-Assessment:** Remember that you are not the only person in the classroom who can give feedback. Students should be given opportunities to give feedback to *each other*. This process not only helps to develop student self-assessment; it can also produce interesting, genuinely communicative classroom interaction.
- **Giving Written Feedback:** The comments, corrections and other notations that you put on students' written work are also a kind of feedback. There are different ways in which this can be done. However, it is important to avoid 'spoon-feeding' the student. Your feedback should always leave the student with something that they have to work out for themselves. Exactly how challenging this 'something' should be will, of course, vary from student to student.

3.1.3 STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

The language skills and cognitive abilities promoted in Grade 12 are not just 'for the classroom'. Sooner or later — whether in the examination hall or, even more important, in real life — students will have to make **independent** use of their skills and abilities, without the assistance of a teacher.

It is therefore essential that students develop the ability and the confidence to assess their own work, and then make decisions and take action to improve it. Self-assessment needs to become a **habit** for students, something that they do automatically and constantly.

As a teacher, you can support the development of this useful habit by adopting a number of positive strategies:

Strategy	Notes
1) At the start of the school year, explain to the students what self-assessment is, why it is important, and what you will be expecting of them during lessons.	<i>Emphasise that self-assessment is nothing 'special' or 'frightening', but a very normal, everyday thing to do.</i>
2) Encourage students to believe that they <u>can</u> (learn to) do it.	<i>Giving short 'pep-talks' may be helpful here. But more important is providing <u>regular</u>, on-going opportunities for students to 'try out' self-assessment and in this way build their confidence.</i>
3a) Using language that they understand, give students information about the learning outcomes.	<i>These learning outcomes are, of course, exactly the same as the ones which the teacher assesses.</i>
b) Likewise, explain to them the general criteria for assessing these outcomes.	<i>Communicate these criteria simply and clearly.</i>
4a) <u>Before</u> students start work on any particular task, tell them (or, even better, elicit from them) what the ' criteria for success ' are.	<i>Focus on a <u>small</u> number of key criteria, and express these in clear, straightforward language.</i>
b) Then, <u>while</u> students are doing the task, keep reminding them of these criteria and encouraging them to monitor the quality of their own work — and to improve it, as necessary.	<i>The ability to 'self-monitor' — using appropriate criteria for success — is crucial in carrying out <u>any</u> task which is worth doing well.</i>

5) In particular, on a regular, day-to-day basis in the classroom, ask questions which require students to assess the quality of any work done , whether by themselves (self-assessment) or by other students (peer-assessment).	<i>Typical questions might be: 'What do you think?', 'Is that clear/ correct/ OK?' etc. If the answer to any of these questions is: 'No/ Not really', then you can ask follow-up questions like: 'What's wrong with it?', 'What could you/he/she write instead?' etc, thus pointing the way to improvement.</i>
6) In all your classroom practice, try to create the right kind of classroom atmosphere , one which encourages openness and honesty.	<i>The whole process of self- and peer-assessment will only work effectively if you succeed in doing this.</i>

Note: However, before embarking on these strategies, you should evaluate your students' current level of awareness and confidence in this area. Some of the above-mentioned steps may not, in fact, be necessary.

'Peer-assessment' can play a very useful role as a kind of 'bridge' towards self-assessment. It can do this because it focuses students' attention on exactly the same learning outcomes and 'criteria for success' as self-assessment. It also has the same ultimate aim, i.e., the improvement of the work being done.

Peer-assessment is especially suited to the process of Writing: students can show each other their first (and second) drafts, and give each other feedback, based on simple, previously agreed criteria (e.g., '*Relevant?*', '*Clear?*', '*Interesting?*', '*Friendly?*', etc.), which will depend, of course, on the type of text being written.

In this way, students will (hopefully) come to understand, and become accustomed to using, the criteria with which they can assess their own work. They will also (hopefully) learn to appreciate that self-assessment/self-monitoring is a natural and constant feature of any learning process — and, indeed, of *any* kind of worthwhile work or task that they will do in future.

