

International School of Ouagadougou

Assessment Policy

ISO Mission Statement

The International School of Ouagadougou strives to cultivate a student's intellect and character, in an English-speaking environment, by offering strong academic programs while promoting cultural understanding and community involvement.

A. Principles

Assessment is intended to authentically reflect student performance in relation to the curriculum standards and to communicate a student's current level of understanding, proficiency, and/or ability. Effective assessment is ongoing, transparent through the use of clear instructions and a comprehensive rubric, and a part of the learning process.

Assessment at ISO is differentiated in terms of types of assignments, products, and processes and provides individualized, constructive feedback that facilitates growth and formalized opportunities for appeals, self-advocacy, and reflection. Teachers may determine that students will have the opportunity to revisit an assessment, unless compelling evidence suggests there has been a violation of the academic honesty policy. ISO teachers will be supported and encouraged to collaborate on assessment design and standardization of measurement through staff development, time resources, and structured planning scheduled within the school year.

B. Assessment Practices

“Assessment, evaluation, and documentation are essential to any teaching and learning process. The way learning is documented and assessed directly influences what gets taught. Rather than a focus on products, assessment should focus on documenting a combination of learning processes and products as a way to inform pedagogical decisions.”
-- Harvard University's Project Zero

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment should:

- Provide timely feedback to students to promote learning and facilitates improvement .
- Develop understanding of skills, knowledge and concepts in each subject.
- Develop a growth mindset that drives motivation and achievement.
- Provide opportunities for students to transfer what they know to unfamiliar contexts.
- Provide data to teachers to inform their practice in order to meet the needs of each learner.

Principles of Assessment

1. All students can grow and improve academically.
2. Assessment should be valid and effectively measure student attainment of the intended learning outcomes at the appropriate level.

3. Assessment should be consistent and continuous throughout the year to guide students in their learning.
4. Students should be responsible for their own learning through self-reflection and peer assessment.
5. Information about assessment should be explicit, accessible and transparent so it is available to staff, students, parents and other external assessors.
6. Pre-Assessment, formative, and summative assessment should be included in each program to ensure that the purposes of assessment are adequately addressed.
7. Students are entitled to timely feedback that promotes learning and facilitates improvement should be an integral part of the assessment process.
8. Assessment should be inclusive and differentiated to meet the needs of each learning.
9. Staff development policy should include assessment professional development.

ISO Assessment Procedures

Effective assessment allows students to demonstrate a wide range of skills and conceptual understanding. The assessments encompasses written, computational and performance tasks across the curriculum. A variety of formative and summative assessments are used. These assessments include multiple-choice type quizzes and tests, short and extended responses, essays, research papers, projects, portfolios, class discussions, group and individual oral presentations, individual oral commentaries, multimedia presentations, skits and performances, problem-solving teams, group critiques, historical investigations, experimental investigations, response journals, investigation workbooks, and reflection logs.

Ongoing student achievement is measured to inform teaching and learning. Differentiation of instruction occurs continuously as a means for assisting students in demonstrating understanding of content standards. Students are engaged in continuous peer- and self-assessments throughout the coursework in an effort to assist them in developing a variety of useful learning strategies. Students and teachers are encouraged to make their thinking visible in order to promote engagement, understanding, and independence.

All assessments are criterion-referenced. Criterion-referenced assessments are used to determine whether students have mastered specific skills or concepts according to AERO Standards and the IB aims and objectives of each course. Assessment criteria and procedures are outlined through teachers' course syllabi, curriculum pacing guide, and standards; teachers' classroom instructional strategies; informational meetings with IB Diploma Coordinator.

Formative Assessment

- Allows students to understand their progress towards meeting IB standards.
- Gives feedback to students as they are learning so they may apply new understanding to future problems and tasks.
- Allows students and teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and work towards a plan of support.
- Shows students explicitly how they can improve by addressing problems immediately.
- Formative assessment do not count towards a final grade.
- Allows teachers to target their teaching strategies.

Summative Assessment

- Evaluates student performance and learning at any given time.
- Should be authentic and include real-world applications.
- Should be reliable and give similar results in different situations and student cohorts.
- Should be a valid assessment of learning goals and standards.
- Should include a variety of approaches to allow all students to show what they can do and understand.
- Will require students to apply their learning in a new context.
- Should be flexible allowing a summative assessment to become a formative assessment and be the student be retested.

