

# Flathead High School

## IB Programme Assessment Policy

Last Updated March 2016

### Section 1: Definitions and Philosophy

#### Assessment Description

Assessment is the measurement of what students know and can do, and it is a critical component of their learning journey. How and when we evaluate students directly informs planning, teaching, and learning. Effective assessment places students at the center of their learning by allowing teachers to monitor student progress and adjust instruction to improve achievement and motivation. Assessment is managed through an active partnership among students, teachers, and parents & guardians. Clarity of expectations and good communication are shared responsibilities.

#### Purposes of Assessment and Indicators of Effective Assessment

- **Informing and guiding teaching and learning**

A good classroom assessment plan gathers evidence of student learning that informs teachers' instructional decisions. It provides teachers with information about what students know and can do. To plan effective instruction, teachers also need to know what the student misunderstands and where the misconceptions lie. In addition to helping teachers formulate the next teaching steps, a good classroom assessment plan provides a roadmap for students. Students should, at all times, have access to the assessment so they can use it to inform and guide their learning.

- **Goal Setting**

Students need frequent opportunities to reflect on where their learning is and what needs to be done in order to achieve their learning goals. When students are actively involved in assessing their next learning steps and creating goals to accomplish them, they make major advances in directing their learning and what they understand about themselves as learners.

- **Reporting Grades**

Grades provide students, parents, employers, other schools, governments, post-secondary institutions and others stakeholders with summary information about student learning.

- **Motivating students**

Research (Stiggins et al. 2004) has shown that students will be motivated and confident learners when they experience progress and achievement, rather than the failure and defeat associated with being compared to more successful peers.

#### Formal IB Assessment Practice and Classroom Grades

In the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (grades 11-12), students demonstrate learning through formal, IB-required assessments in addition to being assessed throughout their courses, from which they receive classroom grades reported through PowerTeacher Gradebook (District 5's electronic grading system). In high school, semester grades earned become part of the student's transcript that may be reported to colleges, employers, and others.

#### Summative and Formative Assessment

Aligned with both current research into best practices and IB's own guidelines, teachers use a range of

formative and summative tasks.<sup>1</sup> Formative assessment allows teachers to monitor student progress towards meeting IB standards. Students receive meaningful, detailed, and timely feedback that supports improvement. Teachers use data from such assessments to modify instruction to promote learning. Formative assessment serves as the foundation for learning and prepares students for the “higher-stakes” nature of summative assessments, which measure achievement at the end of a course or unit. Although grades entered by teachers into PowerTeacher Gradebook may include both formative and summative tasks, final semester grades value the most accurate reflection of student achievement rather than simply averaging of grades over time.

### **Criterion-Related Assessment**

IB assessment is criterion-related rather than norm-referenced. This means that rubrics are “feedback tools” used to “inform learners and guide their improvement” according to the established standards and criteria (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006, p. 78). For some components, assessment is measured through mark schemes aligned to the relevant IB subject’s criteria.

## **Section 2: Summative Assessment of Learning**

### **Defining summative assessment**

Summative assessments take place at the end of a unit of instruction and “are evaluative in nature, and their results are . . . reported as a score or a grade . . . on report cards and transcripts” (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006, p. 71). Summative assessments are designed and developed according to the academic standards and learning goals for a particular unit; consequently they are seen as “assessments of learning” (Danielson, 2007, p. 59, emphasis original).

### **The use of criteria and rubrics**

In IB courses at Flathead High School, the vast majority of summative assessments are graded by teachers using IB assessment criteria. In this way, students, parents, and teachers have specific information about how students are progressing towards achieving IB standards. Because students can only meet standards they know about, it is the responsibility of the teacher to share rubrics with students in advance and to provide explicit instruction that clarify expectations. Rubrics are available by teachers and distributed via hard copy and/or electronic copy to students.

### **Assessment models, sample work, and feedback to students**

In the case of the Diploma Programme (grades 11 and 12) summative assessments often model in both format and material tested, the formal assessments that are officially set by the IB itself. In Flathead High School courses, summative assessments target the official IB Aims and Objectives of the relevant subject, whether or not formal IB assessment criteria are used.

