École Archbishop MacDonald High School Assessment Policy

Our assessment policy contains information, which guides our practices with respect to assessment. It also acknowledges what teachers and students must do to ensure the fairest, most accurate assessment. We acknowledge that assessment is complex and integrally related to instruction goals through key learner outcomes.

Our Assessment Policy is based on the principles and guidelines provided in the following sources:
1. Our District Administrative Policy # 108: Assessment and Assessment Administrative Regulation
2. The Alberta Assessment Consortium
3. The IBO Implementation and Development of the MYP Programme.
4. The IBO Diploma Programme Assessment Principles and Practice
5. IB Diploma Programme Assessment Policy

We are committed to:
- Engaged learning time – commitment made to increase engaged learning time with students, regularly.
- Sharing learning objectives (state, share, show) – explaining learning objectives so students may know what is expected and can more readily hit the intended target (post essential questions and/or objectives and explain how it will be presented and assessed).
Preamble:

Types of Assessment
We recognize that assessment involves setting clear academic standards and explicit student expectations. Therefore, we ensure that our assessment practices are always based on learner outcomes from the Alberta Education Program of Studies and IB MYP and DP learning expectations.

We value the fact that sound assessment and grading practices have the potential to not only measure and report learning but also to promote it (McTighe and O’Connor, 2005). Our assessment accompanies the learning and teaching process. While assessment methods may take a variety of forms, they can be grouped in three types:

Diagnostic Assessment (Assessment for Learning)
Its purpose is to determine student knowledge and academic levels at the initial stages of a unit of study. It sets a baseline from which to assess progress as well as a foundation for a constructivist approach to learning. It serves as a guide for effective planning and teaching strategies. Effective implementation strategies:

- **Prior knowledge is assessed.** Teaching is focused on new knowledge and skills but often relies on prior knowledge.
- **Feedback is given early and often.** Formal and informal feedback is essential to progressive improvement.

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)
Occurs throughout the teaching and learning cycle. Students are provided with timely and specific feedback to help them reflect on their learning. Teachers receive feedback on the effectiveness of instructional strategies used. Effective implementation strategies:

- **Criteria and exemplars are provided.** Examples of desired outcomes and of various performance levels provide targets for students.
- **Self-assessment and goal setting are encouraged.** Students reflect on their learning and identify areas for improvement especially after assessments. Reflection and self-assessment are also used to help students develop and monitor the IB learner profile attributes.
- **Formative tasks may be displayed in Power School.** It is the decision of the department whether or not formative tasks are displayed in Power School.

Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)
Takes place at the end of the learning period. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what has been learned and to what degree desired outcomes have been attained. Also commonly used as a part of a reporting instrument to parents and authorities.

Effective assessment strategies:

- **Appropriate choices are offered.** Whenever possible, students are encouraged to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. This can include investigations, debates, problem-solving, reflection, and other open-ended activities or projects.
• **New evidence replaces old evidence.** Whenever possible, cumulative assessment strategies are used where there is increasing weight on final outcomes.

• **Summative assessment is used to frame meaningful performance goals.** Students are made aware that *doing* is as important as *knowing*. Final performance tasks are a reflection of stated outcomes.

• **Creation of Common Grading Rules within a subject area.** Allows all students taking a particular course regardless of teacher to be evaluated with the same strategies, which are identified in the course outlines.

1.0 Planning for Common Assessment

“To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you are going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.”  **Stephen R. Covey**

It is expected that teachers participate in common planning, marking and assessment practices across grade level and subject areas.

MYP Unit Planners are created in order to ensure that all of the MYP objectives are met and that inquiry guides each subject.

DP Concept Planners are created to facilitate meeting the objectives as presented in specific DP Subject Guides and are horizontally articulated to integrate approaches to teaching, theory of knowledge and the learner profile.

1.1 Basis for Understanding

• Focus questions guide our teachers in planning for assessment
  
  *What is it we expect students to learn?*
  
  *How will we know they have learned it?*
  
  *How will we respond when they don’t learn?*

• **Subject Specific Departments agree to goals at the beginning of the year that focus the teachers in that subject on best practice to improve student learning.**

• **Achievement ~** quality of performance, connected to outcomes, characterizes a level of understanding of subject area content, makes evident a level of knowledge and skills

• **Effort ~** personal and social characteristics. Based on participation and work completion (engagement and task completion).

2.0 Communication

Communication involves the teacher, the students and the parent(s)/Guardian(s).

