

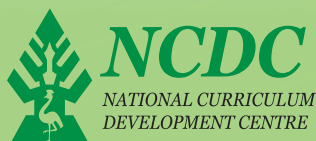


THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
Ministry of Education and Sports

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

FOR

ADVANCED
SECONDARY CURRICULUM



2026

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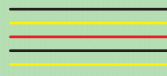
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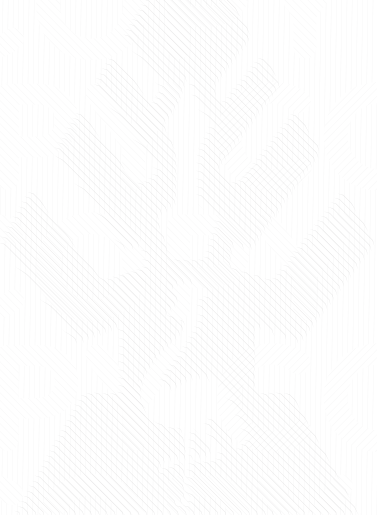
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NCDC takes responsibility for any shortcomings that might be identified in this publication and welcomes suggestions for effectively addressing the inadequacies. Such comments and suggestions may be communicated to NCDC through P. O Box 7002, Kampala, or Email: admin@ncdc.go.ug or on the Website: www.ncdc.go.ug



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Introduction

Following the review of the Lower Secondary Curriculum (LSC), the Advanced Secondary Curriculum was subsequently revised to ensure alignment with the pedagogical approaches, assessment practices and learning expectations established at Lower Secondary. This alignment introduced competencies, values, and generic skills into the Advanced Secondary curriculum, making a shift from content-dominated instruction and assessment to a more holistic and competency-based approach.

This alignment required a review of the assessment practices at the Advanced Secondary level. The assessment of the Advanced Secondary Curriculum emphasises learner's demonstration of competencies through scenario-based assessment items. The purpose of assessing through scenarios is to support learners to apply what they have learnt in real-life situations in addition to furthering their education. This approach to assessment will ensure that the education is contributing towards the realisation of the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) through strengthening Human Capital Development.

Overall, this Assessment Framework provides guidance on how the assessment for the Advanced Secondary Curriculum has been planned both at school level and at the end of cycle by the National Examinations Board for the development of a well-rounded, competent and values-driven learner.

Linkage to Subject-Specific Assessment Guidelines

This Assessment Framework provides the overarching principles and approaches for assessment across all subjects on the Advanced Secondary Curriculum. It is operationalised through a set of subject-specific assessment guidelines developed for each of the 29 subjects.

Each subject-specific guideline should be read and applied in conjunction with this Framework. While the guidelines provide contextualised and subject-specific assessment practices, they derive their authority and coherence from the principles and requirements outlined in this Framework.

Guiding Principles

Assessment of the Advanced Secondary Curriculum is guided by the principals of validity, reliability, fairness, transparency, inclusiveness, authenticity and the promotion of higher-order thinking through real-world application of what has been learnt. This assessment aims to ensure that learners are evaluated in a holistic and meaningful way that goes beyond the simple recall of content. It is designed to measure how well a learner has acquired the key competencies in the curriculum and the ability to apply what has been learnt in real-world contexts.

The Assessment Approaches

Assessment of the Advanced Secondary Curriculum will be done through formative and summative approaches. Each of the two approaches will be serving distinct but complementary purposes in supporting learners' academic development. Formative assessment will be used during the teaching-learning process purposely to monitor learners' progress and improve learning, while summative assessment will be used at the end of a learning period.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a continuous, learning-focused process embedded in everyday instruction for the provision of timely feedback on the learning process. It emphasises continuous feedback rather than end-of-unit grading. Through formative assessment, learning gaps are identified early, allowing teachers to adjust instruction promptly and empower students to take ownership of their academic progress. This approach to assessment promotes a supportive, growth-oriented learning environment that enhances individual achievement and advances equity for all learners.

Formative assessment for the Advanced Secondary Curriculum will be carried out by both the teacher and the learner within the school context. It involves making professional judgement about the learner's learning and providing timely feedback for improvement. The formative assessment will be done through observation (watching learners working), conversation (asking questions and talking to learners about their learning) and appraising the learners' work (product) during the learning process.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is an assessment conducted at the end of a defined period of instruction. This period can be a term, year, or course/topic. The main purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the extent to which learners have achieved the intended learning outcomes. Summative assessment of the Advanced Secondary Curriculum will be done both at school level and national level.

