Washburn High School/An IB World School

Washburn High School Assessment Policy

Introduction

Assessment is the measurement of what students know and can do. How and when we evaluate students directly informs planning, teaching and learning. One of the things that makes the IB program special is the fact that there is a thoughtful focus on assessment that includes a well-established, well-respected system of examination components that serve to validate the program and the learning experiences students have within it.

This portion of the policy outlines the various ways in which assessment is approached in the IB program.

Goal of the School

It is the goal of the Washburn IB Program to develop a curricular system that strives to support the best practices for learning. Certainly, this is congruent with our vision to support the benefits of higher learning. But, we are also committed to giving every advantage to our students in relation to the examination process that is associated with the program.

Assessment Philosophy

Assessment is the process of collecting information from a variety of sources to measure student attainment of curriculum outcomes, to provide feedback to guide future instruction and to promote student learning. Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student work against explicitly identified criteria and assigning a value (a mark, or grade), to represent the level of achievement attained.

IB Assessments--Types

General Classroom Assessments

It will be the goal of the Washburn IB program to provide a variety of formative and summative academic experiences that help support the goals and outcomes related to the various IB courses.

Formative Assessments—A Definition

As the word itself suggests, formative work in the classroom helps students to develop or "form" the skills needed for the various academic disciplines. In many ways, formative work revolves around the practice that students do to gain certain knowledge and learn various skills. Whether it involves practice with written work, speaking, performing, solving problems, or other types of activities, the IB teacher at Washburn will work hard to develop effective ways in which students can hone these academic skills. For the short term, the formative work done in the classroom is to help students become fully prepared for the IB summative assessments. In terms of the greater benefit, it is our equally important endeavor to help students become fully prepared for the rigors of post-secondary as well as life-long learning.

Formative Assessment at Washburn

The following is a listing of the types of formative work that Washburn IB teachers have implemented in the classroom. This list is by no means exhaustive nor is it prescriptive. With that, it is ever the focus of the staff to develop these practices as well as others so that the IB classroom can be a vibrant, supportive environment for our program goals.

Washburn High School/An IB World School

1. Seminar Discussion

   Many of our courses include the opportunity for students to be a part of constructing ideas. To allow for students to do this, various IB teachers will use seminar discussion as a principal means of garnering student participation. In many cases, students will be required to come to those discussions with prepared notes that they may use as a support for their participation. Likewise, their participation in seminar is evaluated by both teacher and student according to a holistic rubric. A holistic rubric is a set of descriptive qualities that help evaluate a student's performance. The descriptors will include qualities ranging from higher to lower levels of performance. The point of such a scaled grid is to give students a sense of the quality of their participation against a certain set of standards. With this information, it is hoped that students can learn to improve in their communication.

At its best, the seminar format should benefit students in a variety of ways:

- Helps them to learn to articulate their ideas orally.
- Students can construct ideas cooperatively—the idea being, the collective knowledge of the group is greater than that of the individual.
- Students gain confidence in participating through dialogue with one another.

Further Points Regarding Seminar

- Within the general IB classroom, an attempt is made to steer conversations and problem solving using a constructivist approach rather than debate. This not to say that ideas aren't "debated" from time to time, but the general spirit of the conversations lean towards being open-ended with the recognition of a variety of perspectives and approaches to any given topic.
- Every student is expected to participate in discussion activities, both large and small group. Good discussion skills include regular participation; thoughtful, well-founded contributions (not just talking a lot); listening attentively; and responding intelligently to others' ideas. An individual or small group of students will sometimes be asked to lead discussions. Students who think of themselves as "shy" or "quiet", who have typically been reluctant to speak in class, will need to make a conscious effort to increase their level of active participation in IB courses. Likewise, students who have tended to dominate discussions in hopes of "getting more points" will also need to change their perceptions.
- At the level of academic inquiry expected in this course, the purpose of oral discussion of literature is to enlarge the scope of the student's understanding in a very immediate way. When discussions work correctly, students leave with more ideas, more questions, more possibilities in their thinking than when they came in. To achieve the widest range of thinking, all students must learn to effectively participate in seminar discussion.

