

JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL



IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM



ASSESSMENT POLICY

TAKE
COMMAND
OF YOUR FUTURE!



JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM



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JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission at John F. Kennedy High School is to challenge all students to realize their full intellectual, emotional, and physical potential in an ever-changing global community.

IB MISSION STATEMENT:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

IB LEARNER PROFILE:

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.



INTRODUCTION:

The following pages contain information and guidance concerning John F. Kennedy High School's International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Assessment Policy. We want to ensure that students, teachers, parents, and staff understand the purpose of formative and summative assessments at John F. Kennedy High School. This document also provides guidance concerning the policies and procedures surrounding assessment. This includes assessments particular to Kennedy, as well as formal IB assessments.

ASSESSMENT AND THE IB LEARNER PROFILE:

The IB Learner Profile is a set of ten characteristics or attributes valued by all members of IB World School communities.

Knowledgeable

“We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.” We expect students to be knowledgeable in each of their IB subject areas. It is their right as students to expect all teachers to provide them with the knowledge they need in order to be successful on formative and summative assessments. It is then their responsibility to learn, understand, and communicate their knowledge on assessments.

Reflective

“We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.” In order to learn from successes and mistakes, students must use formative assessment feedback to help enhance their understanding of the subject material so that they may expand their knowledge and use the knowledge on summative assessments. It is the teachers' responsibility to help students with this process and to reflect on their approaches to teaching, seeking out ways that they can better convey the knowledge to students and improve on their teaching practice.



Thinkers

“We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.” Students show on formative and summative assessments that they can take the knowledge they have gained and apply that knowledge in new and unique ways. It is NOT enough to just memorize facts for either Kennedy or IB assessments. Teachers will help students to build these skills, scaffolding assignments to allow students to use knowledge in increasingly complex ways.

Communicators

“We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.” Students will need to effectively communicate their ideas and knowledge through speaking and writing in a variety of situations throughout the IB Diploma Program. Teachers will continually use best teaching practices to help students build upon these skills.

ASSESSMENT AND THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE:

There is a strong link between assessment in the IB Diploma Program and the Theory of Knowledge course. The TOK concerns itself with critical thinking, and helping students understand and explore the process of knowing. Assessment in the IB at the school level, as well as formal IB internal and external assessments, is a means of asking students to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter. They must use the critical thinking skills they gain in all of their IB Diploma Program classes, but especially in the Theory of Knowledge course, in order to communicate their knowledge in creative ways.



ASSESSMENT POLICY LINKS TO OTHER JFK POLICIES:

In addition to formative and summative assessments similar to other IB Diploma Program courses, the language acquisition teachers, in collaboration with the IB Diploma Program coordinator, must assess all applicants to the program in order to determine placement in the proper Language B course. These policies and procedures are outlined in detail in the school's language policy.

Adherence to the academic policy is crucial to students' successful completion of both formative and summative assessments. There is a strong link between this academic honesty policy and the school's assessment policy; there is no way for a student to address the assessment philosophy, policies, and practices if they do not understand the academic honesty policy and act with integrity at all times.

The IB Diploma Program coordinator and the IB subject area teachers must take into consideration each individual student's special accommodations when creating and administering assessments. Further guidance can be found in the school's special education needs policy.

ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY:

At John F. Kennedy High School we believe that all students are capable of learning and showing proficiency within each subject area through various forms of assessment. As educators, we know that students come from diverse backgrounds and have different learning styles, abilities, and experiences. It is our job to implement instructional practices that address these diverse backgrounds and needs, while maintaining high, clearly-defined expectations.

The main objective of any assessment should be to provide all stake-holders (student, parent, teacher, etc.) with an opportunity to determine the student's mastery of content knowledge and skills at that moment in time. There should never be reliance upon one methodology for making this determination. Students should be provided with a wide-range of formative and summative assessments that allow them to demonstrate their knowledge in formats including essays, short-answer responses, portfolios, presentations, class discussions, commentaries, investigations, Socratic seminars, workbooks, fieldwork, reflection journals, and critiques (to name a few).



The assessment, however, should not be the end of the process. Just as important as the test, essay, or presentation, is the reflection that takes place following the assessment. Both formative and summative assessments provide students with valuable information concerning their strengths and areas that need improvement. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the student, with guidance from parents and teachers, to reflect upon their assessments so that they may come to a clear understanding of what went well and what knowledge or skills they need to work on for future assessments. Likewise, teachers must use assessments both as a means to identify the needs of individual students and drive differentiated instruction, and as an opportunity to reflect upon their own teaching, so that they can improve their instruction practice in subsequent lessons.

If this level of reflection is to take place, teachers must provide students with quality and timely feedback on all assessments. A simple points-based grade (78/100 for example) gives the student minimal information. While limited use of such assessments can provide teachers with a snapshot of overall student content mastery, they should not be the prominent form of assessment. Instead, whenever possible, assessments should be criterion-based activities. This will provide the students with a more meaningful understanding of expectations, and provide teachers with a strong basis for meaningful feedback. The structure and language of the actual IB assessment rubrics should be used in all cases where the actual IB rubrics aren't appropriate. It is the responsibility of the teachers to ensure that all students know and understand the required criteria, and it is the responsibility of the school to provide all teachers with the necessary training to know, understand, and be able to give effective instruction concerning the rubrics.

