



INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT POLICY

Related Merici Policies

- Academic Integrity - IB
- Inclusion

Purpose / Rationale

This policy describes the principles and expectations for assessing student achievement in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

Definitions

Best-Fit

The most accurate demonstration of a student's performance, not an average of grades over a reporting period.

Continuous Assessment

This means that instead of achievement being measured only by a single examination, other items such as research, practical work, written and oral class work are considered as important contributions to the measurement of student outcomes.¹

Formal Summative Assessment

Formal summative assessment is defined by the IB as assessment directly contributing to the final qualification [represents the final summative assessment practice in the IB continuum of education].

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a tool or process that teachers can use to improve student learning; it is about assessment for learning, rather than simply assessment of learning.

International Baccalaureate Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organisation works with schools, governments, and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The Merici College Mission and Vision Statementⁱ aligns with the philosophy and principles of the International Baccalaureate to develop young women who are ready to take their place in the world.

Philosophy and Principles

Merici College is committed to our quality assessment framework, which is underpinned by our teaching and learning philosophy. We are committed to improving our student outcomes through quality feedback to students and parents, and to work collaboratively in teaching teams to develop quality assessment tasks in line with IB requirements.

A lifelong love of learning is an educational goal held by Merici College. The Principles of Powerful Learningⁱⁱ are at the core of best practice teaching, and they underpin all aspects of our teaching strategies, from lessons in the classroom to assessment and the many varied learning experiences offered by the College.

Merici College will identify and nurture exceptional young women from any background with the potential to become effective, ethical leaders. It will be a joyful community of lifelong, fearless learners who are culturally grounded and internationally-minded.

Policy

The purpose of assessment is to enable students to demonstrate their abilities, to affirm effort and application and to suggest ways to improve learning. Merici College has a policy of continuous and varied assessment. Assessment is integrated with teaching and learning in the classroom and reflective of the Merici's Principles of Powerful Learning and the Archdiocese of Canberra- Goulburn Assessment Policyⁱⁱⁱ

At the end of the two-year programme, candidates are assessed both internally and externally in ways that measure individual performance against stated curriculum and assessment objectives for each subject. These assessment items are set by the IB.

Most subjects include some assessment that is carried out internally by teachers, who mark individual pieces of work produced as part of a course of study. Some assessment tasks are conducted and overseen by teachers but are then marked externally by examiners. Examples include:

- written assignments or tasks for studies in Language and Literature, and Language acquisition subjects
- the essay for Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
- the Extended Essay (EE).

The grading system is criterion-related (results are determined by performance against set standards, and not in relation to the performance of other students).

At Merici College, IB Diploma students are required to sit practice exams. This is to prepare students for their



final exams at the end of Year 12. If a student is absent for a practice exam with a valid reason, she will be required to contact the Head of IB to reschedule.

Assessment takes priority over other school-based activities and permission must be sought from the Head of IB to attend events that clash with assessment items scheduled.

Continuous Assessment

Merici College has a process of continuous assessment throughout each semester which may include both formative and formal summative assessment opportunities. The relative importance of each task type varies from subject to subject. All subjects will aim to have at least one piece of formative assessment in line with IB style processes each semester and students will receive written teacher feedback. These items do not contribute to the IB grade but are designed to be an indication of the level at which the student is working. The ongoing semester assessment, classwork, along with practice exams will form the basis for teachers awarding predicted grades to students in each subject. Predicted grades are submitted to the IB and may be used by universities for entrance and offers.

Formative assessment may be supported by any of the following instruments:

- student self-evaluation supported by the teacher
- peer evaluation mediated by the teacher (either face to face or using an ICT resource such as a blog)
- systematic use of detailed assessment criteria (rubrics, matrices, mark schemes).

Formal Summative Assessment

Formal summative assessment must be set in line with IB requirements. IB subject teachers are expected to communicate the task requirements using a task cover sheet and this must include the task weighting as stipulated by the IB subject guide, the outcomes being addressed and the deadline for submission. Subject teachers are required to submit the formal summative assessment tasks to the relevant Studies Coordinator and Head of IB for approval four weeks prior to distribution to students.

In liaison with the Head of IB, subject teachers are responsible for ensuring students complete any IB prescribed forms relating to assessment and the uploading/sending of any Internal Assessment.

Procedures

The IB Diploma is awarded based on performance across all parts of the DP. IB Diploma students complete formal examinations at the end of the Diploma programme, which are marked by external IB examiners. Students also complete assessment tasks in the college, which are either initially marked by teachers and then moderated by external moderators or sent directly to external examiners depending on the subject. Teachers' raw marks awarded for internal assessment will be released to students but are subject to moderation by the IB. Students must be informed of this process. Teachers will not share marks for Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge Essay and the Higher-Level Essay for Group 1 as these are not marked by teachers, but by the IB Examiners.

