



Assessment Policy in the IB Programme

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Assessment Philosophy

Schools of the Sacred Heart – San Francisco believes that student discovery, understanding and achievement take root over time. As such, teachers encourage the acquisition of skills and content via formative and summative assessment practices. Formative practices (e.g. quizzes, homework, practice tests) are employed for continued instructional purposes while summative assessments form the student's achievement grade. Summative assessments are generally cumulative. (The assessment model below shows the varied components of assessment in various disciplines.) While the general school-held belief and practice is for the student's grade to be a fair and honest assessment of the student's understanding and achievement, minor credit may be awarded to students for participation and demonstrated engagement (participation, homework, engagement). It is within the teacher's discretion to award this credit, with the understanding that the majority stake (90%) of the grade be based on student understanding and achievement.

Grading Philosophy and communication

The school uses yearlong grades to allow for demonstration of learning over time, and semester grades for semester-long courses. The school year is divided into four quarters for progress reporting. At progress reporting time, four times per year, teachers report on student performance and achievement of learning goals with the following rubric as a general definition of the letter grade. In yearlong courses, the semester 1 letter grade is a grade in progress (not calculated into the cumulative GPA) and the yearlong grade is filed at the conclusion of the course. In semester-long classes, the calculated semester grade is filed at the conclusion of the semester course. The school uses an A-F scale and does not include quality points of + or -. Grades reported within the frame of the year are used as grades in progress and the final calculation takes place at the conclusion of the course, semester, or yearlong.

Grading scale

The following rubric identifies the determined achievement level of the student to earn the given grade.

A = Student work displayed a *mastery* of the key elements of course content. The student demonstrated a very strong understanding of key learning objectives and course expectations.

4 grade points

B = Student work displayed a *solid, but not fully mastered, understanding* of the key elements of course content and *mostly met* key learning objectives and course expectations.
3 grade points

C = Student work displayed *satisfactory, developing* understanding of learning goals, though with *some gaps* in skills related to key learning objectives and course expectations.
2 grade points

D = Student did not adequately meet key learning objectives and course expectations to merit satisfactory progress.
1 grade point

F = Not enough learning goals were met to earn academic credit for the course.
0 grade points

“Incomplete” grades are assigned only in the case of documented or extended illness or unusual circumstances that interfere with a student’s ability to attend to academic responsibilities. “Incomplete” grades may become an “F” two weeks after the end of the term unless the approved work is completed, submitted to the appropriate teacher, and recorded by the registrar. Any plans for submitting incomplete work must be approved by the Director of Academic Guidance.

Correlation of A-F grades with the IB 1-7 scale.

Generally, the following translation table allows for a correlation between A-F grades and the IB 1-7 scale.

A = 6/7

B = 5

C = 4/3

D = 2

F = 1

Grade Point Average

Unweighted GPAs are computed on the basis of: A=4 pts., B=3 pts., C=2 pts., D=1 pt., F=0 pts. Cumulative GPAs are posted on a student’s transcripts at the end of course (semester/yearlong). Convent & Stuart Hall calculates a weighted GPA for informational purposes. The unweighted GPA is the school’s official GPA of record. Weighted GPAs are computed for Advanced Placement, Honors and International Baccalaureate courses on the basis of A=5 pts., B = 4 pts., C = 3 pts. Student participation in Student Council, Clubs Council, any leadership position, and all athletic teams requires maintenance of a GPA that reflects a serious commitment to academics; failure to do so may result in removal from the activity.

Multi-Modal Assessment per discipline

Student learning and student understanding is encouraged and assessed in multi-modal ways, including traditional cumulative written tests and papers, oral presentation and hands-on work as appropriate to the field of study, e.g., laboratory work for scientific inquiry or artistic/creative performances in literature and the performing and visual arts.

