



# Policy

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY**

This document outlines the School's approach to the setting, assessing and reporting of work set other than for the purpose of exam assessment, which is covered in the 'Controlled Assessment' policy.

### **Assessment: Fundamental Principles**

Oakham School recognises that teaching, learning and assessment of that learning are fundamentally interdependent. The School's focus is on development of learning outcomes in every subject that include knowledge, skills and understanding of that subject as well as relevant global and personal contexts.

Oakham School recognises the following fundamental principles of assessment:

- Pupils must be provided with tasks within and beyond the classroom that contribute constructively to their learning;
- The purpose of assessment of those tasks is to monitor the progress of pupil learning and achievement;
- The assessment should produce coherent feedback for pupils, parents and external institutions where necessary;
- The feedback should be in a meaningful form that allows pupils to understand how to improve further;
- Pupils must interact with that feedback in order to progress;
- Feedback must be used to inform curriculum and assessment review.

In order to facilitate the development of meaningful forms of feedback, Oakham School recognises that pupils:

- Have differing learning styles;
- Have different cultural experiences, expectations and needs;
- Perform differently according to the context of learning;
- Need to know their achievements and areas for improvement in the learning process;
- Should receive feedback that is positive and constructive.

Therefore, throughout the curriculum and as part of the teaching and learning process, assessments should:

- Account for a variety of learning styles;
- Be differentiated to account for the diverse backgrounds of learners;
- Provide a wide variety of different assessment opportunities and to be relevant and motivating to pupils;
- When related to the IB programmes of study, the relevant assessments should be criteria-related using published, agreed, learning objectives mandated by the IB and made clear to students by teachers before tasks begin;
- Measure what pupils understand, what they can do and what they know;
- Be both formative (to assist pupils in building understanding, skills and knowledge) and summative (to assess pupils' acquired understanding, skills and knowledge);
- Be on-going and reflective;

- Allow pupils to evaluate their progress and set targets for improvement;
- Allow the School to evaluate the measure of success in meeting specific learning objectives;
- Be internally standardised both at departmental and grade level;
- Be geared toward appraisal of a broad range of concepts, attitudes, knowledge and skills
- In the IB programmes be authentic by including a relevant context of the multicultural and increasingly complex world.

### **Guidelines for Assessment Practice**

Heads of Department are responsible for adapting the guidelines below to the needs of their subject, and must produce, publish (in the departmental handbook) and be able to justify a clear policy stating their departmental approach and, if there are variations from the details below, why they are in place. The overarching principles above must, nevertheless, be followed, and departments must be able to demonstrate that this is the case.

Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring and managing teachers' adherence to school and departmental policies relating to this or any other academic matter.

1. All summative assessment at Oakham School is criterion-related and grade based.
  2. The MYP and DP make use of distinct schemes and subject specific criteria. The final grades of both the MYP and DP are out of 7; in the MYP each grade is further broken down into a combination of achievement levels (out of 8) over the four relevant subject criteria. Grade boundaries are applied to determine the final MYP grades out of 7; for example, a student needs to achieve a total of at least 28 out of 32 across the 4 criteria levels in any Language Acquisition phase in order to receive an MYP grade 7 (please refer to your subject guide and *MYP: from Principles into Practice* documents for further guidance).
  3. All internal assessment should be designed to be formative in nature for the pupil and summative where appropriate.
  4. Each assessment activity in the IB MYP must allow pupils access to the full range of achievement descriptors. This may be achieved by assessing students against all strands within a descriptor, by using effective differentiation strategies that take into account pupils' prior learning or by formulating assessment tasks that fully evaluate relevant number of strands.
  5. IB Diploma teachers should scaffold assessment tasks through the programme or adapt examination (end-of-course) criteria, so that pupils in the first year of study have access to the full range of assessment grades.  
For the IB MYP, pupils must be provided with their own copy of the relevant MYP assessment criteria for each subject in each summative assessment. Pupils must be forewarned which criteria will be used by the teacher to evaluate any work submitted for assessment. Teachers should help pupils understand what is required of them to fulfil the criteria for a particular piece of assessed work. Teachers will clarify to the pupils what criteria is being assessed by each task and how the criteria apply to the task. Assessment rubrics should be developed and applied to all summative assessment tasks. These rubrics should link the subject criteria levels of achievement descriptors with task-specific clarifications.
- A well-constructed rubric should:
- Support learning by providing clear guidance;
  - Provide transparency to the process for pupils and teachers;
  - Provide clear, measurable evidence of learning;
  - Link generic descriptors and their relevant MYP command terms to task-specific clarifications.
6. For the IB Diploma Programme, assessed work may vary in its purpose and teachers are expected to use the full range of assessment activities. Teachers must inform pupils which criteria will be used to evaluate their work, both for internal assessment (IA) and external examination.

