

Philosophy:

10 Assessment Principles:

- Assessment for learning should be part of effective planning of teaching and learning
- Assessment for learning should focus on how students learn
- Assessment for learning should be recognized as central to classroom practice
- Assessment for learning should be regarded as a key professional skill for teachers
- Assessment for learning should be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact
- Assessment should take account of the importance of learner motivation
- Assessment for learning should promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed
- Learners should receive constructive guidance about how to improve
- Assessment for learning develops learners' capacity for self-assessment so that they can become reflective and self-managing
- Assessment for learning should recognize the full range of achievements of all learners

-from *Assessment for Learning: 10 Principles*, Assessment Reform Group

- Effective assessment involves the student, and engages them by encouraging them to show the range of their understanding and reflection
- Effective assessment allows the teacher to use the feedback created to set the course of study, guide individual students, and inform parents of the progress of their children
- Effective assessment provides a forum for parents to celebrate the achievements of their children
- Effective assessment allows school administration to monitor the effectiveness of their teachers and programs, and allows for objective understanding of the overall student outcomes

In simple terms, an effective assessment program will enhance the outcome of each student, maximizing each to their potential, and provide positive feedback to all parties involved in the educational process.

The three fundamental types of assessment:

1. Summative Assessment: (assessment of learning)

Summative assessment is used to show in overall terms, with regards to the tested subject, what the student is capable of and how well they have learned the topic. The IB Diploma Programme subject examinations are fundamentally summative assessments, and show an overall picture of how well the student understands each topic, especially with regards to their peers.

2. Formative Assessment: (assessment *for* learning)

Formative assessment consists of educational activities that provide insights which are used to guide the learning process. Quizzes, homework, group activities, reports are all tools that, when used to provide timely and constructive feedback, give both the student and the teacher indication in what ideas they are succeeding, and in what areas they need to focus on more. When used correctly, formative assessment has the greatest impact on student achievement by give them and their teacher the tools to focus the learning process on the areas that need the most attention.

3. Peer and self assessment (assessment *as* learning)

This category, in contrast to the first two above, is directed by the students, rather than the teachers. In this process, students are involved in creating the criteria for assessment, which gives them opportunity to go beyond simply understanding the material. It allows them to see the material from the standpoint of assessing the idea, which gives them valuable insight into their own learning process.

Application of Assessment Policy

Here at Okisho, our policy is to provide a balanced approach to assessment, using the three types assessment explained above to match the goals outlined in our assessment philosophy. The optimal assessment program provides students with the skills “beyond the test.” That is, gives them self-assessment and reflective skills to help them throughout their lives. This matches closely with the IB Learner Profile.

Assessment Strategies:

Assessment strategies	
Observations	All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from non-participant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).
Performance assessments	The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.
Process-focused assessments	Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviours, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting observations.

Selected responses	Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.
Open-ended tasks	Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.

-List adapted from *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*, Lorna Earl, Steven Katz & Manitoba Education Assessment Team 2006

With regards to summative assessment, the IB Diploma Programme effectively addresses all of these assessment strategies within its internal and external assessments for each student. However, it is not enough to simply prepare each student for these final examinations but rather utilize formative assessment and peer/self assessment to provide our students with the skills to be successful during and beyond the tests.

This final, summative assessment provides a useful tool for working towards the desired outcome of success in the IB DP assessments. Using the assessment rubric for each subject, the subject teachers will be better able to align instruction with outcomes, assess the needs of the class and individual students, provide current feedback to students, and be better prepared to provide immediate and useful differentiation of teaching strategy to meet the needs of each student. Fundamentally, while the goal of success on the final, summative assessment is paramount to judging a student's success within the IB program, the path to success will be different for each student. By varying the types of assessment among the 3 main types outlined in section one, combined with various strategies for assessment activities, we will be able to pivot rapidly to meet the needs of individual students within the larger context of success on the summative IB Diploma Programme assessments.

Our ultimate goal is to provide students with the cognitive skills to assess their own abilities and function independently as learners. As such, our assessment policy and class activities are focused on creating an atmosphere that provides a constant exposure to differing perspectives, and the opportunity to challenge those perspectives. Various assessment strategies lend themselves to building a ladder to allow the students to advance their self-assessment skills in a supportive environment.

Assessment Policy and Student/Course Evaluation

A fundamental aspect of assessment is that it creates data. It is through this data that both the quality of assessment and future instruction direction can be evaluated. This data will be used to inform and guide each student, record each student's progress, and inform and guide teaching.

Assessment as a guide to each student:

Subject teachers will use their assessment tools to frequently provide feedback to the students. Subject teachers will provide clear goals, timely assessment, and model effective assessment techniques. The goal of all assessment is not only to provide feedback on the material under instruction, but also provide the metacognitive skills to build self-assessment ability.