REPORTING OF GRADES/SCORES:

Progress Reports:

Students in the IB Diploma Program at John F. Kennedy High School receive a weekly progress report from the IB Diploma Program coordinator detailing the current grades in each student's IB Diploma Program classes. The progress report must be signed by the student and parent(s) and returned within two days to the coordinator. This will help to ensure that the student, parent(s), and coordinator are fully aware of potential problems in a timely manner. It will allow us to work together to get each student any additional help or tutoring he or she may need in order to successfully complete assignments and assessments.



Report Cards:

Students at John F. Kennedy High School receive a report card every six weeks (approximately). Report cards are sent home at the end of each six-week grading period. Only semester grades will be recorded on the students' high school transcripts.

Student/Family Access to Information:

Students and parents at John F. Kennedy High School can view current grades, attendance, and transcript information through the Student/Parent Portal (<https://myportal.dpsk12.org/Pages/Default.aspx>), as well as Infinite Campus (<https://campus.dpsk12.org/campus/icprod.jsp>). Teachers are required to update grades on a weekly basis. In addition, all IB Diploma Program teachers post all homework assignments, assessments, projects, presentations, etc on ManageBac (<https://jfkibdiploma.managebac.com/login>). Students and parents have 24 hour access to this site.

Predicted Grades:

Students in the IB Diploma Program at John F. Kennedy High School will receive a set of predicted IB grades at the end of each semester (December of the junior year, June of the junior year, and December of the senior year). IB Diploma Program teachers will predict (based on each student's performance on formative and summative assessments to that point) what they think the student will receive in that IB subject area by the end of the program. The set of predicted grades are mailed home so that students and parents can reflect on subject mastery to date. We emphasize to all parties that the predicted grades are in no way a guarantee. They are simply a tool to help students and parents understand which subject areas the student is excelling in, and in which they may need additional tutoring.

GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Denver Public Schools High School Grading Scale:

All classes at John F. Kennedy High School use the same grading scale for recording and reporting students' grades.

A	92.5	C+	76.5
A-	89.5	C	72.5
B+	86.5	C-	69.5
B	82.5	D	59.5
B-	79.5	F	0

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Grading Scale:

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program uses a different scale and set of descriptors in order to assess student work. Generally, this 7 point scale is:

7	Excellent	3	Mediocre
6	Very good	2	Poor
5	Good	1	Very poor
4	Satisfactory	0	No work

The Theory of Knowledge course and Extended Essay use a letter system:

A	Excellent	D	Mediocre
B	Good	E	Elementary
C	Satisfactory	N	No grade

In the document, *Grade Descriptors*, IB provides more detailed guidance as to what each descriptor means for each subject area (see appendix a).



IB marks are determined using criterion-referenced rubrics. There are, in many cases, multiple rubrics per assessment component, and multiple components go into the overall grade determination in each subject area. It is each teacher's responsibility to ensure that students have copies of each rubric for the teacher's specific subject area. More importantly, it is each teacher's responsibility to ensure that every single student fully understands how she or he will be assessed using the rubrics. There should be no ambiguity surrounding what a student must do on each assessment in order to receive a certain mark.

ASSESSMENTS:

John F. Kennedy High School Formative Assessments:

According to Carnegie Mellon University, "The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning" (<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/basics/formative-summative.html>). Formative assessments will allow students to reflect on their own learning. These low-stakes assessments help students identify strengths and areas of needed growth, so that students can come to a better understanding of the knowledge and skills that they need to develop in order to be successful on later summative assessments at the school level, as well as IB assessments. This self-reflection is not a skill possessed by all students, so it is the role of the school to help students acquire and nurture this capacity. We want students to move away from viewing formative assessments as tasks or sets of tasks that they must perform so that they can earn a certain grade. It is essential that students begin to understand that formative assessments are meant as learning opportunities.

Teachers are to use formative assessments as a means to quickly identify the individual and group needs of the students and make adjustments to address areas of concern. Differentiated instruction often arises out of the administration of formative assessments as teachers gain a better understanding of where individual students are struggling. The teacher must also provide students with descriptive feedback, not merely a score, if students are to understand what they are doing well, and what they need to do in order to grow and improve.



Often, formative assessments are not graded. However, when they are, teachers will use language from IB assessment rubrics. This will help assure alignment between daily assessments and the content, aims and objectives of the IB courses. It will also help students become more familiar with the language of the assessment criteria within each subject area.

John F. Kennedy High School Summative Assessments:

Summative assessments are more formal, higher-stakes activities that occur at the end of a learning cycle. They are only given after a sufficient number and variety of formative assessments have been given, so a teacher then can feel comfortable that students know and understand the material. It is important that sufficient notification of the type, scope, and format of these assessments be provided to students, as well as a clear explanation of what assessment criteria will be used. These assessment criteria in nearly all cases should closely resemble, if not duplicate IB assessment criteria and rubrics.

Students should use summative assessments as a gauge as to how well they are performing against the IB assessment criteria. They should use these assessments as a learning opportunity to reflect on what knowledge they need to better understand in order to do well on the IB assessments. Students can also better understand how their performance on formative assessments translates into competency on summative assessments, and make necessary adjustments to help improve their performance on future summative assessments.