REMINDER for TEACHERS: The sole purpose of self-assessment is **formative**. Self-assessment is not intended to provide you with **summative** data to be used in awarding marks and grades.

PART THREE
**USING
INFORMATION**

Section Two
**SUMMATIVE
ASSESSMENT**

3.2.1 RATING SCALES

- Definitions:
 - '**scale**' (n): 'a measuring instrument' featuring 'a set of points with regular spaces between them'
 - '**rate**' (vb): 'to judge the quality of somebody or something'
- Purpose: Rating Scales are intended to help make teachers' judgements as **fair**, **consistent** and **professional** as possible.
- In this assessment document:
 - A specific Rating Scale is provided for each learning outcome covered by Continuous Assessment.
 - Each scale describes five different levels of achievement.
 - These 'descriptors' consist, at each level of achievement, of two or more statements.
 - Each of these statements covers a different aspect of the students' performance, for example, for Interactive Writing: 'impact on reader', 'task achievement', 'appropriateness' and 'correctness'.
 - Typically, the statements make use of descriptive adjectives (e.g., 'clear', 'appropriate'), adverbs ('usually', 'reasonably') and quantifiers (e.g., 'few', 'most').
 - Teachers need to use their professional judgement to interpret these words and apply them in practice.
 - They should also consult with others in order to create a shared understanding of what these words mean. (See below: 'Informal Moderation').

3.2.2 MAKING DECISIONS on MARKS

Standard Procedure

When making decisions about marks, the 'standard' procedure for applying any Rating Scale is as follows:

Step	Action	Notes
1.	Focus on <u>one</u> Learning Outcome and <u>one</u> Rating Scale at a time.	<i>The mark that you give should <u>not</u> be influenced by other CA marks that you have awarded for other learning outcomes, or by the student's marks in Semester Tests.</i>

2.	Award CA marks according to the <u>wording</u> of the descriptors in the Rating Scale.	<i>Do <u>not</u> award marks by comparing students with each other or putting them in ranking order.</i>
3.	Consider <u>all</u> the aspects listed in each descriptor.	<i>All of the aspects listed in the descriptors are important and should be taken into account. For example, do <u>not</u> award 'Writing' (Interactive) marks based <u>only</u> on 'correctness' — consider the other three aspects as well.</i>
4.	Read the descriptors in the scale and <u>eliminate</u> those which obviously do not apply to the particular student in question.	<i>Follow a systematic procedure: (i) With <u>weak</u> students, start from the <u>top</u> score (e.g., '5') and then work your way downwards. (ii) With <u>strong</u> students, start from the <u>bottom</u> score (e.g., '1') and then work your way upwards. (iii) With <u>average</u> students, start with top and bottom scores, and then work your way inwards.</i>
5a.	In some cases, this procedure will quickly lead you to a single correct mark, which is fairly obvious.	<i>If the correct mark <u>is</u> indeed obvious, do not 'agonise' for a long time — make a decision!</i>
5b.	In almost all other cases, you will be left with only two 'possibles'. In these ' <u>borderline</u> ' cases', use your professional judgement to decide which of the two descriptors is closer to the particular student's actual level of achievement.	<i>Do <u>not</u> simply rely on some 'easy', 'automatic' method, such as always awarding the higher (or the lower) of the two marks.</i>

Difficult Cases

If teachers follow this procedure, arriving at an appropriate mark will often be quite straightforward. However, there are some cases where it is rather more difficult to make the right decision:

