

BME International Secondary Grammar School

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Assessment Policy

Introduction:

Assessment is a natural process in which all stake holders, particularly educators and students must be fully involved with on a daily basis. Self-assessment with guidance has always been a part of this process. Assessment also does not just come from teachers in a traditional classroom setting in numerical written form. It comes from peers, administrators, or even parents or even the wider community. It can be found happening in forums, formal events, or private consultations. The BME international secondary school (ISGS) integrates these beliefs into how the school practices assessment. This document states how this belief can be concretized in the practices of communication, organization, and grading that make up the assessment policy. It can also be found in the schools expectations and responsibilities for students and teachers.

Assessment Beliefs related to academic achievement

At the ISGS we believe and expect that all students have the ability to achieve at high levels. As the ISGS International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme staff, we expose students to a rigorous and challenging curriculum that is aligned to the standards, practices and content expectations of the IB Diploma Programme as well as the established State Education Laws. Students are given the assistance from the ISGS they need to achieve their educational goals. What is required from them is their best effort in class and their initiative to seek out assistance, from a variety of resources, when needed. Working together we can provide all students the education they need to become life-long international learners, a part of the community, and academically successful. This document outlines the policies employed around the assessment of student learning and achievement in the ISGS IB Diploma Programme. As such, our Assessment Policy serves as guidelines for our students, families and staff alike. This covers four main areas: philosophical background of assessment, IB assessment, in-school assessment (formative), and the integration of assessment for the IB and Hungarian educational laws. Moreover, the policies within seek to align the very important work of teaching and learning that occurs within the ISGS IB Diploma Programme, and ISGS as a learning community.

Philosophical Background: General Expectations for Assessment

Assessment in its various forms is a critical component of the educational journey. Assessment provides students with opportunities to determine the degree to which they have mastered content knowledge and skills and to reflect on their progress, allowing for self-evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement in each subject area. Assessment also provides teachers the ability to determine the degree to which students have attained mastery of content knowledge and skills, revise their curriculum and instruction to meet student needs and reflect on their own knowledge and skills, strengthening one's professional practice. Due to the essential role of assessment – whether formative, summative, internal or external – certain expectations are assumed by those committed to the ISGS IB Diploma Programme.

Expectations for the ISGS International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Candidate:

According to the IB Learner Profile, “The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally-minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.”

With this in mind and in accordance with the attributes of an IB learner, students at ISGS strive to:

- Engage their natural curiosity through inquiry and critical thinking skills;
- Acquire in-depth knowledge that explores connections across content areas and communities;
- Apply critical thinking skills to a wide range of issues through reasoned and ethical decisions;
- Communicate ideas and information through collaboration with others and presentation of work to various audiences;
- Act with a sense of integrity, honesty and respect through accepting responsibility for one’s actions;
- Expand one’s understanding and appreciation of varied perspectives, cultures and histories;
- Demonstrate a personal commitment to make a positive impact on our local, national and global communities;
- Exhibit courage and independence through searching out new ideas and experiences;
- Attend to personal well-being through seeking intellectual, physical and emotional balance;
- Reflect on one’s educational experiences and progress through acknowledgment of strengths and areas for improvement to support one’s educational and personal growth.

Expectations for the ISGS International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Staff:

While students are at the center of the educational experience, ISGS IB Diploma Programme teachers engage students within that experience according to the established IB principles and practices. As members of our learning community, staff at ISGS strives to:

- Model inquiry, research and independent thinking skills through life-long learning;
- Demonstrate in-depth content knowledge and skills that develops connections across multiple content areas within our school, local, national and global communities;
- Apply critical and creative thinking skills to curriculum development and instruction of content that informs reasoned and ethical decisions;
- Communicate ideas and information to students, families and colleagues while collaborating with all members of our learning community to enhance student educational experience and achievement;
- Demonstrate integrity, honesty and respect by accepting responsibility for one’s content standards and practices as well as the educational philosophy of the IB programme;
- Incorporate an understanding and appreciation of many, varied perspectives, cultures, traditions and histories to assist students in evaluating a varying points of view.

- Show empathy and respect for students, families, colleagues and community members while making a positive impact on our local, national and global communities;
- Exhibit courage and independence while embedding new ideas and experiences into the educational experience for students;
- Attend to personal well-being through seeking intellectual, physical and emotional balance;
- Reflect on one's professional practice and engage in professional development to meet the needs of our students.

Using Assessment for continuous improvement of ISGS

Review of Assessment: As stated one of the goals of assessment is to help the school improve course work, internal, and external assessment. The achievement of this goal is a collaborative effort that involves collecting of information over a longer period of time and the sharing of this information in various formats including written, oral, or AV formats. Teachers are required to monitor the effectiveness of assessments and through a once-a-semester conference share the results of this monitoring. Also, the ISGS has a database to gather assessments to be used by and have access for, at least in part, all the stakeholders. Finally, students can take part in assessment of the school's educational work through student council reports and class surveys given at the end of the year.

