Profile of ACER

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is an independent educational research organization, established in 1930. It is recognized for the comprehensive services it provides to the education community both nationally and internationally.

ACER’s mission is to create and disseminate knowledge and tools that can be used to improve learning. In pursuing this mission, ACER undertakes a wide range of assessment and testing services, as well as research and development in a number of educational contexts.

ACER is an international research leader in the dynamic world of education. ACER is a full-service research consultancy with a number of experienced and skilled researchers. ACER is able to combine its strengths to develop key research programs in the areas of assessment; school and system level testing; international surveying; teaching and learning; and the transitions and economics of education.
Dear Colleagues,

**International Benchmark Tests in schools**

I am writing to offer your school the opportunity to participate in the International Benchmark Tests program, developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). ACER has developed a global program of school level tests in English, Mathematics and Science, for students from a range of countries.

Over time, ACER researchers have established a global (or international) presence in providing quality educational research and assessment services to a range of countries including the Middle East, South Africa, India, Italy, Fiji, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and the Oceania region.

The tests reflect the international benchmarking aspect with links to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) which is administered in more than 60 countries. In 2012, more than 250,000 students participated in the Assessments. The tests are designed to assess, measure and recognize student performance in a range of skills underlying the subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. They provide detailed diagnostic feedback to the student with a focus on improving learning.

Your school and students will benefit significantly by participating in the ACER International Benchmark Tests. The tests provide a measure of student performance, based on international assessment standards and the School Reports are useful for remedial intervention and curriculum planning. The program also recognizes and rewards students with Participation, Distinction, High Distinction and Honour Certificates.

I recommend these tests as a high quality assessment instrument for your students. If you require further information about the International Benchmark Tests, please contact the Dubai office whose details appear on the enclosed registration form. Alternatively, you can contact ACER directly on +61 3 9277 5555 (telephone), +61 3 9277 5500 (facsimile) or E-mail: info@acer.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

**Professor Geoff N Masters**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Australian Council for Educational Research
What are the International Benchmark Tests

The International Benchmark Tests consists of pencil and paper tests for students in Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 in English, Mathematics and Science. The tests are designed to measure a student’s performance in the generic skills that underpin the teaching of English, Mathematics and Science across the globe.

International Benchmark Tests provide:

- a comprehensive assessment of student performance and ability;
- high quality test items that engage students across all ability levels;
- individual reports to students that highlight skills, strengths and weaknesses;
- school, regional and international percentiles and a **scale score** to monitor progress over time;
- schools with access to the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) international data on student performance;
- students and schools with high quality feedback that can be used to improve learning;
- students with international benchmarks; and
- recognition of outstanding student performance.

The development of International Benchmark Tests

The International Benchmark Tests are highly researched program developed by leading ACER assessment specialists and incorporate a “skill based approach” to improving learning within the classroom.

Each item set included in International Benchmark Tests has been constructed to carefully reflect the skills that comprise English, Mathematics and Science, based on established test results.

**IBT English Assessments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of English test questions</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>40 Multiple Choice Questions</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>45 Multiple Choice Questions</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assess students’ application of reading, spelling, literacy and textual skills.

**IBT Mathematics Assessments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Mathematics test questions</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>40 Multiple Choice Questions</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>45 Multiple Choice Questions</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assess students’ ability to understand and undertake mathematical problem solving in the areas of number, measurement, space, chance and data.

**IBT Science Assessments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Science test questions</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>40 Multiple Choice Questions</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assess students’ ability to understand scientific concepts in the areas of biology, chemistry and physics.

*Specific TIMSS items have been selected for these tests, to provide students with the opportunity and challenge of completing and assessing performance on international testing items. (Approx. 60 countries participate in TIMSS. http://www.timss.org)*
Quality Reporting for Students

International Benchmark Tests provide quality reports to students in the following ways:

**Students Reports:**
These are individual reports, designed to inform the students of the achievement levels obtained with item descriptors that define what skill sets they have demonstrated. In addition these reports provide detailed feedback to benchmark student performance relative to school, the Middle East & international standards.