- i) At school level, the teacher is expected to administer Activities of Integration (AOI) at the end of each topic to assess the learner's acquisition of the learning outcomes in that topic. This topical assessment replaces the tests and examinations that were previously administered at the beginning of term, mid-term and end of term. The record of scores from the AOI will be used to report on the learners performance to parents and other stakeholders. The AOI should be scenario-based, eliciting the learner's ability to integrate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes across the topic and other topics studied earlier. Giving learners scenario-based items at the end of every topic will give them the opportunity to practice and refine their skill of responding to scenario-based questions, and develop their analytical reasoning and application of knowledge in authentic contexts. This practice prepares learners for the rigour of the end of cycle assessment items. Scores from AOI at school level will **NOT** contribute to the end of cycle grading and certification.
- ii) The end of cycle summative assessment will be conducted by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC) at the end of the two years of study. This assessment will serve as the official measure of learner achievement for certification at the end of cycle. The end of cycle assessment items will be scenario-based, eliciting the learner's ability to integrate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Learners will be required to demonstrate their ability to apply what they have learned in solving contextualised real-life problems as presented in set scenarios.

The end of cycle assessment will be guided by assessment constructs in each subject. An assessment construct (often simply called a construct) refers to the theoretical concept that is intended to assess the acquired competency of learning.

In this context, an assessment construct is a unifying concept that brings together related topics with their learning outcomes. Acquisition of competencies in a construct enables the learner to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills in a way that supports real-life functionality and application.

The number of constructs per subject has guided the determination of assessment papers, with emphasis on avoiding duplication of concepts in assessment. **Table 1** below shows the number of constructs, number of assessment papers and the focus of assessment for each of the subjects on the Advanced Secondary Curriculum menu.

Table 1:

ASC subject list, assessment constructs and papers at end of cycle

Subject Name	Number of Constructs	No. Assessment papers	Focus of Assessment
Agriculture	3	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply modern and scientific methods to produce crops, rear farm animals sustainably and profitably, including value addition strategies for agricultural products for the market
Arabic	1	2	Determine the learner's proficiency in the Arabic language, and the ability to integrate the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in order to communicate accurately, fluently, and appropriately in Arabic in real-life contexts

Art and Design	2	2	Assess the learner's ability to integrate art analysis and art making, contextualise artworks, plan, apply art skills and techniques, to produce meaningful artistic outcomes with informed engagement in visual culture
Biology	4	2	Evaluate the learner's understanding and application of biological principles governing life processes in cells, plants, animals, and ecosystems, and the ability to analyse biological structures, functions, and interactions in order to make informed decisions that promote health, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity and environmental conservation
Chemistry	4	2	Determine how well a learner understands chemical principles and can apply them to explain, analyse, and solve novel problems using accurate practical, mathematical, and scientific reasoning, supported by sound experimental knowledge and clear communication
Chinese	1	2	Determine the learner's language proficiency and ability to integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills to

			communicate effectively and appropriately in the Chinese language with due consideration to cultural and intercultural understanding
Christian Religious Education (CRE)	5	2	Assesses the learner's ability to integrate biblical themes (from the Pentateuch, Psalms, Job, Gospels, Epistles, and ancient Israelite roles) with Traditional African and contemporary perspectives, demonstrating a lifestyle that reflects covenantal devotion, Gospel-centered witness, servant leadership, cultural discernment, and active peace-building across personal and societal contexts.
Clothing and Textile	3	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply knowledge of textile science and contemporary fashion trends to design and construct quality, durable, appealing and functional garments and soft furnishings that meet customer needs and expectations
Economics	4	2	Assess the learner's ability to analyse and interpret economic concepts in relation to how individuals, businesses, and governments make decisions about the use of scarce resources to promote economic stability, growth,

			and sustainable development at national and global levels
Entrepreneurship Education	3	2	Assess the learners' ability to apply entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in analysing investment opportunities, establishing and managing viable business ventures, and to use business support services to achieve sustainable, profitable, and long-term outcomes
Food & Nutrition	4	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply scientific principles in the kitchen to enhance food quality through value addition, ensuring safe and efficient meal preparation, and to manage diets that promote nutritional balance and overall health
French	1	2	Assess the learner's ability to use French independently and effectively in familiar academic, social, and vocational contexts, enabling them to communicate meaningfully beyond the classroom
General Paper	2	1	Assess the learner's ability to comprehend and communicate effectively by applying critical, analytical, and innovative thinking in addressing contextualised issues in the community and society at large