Whenever practical, teachers provide samples of work that have been marked so that students can internalize the assessment standards and understand what is expected. Such samples may be (a) the actual work of former Flathead High School students that have been marked or moderated by the IB, (b) models generated personally by instructors, or (c) samples provided by the IB in official teacher support

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<sup>1</sup> Descriptions of research-based best practices may be found in Guskey (2009), *The Teacher as Assessment Leader*; Marzano (2003), *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*; Reeves (2007), *Ahead of the Curve: The Power of Assessment to Transform Teaching and Learning*; and Wiggins & McTighe (2004) *Understanding by Design*. IB guidelines are described in IBO (2009), *The Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice* and IBO (2004), *Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practice*.

material or through formal training. Feedback to students on summative assessments is related to the criteria; however, it may take various forms, including indicating specific achievement levels attained against the various criteria, descriptive marginal comments or annotations, and/or an overall summative comment.

### **Summative assessments and course grades**

Summative assessments comprise an important role in the final letter grade a student earns in a given IB course. Teachers must translate achievement levels attained on the IB rubric into point totals that can be entered into PowerTeacher Gradebook, District 5's electronic grading program. Teachers post on their web pages and distribute in hard copy to students the specific scales used to convert IB points into classroom grades and percentages that are reflected in Gradebook.

## **Section 3: Formative Assessment *for* Learning**

### **Defining formative assessment**

Formative assessments are employed “not to certify mastery of content by students but to provide information to both students and teachers as to what has not yet been learned and to guide next steps” (Danielson, 2007, p. 62). Tomlinson & McTighe (2006) add, “Formative assessments provide opportunities for students to practice, take mental risks, learn from mistakes, and revise their work” (p. 131). IB teachers use a variety of formative assessment strategies to gather evidence of student progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and abilities towards specific learning targets.

Student and teacher partnerships develop as a result of collaborative efforts to analyze feedback, monitor progress and adopt new, more effective strategies for teaching and learning to reach the intended learning goals. Teachers work towards providing descriptive and timely feedback on well-designed formative assessments. In turn, students develop understanding that lifelong learning requires their effort, practice and advocacy in order to progress. Students must invest in their progress daily, initiating additional support as needed and building self-awareness of their learning strengths and challenges.

### **The use of criteria and rubrics**

IB subject area criteria are deconstructed to identify and describe levels of achievement to shape formative assessment tasks, providing students and teachers with learning targets that directly inform achievement on summative tasks. Progress is communicated with clear distinction between various levels of achievement to assist learning progress.

### **Formative assessments and course grades**

Formative assessments provide the opportunity for students and teachers to take manageable risks in the learning process, and, therefore, these assessments play a lesser role in the calculation of the final course grade than do summative tasks. Additionally, IB teachers are encouraged to separate performance from behavior when factoring course grades and work towards the development of appropriately weighted grade scales, given the students' development and abilities at a given period in their progress through IB courses, together with department colleagues and guided by researched best practices and guides.

## **Section 4: District-Level Assignments and Grading**

### **District Classroom Assignment Philosophy**

The overriding purpose of classroom assignments is to improve student learning and to do so assignments must be directly related to students' mastery of established learning goals. To this end, the academic purpose of all classroom assignments must be clearly articulated by the teacher and evident to the student.

Effective classroom assignments enhance the learning experience and build upon content being taught in the classroom. For the positive academic effect of classroom assignments to be realized, feedback must be provided to the student. Classroom assignments should be used to provide both formative and summative information for and about students.

Effective classroom assignments are differentiated to meet individual student needs whenever appropriate. Allowing student choice in topics and methods used in assignments is a way in which differentiation is accomplished.

All classroom assignments given are:

- Relevant to the learning goals of the curriculum
- Realistic in their expectations of students
- Respectful of the many demands in students' lives

The primary purposes for classroom assignments include:

1. Building, reinforcing, and extending upon learning goals
2. Building background knowledge prior to instruction
3. Checking for understanding
4. Practicing acquired skills
5. Reflecting upon concepts and/or learning
6. Acquiring new understandings or information
7. Applying learning to new situations

Homework, when consistent with the guidelines established for classroom assignments, is an appropriate extension of in-class learning. Effective homework assignments provide the student with a quality learning experience that fulfills one or more of the purposes stated above. For homework to be effective, a student should not have to rely upon instruction or undue help from a parent or guardian to complete the work assigned.

### **District Grading Practices Philosophy**

The grading of student learning is a complex process and is part of the intricate relationship between teacher and student. This relationship can often be difficult to quantify and is not easily reduced to simplistic terms. However, guidelines that support research and best practices in grading will serve to move all students and teachers toward effective communication of learning that more closely represents the learning process in relation to content-specific learning targets.

The primary purpose for grading student work is to accurately communicate achievement and academic growth to students, parents, and others.