Communication is frequent and ongoing and may include the following:

  - Documents and Calendars posted on the School's Website
  - Monthly IB Newsletter – containing both MYP and DP news as well as highlighting an understanding IB programming.
  - Monthly School Newsletter – containing general school operations and events.
  - Teacher initiated emails and/or phone calls
  - Parent or Student initiated emails and/or phone calls to teachers/ staff
  - Digital / Online Classrooms: including district Virtual Classroom, Microsoft Classroom or Google Classroom platforms.
  - PowerSchool Parent Portal to view student assessments and teacher comments on both formative and summative assessments.
- Scheduled Student-Parent-Teacher Meetings.
- Student self-reflection and goal setting
- Feedback provided directly on student submitted and returned work.
- School Advisory Council (Parents-Staff Board) Updates and Reports
- School Open House, IB Gala and IB information Presentations offered through the school year.

2.1 Involving Parents and Guardians in the Assessment Process
We assume a responsibility to communicate effectively and continuously with parents and guardians by regularly providing them with timely and meaningful information.

Specific communication occurs through multiple formats such as quarterly Teacher initiated emails and/or phone calls, scheduled Student-Parent-Teacher meetings, student portfolio/ assessment reviews or feedback, and Powerschool digital reporting system.

General communication, occurs through newsletters, announcements (daily on intercom, and through various types of social media) and informational meetings.

Listed in the teacher support documents are many guiding questions to assist with communications regarding assessment. The following are key points to consider:
- Informing parents/guardians of the process of three-way reporting
- Informing parents/guardians of the process of both specific and general communication
- Informing parents/guardians of the process of collecting evidence of their child’s learning
- Informing parents/guardians of the process of student reflection

3.0 The Reporting Instrument
Details, aims, objectives and the intent of each section of the Powerschool reporting system and reporting process are well delineated Powerschool support documents. These include: reporting academic and non-academic achievement factors, creating comments, effort levels and teacher/staff contact information.

- Teachers will utilize balanced assessment practices, a backward design model and begin with the whole child in mind (performance, knowledge, skills and attitude, areas of strength, areas of growth)
- Key Learner Outcomes and objectives are determined at the beginning of each unit or concept, and planned with IB MYP or IB DP planners that includes an emphasis on integrating the approaches to learning.

Key learner outcomes are shared with students and parents at the beginning of each unit or concept. Formats for informing students of the learner outcomes/ objectives include through posters, digital classrooms, focus questions, on the Powerschool reporting system or through teacher initiated communication home.
3.1 Reporting Practices & Agreements In both MYP and DP Programmes:

PowerSchool Reporting System: Teacher feedback and comments are provided frequently.

Course Outlines: Every teacher provides their students with a course outline summarizing the class content as well as the grade distribution rules.

MYP Programme Description and details of the four MYP criteria are present for MYP courses. DP Programme Description and details of the subject specific Internal and External Assessment criteria are present for DP courses.

In the MYP:
The use of the MYP rubrics coupled with constructive comments are intended to guide the MYP student to a high standard of learning.

Formative and Summative Reporting: The MYP rubrics are used for both summative and formative assessment.

In the DP:
The use of subject specific IA rubrics (and where present EA rubrics) guide the internal (and external) assessment process and evaluation. The subject specific guides outcomes direct ongoing feedback throughout the course.

4.0 Grading
Scores derived from formative and diagnostic assessments should not be used to report levels of achievement during the course of new learning, but should be used to identify where the students were when they began; and to coach them to where they are able to develop. These scores may be used to report or demonstrate progress over time.

Scores derived from summative assessments should be used to report levels of achievement when teachers are evaluating a student’s achievement of learner outcomes.

4.1 Reporting Grades to Parents

High school marks are communicated through PowerSchool, which is an online program that enables parents to view their child’s assignment marks and report cards.

Cumulative Marking: A student’s final grade is based upon marks gathered through the entire course.

Rewrites: Rewrites may or may not be implemented at the teacher’s discretion depending on time, place and student effort. An example of effort is having the student show study notes to show that he/she is ready to take the test.

IB MYP grades: Teachers in each subject area are to assess student work against each of the four criteria at least 2 times in each course in order to obtain valid IB report card marks. All MYP grades are delivered via Power School. At the end of each semester, final MYP grades are delivered along with a summative comment.
**IB DP grades**: Teachers in each subject area use the IB DP subject specific criteria to evaluate the required Internal Assessment (IA), External Assessment (EA) or Core subject work. These evaluations will be reported either digitally or through hard copy to students/parents. The posting of the results of these evaluations on Powerschool is at the teacher’s discretion, as the assessments may or may not be directly linked with the Alberta Learning course requirements.