Geography	4	2	Determine the learner's ability to apply geographical knowledge, skills, and tools to analyse and interpret spatial patterns in physical and human environments, respond innovatively to climate and environmental challenges, and design sustainable development strategies that promote effective resource use and improved livelihoods
German	1	2	Assess the learners' ability to communicate effectively and confidently in German about real-life situations
History	4	2	Determine the learner's ability to gather and critically analyse information on historical narratives, the transformation of human societies over time, trace the roots of current global challenges, understand their causes, and explore ways of addressing them in daily life
Islamic Religious Education (IRE)	5	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply Islamic knowledge, skills, values, and ethical principles derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic law, social teachings, leadership models, and Islamic civilisation to real-life, contemporary, and societal contexts

Kiswahili	2	2	Assess the learners' ability to analyse and interpret set literary texts in Kiswahili and compose original literary works across different genres in the Kiswahili language
Latin	1	2	Determine the learner's language proficiency and ability to integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills to communicate effectively and appropriately in Latin with due consideration to cultural and intercultural understanding
Literature	2	2	Evaluate the learner's ability to use the acquired knowledge, skills and values to critically analyse, interpret literary text and create their own
Local Languages	3	2	Assess the learner's competency in local language use, literary creativity and social-cultural expression through the language
Metal Work	2	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply knowledge of Technical Working Drawings and metalworking skills to safely and responsibly design and make metal work products that meet client needs
Music	4	3	Assess the learner's creative, and practical competencies in music performance, composition, and interpretation, and the ability to integrate musical

			knowledge and elements from diverse traditions and deliver contextualised ethical performances
Physics	4	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply the concepts, principles and laws in Physics to communicate the underlying scientific ideas, provide solutions to real-world problems through investigation, modelling and designing innovative technologies
Principal Mathematics	5	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply algebraic reasoning, geometrical thinking, statistical interpretation, principles of mechanics, analytical and numerical modelling, to solve real-world problems, make logical and data-driven decisions and predict outcomes and behaviours in diverse contexts
Subsidiary ICT	4	2	Determine the learner's competencies in the use of digital communication, systems use and troubleshooting, data-driven problem-solving, and responsible utilisation of emerging technologies
Subsidiary Mathematics	4	1	Assess the learner's ability to interpret data and uncertainty, model relationships between quantities, analyse change, accumulation and reason

			spatially in order to solve real-world problems and make informed decisions in everyday and practical contexts
Technical Drawing	4	3	Evaluate the learner's ability to apply drawing principles, conventions and spatial reasoning to solve real life technical problems, communicate ideas clearly and demonstrate practical competence, discipline and readiness for further technical education
Wood Work	1	2	Assess the learner's ability to apply knowledge of Technical Working Drawings and Wood Work skills to design and make wood work products that meet client needs, safely and responsibly

Structure of the Assessment Items

The assessment items to be used for assessing the ASC will be scenario-based, grounded in contextualised challenges/problems requiring the learner to demonstrate their abilities to solve them. Emphasis will be put on the learners' ability to integrate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes acquired from various topics to address the contextualised societal problem.

Scoring

While scoring learners' responses, the assessor will use an analytic scoring rubric. The scoring of the scenario-based items will follow a five-level scale for each basis of assessment (element of a construct) identified in the assessment item. Each basis of assessment will be scored out of a maximum of five points. The total score for the item will therefore depend on the number of bases of assessment included in the item.

A generic scoring rubric is provided in **Table 2** to give a general understanding of bases of assessment and the indicators for the different levels of achievement. This can be customised for specific items in each subject.

Table 2:

Generic scoring rubric

	Basis of assessment	Score 4	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
Output	1. Introduction (Interpretation of task/context) <i>a) Comprehension of the task in respect to the scenario/context</i>	Demonstrates comprehensive understanding of the task by identifying all the important aspects of the task, clearly positions the task within the scenario/context with a clear line of argument	Demonstrates general understanding of the task, identifying most aspects of the task, enough to position the task within the scenario/context with minor omissions.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the task, identifying some aspects of the task, with limited reference or linkage to the scenario/context	Demonstrates limited understanding of the task, and makes little or no reference to the context provided. (Ideas are not related to the scenario)
	2. Generating and presenting ideas <i>a) Generates ideas that address the task</i>	Presents several ideas that address the task . The ideas relate to the	Presents some ideas that address the task , though some parts of the task/	Presents a few ideas related to the task . Some ideas address the task while others are	Presents ideas that show limited connection to the task and scenario.

