

## Assessment policy

### 1. Philosophy and principles

The main aim of student assessment in senior school education is to support curricular goals and encourage student learning and enable them to reveal their full potential and achieve the best possible results in final formal examinations (national curriculum / IB).

In order to achieve this aim assessment must be **criterion based** and be **ongoing**. Different strategies of formative assessment are used to give feedback on the strengths and limitations of the student work in order to improve student learning. At the same time summative assessment is used at regular intervals to judge the level of attainment of the students and also to evaluate the success of the course and the teaching methods used.

Assessment should equally be supported by and lead to learning how to learn. Learning processes at school are regarded to be part of and enable a “lifelong learning “process, therefore the emphasis is on making the student a better judge of their own performance and thus helping them to become an autonomous lifelong learner.

### 2. Assessment practice

#### General aspects combining the national system and the IB standards

Assessment practices in the national system as well as the IB DP are in line with the philosophy and principles described above, since both are criterion based and ongoing and make use of summative and formative assessment methods. Since both systems follow the same principles they can not only be combined and put into practice alongside each other but also lead to synergetic effects as to the development of the students' skills and capabilities as autonomous learners.

The scheduling of internal assessment timelines for the double diploma (Abitur and IB Diploma) is administered in a way that allows a combination of both systems in the best possible way (compare document 2-year-cycle internal / external assessment IB Diploma - Abitur). These timelines are evaluated and revised on a regular basis and handed out to students, parents and teaching staff so that collisions are avoided in the best possible way and the workload is distributed evenly throughout the two-year course reducing stress levels and giving enough time for a feedback on student work.

#### Practices in place

Written and oral assessment is carried out regularly throughout the two year programme. Written and oral assessment is part of the summative assessment in the German system at the same time helping the students to improve performance in a formative way for both the IB Diploma programme and the German Abitur. By assessing the students' progress and reporting it back to them, teachers encourage them to evaluate and improve their performance. This is particularly so as not only grades are given but comments and suggestions for improvement are provided for the students. This enables them to identify their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

Ongoing assessment takes place in direct teacher-student interaction and feedback is given in classroom contexts as well as in individual supervision talks.

Assessment instruments used for formal assessment at the end of the course (e.g. past papers of Abitur or IB exams) are regularly used in the classroom to improve the learning process. Having students use markschemes helps them to evaluate their work and to focus on criteria, the teacher's role is more the one of a counselor than the one of an instructor.

Further instruments in use at our school to support the formative learning process are teacher supported self-evaluation or self assessment (for training purposes the teacher provides markschemes against which the individual work can be marked), peer evaluation/assessment (of group results, e.g. in Group 4 project). It is the teacher's pedagogical decision to set the tasks just at the right level for the student and to adjust that level as the student progresses. The instrument and reporting strategies in place help to ensure an individual support in the best possible way.

**Criteria (subject specific) for written papers** cover three levels of performance:

- reproduction
- application / analysis
- evaluation

as well as the level of presentation / language.

These criteria are used throughout the three years of Senior School and are the same ones that are assessed in the final Abitur exams, which are externally set and marked by school teachers applying the externally provided markshemes. These criteria overlap greatly with IB objectives<sup>1</sup> covering a great complexity of cognitive skills that have to be addressed in the learning process in the classroom.

A significant difference is that formal assessment in the IB is external to a much greater extent than in the national system where coursework and final exam papers are marked by subject teachers and not by an external examiner. But despite this the methods and practices used formatively during the course as well as summatively towards the end of the course are similar.

**Criteria (subject specific) for coursework** cover

- quality and quantity of oral participation
- ability to reproduce, apply knowledge / analyse and to put forward reasoned arguments /evaluate
- problem-solving skills
- interaction and cooperation with other students
- use of appropriate methods and language
- presentation skills
- homework

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Assessment principles and practices: Quality assessment in a digital age (2026), Chapter: "Marking"

