



ASSESSMENT POLICY

This policy should be read with the following IB publications: Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes, the PYP Programme Assessment: Principles and Practices, and the Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practices

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“To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you’re going so that you better understand where you are now, so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.”

Stephen R. Covey, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Introduction

In the PYP and DP programmes, we believe that student’s learning is best done when it is authentic (i.e. relevant to the “real” world) and transdisciplinary (i.e. where the learning is not confined within the boundaries of traditional subject areas but is supported and enriched by them). BIS organizes the programme so that each student engages with it in ways that are developmentally appropriate and fully inclusive. BIS strives towards developing an internationally-minded person who demonstrates the attributes of the IB learner profile.

Boston School International Mission and Philosophy Statement

Boston School International is a globally-minded school providing its students with both a worldwide perspective and a strong connection to the local communities in which we live. Our mission is ***“to develop in our students, active, creative minds and the capacity for critical thinking through a technologically advanced, international bilingual education program”***. Our philosophy states, ***“At Boston School International we believe that all students can learn. We promote learning through inquiry, leadership, development of tolerance, intercultural understanding, and citizenship.”***

As a candidate to be an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, we are also aligned with the IB Organization’s mission and their IB Learner Profile.

- The IB mission statement can be viewed at: <http://www.ibo.org/mission/>
- The IB learner profile can be viewed at: <http://www.ibo.org/programmes/profile/>

Assessment Philosophy

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning as it provides feedback on the learning process and therefore informs decisions made by teachers and students about what will be learned and how it will be learned. Assessment is the practice of gathering and analyzing information about learning outcomes. Assessment identifies what students know and are able to do; what students understand and are able to explain through learning experiences; as well as what students can communicate and reflect at different stages of the inquiry process. At BSI assessment is authentic, informative, personalized and collaborative, involving teachers, students, and parents.

Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills. Assessment is not just about assessing the final product. It is about assessing all steps of the learning process, from what the students



know and understand to all skills, attitudes and actions develop during this process. It aims to integrate and support both the process and the product.

Assessment provides information through its diagnostic, formative, and summative components; it is ongoing, authentic, varied and purposeful. Moreover, assessment outcomes provide valuable information that drives instructional and curricular decision making to help meet student's individual needs. It thoughtfully and effectively guides students learning.

Assessment is central to the International Baccalaureate Programme goal.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to inform and involve students, parents, teachers and administrators. Assessment guides the planning and instruction that will support effective learning and allows:

- Students to be an active part of the learning process through reflection and demonstration of their understanding.
- Provides feedback to teachers to guide and improve on their teaching and learning experiences.
- Parents to see evidence of student's learning and development, while supporting, and celebrating their children's learning.
- Administrators to build a sense of community within the school and communicate the school's progress.

At BSI teaching starts and ends with assessment. Through diagnostic assessments teachers can have a clear vision of what the class knows and also identify areas of learning difficulties. Assessment should be an ongoing and varied process that will improve students learning in order for teachers to drive the next steps in instruction. It should be flexible, explicit, and provide multiple opportunities for the students to demonstrate their progress.

Students and teachers are involved in assessment using a range of tools and strategies that will allow to measure not just the results but the process involved in the learning.

Types of Assessment used at Boston School International

Diagnostic/pre-assessment

Diagnostic assessment will help teachers know what students know and can do prior to teaching. This will allow teachers to use effectively teaching time and strategies.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is connected with daily instruction. It assists the teacher in planning for the next stage of learning. It provides regular and frequent feedback to the teacher and the student. Formative assessments can come, for example, in the form of monitoring and commenting or questioning a student when engaged in an activity; a teacher being conscious to extend waiting time when waiting for answers



to whole class questions; and comments generated by self/peer/teacher assessment on a piece of work. Through a variety of methods, ongoing and regular assessment will be used during the teaching and learning process to inform teachers and students about how learning is developing. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and provide feedback that is actually used to adapt the teaching and learning strategies to meet the learner's needs.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is usually the last step in the teaching and learning process. It allows students to show what they know and are able to do. Summative assessments may take a variety of forms including, for example, lab reports, essays, examinations, presentations, tests, projects, etc.

PYP ASSESSMENT POLICY

Assessment of the Essential Elements of the PYP

The five essential elements of the PYP are assessed through the units of inquiry and are recorded on the planner for each unit and reported in the PYP Progress Report.

