



Westminster High School IB Assessment Policy



Principles of Assessment

All students are different and have different learning styles. To support student learning, feedback is provided on the learning process to help both the student and teacher advance. In order to promote student growth and identify areas for improvement, assessments are done regularly and modifications made accordingly. This allows students and teachers to be actively and continuously engaged in evaluating student development.

Why Do We Assess?

Westminster Public Schools students, in partnership with teachers, know what they are expected to learn. Teachers and students collaborate to evaluate the results of student academic assessments and create goals on the criteria and learning targets to move forward. The purpose of assessing students is to not only evaluate what they know, understand, and can do but to also provide feedback that encourages student progression and learning. This policy is intended to prepare students for the IB assessments as well as to embody the learner profile.

District Assessment System

In addition to the state assessment system, the District has developed a comprehensive assessment system that:

- challenges students to think critically, apply what they have learned and gives them the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and competency;
- includes “early warning” features that allow problems to be identified promptly to let students, teachers and parents/guardians know that extra effort is necessary;
- provides reliable and valid information on student and school performance to stakeholders; and
- provides timely and useful data for instructional improvement and improved student learning, including feedback useful in determining whether the curriculum is aligned with the District’s academic standards.

In accordance with applicable law, the District’s assessment system shall accommodate students with disabilities and English language learners.

How are Students Assessed?

Students are assessed using mainly IB Programme Standards. The learning targets we report out on are aligned to the mark schemes for IB assessments; each semester, we align those learning targets with carefully scheduled IB assessments. For example, in World Literature, WHS studies Part 4: School’s Free Choice in the first semester of the junior year,

and assesses those texts with the Individual Oral Presentation. Therefore, learning targets in our grading system come from the mark scheme for the IOP.

Additionally, as we report on Common Core State Standards and District 50 Content Standards; (our district is moving towards adopting the Common Core State Standards as our only set of standards in addition to IB learning targets), we have closely “cross walked” the IB Assessment learning targets to the Common Core Standards so that students who are working towards success on IB examinations are also meeting national standards to ensure progress towards high school graduation and competency.

Teachers develop tasks that align all standards to help students reach their content area goal. Assessments are balanced between summative and formative and are both integrated and continuous within the learning process, and are developed specifically to aid both learning and success on the IB exams. Teachers make use of the OCC, Exam Question Banks, and the yearly Exam Pack to develop appropriate assessments. Teachers work in content teams to grade sample work from students, evaluating one another’s marks on rubrics and mark schemes, and calibrating the grading process.

Students, parents, and educators know how the student is performing at all times based on a scoring system outlined in a rubric for each content area. Leading up to the final, summative IB assessment, students have many varied opportunities to demonstrate to teachers what they know and understand, and teachers use both verbal and written work to assess student progress.

At times teachers identify what formative assessment will be done and other times both students and teachers together identify the particular formative assessment activity. Students are given numerous opportunities to show what they know and understand. Feedback provided from formative assessments is given through conferences, rubrics, dialogue, self-reflection, and narratives. Formative assessments are used to help students prepare for summative assessments for the class and IB formal assessments.

The following is a list of typical assessments used; this list is not exhaustive, merely representative assessments used by teachers and students:

Types of Assessments

- Written responses
- Self-reflection
- Essays
- Tests and quizzes
- Performances
- Presentations
- Portfolios
- Class discussion
- Displayed work
- Scantron test
- Projects

Summative assessments exams given at the end of each semester and assess the critical thinking skills acquired and enhanced through each subject area. Teachers structure summative assessments to be similar to and in support of IB external and internal exams. Summative assessments are utilized to set goals and plan for the following semester in consideration of where the student. All assessments are criterion-referenced based on each subject area's particular criteria. Students are given the criteria and taught how to utilize that information in their growth through the semester and in assessments.

Students with special needs will receive accommodations as appropriate. Since this programme is optional and has set criteria, course requirements will not be altered. However, student on an Individual Educational Plan or 504 plan will work in conjunction with teachers the IB coordinator, and other support staff to determine appropriate accommodations for them so that they are receiving needed support. If a student requires testing accommodations, IBO will be notified and the required paperwork will be submitted.

How does homework contribute to assessment:

IB teachers are careful to take student workload into consideration when assigning student homework, so as not to overload our learners.

Students are *required* to complete homework as progress towards assessments during the IA process in many, as much of the IA must be completed individually.

Students are assigned reading as homework in literature and psychology classes, but complete much of the written work (practice assignments, formative assessments, etc) in class.

While assigning and requiring homework is generally up to the discretion of the teacher, because our diploma programs operates within the parameters of a school and district wide competency based system, it is our grading policy that if a student can show proficiency on any given learning target, then he or she is meeting standard; therefore, homework may or may not be necessary for a student to complete if he or she has already shown proficiency.

With the exception of reading, which is necessary to cover curriculum in several courses and therefore represents the acquisition of knowledge, our teachers utilize homework as opportunities to practice skills needed for success on various assessments.

How does grading and marking in the CBS system at WHS align with the IB grading system?

WHS assesses students on a scale of 1-4:

- 1=emerging
- 2=partially proficient
- 3=proficient
- 4=advanced/exceeding

Obviously, IB assesses on a scale of 1-7.

To align these grading systems, we do two things each year:

1. Align the philosophy/spirit of the grading systems to one another; for example; a 7 in IB is clearly advanced, so in our CBS system would constitute a 4, while a 4 in IB is proficient, so would constitute a 3 in the CBS system. We then place other IB grades into the CBS scale as seems appropriate. We check back each year, especially with new teachers, to calibrate these alignments. Currently:

IB Grade	CBS Grade
1	1
2	2
3	2.5
4	3
5	3.5
6-7	4

2. Develop an “operating curve” to help us convert a raw score to both an IB score and a CBS score. For example, the Historical Investigation in HOA is worth 25 points. A raw score of 16 would earn a 5 on the IB scale, and a 3.5 on the CBS scale. The IB staff uses an Excel Spreadsheet with an applied formula to make these conversions with consistency across the program.

Links Between Assessment and Other Policies

We use the CBS system to determine whether incoming diploma students are at level and demonstrating proficiency on all learning targets. Students in our district *must* pass learning targets with a 3.0 or higher; even a 2.5 indicates that they are not meeting standard, and therefore, cannot pass a “level” or course. Therefore, incoming students must have a minimum of 3.0 to enter the IB diploma program.

Academic Honesty Policy – Students will adhere to all requirements of the Academic Honesty Policy while completing assignments, homework, formative assessments, summative assessments, and all IB Diploma requirements including Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge, and CAS.

Language Policy – Student language needs will be considered when creating and implementing assessments.

Special Educational Needs Policy – Assessments will follow all requirements outlined by the student’s IEP, 504 plan, and the SEN Policy of Vanguard High School.

Policy Distribution & Review

This assessment policy is a working document, changed to reflect the needs of students and requirements of IB as they may change from year to year.

All WHS IB policies will be reviewed annually during the first IB staff meetings of the year, revised, and posted to the WHS IB website.