Teachers must explain what is required for pupils to fulfil the criteria for any particular piece of assessed work.

7. Teachers must keep a clear and accurate record of all assessment activities. For the MYP, evidence of formative assessment in preparation for summative assessment should also relate to the relevant subject criteria. Both formative and summative assessment will occur within a single grading period.

8. Any completed summative assessment tasks should, unless there is good reason otherwise, be graded and returned to pupils in a timely manner and preferably within a week of school time.

9. For any formative assessment tasks or where a piece of summative assessment work is being produced over an extended period of time, teachers should provide ongoing feedback as appropriate.

10. When using criterion-related assessment for the IB MYP and DP programmes, pupil answers are placed where the majority of descriptors correspond to the pupil's work. If the descriptors include many strands of an objective and student performance is at a high level on most of the strands but not all of them, teachers adopt a "best-fit" model. If most of the performance was, for example, at the 5–6 level, and yet pupil work on a particular strand was inconsistent or of a considerably lower quality, teachers might consider reducing the overall performance to a lower level band. If a piece of work seems to fall between two level descriptors, only partially fulfilling the requirements of the higher descriptor, teachers will re-read both of the descriptors in question and choose the descriptor which is a 'best-fit' description of the candidate's work.

11. When returning to pupils their assessed work, it should be appropriately annotated and commented upon: comments should be of an analytical and constructive nature, enabling pupils to reflect effectively and productively on their work. At times, it may also be appropriate to give feedback to a whole class, or for pupils to annotate their own or each other's work; lengthy feedback is not, by default, better than short: but rather the ability to learn from the feedback offered is key.

12. Whilst feedback and action points for improvement or developing learning are of the highest priority, in some cases it may be appropriate to award one or more grades or marks to a piece of work (in particular, in the non-IB programmes of study): pupils should be able to understand how these were awarded, and their teachers must provide clear guidance on this which should be available to pupils in a printed form; it should also be clear how their performance relates to qualification-specific measures of achievement.

13. Pupils should have the opportunity to reflect on their assessment and discuss it with their teacher by responding to their marking.

14. All awarded marks, grades or levels of relevant assessments should be recorded by the teacher, and Heads of Department should ensure that these records are kept up-to-date.

15. For the IB MYP, the outcomes of assessments should be collated and recorded internally by the departments in preparation for end of year reports. For the IB DP, the departments are responsible for recording and collating relevant internal assessment data.

16. Teachers must be proactive in addressing issues relating to late, poorly-presented or missing work: a range of sanctions exists, as outlined in the Red Book, and teachers should use these consistently in support of their classroom management and of the wider culture of high expectations across the school.

17. The School places particular focus on language learning and considers every teacher to also be a language teacher. Teachers should, therefore, whatever their subject, point out errors of English in pupils' work and take appropriate steps in developing deeper understanding of the subject specific terminology and vocabulary of their pupils. (For further guidance please refer to the School's Language policy).

18. If a teacher suspects that a pupil is guilty of malpractice, he/she should not be awarded a level of achievement and instead be referred to the relevant academic programme coordinator or the Deputy Head (Academic) where appropriate. (For further guidance please refer to the School's Academic Honesty Policy)

### **Setting Prep (Independent inquiry and preparation work)**

The prep timetables, as published by the Head of Lower School and the Head of Middle School, indicate when Lower and Middle School pupils should be doing prep and how long it should be: teachers should follow the directives of these timetables to ensure an appropriate amount of work is set at the correct time.

When setting prep, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Written work must be set regularly where and when it is appropriate to the course or unit of work.
- Form 6 A-level, Pre-U or BTEC students should expect a total of four hours of prep per week in each subject per block in which it appears;
- Form 7 A-level, Pre-U or BTEC students should expect a total of six hours of prep per week in each subject per block in which it appears;
- IB DP pupils should expect three hours of prep per week in their Higher Level subjects, and one and a half hours in their Standard Level subjects;
- Where pupils are engaged in longer project work, or working towards an internal assessment, this should be set instead of normal prep, and not in addition to it.

All prep should be set via Teams and on the day when it's due to be allocated. The prep tasks should clearly state the time it should take pupils to complete the tasks. This helps pupils plan their work and helps teachers to select appropriate tasks for prep.