- Knowledge: Each Unit of Inquiry provide students opportunities to assess their knowledge. In other words, “What we want our students to learn?” It reflects an understanding of the central idea reinforced through the lines of inquiry.
- Skills, concepts and attitudes: Each unit provides opportunities for different skills, concepts and attitudes. Reflection on growth in these areas is recorded on the planners and self-assessments or co-evaluations are done by the students.
- Action: Student actions that are initiated beyond the scope of the unit are recorded on the planner.

The 6th Grade Exhibition

The 6th grade exhibition is the most significant event of the PYP programme. Students are expected to develop and present their own collaborative unit of inquiry that displays the five PYP essential elements (knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes and action). It is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the learner profile, which they have developed throughout the Primary Years Programme.

Practice (Strategies for recording and reporting)

- Observation: Students are observed regularly with teachers noticing the growth and progress of individuals, groups and the whole class.
- Performance assessment: Students apply what they have learned by completing authentic tasks that have more than one acceptable solution.



- **Process-focused assessment:** These are teacher's observations that aim to identify student's proficiency in a particular skill. These observations will allow teachers to collect information about which students are meeting, exceeding or struggling to meet the expectations.
- **Open-ended tasks:** Students are asked to complete or communicate original responses through drawings, written responses, diagrams or solutions.
- **Test/quiz:** These assessments provide a snapshot of students' subject-specific knowledge.
- **Student reflections:** Students are asked to reflect on what they have learned at the end of a lesson/unit.
- **Formal Essay:** Extended piece of independent student work which can reflect a student-generated title, a teacher-set title, be open or closed in nature and may have guiding questions; generally speaking, as students' progress in age, this activity will move from descriptive to analytical or evaluative and increasingly have a formal structure dependent upon the subject area.
- **Research Project:** Involves both teacher-guided and/or independent student work done both in class and/or as homework.
- **Journal Writing:** Continuous assessment activity, which can be part of class work or homework.
- **Field Work:** Off-site data collection for analysis and interpretation.
- **Self-assessment:** Students evaluate their work and reflect on the process they went through to produce it.

School-wide Assessment Tools

A range of tools can be used to assess students' knowledge and ongoing understanding. These tools include:

- **Exemplars:** These are samples of students' work that are used as models.
- **Checklists:** Lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present in students' work or performance
- **Rubrics:** Criteria used for assessing students in all areas.

The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in student work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Teachers, as well as students, can develop rubrics.

- **Anecdotal records:** brief, written notes based on close observations of students
- **Continuums:** visual representations of developmental stages of learning that show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.
- **Rating scale:** a simple multi-point range (from high to low) used to judge extent to which a student demonstrates specific behaviors, attitudes or understanding.



- Anecdotal records: a short narrative used to objectively report student behavior and approaches to learning.
- Continuums: Visual representations of developmental stages of learning which show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

Reporting to Stakeholders

The Written Report

The school term is divided into three equal class periods, or trimesters. Students must comply with homework, assignments, projects and tests, which will be posted weekly on the school website. At the completion of each trimester, teachers will complete the Boston School International report card, which is currently administered by the iMereb platform, BSI's online grading system.

- The report card includes grades for all curricular areas. Graded work will be evaluated from 2.0 to 5.0 in elementary in accordance to the Minister of Education of Panama through the Decree 123.
- A student must have at least a 3.0 average to pass a subject.
- In the elementary grades students' behavior is also graded with E (excellent), S (adequate), R (needs improvement), and X (inadequate) in areas as cooperation, honesty, initiative, respect, and responsibility.
- A copy of each student's report card will be filed in each student's personal administrative folder.

In addition to the BSI's report card, all students will receive a PYP Progress Report. The PYP Progress Report will be used to report students' understanding of the units of inquiry, as well as the areas of strength and improvements of the students. In the PYP Progress Report the learner profile and all the elements used in the transdisciplinary units are addressed with the subject-specific teaching reflections.

Portfolios

- A portfolio is a thoughtful, organized, and selective collection of documents of student work designed to demonstrate learner's successes, growth, and reflections.
- Portfolios are cumulative collections of student work, traveling with students from Kindergarten through sixth grade. They are housed in the students' classrooms and are accessible to the students and their families at any time during the school year. The portfolio is the property of the student and goes with the child upon leaving or graduating from the program.
- The portfolios will be used as tools to collect students' leadership, academic, and learner profile progress.



- These will include the Personal Mission Statement, aligned with Leader in Me Program Habit 2, “Begin With End In Mind”, helping students identify social, emotional, and academic strengths or areas of improvement.
- Goals and lead measures will then be written to determine how everyone involved can support the achievement of his or her personal mission statement. The goals should be reviewed and adapted by each student at the end of both the first and second trimesters.
- Student progress and celebrations will also be included.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Formal conferences will take place at different times during the school year. Students will use their portfolios as tools of empowerment. Each conference will be held at the end of each trimester and will last at least fifteen minutes.

