



International Baccalaureate Assessment Policy Diploma Programme

Related Policies

Academic Honesty
Inclusion

Rationale / Purpose

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 outcomes¹.

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.

¹ Merici College, (2020). *Core Teaching and Learning Document*. Canberra. ACT.

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 Statement² 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 Learning³ 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.

Assessment

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 Policy*⁴.

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.

² Merici College, (2017). *Mission and Vision Statement*. [online] Available at: <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/building-futures/about-merici/strategic-directions>

³ Merici College, (2020). *Core Teaching and Learning Document*. Canberra. ACT.

⁴ Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn, (2015). *Assessment Policy*. ACT.

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 Senior School to reschedule.

Continuous Assessment

Merici College has a policy 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 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. Non submission/completion of Merici set tasks designed for the purpose of reporting without appropriate documentation and valid reason as determined by the Head of IB and/or Head of Senior School, will result in parents being contacted by the class teacher and may be reflected in the determining of semester grades in the semester report due to lack of evidence.

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

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

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 written 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.

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 to 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 Head of Senior School. 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*⁵ and the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*⁶.

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 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 Honesty

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 Honesty Policy⁷ 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 of Internal Assessments

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

⁵ International Baccalaureate Organization, (2015). *Diploma Programme: From principles into practice*. The Hague: IB Publishing Ltd.

⁶ International Baccalaureate Organization, (2019). *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2020*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization (UK).

⁷ Merici College, (2019). *Academic Honesty Policy*. ACT.

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, however, the overarching rules for subject specific guidance on drafts is to be found in The IB *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*⁸:

- Drafts must only be submitted to the current class teacher for that subject, except in the case of the EE
- Any drafts must be submitted as per the published assessment calendar to allow time for feedback and student action in response to the feedback. Non-compliance with this calendar deadline for both drafts and final IA's and the EE will result in parents being notified and may impact on students predicted grades.
- As part of the learning process, teachers can give advice to students on a first draft of the internally assessed work
- Advice should be in terms of the way the work could be improved, but this first 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 first 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, Head of Senior School, relevant Studies Coordinator and/or 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. Parent teacher

⁸ International Baccalaureate Organization, (2019). *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2020*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization (UK).

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:

- Interactions with their teachers in class
- The results of formative and summative assessment: feedback written on the tasks and/or indication of achievement through marking of the rubric
- 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. 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/international student. Refer to the *Board of Senior Secondary Studies Policies and Procedures Manual*⁹. 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.

⁹ ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, (2019). *Policy and Procedures Manual*

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

All Diploma teachers 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 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 and to deliver their course in line with the current and relevant IB Subject Guide.

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

References

- ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, (2019). Policy and Procedures Manual
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Forms

Nil

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