

Assessment Policy

Introduction

1. Philosophy and Principles of Assessment
2. Goals of Assessment
3. General Assessment Practices
4. Formative Assessment
5. Summative Assessment
6. Special Features of Assessment in the Diploma Programme
7. References

1. Philosophy and Principles of Assessment

Assessment makes a major contribution to the realisation of the objectives of UWC Dilijan as summarised in its mission statement:

UWC Dilijan is a community working towards a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable world through a balanced, challenging and transformative education with people from diverse backgrounds. The college aims to be an integral part of Dilijan and to have positive personal, local and global impact.

Assessment facilitates the evaluation, adjustment, direction and redirection of curriculum planning and delivery. It enables students, teachers, and parents to monitor the learning undertaken by each student in terms of all-round personal development. All aspects of learning as embodied in the IB Learner Profile and UWC goals and objectives must be evaluated and monitored against the overall aims of the college to provide students and teachers with information on the progress being made towards attaining the goals of the whole programme. Assessment supports setting personal learning targets and helps each student reach his/her own full potential. It should lead to a clear understanding of the progress made by the learner and facilitate the establishment of effective teaching practices based on the needs of the students. Thus assessment informs curriculum planning in a curriculum designed to deliver all aspects of the Learner Profile.

Since assessment is so often associated solely with cognitive skills, it is worth saying explicitly that in a curriculum designed to realise our mission statement, assessment must be rich enough to facilitate the monitoring of attainment of all its aims including the Learner Profile attributes and the ideals of the UWC movement embodied in its seven principles. Assessment of cognitive development alone is not sufficient.

In a personalised learning environment in which the curriculum reflects the needs of each student, assessment must also be personal if it is to be appropriate and effective. The challenge is to develop an assessment regime capable of evaluating the extent to which each student is reflective, knowledgeable, balanced, principled, caring, risk-taking, inquiring,

Assessment Policy

communicative, thoughtful and open-minded, as well as exhibiting the qualities of service, leadership and environmental and cultural stewardship. Unless an assessment policy is capable of providing reliable feedback on these parameters, it is not adequate to the evaluation of the programme.

2. Goals of Assessment

The assessment policy serves to provide students, teachers and other stakeholders with well-analysed timely feedback in every area of learning. UWC Dilijan undertakes to provide regular and constructive assessment. Students and teachers will commit to using assessment only where it contributes positively to learning. There will be no “assessment for the sake of assessment”; e.g., merely to accumulate marks to put into reports.

Assessment at UWC Dilijan serves to promote

- excellence in learning
- joy of learning
- self-assessment and peer-assessment with the active support of the teacher
- mutual understanding between student and teacher on goal setting, pace of learning, and acquisition of knowledge and critical skills
- demonstrable skills of expression, collaboration, and service to others
- the general qualities expected of ethical leaders and fearless learners.

The IB Diploma Programme requires specific assessment tools. The assessment policies and tools of assessment are given below in section 6.

3. General Assessment Practices

Teachers will make the basis of assessment clear to students at all stages of the IB programme. While the DP programme guidelines lay down the parameters of assessment, they also ensure that each student is evaluated individually and not ranked or graded to fit into a comparative scale of performance. In the hyper-competitive context of contemporary society, it is particularly necessary to emphasize that assessment is *for learning*, that it provides guidance for *purposive directed learning*, and for *meeting programme standards*. It is not for producing a rank ordering which compares one student’s performance against another’s.

- Assessments will generally be reported in English, which is currently the medium of instruction. Assessment of learning of languages other than English will be reported in those languages.
- Given the complex linguistic composition of the student and parent body, the multilingual nature of UWC Dilijan, and the stated goal of supporting mother



Assessment Policy

tongues, assessment reports may be translated if and when necessary for the benefit of the recipient, especially a parent who is monolingual.

- A wide range of tools of assessment will be used and shared among teachers and students. A shared understanding of the purpose and accuracy of assessment tools will nurture a constructive climate for assessment and the reporting of that assessment.
- Assessment criteria will be explained to and understood by students prior to learning. This will enable learners to reflect upon and assess themselves based upon agreed criteria, and thus empower them as learners. It will also enable learners to communicate with teachers and peers, to reflect on their own learning, from achievements to analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and to understand and evaluate trajectories for learning.
- A comprehensive set of records of assessment for each student will be maintained for the benefit of students, teachers, parents, career counsellors, university applications, national committees when appropriate, and other stakeholders.
- Assessments will be used to review knowledge and skills before advancing to the next unit of inquiry or level of learning.
- UWC Dilijan will ensure that assessment is for learning and not the other way round.
- All assessment will be undertaken according to the principles of the Academic Honesty Policy with the full knowledge of the students.

While both formative and summative assessments guide learning, the former is used in daily practice to shape next steps by informing curriculum planning. Summative assessment comes at the end of a unit of learning. In other words, the former is development oriented and the latter measures mastery of knowledge and skills.

4. Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is assessment *for* learning, and is on-going throughout the teaching and learning process. It provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do and how well they are learning new knowledge and skills. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together to direct and shape curriculum planning.

Collective formative assessment of the progress of each student is undertaken by tutors who ask teachers and others for individual feedback on each of their tutees. Specifically, tutors monitor the extent to which students have absorbed and understood both the letter and the spirit of the IB Learner Profile.

Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in



Assessment Policy

thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize criteria for success.

Students will grow to engage in self- and peer-assessment opportunities to develop the confidence needed if they are to be stewards of their own learning.