4.2 **MYP Grading System**

Assessment in the MYP is *criterion related*, which means that teachers measure student attainment against specified subject criteria rather than against other individuals in the class. For each criterion there is a range of points awarded, based on student performance at the time of assessment. Each criterion has a descriptor that explains as clearly as possible what each student has been able to achieve. When the points for each criterion are added up, the student’s overall score falls within a Point Range, which equates to an IB Grade Equivalent/Academic grade that may range from 1 to 7.

Descriptors on the tables below summarize what the grades mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td><strong>Minimal</strong> achievement in terms of the objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td><strong>Very limited</strong> achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is <strong>unable</strong> to apply them fully in normal situations, <strong>even with support</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td><strong>Limited</strong> achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a <strong>limited understanding</strong> of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations <strong>with support</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>A <strong>good general understanding</strong> of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is <strong>occasional</strong> evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>A <strong>consistent and thorough understanding</strong> of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a <strong>variety</strong> of situations. The student <strong>generally</strong> shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and <strong>occasionally</strong> demonstrates originality and insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a <strong>wide variety</strong> of situations. <strong>Consistent</strong> evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student <strong>generally</strong> demonstrates originality and insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them <strong>almost faultlessly</strong> in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student <strong>consistently</strong> demonstrates originality and insight and <strong>always</strong> produces <strong>work of high quality</strong>.</td>
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**DP Grading System**

The DP grading system is *criterion related*, which means that teachers measure student attainment against specified subject criteria rather than against other individuals in the class. For each criterion there is a range of points awarded, based on student performance at the time of assessment. Each criterion has a descriptor that explains as clearly as possible what each student has been able to achieve. When the points for each criterion are added up, the student’s overall score falls within a Point Range, which equates to an IB Grade Equivalent/Academic grade that may vary from subject to subject.

*The descriptors for each Internal (or External) Assessment Criterion Rubric is posted in the individual subject area guides.*
4.3 Criterion-related assessment

Both the MYP and DP assessment model is also described as criterion-related, as it is based upon predetermined criteria that all students should have access to. The MYP or DP guides identify a set of objectives for each subject group, which are directly related to the assessment criteria of that particular subject group. The level of student success in reaching the objectives of each subject group is measured in terms of levels of achievement described in each subject assessment criterion. The kind of generic application of broadly constructed criteria that is used in MYP or DP assessment practices is called “criterion-related” assessment. This differs from the term criterion-referenced assessment in that it does not require a mastery of each descriptor and better describes the MYP or DP “best-fit” approach.

At the beginning of each course, students are given copies of the rubric criteria that they will work with during that year in every subject. Teachers will maintain a record of individual student attainment on a regular basis.

The objectives to be assessed in any task are made explicit to the students in the class at the time that the task is set. Feedback on assessment is made available to students either at the time of assessment, or as soon as possible afterwards.

4.4 Reporting Schedule

- Meet the Teacher Night – 2nd or 3rd week of school. We communicate to parents and students present about the philosophy of the assessment reporting system, assessment process, key learner outcomes, teacher expectations, special events, field trips and curriculum summaries.

- Parents/Guardians and students have real time access to their marks with PowerSchool.

- Parents may contact teacher at any time to discuss students marks and effort.

- Teachers at Ecole Archbishop MacDonald High School are to initiate contact with each parent via email early in each semester.

- Further contact is determined at the teacher’s discretion.

5.0 Differentiation of Instruction/ ELL programming

Students who have or request accommodations need an indication of this on their report cards through the modification of the key learner outcomes.

5.1 Special Needs Students in an Inclusive Setting

Our practices allow for the inclusion of students with special needs. This includes students in all programs.
Assessment of the ATLs

Although the approaches to learning clusters and skills are explicitly and implicitly taught, they are not given a summative mark. These skills are incorporated into tasks that may be used as summative or formative assessments. (example: proper collaboration may be incorporated in an inquiry lab in year 5 science)

According to “Approaches to Learning across the IB continuum,” document it states that the ATLs will foster learning and help students:

- reflect purposefully on their learning (metacognition)
- understand the diversity of human learning needs
- evaluate and provide evidence of their learning
- meet MYP or DP subject group aims and objectives
- share responsibility for creating productive, cooperative and safe learning environments
- develop the confidence to try new strategies and explore new concepts and contexts for learning
- prepare for further study and responsible participation in local and global communities.

MYP Developmental Workbooks
The developmental workbooks are to be created and maintained in each of the arts courses (art, music, and drama). These workbooks serve as a tool to show progression of skills learned in the arts. They also function as a place for reflection.

DP ManageBac System and Process Journals:
Our Core subjects are managed through ManageBac which allows students to create an ‘online portfolio’. Teachers will post feedback/comments and document levels of progress. The ManageBac System allows students and parents to view and reflect on progress on work. In some subject areas process journals are used to allow students to reflect on progress throughout the course.