General ISGS Grading and Documentation Policies and Procedures

Introduction

The ISGS has a long established assessment policy, in particular for grading. It is the intention of the school to continue this form of assessment for the IB program as well. Although the integration, differences and an outline of these pre-IB school policies are presented here, the School Rules and Regulations provides further details on the pre-IB assessment policies.

In-House Assessment

Background: Simultaneously the students will be assessed through the IB assessments as well as an in-house system. If students do not wish to receive credit within the Hungarian education system, this in-house system is used for ISGS scholarships, may be sent to higher education institutes, and allows promotion from the first year of the IB to the second, but it is not a legal document for promotion within the Hungarian educational system. If a student wishes to receive credit for in-house assessments within the Hungarian system, please see the section on integration of assessment into the Hungarian system. The IB internal and external assessment, of course match the requirements for the IB Program and carry the full privileges of this diploma.

The regulations guiding failing grades on in-house assessments are the same as those in the Hungarian program regulations. That is, if a student fails, they may sit for a retake exam in

August. If this fails the candidate must repeat the year. This does not depend on results in IB internal and external assessments.

Categories of assessment: In order to differentiate how assessment applies to the two systems, the three categories of assessment must be defined.

- **Internal Assessment:** This is a task set by the IBO but assessed by the student's regular teacher and then reviewed externally by the IBO. These are conducted throughout the time in the IB and all IB rules and regulations apply to these assessments. This assessment counts towards final point in the IB diploma. Individual teachers may also use these for in-house assessment.
- **External Assessment:** This is usually a set of papers (examinations) always given at the school but set and assessed by the IBO. This exam is generally to be completed at the end of the coursework in May of the second year of the IB. This has the highest weight in terms of points for the IB diploma and follows all the rules and regulations of the IB. It will not be used for in-house assessment. The extended essay, TOK, and group 1 and 2 essays are not examinations but are externally assessed.
- **In-house (formative) Assessment:** These are all forms of assessment given by individual teachers to make all stakeholders aware of a student's progress towards matriculation and assist the learners in reaching learning goals. In general they should be formative in nature, but they may also be summative. They have no weight in regards to IB Diploma points, but poor results could cause a student to be removed from the program.

Types of Assessment for in-house assessment: As the internal and external assessment is criterion referenced, the informative assessment will also be criterion based. Much discretion is left to the individual teacher with the stress being communication of progress reaching parents, administrators and students.

Modes of Assessing: As the tasks for internal assessment often contain non-written elements, in-house assessment should also assess presentations, circle discussions, AV material, etc. In addition long answer, short answer, or selective response assessment are in-line with many of the IB tasks related to the external papers so these should be assessed as well.

Major milestones for assessment should be noted in the course curriculum. These milestones as well other in-house assessments can be

- Exams
- Quizzes
- Portfolios
- Progress Reports
- Records of Accomplished tasks

Required Milestones: Each course should have mock (practise) internal and external assessments. These should be assessed by the subject teacher and the results given to all stakeholders. The scheduling of the mock exams is left to agreement between subject teachers.

Other Required Informative Assessments: All subject teachers must record a minimum of eight in-house assessments over the period of the courses, that is two years. Teachers should make an effort to have at least one conference with parents and two of the assessments should be a written progress report for all stakeholders. This should be given no later than the end of the first year and should clearly indicate student's progress towards success at internal and external assessment.

Students have the opportunity to present and get feedback on their work from the community. The main forum for this are the student evenings held at least once-a-year at the school. However there are other opportunities as well whether it is a poetry reading contest or participating in the school talent show. Candidates must take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate their abilities at least once.

Grading Schedule

Students at ISGS receive a school report at the end of each semester. Mid-semester grades will be issued continuously to inform students of their progress. The grading system for the in-house evaluation is on a scale of 1-5, five being the best mark. The following subjects will receive a grade: all 6 areas and TOK. In addition there will be written assessment by advisors for both CAS and EE. Participation in events for the community will be noted and written assessments from teachers and administrators can be included.

Student/Family Access to Information

Students at ISGS are regularly provided opportunities to review their progress and reflect on their mastery of content knowledge and skills. Teachers maintain consistently updated assessment records, which can be viewed in our electronic register, accessible online at almost anytime. Parents also have access to teacher emails and may request conferences with teachers or administrators. Four times a year there are also conferences to discuss student progress.

Returning of In-House Assessments

All subjects are different to some degree and the nature of the tasks set for the students varies. Because of this there is no dated deadline for returning work to students. However, there are some guidelines for good practice and to help the class function as well as possible.