Tasks set for prep should be meaningful and contribute significantly to the pupils' progress in that course, and demonstrably develop or reinforce knowledge, skills and understanding of the relevant subjects: they may arise from the material covered in that lesson or, for example, comprise preparation required for future lesson, test or assessment; a review of earlier work, deliberate practice of a skill, or 'flipped learning' preparation for a lesson; they should, in brief, contribute to the learning journey for the students.

The purpose of prep should never be to fill time: in particular, setting it solely because of a perception that pupils should be busy during prep time is never appropriate.

Tasks may include any activity that legitimately contributes to pupil progress, but teachers should be aware that pupils may only have limited access to technological or other aids, and must take account of this in their planning; for example, if pupils need a web-based resource for a prep, teachers should ensure that a link is sent no later than the end of the lesson in which the work was set.

Finite rather than open-ended tasks are frequently preferable; if an open-ended task is set, guidance should be given as to the length of time a pupil is expected to spend on it, and how they should be done: a particular example is a prep involving the production of a poster, which should be set sparingly if at all.

'Note taking' preps should not be set without clear and appropriate guidance given to pupils on how this should be done.

When a learning prep is set, teachers should be sensitive to different approaches that may be more effective for individual pupils and avoid mandating a particular style unless this is demonstrably appropriate.

If the work is set in class, pupils must be given sufficient time to record preps in their organisers.

## Facilitating Assessment

In facilitating assessment, IB MYP teachers should refer to the “Assessment” section of the IB MYP from *Principles into Practice* document as well as their subject guides.

When using an IB Diploma mark scheme, grading will follow the published mark schemes. Teachers will consult their subject guides, mark schemes and any other relevant publications on the IB My School for the up-to-date grade boundaries and assessment criteria.

Supporting Assessment: expectations of the student

The teacher can expect the student to:

- Be on time to class and fully prepared with all the appropriate materials for class work and assessment activities;
- Respect others’ right to learn and to collaborate constructively with peers;
- Submit any required work - prep work, class work, assignments and projects, etc. - on time and with due diligence;
- Present work neatly and appropriately.

Supporting Assessment: expectations of the teacher

The pupil can expect the teacher to:

- Clearly identify the requirements for each piece of work, providing students with task-specific clarification of relevant assessment criteria/rubrics;
- Provide adequate time for students to complete any given assessment task;
- Provide adequate access to any materials necessary for the successful completion of any assessment task;
- Assess all work appropriately and return it in good time and in line with this policy. (For more detailed work, especially at IB Diploma level, A-level or in the completion of MYP projects, teachers may require more than one week to return work).

## Internal and External Assessment

Internal and external assessment is a feature of all course and programmes of study offered at Oakham School including the IB Diploma Programme and the IB MYP. Internal assessment is undertaken by all Lower, Middle and Upper School teachers; external assessment involves exam officers and/or coordinators sending candidate work to the appropriate organisations for assessment (further guidance may be found in the ‘Controlled Assessment and Coursework’ and ‘Exam’ policies). The IB MYP relies uniquely on internal assessment. However, as part of the MYP Next Chapter, the school is planning to participate in the unit planning quality assurance service provided by the IB as well as the collaborative quality assurance opportunities as part of the UK IB MYP Community of Schools.

## Awarding Term Grades

Grades are awarded and reported to pupils on a termly basis. In the IB MYP, for each subject, it is advisable to award a summative termly level of achievement for the relevant criteria that should be recorded internally in the departments. At the end of each academic year, a formal MYP grade is reported to pupils and parents for each academic subject. This involves translation of criteria referenced levels awarded through each term into a single 7 (high) -1 (low) MYP grade. This process is facilitated by the iSAMS software that has an automated tool for this process.

Awarding Grades for the IB Diploma Programme: grades awarded for criteria-referenced tasks are translated into final 7 (high) -1 (low) reported grades by measuring performance against moderated grade boundaries, based on boundaries published by the IB.

Awarding a ‘0’ Level of Achievement

An MYP pupil should only receive a level '0' if the work submitted does not fit with the band descriptor for levels 1 and 2.

An IB DP candidate should only receive a level '0' if the work has either not been handed in, or the material is entirely irrelevant/incorrect.

#### Awarding Grades Lower than '4'

A grade '4' is generally considered as a satisfactory achievement against the MYP subject objectives, with a student achieving this grade generally "produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts . . . Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking."

A grade '4' in the DP programme is commonly seen as the minimum requirement to secure passing grade in external examinations.

