



RAFFLES
WORLD ACADEMY



IBDP Assessment Policy

Update: April 2016

IBDP Assessment Policy

What is the DP assessment policy?

The DP assessment policy applies to students in the IB Diploma (DP) and IB Courses programs offered at RWA. These programs involve students enrolled in Grades 11 and 12 at Raffles World Academy (RWA).

The policy is derived from the RWA and the IB's assessment philosophy and principles. These are consistent with each other, as required by the IB. The policy represents statements of intent and action describing principles, practices and procedures for achieving and reporting DP assessment objectives.

Formative and summative assessment

1. **Formative assessment** should be regular and ongoing, to guide development through teacher, self and peer assessment, and will utilize many of the assessment tools listed. Formative assessment results should be used to alter the instructional methods to meet the students' needs. It enables the teacher and each student to know where they are in their learning and what they need to do next to further improve.

Formative assessment encompasses:

- Diagnostic assessment: is usually performed at the start of each unit. It helps teachers to prevent assumptions on what students know.
 - Self-assessment and peer assessment
 - Quizzes, small weekly tests
 - Projects
 - Questions and answers in the lesson
 - Homework
 - Worksheets
 - Discussions
 - Practical or experimental work
 - Teachers' observations
2. **Summative assessment** is usually performed at the end of a complete unit or term. It measures the standards reached by students at certain milestones. It is used to place students in appropriate SL or HL groups and to generate reports to inform parents about the standard attained at that moment in time in relation to minimum standards required in the DP.

It is used by teachers to inform them about the quality of their work and whether their classes are at the target expected. It is used to compare student results from year to year within the school or to compare the school's results with those of other institutions worldwide.

Summative assessment encompasses:

- Assessment Point (AP) quizzes or tests
- Mid-year and end-year examinations
- Internal assessment and coursework for external examinations

All assessments are designed in alignment with IBDP course objectives and subject specific assessment criteria.

IBDP Assessment Policy

Designing assessments

General statements

1. All assessments should relate directly to the IB course of study and its objectives, as listed in the IB subject guide.
2. Grading procedures should be based on evidence and not subject to any form of bias. All records of grades and calculation of these grades must be kept on file with the teacher and HOD.
3. Duration of written mid-year and end-year examinations
 - **Grade 11 examinations:** 1 ½ -2 hours per paper for mid-year examinations; end-year examinations should reflect length of IBDP examinations in that subject
 - **Grade 12 examinations:** mock examinations must reflect IBDP examination design in each subject, in terms of number of papers, weight of each paper, skills and content tested and examination lengths.
4. Questions asked in examinations should be unseen.
 - Do not include the same questions which they have had on previous tests
 - Do not include the same questions as they have on revision sheets
5. Balanced selection of course content
 - Grade 11 end-year examinations must include material from topics covered during the whole academic year.
 - Grade 12 mock examinations must include material from topics covered during Grades 11 and 12.
6. Use a range of questions to reflect IB examination design. Questions asked should be taken from a mix of IB subject past papers and should cover all assessment objectives, in alignment with weights given to these objectives in each IB subject guide. No subject examination should be taken from a single past paper examination.
7. The teacher identified in the department with responsibility for design of the examination in a session should compile the following for approval by the HOD:
 - master copy of the examination
 - assessment rubric
 - mark scheme with fully worked solutions
 - cover sheet attached to the master copy showing the breakdown of marks by assessment objective. A sample template of this will be provided to all HODs and teachers by the DP Coordinator prior to the examination period.

IBDP Assessment Policy

Record Keeping

Record keeping is a strict requirement of teaching at RWA. All teachers are expected to maintain clear and accurate mark books. This is to ensure that when semester and final grades are produced there is evidence of how the grade was awarded.

Grade boundaries for AP and examination attainment must be made available to students (and parents, if required).

Assessment Points (APs) are used for tracking the progress of students, either individually or as a teaching group, in **six-week cycles** on the school management system, Prodigy.

