

## DIVING RIGHT IN

Pathways School Gurgaon offered its Middle Years Programme students eAssessment as soon as possible after being authorized.

Pathways School Gurgaon (PSG) in Gurgaon, Haryana, India, was authorized to offer the Middle Years Programme (MYP) on 20 January, 2016. Just a little more than a year later, the school's grade 10 students took the MYP eAssessments. That was the soonest possible opportunity.

The ability to offer eAssessment was one of the main reasons that the school wanted to provide the MYP. It already offered the Diploma Programme and Primary Years Programme but had used the Cambridge curriculum for middle years students. Having externally marked, standardized assessments at the end of the middle years is something that universities in India want to see, says Rohit Bajaj, school director, and parents know that. "It also was the school vision that we would be a continuum school," Bajaj adds. "And I feel it is very important to know and to understand how the skills have been developed in the young learners."

In addition to moving quickly to offer MYP eAssessment, Pathways School Gurgaon chose to offer all the on-screen exams and ePortfolios. There was some nervousness about the types of questions, the possibility of snags in the technology and how the students would do on the exams, Bajaj says, "but I think we were very confident that it was going to be a great impact."

The school did not simply assume things would go well as it implemented MYP eAssessment. Instead, it prepared students and teachers and kept parents informed. For students, ongoing formative assessments, unit-based summative assessments, year-end assessments and mock exams helped prepare them well to be comfortable with the exams, Bajaj says. To familiarize students, teachers and parents with the expectations and format, a task from a previous year's on-screen exams was annotated and shared.

**Pathways School  
Gurgaon (private):  
Pre-nursery through  
grade 12**

**First offered the Middle  
Years Programme:  
2016**

**Total number of students:  
1,553**

**School director:  
Rohit Bajaj**

**Middle school principal:  
Dimpu Sharma**

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—ROHIT BAJAJ, SCHOOL  
DIRECTOR, PATHWAYS  
SCHOOL GURGAON

To prepare to provide MYP eAssessment, teachers went to International Baccalaureate (IB) professional development workshops, attended webinars on eAssessment and did in-school training, including with IB facilitators. They also studied sample papers from past years.

“We did a lot of open houses for the parents so they could come and ask us questions,” Bajaj says. PSG made sure that parents became familiar with the MYP eAssessment framework and terminology. “We made parents aware of the eAssessment software and the safety features, the sample papers published, how the learning and content were different from other boards,” says Dimpu Sharma, principal of the middle school. “We made them aware of the conceptual and skill-based understanding.” The fact that the students use laptops for academic work in school helped make parents more comfortable with MYP eAssessment, she adds.

PSG gradually introduces eAssessment modules to its MYP students during the five years of the programme, allowing them to practice thinking and communicating digitally in a stipulated amount of time, Bajaj says. Mid-term assessments are done in grades 8 and 9, and year-end assessments are done in grades 6 through 9. Students start in grade 8 with on-screen assessments, and mock eAssessments are scheduled twice during grade 10.

Not only have the type and scheduling of testing changed with MYP eAssessment, the use of online sources has changed, too, says Sharma. More virtual labs, audio-video clips, online calculators and graph-making tools are being used, she explains.

In addition to the on-screen exams, MYP eAssessment includes ePortfolios, which permit assessment of students’ coursework in language acquisition, arts, physical and health education and design. The portfolios are internally marked by teachers and then moderated to international standards by the IB. Pathways School Gurgaon students embraced ePortfolios with enthusiasm: some of them did three portfolios the first year. However, Bajaj says the school noticed that doing that many portfolios was stressful, so the next year students were given an option to do two portfolios.

Students, teachers and the school all have learned from the experience with MYP eAssessment. “There has been an enhancement in the digital thinking and planning of responses by students,” Sharma says. “ATL [approaches to teaching and learning] skills, critical and creative thinking and ability to use technology have also shown improvement. They are better equipped for the Diploma Programme in terms of thinking skills.” Based on MYP eAssessment subject reports, teachers are providing more focused criteria and task-specific feedback, she says.

Bajaj says the on-screen exams and ePortfolios have helped in improving practices and planning, “eAssessment has helped us see how we can better develop our students’ skills,” he says. “It’s a good way to inform our teaching practices.” The school also can look at student learning against global standards of achievement. As a continuum school, Pathways School Gurgaon uses eAssessment feedback to determine if there are any gaps in the MYP and Diploma Programme transition and knowledge and adjust accordingly, he adds. “It helps us consider how we want to plan ahead for the coming year.”

“There’s been a lot of enthusiasm and excitement in this learning experience,” Bajaj says. “The big takeaway is the effect on the children’s skills.”

**For more information about MYP eAssessment visit: [www.ibo.org/e-assessment](http://www.ibo.org/e-assessment)**