		requirements of the task and are appropriate to the scenario.	scenario may not be fully addressed.	not clearly connected to the scenario being addressed.	Few ideas address the task requirements and several ideas are not related to the scenario or unclear.
	<i>b) Makes connections within and between ideas and context</i>	Shows strong and logical connections between ideas and context and demonstrates how the ideas fit within the context of the task.	Establishes logical connections among most ideas and relates them appropriately to the context, but the connections are not well maintained throughout the response.	Some connections among ideas are made without clear explanation of how they relate to each other or the context. A few references to the scenario are made but the relationships are not clearly explained.	Shows little or no connection among the ideas presented. Ideas appear separately and are not clearly related to the scenario or to one another.

c) <i>Presents ideas coherently</i>	Ideas are presented in a clear, logical, and fluent manner; transitions are smooth and enhance meaning	Presentation is mostly coherent with logical sequencing and clear transitions ; minor lapses do not hinder understanding	Ideas are understandable but may lack smooth flow or have occasional lapses in logic or organisation	Presentation lacks clear organisation ; ideas appear disjointed or loosely connected
3. Making informed Judgement <i>Use the acquired knowledge to form an informed opinion/conclusion or judgement</i>	Forms an opinion/conclusion that is highly informed, insightful, and well-reasoned based on comprehensive understanding and application of knowledge	Forms an opinion/conclusion that is clear, logical, and supported by relevant evidence; shows sound understanding and some evaluation though less deep	Forms an opinion/conclusion that is generally relevant and based on knowledge; reasoning is adequate but lacks depth or justification	Forms an opinion/conclusion that shows limited use of knowledge; reasoning is weak with minimal evidence or clarity

Note. The customised scoring rubrics for sample assessment items have been provided in the respective subject assessment guidelines.

There is no permanent maximum score for all the items. Different items will have different maximum scores based on the number of bases of assessment identified for that item.

The minimum score for an item will always be equal to the number of bases of assessment for that item, while its maximum score will be five times the number of bases of assessment.

Example 1: An item with 5 bases of assessment

Maximum score possible = 20

Minimum score possible = 5

Range = 20 – 5 = 15.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Grade Interval for different levels of achievement} &= \frac{\text{Range}}{\text{number of levels of achievement}} \\ &= \frac{15}{5} = 3 \text{ scores}\end{aligned}$$

Since the interval is already a whole number, this makes it easy to determine the ranges for each of the five levels of achievement as shown in the table below.

Table 3:

Grading for a single item with 5 bases of evaluation

Performance level	Range of Scores	Optimised Range
Exceptional	17 - 20	18 - 20
Outstanding	14 - 16	14 - 17
Satisfactory	11 - 13	11 - 13
Basic	8 - 10	8 - 10
Elementary	5 - 7	5 - 7

Note. The purpose of optimising the scoring ranges is to ensure that the learners who fall in the top most category are really very good. This cannot be realised by having the same intervals for all performance levels.

Example 2: Item with 6 bases of assessment

Maximum score possible = 24

Minimum score possible = 6

Range = 24 – 6 = 18.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Grade Interval for different levels of achievement} &= \frac{\text{Range}}{\text{number of levels of achievement}} \\ &= \frac{18}{5} = 3.6 \text{ scores} \end{aligned}$$

Since the interval is a decimal, round 3.6 to 4 scores per grade interval.

Table 4: Grading for a single item with 6 bases of evaluation

Performance level	Range of Scores	Optimised Range
Exceptional	22 – 24	22 – 24
Outstanding	18 – 21	21 – 26
Satisfactory	14 – 17	15 – 20
Basic	10 – 13	10 – 14
Elementary	6 – 9	6 – 9

Scoring by Construct

The final grading will be informed by the constructs/assessment objectives identified during syllabus analysis. For cases where the construct is assessed by more than one item, it is recommended that the two or more items are scored differently and then combined to get a single score for that construct. Use the total number of bases of evaluation for all the items contributing to the same construct to determine the overall grade for that construct.

