

# **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

## **The IB Diploma Programme**

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Contents based on:

*Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practices*, (2010/2004), IBO, Cardiff

*Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme*, (2010), IBO, Cardiff

*IB Assessment Policy: Goetheschule Essen* (2011)

Walvoord, Barbara E., (2010), *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments and General Education*. San Francisco, Jossey Bass

*Assessment Philosophy and Practice Viborg Katedralskole*

*Assessment Philosophy and Practice Copenhagen International School*

### **The International Baccalaureate's Mission Statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## The Learner Profile

**Inquirers** We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**Knowledgeable** We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**Thinkers** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators** We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Principled** We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences

**Open-minded** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring** We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers** We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenge and change.

**Balanced** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.



## Assessment philosophy

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It provides learners and teachers with feedback to revise performance and improve teaching and learning. Assessment enables the school to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of its programmes and provides direction for teachers, learners, parents, administration and overall school development.

For assessment to be effective, it should

- Be based on clear, known and understood assessment criteria
- Involve self-assessment and reflection on the part of the learner
- Provide timely, direct, specific and contextualized feedback to teachers, learners and parents
- Be integrated into all stages of the learning process
- Be supportive and motivating
- Place students at the centre of teaching and learning

## Assessment practices and strategies

Struer Statsgymnasium operates the following practices:

### Pre-assessment

If relevant, teachers assess learners' prior knowledge and experience in an appropriate way before beginning a new unit of work or learning experience

### Formative Assessment

On-going and regular assessment will take place during the teaching and learning process using a variety of methods to inform teachers and learners about the progress of learning

- Formative assessment and learning are directly linked and provide feedback to teachers and learners. It is responsive to learner needs and informs teaching practice.
- Formative assessment engages students actively in the process of learning. Students should learn to self-assess, peer-assess, and improve their performance with the aid of each teacher's feedback.
- Formative assessment provides students with opportunities to learn new skills and to achieve better results while taking risks and not being afraid to make mistakes as they are not working towards the achievement of grades.
- Formative assessment can for instance be draft assignments, oral presentations, questioning, discussion, visual representations and quizzes.

### Summative Assessment

Summative assessment often takes place at the end of a teaching and learning process or experience and is planned for in advance.

- The assessment is designed so that learners can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in authentic tasks and apply their skills. The tasks involved are usually modelled on those mandated by the IB and graded in accordance with IB criteria. These grades count towards semester grades.
- Summative assessments can take a variety of forms (including for example tests, mock examinations, lab reports, oral and visual presentations, essays, written assignments, projects, oral examinations).

## Self-assessment

Reflection and self-assessment are fundamental elements of the assessment process

- Self-assessment is useful both during a learning experience, in enabling the learner to set goals and strategies for personal development, and at the end of the learning experience, in helping the learner to take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- Self-assessment may be particularly relevant at the end of year one and during year two when students must examine their strengths and weaknesses in light of the coming exams. This can be done in talks with their subject teacher, counsellor and/or IB coordinator.

## Peer assessment

- Peer assessment may happen as part of the teaching and learning process. Examples of peer assessment in the Diploma Programme will be based on clear criteria given by the teacher and often mediated by the teacher. This will often take place in smaller groups during lessons, and the format can be oral feedback on written work, on class presentations, on drafts for written work (processual writing strategies). This is very much in line with the learner profile attributes of open-mindedness, communication and critical thinking.

## Assessment Strategies

### Observation:

At Struer Statsgymnasium all learners are observed regularly, with the teacher noting the performance of the individual, the group and the whole class. Observations include how groups work and the various roles of participants within the groups.

### Task Specific Rubrics:

Assessment criteria and learning outcomes are established and published to the learners clearly in advance of an assessment.

### Moderation:

Moderation refers to the checking and unifying of assessment standards. Internal moderation takes place in the DP Programme where this is possible. Where there is only one teacher of a subject, internal moderation is not possible within the subject but subject group teachers meet to discuss the criteria that apply for the subject group. E.g. a language B teacher will find it useful to discuss moderation with a language B teacher of a different language.