Case	Nature of Difficulty	Strategy
A	Student does not fit easily into any one descriptor because the level is different for different 'aspects' (e.g., in e-mails, he/she writes correctly, but often uses inappropriate language).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> <i>Think globally, focusing (as in real life) on the overall impression made by the work done.</i> >> <i>Do <u>not</u> simply apply mathematical averages or any other 'automatic' method. Make a professional judgement.</i>
B	Student's performance seems to <u>vary</u> considerably from one occasion to another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> <i>First, investigate — <u>why</u> do these variations occur?</i> >> <i>Then, base your marks on those pieces of evidence which you believe are most reliable.</i>
C	Student's level undergoes a substantial <u>change</u> as the semester progresses, e.g., a student's presentations noticeably improve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> <i>Do <u>not</u> just 'average out' all the marks awarded throughout the semester.</i> >> <i>Base your mark on where the student stands (overall) at the <u>end</u> of the semester.</i> >> <i>In the (rarer) case of a student 'going backwards', apply the same method, but also make a special point of investigating the cause(s).</i>
D	Student manages to produce good <u>final</u> versions of written work, but only after a <u>lot</u> of help from the teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> <i>Provide the kind of help which encourages awareness and <u>self</u>-correction.</i> >> <i>Base your final decision on the student's <u>real</u> (i.e., independent) level of achievement.</i>
E	Student has produced very little work/ evidence of achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> >> <i>tell the <u>truth</u> — i.e., award a (very) low mark, but not zero.</i>

IMPORTANT NOTE: Strategy 'E', in fact, applies to all decisions on awarding marks. The best way to **really** 'help' students — in the long run — is to tell them the **truth**, and then work together with them to improve whatever needs to be improved.

Anticipating and Avoiding Problems

It is possible to avoid many of these (and other) potential difficulties by taking preventive measures as follows:

- At the start of the school year, explain to the class how marks will be awarded, and make them familiar with the relevant outcomes and the general criteria for awarding marks.
- Consolidate this by encouraging self-assessment / peer-assessment / use of the criteria.
- Also brief the students about the basic 'rules' you expect them to follow (in particular, your insistence on genuine work).
- Start filling in your provisional (pencilled-in) marks as soon as possible — do not leave it until the last minute!
- Identify potential 'difficult cases' early on — well before the end-of-semester — and then observe closely and gather further evidence.
- Speak to students who are in danger of getting low marks — a low mark at the end of the semester should never come as a complete surprise! Where appropriate, parents will need to be notified as well.
- Consult with Supervisors, your Head of English and other teachers about common standards in general and for difficult cases in particular. (See: '*Informal Moderation*')

3.2.3 MODERATION

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the criteria for awarding marks are being applied ***fairly*** and ***consistently*** at all the schools concerned.

FINAL MODERATION

Of the several possible methods which can be used for Formal Moderation, the Ministry has chosen to focus on 'Moderation Visits'. These are held towards the end of each semester, shortly before the exams.

During these visits, teachers will need to provide Visiting Moderators with convincing ***evidence*** that the marks which they have awarded for Continuous Assessment (CA) are fair and accurate, and in line with national standards. Consideration of this evidence may result in amendments to the teacher's marks, either upwards or downwards.

Discussions will centre on the completed CA mark sheet for each class:

- a) All marks awarded on this sheet should be based on the criteria shown in the official Rating Scales.
- b) Only the marks specified in these scales should be awarded, without the inclusion of half-marks.

- c) This also means that a mark of 'zero' should not be awarded for any outcome, except in very exceptional circumstances.

In order to confirm/verify the accuracy of the marks awarded, two main types of evidence are available:

- For Speaking (Presentations), the **teacher's written notes** based on his/her observations during the semester.
- For Writing and Literature, **samples of work** done by individual students.

SPEAKING (Teacher's Notes only)

- The teacher's written notes about the performance of individual students in their Presentations.
- These notes should be typed and should consist of bullet-points outlining the main features/ strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance.
- Comments need not be lengthy but should be as detailed and specific as possible. Teachers should use their own words and write in straightforward, everyday language. They should not cut-and-paste the (specialised, academic) expressions used in the Rating Scales.
- Ideally, the Visiting Moderator should be able, just from reading the teacher's comments, to judge what an appropriate mark would be for that particular student.
- The teacher should also provide brief details, i.e., the date and topic, of any presentation(s) given by the student.

WRITING (Samples of Work only)

- For each student in the class, **at least two** typical samples of **each** of the two types of Writing required.

LITERATURE

- For each student in the class, **One** typical sample of **each** of the two genres covered.

WRITING & LITERATURE

- The samples should be genuine pieces of Writing, which are typical of the student and show his/her actual level of (general) Writing Skills or Literary Appreciation.
- Each sample should include the date, as well as details of the task instructions.
- The sample should be annotated with both marks and comments made by the teacher.
- Writing should be done in class.