The parents of pupils who may be at risk of scoring less than a grade '4' at the end of each academic year should be engaged in a dialogue with the teacher and/or programme coordinator aimed at implementing measures to improve learning. This may be achieved through the school's reporting process, by communicating with the pupil's tutor or by communicating with the parents directly during the relevant parent-teacher evening.

Parents should have been forewarned of the possibility of their child receiving a grade lower than a '4', with sufficient time subsequently available to give the student the opportunity to change his/her approach to their learning and improve his/her performance if appropriate.

Prior to the publication of the end of year student reports, the relevant IB programme coordinator must be informed of any grade of a '1' or '2'. The teacher awarding grades of a '1' or '2' should also supply the coordinator with the relevant correspondence with the pupil, form tutor and parents, and all information about measures taken to address the student's difficulties.

#### **Internal Standardisation of grades**

Internal standardisation is an ongoing process of understanding, implementing and reviewing the uniform application of the prescribed standards of assessment aimed at providing information to guide teaching and learning and ultimately improve student performance. The benefits of internal standardisation are:

- It allows teaching staff to make consistent, reliable and valid decisions across different points in time.
- Challenges the consistency of practice (due to staff changes, changes in student numbers or changing education demands).
- Utilises exemplars to reference criteria judgments.
- Engages teachers and pupils with the principles of assessment for learning.
- Internal standardisation improves the quality of assessment where individual teacher decisions are made with increased confidence.
- Reliability, validity and fairness within the process are enhanced, so achievement decisions are justifiable.
- Relevant information is recorded accurately and used effectively for a variety of teaching, learning and reporting purposes.
- Internal standardisation provides the school with more reliable and valid information when comparing cohort data with historical information.

Guidelines for organising an effective process of internal standardisation:

- Internal standardisations should occur on both departmental and interdepartmental levels.
- Internal standardisations are most effective when completed in a frequent cycles and for the IB programmes at least once each academic term.

While planning a new unit of work:

- Before the process of internal standardisations may begin, the role of a leader to oversee the standardisation process within a group of staff should be discussed. This person could also be responsible for gathering samples of student work and guiding the group through discussions.
- It is advised to begin the standardisation process at the planning stage of the teaching unit, with all relevant teachers involved.
- Before teaching of a new unit may begin, there should be an opportunity for all teachers involved to share their understandings, expectations and interpretations of assessment criteria and how these criteria have been clarified for the task.
- Teachers should also have an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the planned assessment tasks and whether the students would be able to access those.

During the teaching of a unit:

- Teachers could gather several sets of evidence on which to base final criteria levels, focusing on difficult sets such as those they consider near the border between judgments, or with a high level of inconsistency between different sources of evidence.
- It is a good idea for teachers to make judgments collaboratively about a sample of pupil work before assessing their own classes' work.
- Moderators may change over time but the same criteria and associated references will remain and continue to guide decisions.

After the teaching of a unit:

- Teachers should make final judgments on criteria levels of their own pupils' achievement.
- Collate samples for the standardisation process and provide copies to other teachers as required.
- Meet to discuss their judgments of a sampling of pupils' achievement based on the evidence they have gathered.
- Have a thorough discussion and clarification to arrive at an 'agreed' judgment for each sampled pupil's achievement in relation to the assessment criteria. This may not always be achieved, but the aim is to reach a greater level of consensus over time.

The standardisation leader's role:

- Facilitate the standardisation session to ensure that there is time for discussion in small groups as well as across groups.
- Determine how the samples of learning will be gathered and how many. This can be achieved in a number of ways: e.g. every fifth or seventh piece, or samples teachers consider represent the top, middle and bottom of their respective classes.
- Establish what annotation is expected (e.g. learning intentions, details of the task, support given) and make clear how/when/where the samples are to be collected prior to conducting the session.
- Keep a record of the process and retain annotated samples with the judgment reached.

Pupil role:

- Participating in the standardisation process benefits pupils by supporting teaching and learning goals.
- Pupils can actively participate in selecting evidence (e.g. samples of their work) that best demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. The process develops pupils' understanding of the desired outcomes and success criteria, and is closely linked to developing and using the skills of self and peer-assessment.

Teacher role:

- Within the classroom setting, teachers should endeavour to provide opportunities for students to participate in the standardisation process.
- All relevant teachers participate in the standardisation process.



- Willingness to engage in critical debate and the ability to use evidence to challenge viewpoints should be encouraged and valued.
- The process of standardisation can build teachers' content knowledge and understanding through these professional exchanges.
- Teachers share their expectations and interpretations in order to clarify their understandings about what students have achieved and where their next learning steps will need to be situated.