## Comparison of formal assessment throughout the two-year IB Diploma Programme / national curriculum

	German system	IB Diploma programme
Grading/marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- seven written exams per subject</li> <li>- written Abitur exams in three subjects / oral exam in one subject</li> <li>- coursework /oral work is assessed throughout the year</li> <li>- written work / coursework both count for 50% of the final mark/grade</li> <li>- grades 1(excellent)- 6 (fail)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internal assessment (according to deadlines)</li> <li>- external assessment at the end of the Diploma Programme</li> <li>- predicted grades which represent expected overall performance</li> <li>- grades 7 - 1</li> </ul>
Recording and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- formal report cards twice a year</li> <li>- informal information on performance / ways to improve to parents and students on request</li> <li>- parents can consult teachers in their weekly office hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- individual feedback on drafts, essays, presentations and other subject-specific tasks</li> <li>- predicted grades (recording)</li> </ul>
homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oral/written/creative tasks aimed at revising, consolidating or applying of syllabus criteria and knowledge</li> <li>- Oral/written/creative tasks aimed at preparing new (aspects of) syllabus criteria</li> <li>- tasks to help students train the assessment expectations and standards (reproduction, analysis, evaluation – see above)</li> <li>- tasks to help students develop their creative potential and personal skills (even within a group)</li> <li>- tasks allowing for an individualized learning process</li> <li>- tasks reflecting the own learning process</li> </ul>	

### 3. Links between the assessment policy and other documents

#### Links between assessment policy and language policy

The principles and practices of the assessment policy are valid for the assessment of student performance in first and foreign languages. Specific criteria that concern the assessment of language proficiency are described in the respective section of the language policy.

#### Links between assessment policy and admissions policy

In the selection process for the IBDP one aspect we take into consideration is the candidate`s report card(s). Performance levels in the subjects serve as an indicator whether or not a candidate should be encouraged to enroll in the programme and attempt the double qualification Abitur and IB Diploma. Even though we do not impose the condition of a specific *numerus clausus*, grades in chosen IBDP subjects should be at least at good standard (or better). Performance in English must be good.

## **Links between assessment policy and inclusion policy**

When it comes to assessing the performance of students each student should be able to show his full potential. Thus the special needs of students are catered for by technical equipment, an extension of the working time or other suitable means to balance out disadvantages (compare inclusion policy).

## **Links between assessment policy and academic integrity policy**

In cases of malpractices or other breaches of academic honesty in student work used for formative, summative or formal assessment the principles and practices described in the academic honesty policy apply (compare academic integrity policy).

## **4. Roles and responsibilities for implementing, evaluating and reviewing assessment policy**

Formal assessment in the national system is externally set by the respective school authorities, i.e the Ministry of education. The rules and regulations about assessment practices are clearly set in the legal framework published by the ministry called APO-GOST<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of each course students are informed about the assessment means and criteria set for the national system and the IB Diploma.

On a school level, each subject group decides in a collaborative process on the focus and administrative issues of the assessment process. Regular meetings throughout the year, at least one meeting per half-term, are devoted to address this. These bodies can also decide on optional standardized tests in different grades, e.g. standardised Maths test in grade 11. Instruments like this help to promote collaborative work among subject teachers, help develop criterion based markschemes and evaluate assessment practices at the school in an ongoing process. It helps students to understand the nature of criterion based assessment and to better judge their own performance.

It is common practice that subject teachers are asked to hand in samples of student work in class tests regularly in order for the school administration to ensure implementation of standards. During the Abitur exam period, exam papers are remarked by other teachers (internally or externally), thus exerting a sort of “external moderation” on the school’s exam grading. If significant differences in the marking occur, a third check remark by the local school authorities will be done.

### **Training new teachers**

Teacher training in Germany involves a 1.5-year post university educational training programme which is organized as a combination of didactic instruction and practical experiences as trainee at a school. Teacher trainees are instructed about assessment procedures during their 1.5-year professional teacher training by their seminar tutors. In addition they will carry out assessment practices first under the supervision of an experienced teacher and - at a later stage of their training– independently.

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<sup>2</sup> Verordnung über den Bildungsgang und die Abiturprüfung in der gymnasialen Oberstufe: <https://bass.schule.nrw/9607.htm> (11<sup>th</sup> May 2026)



# Lessing – Gymnasium



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Teachers who also teach students in the IBDP attend an appropriate IB Workshop in the subject they will teach, at which the principles of IB assessment are presented and put into practice. Guidance and support are provided by other subject staff and the IB Coordinator. The latter provides new teachers in the IBDP with appropriate documents (e.g. subject guide, subject support material, recent subject reports, examination mark sheets) so that IB assessment is carried out in accordance with the regulations.

When a new IB curriculum is introduced, the IB Coordinator ensures that a subject teacher attends a subject specific workshop who afterwards informs his/her colleagues on changes so that a review of previous practices can be carried out and new assessment strategies introduced if necessary. Additionally, when a new curriculum is introduced, meetings take place for the corresponding subject teachers within the framework of the "IB Network of local schools". This encourages collaborative planning as well as common assessment practices.

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Cologne, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026