- If any student score **less than 3 marks** in writing or literature, one more evidence is required

READING (Samples of Work only)

Class-based Reading

- At least **four** examples of tasks in which students wrote responses to Reading texts (either in course materials or in quizzes). The types of reading should match the types covered each semester.
- Each task should be accompanied by the relevant text (with instructions) and the date.
- Reading tasks of this kind generally include a number of items to which students should give correct responses. The resulting score must then be converted to a score out of 5, in order to show its value in terms of the official Rating Scale.
- Reading texts must follow the types specified in the reading outcome.
- Samples should include different types of reading texts and variety of tasks.
- The length and the difficulty level of the reading texts should be suitable for grade 12.

On the day of the Moderation Visit, the teacher needs to have all of the evidence for each of his/her students ***readily available*** and ***accessible***, so that the visit can run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

Countinous Moderation

In order to enhance the accuracy and consistency of the marks awarded, it is essential the Informal Moderation activities are carried out during the semester, before the Formal Moderation Visits take place.

This is a process of on-going consultation and teacher-development. The target is to arrive at a ***shared understanding*** of the criteria used for assessing students' work and awarding marks.

It also helps to prepare teachers for the Moderation Visits. If teachers have already taken part in informal moderation activities, they will feel more comfortable and confident when dealing with more formal procedures.

Some recommended examples of ***Informal Moderation activities*** are:

ACTIVITY	NOTES & COMMENTS
1. Two teachers <i>talk together informally</i> about work done by their students — comparing, evaluating and commenting.	<i>Simple, informal and very easy to arrange.</i>

2.	Two teachers agree to visit each other's classes and contribute to the assessment of students' performance in Speaking (Presentations).	<i>Post-lesson discussions will then be based on observed evidence and on the criteria in the Rating Scales.</i>
3.	The Supervisor or the school's Head of English sits down with a teacher, looks at her CA mark sheets and selects a particular mark. He/She then asks the teacher why he/she has awarded that particular mark . The teacher justifies his/her mark, referring to Rating Scales, Informal Records, and samples of the student's work. Then, the process is repeated with other marks.	<i>This can be done both during the semester, and again as a final check at the end of the semester.</i>
4a.	All the English teachers at a school get together for a moderation workshop , at which they discuss and agree on appropriate marks for a varied collection of samples of Sts' work for <u>Writing</u> or <u>Literature</u> .	<i>The Head of English collects and selects appropriate samples of students' written work.</i>
4b.	Likewise, a workshop on ' difficult (or borderline) cases ', i.e., cases where they are finding it difficult to decide on the correct mark for any outcome.	<i>Teachers should bring with them all the available evidence for these 'difficult' cases'</i>
4c.	The same kind of workshop as in Activities 4a or 4b but involving teachers from two or more schools within easy reach of each other, i.e., a ' local cluster '.	<i>Possibly rather difficult to arrange — but the wider the circle of participants, the more valid the moderation will be.</i>
5.	As a result of the above-mentioned workshops (4a, 4b or 4c), compile — and make available to teachers — a collection of ' exemplars ' of students' written work which have already been 'moderated'. Each exemplar should be accompanied by the agreed mark, along with comments and explanations.	<i>With proper coordination, collections from different schools can be combined into a larger collection, more widely circulated.</i>

In connection with these activities, some further points should be noted:

- Every activity involves teachers **getting together** to talk about students' work and how that work should be assessed.
- Some of the activities can be initiated very informally by teachers; others require action by the Head of English; others may require some level of coordination by Supervisors. However, it is **always** possible, whatever the local circumstances, to carry out **some** form of Informal Moderation.
- It may happen that, initially, some teachers will feel a little uncomfortable with, or even threatened by, these 'sharing' procedures. However, Heads of English and

Supervisors need to show **leadership** in emphasizing the benefits in terms of increased professionalism.

