



Assessment policy

1. Philosophy of assessment

The main aim of student assessment in senior school education is to support curricular goals and encourage student learning and enable them to reveal their full potential and achieve the best possible results in final formal examinations (national curriculum / IB).

In order to achieve this aim assessment must be **criterion-based** and be **ongoing**. Different strategies of formative assessment are used to give feedback on the strengths and limitations of the student work in order to improve student learning. At the same time summative assessment is used at regular intervals to judge the level of attainment of the students and also to evaluate the success of the course and the teaching methods used.

Assessment should equally be supported by and lead to learning how to learn. Learning processes at school are considered to be part of and as enabling a “lifelong learning “process, therefore the emphasis is on making the student a better judge of their own performance and thus helping them to become an autonomous life-long learner.

2. Assessment requirements and use of programme assessment criteria

General aspects combining the national system and the IB standards

Assessment practices in the national system as well as the IB DP are in line with the philosophy and principles described above, since both are criterion based and ongoing and make use of summative and formative assessment methods. Since both systems follow the same principles they can not only be combined and put into practice alongside each other but also lead to synergetic effects as to the development of the students' skills and capabilities as autonomous learners.

The scheduling of internal assessment timelines for the double diploma (Abitur and IB Diploma) is administered in a way that allows a combination of both systems in the best possible way (compare document 2-year-cycle internal / external assessment IB Diploma - Abitur). These timelines are evaluated and revised by the Head of School, Senior Head of School, the IB coordinator and the IB teachers on a regular basis and handed out to students, parents and teaching staff so that collisions are avoided in the best possible way and the workload is distributed evenly throughout the two-year course, reducing stress levels and giving enough time for a feedback on student work.

Assessment requirements

Teachers regularly carry out written and oral assessment throughout the two-year programme. Written and oral assessment is part of the summative assessment in the German system, at the same time helping the students to improve performance in a formative way for both the IB Diploma programme and the German Abitur. The teachers assess the students' progress and report it back to them, teachers encourage them to evaluate and improve their performance. This is particularly so as not only grades are given but comments and suggestions for improvement are provided for the students. This enables them to identify their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

Ongoing assessment takes place in direct teacher-student interaction and feedback is given in classroom contexts as well as in individual supervision talks.

Assessment instruments used for formal assessment at the end of the course (e.g. past papers of Abitur or IB exams) are regularly used in the classroom to improve the learning process. Having students use mark schemes helps them to evaluate their own work and to focus on criteria, while the teacher's role is more that of a counsellor than that of an instructor.

Further instruments in use at our school to support the formative learning process are teacher supported self-evaluation or self-assessment (for training purposes the teacher provides mark schemes against which the individual work can be marked), peer evaluation/assessment (of group results, e.g. in Group 4 project). It is the teacher's pedagogical decision to set the tasks just at the right level for the student and to adjust that level as the student progresses. The instrument and reporting strategies which are in place help to ensure individual support in the best possible way.

Comparison of formal assessment throughout the two-year IB Diploma Programme / national curriculum

	German system	IB Diploma programme
Frequency of formative and summative assessment	<p>eight written exams per HL/LK subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written Abitur exams in three subjects / oral exam in one subject - coursework /oral work is assessed throughout the year - written work / coursework both count for 50% of the final mark/grade - grades 1(excellent)-6 (fail) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internal assessment (according to deadlines) in all IB DP subjects - external assessment at the end of the Diploma Programme in all 6 IB DP subjects - predicted grades which represent expected overall performance - grades 7 - 1
Recording and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff meeting on student development and assessment twice a year - informal information on performance / ways to improve to parents and students once a year or on request - additionally, parents can consult teachers in their weekly office hour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff meeting on student development and assessment twice a year - individual feedback on drafts, essays, presentations and other subject-specific tasks - predicted grades (recording) - additionally, parents can consult teachers in their weekly office hour
homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral/written/creative tasks aimed at revising, consolidating or applying syllabus criteria and knowledge - Oral/written/creative tasks aimed at preparing new (aspects of) syllabus criteria - tasks to help students practise meeting the assessment expectations and standards (see above) - tasks to help students develop their creative potential and personal skills (including within a group) - tasks allowing for an individualised learning process 	

Assessment criteria

Cognitive skills (subject specific) tested in written papers cover three levels of performance:

- knowledge / understanding
- application / analysis
- reflection / evaluation / critical thinking / synthesis as well as presentation and language skills

These skills are tested by every teacher in the respective subject throughout the two and half years of Senior School and are the same ones that are assessed in the final Abitur exams, which are partly externally set and marked by school teachers applying the externally provided mark schemes. Especially in the higher level courses emphasis is put on the higher-order cognitive skills. The skills tested overlap greatly with IB objectives (cf. Diploma Programme assessment, [Principles and Practice, chapter 3.5](#)) covering a great variety of cognitive skills that have to be addressed in the learning process in the classroom.