2. Other Oral Activities

In addition to seminar discussion, IB students at WHS also regularly participate in shorter oral activities that require them to present material. Considering that solid oral communication skills are essential to post-secondary academics and employment, various practice orals will occur regularly in the classroom.



3. Reflection

It is also a practice within our IB courses that students participate in self-reflection of their work. This occurs in a variety of ways, in both oral and written form. The primary purpose of this is to help students internalize their learning.

4. Use of Former IB Test Questions.

The IBO gives access to examination papers to IB teachers 24 hours after the exams are given. Likewise, the full range of exams and mark schemes for both examination sessions (May and November) are made available after a period of time.. The reason for such immediate and direct access to the test documents is so that teachers can use the tests for continued instruction.

Regularly, Washburn IB teachers will use former exam questions as practice for the final exams in May. Our teachers will model their own questions after those found on the previous exams.

In all, students will work through these questions so that they can get a sense of what they might expect on the exams as well as the level of their own performance.

5. Integration of IB Grading Rubrics Throughout the Courses.

As was stated earlier, a rubric is a document that articulates the expectations for an assignment. Within this articulation is a set of criteria which explains what is important for a given assignment and how a student might achieve those criteria. Each of the internal assessments as well as the May examinations are scored against a set of rubrics. Because of this, it is a regular practice of IB teachers to use these rubrics throughout their courses so that students get used to the standards by which their work will ultimately be scored. Often teachers will "unpack" those rubrics and illustrate them using examples from former students' work. More about IB Assessments is presented in the section on "Summative Assessments."

General Statement Regarding Homework

There is no doubt that learning at a higher level can involve challenges. By nature of the depth of the content and the complex thinking required to understand it, IB coursework simply takes time to process and achieve.

For the sake of the student, it is important that IB courses then function in an interdependent manner. In other words, no one instructor may consider the needs of his/her course greater than another. And, instructors must consider the fact that the total workload of any given student may be rather heavy when considering how much work can be completed beyond the school day.

In reality, it is unrealistic to place contrived "time limits" for homework (ie. ½ hour for each subject). Certainly, the time it takes to do homework will depend on the student. Therefore, IB instructors will strive to administer a fair and reasonable amount of work to students outside of class in the spirit of "balance" as is articulated by the Learner Profile. Likewise, all who are involved in the IB program (instructors and administrators alike) will strive to educate students and each other regarding the importance of "balance" so that we may promote a healthy working and learning environment.

Summative Assessments—A Definition

Summative assessments involve tests and projects that test for the broader range of skills and knowledge gained over the course of a period of instruction. In other words, as the term "summative" suggests, such assessments summarize the

learning experience. A variety of summative assessments are supported through the IB program here at Washburn. Some of them are constructed internally as a means to support the IB curriculum. Others are sponsored directed by the IBO.

Washburn IB Course Unit Exams/Projects

Like any other course in the Minneapolis School District, IB Courses typically include unit exams and/or projects that reflect the learning done within the various units.

IBO Sponsored Internal Assessments

IB courses are not scored on final, timed exams alone. While such tests prove to be worthwhile, a portion of each IB subject score is based on projects/orals/papers that are marked by the teacher and moderated by IB examiners. These include:

Lab work in sciences

Research projects

Essays

Oral commentaries and presentations

Portfolio Projects (application of math concepts)

Additional qualities that define the Internal Assessments include:

- All work related IB Internal Assessments are integrated into the courses. Often, the projects are broken up into parts so that students can have an easier time managing them.
- In each course, the skills needed to achieve the Internal Assessment are practiced in a variety of ways before the student is required to complete the internal assessment.
- Depending on the internal assessment, IB teachers are allowed to give some support to the student; however, the greater share of the final project is supposed to represent the student's individual work.
- For most of the IB subject areas, IB teachers are expected to mark each internal assessment using the corresponding rubric (grading chart) provided by IB. The teacher then submits the scores and the projects to the IBO using IBIS, the coordinators' IB sponsored website.
- Once the marks are entered, IB will request a random sampling of the assessments for a process called moderation. The number of assessments sent to the examiner is determined by the overall number of students registered for the subject at Washburn. Generally, if the number testing is 5 or fewer, the entire batch will be requested. The average number of projects requested for larger groupings can range from 5-10.
- The sample assessments are then sent to an IB examiner for moderation. If the samples are marked properly, then marks for the whole subject at Washburn will remain. If the sample set is either marked too high or too low, all of the marks for the whole subject at Washburn will be moved accordingly. The philosophy behind this practice is that teachers are likely marking all the projects using a consistent interpretation of the rubric for each project.