- Hopefully, all teachers will eventually come to appreciate the increased feeling of **security** and **confidence** that they have when awarding marks — and when facing not only Visiting Moderators, but also other stakeholders (parents, school principals, etc) who may query their marks.
- The likelihood that these Informal Moderation activities will make the marks that students receive more accurate and **closer to the truth** is, of course, in itself, another important benefit.
- It is true that the procedures listed above **take time**, especially at the beginning. However, for the reasons just given, this is clearly time well spent.

APPENDIX ONE

Learning Outcomes & Rating Scales

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOME & RATING SCALE for SPEAKING

OUTCOME # 1	RATING SCALE # 1
<p>Can give presentations.</p> <p>– Presenters should be able to speak on a topic for four to five minutes.</p> <p>– The audience will consist of the rest of the class.</p> <p>– Topics should be approved in advance by the teacher.</p> <p>– These topics should be culturally appropriate and of interest to the audience.</p> <p>– Presentations should be supported by digital technology (images, sounds, etc.).</p> <p>– Students may use brief notes (either on paper or on-screen) but should not read out from a prepared text.</p> <p>– Presentations will usually be given individually but can also be given in pairs.</p> <p>(<u>Note:</u> In paired presentations, marks should be awarded individually.)</p> <p>– After the presentation, there should be an opportunity for the audience to ask Qs.</p>	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations are easy to follow, well-structured and interesting. – Contact with audience is very good. – Voice and pronunciation are clear. – Language used is mostly accurate. – Supporting visuals are clear and effective. – Answers to Qs are clear and convincing.
	<p>9 Between the descriptors above and below</p>
	<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations are mostly clear, as well as quite interesting. – Contact with audience is reasonably good. – Voice and pronunciation are mostly clear. – Language used contains inaccuracies but meaning is only rarely obscured. – Supporting visuals are quite good. – Answers to Qs are mostly adequate.
	<p>7 Between the descriptors above and below</p>
	<p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations are reasonably clear, but not very interesting. – Contact with audience is only moderate. – Voice and pronunciation are fairly good. – Language used contains noticeable errors, occasionally making meaning unclear. – Supporting visuals are adequate. – Answers to Qs are only partly effective.
	<p>5 Between the descriptors above and below</p>
	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Manages to convey <i>some</i> information, but generally ineffective/uninteresting. – Contact with audience is rather weak. – Voice and/or pronunciation are sometimes unclear. – Language used contains frequent errors, making meaning sometimes unclear. – Use of supporting visuals is limited. – Answers to Qs are limited and/or unclear.
	<p>3 Between the descriptors above and below</p>
	<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentations are unclear and uninformative. – Contact with audience is very weak. – Voice is difficult to hear and/or pronunciation is difficult to understand. – Frequent serious errors make speech generally difficult to follow. – Supporting visuals are either missing or obviously inadequate. – Answers to Qs are very inadequate indeed.

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOMES & RATING SCALES for WRITING ⁽¹⁾

OUTCOME # 2	RATING SCALE # 2	
<p>Can write and respond to letters and e-mails.</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Message to the intended reader(s) is very clear. – Writing clearly succeeds in achieving its intended purpose. – Uses language which is fully appropriate to reader and context. – A varied range of structures and vocabulary, with a very good level of accuracy.
<p>Students should be able to write letters and e-mails of up to 300 words.</p> <p>These 'Interactive' texts come under two main categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – informal: to friends and relatives – formal: to employers, officials, school principals, etc <p>These texts cover a wide range of everyday types and topics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – latest news – requests for information/advice – giving information/advice – letters of complaint – application letters, etc 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Message to the intended reader(s) is fairly clear. – Writing has reasonable success in achieving its intended purpose. – uses language which is somewhat appropriate to reader and context. – A fair range of structures and vocabulary, with a good level of accuracy.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Message to the intended reader(s) is partially clear. – Writing has only partially achieved its intended purpose. – Uses language which is minimally appropriate to reader and context. – A limited range of structures and vocabulary, with a reasonable level of accuracy.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Message to the intended reader(s) is mostly unclear. – Writing has only very limited success in achieving its intended purpose. – Uses language which is mostly inappropriate to reader and context. – A very limited range of structures and vocabulary, and frequent errors.
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Message to the intended reader(s) is unclear. – Writing clearly fails to achieve its intended purpose. – NO use of appropriate language. – Extremely limited range of structures and vocabulary, and frequent serious errors.

