



Curriculum and Assessment Policy

***Note: Much of policy heavily based on Assessment Policy of The International School Paris, an IB World School, with permission.**

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Background Information

This document is applicable to IB Diploma students (Grade 11-12), and is supplementary to the guidelines set out by the Education Bureau (EDB) HKSAR [\[link\]](#), the Curriculum Development Council [\[link\]](#) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority [\[link\]](#), which all schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme in HKSAR must follow.



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Principles of Assessment

DBS recognizes that teaching, learning and assessment are fundamentally interdependent. We are aware of and guided by the following principles:

Best serving student needs. Our **students**:

- have multiple learning styles, and cognitive and affective skills levels.
- have different cultural experiences, expectations and needs.
- perform differently according to the context of learning.
- need to know their achievements and zone of proximal development in the learning process.
- should receive feedback that is positive and constructive, and have an active role to play in self-regulation, self-assessment and peer assessment.

In the **curriculum and instructional process**, assessment:

- constitutes an integral part of the pedagogy / assessment / reporting cycle.
- contributes greatly to the data used in monitoring student learning and achievement.
- aids in determining the effectiveness of teaching.
- informs the need for ongoing curriculum and assessment review and revision, especially as relates to Backwards Design of courses as described by the Understanding by Design Program.
- utilises a variety of methods.
- should be in a context that is relevant and motivating to students.

The **broader scope** requires feedback to parents and others, as appropriate to maintain:

- transmission of relevant data to receiving institutions.
- assessment and appraisal of a broad range of concepts, attitudes, knowledge and skills to thrive in multiple cultural contexts and an increasingly complex world.

In addition:

- Assessment undertaken by the IB Division must be in accordance with the Hong Kong EDB assessment principles.
- Students should be made aware of the assessment tools used before commencing any area of study.



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- All internal assessment should be designed to be formative in nature for the student and summative where appropriate.
 - Feedback to students should be prompt and supportive.
 - The department should keep a clear and accurate record of any assessment.
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Why do we assess?

DBS is involved in the process of assessment of its student body in order to:

- enhance the learning of the students', including cognitive, affective, and metacognitive skills.
 - monitor the progress of individual student learning and achievement, including self-monitoring skills.
 - determine the effectiveness of teaching.
 - inform curriculum review.
 - evaluate suitability of courses.
 - provide ongoing communication with all stakeholders in the school community, including students, teachers, parents, secondary and post-secondary institutions, and future employers.
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How do we assess?

We assess by **gathering and analyzing data** from the following sources:

- Multiple types of ongoing formative assessment
 - Summertime assessment tasks
 - Previous summative records
 - Parent consultations
 - Conversations with other stakeholders and community members
 - The student as a metacognitive learner, with emphasis on higher-order cognitive skills such as synthesis, reflection, evaluation, and critical thinking.
 - Teachers' professional knowledge and expertise
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How do we grade at the Pre-IB Level?

The pre-IB program is dominated by continual assessment and is very skills-based in order to prepare our students for the IB program. We will report in the same manner as the main body of the school, but eliminate ranking students.

The Pre-IB level is equivalent to the local New Senior Secondary (NSS) system Year 1 level (Grade 10). Within the pre-IB program, grading should be undertaken constructively and consistently, giving students credit for what they have achieved without being influenced by too many omissions. Teachers do not subtract marks for material that is irrelevant or incorrect. Instead, teachers look for evidence of what students know and understand. Teachers reward alternative yet equally valid answers that contain coherent ideas relevant to the question. Any mark scheme used should not be considered exhaustive.

Homework is an integral part of the formative process and as such is embedded in all programmes.

With regard to late submission of work please refer to the signed Student Agreement document which is part of the admissions process.

