



No. SO(ER-I) 1-19/2018
GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
SECTION (ER-I)

Dated Lahore, the 3rd February, 2020.

To

All Chief Executive Officers, District Education Authorities in Punjab.

Subject: **ASSESSMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK-2019**

I am directed to refer to the subject cited above and to state that the Provincial Cabinet in its 22nd Meeting held on 24-12-2019 has approved the Assessment Policy Framework (APF) 2019 for elementary level of school education in the Punjab. The APF- 2019 is the first framework of its nature being presented in the province under which all assessments shall henceforth be administered in the Punjab in a coherent and meaningful manner.

1. This policy replaces and repeals previous policy directions covering earlier primary/elementary level assessments/examinations in the province including the annual examinations held at Classes 5 and 8 by the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC). The School Education Department (SED) shall hold the overall custodianship of this policy, whereas the Commission overseeing PEC shall supervise technical input on the revision, improvement, and the implementation of the APF by coordinating with relevant line departments of the SED, such as the Qaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) and the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board (PCTB).
2. The APF-2019 is based on a key principle of reform efforts for educational achievement in the Punjab: a shift from assessment as an end in itself towards assessments that support and encourage learning at all levels of the system. This framework is, therefore, aligned with the underlying principles behind the Government of the Punjab's vision for school education as outlined in the New Deal 2018-2023. The scope of the APF is, at present, limited to elementary level of government school education in the Punjab. However, the approach proposed in the framework may also be opted for private as well as public-private partnership schools.
3. Punjab has lacked, thus far, an overarching policy with which to govern the purpose, classification, nature, design and impact of assessment on educational achievement across its school education system. The absence of a policy has implications for the types and utility of assessment for student learning, in addition to the tracking of learning priorities by different actors in the schooling process.

The present collection of assessments in the province does not make up a consistent, reliable or coherent assessment system that places the learner at its centre. To the contrary, current examinations and related forms of assessment are testimony to a system that has evolved to measure learning in a largely sporadic manner. Therefore, there is a need for a coherent assessment policy framework that can guide and govern all aspects of implementation/decision-making regarding student assessments from ECET to Class 8 in the province.

5. This framework provides clarity about assessment and reporting of student achievement and system performance to policy makers, local education authorities, schools, students, parents, and the wider community. It also seeks to balance the often competing demands of system accountability and student learning. In this policy, class level refers to the specific year of school about which a discussion is taking place, e.g. Class 5. Class levels refers to all years of schooling, being referred to in plural.
6. In the future, Punjab may participate in large-scale assessments that originate from sources beyond its immediate administrative territory. Such assessments may require the province to provide operational assistance, but also extend to a level of research or analysis. Such national and international assessments may include the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and Programme for International Student Assessment (for Developing Countries) (PISA-D). The APF-2019 extends to participation in such international assessments.

7. **Aims and Objectives of Assessment Policy Framework**

This policy acts as a guiding framework for educational assessments across the Punjab up to a minimum of the elementary years (Class 8). Its scope addresses important purposes of assessment that require collaboration across Punjab's education sector for effective outcomes. The purposes of assessment

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identified for the purpose of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- a. System-level diagnosis of performance at various levels (from student and school up to district and provincial levels)
- b. Measurement of change and progression/regression in learning competencies
- c. Provision of specific feedback to the SED and its line departments (QAED and PCTB, in addition to PEC) on system and school/student strengths and weaknesses to support educational achievement journeys
- d. Support to teachers through key feedback loops for continuous and needs- responsive improvement and adjustment in teaching practices
- e. Support to actors across learning system in the development, implementation and analytical use of assessments to institute stronger teaching and learning practices
- f. Guidelines for the province in its adoption of global best practices for assessments, as and when required by the Punjab

8. Assessment Types

The Assessment Policy Framework 2019 is built upon two types of assessments, distinct in their purpose, methodology and the end users of the assessment results. The first type is a sample-based Large Scale Assessment (LSA). This assessment shall entail assessment of core literacy (multilingual) and numeracy skills at key stages of schooling with allowance for additional subjects in special years, as well as participation in international assessments as and when determined by the Government. An LSA can effectively provide the education system diagnostic evidence for performance, whether of students, schools or higher administrative units within which schools are located. The revised LSA shall address existing gaps in knowledge about learning outcomes and system performance, for which the existing system of mandatory population-based examinations at Classes 5 and 8 in the Punjab is a less efficient and less effective approach.

The second type of assessment is a School-Based Assessment (SBA), which shall include a summative form of examination at specific periods in time and formative assessments throughout the year. As the summative assessment process becomes more firmly established across the province, formative assessment shall also gradually gain strength. This shall occur primarily through continuous, low- stake, teacher-led assessments to monitor student performance and maintain needs-responsiveness in their own teaching practices.