Teachers should use the results from summative assessments to reflect on their own teaching during the particular learning cycle. This will help teachers understand what teaching practices worked well in the long term, decide which formative assessments lead to student success, and help students improve their overall performance. They will also help teachers understand if certain concepts need to be retaught.



John F. Kennedy High School Homework:

Students in the IB Diploma Program at John F. Kennedy High School are on an alternating block schedule. That means that while all of these students are taking 7-8 courses, they only go to 3-4, 90-minute classes per day. It is the responsibility of the teachers to ensure that all homework assigned is necessary to the development or rehearsal of skills and knowledge. Homework should not be given just to create the illusion of a rigorous course. Teachers are also asked to limit their homework assignments to 45 minutes between each class. While occasional projects, portfolios, labs, or preparation for other summative assessments may lead to homework extending beyond this 45-minute guideline, as often as possible we want students to have the time and opportunity to learn from their homework, not just work frantically to complete assignments.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Internal Assessments:

IB internal assessments are projects, portfolios, labs, performances, etc. that are completed sometime during the course of the two-year program within each IB class. Internal assessments make up between 20% and 50% of the students' overall IB grade in each class. They are assessed by the teacher, using IB criteria, and moderated by the IB.

Students have an opportunity to turn in draft work, have the teacher comment on the draft, and make revisions before submitting the final copy. It is, therefore, essential that students understand the importance of these assignments to their overall success in IB and take put forth appropriate effort in completing these assessments to the best of their ability, including effectively understanding and utilizing teacher comments on draft work.

Teachers must ensure that students fully understand the expectations of the internal assessments and are completely familiar with relevant assessment criteria. Teachers must also give students an appropriate amount of time in class to complete the assessments (as outlined in individual subject guides).



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It is the responsibility of the school to spread out internal assessment due dates so that students can spend an appropriate amount of time on each assessment without becoming overwhelmed. Below is a list of internal deadlines for these assessments. Teachers will give students clear guidelines concerning deadlines for draft work. It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that students have enough time allocated to the draft work of the assessments as dictated by the IB. A more detailed outline of Extended Essay deadlines can be found in the Extended Essay Guide.

Year 1		
Month	Group/Assessment	Deadline
January	English A: Literature HL Individual Oral Presentation	Throughout the month of January and into early February as necessary.

Year 2		
Month	Group/Assessment	Deadline
August	English A: Literature HL Written assignment final draft	First week of school
October	Psychology SL/HL Internal assessment final draft	First week of October
	Mathematics SL Mathematics Exploration final draft	Last week of October
November	History of Americas HL Historical Investigation final draft	Second week of November
December	Theory of Knowledge Final presentations	Throughout the month of December
	English A: Literature HL Individual Oral Commentary	Week prior to winter break
	Film HL Final Film Presentation	Week prior to winter break



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YEAR 2		
Month	Group/Assessment	Deadline
January	Extended Essay Final draft of Extended Essay	First week of January
	Language B SL/HL Written Assignment	Second week of January
	Sciences SL/HL Group 4 Project	Third week of January
February	Mathematical Studies SL Mathematical Studies Project	First week of February
	Theory of Knowledge Final Paper	Third week of February
March	Sciences SL/HL Final drafts of labs	Second week of March
	Film HL Portfolio and Independent Study	Third week of March
	Visual Arts SL/HL All components to be submitted electronically to IB	Third week of March
April	Language B SL/HL Individual Oral	First week of April

Further guidance for teachers concerning the internal assessments from the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme* is located below.

A10.7.1 Requirements for internal assessment

The teacher(s) for each subject and level with an internal assessment component must ensure that the candidates' work conforms to the requirements for the subject and level. Details of these requirements are available in the relevant subject guide.

The teacher(s) must assess candidates' work using the IB assessment criteria for the respective subject and level. Marks must be awarded within the range of minimum and maximum marks available without using fractions, decimal places or estimates.

A candidate must complete all work for internal assessment in the language of registration for the respective subject and level. According to the type of internal assessment work required for the subject and level, assessment must be based on work done.

Marks must be awarded even if the work, or participation, is incomplete. If a candidate submits no work, an "F" must be entered on IBIS for the mark, resulting in no grade for the subject and level.

The IB reserves the right to request additional sample work or the work of all candidates for internal assessment in any subject, for the purpose of moderating marks, at any time before the issue of results. Therefore, coordinators must ensure that all candidates' work and associated materials are retained until the issue of results.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program External Assessments (completed prior to May):

Certain IB Diploma Program courses have external assessment components that are completed at the school during the two-year class. Specifically, this includes the Written Assignments for English A: Literature HL, The Written Assignments for Language B SL/HL, the Studio Work for Visual Arts SL/HL, and the Independent Study and Presentation for Film HL. The internal deadlines for these components are included in the internal assessment calendar to help ensure that they are evenly spaced throughout the students' time in the program. Teachers should provide similar supports for these assessments as they do for the internal assessments regarding time allocation and presentation of assessment criteria.



International Baccalaureate Diploma Program External Assessments (completed in May):

All of the IB Diploma Program courses (other than Film HL and Visual Arts SL/HL) have formal external assessments that the students must take in May of their senior year.