How do we grade at IB Level

[Diploma Programme assessment link](#)

During a particular reporting period several **formative** tasks will be utilized to provide detailed feedback on students' strengths and weaknesses, ultimately helping develop student capabilities. **Formative** assessments represent the process of gathering, analysing, interpreting and then using evidence to improve student learning and help students achieve their potential. These may be marked in a variety of ways to inform the student; they are unlikely to have included the higher order thinking skills needed to match the criteria necessary to achieve the topmost IB grades. They are, however, essential formative steps in the learning process to inform students, and influence teacher pedagogy especially with regards to scaffolding for higher order thinking. The Internal Assessments, for example, may be subdivided into components and a student may master individual steps.

Towards the end of a reporting period, and at other suitable intervals, **summative** tasks will be set which include the higher order thinking skills such that students have the opportunity to achieve the criteria for the highest levels. It is only these **summative** exercises, which include a variety of assessment types, (e.g. tests, quizzes, commentaries, presentations, and individual commentaries) that contribute to the final grade. The student should be given the optimum chance of succeeding in Subject Areas and in the programme.

Please also note that the reported **summative** grade is for a particular reporting period, and that it is **criteria referenced** rather than norm-referenced, and that it is not an average of the **summative** tasks, rather it is the **most accurate and recent descriptor** of student achievement in a particular subject.



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Some key features of the Diploma Assessment include:

- An emphasis on criteria related [as opposed to norm referenced] assessment. This method of assessment judges students' work in relation to identified levels of attainment (see grade descriptors), and not in relation to the work of other students.
- A distinction between summative internal and external IB assessment and the supporting formative process.
- Valuing the most accurate demonstration of student performance, and not just averaging attainment marks over a reporting period.
- Examining student understanding at the end of the course on the whole course and not just aspects of it. Students must be able to recall, adapt and apply knowledge and skills to novel questions, contexts, and works.

Assessment criteria should be used as the basis for awarding marks, in addition to any assessment-specific mark scheme. The student's answer should be placed in the highest level where the majority of descriptors correspond to the student's work. For example, if a student has achieved one level 7, two times level 6, and two times level 5 - then the overall level achieved will be a Level 6. Teachers use the full range of levels available. Teachers do not use decimals, percentages or fractions. When using a Diploma mark scheme, initial grading will follow the mark scheme. To ensure this is in line with the School's internal grading in accordance to the EDB, policy modifications may be made.

If a piece of work seems to fall between two level descriptors, only partially fulfilling the requirements of the higher descriptor, teachers re-read both of the descriptors in question and choose the descriptor which most appropriately describes the students' work



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What is a 7? And how do students obtain a 7 mark?

Each subject at both Higher and Standard level has an associated grade descriptor and a student has to be set tasks such that the full range of criteria can be achieved. This may not be the case in formative tasks where specific skills and knowledge components are being introduced. Summative tasks should, however, give the student the opportunity to match criteria over the full range. In summary, a student has the opportunity to obtain a Grade 7 when they undergo a summative task which addresses the higher order skills and they achieve those skills as identified in the descriptor.

IB DP Grade Descriptors

Group	Subjects offered at DBS	IB DP Grade Descriptors
1	English HL, SL Chinese HL, SL	N
2	French B HL, SL	N
3	History HL, SL Economics HL, SL Psychology HL, SL	N
4	Biology HL, SL Chemistry HL, SL Physics HL, SL	N
5	Mathematics Studies SL Mathematics SL Mathematics HL	N
6	Visual Arts HL, SL Music HL, SL	N

Assessment is gauged against subject specific criteria.

The award of Level 1: A candidate should be awarded Level 1 only in the following circumstances.

- If the work has been genuinely attempted, but no relevant material is correct or work has not been handed in.

Students are not awarded Level 1 if the teacher suspects that a candidate is guilty of malpractice. In this case, we refer to Diocesan Boys' School's Academic Honesty Policy.

The recording and reporting of individual levels of achievement should be organized in ways that provide students with detailed feedback on their progress as it relates to the assessment criteria for each subject.