- 1) Teachers must return work in a timely enough fashion so it does not hinder the continuous progress of the class and further work by students.

- 2) Assessments should be returned in a timely fashion when the material is still fresh in the minds of the stakeholders. It is a detriment to all parties to return material so late that it no longer bears relevance.
- 3) If the practice above is not followed any stakeholder should bring this first to the attention of the teacher and then the IB Coordinator. This can be through a meeting with the parties or in written form. It is not appropriate to use class time for discussing this.

An Outline of IB Assessment

The following is an outline of IB assessment policy. For details please see the IB Assessment policy handbook

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Grade Scale:

Unlike the grade scale used at ISGS, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme uses the following numerical scale in each individual subject area.

7 – Excellent, 6 – Very good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3 – Mediocre, 2 – Poor, 1 – Very Poor

Additionally, the assessments for the Theory of Knowledge course as well as the Extended Essay follow a letter grade system as seen below.

A – Excellent B – Good C – Satisfactory D – Mediocre E - Elementary N – No grade

IB grades are determined through the criterion-referenced rubrics established by IB's standards and practices in each content area. Multiple components are assessed to specific criterion and are then combined to determine the final grade. Each subject area has its own defined internal and external assessments in addition to the in-house evaluations throughout the year.

A variety of variables including classroom policies, use of formative assessments as learning and instructional tools, the role, what attendance plays in classroom, expectations and more may result in variance between the school-based grades and those earned by the student through the IB assessments.

Academic Support and Assistance:

ISGS IB Diploma Programme teachers recognize their role in preparing students to complete the required IB subject area assessments. As such, teachers develop and adjust their curricula, according to the relevant IB subject area assessment criteria, with the IB assessments in mind. Summative assessments – assessments to evaluate the degree to which a student has mastered content knowledge and skills – happen occasionally in class, at least 3 times in an academic term. Many of the summative assessments take the form of mock IB examinations, using exams from years past.

The formal IB Diploma Programme assessments fall into two categories: internal assessments, external assessments. (See International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Assessments

Section of this document). These assessments are summative in nature and evaluated according to criterion-referenced rubric established and regularly reviewed by the IBO. Throughout an IB course, teachers use formative assessments to determine students' strengths and limitations in accessing the required content knowledge and skills, provide needed support in making progress toward mastery and to allow for students to actively engage in and reflect on their educational experience in each class. While preparing students for the summative assessments, teachers in each subject area use a variety of formative assessments to scaffold student development of content knowledge and skills. Additionally, all teachers commit to provide regular before- or after-school tutorial sessions whereby students are able to get one-to-one or small group support in meeting the course expectations. Care is taken to ensure that, to the degree possible, scheduled tutorials in one content area do not conflict with scheduled tutorials in another. Moreover, many teachers make themselves available through other means to assist students in their educational experience. The IB Diploma Coordinator and the subject teachers are available to meet with students and their families to support student academic success.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME ASSESSMENTS:

According to the IB Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and practice, assessment of the DP (Diploma Programme) is high-stakes, criterion-related performance assessment based on the following aims:

1. DP assessment should support the curricular and philosophical goals of the programme, through the encouragement of good classroom practice and appropriate student learning.
2. The published results of DP assessment (that is, subject grades) must have a sufficiently high level of reliability, appropriate to a high-stakes university entrance qualification.
3. DP assessment must reflect the international-mindedness of the programme wherever possible, must avoid cultural bias, and must make appropriate allowance for students working in their second language.
4. DP assessment must pay appropriate attention to the higher-order cognitive skills (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking) as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding and application).
5. Assessment for each subject must include a suitable range of tasks and instruments/components that ensure all objectives for the subject are assessed.
6. The principal means of assessing student achievement and determining subject grades should be the professional judgment of experienced senior examiners, supported by statistical information.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Internal Assessments

Internal assessments are pieces of student work that are evaluated by their content teacher who gives the assessment a score mark which may then be moderated by external examiners/moderators to ensure international parity aligned to the IB assessment criteria in that subject area.

Examples of internal assessments include oral examinations in Group 1, Language A (English, Hungarian) and Group 2, Language B (World Languages), projects and portfolios in Group 5, Mathematics, presentations in Theory of Knowledge, practical laboratory work in Group 4, Science, artistic performances and presentations in Group 6, Arts and more.