- **Teacher–Student Conference:** This conference will provide students feedback about the progress and the development of the five elements of the PYP programme. It will also help students master their presentation skills. A day and a time will be set at the end of the first trimester.
- **Parents Conference:** This conference happens between the parent, student, and teacher to review progress of student goals and academic development. There will be two formal conferences at the end of the first and second trimester.
- **Student-led Conference:** It will involve the student and the parent. The students are responsible for creating and sending the invitations for the conference. They will lead the individual conferences and will be involved in the discussion and reflection of their learning, by sharing their portfolios or other work samples. They will openly discuss strength areas, as well as areas of difficulties, in both academic and the development of the learner profile or the implementation of the Leader in Me program. This conference will take place at the end of third trimester.

DIPLOMA ASSESSMENT POLICY

Assessment Practices

All assessment is criterion referenced. Assessment in the Diploma Programme is guided by the IB organization. Assessment 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 rigorous, criterion-related performance assessment.' It is based on the following aims:

- To support curricular and philosophical goals
- To encourage good classroom practice
- To reflect the international-mindedness of the programme
- To provide each subject a suitable range of tasks, instruments, and components in order to ensure class aims
- To further develop thinking skills such as comprehension, synthesis, reflection, evaluation and other critical thinking skills as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills such knowledge, understanding, and application.
- To provide students with the knowledge and skills required to enter elite institutions and high-stakes universities

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 judge students' work in relation to identified levels of attainment, rather than in relation to the work of other students
- A distinction between formal IB internal and external assessment and the supporting formative assessment that takes place during the entire programme
- Valuing student's performance, rather than just averaging attainment grades over a reporting period
- Differentiation in assessments in order to address the different learning needs of students
- Examining student understanding at the end of the course.
- Measuring student's abilities to apply knowledge and skills in new contexts.

BSI uses a number of practices and instruments including teacher-supported self-evaluation, rubrics, matrices, and peer evaluations mediated by the teachers. 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 as well as a variety of other tasks such as essays, research papers, written assignments, oral interviews, mathematical and scientific investigations, and projects.



Some of these assessment instruments are used formatively during the course, for internal assessment purposes, as well as summative at the end.

Assessment Criteria

Subject teachers present the assessment criteria of their subjects guides early in the programme. Assessment tasks are marked according to these criteria so that students, teachers and parents are clear about the student's progress. This includes internal and external evaluations and overall expectations of the programme.

Assessment Scores in the Diploma Programme

In the DP, students obtain grades for each DP course attempted from 7 to 1, with 7 being highest. Article 13, from the "General regulations: Diploma Programme," IBO, April 2014, explains the conditions required to earn an IB Diploma. This article states all mandatory requirements:

"13.1 All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional Diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB Diploma, except under the conditions stipulated in articles 18 and 19 of these regulations.¹

13. 2 The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate provided all the following requirements have been met.

- a. CAS requirements have been met.
- b. The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
- c. There is no "N" awarded for theory of knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject.
- d. There is no grade E awarded for theory of knowledge and/or the extended essay.
- e. There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- f. There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL).
- g. There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL).
- h. The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
- i. The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).
- j. The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee."

The DP core

The theory of knowledge and extended essay are awarded individual grades. Collectively, they can sum up to three additional points towards the overall score.

Creativity, Action, Service does not contribute to the points total but student's need to prove authentic participation in order to be awarded the diploma.

Internal and External Assessments

All subjects, with the exception of CAS, are assessed internally and externally. Internal assessments could include oral presentations, practical or written works. It all depends of the nature of the subject. Internal assessment could range between 20 to 50 percent of the mark awarded for each subject. Each

¹ Article 18: Candidates affected by adverse circumstances, Article 19: Candidates with incomplete assessment. General regulations: Diploma Programme," IBO, April 2014.



subject teacher marks internal assessments. A moderator appointed by IB will grade a sample of at least five internal assessment per subject at each grade level. The internal assessment scores are submitted to IB for moderation, which refers to the checking and unifying of assessment standards, to ensure all internal assessment scores worldwide are consistent.

The externally assessed examinations are mandatory and are held in April of the second year of the Diploma course. External exams contain two or three papers. The different papers may focus on different areas of the subject syllabus and can have different forms of questions. Independent examiners appointed by the IB organization do the grading of all external assessments.