**Student TIMSS Reports:**
These reports are given for Mathematics & Science only. They provide a comparison of individual students’ performance to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) scores of a select group of countries.
Quality reporting for Schools

International Benchmark Tests provide quality reporting to schools through a range of different reports that indicate school performance against national & international norms including:

**School Reports:**
These reports give a summary of results for the school for all three subjects separately; they are:
- **By Grade and Section:** Provides information on student achievement in different sections of the Grades as well as with the Middle East performance;
- **By Question Number:** Gives the complete Grade result in alphabetical order. It also gives percentile scores for the school, the Middle East and the International schools participating in the Tests;
- **By Strand:** Indicates the performance of each student for each question in the respective strands, including the percentage correct in the Section, the School and the Middle East;
- **By Order of Difficulty of Question:** Orders questions from easy to difficult, also rank ordering student performance and indicates the school percentile achieved by the student along with the Middle East and International percentiles for each student.

**The Benchmark Report:**
Based on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which is a worldwide study with more than 60 participating countries, these reports provide a comparative benchmark of how the students have performed against the TIMSS scores of a select group of countries.

**The Interactive Report CD:**
All results are displayed using special software in excel. It is highly interactive as the data can be viewed and interpreted in several different formats using various graphs & tables at a click of a button. This report enables monitoring of performance for individual students as well as groups of students. Standardized data from all participating schools is used, allowing meaningful comparisons of results between different years, different grades for the same school as well as other regional & international school.

**The Data Interpretation Manual:**
This manual has been designed to assist teachers and coordinators in understanding & analyzing the IBT results data more efficiently. It presents helpful tips and suggestions on how to interpret the data.
Improving learning through The International Benchmark Tests

Students
- Will be able to see their intrinsic abilities and potential for learning. They will be able to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses on specific skills and concepts related to their grade level, and be informed of the next levels of attainment.

Teachers
- Will be able to observe student performance in relation to the expected standards for the particular grade level and apply the results to act as a basis for remedial action and planning between student and teacher.

Schools
- Will benefit from the reporting system based on globally accepted standards. Be able to compare students within the grade, locally and internationally and use results as a possible guide for streaming of students including access to a range of ACER resources and professional development workshops.

Parents
- Will be able to observe & monitor their child’s performance and progress through an independent, comprehensive and internationally accepted assessment tool.

Recognizing Excellence
All students who undertake the International Benchmark Tests will be recognized and rewarded with an individual Certificate of Participation.

The International Benchmark Tests aim to reward and recognize student achievement. The top achievers in each grade & subject are awarded a Certificate of Honor. The following 5% are awarded a Certificate of High Distinction and the next 5% receive a Certificate of Distinction.
Administration in Gulf Countries

Student Registration

Students can be registered through their participating schools. Each student can register for one, two, or all three subjects. The schools are required to complete the Registration Form sent on the school email ID and email or fax back to ACER Office.

Please follow the instructions given below for completing the form:

- Please complete ALL sections of the form.
- For the 'Street Address', please provide the complete address/location of the school. This will be used for delivery & collection of all test material and to courier reports & certificates.
- Please nominate one staff member as the IBT Coordinator & provide his/her mobile number and email ID for all communication throughout the assessment process.
- After completing the form, click on the ‘FINISH’ button to save your data. This will lock all fields and make the text non-editable. This feature has been introduced for security reasons. Please make sure all information is complete and correctly entered before clicking on the button.
- Save the form before closing it and email it back to ACER.
- Please retain a copy of the form for later reference & school records.

The list of participating students (per grade and per subject) should be e-mailed in the given ‘IBT Student List Template’ along with the Registration Form. Full names of students are to be provided. The names should be thoroughly checked to avoid errors as these would be used to generate unique student ID’s & barcodes for the test material & final reports. Re-prints are liable to be charged if errors are reported later.

Assessment Fee: AED 30/- per student per test.

The fee for the assessment service includes the test material – Test Booklets & Answer Sheets (test booklets are to be retained by the school and given back to the students along with their reports), delivery of test material, collection of answer sheets, scanning & analysis of results and delivery of final results/reports, including an easy step-by-step Administration Manual & a Data Interpretation Manual.