Practice

Teacher records

- Student lesson attendance must be recorded for each lesson in the Teacher Planner or online
- All marks awarded for assessed work are recorded in the Teacher Planner or on a spreadsheet.
- When teachers record grades, they record the name of the task, date, points available and mark awarded.
- Teacher Planners must be available for inspection by the HOD, Head of SS, Deputy Head of SS or Principal, as requested.
- Teacher Planners may be reviewed regularly by HODs.
- AP and examination marks must be entered by question or by criteria after each assessment on the prescribed Excel worksheet for the purpose of Deep Dive Analysis (DDA).
- Data generated after each assessment must be shared at department meetings and next steps planned by teachers to address any issues of concern in teaching and learning. These next steps must be recorded on each DDA sheet.

Marking

Aims

- To provide students with clear feedback on strengths and areas requiring improvement. Students are encouraged to reflect and take action to achieve targets set using SIR (Strengths, Improvements, Reflection including next steps).
- To provide teachers with an accurate assessment of individual student ability and to track student progress against CAT4 entry data and targets (CAT 4 tests are taken by all Grade 11 students at the start of the academic year)
- To enhance the communication given to students and parents when work is marked.
- To ensure consistency between departments.

IBDP Assessment Policy

General points for all departments

- When marking student's work, a simple \surd or X is insufficient in most cases. Students need to be given written feedback which will enable them to identify strengths and weaknesses so they can improve.
- Annotations and comments should be written on the work to help clarify the marking
- Where a mark is awarded, a tick (\surd) should be placed in the text at the precise point where it becomes clear that the student deserves the mark
- Record subtotals (where applicable) in the right-hand margin against the part of the answer to which they refer next to the mark allocation.

Marking using criteria and internal moderation for standardization

1. The approach used in the application of criteria is the 'best fit' model as described in *Diploma Programme Principles and Practice (updated in Nov 2010)*.
 - Marking rubrics must be clear to students before the assessment.
 - The teacher chooses the assessment level that overall best matches the piece of work being marked.
 - It is not necessary for every detailed aspect of an assessment level to be satisfied for that level to be awarded.
 - The total possible mark for a piece of work is arrived at by adding together the maximum achievement level for each criterion.
 - Greater weight is given to criteria considered to be more important by giving them a greater number of achievement levels.

2. Targets

Comments both verbal and written should be constructive and supportive. Areas of weakness should be described as future targets for improvement rather than as a criticism using the SIR approach described on page 3 of this policy.

3. Mark positively

Give students credit for what they have achieved and for what they have got correct, rather than penalizing them for what they have not achieved or what they have got wrong.

4. Unexplained symbols or personal codes/notations on their own are not acceptable.

5. Internal moderation of marking: AP/coursework/examination marking must be moderated if there is more than one teacher teaching that subject.

The mark/remark model may be used which involves selecting a sample of examination scripts (top, average and lower marks scripts should be included in the sample) or each teacher of a DP subject marks a question across all teaching groups in that subject for that grade level.

When a significant variance in marks (>10%) for a particular question, criterion or script is noted, a re-mark is required. This should involve the Head of Department or senior-most DP teacher of that subject. If necessary, a moderation factor may be applied across the cohort in that subject assessment/examination, and marks across the cohort adjusted accordingly.

IBDP Assessment Policy

External Assessment

RWA may enter students for various internationally bench-marked tests such as ACER i-Achieve or the **International Schools' Assessment (ISA)** administered by the Australian Council for Educational Research (see <http://www.acer.edu.au/isa/> for details) or consider other standardized tests such as Progress in English, Progress in Mathematics.

As of September 2015, all new students entering the IB Diploma and Courses programs in Grade 11 are required to sit the CAT4 test administered at RWA.

Mean Standard Age Scores (SAS) achieved by these students and the CAT4 report are provided to all Grade 11 teachers. Starting points and target grades for each student across all available subject areas included in the CAT4 (including target grades if the student is challenged) are also made available to teachers.

Final IBDP examinations in Grade 12 are set by external examiners and papers delivered to RWA from the IB. These are kept secure following IB security requirements and scripts are despatched at the end of each examination session.

Grading in the IB Diploma and IB Courses programs

The following systems are in use when assessing students' work, in Teacher Planners and on reports to parents.

The 7-1 point scale is used by senior IB examiners when determining grade boundaries for examination papers and coursework components. This scale is also used by universities when determining entrance requirements for students who have challenged the IB Diploma or IB Courses programs.