Students will sit for all external assessments for all the IB courses in which they are enrolled. They will be diligent in adhering to the school's academic honesty policy and act principled at all times. They will further adhere to all guidelines outlined in the *Conduct of the Examinations* document provided by IB.

Teachers will ensure that by the time of the examinations, they have covered all the material specific to their subject areas and outlined in the subject guides that the student must know in order to be successful on the assessments. They will also make sure that all students have a clear understanding of the format of the assessments, and that students have a clear understanding of the expectations as outlined in the assessment rubrics. Finally, teachers will have provided the students with multiple opportunities to take practice exams that mirror the formal external assessments, including providing a testing environment for these practice assessments that reflect what the students will experience during their May exams.

It is the school's responsibility that students clearly understand the testing schedule, the *Conduct of the Examinations* document, and all expectations of the school and IB regarding proper completion of the external assessments.

POLICY REVIEW:

At the start of each school year, a panel will convene to review the assessment policy and make any necessary changes, deletions, or updates to meet the needs and requirements of the school, school district, and IB. This panel will be chaired by the IB Diploma Program coordinator and consist of IB teachers, school administration, student representatives, and the school assessment leader.



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APPENDIX A

Group 1 (studies in language and literature) grade descriptors

Grade 7

Demonstrates excellent understanding and appreciation of the interplay between form and content in regard to the question or task; responses that may be convincing, detailed, independent in analysis, synthesis and evaluation; highly developed levels of expression, both orally and in writing; very good degree of accuracy and clarity; very good awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; very effective structure with relevant textual detail to support a critical engagement with the thoughts and feelings expressed in the work(s).

*Demonstrates refined appreciation of literary style and a full engagement with the act of transforming literature into performance; the personal qualities necessary to work with others in a purposeful and effective manner.

Grade 6

Demonstrates very good understanding and appreciation of the interplay between form and content in regard to the question or task; responses that are, mainly, convincing, as well as detailed and independent to some degree, in analysis, synthesis and evaluation; well-developed levels of expression, both orally and in writing; good degree of accuracy and clarity; good awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; effective structure with relevant textual detail to support a critical engagement with the thoughts and feelings expressed in the work(s).

*Demonstrates clear appreciation of literary style and a solid engagement with the act of transforming literature into performance; willingness to work with others in a constructive manner.

Grade 5

Demonstrates good understanding and appreciation of the interplay between form and content in regard to the question or task; responses that offer generally considered and valid analysis, synthesis and / or evaluation; good levels of expression, both orally and in writing; adequate degree of accuracy and clarity; awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; clear structure with relevant textual detail to support an engagement with the thoughts and feelings expressed in the work(s).

*Demonstrates an appreciation of literary style and an engagement with the act of transforming literature into performance; recognisable involvement to work with others in a cooperative manner.

Grade 4

Demonstrates adequate knowledge and understanding of the question or task; responses that are generally valid in analysis and / or synthesis; satisfactory powers of expression, both orally and in writing; only some lapses in accuracy and clarity; some awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; a basic structure within which the thoughts and feelings of the work(s) are explored.

*Demonstrates some appreciation of literary style and some commitment in the act of transforming literature into performance; an acceptance of the need to work with others.

Grade 3

Demonstrates some knowledge and some understanding of the question or task; responses that are only sometimes valid and / or appropriately detailed; some appropriate powers of expression, both orally and in writing; lapses in accuracy and clarity; limited awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; some evidence of a structure within which the thoughts and feelings of the work(s) are explored.

*Demonstrates little appreciation of literary style and modest commitment to the act of transforming literature into performance; little apparent attempt to work with others effectively.

Grade 2

Demonstrates superficial knowledge and understanding of the question or task; responses that are of generally limited validity; limited powers of expression, both orally and in writing; significant lapses in accuracy and clarity; little awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; rudimentary structure within which the thoughts and feelings of the work(s) are explored.

*Demonstrates very little appreciation of literary style and little commitment to the act of transforming literature into performance; sparse evidence of involvement in working with others effectively.

Grade 1

Demonstrates very rudimentary knowledge and understanding of the question or task; responses that are of very limited validity; very limited powers of expression, both orally and in writing; widespread lapses in accuracy and clarity; no awareness of context and appreciation of the effect on the audience/reader; very rudimentary structure within which the thoughts and feelings of the work(s) are explored.

*Demonstrates very little appreciation of literary style and negligible involvement with the act of transforming literature into performance; inability to work with others.

* Applies to literature and performance only

Group 2 (language acquisition) grade descriptors

Language B (HL)

Grade 7

Students speak with clarity and fluency; use a richly varied and idiomatic range of language very accurately; handle ideas effectively and skillfully with active and complex interaction; demonstrate a thorough understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have little difficulty with the most difficult questions; recognize almost all the subtleties of specific language usage; write detailed and expressive texts demonstrating an excellent command of vocabulary and complex structures with a consistently high level of grammatical accuracy; demonstrate clarity of thought in the organization of their work and an ability to engage, convince and influence the audience.

Grade 6

Students speak clearly, fluently and naturally; use a varied and idiomatic range of language accurately; handle ideas effectively with active and full interaction; demonstrate a very good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have little difficulty with more difficult questions; recognize most of the subtleties of specific language usage; write detailed texts demonstrating a very good command of vocabulary and complex structures with a very good level of grammatical accuracy; adapt their writing appropriately to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work coherently and convincingly.