Related purposes for grading student work include:

1. Providing feedback for students to use for self-evaluation and improved achievement
2. Providing feedback for teachers to use to improve instruction and student achievement
3. Providing feedback for departments, grade levels, schools and the district to use to make adjustments in curriculum, alignment, materials, and assessment

### **District Grading Practice Guidelines**

1. Academic grades reflect students' levels of proficiency related to learning goals, which are based on state standards, benchmarks, essential learning expectations, or district curriculum.
2. Behavior is not reflected in reported academic grades unless defined in state standards, benchmarks, essential learning expectations, or district curriculum.
3. Teachers emphasize accountability in meeting timelines and expectations. However, when students struggle with meeting timelines it remains important that assignments be completed to demonstrate levels of achievement on learning goals. Therefore, accepting late assignments is important in order to assure that students meet the learning goals measured by those assignments, providing the submission of work is within manageable timeframes established at the school, departmental and/or classroom level (i.e., end of units, end of quarter, end of semester, etc.).
  - a. Any academic penalty for assignments completed late should not unreasonably affect a student's final grade. For example, if late work completed demonstrates a student's proficiency, it should not take the final grade below the proficiency level.
  - b. Support systems to help students struggling with timely completion of assignments are available to students to assist them in meeting deadlines and completing unfinished work.
4. Students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their progress related to the mastery of clearly articulated learning goals within timeframes established at the school, departmental and/or classroom level (i.e., end of units, end of quarter, end of semester, etc.).
  - a. Resubmission of assignments and assessments or completion of alternative assignments and assessments is encouraged for students who are struggling to meet established learning goals.
    - i. Resubmission or alternative submission provides students who are struggling to meet established learning goals opportunities to seek higher levels of achievement. However, prior to resubmissions or alternative submissions being accepted, students must demonstrate that steps have been taken to increase their proficiency level.
  - b. Support systems to help students struggling to master learning goals are available to students to assist them in the learning process.
5. In any given class, the student's grade should be a reflection of their performance on the learning goals identified for that course and should be gleaned primarily from summative assessments.
6. Formative assessment information is intended to provide input for students regarding areas in which improvement is needed. Subsequently, academic credit may be granted for completion of formative assignments providing it does not unreasonably affect a student's final grade.)
7. A student's grade is not to be unduly dependent upon the achievement or behavior of others. When group work is part of the standards of a given class, students' performance within the group must primarily be evaluated individually and only secondarily on the whole group outcome or process.

8. The preponderance of assignments given will be scored using rubrics that clearly define performance levels which are based upon established learning goals.

## **Section 5: National and District Programs In Place at FHS**

### **District-Wide Protocols for the Montana Common Core Standards**

The state of Montana adopted a new set of academic standards, the Montana Common Core Standards, on November 4, 2011, establishing the requirement that literacy education be taught across the curriculum. As a component of statewide adoption, Kalispell Public Schools has implemented district-wide protocols for close reading (LAPS) and writing (CEAL) all disciplines and classrooms. Moreover, the protocols were developed, in part, to align with the requirements of the IB and Advanced Placement programs of study. Students begin working with these protocols in middle school, and they further refine and develop them in high school.

All staff members of Flathead High School are trained in the use of these protocols, and are expected to regularly implement them in their classroom instruction. Furthermore, the district has developed performance task assessments in the 9th and 10th grade years, in which students participate in a guided research process, culminating in an argumentative essay. The subject matter in the 9th grade performance task is based upon the curriculum in Sciences, and the subject matter in the 10th grade performance task is based upon the curriculum in Social Studies. Grade-level, core subject area teachers collaborate in the planning, student preparation and evaluation, and summative assessment process of the performance tasks. All 9th and 10th grade students in the district participate.

### **ACT**

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), the State of Montana elected to use the ACT as the basis for demonstrating compliance with the United States Department of Education. Since 2013, all students in Montana have taken the ACT in the spring of the academic year.

The ACT is an educational assessment that measures students academic preparedness for college-level education. It is composed of five components: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science Reasoning, and Writing. The exam is aligned to its own individual criteria, developed through internal research into college readiness and success.

### **How These Programmes Affect and Impact the IB Programs at FHS**

The implementation of the ACT as the basis for federal compliance is in its first year, and the effect of the assessment on our IB Programme is limited and yet to be seen. FHS is currently developing resources to help prepare our students for the new requirements, and we are studying the alignment of ACT's criteria with that of the course-specific criteria of the IB Programme. However, the effect of the district-wide protocols is significant and notable. The protocols give our students a common language for developing their close reading and writing skills, and we have observed meaningful improvement in these skills in all curricular areas, as well as in student preparation for IB courses at FHS.