Late, Incomplete, and Missing Assessments

Given that any assignment is a valid assessment with a clearly outlines learning objective and a reasonable initial deadline, the event of failure to meet the assignment deadlines:

1. Students who inform teachers before the deadline that they are having problems or have mitigating circumstances may be given extensions at the teacher's discretion.
2. Should work not turned in on time, students may be assigned the designated after-school support session in which he/she will be expected to complete the work. Attendance is mandatory and non-negotiable and the after-school activities are suspended in these instances.
3. Students repeated late on assignments will be referred to the Upper School Principal who will address the infractions with the possible consequences, but are not limited to:
 - a. A meeting with parents to discuss implications
 - b. Removal from extra-curricular activities including sports teams and other privileges
 - c. A contractual period of probation for academic issues
4. Students who have not submitted work after 3 weeks, the student will receive "I" for "Insufficient evidence to formulate a grade". An "I" will be included in the student's final grade and the student may not receive credit for the course.

Grading and Marking

All courses receive a grade at the end of each quarter and semester. Semester grades are evaluated for the awarding of credit. Grades are reported on an A-F scale with few exceptions (e.g. Reading Support, online courses) and are converted to a GPA for the purposes of university admission.

ISO 6-12 Grade Scale				
IB Grade	Letter Grade	Average (%)	GPA	GPA for HL Subjects
1	F	0-59	0.0	0.0
1	D-	60-62	0.7	1.2
2	D	63-66	1.0	1.5
2	D+	67-69	1.3	1.8
3	C-	70-72	1.7	2.2
3	C	73-76	2.0	2.5
4	C+	77-79	2.3	2.8
4	B-	80-82	2.7	3.2
5	B	83-86	3.0	3.5
5	B+	87-89	3.3	3.8
6	A-	90-92	3.7	4.2
6	A	93-96	4.0	4.5
7	A+	97-100	4.3	4.8

Assessments are collected throughout each quarter and the average of those assessments comprise 80% of a semester grade. The remaining 20% of a semester grade calculation arises from a semester exam with few exceptions (e.g. the Arts, Physical Education, etc.).

Semester Grades

Quarter 1 + Quarter 2	→	80%
<u>Semester Exam</u>	→	+ 20%
Semester Grade	→	100%

Recording and Reporting

Grades are recorded by teachers in Rediker Gradebook. These grades are available to parents and teachers on a daily basis except two weeks before the end of a quarter. Teachers are encouraged to update grades in a timely manner so as to keep parents and students informed of progress.

Report Cards are issued for Semester 1 and 2 and include letter grades and progress narratives written by each subject teacher. Progress reports are issued midway through quarter 1 and at the end of quarters 1 and 3. Student/Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice per year with additional conference schedules on an as needed basis.

Homework

Homework will be assigned regularly as an independent activity to either practice material learned in class or, as in a flipped classroom, to introduce concepts that will be applied in the class. The amount of homework is adjusted according to grade level. Each teacher will explain the specifics of their homework policy in the course syllabus. The average time to complete a homework assignment should be 30 minutes per class. After this time students are encouraged to seek help from their teacher. Students should not be staying up late into the night to finish homework as sleep is important. Effective homework is not busy work but should strengthen concept skills, study skills, time-management, self-direction, and responsibility.

C. The IB Diploma and IB Courses

Awarding of the IB Diploma

From *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, IBO (2019)*:

- DP category candidates must study six subjects, plus the three core subjects—EE, TOK and CAS. They must accumulate no fewer than 24 points from assessment in these subjects, in addition to grade stipulations.
- They must meet all of the additional requirements—see section A2.2.2.
- They must meet all of the requirements within a maximum of three examination sessions.
- Candidates who successfully meet these conditions will be awarded the diploma.
- Candidates who take the diploma in multiple languages may be eligible for a bilingual diploma.

The IB diploma is awarded based on performance across all parts of the DP.