### Criterion Referencing:

All assessment is criterion referenced. Assessment in the Diploma Programme is guided by the IB and the guidelines and practices are outlined in the IB document *Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practices* (IBO 2010/2004). The IB describes assessment of the Diploma Programme as 'high-stakes, criterion-related performance assessment.' It is based on the following aims:

- DP assessment should support the curricular and philosophical goals of the programme, through the encouragement of good classroom practice and appropriate student learning.
- The published results of DP assessment (that is, subject grades) must have a sufficiently high level of reliability, appropriate to a high-stakes university entrance qualification.

- DP assessment must reflect the international-mindedness of the programme wherever possible, must avoid cultural bias, and must make appropriate allowance for students working in their second language.
- DP assessment must pay appropriate attention to the higher-order cognitive skills (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking) as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding and application).
- Assessment for each subject must include a suitable range of tasks and instruments/components that ensure all objectives for the subject are assessed.
- The principal means of assessing student achievement and determining subject grades should be the professional judgment of experienced senior examiners, supported by statistical information.

Some key features of Diploma Programme assessment include the following:

- An emphasis on criterion-related (as opposed to norm-referenced) assessment. This method of assessment judges students' work in relation to identified levels of attainment, rather than in relation to the work of other students.
- A distinction between formal IB assessment and the supporting formative processes that schools need to develop for themselves
- Valuing the most accurate demonstration of student performance, rather than just averaging attainment grades over a reporting period
- Examining student understanding at the end of the course, based on the whole course and not just aspects of it. Students must be able to recall, adapt and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts.

Assessments are based upon evaluating course aims and objectives and, therefore, effective teaching to the course requirements also ensures effective teaching to the examination and other formal assessment requirements. Students need to understand what the assessment expectations, standards and practices are and these are therefore all introduced early, naturally in instruction as well as class and homework activities. Teachers are responsible for designing and providing formative assessment structures and practices that help students to improve their understanding of what constitutes excellence and where their own work stands in relation to this.

**Formative assessment** is also important for the teacher, as it provides detailed feedback on the nature of the students' strengths and limitations. The emphasis here—a key component of learning how to learn—is on making the student a better judge of their own performance and then helping them to develop strategies to improve. Formative assessment focuses on assessment as an essential learning process. Assessment instruments primarily designed for formal assessment at the end of the course are also adapted and used formatively as part of the learning process.

**Formal assessment** in the Diploma Programme is defined by the IB as "all those assessment instruments that are used to contribute to the final qualification". These instruments include some multiple-choice tests for some of the Group 4 subjects, examination papers for most subjects, taken at the end of the two-year course, as well as a variety of other tasks (essays, research papers, written tasks, oral interviews, scientific and mathematical investigations and fieldwork projects) spread over different subjects and completed by students at various times under various conditions during their course. Some of these assessment instruments are used

formatively during the course, for internal assessment purposes, as well as summatively at the end.

### **Assessment Criteria**

Subject teachers present the assessment criteria of their subject early in the programme. Assessment tasks are marked according to these criteria so that students, teachers and parents are clear about the progress of the learner.

### **Grades, reporting and recording**

#### **The IB Grading Scale is as follows:**

7: Excellent  
6: Very Good  
5: Good  
4: Satisfactory  
3: Mediocre  
2: Poor  
1: Very Poor  
Grade 1 is failing grade.

#### **The TOK course and the Extended Essay are graded according to the following scale:**

A: Excellent  
B: Good  
C: Satisfactory  
D: Mediocre  
E: Elementary (failing grade)  
N: No grade

In order to achieve a final score for the Diploma, the numeric grades from the six subjects are added together. EE and TOK grades are converted into 1, 2 or 3 points (using the matrix below) and added to the subject score to achieve a final result out of 45. 24 points (and the meeting of a number of conditions, see the Grade Folder on the school's homepage) are required in order to 'pass' the Diploma.



		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

### Predicted Grades

Final Diploma Programme grades for each student are predicted twice in DP2, for two separate purposes. Between October and February, teachers predict grades on an individual basis to assist with student applications for university. Students are informed of their total predicted grade, and, where necessary, (usually for entrance to UK universities), of individual subject predicted grades. Teachers can change these predicted grades following the outcome of the mock examinations in February. In March, teachers again predict grades for students, in all subjects, including TOK and the EE, this time in response to an IB requirement to provide such grades prior to the final exams. For studies in Denmark the predicted grades are not required. Students can apply for further education in Denmark without grades and the grades will be reported to the institutions either through IB results service if the students inform the IB coordinator of which institutions they have applied to, or by the students themselves when the results are released in July.