Grade 5

Students speak mostly clearly and fluently; use a varied range of language mostly accurately; handle ideas mostly effectively with generally full interaction; demonstrate a good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with more difficult questions; recognize some subtleties of specific language usage; write fairly detailed texts demonstrating a good command of vocabulary with a good level of grammatical accuracy; show a reasonable ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work coherently.

Grade 4

Students speak generally clearly; use a basic range of language correctly; handle ideas adequately with full interaction at times; demonstrate an adequate understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with almost all difficult questions and some average questions; recognize a few subtleties of specific language usage; write texts demonstrating an adequate command of vocabulary with an adequate level of grammatical accuracy; show some ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work appropriately.

Grade 3

Students speak hesitantly and at times unclearly; use a simple range of language correctly at times; handle ideas with some difficulty with fairly limited interaction; demonstrate some understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with questions of average difficulty; write texts demonstrating a basic command of vocabulary and some awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type; make some attempt at expressing their ideas and organizing their work.

Grade 2

Students speak hesitantly and generally unclearly; use a limited range of language often incorrectly; handle ideas with difficulty with restricted interaction; demonstrate a fairly limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with some easy questions; write texts demonstrating a fairly limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type with limited success; make some attempt at basic organization; content is rarely convincing.

Grade 1

Students speak hesitantly and unclearly; use a very limited range of language mostly incorrectly; handle ideas with great difficulty with very restricted interaction; demonstrate a limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties even with easiest questions; write texts demonstrating a limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce a barely identifiable text type; lack organization to an extent that content is unconvincing.

Language B (SL)

Grade 7

Students speak clearly, fluently and naturally; use a varied and idiomatic range of language accurately; handle ideas effectively with active and full interaction; demonstrate a very good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have little difficulty with more difficult questions; write detailed texts demonstrating a very good command of vocabulary and complex structures with a very good level of grammatical accuracy; adapt their writing effectively to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work coherently and convincingly.

Grade 6

Students speak mostly clearly and fluently; use a varied range of language mostly accurately; handle ideas mostly effectively, with generally full interaction; demonstrate a good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with more difficult questions; write fairly detailed texts demonstrating a good command of vocabulary with a good level of grammatical accuracy; adapt their writing appropriately to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work coherently.

Grade 5

Students speak generally clearly; use a basic range of language correctly; handle ideas adequately with full interaction at times; demonstrate an adequate understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with almost all difficult questions and some average questions; write texts demonstrating an adequate command of vocabulary with an adequate level of grammatical accuracy; show a reasonable ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organize their work appropriately.

Grade 4

Students speak hesitantly and at times unclearly; use a simple range of language correctly at times; handle ideas with some difficulty with fairly limited interaction; demonstrate some understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with questions of average difficulty; write texts demonstrating a basic command of vocabulary and some awareness of grammatical structure; show some ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; make some attempt at expressing their ideas and organising their work.

Grade 3

Students speak hesitantly and generally unclearly; use a limited range of language often incorrectly; handle ideas with difficulty with restricted interaction; demonstrate a fairly limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with some easy questions; write texts demonstrating a fairly limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type; make some attempt at basic organization; content is rarely convincing.

Grade 2

Students speak hesitantly and unclearly; use a very limited range of language mostly incorrectly; handle ideas with great difficulty with very restricted interaction; demonstrate a limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties even with easiest questions; write texts demonstrating a limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type with limited success; lack organization to an extent that content is unconvincing.

Grade 1

Students speak very hesitantly and unclearly; use a very limited range of language incorrectly; handle ideas unsuccessfully with very restricted interaction; demonstrate a very limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with almost all questions; write texts demonstrating a very limited command of vocabulary and very little awareness of grammatical structure; produce a barely identifiable text type; lack organization to an extent that content is confusing.

Language *ab initio* (SL)

Grade 7

Receptive skills: students respond clearly and effectively to all simple and most complex information and ideas.

Interactive skills: students respond accurately, communicate effectively and demonstrate comprehension; pronunciation and intonation always facilitate the understanding of the message; students sustain participation and make good independent contributions. The message is always clear.

Productive skills: students develop ideas well using an effective, logical structure; they successfully use a range of simple and some complex cohesive devices; they use both basic and complex grammatical structures accurately. However, they may make occasional errors in complex structures; they use varied and effective vocabulary and appropriate register; they demonstrate clear evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 6

Receptive skills: students respond clearly to all simple and most complex information and ideas.

Interactive skills: students respond mostly accurately, communicate almost always effectively and demonstrate comprehension; pronunciation and intonation almost always facilitate the understanding of the message; students almost always sustain participation and make independent contributions. The message is almost always clear.

Productive skills: students develop ideas well using a logical structure; they successfully use a range of simple and some complex cohesive devices; they use both basic and complex grammatical structures accurately. However, they may make several errors in complex structures; they use varied vocabulary and appropriate register; they almost always demonstrate clear evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 5

Receptive skills: students generally respond clearly to simple and some complex information and ideas.

Interactive skills: students respond accurately and generally demonstrate comprehension; pronunciation and intonation often facilitate the understanding of the message; students generally sustain participation and make some independent contributions. The message is often clear.