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Students not writing in their first language

For assessments in many subjects, it is important to take into account and make allowances for the fact that some students will not be using their first language. Teachers are not marking for grammatical or syntactical accuracy; relevance lies in students presenting their answers as clearly as possible. All teachers should aid English B students by highlighting and improving language errors, where applicable.

For details please refer to the DBS IB Language Policy [\[here\]](#).

Assessment Submitted after Deadlines

Clear guidelines are given to the student at the beginning of the school year. The student and parent/ guardian have signed a Student Agreement which clearly sets out the consequences of handing in work late.

The penalties in terms of percentage deduction apply particularly to the Pre-IB course.

Assessment Missed Due to Absence

Students are responsible for queries regarding any and all work missed. All missed work must be completed.

Work due during an absence must be submitted on the first day the student returns to school. Work assigned during an absence is due on its regular due date unless prior arrangements are made with the teacher.

If a student is present in when a test or quiz is announced, the student is expected to take the test or quiz on the day of his or her return to school, pending teacher arrangement. Special arrangements for examinations will only occur due to sickness (accompanied with a doctor's certificate), bereavement or University Entrance interviews / examinations; otherwise the student will not be allowed to sit the examination and will receive a Level 1.

Field trips or other special events: Students are required to inform the teacher at least three days **prior** to the event. Students are responsible for the work missed while on the trip. Any assignments due the day of the field trip must be submitted prior to the field trip.



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Who undertakes assessment?

All students are assessed in Subject Area Courses by:

- The relevant staff
- External agencies

Other assessments are valued and encouraged:

- Student self-assessment, in ongoing self-regulation
- Peer assessment
- Portfolios or journals
- Observation and interviews

When do we assess?

- When students are engaged in both teacher-initiated and student-initiated activities
- When students are working with an adult
- When students are engaged in groupwork or pairwork
- When students are working independently
- When students are working on the school premises and on educational activities off-site

IB Assessment

Students take written examinations at the end of the programme (in May of their final year), which are marked and moderated by external IB Examiners. Students also complete assessment tasks in the school, which are either initially marked by teachers and then moderated by external moderators or sent directly to external examiners.

The marks awarded for each course range from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest). Students can also be awarded up to three additional points for their combined results on Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. From 2010 the Diploma is awarded to students who gain at least 24 points, (or 28 points if a student attains an “E” grade in either the Extended Essay or the TOK) subject to certain minimum levels of performance across the whole programme and to satisfactory participation in the Creativity, Action, Service requirement.

The highest total that a Diploma Programme student can be awarded is 45 points. Assessment is criterion based, measuring student performance on pre-specified assessment criteria based on the aims and objectives of each subject’s curriculum, rather than the performance of other students undertaking the same examinations.



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Internal and External Assessment Delineation

Subject	Section	Internal Assessment	External Assessment	External Assessment: Exam	Oral Component
English A1	Oral/Written		25%	45%	30%
Chinese A1	Oral/Written		25%	45%	30%
Chinese A2	Oral/Written		25%	45%	30%
English A2	Oral/Written		25%	45%	30%
French B	Oral		20%	50%	30%
Economics	Portfolio of 4	20%		80%	
Economics HL	Commentaries	20%		80%	
Geography	Report on field work	20%		80%	
Geography HL	Report on field work	20%		80%	
History SL	Investigation	20%		80%	
History HL	Investigation	20%		80%	
Psychology SL	Experimental study	20%		80%	
Psychology HL	Experimental study	20%		80%	
Biology SL	Practical	20%		80%	
Biology HL	Practical	20%		80%	
Chemistry SL	Practical	20%		80%	
Chemistry	Practical	20%		80%	
Physics SL	Practical	20%		80%	
Physics HL	Practical	20%		80%	



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Assessment: Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay

The diploma points matrix

May 2015 onwards

		Theory of knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No grade N
Extended essay	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade E	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition
	No grade N	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition

Points awarded for the externally assessed component (Part 1 Essay on Prescribed Title, 40 points), and for the internally assessed component, (Part 2 ToK Presentation, 20 points), are combined to give a total out of 60. The grade boundaries are then applied, to determine where the student falls on the ToK Markband (A to E).

