

Thursday, 10 May 2018

Dear Principal,

The UAE National Agenda for Education continues to be one of the most important strategic initiative introduced by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai. This initiative steer us in working collectively to improve the quality of education across the UAE.

This year the UAE has participated in the new, cycle of 2018 PISA. We look forward to receiving the new results. Private schools in Dubai have demonstrated significant improvement in the PISA Based Test for Schools. Although there are improvement, much work remains if we are to fulfil the UAE national targets for this assessment. The next PISA tests will be administered in 2021 and TIMSS in 2019.

KHDA introduced the UAE National Agenda Parameter in 2015-2016 as a method for measuring and monitoring Dubai's private schools' improvement towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets. The parameter requires all schools to participate in international and external benchmarking assessments on an annual basis (other than TIMSS and PISA), and use them to monitor their progress in meeting these targets.

DSIB's inspection findings over the last three years indicate clearly that there has been a very positive impact in schools that fully embraced and adopted all components of the UAE National Agenda Parameter. The introduction of the Cognitive Ability Test (CAT 4), in particular, has been an innovative addition that has allowed all schools to identify students' potential to learn and attain.

In light of this, DSIB is pleased to share with you the UAE National Agenda requirements for the 2018 -19 academic year. The new requirements include three mandatory components. To ensure the most effective preparation for the upcoming TIMSS and PISA tests and for consistency of data analysis, the UAE National Agenda Parameter will continue to cover all grades from Grades 3 to 9 (UK schools Years 4 to 10), as indicated in the tables below:

Table A: Mandatory components for all schools

The National Agenda Parameter 2018 -2019 components		Requirements	
		Targeted grades	Number of students
1	GL Cognitive ability test – CAT 4	Grades 3, 6 and 8 (UK schools: Years: 4, 7 and 9)	All students in the targeted grades and all new students that joint the school in G3 – G9
2	One benchmark assessment in Mathematics, Science and English (Arabic, Mathematics and Science for MOE-private schools) listed in Table B and specific to each curriculum.	All grades from G3 – G9 (in UK schools: All Years from Y4 – Y10)	All students in the targeted grades

3	OECD PBTS – “PISA based Test for Schools”	Grade 10 (UK schools: Year 11)	All students in Grade10 (UK schools: Year 11)
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Table B: Benchmark tests available according to the curriculum

Curriculum	Recommended assessment (choose one from this list)	Targeted Grades	Number of students
UK curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GL (PTE, PTS and PTM) ACER (ISA) 	Years 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9)	All students in the targeted grades
US curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWEA MAP 	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	
Indian curriculum schools (CBSE, CISCE, KSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASSET ACER (ISA) 	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	
MoE private schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *EmSAT for all available grades and IBT (Arabic version) for all remaining available grades. 	More details about available grades for EmSAT will be provided by MoE	
IB curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACER (ISA) NWEA MAP GL (PTE, PTS, PTM) ASSET 	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	
Others: Pakistani, Canadian, Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACER (ISA) NWEA MAP GL (PTE, PTS, PTM) ASSET 	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	

Comment 1: The schools that, in 2017 – 2018 Academic year, administered CAT 4 for **ALL students** in **ALL grades** from **G2 to G8** (UK schools Y3 to Y9) , do not have to repeat the CAT4 test again in 2018 – 2019 Academic year for the same cohort of students.

The schools that did not meet the registration requirement for CAT 4 last Academic year, 2017 – 2018, have to ensure all students from G3 to G9 have been tested at the beginning of the Academic year 2018-2019.

For further details, please contact DSIB.

***Comment 2:** * **EmSAT:** This assessment, as a part of the UAE National Agenda Parameter, is a requirement for Private MoE schools only.

However, please note that EmSAT overall is a requirement for all schools across the UAE, public and private. More information about the specific targeted grades and students will be provided by MoE at a later stage.

Comment 3: For UK curriculum schools, please note that due to the specifics of the GL PT tests, the PTS (Progress Test in Science) is not available for Y7.

Comment 4: In schools offering the US and another curriculum, NWEA MAP must be used for the grades that follow a US curriculum. For other grades, schools can choose any appropriate test from Table B (including, if appropriate, MAP).

Comment 5: For schools administering ASSET or ACER (ISA), only the online version can be used.

Furthermore, please note that:

- Schools that wish to test other grades, in addition to the target grades, are welcome to do so. This is educationally beneficial as it will provide schools with a more holistic picture of their students' performance.
- Using curriculum-specific assessment along with CAT4 should provide schools with the tools to develop a comprehensive external assessment plan tailored to students' educational needs. This plan should help schools to ensure better learning outcomes for their students and to monitor their own progress towards achieving the school's individual UAE National Agenda targets.
- In 2019, G4 and G8 (UK schools Years 5 and 9), will be of particular importance as students in these grades will be taking TIMSS in spring of 2019. (The final TIMSS assessment window, prior to the 2021 National Agenda targets deadline).
- Further guidelines on the featured tests and their administration will be provided by the test providers.

Table C. Time frames for administering the N.A.P tests during 2018-2019 Academic year.

Test	Time frames for administering the National Agenda Parameter benchmark tests
GL CAT 4	Online format only. The test has to be completed by 1 November 2018
GL PTS, PTM, PTE	Online format only. The test has to be administered between: 28 April - 27 June 2019 <u>(The students should be tested only once during one academic year)</u>
ACER ISA	Online format only. The schools may choose from two testing windows: <u>(The students should be tested only once during one academic year)</u>

Test	Time frames for administering the National Agenda Parameter benchmark tests	
	Online format 11 Feb - 22 Feb 2019	Online format only 6 May - 17 May 2019
ASSET	Online format only. The test must be administered between: 2nd January 2019 - 28 February 2019: (The students should be tested only once during one academic year)	
NWEA MAP	Online format only. The test needs to be administered a minimum of three times within an academic year: Autumn, Winter and Spring. The three testing windows are as follows: (allowing for at least 8 weeks of instruction in between test administrations) Students tested in Fall must be tested again in Winter and Spring	
	Fall August 15 – November 28 , 2018	Winter December 1, 2018 - February 28, 2019
EmSAT	The MoE will inform eligible schools of the dates, targeted grades and targeted group of students. This information will be communicated at later stage.	
ACER IBT (Arabic version for MoE schools only)	Paper format. Testing window will be March – April 2019 ; more details will be provided by ACER.	
PBTS – PISA based test for schools	Spring 2019. The dates and details will be provided later.	

- All schools are asked to sign a data-release document that will be required by the test providers. All results must be made available to DSIB for further analysis.
- During any of the above tests registration, the schools are asked to **clearly identify all *Emirati students***.
- The principal and school leaders are responsible for ensuring the test integrity and security in the operation, as well as administration of all assessments, to prevent irregularities from occurring.

DSIB is committed to continue working with school to ensure that National Agenda targets are achieved.

Yours sincerely

KHDA International Assessment Team