Productive skills: students develop some ideas using a logical structure; they often use a range of simple and some complex cohesive devices; they use basic grammatical structures accurately. However, complex structures are rarely accurate; they use a range of basic vocabulary and appropriate register; they often demonstrate evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 4

Receptive skills: students respond clearly to most simple information and ideas.

Interactive skills: students respond accurately and demonstrate comprehension in simple exchanges; pronunciation and intonation usually facilitate the understanding of the message; students sustain participation in simple exchanges. The message is usually clear.

Productive skills: students develop basic ideas using a logical structure; they use a range of simple cohesive devices successfully; they use most basic grammatical structures accurately; they use basic vocabulary and appropriate register successfully; they usually demonstrate evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 3

Receptive skills: students sometimes respond clearly to simple information.

Interactive skills: students sometimes respond accurately and sometimes demonstrate comprehension in simple exchanges; pronunciation and intonation sometimes facilitate the understanding of the message; students sometimes sustain participation in simple exchanges. The message is sometimes clear.

Productive skills: students sometimes develop basic ideas; they sometimes use simple cohesive devices successfully; they sometimes use basic grammatical structures accurately; they sometimes use basic vocabulary and appropriate register successfully; they sometimes demonstrate evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 2

Receptive skills: students rarely respond clearly to simple information.

Interactive skills: students rarely respond accurately or demonstrate comprehension; pronunciation and intonation rarely facilitate the understanding of the message; students rarely sustain participation in simple exchanges. The message is rarely clear.

Productive skills: students rarely develop basic ideas; they rarely use simple cohesive devices; they rarely use simple grammatical structures accurately; they rarely use basic vocabulary or appropriate register successfully; they rarely demonstrate evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Grade 1

Receptive skills: students very rarely respond clearly to simple information.

Interactive skills: students very rarely respond accurately or demonstrate comprehension; pronunciation and intonation very rarely facilitate the understanding of the message; students very rarely sustain participation in simple exchanges. The message is very rarely clear.

Productive skills: students very rarely develop ideas; they very rarely use simple cohesive devices; they very rarely use basic grammatical structures accurately; they very rarely use basic vocabulary or appropriate register successfully; they very rarely demonstrate evidence of intercultural understanding where required.

Group 3 (individuals and societies) grade descriptors

Grade 7

Demonstrates conceptual awareness, insight, and knowledge and understanding which are evident in the skills of critical thinking; a high level of ability to provide answers which are fully developed, structured in a logical and coherent manner and illustrated with appropriate examples; a precise use of terminology which is specific to the subject; familiarity with the literature of the subject; the ability to analyse and evaluate evidence and to synthesize knowledge and concepts; awareness of alternative points of view and subjective and ideological biases, and the ability to come to reasonable, albeit tentative, conclusions; consistent evidence of critical reflective thinking; a high level of proficiency in analysing and evaluating data or problem solving.

Grade 6

Demonstrates detailed knowledge and understanding; answers which are coherent, logically structured and well developed; consistent use of appropriate terminology; an ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesize knowledge and concepts; knowledge of relevant research, theories and issues, and awareness of different perspectives and contexts from which these have been developed; consistent evidence of critical thinking; an ability to analyse and evaluate data or to solve problems competently.

Grade 5

Demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject using subject-specific terminology; answers which are logically structured and coherent but not fully developed; an ability to provide competent answers with some attempt to integrate knowledge and concepts; a tendency to be more descriptive than evaluative although some ability is demonstrated to present and develop contrasting points of view; some evidence of critical thinking; an ability to analyse and evaluate data or to solve problems.

Grade 4

Demonstrates a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject going beyond the mere citing of isolated, fragmentary, irrelevant or "common sense" points; some ability to structure answers but with insufficient clarity and possibly some repetition; an ability to express knowledge and understanding in terminology specific to the subject; some understanding of the way facts or ideas may be related and embodied in principles and concepts; some ability to develop ideas and substantiate assertions; use of knowledge and understanding which is more descriptive than analytical; some ability to compensate for gaps in knowledge and understanding through rudimentary application or evaluation of that knowledge; an ability to interpret data or to solve problems and some ability to engage in analysis and evaluation.

Grade 3

Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the subject; a basic sense of structure that is not sustained throughout the answers; a basic use of terminology appropriate to the subject; some ability to establish links between facts or ideas; some ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Grade 2

Demonstrates a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject; some sense of structure in the answers; a limited use of terminology appropriate to the subject; a limited ability to establish links between facts or ideas; a basic ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Grade 1

Demonstrates very limited knowledge and understanding of the subject; almost no organizational structure in the answers; inappropriate or inadequate use of terminology; a limited ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Group 4 (sciences) grade descriptors

Grade 7

Displays comprehensive knowledge of factual information in the syllabus and a thorough command of concepts and principles. Selects and applies relevant information, concepts and principles in a wide variety of contexts. Analyses and evaluates quantitative and/or qualitative data thoroughly. Constructs detailed explanations of complex phenomena and makes appropriate predictions. Solves most quantitative and/or qualitative problems proficiently. Communicates logically and concisely using appropriate terminology and conventions. Shows insight or originality.