Grading

The Diploma is awarded to students who gain at least 24 points, subject to certain minimum levels of performance across the whole programme and satisfactory participation in the Diploma Core

- Creativity, activity, service (CAS) requirement, the Extended Essay (EE) and Theory of Knowledge (TOK). Each subject is graded 1–7, with 7 being the highest grade. These grades are also used as points in determining if the Diploma can be awarded:

Grade 7 = 7 points

Grade 6 = 6 points

Grade 5 = 5 points

Grade 4 = 4 points

Grade 3 = 3 points

Grade 2 = 2 points

Grade 1 = 1 points

The highest total that a Diploma Programme student can be awarded is 45 points. If a candidate scores less than 24 points, the Diploma is not awarded.

TOK and the EE are graded A–E, with A being the highest grade. The TOK and EE grades are then combined in the Diploma points matrix to contribute between 0 and 3 points to the total. CAS is not assessed but must be completed to pass the Diploma Programme.

A ‘4’ in the DP programme is commonly seen as ‘meeting standard’ in terms of achievement in external examinations. Students who are at risk of scoring less than 4 should engage in dialogue with relevant IB Staff. Their subject teacher and their parents must be included in this dialogue which should focus on implementing measures to improve learning. During Term 4, Year 11, students at risk of not meeting the IB requirements are encouraged to meet with the Head of IB, their parents and Deputy Principal Learning. This provides an opportunity for the student to change her approach to learning, improve performance and allow for discussion of the future of her place in the Diploma Programme.

Teachers must inform students which criteria will be used to evaluate their work; both for internal assessment (IA) and external examination. Teachers must explain what is required for students to fulfil the criteria for any piece of assessed work whether summative or formative.

Assessment in the Diploma Programme is guided by the IB, and the guidelines and practices are outlined in *Diploma Programme: From principles into practice*^{iv} and the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*^v.

IB marking criteria is set out in subject guides. Weightings of tasks will vary from 10–50% of the student’s final grade in each subject area. It is expected that students complete both summative and formative assessment. Students who are at risk of missing internal deadlines will have their parents/guardians notified, the Head of IB, Deputy Principal Learning and a meeting will be arranged to discuss progress.

If students do not submit their Internal Assessment items by the deadline, and do not have approval from the Head of IB for late submission, they will be removed from classes the following day or on their return to school and provided with that day to complete the item which in the absence of any other work, will be submitted as finished to the IB. Approval will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and must be accompanied with documentation such as medical certificates.

Formal Summative IB Exams

If students are unable to attend the IB formal summative exams (November or May Session), they must immediately contact the Head of IB who will inform the IB. As this is a global qualification, examinations are set in specific conditions and not able to be rescheduled in that exam session. The student would need to consult with the Head of IB to find out the options available to them at that time, under their specific conditions and this may result in the student not being awarded the Diploma in that academic year.

Academic Integrity

If a teacher suspects that a student is guilty of malpractice, the teacher should not award a level of achievement and refer to the Merici Academic Integrity Policy - IB^{vi} for further guidance. The occurrence must also be reported to the relevant Studies Coordinator and the Head of IB.

Course Information

All students receive a Course Outline for each subject for the 2-year course within the first two weeks of Year 11. The outline details the course being studied, the teacher, the assessment objectives and the formal summative assessment tasks and due dates.

The teacher may alter this outline only after consultation with the relevant Studies Coordinator and Head of IB. A copy of the Course Outline is also found on the student's online learning platform. The online learning platform also contains other relevant information such as copies of the course guide for that subject.

Drafts

Merici College encourages teachers to provide constructive feedback to students, to assist them to achieve to their potential. General discussion of assessment work and how it is proceeding is a natural part of the relationship between the teacher and the student in any course. However, marking, correcting, or editing of draft material by the teacher prior to submission of the assignment proper moves into the realm of improper practice. Students should not expect this level of assistance, nor should the teacher provide this.

The following requirements must be adhered to by teachers when reading the drafts of student work:

- Drafts must only be submitted to the current class teacher, except in the case of the EE
- Any contact should be at least 48 hours before the due date
- As part of the learning process, teachers can give advice to students on one draft of the internally assessed work
- Advice should be in terms of the way the work could be improved, but this draft must not be heavily annotated or edited by the teacher. If responding to work of a performing nature, this must not be an extensive response
- The next version handed to the teacher after the draft must be the final submission of the task. However, if a student could not have completed the work without substantial support from the teacher, this should be recorded
- The teacher may not give an indication of a mark or grade for the draft.