Grading and Reporting Learner's Performance

The learner's performance will be graded depending on their different levels of achievement. A learner's performance level will be determined at the construct level, with each construct contributing to the overall final grade for the subject. The learner's final achievement will be presented by a letter grade A to E where A is the highest achievement and E the lowest. Each letter grade shall be arrived at after obtaining the average grade weights for the different papers/constructs used to assess the subject. A learner's weighted performance will be described by a grade descriptor (***see grade descriptors in the subject assessment guidelines***) at the level of a construct. This is intended to ensure that the learner's abilities in each of the constructs are described across the five levels of achievement (Exceptional, Outstanding, Satisfactory, Basic and Elementary).

Each performance level in a construct will be assigned a grade weight that will be used to determine the learner's final performance in a subject. The table below shows the assignment of the grade weights of 5 to 1 for the performance levels of Exceptional to Elementary respectively.

Table 5:

Grade weights for the five levels of achievement in a construct

Performance level	Grade Weights
Exceptional	5
Outstanding	4
Satisfactory	3
Basic	2
Elementary	1

The final subject grade will be determined using the average weight of the weighted scores. The table below shows the ranges of the weighted scores to determine the final subject grade.

Table 6:

Letter grades and their ranges of average grade weights

Final Grade	Average Weight	Range
A	4.6 – 5.0	0.4
B	3.7 – 4.5	0.8
C	2.8 – 3.6	0.8
D	1.9 – 2.7	0.8
E	1.0 – 1.8	0.8

Consider an example of a student whose weighted performance in a subject with three constructs is assessed using 3, 2 and 5. To determine the student's grade, you will obtain the average weight of the three weighted scores.

$$\frac{3 + 2 + 5}{3} = 3.33$$

From the calculation above, the average weight 3.33 lies in the range 2.8 – 3.6. Therefore, the learner's final grade will be a C. The image below shows a sample record of performance of imaginary learners in the subject of Art and Design.

Figure 1:

Sample record of performance for a single subject

Art and Design			
Index Number	Final Grade	Grade Descriptor	
1	U000/001	D	Shows limited analysis of art forms with minimal reference to context, expression, or communication. Descriptions may be factual rather than interpretive. Personal judgements are partially informed and lack depth or justification.
			Fairly generates original ideas with little evidence of research, produces artwork(s) following some few of the required creative processes, displays little use of technique, style and technologies to provide an artistic solution to a problem.
2	U000/002	D	Shows limited analysis of art forms with minimal reference to context, expression, or communication. Descriptions may be factual rather than interpretive. Personal judgements are partially informed and lack depth or justification.
			Fairly generates original ideas with little evidence of research, produces artwork(s) following some few of the required creative processes, displays little use of technique, style and technologies to provide an artistic solution to a problem.
3	U000/003	D	Provides little or no meaningful analysis of art forms. Fails to recognize contextual influences or artistic expression. Responses are descriptive, fragmented, or inaccurate; personal judgement is unsupported or absent.
			Satisfactorily generates original ideas with reasonable evidence of research, produces artwork(s) following most of the required creative processes, displays technique, style and use of technologies and provides an artistic solution to a problem.
			Provides little or no meaningful analysis of art forms. Fails to recognize contextual

Whereas the three students scored the same final grade D, the grade descriptors picked from the learners' performance in each construct can help tell their individual abilities (competencies) in the subject. Based on the above, the image below represents the proposed appearance of the learner's transcript and/or certificate.

Figure 2:

Sample layout of a learner's transcript

Name: Siima Gilbert Reg. Number		U000/001	
			0
	Subject	Final Grade	Grade Descriptor
1	Art and Design	E	Shows limited analysis of art forms with minimal reference to context, expression, or communication. Descriptions may be factual rather than interpretive. Personal judgements are partially informed and lack depth or justification. Minimally generates ideas with originality and evidence of research, produces artwork(s) following some few of the required creative processes, displays little use of technique, style and technologies with no correlation to a solution to solve a problem in the context.
2	Biology	C	Describes basic structures of cells and tissues and outlines simple processes of energy release and cell division. Evaluates plant structure and physiology, including C ₃ and C ₄ adaptations, environmental effects on photosynthesis, water-use adaptations, growth, photoperiodism, and hormonal regulation, to inform sustainable practices that improve crop yield and food security." Evaluates some animal sensory organs and systems (circulatory, nervous, immune, and homeostatic) by analysing physiological processes, adaptive behaviours, and their role in survival, to inform some health decisions and promote animal welfare Accurately analyses genetics, evolution, and ecology, linking major aspects to develop generally sustainable strategies, though with less depth, integration, or justification than Level 5.
3			
4			

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