Demonstrates personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in a wide variety of investigative activities in a very consistent manner. Works very well within a team and approaches investigations in an ethical manner, paying full attention to environmental impact. Displays competence in a wide range of investigative techniques, pays considerable attention to safety, and is fully capable of working independently.

Grade 6

Displays very broad knowledge of factual information in the syllabus and a thorough understanding of concepts and principles. Selects and applies relevant information, concepts and principles in most contexts. Analyses and evaluates quantitative and/or qualitative data with a high level of competence. Constructs explanations of complex phenomena and makes appropriate predictions. Solves basic or familiar problems and most new or difficult quantitative and/or qualitative problems. Communicates effectively using appropriate terminology and conventions. Shows occasional insight or originality.

Demonstrates personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in a wide variety of investigative activities in a very consistent manner. Works well within a team and approaches investigations in an ethical manner, paying due attention to environmental impact. Displays competence in a wide range of investigative techniques, pays due attention to safety and is generally capable of working independently.

Grade 5

Displays broad knowledge of factual information in the syllabus. Shows sound understanding of most concepts and principles and applies them in some contexts. Analyses and evaluates quantitative and/or qualitative data competently. Constructs explanations of simple phenomena. Solves most basic or familiar problems and some new or difficult quantitative and/or qualitative problems. Communicates clearly with little or no irrelevant material.

Demonstrates personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in a variety of investigative activities in a fairly consistent manner. Generally works well within a team and approaches investigations in an ethical manner, paying attention to environmental impact. Displays competence in a range of investigative techniques, pays attention to safety and is sometimes capable of working independently.

Grade 4

Displays reasonable knowledge of factual information in the syllabus, though possibly with some gaps. Shows adequate comprehension of most basic concepts and principles but with limited ability to apply them. Demonstrates some analysis or evaluation of quantitative or qualitative data. Solves some basic or routine problems but shows limited ability to deal with new or difficult situations. Communicates adequately although responses may lack clarity and include some repetitive or irrelevant material.

Demonstrates personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in a variety of investigative activities, although displays some inconsistency. Works within a team and generally approaches investigations in an ethical manner, with some attention to environmental impact. Displays competence in a range of investigative techniques, pays some attention to safety although requires some close supervision.

Grade 3

Displays limited knowledge of factual information in the syllabus. Shows a partial comprehension of basic concepts and principles and a weak ability to apply them. Shows some ability to manipulate data and solve basic or routine problems. Communicates with a possible lack of clarity and uses some repetitive or irrelevant material.

Demonstrates personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in some investigative activities in an inconsistent manner. Works within a team and sometimes approaches investigations in an ethical manner, with some attention to environmental impact. Displays competence in some investigative techniques, occasionally pays attention to safety, and requires close supervision.

Grade 2

Displays little recall of factual information in the syllabus. Shows weak comprehension of basic concepts and principles with little evidence of application. Exhibits minimal ability to manipulate data and little or no ability to solve problems. Offers responses which are often incomplete or irrelevant.

Rarely demonstrates personal skills, perseverance or responsibility in investigative activities. Works within a team occasionally but makes little or no contribution. Occasionally approaches investigations in an ethical manner, but shows very little awareness of the environmental impact. Displays competence in a very limited range of investigative techniques, showing little awareness of safety factors and needing continual and close supervision.

Grade 1

Recalls fragments of factual information in the syllabus and shows very little understanding of any concepts or principles.

Rarely demonstrates personal skills, perseverance or responsibility in investigative activities. Does not work within a team. Rarely approaches investigations in an ethical manner, or shows an awareness of the environmental impact. Displays very little competence in investigative techniques, generally pays no attention to safety and requires constant supervision.

Group 5 (mathematics) grade descriptors

Grade 7

Demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of the syllabus; successfully applies mathematical principles at a sophisticated level in a wide variety of contexts; successfully uses problem-solving techniques in challenging situations; recognizes patterns and structures, makes generalizations and justifies conclusions; understands and explains the significance and reasonableness of results and draws full and relevant conclusions; communicates mathematics in a clear, effective and concise manner, using correct techniques, notation and terminology; demonstrates the ability to integrate knowledge, understanding and skills from different areas of the course; uses technology proficiently.

Grade 6

Demonstrates a broad knowledge and understanding of the syllabus; successfully applies mathematical principles in a variety of contexts; uses problem-solving techniques in challenging situations; recognizes patterns and structures, and makes some generalizations; understands and explains the significance and reasonableness of results, and draws relevant conclusions; communicates mathematics in a clear and effective manner, using correct techniques, notation and terminology; demonstrates some ability to integrate knowledge, understanding and skills from different areas of the course; uses technology proficiently.

Grade 5

Demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of the syllabus; successfully applies mathematical principles in performing routine tasks; successfully carries out mathematical processes in a variety of contexts, and recognizes patterns and structures; understands the significance of results and draws some conclusions; successfully uses problem-solving techniques in routine situations; communicates mathematics effectively using suitable notation and terminology; demonstrates an awareness of the links between different areas of the course; uses technology appropriately.

Grade 4

Demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the syllabus; applies mathematical principles in performing some routine tasks; successfully carries out mathematical processes in straightforward contexts; shows some ability to recognize patterns and structures; uses problem-solving techniques in routine situations; has limited understanding of the significance of results and attempts to draw some conclusions; communicates mathematics adequately, using some appropriate techniques, notation and terminology; uses technology satisfactorily.