The band descriptors are:

- Work of an **Excellent** standard
- Work of a **Good** standard
- Work of a **Satisfactory** standard
- Work of a **Mediocre** standard
- Work of an **Elementary** standard

The band descriptor is used both to determine the contribution of TOK to the overall diploma score and to provide the basis for school reporting.



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TOK and the Extended Essay

The performance of a student in Diploma Programme requirements, Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay is determined according to the quality of the work based on the application of the IBDP's assessment criteria. It is described by of the band descriptors, A–E. Using the **two** performance levels and the diploma points matrix, a maximum of **three** diploma points can be awarded for a student's combined performance.

A student who, for example, writes a **Satisfactory** Extended Essay and whose performance in Theory of Knowledge is judged to be **Good** will be awarded 2 points, while a student who writes a **Mediocre** Extended Essay and whose performance in Theory of Knowledge is judged to be **Excellent** will be awarded 2 points.

A student who fails to submit a ToK Essay, or who fails to make a Presentation, will be awarded N for ToK, will score no points, and will not be awarded a diploma.

Performance in both ToK and the Extended Essay of an **Elementary** standard is a failing condition and the student will not be awarded the diploma.

*Note: Beginning in 2015, attaining a grade “E” in either the extended essay and theory of knowledge continues to represent an automatic failure.

Diploma Award Conditions

All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional IB diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB diploma. The **IB diploma will be awarded** to a candidate whose total score is **24, 25, 26 or 27** points, provided all the following requirements have been met:

- a) Numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the diploma;
- b) An approved program of CAS has been completed;
- c) Grades A (highest) to D (lowest) have been awarded for both Theory of Knowledge and an extended essay;
- d) There is no grade 1 in any subject;
- e) There is no grade 2 at higher level;
- f) There is no more than one grade 2 at standard level;
- g) Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below;
- h) At least 12 points have been gained on higher level subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects must gain at least 16 points at higher level);
- i) At least 9 points have been gained on standard level subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 6 points at standard level);
- j) The final award committee has not judged the candidate to be guilty of malpractice.



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The **IB diploma will be awarded** to a candidate whose total score is **28 points or above**, provided all the following requirements have been met (differences with the above scheme are highlighted):

- a) Numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the diploma;
- b) An approved program of CAS has been completed;
- c) Grades A to D have been awarded for both Theory of Knowledge and an extended essay, with a grade of at least D in one of them;
- d) There is no grade 1 in any subject;
- e) There is no more than one grade 2 at higher level;
- f) **There are no more than two grades 2 at standard level;**
- g) Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below;
- h) **At least 11 points have been gained on higher level subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects must gain at least 14 points at higher level);**
- i) **At least 8 points have been gained on standard level subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 5 points at standard level);**
- j) The final award committee has not judged the candidate to be guilty of malpractice;
- k) A maximum of three examination sessions is allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB diploma;
- l) A bilingual diploma will be awarded to a successful candidate who takes a language A1 and a language A2.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the IBDP Coordinator who has the responsibility for implementing, evaluating and reviewing the assessment policy and training new teachers. The majority of this would be carried out in time allocated for IB Meetings and on a continuous informal basis.

It is also the responsibility of the IBDP Coordinator to keep the school community informed.

It is, however, the collaborative efforts of the teachers within the subject grouping to develop the assessment practices within their particular subject groupings and to induce new teachers within their subjects with the collective experience gained over time.

Teachers have responsibility to design and provide formative assessment structures and practices that help students improve their understanding of what constitutes excellence and where their own work stands in relation to this.

Students are the key component in their learning how to learn and as such have responsibility to become better judges of their own performance and work closely with teachers to improve their cognitive and affective skills.