### Grade Conversion and Danish Universities

The IB Diploma is recognized as an entrance qualification for admission to all the higher education institutions in Denmark, provided that the applicants have either passed Danish (as Danish A (HL or SL) or Danish B (HL)) in their IBDP examination or passed a required language test in Danish. The 2018 Conversion Table below details the manner in which IB Diploma points are converted to equate with the Danish grading system when determining eligibility to enter Danish universities.

If students do not pass the Diploma, but achieve at least 3 points in each of the six subjects (EE, CAS and TOK not relevant), they will still have a qualification equivalent of the Danish HF-eksamen, giving access to vocational colleges [professionshøjskoler] and the like, but not university level courses.



Total points IB	Danish grades
18	2.4
19	2.7
20	3.0
21	3.3
22	3.6
23	4.0
24	4.4
25	4.7
26	5.2
27	5.6
28	6.0
29	6.5
30	6.9
31	7.3
32	7.8
33	8.3
34	8.6
35	9.0
36	9.4
37	9.8
38	10.2
39	10.5
40	10.8
41	11.1
42	11.3
43	11.6
44	11.9
45	12.7

### **Semester grades and final grades, the IB Diploma and the DP Course Result**

Achievement grades on student reports are given in the form of number grades, 1 – 7 (7 being the best), and are, therefore, reflective of the IB grading scale, allowing students and parents to determine how well students are doing when measured against IB criteria in each subject.

Semester grades and yearly grades are the teacher's estimate of how well each student has mastered the essentials of the subject. The assessment instruments used to obtain the grade will vary from subject to subject. Depending on the course, the grade may be based on homework, quizzes, tests, laboratory reports, projects, papers, oral presentations, group work and participation in class.

The students will receive semester grades twice a year, in November and February/March. In DP1, students will also receive an end-of-year grade. These grades will be an overall assessment, including class work, written assignments, group work, field work, presentations, tests, Internal Assessment, mock exams and other types of subject work that the teachers finds relevant. Sometimes the grades will be accompanied by a written comment.

Total points for each student in DP1 and DP2 following each relevant semester grade report and yearly grade report are calculated by the DP Coordinator and used in collaboration with subject teachers and counsellors as a means of tracking student progress and supporting students who may be facing academic or personal challenges.

Term grades, end of year grades and mock exam grades will be available in lectio, and no paper version will be sent to parents and students. It is the responsibility of students and parents to check the grades once available, and students should give parents their access information to the online platform 'lectio' where attendance and grades are registered. In cases when a student is performing badly and in particular if there is a risk that the student will not be allowed to be promoted to year 2 or is in risk of failing a subject, the student and parents (if the student is under 18) will be contacted directly, in writing.

A general guideline is that in order to be promoted from DP1 to DP2, end of year grades as well as mock exam grades from June must suggest that the student can achieve a full IB Diploma by the end of DP2. Alternatively, students wishing to continue their studies in Denmark must be able to achieve at least 3 in all subjects, permitting them to apply for a number of schools of further education, but not universities. However, at Struer Statsgymnasium we always have individual talks with students, with whom we have a concern, to clarify each individual student's plan of action.

### **The Diploma and the DP Course Result**

In some cases students, after having been informed that it is highly probable that they will fail in one or two subjects or that their accumulated grades are likely to be below 24, will be allowed to continue through the exams, not receiving an IB Diploma, but the DP Course Result, showing the individual subjects and grades.

The DP Course Result is not comparable to the IB Diploma and generally does not give access to higher education. However, some institutions may enroll students with Course Results only, depending on the individual subject grades and level. These requirements are varying from nation to nation and school to school.