Assessment in the classroom involves teachers in:

- developing clear rubrics in advance of starting teaching so that the basis of assessment can be made known to students before learning commences as part of the strategy of giving shape to the learning-objectives
- using representative samples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- identifying exemplary student work
- keeping qualitative as well as quantitative records of test/task results

Assessment in the classroom involves learners in:

- reflecting on their learning
- communicating their learning to teachers and peers
- evaluating work produced by themselves and by others against known rubrics
- sharing their learning and understanding with others
- using a variety of styles and abilities to demonstrate their learning
- analysing their learning and understanding what needs to be improved

For free exchange of evaluative feedback to be possible, an atmosphere of trust and co-operation between teachers and learners must be established not only within the classroom but across the UWC Dilijan community. Without such an atmosphere, evaluation can be experienced as destructive rather than constructive, and, conversely, poor relationships can inhibit effective communication of information about what needs improvement. To be effective, formative assessment must therefore take place in an environment which is positive and supportive.



Assessment Policy

5. Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment (assessment of learning) is undertaken at the end of a unit or topic and aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Summative assessment marks the culmination of the teaching and learning process, but it is not the *purpose* of the teaching and learning process; it gives students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned.

Summative assessment can and usually should assess several elements of learning simultaneously in order to inform and lead students to improve their integrative and trans-disciplinary learning skills; it measures understanding of central significant ideas, and encourages students to undertake action. Primarily, summative assessments are intended to achieve the following:

- to give students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (rather than to identify what they do not know or cannot do);
- to help teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning and teaching processes.

Summative assessment will enable students, teachers and parents (the latter via the reporting process) to gauge the level of student performance and enable greater academic achievement in externally assessed components, as well as reach a more complete understanding of the topic and grasp of the associated concepts.

6. Special Features of Assessment in the Diploma Programme

Final (summative) assessment in the DP is criterion-related and holistic, not norm-referenced. Formative and internal summative assessment will be used to promote student learning as well as to work towards achieving UWC Dilijan's mission.

Assessments must be valid, reliable, consistent, transparent and relevant. Targets used in assessment must be attainable given the level of learning reached by students.

Tutors will use their over-view of student progress to assess the trans-disciplinary achievements of their tutees as a reflection of their understanding and embodiment of the IB Learner Profile.

Formative and Summative Assessments

Formative assessments are used regularly to aid the teaching and learning process by informing teachers of the progress levels of individuals in the class, and allowing students to take responsibility for their learning through awareness of their own levels of learning. Students will grow to engage in self- and peer-assessment opportunities to develop confidence in being stewards of their own learning.



Assessment Policy

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Formal Examinations

- Students will have had exposure in previous years to examinations, to allow them to develop skills in the areas of revision, time-management and topic analytics.
- DP1 students will take mid-year (December) and end-of-year (May/June) examinations.
- DP2 will sit a mid-year examination (December) and a 'mock' examination (February).
- The outcome of any formative assessments in DP1 and DP2 will have a significant weighting when determining student predictions for the purpose of university applications
- Before the external DP examinations occur, students will have thorough experience and understanding of IB regulations and expectations in all areas including academic honesty and special circumstances such as those regarding extra time, calculators, dictionaries, etc.

Internal Assessments

For many DP subjects, a part of the final grade is determined by performance in internal assessment tasks done by the students throughout the DP programme. These tasks contribute to overall grades, and are subject to strict regulations on how they can be completed and the assistance that can be provided for students in completing the tasks.

Each course will have its own regime and weighting for internal tasks and assessments which will be communicated by the class teacher. Students will be provided with clear timelines for the completion and submission of these tasks and should ensure these are not breached.

Extenuating Circumstances

At the discretion of the school and the IB (if it is a formal assessment), a student may be deemed to have suffered from extenuating circumstances in completing an assessment. In this case, adequate arrangements will be made to ensure that the student has a reasonable period of time in which to complete the assessment, or, in cases where an assessment is incomplete or missing, for other assessments to be used in determining a student's attainment. Such adjustments will always be made in strict adherence to the prevailing IB regulations.

Reporting of Final Assessments

The final diploma award is determined by a combination of internal and external assessment in six subjects, each graded on a scale of 1-7 (low to high). Additionally, points are awarded for two of the core constituents: Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. A total of 45

Assessment Policy

points is available to each candidate and constitutes the maximum reported grade. The external examinations will be taken at UWC Dilijan in May of DP2.

As part of the formal assessment process, the school is required to submit predictions on a student's expected grade outcome which will be used in some university application systems. This process of prediction is conducted through analysis of the student's academic performance and is reviewed for consistency across each diploma year and between diploma years.

Feedback

Regular reporting of student progress and attainment will be offered during the academic year, taking account of both formative and summative assessment and teachers' professional judgement.

Late Submissions

In line with a positive philosophy of education, students will not lose marks for their work on account of late submission. However, depending on the nature of the task and situation, it is possible for the grade for a piece of work not to be recorded formally resulting in zero marks for a particular assignment.

Plagiarism

The school is committed to maintaining the utmost academic honesty throughout assessments, as outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy.

Data Recording and Analysis

Data from summative assessments will be stored in a systematic way consistent across the Diploma Programme. This data will be made available to those with a wider responsibility for students, including tutors, to provide useful information about individual student needs, and will provide opportunity for students to reflect on their progress.

The data will also be analysed at department and school levels, to identify areas of progress, to inform the direction of future teaching, and to facilitate the development of staff.

Assessment styles

- Skill observations
- Presentations
- Orals
- Practical work
- Assignments or projects
- Essays and other exercises
- Unit tests and examinations



Assessment Policy

- Coursework tasks
- Self-assessments
- Journals etc.
- Student/teacher interviews

This Assessment Policy will be published on the UWC Dilijan website.

7. References

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John Puddefoot, *Head of College*, September 2014

Revisions

This policy will be reviewed in September/October 2016; 2018; 2020 and republished as required.

