

SMS Assessment Policy

School Profile

Located in Victoria, BC, St. Margaret's School is Vancouver Island's only all-girls day and boarding school and Canada's first all-girls STEM-X school. Students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 thrive as they are challenged to meet personal goals. Leadership, confidence, wellness, and high academic standards guide their way toward university programs of choice. The school motto, Service with Love, lays the foundation for personal character, courage, and global and environmental-minded perspectives.

Mission - St. Margaret's School is a caring, inclusive community where students are challenged to pursue personal and academic excellence, use their voice, and enact change.

From the SMS mission - Challenging students to develop personal and academic excellence encourages students as balanced inquirers.

From the [IB Learner Profile](#)

Principled - We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Inquirers - We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Philosophy and Principles of assessment

At SMS we recognize the developmental role assessment plays in a student's learning when the teaching and learning are informed and supported by assessment. At SMS we strive to ensure that we engage in *quality assessment approaches, where quality represents relevant, meaningful, authentic and universally designed assessments that are ultimately in the best interest of student centred learning.

*Quality assessment as outlined in *Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme (2021)*

Objectives of the SMS Assessment policy -

- to outline philosophy and principles that underpin assessment practices at SMS
- to outline assessment practices and procedures for SMS and IB grade reporting
- to contribute to the culture of continuous learning and growth within the SMS community

SMS Teaching and Learning informed by formative and summative assessment

In relation to developing this policy to contribute to the culture of continuous learning and growth within the SMS community, some of the Principles of Assessment are outlined below.

A. SMS assessment practices vary in form and represent a range of both formative and summative practice.

Where formative and summative assessment:

	Purpose	Inference
Summative assessments	• To demonstrate the competency or level of achievement of a student generally at the end of a course of study or a unit of learning • To determine the readiness of the student to progress to the next stage of education	• Focus on what the student can do at the end of a course of study or a unit of learning.
Formative assessments	• Ongoing assessment during the course of study to provide evidence and feedback that could move learning forward • The primary purpose is to promote student learning in a well-informed meaningful way	• Relate to the kinds of actions that can be taken next which "would best help the student learn" (Black, Wiliam 2018: 553)

Table from *Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme (2021)*.

Examples of formative assessment found in SMS classrooms: Practices intended to inform on student progress and enrich the learning process.

- Class discussions
- Self-assessment
- Journals

- conferences/interview
- Process portfolio
- Think-aloud problem-solving

Examples of summative assessment found in SMS classrooms: Practices to determine level of achievement or competency of students in relation to certain criteria ie. what the students can do at the time of assessment.

- End-of-term or midterm exams
- Cumulative work (final project or creative portfolio) - Product portfolio
- End-of-unit or chapter tests
- IBDP specific - practice papers

Assessment Practices and Procedures:

The following table is a helpful visual of the range of diversity and modality of assessments that can be found in classrooms. Depending on the purpose of the assessment these may be utilized as formative or summative assessments ie. if the purpose of assessment is to measure current achievement (summative) or to explore student learning process/progress (formative).

The diversity of assessment types and modalities

Assessment types		Modalities	Assessment types	
Results/solutions	Table	Numerical	Problem-solving steps/process	
Data analysis	Formula			
Thesis	Report	Written	Hypothesis	
Dissertation	Annotated extracts		Proposal	Blog
Essay	Poem			Journal
	Proposal	Visual	Web portfolio	Note taking
Graph			Illustration	Highlighting text
Diagram	Photographs		Concept or mind maps	Sketch
Structured end-product		Verbal	Fluid Processing	
Presentation	Podcast		Viva	Conversation
	Reading scripts		Interview	
Performance	Lab experiment	Performative	Debate	Group discussion
Play	Theatre		Demonstration	Improvisation
	Song		Rehearsals	Practical activity
Product portfolio		Hybrid	Process portfolio	Plan
	Exhibition			Steps
Video			Questions	Event
Building models	Representations		Strategies	Observations
			Explanations	Activity

Figure from *Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme* (2021).

B. Assessment is a continuous ongoing process that provides opportunity for effective qualitative feedback/feedforward - SMS teachers use evidence from assessment outcomes to guide instructional practice in the direction of what ought to come next that will move the individual/group learning forward. Feedback/feedforward is most effective when it is - Personalized, timely, actionable, relevant and promotes student agency. Feedback/feedforward practices include teacher, peer and self reflection opportunities.

C. SMS IBDP Assessment practices recognize that the assessments within the IB Diploma Programme are criterion-referenced assessments as opposed to norm-referenced assessments. As such educators develop and use assessment tools that align with this format.

3 useful descriptors from Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme (2021)

Criterion referencing	A comparison of student attainment against predefined descriptions of achievement (criteria) for grading or feedback purposes.
Norm referencing	Where attainment is determined by comparing (referencing) the student's performance against that of the entire population for whom the assessment is designed.
Criterion-related assessment	An assessment process based on determining levels of achievement against previously agreed criteria. The standard is therefore fixed and is not dependent on the achievement of the entire cohort of students.

D. Frequency of assessment (including homework) - SMS philosophy related to assessment/homework frequency relates to the learner profile attribute of -

Balanced - We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

SMS educator collaboration time explores homework and assessment scheduling that strives to ensure needs and wants for students (as individuals and a cohort) and teachers are balanced across subjects through time.