A significant difference is that formal assessment in the IB is external to a much greater extent than in the national system where coursework and final exam papers are marked by subject teachers and not by an external examiner. But despite this, the methods and practices used formatively by teachers during the course as well as summatively towards the end of the course are similar.

Criteria (subject specific) for coursework cover

- quality and quantity of oral participation
- ability to reproduce, apply knowledge / analyse and to put forward reasoned arguments /evaluate
- problem-solving skills
- interaction and cooperation with other students
- use of appropriate methods and language
- presentation skills

3. Links between the assessment policy and other documents

Links between assessment policy and language policy

The principles and practices of the assessment policy are valid for the assessment of student performance in first and foreign languages. Specific criteria that concern the assessment of language proficiency are described in the respective section of the language policy.

Links between assessment policy and admissions policy

In the selection process for the IBDP one aspect we take into consideration is the candidate`s report. Performance levels in the subjects serve as an indicator whether or not a candidate should be encouraged to enrol in the programme and attempt the double qualification of Abitur and IB Diploma. Even though we do not impose the condition of a specific *numerus clausus*, grades in chosen IBDP subjects should be at least at good standard (or better). Performance in English must be good.

Links between assessment policy and inclusion policy

When it comes to assessing the performance of students, each student should be able to show his/her full potential. Thus the inclusion of students are catered for by the provision of technical equipment, an extension of the working time or other suitable means to balance out disadvantages (compare inclusion policy).

Links between assessment policy and academic honesty policy

In cases of malpractices or other breaches of academic honesty in student work used for formative, summative or formal assessment the principles and practices described in the academic integrity policy apply (compare academic honesty policy).

4. Roles and responsibilities for implementing, standardising and reviewing assessment policy

Formal assessment in the national system is externally set by the respective school authorities, i.e. the Ministry of Education. The rules and regulations about assessment practices are clearly set out in the legal framework published by the ministry. At the beginning of each course the Senior Head of School, the IB coordinator and each subject teacher inform the students about the assessment means and criteria set for the national system and the IB Diploma.

On a school level, each subject group decides in a collaborative process on the focus and administrative issues of the assessment process. Regular meetings throughout the year, at least one meeting per half-term, are devoted to address this. These bodies can also decide on optional standardised tests in different grades, e.g. standardised Maths test in grade 10. Instruments like this help to promote collaborative work among subject teachers, help develop criterion-based mark schemes and evaluate assessment practices at the school in an ongoing process. It helps students to understand the nature of criterion-based assessment and to better judge their own performance.

It is common practice that subject teachers are asked to hand in samples of student work in class tests regularly to the Head of School or the designee for the respective subject in order for the school administration to ensure implementation of standards. During the Abitur exam period, exam papers are remarked by other teachers (internally or externally), thus exerting a sort of “external moderation” on the school’s exam grading. If significant differences in the marking occur, a third check remark by the local school authorities will be done.

Training new teachers

Teacher training in Germany involves an 18-month post university educational training programme which is organised as a combination of didactic instruction and practical experience as trainee at a school. Trainee teachers are instructed about assessment procedures during their 18-month professional teacher training by their seminar tutors. In addition, they will carry out assessment practices first under the supervision of an experienced teacher and - at a later stage of their training- independently.

Teachers who also teach students in the IBDP attend an appropriate IB Workshop in the subject they will teach, at which the principles of IB assessment are presented and put into practice. Guidance and support are provided by other subject staff and the IB Coordinator. The latter provides new teachers in the IBDP with appropriate documents (e.g. subject guide, subject support material, recent subject reports, examination mark sheets) and access to the PRC website so that IB assessment is carried out in accordance with the regulations.

When a new IB curriculum is introduced, the IB Coordinator ensures that a subject teacher attends a subject-specific workshop and afterwards informs his/her colleagues on changes so that a review of previous practices can be carried out and new assessment strategies introduced if necessary.

5. Procedures for access arrangements and recording of DP assessments

It is the responsibility of the IB subject teachers to make sure that all internal IB deadlines are met by the students and to provide the IB coordinator with all the necessary assessment documentation, predicted grades and electronic versions of the student work handed in for internal assessment. The IB coordinator uploads the predicted and internal assessment grades as well as the samples for external monitoring and makes sure that all the IB deadlines are met.

Externally assessed student work is uploaded by the students themselves and authenticated by the subject teachers. The IB coordinator uploads the predicted grades and makes sure that the IB deadlines are met.

References:

Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles into practice

Diploma Programme: From principles into practice, for use from August 2015

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