- Each subject is graded 1–7, with 7 being the highest grade.
- These grades are also used as points (that is, 7 points for a grade 7, 6 points for a grade 6, and so on) in determining if the diploma can be awarded.
- TOK and the EE are graded A–E, with A being the highest grade. These two grades are then combined in the diploma points matrix to contribute between 0 and 3 points to the total.
- CAS is not assessed but must be completed in order to pass the diploma. See section A2.2.2.
- The overall maximum points from subject grades, TOK and the EE is therefore 45: $((6 \times 7) + 3)$.

Assessment in the IB Diploma Program and IB courses at ISO reflect the ISO assessment policy. ISO uses a blend of formative and summative assessments, and the types of assignments, rubrics, and coursework are determined by the teacher and may vary from class to class. While the IB grade for a course is determined through the internal and external assessments, the ISO grade is determined from a student's body of work throughout the semester and is an average of coursework, including assessments, and the semester exam, if applicable.

While the IB awards a grade on a 1-7 scale, ISO uses the 1-7 scale only in cases where a predicted grade is required. In all other cases, including the reporting of student progress on quarter reports and assigning a grade for credit at the semester, ISO uses an A-F grading scale as shown in the Upper School Parent-Student Handbook.

Predicted Grades

ISO collects predicted grades from teachers twice per year: September and February of year 2. Teachers will be requested to provide a predicted grade on a 1-7 scale in September for each student in their class in year 2, and the counselor and IB coordinator will meet with students and their parents to review their predicted grades and make recommendations for improvement. September predicted grades will take into account students' performance and understanding of course content over the first year, achievement on the second semester exam, and progress made on internal assessments as applicable. Predicted grades will be collected again in February of year 2 after semester 1 exams are finished and report cards have been posted. These will again be shared with students and parents in a meeting with the counselor and IB coordinator.

Students have the option to send their predicted grades to universities as part of their application. Some universities require predicted grades, while others make these optional and may consider them. For students applying early decision/early action to the U.S., ISO will send the September of year 2 predicted grades, if requested or required, along with a student's transcripts. For students applying regular decision to the U.S., to Canada, or to universities in other countries, ISO will send the February of year 2 predicted grades, if requested or required, along with a student's transcripts.

During the period of collecting predicted grades or after predicted grades have been shared, students and parents may not request a teacher directly, in person, through email, or otherwise, to change the grade. Students may ask teachers how they could improve prior to collection of predicted grades or after sharing predicted grades. Students and parents should be satisfied with a teacher referring to the semester or quarter report card comments as sufficient guidance, particularly if students are unaware of or has not addressed the issues identified in the comments.

External Assessment vs. Internal Assessment

External assessments include any IB assessment that is completed by the student and marked by an IB examiner. Most often external assessments are exams completed in May of year 2, but these may also include the HL Essay in IB English or French Language and Literature or the Comparative Study in IB Visual Arts. External assessments completed on paper, i.e. exams like IB Biology paper 1, paper 2, or paper 3, for example, are mailed to IB examiners. Other external assessments completed digitally (i.e. typed by computer), like the Extended Essay, TOK Essay, etc., are uploaded to the IB online system on behalf of the student by the IB coordinator.

Internal assessments (IA) include any IB assessment that is completed by the student and marked by the teacher. In these assessments, the subject teacher will mark the student work against the published IA assessment criteria and will send the marks to the IB to be used in awarding a grade for the subject. Internal assessments are moderated, which means the IB requests a sample of student work from the school and then evaluates how precisely and accurately the teacher marked the work in relation to the IA assessment criteria. The marks for each student in a class may be adjusted up or down according to the results of the moderation process. Students and parents should be aware that the marks assessed by the teacher for the IA may not be the final marks.

IB 1-7 Grade

As students progress through their IB courses, they must develop their skill to reflect on their progress and achievement and to self-evaluate using the IB grade descriptors for each subject. Below are the grade descriptors for each IB subject on offer at ISO. These can be a useful source of feedback at any point over the two years of the program as students question where they are in relation to their goals and what they must do to improve. Also, during periods when predicted grades are requested, teachers make explicit use of the IB grade descriptors for their subjects to regard each student holistically and

strike a balance between valuing summative assessment evidence (e.g. exams, tests) and making use of other observable evidence (e.g. classroom discussion, interactions during direct instruction, etc.).

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