Grade 3

Demonstrates partial knowledge of the syllabus and limited understanding of mathematical principles in performing some routine tasks; attempts to carry out mathematical processes in straightforward contexts; communicates some mathematics, using appropriate techniques, notation or terminology; uses technology to a limited extent.

Grade 2

Demonstrates limited knowledge of the syllabus; attempts to carry out mathematical processes at a basic level; communicates some mathematics but often uses inappropriate techniques, notation or terminology; uses technology inadequately.

Grade 1

Demonstrates minimal knowledge of the syllabus; demonstrates little or no ability to use mathematical processes, even when attempting routine tasks; is unable to make effective use of technology.

Group 6 (arts) grade descriptors

Grade 7

Demonstrates in-depth and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the media used with precise use of terminology to communicate this understanding.

Highly effective use of research, investigation and technical skills.

In-depth understanding of artistic intention and engagement with the artistic process demonstrated in consistent development of ideas, creativity and critical reflection.

Grade 6

Demonstrates detailed knowledge and understanding of the media used with appropriate and consistent use of terminology to communicate this understanding.

Effective use of research, investigation and technical skills.

Understanding of artistic intention and engagement with the artistic process demonstrated in development of ideas, creativity and critical reflection.

Grade 5

Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the media used, with appropriate use of terminology to communicate this understanding.

Research, investigation and technical skills are evident and sometimes well developed.

Evidence of understanding of artistic intention and the artistic process and development of ideas, creativity and critical reflection.

Grade 4

Demonstrates secure knowledge and understanding of the media used, with appropriate use of terminology to communicate this understanding.

Research and/or investigation skills are evident but not well developed.

Some understanding of artistic intention and the artistic process, that is, understanding of the work of others, the student's own work and the connections between these.

Some evidence, through the student's own work, of understanding of the artistic process. Technical skills are evident but not necessarily well developed.

There is some evidence of development of ideas and some evidence of creativity and critical reflection.

Grade 3

Demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the media used with some use of terminology to communicate this understanding.

There is evidence of research and/or investigation but this remains undeveloped.

Partial understanding of artistic intention, that is, understanding of the work of others and the student's own work.

Evidence in the student's own work of limited artistic process and technical skills.

Creativity and critical reflection emerge occasionally in the work.

Grade 2

Demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the media used with limited use of terminology.

There is evidence of superficial research and/or investigation.

The student's own work demonstrates very limited artistic process, technical skills, creativity and critical reflection.

Grade 1

Demonstrates very little knowledge and understanding of the media used, with inadequate use of terminology.

Irrelevant research and/or investigation.

The student's own work demonstrates almost no artistic process, technical skills, creativity or critical reflection.

Diploma Programme core grade descriptors

Extended essay grade descriptors

Grade A

Demonstrates sharp focus and good contextualization of the topic through very good knowledge and understanding; a high level of organization and an effective ability to assemble evidence/data/information in an intelligent and academic way facilitating analysis and evaluation, supported throughout by excellent communication, using language appropriate to the subject; clear insight and understanding leading to evidence of independent thinking; consistent, persuasive and effective argument.

Grade B

Demonstrates focus and contextualization of the topic through good knowledge and understanding; clear organization and structure and an ability to assemble evidence/data/information in an intelligent and academic way facilitating analysis and evaluation, supported throughout by good communication using language appropriate to the subject; some evidence of independent thought; some persuasive and effective argument.

Grade C

Demonstrates a satisfactory focus and partial contextualization of the topic through satisfactory knowledge and understanding; some degree of organization and structure and some ability to assemble relevant evidence/data/information, supported throughout by satisfactory communication, generally using language appropriate to the subject; work that is largely descriptive and with limited argument/analysis/evaluation.

Grade D

Demonstrates limited focus and contextualization of the topic which shows limited knowledge and understanding; limited organization and structure and a limited ability to assemble evidence/data/information, hindered by unsatisfactory communication which generally does not use language appropriate to the subject; work that is largely descriptive with little evidence of argument.

Grade E

Demonstrates a lack of focus and lack of contextualization of the topic which shows minimal knowledge and understanding; minimal organization and structure and an inability to assemble appropriate evidence/data/information, hindered by unclear communication which does not use language appropriate to the subject; work that is ineffectively descriptive or irrelevant to the topic; no evidence of argument.

Theory of knowledge grade descriptors

Grade A

Pertinent knowledge issues are explored thoroughly and linked effectively to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is strong evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues, including consideration of different perspectives. Arguments are clearly developed and well supported by effective concrete examples; counterclaims and implications are explored.

Grade B

Pertinent knowledge issues are explained and linked to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is some evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues, including consideration of different perspectives. Arguments are partially developed and supported by effective concrete examples; counterclaims are explored and some implications identified.

Grade C

Some pertinent knowledge issues are described and linked to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is limited evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues; some different perspectives are described but not explored. Arguments are developed to a limited extent and supported by examples; counterclaims are identified.

Grade D

Some pertinent knowledge issues are identified with only superficial links to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is simplistic personal exploration of knowledge issues and minimal reference to different perspectives. Arguments are not developed and not supported by effective examples.

Grade E

Demonstrates little or no evidence of knowledge issues.