Internal assessments often allow for greater student flexibility in exhibiting their acquired knowledge and skills according to IB criterion-referenced rubrics as well as the opportunity for

students to show their work over time and outside of the restrictions of the examination environment.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme External Assessments, Examinations

The final category of summative assessment is the subject area examinations, administered in May each year. Examinations occur under strictly controlled conditions and often over a two-day period for each subject area (the afternoon and the following morning). The examination papers consist of a variety of assessment vehicles including short-answer, essay, data-analysis, open-ended problem solving, case studies, commentaries and multiple choice. In order to sit for the examinations, students must complete all required internal assessment for the subject area. Examinations are mailed, within 24 hours following the examination, to external examiners around the world for assessment. Examination marks are then combined with marks earned on the internal assessments to create the final subject grade.

ISGS IB Diploma Programme Assessment Calendar

Formal assessments in IB subject area courses occur throughout the school year over the two years of the programme. Assessment benchmarks and deadlines are communicated through course syllabi and the online IB calendar found on the ISGS website. To aid in balancing student workload, the ISGS IB Diploma Programme teachers agree to have all major assessments administered or due according to a coordinated schedule and if a conflict arises, IB Diploma Programme teachers seek to make adjustments with each other to make the necessary accommodations.

Deadlines Relating to the Assessment Calendar

Deadlines and the holding to deadlines in the case of assessments not listed on the calendar is the prerogative of the teacher. The calendar is set up so that the assessment date is not given but the month is given. As the formats of assessments vary, it is the teacher's decision about deadlines within the month.

However, there are strict rules for all forms of assessment, internal, external, and in-house in relation to the calendar. If a student does not turn in the assessment by the date set by the teacher and the student has not had a conference with the IB Coordinator, teacher, and parents to ask for an extension, the school will not turn in the assignment to the IB and the student will need to repeat the year. If it is a milestone assessment the student will receive a one mark.

The date the student turns in an assessment to a teacher is not the same as the date the assessment will be submitted to the IB. Completed assessments will be kept in a safe until the deadline for turning them in to the IB.

The Role of Academic Honesty in both the IB and In-house systems

Academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. ISGS expects that the developed academic honesty policy (for details see the academic honesty policy) will be an engaging process that will give the students the tools necessary for authentic inquiry. However, it is expected that students will not engage

in malpractice including plagiarizing, duplicating, colluding, or breaking IB policy. The well being of the entire school community depends on the student accepting responsibility for personal conduct in both social and academic endeavors.

ISGS believes that promoting academic honesty is the responsibility of the total school community. Only when there is a commitment on the part of all concerned can a school's academic environment facilitate a healthy respect among students for the value of academic honesty. In such an environment, students will know that teachers will not ignore or condone malpractice. Students will also know that teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians will hold them accountable for malpractice.

CONSEQUENCES

Individual violations of academic honesty are significant. It is ISGS's intent, through the use of consequences, that the student will learn from his/her mistakes and not exhibit dishonest behavior in the future. Violations of academic honesty are cumulative during the student's entire attendance. Consequences may include any one of the following:

1. Teacher will assign grade 1 for the work in question.
2. Teacher will notify parent/guardian.
3. DP coordinator will contact parent/guardian regarding the incident.
4. DP coordinator will enter incident into student's file.
5. DP coordinator may suspend student from extra-curricular activities, including sports.
6. Conference will be held with the parent/guardian and student.
7. In case of repeated violations, student may be denied enrollment in the second year of the DP.

Integrating Hungarian Law with the IB in-house assessment policy

Introduction: For most students of the IB program, it is best that they chose not to also attempt to fulfill the requirements of the Hungarian Secondary school system as well. The core beliefs, courses taken, and general content are not in-sync with each other. When a student chooses to join the IB, it is a 2-year commitment to this program. The IB is accepted within the Hungarian university entrance qualifications and in most cases this would be a better choice than fulfilling the requirements for both systems. However, it might happen that a student would like to fulfill the requirements for both systems or may wish to switch to the Hungarian system at the end of the first year of the IB. There is a possibility for the student to receive a Hungarian Report Card.

To receive a Hungarian system report card after the first year of the IB (this would be the equivalent of 11th year for the ISGS program) the student will receive credit for having taken end of the year exams for all subjects that are required for the ISGS Hungarian state educational program. This could mean that the student will be required to take exams for classes that were not studied in the IB, or for material that was not covered in the IB. The student will also have to have CAS work redocumented as Service work for the Hungarian state system

The student may also wish to take the Hungarian state Matriculation Exam at the higher level for certain subjects in which the IB Diploma is certified only for the Standard Level Hungarian State Matriculation Exam. First the students must complete end of the year exams for both the third and fourth year ISGS Hungarian state educational program. They must also have CAS work transferred to the Hungarian state Service Work. After this the student may take the Hungarian state matriculation exam.

Again, this is a complicated process and it is recommended that students consider which educational system is best for them before entering the IB program.

References:

General Regulations, Diploma Programme, IBO 2014

Diploma Programme Assessment, Principles and Practice, IBO 2010

Handbook of procedures, IBO 2014