Grades, Reporting and Recording

Students will receive at the end of each trimester, the Boston School International report card, which is currently administered by the iMereb platform, BSI’s online grading system for recording and reporting grades for Meduca. Report card grades usually involve the marking of assessment sections that will later be moderated by the IB. Teachers are encourage to use different methods to provide feedback to students and parents. Parent-teacher conferences take place at the end of each trimester. Student led conferences take place at least once a year, usually towards the end of the school year. It is important to understand that grades awarded by teachers for school reports may be different to final IB grades.

	The IB Grading Scale	Meduca Grading Scale
Excellent	7	5
Very Good	6	4
Good	5	
Satisfactory	4	3
Mediocre	3	
Poor	2	2
Very Poor	1	1

Grades 2 and 1 are failing grades for Meduca.

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

	The IB Grading Scale	Meduca Grading Scale
Excellent	A	5
Good	B	4
Satisfactory	C	3
Mediocre	D	2
Elementary	E	1
No grade	N	0

Grade E is a failing grade for IB. Bellow 3 is a falling grade for Meduca.

Assessment Accommodations

Students needing accommodations have access to various support services provided by the school. Accommodations could include services for English learner students (ESL) as well as students with learning needs. Arrangements for meeting the accommodations and requirements are developed through the DP



Coordinator and implemented through the subject teachers, the ESL Program specialist, and the psychological department. For further information please read Special Needs Policy.

Mock Exams

A mock exam is a trial run exam very similar to the final external IB exam that will allow students, teachers, and coordinators to determine an action plan to address any possible issues. Mock exams will take place towards the end of the second trimester of 12th grade.

If a mock exam result shows a grade below three, a mandatory meeting with students, parents, and teacher will take place. The meeting's agreements will determine the actions, strategies, and time needed to improve the chances of students' success in the IB external exams.

Roles and Responsibilities

DP Coordinator

- Communicate with students and parents regarding the expectations of the program
- Provide access of all policies to teachers and the school community
- Provide teachers, parents, and students with a copy of the Academic Honesty Policy
- Provide assessment calendar for students which includes internal assessments, orals, and exams
- Provide assessment calendar for teachers which also includes teacher deadlines
- Provide materials that will support teachers and students with their internal assessments and exams
- Monitor instruction, pacing and assessment to ensure it is aligned with IB curriculum requirements
- Monitor to ensure the grade posting is occurring in a timely manner
- Monitor assessments' pacing
- Provide exam results
- Analyze with all teachers exam data for instruction purposes
- Keep teachers informed of new DP principles and practices regarding assessment
- Provide IB Training for teachers

Teachers

- Use the criterion-referenced assessments as required by their subject guides
- Provide subject guides at the beginning of the course
- Provide a variety of assessments
- Communicate clearly all assessment expectations from the beginning
- Design formative assessment activities to help students understand what they have learned and what they need to improve
- Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in the feedback process
- Maintain and report to parents student's progress by keeping assessment records updated
- Utilize assessment data to guide and to improve teaching and learning
- Provide tutorial times for student support

Students

- Comply with assessment rules and regulations
- Respect and student's Handbook and the Academic Honesty Policy



- Participate fully in formative assessment activities and homework
- Reflect on areas in need of improvement
- Meet all deadlines for internal assessments and the orals as set by the teachers, the coordinator and the school
- Seek help when not understanding a concept, skill, or falls behind
- Attend class regularly in order to benefit from instruction
- Be prepared for class by being organized, having materials and bringing assignments to class on time
- Bring a positive attitude to learn
- Strive to develop the IB Learner Profile attributes

Parents

- Provide a positive learning environment at home where the student can do homework
- Ensure that the student attends school regularly and does not fall behind
- Monitor student grades online weekly
- Contact teachers directly with any concerns in a timely manner

Distribution

This policy will be distributed and discussed with all students and emailed to parents. It will also be posted digitally. Questions may be directed to the Elementary and High School Coordinator, the IB Coordinator, or Academic Director.

Policy Review

The developers of this policy include the Head of School, the Academic Director, the IB Coordinator, and Elementary and the High School Coordinator. It will be reviewed and amended at minimum annually under the direction of the DP Coordinator.

References

PYP - Making it happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education (IBO)

The PYP Programme Assessment: Principles and Practices (IBO)

The Diploma Program: From Principles into Practice (IBO 2015)

Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy (IBO 2010)

Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme (IBO 2018)

General regulations: Diploma Programme," (IBO 2014)