

# Assessment Policy

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## Purpose

At UWC Dilijan, we recognise that our students come from a wide variety of educational backgrounds and that they have vastly different experiences of assessment. As teachers, we take this information into account when planning and delivering assessment as well as when giving feedback on assessments.

This policy sets out the College's philosophy of assessment and outlines the expected assessment practices. It also outlines how we record, monitor and report assessment data.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students of the College, apart from those in the Early Years Centre.

## Policy Statement

Assessment is a key part of the learning experience for students who are studying the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Assessment can be used for a variety of purposes but most importantly it should be used to inform effective planning, teaching and learning; it is an integral part of our practice as teachers. The best assessment practice includes self-assessment, peer-assessment, time for reflection and support to move forward.

Assessment is a term used to cover all the various methods by which student achievement can be evaluated. Assessment instruments may include tests, examinations, extended practical work, projects, portfolios and oral work, some carried out over a prolonged period and sometimes marked by the student's teacher. We carry out both formative and summative assessment on a regular basis (IBO, 2010).

## Procedure

### Assignments

The purpose of **homework assignments** is to extend and reinforce what students have learnt in the classroom. They can also be used as part of preparation for upcoming lessons. Homework assignments can take many forms, and this will vary from subject to subject.

Homework assignments will be set on a regular basis and staff should check that students have fully understood a task before they leave the classroom. As a guideline, HL subjects might set work taking around two hours per week, SL subjects up to 1.5 hours per week. Teachers should always be in dialogue with students to ensure awareness of workloads.

Homework should be marked and returned to students in a timely fashion, with feedback indicating strengths, weaknesses and ways to move forward, as appropriate.

When setting homework, staff should consider students' language proficiency, the school calendar and commitments that students may have in other subjects, particularly the core of the IBDP, in order to balance student workloads.

**Assessment** takes place on a regular basis in the classroom and takes a wide variety of forms, including tests, performances, experiments, orals and timed essays. Departments should include assessment in their planning; Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the assessment programme in their department is broad, balanced and effective.

The range of assessment instruments includes tests, examinations, extended practical work, projects, portfolios, oral work (IBO, 2019), essays and research projects, both completed individually and in groups. Incorporating a range of assessment instruments allows each student to demonstrate their individual knowledge and skills in subject and task-specific ways, reducing the potential for inequity in assessment (IBO, 2010).

Staff must consider the school calendar when setting assessments in order to ensure that students have the best possible chance of success. For example, major assessments should not take place directly after holidays or project weeks. If there are concerns about the distribution of assessments, the Deputy Head will review the distribution with relevant Heads of Department.

School examinations take place once a year for DP1 and once a year for DP2. These dates will appear on the school calendar, published at the start of the academic year. A timetable of examinations will be produced by the IBDP Coordinator. In addition there is one week of formal in-class assessments scheduled for DP1 and DP2 students towards the end of the first term, in November. These assessments will take place during class time.

## Internal Assessments for the IB Diploma Programme

All IBDP subjects have an **internal assessment component**. In most, but not all, cases, this component will be covered in the second year of the course. All staff should carefully read the IB guidance for internal assessments in their subjects and ensure that these tasks are completed in line

with the IB's guidance. Generally, this means that students produce one draft of a task, feedback is provided and students go on to write the final draft (please refer to subject guides for details).

Students will be given time in class to work on internal assessments, where appropriate. They will also receive support in the form of marking criteria, exemplar materials and introductory teaching of the topic.

Internal assessments will be moderated within faculties before marks are submitted to the IB. A sample of work will then be requested and sent to the IB. Details of deadlines will be provided by the IBDP Coordinator.

## External assessments for the IB Diploma Programme

Some subjects have an **externally assessed component** that is completed in school and then sent to the IB for marking. The Extended Essay is also an externally assessed component.

Staff should ensure that these assessments are completed in accordance with the subject guides and supporting information provided by the IB. Time should be allocated in class to work on external assessments. Students should receive support in the form of the marking criteria, exemplar materials and introductory teaching of the topic.

The Extended Essay will be coordinated by the **Extended Essay Coordinator**. Guidance will be provided for both staff and students on the completion of this component.

## IB DP Examinations

Formal examinations take place in May of the DP2 year of the course following an examination schedule produced in line with the IB's schedule.

We will employ Exam Invigilators who will be provided in advance of the May examination session.

## Deadlines

Heads of Department, the IBDP Coordinator and the Deputy Head will prepare a calendar of deadlines in advance of each academic year in order to support students to manage their time. Changes to this calendar should only be made in consultation with this group.

If students miss a deadline, it should be reported to the mentor and Head of Department for review. In most cases, students will be asked to complete work under staff supervision. If there are further issues, the Deputy Head must be consulted.

For further details on procedures and consequences of missing an internal deadline, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy.

## Supporting students

Students should have access to the following information, as appropriate, as they prepare for assessments:

- Grade descriptors for each subject/group
- Subject-specific mark bands
- Internal/external assessment marking criteria
- Exemplars of assessed work
- IB subject reports
- Lists of topics to be covered in the assessment
- Revision material, such as past papers and marking notes
- Subject guides

The need for fairness in assessment procedures and practices for all students is acknowledged in accordance with the IB (IBO, 2019). Students with specific learning needs will receive support to ensure that they have inclusive access to assessments as outlined in the UWCD Special Educational Needs Policy. Support for IB Internal and External assessments, including examinations, will also be provided in accordance with the inclusive access arrangements outlined in the Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, available on My IB for each examination session.

## Marking and feedback

Marking should be regular and constructive. Students should be clear about how they can move forward in their learning once they receive their marked work.

Feedback can be given verbally as well as in writing. As many of our students have English as their second or even third language, it is important that staff ensure that students have understood the feedback that they have been given.

## Grading

Educational research shows that grades should be used sparingly (Black et al., 2004). The best practice is to provide specific feedback and to provide grades on an infrequent basis and based on the IB assessment criteria.

There is a whole college grading cycle when staff are required to submit grades. These grades are used for transcripts and university applications. We have published a document on our website (parent portal) giving details of assessment and also the term grade weightings for each subject. Dates for the publication of the reports can be found on the College calendar.

## Recording

Staff will keep a record of grades on Managebac that will be shared with Heads of Department as required.

Grades linked to the college grading cycle will be stored on a central spreadsheet and on student transcripts.

## Reporting

Reports are produced twice a year for DP1 and for DP2. These reports are generated using ManageBac - guidance on format and content is published for all staff. Details of deadlines can be found on the college calendar.

Each report contains:

- Subject report for groups 1 – 6
- ToK report, as relevant to the year group
- Extended essay report, as relevant to the year group
- Mentor report
- Toon Parent report

## References

- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B and Wiliam, D. (2004). Working Inside the Black Box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 84 (1) 8-21
- International Baccalaureate Organisation (2010). *Diploma Programme assessment: principles and practice*. Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate Organisation.
- International Baccalaureate Organisation (2019). *Assessment principles and practices - Quality assessments in a digital age*. Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate Organisation.