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOMES & RATING SCALES for WRITING ⁽²⁾

OUTCOME # 3	RATING SCALE: # 3	
<p>Can write texts with the purpose of providing information.</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presents relevant information clearly and in an interesting way. _ Very good use of details and examples. – Language used is fully appropriate to the type of text. – A varied range of grammar and vocabulary with a very good level of accuracy.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presents relevant information with reasonable success. _ Good use of details and examples. – Language used is mostly appropriate to the type of text. – A fair range of grammar and vocabulary with a good level of accuracy.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Manages to present relevant information, but only in a somewhat limited way. -Minimal use of details and examples. – Language used is reasonably appropriate to the type of text. – A limited range of grammar and vocabulary with a reasonable level of accuracy.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attempts to present information, but the results are obviously inadequate. _ Poor use of details and examples. – Language used is often inappropriate to the type of text. – A very limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent errors.
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presents very little relevant information indeed. _ No use of details and examples. – Language used is wholly inappropriate to the type of text. – Extremely limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent serious errors.
<p>Students should be able to write texts of up to 300 words.</p> <p>These 'Informative' texts may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reports – articles – summaries – descriptions – processes, etc 		

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOMES & RATING SCALES for WRITING ⁽³⁾

OUTCOME # 4	RATING SCALE # 4	
<p>Can write stories and narrate events in the past.</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produces narratives which are fully successful in engaging the reader. – Lively, effective use of appropriate detail. – Writing is very well-structured, clear and coherent. – A varied range of grammar and vocabulary with a very good level of accuracy.
		<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produces narratives which are reasonably successful in engaging the reader. – Generally good use of appropriate detail. – Writing is generally well-structured, and mostly clear and coherent. – A fair range of grammar and vocabulary with a good level of accuracy.
		<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produces narratives which are only partially successful in engaging the reader. – Somewhat limited use of appropriate detail. – Writing is well-structured but is still reasonably clear and coherent. – A limited range of grammar and vocabulary with a reasonable level of accuracy.
		<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produces narratives which have very limited success in engaging the reader. – Inadequate use of appropriate detail. – Writing is poorly-structured, and often unclear. – A very limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent errors.
		<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Produces narratives which fail entirely to engage the reader. – Little or no use of appropriate detail. – Writing is incoherent and confusing. – Extremely limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent serious errors.

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOMES & RATING SCALES for WRITING ⁽⁴⁾

OUTCOME # 5	RATING SCALE # 5	
<p>Can write texts which express and justify opinions.</p> <p>Students should be able to write texts of up to 300 words.</p> <p>These 'Persuasive' texts will consist of essays of a range of different types, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – advice/ recommendations – feedback/ praise/ criticism – 'pros and cons' – comments on social/cultural/ethical issues – opinions concerning on public or institutional policy 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Expresses opinions on topics in a lively, convincing way. – Supports all points effectively with relevant evidence and detail. – Essays are very well-organised, clear and coherent. – A varied range of grammar and vocabulary with a very good level of accuracy.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Expresses opinions on topics in a reasonably convincing way. – Supports most points with relevant evidence and detail. – Essays are generally well-organised and, for the most part, clear and coherent. – A fair range of grammar and vocabulary with a good level of accuracy.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Expresses opinions on topics, in a somewhat limited way. – Is inconsistent in supporting points with relevant evidence and detail. – Essays are poorly- organised, but are still reasonably clear and coherent. – A limited range of grammar and vocabulary with a reasonable level of accuracy.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Expresses opinions on topics, but the results are clearly inadequate. – Is generally weak in supporting points with relevant evidence. – Essays lack organization, lacking in coherence and sometimes unclear. – A very limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent errors.
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Makes only very feeble attempts to express opinions on topics. – Fails to support points with any relevant evidence. – Essays are incoherent and confusing. – Extremely limited range of grammar and vocabulary with frequent serious errors.