Teacher Collaboration and Professional Learning - Developing assessment-capable learners and teachers (as noted in *Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme (2021)*)

At SMS educators participate in weekly (and term) professional learning groups as well as semi-annual regional and provincial professional development. Assessment practices are a focus of the collaborative learning through workshops, critical friends groups and action research with the goals of providing a space for teachers to:

- share and build on professional insights in assessments in IB classrooms
- share, plan and improve assessment practices in curriculum planning and standardization meetings.
- Learn about and discuss inclusive access arrangements for assessments

Inclusive Learning - Inclusive Access Arrangements for SMS learners

Students with identified Inclusive Access Arrangements may be eligible for IBDP internal and external assessment accommodations. See the SMS Inclusion Policy for details.

Grading

SMS teachers will create, administer, evaluate, and communicate assignments based on BC provincial or IBDP course curriculum and assessment criteria as outlined in current subject guides. As part of their assessment and evaluation practice, teachers make use of the criterion referenced assessment rubrics available to score and provide feedback to students according to the IBDP scoring standards.

SMS grades are recorded in myschool (provincial educational platform). Report cards are produced and communicated to guardians/students three times per year.

IB assessment component grades and predicted grades are reported to the IB according to the dates and procedures found in the annually appropriate *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*

IBDP predicted grades are generated for university admissions purposes in January of year 2, predicted grades are not communicated to students.

SMS IBDP Grade Reporting. SMS grades are recorded in myschool (provincial educational platform). Report cards are produced and communicated to students/guardians three times per year. SMS grades are reported as a percentage and can be converted to IB grades using the following conversion chart to provide a 1-7 IB grade approximation for consideration. Grade reports are generated and are accompanied with teacher commentary on student 'Approaches to Learning' (ATL) (BC core competencies) development progress.

IB SL Grade	IB HL Grade	IB HL Math Grade	% Equivalent
--	--	7	100
--	7	6	98
7	6	5	96
6	5	4	90
5	4	3	86
4	3	--	76
3	--	--	70

This conversion chart is used by UBC and the BC association of IB World schools.

SMS - IBDP Internal assessments:

SMS teachers evaluate student work according to the criteria set out in subject guides. Grades are submitted to the IB along with a representative sample of the work marked by the teacher which is then moderated by IB staff to ensure marks awarded are in line with IBDP standards. Students receive developmental support, guidance and practice throughout their courses in order to effectively prepare for completion and submission.

Examples include, oral commentaries, science assessed practical's, explorations in individuals and societies and mathematics and, portfolios and exhibitions in Arts and Theory of Knowledge.

To ensure consistent sampling for external moderation teachers are given time to collaborate on moderation practices in collaboration and professional learning time as

well as being supported to take category 2/3 workshops and attend regional subject specific workshops.

IBDP External assessments:

Assessments that are completed by students and sent to the IB to be marked by external IB examiners. Examples include final exams, language written tasks, the extended essay and essay in Theory of Knowledge.

Assessment in the IBDP - Core requirements for obtaining the Diploma

- DP category candidates must study six subjects, plus the three core subjects— The Extended Essay (EE), Theory of Knowledge Course (TOK) and Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) element. They must accumulate no fewer than 24 points from assessment in these subjects, in addition to grade stipulations.
- They must meet all of the additional requirements - *see additional requirements below*.
- They must meet all of the requirements within a maximum of three examination sessions.
- Candidates who successfully meet these conditions will be awarded the diploma.
- Candidates who take the diploma in multiple languages may be eligible for a bilingual diploma.

The IB diploma is awarded based on performance across all parts of the DP.

- Each subject is graded 1–7, with 7 being the highest grade.
- These grades are also used as points (that is, 7 points for a grade 7, 6 points for a grade 6, and so on) in determining if the diploma can be awarded.
- TOK and the EE are graded A–E, with A being the highest grade. These two 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 in order to pass the diploma. *see additional requirements below*
- The overall maximum points from subject grades, TOK and the EE is therefore 45: $((6 \times 7) + 3)$.
- The minimum threshold for the award of the diploma is 24 points. If a candidate scores less than 24 points, the diploma is not awarded.

Additional requirements There are a number of additional requirements for the award of the diploma.

- CAS requirements have been met.
- There is no “N” awarded for TOK, the EE or for a contributing subject.
- There is no grade E awarded for TOK and/or the EE.
- There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (SL or HL).
- There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (SL or HL).
- The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects. (For candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count.)
- The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects. (Candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL.)
- The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee

Figure 9: Award of points for TOK and the EE

	Theory of knowledge (TOK)					
Extended essay	Grade awarded	A	B	C	D	E or N
	A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
	B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition
	C	2	2	1	0	
	D	2	1	0	0	
	E or N	Failing condition				

Links between the assessment policy and other documents

The SMS Assessment Policy is integrated with the SMS Admissions Policy, Language Policy, Inclusion policy and Academic Honesty Policy

This policy was developed collaboratively with faculty, administration and community input, it was reviewed as part of the candidacy and authorization process, last review January 2023. This policy will be reviewed at each stage of the authorization process, before the initial cohort (September 2023) and annually thereafter. The policy will be

introduced to the community each term and covered as part of a staff induction process. It will be communicated to the school community via the student/guardian handbook and website.

The following resources were consulted in the creation of this document:

Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2023

Teaching and learning informed by assessment in the Diploma Programme (2021)

Assessment principles and practices—Quality assessments in a digital age 2019