International Benchmark Test

Student assessment program for Grade 3 to Grade 10
• English
• Mathematics
• Science
• Reasoning

Compare performance nationally and internationally.

Compare students between grades and over time.
INVITATION TO JOIN THE IBT PROGRAM

from Professor Geoff Masters AO
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Council for Educational Research

Dear Fellow Educators,

I am writing to offer your school the opportunity to participate in the IBT assessment and reporting program developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). ACER has created a global program of school-level tests in English, Mathematics, Science and Reasoning suitable for students across a range of countries. These high-quality tests enable teachers, parents and school leaders to monitor the educational development of students throughout their years of primary and secondary schooling.

The approaches we take to assessing learning and the way we report success or failure at school send powerful messages to students. Over recent years there has been a shift in the focus of educational measurement towards diagnostic assessment and towards a ‘growth mindset’. With a comprehensive reporting program and diagnostic feedback, the IBT can assist educators in establishing the points that individuals have reached in their learning, in setting personal targets for further learning and in monitoring the progress that individuals make over time.

Assessments of progress are a welcome alternative to judging success only in terms of year-level standards. Importantly, the adoption of a growth mindset does not represent a lowering of expectations. On the contrary, it sets high expectations of every learner, including more advanced students who sometimes are not challenged or stretched at school.

The IBT assessment program draws on ACER’s many years of experience in educational research. Requiring students to think about topics rather than just recall information, to apply their subject knowledge rather than just remember facts, the IBT is at the forefront of modern educational measurement. With more than 250,000 tests sat annually, and a growing number of schools worldwide participating, I can highly recommend the IBT program for all schools that want to monitor students as they make their way along their personal learning journeys.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Masters

ABOUT ACER

ACER is one of the world’s leading educational research centres. Since it was established in 1930, it has built a strong reputation as a provider of reliable support and expertise to education policy makers and professional practitioners.

ACER has been instrumental in the implementation, management and reporting of large-scale international surveys such TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS and ICILS.

ACER’s mission is to create and promote research-based knowledge, products and services that can be used to improve learning across the life span.
ABOUT IBT

The IBT is an internationally administered program of assessments in English, Mathematics, Science and Reasoning for students in primary and secondary schools with tests appropriate for each grade level.

The IBT program was established in 2005 to provide schools in all countries with a high-quality skills-based assessment not linked to any national curriculum. This allows students from all countries to be compared fairly.

Schools use the IBT to:

- Identify student strengths and weaknesses in each subject.
- Provide teachers with reliable data to inform their teaching.
- Compare student and school performance internationally.
- Monitor student progress from one year to the next.

The IBT is written by a select team of ACER test-writing experts using the latest pedagogical research. Once the assessments have been sat and the data collected, ACER’s experienced psychometricians use the Rasch model of Item Response Theory to analyse the results. ACER then produces developmental scales for each subject onto which students are placed.

TEST DESIGN

The IBT tests are skill based. They are aligned to but do not follow any single national curriculum. This allows students from all countries to be compared fairly.

The duration of each test is 60 minutes. There are 40–45 multiple-choice questions on each test.

For each subject, there are eight tests. The levels are linked ‘vertically’ using a few common test questions in adjacent grade levels. This enables all students to be reported on that subject’s developmental scale regardless of the test sat. The tests are also linked ‘horizontally’ between calendar years by including a few test questions from previous years. This ensures the scale stays the same each year, enabling the monitoring of student growth over time.
**Mathematics**

1. This clock shows the correct time. Issam’s watch shows

   Issam’s watch is
   
   A 8 minutes fast.
   B 8 minutes slow.
   C 12 minutes fast.
   D 12 minutes slow.

**Question intent:** Calculates time difference between digital and analogue clocks and interprets this in context.

For Mathematics questions, students are asked to make sense of mathematical concepts in everyday situations. IBT Mathematics is not about simply remembering rules and procedures; it requires students to use higher-order thinking to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems.

**English**

1. Which word best describes Aunt Casey’s attitude to life?

   A reckless
   B intolerant
   C thoughtful
   D responsible

**Question intent:** Infer the main character’s attitude from her behaviour and speech in a narrative text.

In the English tests, students are not asked merely to retrieve information from a passage; they are asked to make inferences, form judgements and reflect on the texts. Questions addressing higher-order thinking skills are used to ascertain whether a student can ‘read between the lines’ and understand subtlety and nuance in the English language.
1 Michael is in the full shadow of a total solar eclipse.