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOMES & RATING SCALE for LITERATURE

OUTCOME # 6	RATING SCALE # 6	
<p>Can engage with and write about literary texts.</p> <p>These 'literary texts' cover <u>four</u> genres: Poetry, Drama and two types of fictional prose: Short Stories and Novels.</p> <p>Within these categories, a wide variety of texts are to be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – both classic and contemporary – a wide range of authors in terms of place of origin, background, gender, etc. <p><u>Note</u>: Translations into English from other languages are acceptable, <u>except</u> in the following two cases:</p> <p>(i) poetry</p> <p>(ii) texts which were originally in Arabic (the students' mother tongue)</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses are relevant*, well-developed and insightful. – Effectively relates texts to personal and/or social values and themes. – Shows very good understanding of literary elements and figures of speech. – Writing is varied, clear and mostly accurate.
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses are relevant* and reasonably well-developed and insightful. – Has reasonable success in relating texts to personal and/or social values and themes. – Shows good understanding of literary elements and figures of speech. – Writing is somewhat varied and mostly clear, despite some inaccuracies.
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses are mostly relevant*, but only developed on a superficial level. – Has only partial success in relating texts to personal and/or social values and themes. – Shows reasonable understanding of literary elements and figures of speech. – Writing is reasonably clear but lacks variety and contains frequent inaccuracies.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses are attempted but are incomplete and at times irrelevant*. – Generally, fails to relate texts to personal and/or social values and themes. – Shows only limited understanding of literary elements and figures of speech. – Writing is limited and sometimes unclear and contains serious errors.
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses are feeble: largely irrelevant* and/or seriously inadequate. – Little or no attempt to relate texts to personal and/or social values and themes. – Shows little or no understanding of literary elements and figures of speech. – Writing is very limited, frequently unclear, and contains many serious errors.

OUTCOME # 6 (cont'd)	
<p>Students should be able to engage with these texts and show the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – analyse – interpret – evaluate – address relevant moral/ ethical/ social issues – relate literary texts to their own lives and cultural backgrounds <p>As part of this, they will need to be familiar with a wide range of literary elements (e.g., <i>style, character, setting, point-of-view, conflict, etc.</i>) and figures of speech (e.g., <i>metaphors, puns, symbols, images, etc.</i>) used in and across the four genres.</p> <p>Students should be able to express their insights and opinions during discussion, and <u>especially</u> in the form of written essays.</p> <p>A list of approved texts for each genre is provided by the Directorate-General of Private Schools for use in the classroom, and as a basis for Continuous Assessment.</p> <p>However, all the literary texts which will appear in the Ministry exams will be <u>unseen</u>.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DEFINITION of <i>*relevant</i>:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>'The student's response fully addresses the topic of the question.'</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Note</u>: This is an essential requirement for all essays written in relation to this Learning Outcome.</p>

BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS — OUTCOME AWARDED MARKS
on the basis of SEMESTER TESTS ONLY

READING

OUTCOME # 7

Can understand a variety of written texts.

Students should be able to read and understand texts of ***up to 750 words***.

Covers the ability to understand four general categories of text:

Interactive: (i) Informal *letters/ e-mails* (ii) *More formal letters/ e-mails, covering a range of everyday topics*

Informative: *Descriptions; sets of instructions; tables/ graphs; newspaper/magazine articles; factual texts; reports; scientific texts. encyclopedia entries; leaflets/ brochures/ adverts, etc.*

Narrative: *News reports; biographies; historical texts; accounts of personal experiences etc.*

Persuasive: *Articles expressing opinions ; reviews ; essays ; editorials ; 'Letters to the Editor', etc.*

NOTE: Literary texts are ***not*** included here. (See Outcome # 6)

APPENDIX TWO

Mark Sheets for Continuous Assessment

MARKS << CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS <u>GRADE 12</u> <u>SEMESTER ONE</u> Class: _____ Year: _____ Teacher: _____																		
WRT	Can write letters and e-mails	(5)																
	Can write texts with the purpose of providing information	(5)																
	WRT: Total:	(10)																
SPK	Can give presentations.	(10)																
RDG	Can understand a variety of written texts.	(5)																
LIT	Can engage with & write about literary texts: <i>Short Stories</i> & Drama	(5)																
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT: Total (30)																		