## **Section 6: Academic Honesty**

### **Philosophy**

In order for learning to be valid, students must engage in their studies honestly. When a student cheats or in any way compromises the integrity of the educational process, that student demeans him or herself, debases the efforts of peers, and degrades the value of the International Baccalaureate

Programme.

### **General Guidelines**

From the beginning of their participation in the IB, students work with teachers to develop shared understandings about cheating, plagiarism, and other instances of academic dishonesty. Students are expected to do their own work; to receive only such help from peers, parents, or others as is authorized by instructors; to avoid claiming as their own the words, ideas, or data of others; and to refuse to assist peers in cheating. Students are encouraged to bring the efforts of others who cheat to the attention of school officials. Teachers educate students carefully on matters of academic honesty, including engaging students in activities that clarify what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it and about the difference between authorized collaboration and illegitimate collusion.

### **Consequences**

Students will receive partial credit or no credit depending on the circumstances and administrative approval for an assignment attempted or completed through cheating. At discretion of the teacher, the student may be required to complete the assignment (or an equivalent) for reduced credit. Depending on the student's history of misconduct, its intent, its severity, other action may be taken, including detention, suspension, or being dropped from the relevant class. In especially serious cases or for repeat offenses, students who cheat may be dropped from the IB Programme.

### **Official IB Policy**

IB sets forth detailed guidelines that Flathead High School must follow when an IB student is suspected of academic dishonesty on an IB assessment. Students who are found guilty of academic malpractice on an IB-required assessment (e.g., plagiarizing an Extended Essay, cheating on an IB exam) will be denied the IB Diploma.

**N.B.:** Appendix A relevant sections of the Academic Honesty Policy document.

## **Section 8: Accountability and Review**

Students can expect a culture of accountability in the development of assessment protocols that inform their learning. Teachers work regularly in collaborative professional learning communities to discuss, clarify and sequence the learning targets for the class, and hence develop formative and summative assessments to measure student progress toward these objectives.

It is the IB coordinator's responsibility to assist instructors in the implementation of the policy by providing access to key IB documents and the IB Online Curriculum Centre. It is the responsibility of the head of school to ensure compliance with the policy and to provide the staff development needed to implement the policy.

### **Review and Communication of the Assessment Policy:**

At minimum, every five years and as needed Flathead High School will review the Assessment Policy. The policy will be published on our IB website. Relevant research will be included in the review process.

### **Committee Members Involved in the Creation of This Policy:**

IB staff members representing all core curricular areas, the IB coordinator, and building administration have worked in collaboration to create and review this policy.





## References

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## **Appendix A: FHS Academic Honesty Policy**

### **Philosophy**

“By coming to [Flathead High School], you have implicitly asked the school to help you develop a broadly based, highly disciplined intelligence; you’ve asked not just to learn material, but also to be guided toward a deep and supple understanding of the subjects you study. Course readings, lectures, and discussions are all crucial elements of this learning. Less obvious, perhaps, is what your own writing contributes to this process. It may sometimes seem that exams, lab reports, and papers are meant primarily to measure how much you’ve learned. But when you complete written course work, you are not demonstrating what you’ve learned, but are rather doing the very work of synthesis and reflection that constitutes advanced learning. Every writer has had the experience of making discoveries while writing an essay. To have this discovery is to make knowledge, and making knowledge is what joins you to the project of the [school]. Students who cheat forfeit the opportunity to make such discoveries.”

Quoted from the Yale College Undergraduate Regulations 2008-2009,  
[www.yale.edu/yalecollege/publications/uregs/appendix/cheating.html](http://www.yale.edu/yalecollege/publications/uregs/appendix/cheating.html). Emphasis added by FHS.

### **What is Academic Honesty?**

“An authentic piece of work is one that is based on the candidate’s individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore, all assignments, written or oral, completed by a candidate for assessment must wholly and authentically use that candidate’s own language and expression. Where sources are used or referred to, whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase, such sources must be fully and appropriately acknowledged.”

Academic honesty: guidance for schools. 2003. Geneva. IBO.

### **What is Academic Dishonesty?**

- Plagiarism: “[. . .] the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate’s own.” Academic honesty: guidance for schools. 2003. Geneva. IBO.
- Collusion: “[. . .] supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.” Academic honesty: guidance for schools. 2003. Geneva. IBO.
- Duplication of Work: “[. . .] the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements. Academic honesty: guidance for schools. 2003. Geneva. IBO.
- “Any other [behavior] that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, falsifying a CAS record).” Academic honesty: guidance for schools. 2003. Geneva. IBO.
- Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Fabrication: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following examples.