Washburn High School/An IB World School

- Students will not be informed if their assessment is being sent for moderation. In all, this process is not about the student. Rather, the system is put in place to confirm or adjust the consistency and accuracy of the marking given by the teacher.
- Internal assessments must be submitted or a student cannot receive a composite score for the IB subject in which they are testing.

General Deadline Schedule for Internal Assessments

At Washburn, effort is made to space out the deadlines for the various assessments in the interest of balancing students' schedules.

The following is an example of a general calendar that outlines the approximate times when the various assessments are to be due.

Washburn IB Internal Assessment Due Dates- example

Subject	Teacher	Assignment	Due Date
Language and Literature HL	Pederson, Schmidt	Written Task 1 RD	October 15
Language and Literature HL	Meaney, Groettum, Schmidt	HL Essay	May 2024
Language and Literature HL	Pederson, Lynn, Manor	IOCs	Jan 16-23 2024
ToK	Romo, Dobson	Presentations	January 7-10
ToK	Romo, Dobson	Essays	February 28
History SL	Romo, Sykes, Beukema, Jirsa	Full Draft IA	January 16
HL/SL Math Analysis	Hebl, Olson	Final IA	January 22
SL/HL Biology	Kelley	IA First Draft	January 27
SL/HL Biology	Kelley	Final IA	February 5

Washburn High School/An IB World School

ESS SL	Housenga	IA Final Draft	February 10
HL/SL Spanish	Brener/Fettig	Oral exams	February 24-28
SL French	DeGregory	Oral Exams	March 15
SL Arabic	Raka	Oral exams	March 20
SL Physics	Hoogheem	IA	March 15
HL Physics	Schiebe	IA	March 15
Lit and Performance	Lynn	Performance and IOC	March 1
SL Global Politics	Scanlon	Engagement Activity	March 1
Visual Arts	Cassidy	Comparative Study and Exhibition	March 20
Math Application	Selvaag	IA	March 10

Internal Moderation and Assessment of IAs

In subjects that multiple teachers are assessing students, we create check points for them over the course of the IA process. A couple of examples are provided below

- History- Teachers work collaboratively in assessing student work and with a goal of maintaining consistent grading within the IB scale. Teachers are given time to grade a variety of student pieces and then discuss why they gave them the grade they did within the markscheme.
- Language and Literature- teachers work together in creating internal rubrics for students based on the HL Essay rubric. They will explore student work in their Professional Learning Community (PLC) as they prepare to grade the HL Essays.

IB Sponsored External Assessments

Washburn participates in the May Examination Session sponsored by the IBO. It is expected that students who are registered for IB courses participate in the written exams given in May.

Washburn High School/An IB World School

Marking and Scoring

At the end of each day during exams, the student test documents are immediately processed and sent to the examiner for scoring. Washburn is not allowed to make photocopies of the student answer sheets.

The marking and scoring is done by a series of examiners who are hired and assigned by the IBO. It is the IBO, then, that confirms the results of the exams.

The Schedule

The schedule for these exams is set by the IBO and is non-negotiable in terms of any rescheduling or late testing.

These exams are given at the end of the course.

Scores and Grades

IB Composite Scores

Once a student completes the various assessments for an IB subject, the scorings for each are put together and then a student is given a composite score, which comprises a number on a scale of one to seven—one being the lowest and seven being the highest.

The IBO assigns the following descriptors to each grade level:

Grade 7 Excellent performance

Grade 6 Very good performance

Grade 5 Good performance

Grade 4 Satisfactory performance

Grade 3 Mediocre performance

Grade 2 Poor performance

Grade 1 Very poor performance

Of course, how this translates specifically to each subject depends on the types of skills required within that subject. Likewise, how this translates to the letter grade scale sponsored by Washburn can be difficult to do considering that they are two different systems. However, in the spirit of attempting to consider an equivalent, typically students who earn composite scores of 5 or higher tend to earn "A's and B's" for their class grades.