9. Large-Scale Assessment

Description: A sample-based diagnostic assessment through which to gauge the performance of the education system (student, and the contributing factors surrounding the student). The Large Scale Assessment in the Punjab shall be one of 2 main assessment formats to understand whether, and how, students perform against established learning standards and curriculum.

The new LSAs results shall be considered low-stake for school-level education actors (student, teacher and head teacher), but high-stake for the education system (the SED and its line departments as well as local education authorities) because of its diagnostic role in improved decision-making. For instance, results shall inform baselines, changes to learning expectations and processes, and key adjustments to education policy and practice in the Punjab made in light of proficiency levels measured.

Types of Assessment (in a phased manner):

1. Annual sample-based assessment of core competencies (literacy and numeracy) at key stages of schooling as required by the system
 - a. **Phase I:** Sample-based assessment pilot at Class 5 in Academic Year 2019/20; population-based terminal exam for Class 8; review of, and decision regarding, status of Class 8 and any other level(s) required for subsequent academic years
 - b. **Phase II:** Sample-based assessment pilot at Classes 5, 8 and any other levels determined by the system in the following academic years, subject to performance review of AY 2019/20
2. Assessment of additional, specified subjects in select years at key stages of schooling as determined by the system

3. International assessments (such as TIMSS, PIRLS and PISA-D) and any other need-based assessments as and when Punjab participates

Population Coverage: Representative random sample of schools and students from levels of schooling participating in the assessment

Format: Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), Constructed Response Questions (CRQs), Extended Response Questions (ERQs) and any other formats required by the assessment

10. School Based Assessments (SBAs)

Description: A two-pronged approach (summative and formative) to assessment of the student at the school level, the SBA facilitates an increased involvement of teachers and school leadership in supporting the learning of the child. These assessments enable the delivery of feedback on student performance feedback at a relatively faster pace and in a more proximate fashion than system assessments such as the LSA, which supports more effective improvements in learning habits.

These types of assessments entail a variety of stakes. They place greater demands on teachers, school leaders, and even parents because of the need to develop, administer, grade/score and use assessment data more autonomously for the school unit, such as by preparing report cards and discussing results with parents.

For students, however, SBAs create opportunities to support learning within the classroom by removing the pressure of intra-school comparability as the underlying premise of an assessment. Summative assessments create a medium stake for students, their parents and teachers because results shall be reported, but only to those immediately responsible for a student's learning. Formative assessments are low-stake across the system, and represent that battery of assessments through which the greatest amount of learning support and adjustment to teaching methods occurs in response to student needs.

Types of Assessment (in a phased manner):

1. Summative Assessments:

Phase I: All classes other than Class 5 shall observe their final-term school-based examination as per conventional format; only for Class 5 shall a centrally prepared paper-and-pencil assessment of standardised items be administered by schools at the end of Academic Year 2019/20; a formal report card shall be issued to parents at all class levels as a means of formally reporting student performance;

Phase II: Centrally prepared paper-and-pencil assessments with standardised items for remaining classes from 2-8; oral examination rubric for earlier years (ECE and 1); frequency of summative school-based assessments to be reviewed;

Phase III: Standardised items disseminated from central examination body to the school level for all class levels; schools develop own examinations using standardised items in accordance with official curricular benchmarks;

Phase IV: Schools develop own reliable and valid assessment item banks as a result of concurrent capacity development amongst system teachers, and employ such items in own exams.

2. Formative Assessments: An evaluation approach used by teachers to continuously monitor student performance through the use of formal, and informal techniques that emphasis, as applicable, all three domains of knowledge:

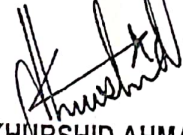
- a. cognitive (academic) competencies, especially higher-order thinking;
- b. affective (attitudinal/non-academic) competencies;
- c. and psychomotor skills.

The results of these assessments are always for ongoing student learning and growth support, not performance reporting. The means/methods used in formative assessment shall be determined by the concerned school and teacher. The information gathered through such assessments can be used to improve the teaching and learning processes in a class setting within a shorter period of time. Additional use of such data can be to inform teacher-head teacher forums, initiate structured improvements to curricular and pedagogic

design with QAED and PCTB, respectively, as well as provide parents/communities informal feedback throughout an academic year.

Population Coverage for Revised SBAs: All classes, but in phases


Format: MCQs, CRQs, ERQs and/or other formats, such as labwork and/or quizzes, as required by the assessment


(KHURSHID AHMAD)
SECTION OFFICER (ER-1)

NO & DATE EVEN:

A copy is forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. The Program Director, PMIU, Punjab, Lahore.
2. The Director Public Instruction (SE/EE) Punjab, Lahore.
3. The Director General, Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development, Wahdat Colony, Lahore.
4. The Chief Executive Officer, Punjab Examination Commission, Lahore.
5. The Managing Director, Punjab Education Foundation, Lahore.
6. The Managing Director, Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board, Lahore.
7. PS to Chief Secretary Government of Punjab
8. PS to Secretary School Education Department


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