Procedures & Technical Information
Through PowerSchool, cumulative assessment marks are provided by the teachers who teach the course and can only be modified by them. Final course grades are reviewed by a Department head and at least one member of the administration team and feedback may be provided to each teacher. Timelines for completing final course grades and providing feedback are given to teachers in advance. Details are discussed at the division level meetings and further information is provided through email if necessary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment Glossary</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement</strong></td>
<td>The student’s demonstration of knowledge, skills and attitudes relative to grade level learner outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>The process of collecting information on student achievement and performance to improve student learning. A balanced assessment includes a variety of assessment tasks. Ongoing diagnostic assessment provides information to inform instruction and improve student performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment for learning</strong></td>
<td>Assessment experiences that result in an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress toward clearly specified learner outcomes (also called diagnostic, and formative assessment, refers to information not used for grading purposes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment of learning</strong></td>
<td>Assessment experiences designed to collect information about learning to make judgments about student performance at the end of a period of instruction to be shared with those outside the classroom (also called summative assessment, refers to performance data compiled as a grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Authentic assessment</strong></td>
<td>An evaluation of student learning by means of tasks that are similar to the work students normally do in the classroom or may encounter outside the classroom in real life situations. An example of authentic assessment is portfolio development as opposed to the paper-pencil standardized testing approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Checklist</strong></td>
<td>A two point evaluation tool that indicates if a student has achieved a learner outcome (yes or not yet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criterion-referenced</strong></td>
<td>An approach for describing a student's performance according to established criteria: e.g., she typed 55 words per minute without errors.</td>
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</table>
| **Curriculum**          | A statement of outcomes and expectations for student achievement:  
  - Outcomes are the intended knowledge, skills and attitudes students demonstrate as a result of schooling.  
  - Expectations are the knowledge, skills and attitudes students demonstrate at a specific grade. |
| **Curriculum standards** | The expected student learning sequenced into grade levels, against which student performance is judged. |
| **Descriptive feedback** | Part of an ongoing, specific and constructive conversation about learning that relates directly to the learner outcomes. |
| **Diagnostic assessment** | Provides reliable and valid information to teachers about student learning and progress, and direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a |
Evaluation
A judgment regarding the quality, value, or worth of a response, product, or performance based upon established criteria. Evaluations are usually based on multiple sources of information and used for communicating student achievement.

Formative assessment
Provides information to students and teachers about student learning and progress, and direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program. Formative assessment includes opportunities for practice and is not part of an achievement grade.

Grade
A summary statement of student achievement relative to the curriculum standard and may be reported as a level of achievement or a percentage.

Key learner outcomes
Statement about curriculum content area that describes a learning segment (taken from Alberta Education program of studies)

Mark
Means the score (number, letter, or descriptive category) given on any single test or performance.

Metacognition
Refers to the higher order thinking skills which involves active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning.

Norm-referenced
An approach for describing a student's performance by comparison to a normed group: e.g., she typed better than 80% of her classmates (see criterion-referenced).

Performance
How well a student demonstrates grade level learner outcomes

Performance assessment
An assessment activity that requires students to construct a response, create a product or perform a demonstration. Since performance assessments generally do not yield a single correct answer or solution method, evaluations of student products or performances are based on judgments guided by criteria. The context should be authentic or reflect real life situations. A meaningful real life task that enables students to demonstrate what they know and can do in situations like those they will encounter outside the classroom as well as in situations that simulate how people do their work

Portfolios
A purposeful collection of products and criteria for making judgments that exhibits to students or others achievement and growth in curriculum.

Process
Refers to the student’s social development and work habits that are essential to higher-level work success, reported as effort, growth as a learner and comments
| **Product** | Refers to a student’s performance of key learner outcomes at term end or year end, reported as levels of achievement |
| **Progress** | Refers to the degree of difficulty a student encounters versus the quality of the work, reported as a comment |
| **Rating Scale** | An evaluation tool of three or more points that illustrates how frequently, consistently or independently a student demonstrates a learner outcome |
| **Reporting** | Refers to the act of providing information regarding the students’ achievement, progress and growth. This could be done in a report card or an Individual Program Plan. |
| **Rubric** | A set of general criteria used to evaluate a student’s performance in a given outcome area. Rubrics consist of a fixed measurement scale (e.g., 4-point) and a list of criteria that describe the characteristics of products or performances for each point. Clear performance targets are set for instruction. |
| **Summative Assessment** | Provides information to students, parents/guardians, and teachers about student achievement at the end of a period of instruction. Summative assessment is used to determine an achievement grade. |