Homework

It is expected that students engage in their formative homework activities to support their classroom-based learning and progression. Diploma subject teachers are responsible for ensuring homework tasks are designed in line with course aims and objectives.

If a student is not submitting homework tasks, the class teacher is to contact parents/guardians and discuss this with student's Pastoral Care Teacher, House Coordinator, relevant Studies Coordinator and the Head of IB as required.

Reporting

Assessment of a student's achievement in a semester is determined by the aggregation of performance in several assessment tasks, some formative and some prescribed by the IB such as the internal assessment component of a course. These tasks provide indicators of achievement for the selected assessment objectives. Numerical scores and/or grades are allocated to individual assessment tasks according to the assessment objectives for each task and as prescribed in the marking scheme, rubric, or grade descriptors.

Progress reports are issued mid semester and at the end of each semester (except in term 4 of Year 12). Parent teacher interviews are scheduled once every semester. Students are encouraged to attend these parent/teacher/student interviews with their parents to facilitate authentic conversations about improved learning and achievement. Students will be provided with a predicted level (1-7) in each subject area at the end of each semester. This is a guide only and students, parents and teachers must bear in mind that the final IB levels may differ to the college-based report card.

Students receive ongoing feedback on their progress through:

- The results of formative and summative assessment: feedback written on the tasks and/or indication of achievement through the marking of the rubric/ mark scheme
- Interactions with their teachers in class
- Individual or class feedback on the task.

Moderation

Internal Moderation

Internal assessment is based on work completed by candidates during the course and is a requirement of their subjects as stated in the IB Subject Guides. Where more than one teacher is involved in the teaching of a course, all teachers of a subject must standardise their marking of the final internal assessment through a moderation process which may involve horizontal and/or vertical team meetings.

External Moderation

A sample of student's internal assessments, selected by the IB, is sent for external moderation to achieve a common standard across schools. Marks may be adjusted by the external moderators based on the sample submitted to the IB and adjustments affect the whole cohort in that subject for that assessment item.

Transferring Students

Transfer into ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) system

Students who enrol in the IB programme at Merici are committing to a 2-year programme. Students who enter the IB DP at Merici may swap to the BSSS at any point until the end of Year 11. Any course changes must be authorised by the Deputy Principal Learning. If at the end of Year 11, students do not wish to continue in the IB programme and wish to transfer into the BSSS system they will be treated by the BSSS as an interstate student. Refer to the Board of Senior Secondary Studies Policies and Procedures Manual^{vii}. This can only occur after a period of course counselling and dialogue with all relevant stakeholders including parents and the Deputy Principal of Learning.

Transfer from the BSSS system

It will not be possible for a student from a non IB Diploma school or from the BSSS system (after 3 weeks of commencing Year 11) to enrol in the IB Programme at Merici. They must remain in the BSSS system.

Transfer from another IB Diploma school

This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis based on Merici subject offerings, amount of work completed by the individual student at the time of arrival and IB policies and procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of IB is responsible for ensuring all IB DP processes and procedures are adhered to. Any changes to procedures and requirements must be communicated to persons affected e.g. subject teachers, Deputy Principal Learning, parents etc.

All Diploma teachers and DP Administrators will have valid IB training. Teachers new to Merici College without IB training will be expected to enrol in IB training within the first term of employment to ensure they are familiar with the IB Diploma processes and standards. It is the responsibility of the Head of IB and the Merici College Principal or Deputy Principal Learning to ensure all Diploma teachers are trained to deliver the IB Diploma courses.

Subject teachers have a responsibility to design and provide ongoing formative assessment that informs students about their learning and how it relates to the course goals.

To maintain common standards with regards to feedback and assessment, cross marking, moderation and discussions with Studies Coordinators and other teachers are standard procedures.

Forms

Nil

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ⁱ Merici College, (2022). *Mission and Vision Statement*. [online] Available at: <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/building-futures/about-merici/strategic-directions>

ⁱⁱ Merici College, (2022). *Core Teaching and Learning Document*. Canberra. ACT.

ⁱⁱⁱ Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn, (2015). *Assessment Policy*. ACT

^{iv} International Baccalaureate Organization, (2015). *Diploma Programme: From principles into practice*. The Hague: IB Publishing Ltd.

^v International Baccalaureate Organization, (2021). *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*. The Hague: IB Publishing Ltd.

^{vi} Merici College, (2022). *Academic Integrity Policy*. ACT.

^{vii} ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, (2022). *Policy and Procedures Manual*. [online] Available at: https://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_teachers/policy_and_procedures. Accessed [1 January 2022]