This 7-point scale is used to assess semester and examination performance in the IB Diploma and IB Courses programs at RWA (see below). This is by means of general descriptors explicitly stated on the report card published for each individual student.

Subject specific descriptors for each grade point are listed in the document *Grade descriptors: For use from September 2014/January 2015*, published by the IB. The IBDP Coordinator must ensure that a copy of this document is made available to all teachers in the program. These descriptors are used by subject teachers to determine student attainment in examinations as well as work completed during the semester.

Numerical assessments are used in the assessment of exams, AP tests, quizzes, etc. and are usually expressed as a percentage. Grade boundaries in AP tests and internal examinations are determined following the moderation of these assessments. They are determined using a normal distribution curve and are aligned with IB grade boundaries stated in the most recent DP examination subject report on the OCC.

Grade boundaries established collectively by DP subject teachers in each subject are to be used by all teachers of that subject in Grades 11 and 12.

IBDP Assessment Policy

This scale is also used for formal reporting to parents and universities.

IB grade	Descriptor
7	Excellent performance A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality.
6	Very good performance A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
5	Good performance A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
4	Satisfactory performance A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
3	Mediocre performance Limited achievement against most assessment objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support. This is the minimum passing grade required in order to meet promotion requirements.
2	Poor performance Very limited achievement against all assessment objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support.
1	Very poor performance Minimal achievement in terms of all assessment objectives.

Effort grades for reports

Effort grade symbol	Effort grade	Descriptor
VG	Very good	Consistently demonstrates diligence, care and participation in all aspects of the work
G	Good	Demonstrates diligence, care and participation most of the time.
S	Satisfactory	Just adequate. An increase in diligence, care and participation is both possible and necessary.
N	Needs improvement	Inadequate; a significant increase in diligence, care and participation is essential.

IBDP Assessment Policy

Notes to accompany the effort grades

- The effort grade must be based on performance over the period covered by the report.
- Prolonged absence must not *of itself* lead to an 'N' effort grade.
- An 'N' effort grade should not be given for a semester report unless the Head of Grade/Academic Coordinator and parents have been previously alerted to the cause for concern. 'N' grades should not come as a surprise.
- Effort grades must be consistent with report comments. An 'N' for effort coupled with a comment such as "Sarah has worked well throughout the year" is unacceptable.

Attainment Grades

To remain in the IB Diploma Program at the end of each semester in Grade 11, students are required to meet the following criteria:

- a minimum of 24 points, in total, in their mid-year and end-year examinations
- a minimum total of 12 points, in their HL subjects, in the mid-year and end-year examinations

AP grades are reported to students and parents at the end of each six-week cycle. Mid-year and end-year reports are also distributed to students and parents at the end of each semester.

IB predicted grades are calculated using the Excel spreadsheet made available by the DP Coordinator. 20% of the predicted grade is based on student performance in the AP tests in Grades 11 and 12, 30% from the end-year Grade 11 examination. The remaining 50% is determined by the mock examination in Grade 12, in conjunction with the final IA, in the same proportion as internal/external assessment is weighted for that subject in the DP.

Grading learners with specific learning difficulties

In order to ensure standardization of assessment design, the assessments for students with learning difficulties are not modified in the DP. This is in alignment with DP requirements.

To allow these students the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery over the content and skills covered, however, inclusive access arrangements may be made on provision of authorized reports from an educational psychologist. These include offering more time (up to 25%) on written tasks and projects, the use of a laptop for tests, etc.

Formal assessments completed by these students are marked/graded to the same standards and criteria as the rest of the subject group.

Promotion requirements

The IB requires DP students to meet **both** the following criteria in order to qualify for the Diploma:

- all DP students must attain a minimum total of 24 points in their final examinations, and
- all DP students must attain a minimum of 12 points in their HL subjects

RWA uses the same criteria as the IB to determine whether a student continues in the Diploma Program following each examination session in Grade 11.

IBDP Assessment Policy

In addition, the IB's requirements for the Diploma state that a student with an attainment grade of 2 or lower in **three or more** subjects will not meet DP requirements.