- Copying someone else’s work, such as an assignment, quiz, or test, and submitting it as your

work

- Allowing another student to copy your work or giving test information/answers to students in other sections of the same class
- Utilizing aids such as notes or crib sheet to assist in completion of a quiz or test when such aides are not authorized by the teacher and looking on someone's paper or using a "cheat sheet" while taking a test
- Copying source material or not crediting sources in an attempt to present another's work as your own or putting a source's text into one's own words (paraphrasing) and not citing the source
- Turning in a research paper that you bought from a service or received from some other source
- Submitting your same work more than once for credit without the teacher's permission
- Using memory calculators with stored exam information while taking a test
- Making up data on a lab assignment or making up a source to use as a citation in a paper
- Using internet or electronic translators without the permission of the teacher

#### **Academic Dishonesty on Classroom Assessments**

**Level One Offense:** Improper citation of sources or other examples of plagiarism or other malpractice that could be unintentional.

- The teacher will conference with the student. This is the student's opportunity to learn from the mistake so that it can be avoided in the future.
- The student may be allowed to rewrite the assignment or complete an alternative assignment within the time parameters set by the teacher and will receive a reduced or a late grade on the assignment.
- The student will receive a failing grade on the assignment if he/she does not rewrite the assignment.

**Level Two Offense:** This is a deliberate exchange of information between students or flagrant copying of work from another student or another source. This includes but is not limited to any kind of cheating on exams, copying student work on homework or on exams, allowing someone to copy your work on homework or exams, intentional plagiarism, repeated plagiarism, fabrication of data, and multiple level one offenses.

- The teacher will conference with the student and the parent and may invite the IB coordinator and the administration to join as well.
- The student will receive a failing grade on the assignment. The student is still responsible for the content and the teacher may require an alternative assessment.
- The teacher will write a discipline referral to the administration.

**Level Three Offense:** This is repeated and chronic malpractice and will be handled by the administration. Consequences could include, but are not limited to, a zero on the assignment or removal from the class with a semester "F".

#### **Academic Dishonesty on IB Assessments (Those that will be scored or moderated by an external IB examiner)**

If the malpractice is discovered before the student and teacher have signed the cover sheet:

- The student will receive a failing grade on the assignment in the classroom gradebook.
- The student must rewrite the assignment when possible, allowing time for the teacher to score and submit the work before the coordinator's final submission deadline.
- A student who does not rewrite the assignment will receive an F for the IB score.
- The teacher will conference with the student and parent and may ask the coordinator and administrator to join as well.

If the malpractice is discovered after the coversheet has been signed and before the coordinator has mailed the assessment:

- The student will receive a failing grade on the assignment in the classroom gradebook.
- The student will receive an F for the IB score. "If it is apparent that the candidate's draft work may not be entirely authentic, it is not appropriate to allow the candidate to submit the same work with a signed coversheet with the expectation that the situation will then be resolved by the IB [organization]." IB Handbook A8.5.1
- The teacher will conference with the student and parent and may ask the coordinator and administrator to join as well.

If the malpractice is discovered after the coordinator has mailed the assessment or during an IB exam:

- The student will receive a failing grade on the assignment in the classroom gradebook where applicable.
- The coordinator must notify IB and an investigation will be conducted by IB staff.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### Administrators/IB Coordinator

- Understand and communicate what constitutes academic honesty and an authentic piece of work.
- Know and enforce the Flathead High School Academic Honesty Policy as well as the IB Academic Honesty Policy.
- Establish a school culture that actively encourages academic honesty.
- Support the IBO fully in the prevention, detection and investigation of malpractice.
- Understand additional responsibilities in the event of a candidate being investigated for malpractice.

#### Teachers

- Enforce the Flathead High School Academic Honesty Policy.
- Provide instruction and scaffolding necessary for students to use ethical research practices including opportunities for feedback via the drafting process.
- Provide students with consistent advice on good academic practice whenever necessary including clear guidelines on academic writing and referencing styles required in each subject.
- Confirm, to the best of his or her knowledge, all students' work accepted or submitted for assessment is the authentic work of the student.
- Provide clear information and guidelines on assessment requirements and group work, and the level of collaboration involved especially concerning aspects involving individual and/or

collective course work and assessment.

#### Students

- Are responsible for complying with the Flathead High School Academic Honesty Policy.
- Seek clarity from teachers during the assignment process and regarding any aspect of Academic Honesty guidelines.
- Have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged.

Adapted from *the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries Academic Honesty Policy 2007*