Although, it must be said that there are some cases where a student may not necessarily perform well in a course but may be able to achieve decent marks on the assessments. This, however, is more the exception than the rule. With that, students are highly encouraged to take their work in class very seriously as it is a fairly accurate indicator of their success on the IB exams.

Washburn Course Grades

Washburn High School/An IB World School

Just like with any other course at Washburn, a student will earn a letter grade for his/her work throughout an IB course.

Further details about IB class grades include the following:

- Class grades do not affect one's status in terms of being eligible for the IB sponsored examinations.
- In cases of an IB student being suspended from school, such a student will be treated in the same manner as any other. Per school ruling, students will be able to make up class work from the time missed. However, if a student is suspended from school during the May examination period, he/she may not be able to participate in the exams missed as there is no opportunity for retakes or late exams.

Transcripts—Certificate of Results

When a student completes a course of study in the IB program, the IBO will issue one official transcript (aka Certificate of Results) to a college/university of the student's choosing. With little exception, school registrars prefer this official documentation of a student's scores for the credit awarding process.

Six months after any given testing period, students then become responsible for requesting their own official transcripts from IB. This can be easily done through the IB Website at http://www.ibo.org/iba/transcripts/.

Special note: The IB Certificate of Results is not to be confused with the transcript of course grades sponsored by Washburn High School. In fact, the composite scores for the IB assessments do not appear on the Washburn transcript.

University Recognition

One of the bonus features of IB programs is that colleges and universities recognize IB students as being well prepared for the rigors of college. With that, students also have the potential to earn college credit for their work in IB. How this is determined is based on how a particular institution recognizes the IB composite scoring scale (based on 1-7). As much as there is consistency in this process, recognition practices can vary a bit from school to school. It is safe to say that where there are stringent admission practices, credit recognition follows suit. It is recommended, then that students do the following:

- In advance, students may have conversations with their prospective schools to find out how IB scores are recognized for credit.
- In cases where credit is not readily given, students should inquire about any appeals process that may be sponsored by the school.

On a final note, while the Washburn IB staff is eager to have students earn credit with their IB scores and can support a student in cases of an appeal, the institutions themselves have the final say in terms of such awards.

Additional IB Course Expectations

- Target learning outcomes for the various IB courses will be published in some form (syllabus, website, class Googlesite account, power point, classroom) in an effort to communicate them to students.

Washburn High School/An IB World School

Earning the IB Diploma

Students in the IB Full Diploma Program are required to do the following:

- Take one IB course in each of the six academic groups. This includes: English (Language A), World Language (Language B), History, Science, Math and an IB Elective.
- Take the two semesters of the course, Theory of Knowledge.
- Write an Extended Essay in an IB approved subject area of no more than 4,000 words.
- Participate in and reflect on activities throughout the program that help a student achieve the 8 outcomes associated with CAS—Creativity, Activity, and Service.

Award of the IB diploma

The following is a listing of all the numeric requirements one must achieve in order to earn the IB diploma. This language comes directly from the IB regulations.

- All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional IB diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB diploma.
- If a diploma candidate is awarded a grade E for TOK or a grade E for the extended essay, the candidate must achieve 28 points or more to be eligible for the diploma. However, if a candidate is awarded an E for both TOK and the extended essay requirement, the candidate will not qualify for the diploma regardless of the total number of points achieved.
- The IB diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 24, 25, 26 or 27 points, provided all the following requirements have been met.
    - Numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the IB diploma.
    - All CAS requirements have been met.
    - At least a grade D has been awarded for both TOK and the extended essay.
    - There is no grade 1 in any subject.
    - There is no grade 2 at higher level.
    - There is no more than one grade 2 at standard level.
    - Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below.
    - At least 12 points have been gained in higher level subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects must gain at least 16 points at higher level).
    - At least 9 points have been gained on standard level subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 6 points at standard level).



- The candidate has not been found guilty of malpractice by the IB Organization.

- A maximum of three examination sessions are allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB diploma. The examination sessions need not be consecutive.