Assessment within Schools of the Sacred Heart - San Francisco complies with the IB Programme Standards and Practices and is designed to provide valuable measurements of learning. The school is committed to graduating lifelong learners. We value the process of learning, laying the path for students to access content, apply their understanding, synthesize their thinking, and reflect on their learning. The school recognizes that the goal of the program is to build mastery and fluency in students across key subject areas and disciplines and continuously evaluates which knowledge and skills are most essential both within and across subject areas. In assessing mastery and fluency, the school utilizes traditional assessment methods as well as projects, and performance opportunities using both formative and summative assessment practices. Additionally, students engage in post-assessment reflection and ongoing reflection, developing a growth mindset.

External assessments are often used in the general school program and in the IBDP Programme due to their “high levels of objectivity and reliability.”

They include:

- essays
- structured problems
- short-response questions
- data-response questions
- text-response questions
- case-study questions
- multiple-choice questions

Internal assessments, or those orchestrated by the course teacher, include:

- oral work in all courses, including languages
- fieldwork in geography
- laboratory work in the sciences
- investigations in mathematics
- artistic performances and exhibitions

Unifying principles of assessment

The school expects that teachers assess student learning on a regular basis with graded assessment taking place periodically so that the cumulative grade may come into focus over the course of the year.

Teachers must have an appropriate number of graded data points over the course of the year to form the final grade. While some discretion is left to the teacher to determine the number of assessments, it is a general principle that each quarter includes at minimum two cumulative evaluations that will be included in the final achievement grade. Department chairs conduct “assessment inventories” over the course of the year to ascertain that departmental instructors are meeting this goal.

Teachers work collaboratively to design and evaluate assessment, promoting consistency and fairness in evaluating student work. Where teachers share instructional course delivery (meaning more than one teacher is teaching the same course), it is essential that close collaboration takes place so that students experience similar instructional and assessment practices. Typically, when sections are shared across instructors, we assign a lead or anchor instructor to ensure the direction of the collaboration and its productivity.

A shared assessment plan is an expected output of each department so that there is alignment and cohesion within the discipline. IB Internal and External Assessments are noted on a calendar shared with each student cohort and families at the start of Year 1 (Grade 11) with assessments due throughout both years of the IB Diploma Programme. Core Assessments in CAS, Extended Essay, and Theory of Knowledge are included on the Assessment Overview.

Assessment Models (examples)

In English language and literature, assessment centers on reading comprehension, written expression (analytical and creative), oral presentation and Socratic discussion. Student responses must show an analytical sensibility to the text as a work of art as well as an interpretive analysis of the value of the message and its enduring relevance as an artifact of human creation and experience.

In History, research skills and the capacity to synthesize research source material is a driver of assessment. Document based analysis, research projects and research papers/essays form the basis of cumulative assessment.

In mathematics, testing is mostly pen(cil) to paper. Tests in mathematics include prior material, so cumulative mastery is assessed. Unit tests and formative quizzes form the assessment picture. Written projects (using math to solve problems and research a topic) are included in the higher grades, as are design projects that may involve 3-D printing. The latter invite students to develop a relationship with mathematics that applies their knowledge to real-world problems and applications.

In science, scientific exploration skills are the core of assessment and these are tested in lab work, lab design, lab reports and in tests that test for cumulative mastery and content fluency. Testing students in their demonstrated capacity to observe, hypothesize and design experiments to test hypotheses is at the core of assessment.

In Modern & Classical Language, communicative fluency is the goal of assessment -- oral production (presentations and dialogue) and listening comprehension, written expression are cumulative goals. Supporting these goals are vocabulary, grammar and reading and writing assessments that test for specific areas of language development.

Performance and exhibits are core to assessment in Visual and Performing Arts and students are also assessed on their process. A process portfolio (sketchbooks and reflections on artistic practice) form the backbone of art assessment. At the higher levels, critique practice is a key element of the assessment experience.

In terms of social-emotional growth and growth as learners, reflection is a key element of the assessment process for students -- pre-reflection and post-reflection is frequently employed by faculty to check in and check out of the assessment experience. The wide use of formative assessment tools checks for student growth and understanding ahead of a higher stakes assessment. Reflection also contributes to a "growth mindset" where students are able to reflect on their effort and to analyze their achievement -- what went well and what could have been better.