For further information about ACER and the International Benchmark Tests program, please visit the ACER website or contact the office at the address given below:

Australian Council for Educational Research
Block 2B, Office G21, Knowledge Village
P.O. Box 502339, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel: + 971 4 366 4098 / +971 4 434 1904 Fax: + 971 4 366 4097 / +971 4 434 1903
Email: ibt-me@acer.edu.au Website: http://www.acer.edu.au
IBT 2013 - SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete all sections of this form using CAPITAL letters.

SCHOOL NAME: ___________________________________________________________

PRINCIPAL: ______________________________________________________________

STREET ADDRESS: ________________________________________________________

CITY: __________________________ COUNTRY: __________________________ CURRICULUM: __________________________

SCHOOL PHONE: __________________________ FAX: __________________________

EMAIL ID: _______________________________________________________________

IBT COORDINATOR: _______________________________________________________

MOBILE: __________________________

EMAIL ID: _______________________________________________________________

**Instructions:** Please enter the total number of participating students in each grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
<th>MATHEMATICS</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>GRADE 3 :</td>
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</table>

**TOTAL REGISTRATION:**

**TOTAL PAYMENT:**

Please make the payment in UAE Dirhams by Demand Draft or Cheque payable to “Australian Council for Educational Research Limited”. Please complete the details below:

Bank: __________________________ DD/Cheque No.: __________________________

Amount: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Name: __________________________ Signature: __________________________
Instructions for the IBT Coordinator:

- The school must fill in the Registration Form sent as a soft copy on the school email ID & send back to ACER. A copy of the same must be retained for school records.

- It is the schools’ responsibility to return the following material to ACER Office:
  - Registration Form (via e-mail)
  - Participating Student Names (in the given ‘Student List Template’ along with the Registration Form, via e-mail)
  - Entry Fee (as Demand Draft or Bank Transfer)

- All International Benchmark testing material and Administration Manual will be delivered to schools at least one week prior to the testing dates. The school must ensure the correct number of test booklets and answer sheets have been received. In case of any discrepancy, please contact ACER Office at the address given below immediately.

- Each school will be provided with a Test Booklet and an Answer Sheet for each student. The question booklets are the property of the students; however these maybe collected after the test and returned to the students along with the test results.

- Each school is responsible for the strict security of the Test Material and must administer the tests according to the guidelines provided by ACER.

- The International Benchmark Tests must be administered on the respective, given test dates, within school hours.

- After the test, Answer Sheets will be collected by courier appointed by ACER. It is the responsibility of the IBT Coordinator to ensure that all Answer Sheets are duly collected and returned.

- Schools will be contacted in approx. 6 - 8 weeks after test completion. The International Benchmark reports and certificates will be sent via courier. It is the school’s responsibility to distribute the reports and certificates to participating students.

Address for Correspondence:

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Website: http://www.acer.edu.au
International work by ACER

ACER has completed a number of international projects, including the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 60 countries. Clients include:

- Ministries of Education
- UNESCO
- UNICEF
- World Bank
- AusAID
- Asian Development Bank
- Universities
- Schools and Colleges

ACER managed the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in more than 60 countries and manages the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) for Australia & UAE, including other International Surveys such as Civics Education Study (ICES) and Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO).

ACER is managing the UAE National Assessment Program (UAENAP) for the Ministry of Education in the United Arab Emirates.

ACER is also developing a National Assessment for entry into Universities in the UK, in conjunction with UCLES. A number of UK universities now use ACER designed tests such as the GAMSAT and MSAT for entry into medical schools.

Work for the Ministry of Education in Papua New Guinea to develop a curriculum standards monitoring test.

Work for the Ministry of Education in Chile to advise on the development of a standards based curriculum and assessment system, refinement of outcomes statements and alignment of monitoring statements.

Work to support curriculum assessment reforms for the Indonesian Ministry of Education.

Advice and training on student achievement testing and teacher-based assessment strategies in the Philippines.
ACER has programs, projects and other services operating in many countries around the world. The dots on this globe represent these programs. ACER office locations are indicated with a red star.

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