



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Howaida Nadim
Communications Coordinator
Tel: 4559531; Fax: 4659444

Annual Student Assessments Begin

Essential Element of “Education for a New Era” Reform Effort

Doha, Qatar (April 4, 2004) – The Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment begins today at secondary schools throughout Qatar. It consists of a series of standardized tests in Arabic, English, mathematics and science, and is an important element of “Education for a New Era,” the nation’s initiative to reform K-12 education.

Over the next six weeks, these tests will be administered to students in all grades at all public and private Arabic schools in Qatar. Parents are encouraged to make sure their children are present for these exams. The schedule for the Assessment is as follows:

Secondary Schools	April 4-8 and 11-15
Preparatory Schools	April 18-22 and 25-29
Elementary Schools	May 2-6 and 9-13

“The Assessment is an essential element in our effort to build a world-class school system in Qatar,” said Evaluation Institute Director Adel Al-Sayed. “These tests are based on international standards and will help us ensure that Qatari students are learning at the same level as their peers around the world.”

The Assessment will not be used to determine student promotion or graduation but rather is a tool for gathering information about the quality of our school system based on student performance. Beginning this year it will be conducted annually, with these first tests establishing a baseline from which to compare all future test results. A pilot of this baseline test was conducted in October 2003 in a representative sample of Qatari schools to make sure that the test questions and the test process were functional.

The Assessment is unique and differs in significant ways from the national exit exam and other tests currently administered in Qatar. It uses a multiple choice format, in addition to essay questions for students in the higher grades. In the near future,

sample tests will be available at www.education.gov.qa to help familiarize parents and students with the testing format.

As future tests are administered, the students' collective test scores - together with a wide range of other information about schools and their performance - will be made available in the form of a school report card published by the School Evaluation Office of the Evaluation Institute. Parents will be able to use the information on the report card to help identify the best schools for their children.