All forms of assessment will be recorded to provide an ongoing record of student progress, which will be shared with parents/guardians at regular parent/teacher conferences. Personal data will

not be shared outside of the subject teachers, IB coordinator, school staff, although grades and student progress may be used anonymously within the school so as to better show student progress relative to their peers. One's own personal data can be released at the request of the individual or the individual's parent/guardian (i.e. transcript requests for university applications).

Assessment as a guide to subject teachers:

Essential to maximizing the potential of each student is the use of assessment by the subject teachers to guide the course of study for both individuals and the class as a whole. For the teacher, what is most important are the *quality* of assessment, and the *reliability* of the assessment.

One of the primary concerns of any assessment program is the quality and relevance of that program. As such, we have recognized important points that apply:

Assessment must be fair:

All students must be given an equal chance to have their achievement of learning outcomes recognized.

Assessment must have recognizable reference points:

The interpretation of any kind of measurement depends on reference points. In classroom assessment, there are three main reference points teachers can use when considering a student's performance:

1. How is the student performing in relation to some pre-determined criteria, learning outcome, or expectation (criteria- or outcomes-referenced)?
2. How is the student performing in relation to his or her performance at a prior time (self-referenced)?
3. How is the student performing in relation to the performance of other students in the defined group (norm-referenced)?

It is only by clearly distinguishing the reference points that teachers can provide students, parents, and the general public with meaningful information about what is deemed important, and what the stages are in the journey from emergent to proficient. Additionally, by creating transparency and creating opportunities for assessment as learning within the assessment program, students will gain the additional benefit of gaining self-assessment skills lead them "beyond the test."

Assessment must be valid:

Validity in classroom assessment is about the accuracy of the interpretation and the use of assessment information: How well does the assessment measure what I'm trying to measure?

Validity of classroom assessment depends on:

- Analyzing the intended learning and all its embedded elements
- Matching the most effective assessment approaches with the intended learning
- Ensuring that the assessment adequately covers not only the targeted learning outcomes, but also give the student the opportunity to practice "assessment as learning," so as to improve their critical thinking and self-assessment skills
- Giving each student the ability to show the extent of their learning in a variety of ways (i.e. different types of assessment activities), in order to create a composite of a student's achievement and abilities

Recording Assessment

Assessment is only effective if it is recorded effectively. As such, the Okinawa Shogaku International Baccalaureate Diploma program will use the ManageBac or Google Classroom web-based information system. Both systems are safe, secure, and has a proven record of providing a streamlined and efficient management of an IB Diploma Programme, including the integration with Japanese national standards within the unit-planning structure. All assessments assigned by the teachers will be recorded on ManageBac or Google Classroom.

Achievement Levels:

Achievement Levels are arrived at in as similar a way as possible from student to student; however they are ascertained in part based on the teacher's professional judgment.

It is important to note that in the Okisho IB Diploma Programme, achievement is the sole basis for grading. Attitudes and behaviors will be recorded separately from a student's achievement with regard to the learning goals. This is not to say that some behaviors will not affect a student's achievement scores, such as late work, plagiarism, or cheating. Such behaviors will be cause consequences as outlined in the student handbook.

Other necessary practices to maximize student achievement include:

- Continuing to encourage students to exhibit strong time management and organizational strategies
- Encouraging self-directed inquiry, which demonstrates valued skills and knowledge and eliminating the use of extra credit for activities that have nothing to do with demonstration of achievement of standards
- Ensuring that grades are based on individual achievement. In group-work teachers need to document carefully the input of individuals working in a group situation so that the levels of achievement for individual students can be determined. Group scores have limited value in the determination of final achievement levels.
- Ensuring that every assessment meets standards for quality assessment—clear targets, clear purpose, and sound design
- Calculating grades and achievement appropriately, using the best-fit model. Where it is not clearly evident which level descriptor should apply, teachers must use their judgment to select the descriptor that best matches the student's final achievement level.
- Achievement levels must be based on assessment criteria, not types of assessment.
- The determination of achievement levels begins with the consistent application of the descriptors found in the criteria. Well-written descriptors are the basis for the scoring tools used at the classroom level.

The Okisho IB Diploma program will use the IB DP achievement levels for all work within the IB DP. The IB prescribed achievement levels and their descriptors are:

Achievement Level	Descriptor
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7	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. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality
6	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight
5	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	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	Limited achievement against most of the 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
2	Very limited achievement against all the 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	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives

-from *Diploma Programme assessment Principles and Practice*, (2018) published by IBO, U.K.

Grade Equivalencies

Percent Score	Okisho Grade	IB Score Equivalent
100-90	5	7
89-80	5	6
70-79	4	5
60-69	4	4
35-60	3	3
34-25	2	2
24-0	1	1