Which point shows where Michael is located?

A P  
B Q  
C R  
D S

Question intent: Identifies position on Earth of full shadow during a total solar eclipse.

In the Science tests, students are asked to apply scientific principles to particular problems. IBT Science not only assesses students' knowledge of science, it assesses whether students are capable of applying this knowledge to the given contexts. Many of the higher-order thinking questions are based on scientific enquiry.

Reasoning

1 Which picture is next in the sequence?

A  
B  
C  
D

Question intent: Identifies the next step in a dual rotating geometric pattern.

Reasoning questions require students to think critically and make logical deductions, as well as identify connections and spot patterns. Students must use their higher-order thinking skills to solve non-routine problems. IBT Reasoning does not require prior knowledge of any particular content area and assesses students on their general capabilities.
RESULTS AND REPORTS

The IBT program provides a comprehensive set of PDF and Excel reports to school leaders, classroom teachers, students and parents. The reports include:

- Student performance on each question and each subject strand.
- Subject scale scores to monitor student performance over time.
- Described achievement bands to outline each student’s current skill set.
- Comparisons of students within the school, grade and class.
- Comparisons to national and international performance to see where students sit globally.
- National certificate of achievement for each student for each subject.

REPORTS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Receive an interactive report in MS Excel format.

See graphical comparisons at the click of a button.

Identify patterns and trends in student performance.

See how students perform against a developmental scale at a glance.

Benchmark report enables comparisons to other IBT schools nationally and internationally.
REPORTS FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Detailed data by subject strand.

Entire class or year level reported against the IBT developmental scale.

Student achievement bands describe the skills and understandings students have demonstrated.

REPORTS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Comprehensive student report shows parents how their child performed against national and international standards.

Certificates of achievement including honour, high distinction, distinction and participation.
ACER INDIA

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is one of the world’s leading educational research and assessment agencies. Established as a not-for-profit subsidiary in 2004, ACER India brings the global expertise of ACER to India. Based in New Delhi, the ACER India team has provided technical advice to governments and universities in South Asia, international aid agencies and not-for-profit organisations such as the World Bank, the UNICEF, and the British Council.

ACER India has successfully delivered projects in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Work undertaken by ACER India includes:

- Strengthening Learning Assessment Capacities at Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK), Madhya Pradesh
- Technical assistance to the Government of Bangladesh in implementing Learning Assessments for Secondary Institutions
- Evaluation of teacher professional development in the Kingdom of Jordan
- Support to the Government of Nepal in analysis of National Assessment of Student Achievement
- Support to Maldives National University to develop Master’s Course Material
- Technical Support for the National Achievement Survey (NAS) to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
- Capacity development and technical support on implementation of national learning assessments in Sri Lanka
- Evaluation of English medium instruction across government primary schools in Pakistan

In addition, Teacher magazine and our evidence-based publications are popular among school leaders and teachers in India. Most recently, we have introduced professional learning workshops for Indian schools, that help teachers and school leaders make the most of assessment results in their goal to improve classroom learning.

Dear Principal

I am pleased to invite your school to participate in the International Benchmark Test (IBT). The IBT is the most rigorous assessment of student learning available in India, offering a clear understanding of student learning for levels 3 to 10 in the core subjects of Mathematics, English, Science, and Reasoning.

The IBT is underpinned by extensive research and international best practice in assessment of student learning. It offers schools a tool that delivers valid and reliable results which enable the achievements of students to be benchmarked against their peers from around the world.

The detailed feedback provided by the IBT is invaluable in helping teachers and school-leaders pinpoint the strengths of students in the key subjects that are assessed, as well as areas that need further strengthening. It also provides rich insights that inform teaching practices to support better student learning, and allows specific areas to be targeted for individual students.

From a management standpoint, the IBT supports schools in improving learning levels across the board, thus improving the overall performance of the school.

My colleagues and I welcome any questions that you may have, and look forward to your participation in the IBT.

Best wishes,

Amit Kaushik
CEO, ACER India

For more detailed information about IBT, visit [http://ibt.acer.org](http://ibt.acer.org)
For any further assistance, contact the IBT team on +91 11 410974333 or email sales.india@acer.org