MARKS << CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS <u>GRADE 12</u> <u>SEMESTER TWO</u> Class: _____ Year: _____ Teacher: _____																		
WRT	Can narrate events in the past	(5)																
	Can write texts which express and justify opinions	(5)																
	WRT: Total:	(10)																
SPK	Can give presentations.	(10)																
RDG	Can understand a variety of written texts.	(5)																
LIT	Can engage with & write about literary texts: <i>Poetry & Novels</i>	(5)																
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT: Total (30)																		

APPENDIX THREE

EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

SPECIFICATIONS for the END-of-SEMESTER EXAM
BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS
SEMESTER ONE

	MATERIALS	WITH:	STUDENT TASK	MARKING
READING 1	One NARRATIVE and one PERSUASIVE text, each of between 600 and 700 words (<u>Note:</u> Test-writers to decide which is in RDG1, and which is in RDG 2)	12 Multiple Choice items (each with 3 options).	For each item, indicate which of the three options is correct.	One mark per item: <u>Total: 12 marks</u>
READING 2		<u>Task one:</u> 8 Wh-Qs items. <u>Task Two:</u> 5 True/False items.	<u>Task One:</u> For each question, write a <u>short</u> answer. <u>Task Two:</u> Indicate whether the statement is TRUE or FALSE.	One mark per item: <u>Total: 13 marks</u>
WRITING	Instructions for 2 tasks, one requiring the writing of an INFORMATIVE text, the other of an INTERACTIVE text	(No other materials)	Choose ONE of the options and complete the task writing at least 200 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. <u>Total: 20 marks</u>
LITERATURE ONE	Extract from an unseen DRAMA Length: 200-300 words	One question requiring discussion, analysis, interpretation, etc.	Answer the question, writing at least 120 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. <u>Total: 10 marks</u>
LITERATURE TWO	Extract from an unseen SHORT STORY Length: 300-400 words	Two questions requiring discussion, analysis, interpretation, etc.	Answer question 1, writing at least 50 words Answer question 2, writing at least 120 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. Question one: 5 marks Question two : 10 marks <u>Total: 15 marks</u>

(Grade 12, bilingual --- Sem. One)

SPECIFICATIONS for the END-of-SEMESTER EXAM
BILINGUAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS
SEMESTER TWO

	MATERIALS	WITH:	STUDENT TASK	MARKING
READING 1	One INTERACTIVE and one INFORMATIVE text, each of between 600 and 700 words (<u>Note:</u> Test-writers to decide which is in RDG1, and which is in RDG 2)	12 Multiple Choice items (each with 3 options).	For each item, indicate which of the three options is correct.	One mark per item: Total: 12 marks
READING 2		<u>Task one:</u> 8 Wh-Qs items. <u>Task Two:</u> 5 True/False items.	<u>Task One:</u> For each question, write a <u>short</u> answer. <u>Task Two:</u> Indicate whether the statement is TRUE or FALSE.	One mark per item: Total: 13 marks
WRITING	Instructions for 2 tasks, one requiring the writing of a NARRATIVE text, the other of a PERSUASIVE text	(<i>No other materials</i>)	Choose ONE of the options and complete the task writing at least 200 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. Total: 20 marks
LITERATURE ONE	A complete POEM (or extract from a poem): Length: 15-30 lines	One question requiring discussion, analysis, interpretation, etc.	Answer the question, writing at least 120 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. Total: 10 marks
LITERATURE TWO	Extract from an unseen NOVEL. Length: 300-400 words	Two questions requiring discussion, analysis, interpretation, etc.	Answer question 1, writing at least 50 words. Answer question 2, writing at least 120 words.	Award a <i>global</i> score using the appropriate Rating Scale. Question one: 5 marks Question two : 10 marks Total: 15 marks

(Grade 12, Bilingual --- Sem. Two)