School's role:

- The School's assessment cycles incorporate regular grade standardisation.
- The School facilitates regular opportunities for teachers to share their interpretations and understandings of the relevant criteria.
- The senior leaders actively support the standardisation process.
- The School implements consistent and cohesive policies and procedures for standardisation, and ensures sustainability of practice.

### **Reporting of achievement grades**

The purpose of reporting of achievement grades is to provide parents with timely and accurate information about the progress of their children's education, and to encapsulate a record of progress for students as they move through the School.

Reporting is made through regular Progress Reports ('PRs') and a comprehensive End of Academic Year Report. These comprise subject-specific grades relating to academic performance and effort, together with a comment from the teacher. In addition, an internal Progress Report is produced early in the school year to alert tutors or other colleagues to any academic issues. All academic reports refer to the period since the last report. Reports are not written to cover periods where courses have already been completed or where insufficient lessons have been taught to render a report meaningful, for example where Examination Leave comprises a significant part of the reporting period. Reports will be written even in close proximity to a Parents' Evening, as they form a formal written record of progress.

Grades are awarded as follows:

- Attainment grades reflect academic performance in that subject relative to what would be expected from a pupil in that stage in their academic careers; notionally, they indicate a pupil's likely final grade if they continue progressing as at present.
- In Forms 4 and above, the levels relate to performance in the public examinations for which the pupils are being prepared (for example, 9-1 for GCSE, 7-1 for IB DP, D1/D2/D3/M1/M2/M3/P1/P2/P3 for Pre U, and so on).
- In Forms 1-3, the final MYP grades (detailed below) are reported at the end of each academic year. Those are supported as appropriate by specific criteria achievement descriptors specific to the subject in question.



Grade	Boundary guidelines	Descriptor
1	1–5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6–9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10–14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15–18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19–23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24–27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28–32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

In Form Lower 1 the following levels of attainment are reported:

Attainment	Descriptor
Outstanding	Consistent and thorough knowledge, understanding and skills, applied with fluency and originality, and in a wide variety of situations. Work produced and contributions in lessons are of a very high standard.
Very Good	Secure knowledge, understanding and skills, and mostly successful in their application in a variety of situations. Work is of a high standard with some insight and originality in evidence.
Good	Sound knowledge, understanding and skills, and able to apply them in normal situations. Work is of a good standard.

Intermediate	Inconsistent knowledge, understanding and skills, with difficulties in some areas. Able to apply the ideas with some assistance.
Low	Limited knowledge, understanding and skills, with difficulties in applying them even with assistance.

- Effort grades for performance in class and in prep are reported using a three-point scale: two ticks (indicating exceptional effort), a single tick (indicating the effort that would be expected of an Oakham student), or a cross (indicating an effort below normal expectations).
- Behaviour, together with punctuality and organisation, is reported on a three-point scale: 'Good', 'Inconsistent' or 'Unacceptable'; the latter should not be awarded without the tutor having been advised ahead of time.
- Grades are not to be used as rewards or sanctions: they must tell the truth about the pupil as accurately and as honestly as is possible, and it is appropriate to use the whole scale for attainment if required; grades may need to be justified at a later date.

Other Notes:

- Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that departmental colleagues understand and use the reporting systems correctly to report performance in their subjects.
- Elements of the Total Curriculum, such as sport, service, musical instruments and so on, are reported on by a comment on the Progress Report at the end of term.
- Pupils complete three self-appraisals on their end-of-term report, reflecting on aspects of their academic, service and activities programmes.
- Teacher comments (a maximum of 90 characters for the first PR in the term, and 280 characters for the second) are obligatory on all PRs: these should be diagnostic and specific to the pupil.
- Tutors add a comment to their tutees' reports, and Housemasters add a comment on the end-of-term reports; a final comment is contributed to the second report by a member of SLT on a rotational basis.
- Tutors are responsible for ensuring that reports are fit for publication, by checking for errors in spelling and grammar and for any omissions; subject teachers are responsible for the factual accuracy of reports and should also check that their comments are free from error before they are sent to tutors.

*\*Elements of this policy are based on the Assessment Policy produced by the International School of Paris, and it is further informed by the IB publications 'Programme standards and practices (2018)' and 'MYP: From Principles into Practice (2014/2017)'. It is licenced under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike licence (CC BY-NC-SA).*

LFD

Reviewed: February 2021

Next review: February 2022