RWA, therefore, also incorporates the following requirements in our promotion criteria:

- in order to meet promotion requirements for Grade 12, a student must achieve a minimum passing grade of 3 in each subject. This is accepted by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), a branch of the Department of Education, Dubai, as the **minimum passing grade** in each subject.
- a student is allowed up to **two** re-take examinations only at the end of Grade 11.

Reporting to students and parents

The annual reporting cycle is as follows:

1. AP reports are emailed to parents at the end of each AP six-week cycle.
2. Mid-year Report: A report is issued in January/February, following the mid-year examination period, containing the effort grade, semester grade and exam grade as well as a written comment from each subject teacher.
3. An at-risk letter is issued in March for students at risk of failing (getting a grade 2 or 1 in their examinations).
4. End-year Report: An end-year report is issued in June, following the model described for the mid-year report.

Generation of written reports is done using the Prodigy software.

The roles of SS staff in generation of reports are as follows:

- **IBDP Coordinator**
 - sets deadlines for submission of reports in collaboration with other academic coordinators
 - informs SS staff of procedures and deadlines
 - coordinates with IT staff
 - proofreads reports for accuracy, with assistance from other members of staff, when required
 - informs parents of report card issue via school Newsletter/website and email
- **Heads of Department**
 - maintain and update department comment banks if applicable.
 - proofread all departmental reports and ensure all corrections are made
 - ensure all subject teachers in their department meet report card deadlines
- **Subject Teachers**
 - write reports based on semester and examination results that give clear feedback to parents on academic progress of students and which provide guidance on how specific improvement can be made.
 - set targets for students to work on over the next reporting period
 - assist with proofreading colleagues reports as outlined by HoD
 - meet all internal deadlines

IBDP Assessment Policy

Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTCs)

Parents or guardians are invited into school twice a year - once in the first semester and once in the second semester - to discuss with teachers results, student progress, conduct and strategies for improvement where necessary.

Roles of staff in organization of PTCs

- **Senior management team** sets dates of PTCs in June of previous academic year.
- **Head of Secondary School**
 - letters to parents communicating dates of PTCs and booking procedures
 - memos to SS staff with booking procedures and booking sheets outlined
 - coordination with Facilities Manager for refreshments
 - coordination with CAS Coordinator for student helpers
- **IBDP Coordinator**
 - contact staff members to identify students whose parents will receive email letters, encouraging them to attend due to concerns about academic progress
- **Subject Teachers**
 - book 5-minute appointments with each student they teach
 - have mark book and work available for parents to see at the conference
 - follow-up with phone calls to parents who are not able to book an appointment on the given days
- **CAS Coordinator**
 - organize students to help with manning the reception desk, refreshment tables and to act as parent guides
 - supervise students on day of PTCs.

Student progress must be actively monitored during the year during each AP cycle. Any parent whose child in Grade 11 or 12 is flagged by a teacher as being at-risk must receive written communication about these concerns from that teacher, via email, and copy the DP Coordinator and Head of Grade on this mail. A follow up meeting may be set up between parents and the subject teacher, if needed.

The DP Coordinator will monitor student progress through each AP cycle. Should a student be cause for concern in more than one subject area, the DP Coordinator will obtain feedback from all teachers of this student, collate this feedback in the form of a Progress Report, send this Report to parents and arrange for a meeting with them and subject teachers.

IBDP Assessment Policy

Policy Distribution and Review

The DP Assessment Policy will be posted on the Raffles World Academy, Dubai website. The website is currently under development and will go live at the end of this academic year.

All RWA policies are reviewed at the end of each academic year.

Links to other policies

The DP Assessment Policy at RWA aligns with the principles outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy, the Language Policy and the SEN Policy.

IBDP Assessment Policy

Sources

1. ***Diploma Programme assessment: Principles and practice***
First published in September 2004, Updated November 2010; by the International Baccalaureate
2. ***Diploma Programme Candidates with special assessment needs***
Published in March 2007, by the International Baccalaureate
3. ***Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme***
Published in 2010 by the International Baccalaureate
4. ***Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme 2015: Section A10 - Assessment procedures***
Published in 2015 by the International Baccalaureate
5. ***Grade descriptors: For use from September 2014/January 2015***
Published in 2014 by the International Baccalaureate