In a Danish context, it is possible to move on into some higher education programmes (not university), known as e.g. Professionshøjskoler and Erhvervsakademier, with less than a full diploma. The requirement here is at least 3 points in all subjects and a minimum of 18 points in total. Whether or not grades in the 18-23 band give access to specific institutions depends on their general (Grade Point Average, if any) and specific (subjects, levels) access requirements.

If a student does not intend to continue their further education in Denmark, it is their own responsibility to find out whether a DP Course Result is adequate in terms of accessing programmes of further education. The school's counselor for further education abroad (currently the IB coordinator) will of course be of assistance if the student so wishes.

The rules of the Danish Ministry of Education concerning students with DP Course Results can be read here (in Danish):

[http://bachelor.au.dk/fileadmin/www.bachelorguide.au.dk/Optagelse/Optagelse\\_af\\_IB-  
elever\\_og\\_supplering\\_af\\_Diploma\\_Programme\\_DP\\_Course\\_Re..pdf](http://bachelor.au.dk/fileadmin/www.bachelorguide.au.dk/Optagelse/Optagelse_af_IB-<br/>elever_og_supplering_af_Diploma_Programme_DP_Course_Re..pdf)

### **Recording of grades**

Records of total grades and, where necessary, the actions taken are maintained by the DP Coordinator across the two years of the Diploma Programme. Records of predicted grades are maintained by the student counsellor and the DP Coordinator. An analysis of predicted versus actual total grades is also maintained by the DP Coordinator.

The final DP score achieved by each student is noted on the Diploma Results Document issued by the IB. This, alongside the IB Diploma is copied and placed in individual student files as a record of achievement. Subject and component grades for each student alongside school statistics, etc., going back a number of years, are recorded on IBIS (the IB's information system) and can be accessed by the DP Coordinator.

Overall Diploma Programme results (pass rate, average points, best score...) are provided each year by the IB and a record of this assessment outcome is maintained by the DP Coordinator and updated annually on the school website.

### **Internal and external assessment in the The Diploma Programme**

Formal assessment in the Diploma Programme is defined as assessment directly contributing to the final qualification. Because of the high stakes nature of this assessment process, determining students' possible pathways to further education, it is essential that teachers and students fully understand how formal assessment is conducted. Most formal assessment is external and includes examinations or work completed during the course and then sent to an external examiner. Some formal assessment is internal, requiring the teacher to mark the work before it is moderated by an external moderator.

In order to ensure that the internal and external assessment tasks mentioned above are appropriately and effectively distributed across the two-year Diploma Programme as a means of reducing student stress, a calendar of internal assessment deadlines is created each year by the DP Coordinator and agreed to by all DP teaching staff. This calendar will be available electronically and the students will be informed about the upcoming deadlines regularly by teachers and the IB coordinator.

### **Assessment and Inclusion**

Students with 'special education needs' are defined as those who have the intellectual capacity to meet all curriculum requirements, but who have individual learning needs and who require special arrangements to demonstrate their level of achievement. Therefore, where standard assessment conditions could put candidates with special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment, special arrangements may be authorized by the IB. This approach applies to students with learning difficulties, alongside students affected by temporary, long-term or permanent disability or illness.

Some of the special arrangements related to assessment that may be authorized by the IB are based on the following principles:

- The IB must ensure that a grade awarded to a candidate in any subject is not a misleading description of that candidate's level of attainment, so the same standards of assessment are applied to all candidates, regardless of whether or not they have special needs.



- Special arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's special needs when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The special arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.
- The special arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the intellectual capacity to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or courses results.

Full details of assessment arrangements for students with special education needs can be found in the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **Assessment and Academic Honesty**

Struer Statsgymnasium places great value on the ethical qualities of personal integrity and academic honesty. Academic honesty is expected of all members of the school community; students, faculty, administration and parents. Students are expected to abide by the school's Academic Honesty Policy when completing any and all pieces of assessment work – the overriding principles of which are outlined below:

- All work produced by Diploma Programme students is their own, authentic work
- All such authentic work has the ideas and words of others fully acknowledged
- Students understand and obey the rules relating to proper conduct of examinations
- Students understand the difference between collaboration and collusion, and that it is unacceptable to present work arrived at through a process of collusion
- The policy refers to all assignments set and completed in school or at home, ranging from basic pieces of homework to formal assessments required by the IB