

St. Edmund IB World School Assessment Policy

Philosophy

At St. Edmund IB World School, we recognize that teaching, learning, and assessment are interdependent. Assessment is a tool to drive individualized, as well as group, instruction. Assessment is used to support student learning, to monitor student progress, and to determine the effectiveness of best teaching practices. Teachers assess to provide feedback to the learning community on student progress and to encourage further development of reflection and action.

We believe assessment is ongoing, authentic, varied, purposeful and drives instruction. Our inquiry-based instruction and balanced assessment practices help students to develop skills of critical thinkers and confident learners. Furthermore, planned reflection upon and review of student achievement and assessment practices, with excellence in student achievement as our goal, will help us to create optimal conditions for student learning. For this reason, our assessment policy is reviewed on an annual basis and communicated through our website.

Establishing Assessment Culture

In an assessment-capable learning community, everyone has a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success, and the methods by which the assessment is made. In so doing, the community is involved in the inquiry regarding the efficacy of the programme implementation (Hipkins 2009). Fostering a school-wide assessment culture involves developing assessment capability within the learning community and creating opportunities for teachers to plan, reflect and moderate assessment collaboratively.

Rights & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teachers to assess the Program of Studies of the Alberta Curriculum.

Principles of Assessment

Effective assessments are characterized by:

- promote a culture of process and reflection
- encourage a growth mindset
- a balance between assessment for, of, and as learning
- a variety of assessment tools within IB units of inquiry, stand-alone and interdisciplinary planners
- transparency/clarity in reporting to all stakeholders and allows for dialogue
- meaningful feedback that affirms achievement and outlines practical strategies for growth
- differentiation that is clearly identified and which addresses all student's needs
- reporting that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP
- providing the students with voice and choice on criteria given to students
- students actively reflecting on their performance and feeding-forward on co-creating goals, success criteria and next steps
- using the criterion to guide assess in the MYP
- students develop a sense of ownership in their learning
- students work on their metacognition and developing their skills based on their profile
- develop students to become active, compassionate life long learners through a focus of inquiry-based instruction
- modify instruction based on assessments
- focus on concept based learning and skill progression

Assessment Practice

Questions that guide our practice:

- What relevant prior knowledge might students already have?
- How will we know that we have sufficiently supported student learning?
- How am I documenting feedback and reflection on new concepts?
- What action needs to be taken to develop the learning further?

Assessment Strategies and Tools:

- Performance assessment tasks
- Process-focused assessments
- Selected responses
- Open-ended tasks
- Observations
- Project-based learning
- Rubrics
- Exemplars
- Checklists
- Conferencing
- Anecdotal records
- Self and Peer Assessment/reflections
- Continuums

Types of Assessment

Ongoing Outcome Based Assessment:

Assessment opportunities through observation, conversation, and products are ongoing to allow students to receive full credit in relation to the learning outcomes.

Assessment for Learning: Students are provided opportunities to share their prior knowledge on concepts. This data provides teachers the opportunity to gather and analyze the information the students already have and adjust the projected learning environments. Students are given the chance to make suggestions and state their interests to guide the development of further inquiry.

Assessment as Learning: Throughout the learning process, students are reflective on their journey. Opportunities to take responsibility by setting goals, reflecting, and acting are provided for further learning. This type of assessment guides our teaching. Also, formative assessment allows students to assess themselves and reflect on their progress, set goals for the future, and be agents of change.

Assessment of Learning: Summative assessments take place at the end of teaching and learning engagements and gives the children opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Assessment tasks are included within each of the units of inquiry. These tasks assess the student's understanding of the central idea, lines of inquiry, and leads them to take action. Summative assessment informs and indicates skills and knowledge students have mastered or acquired.

Characteristics of Effective Assessment

Highly effective assessment shares some key characteristics (Adapted from Clarke 2012).

- Authentic - connected to the real world
- Clear and specific learning goals and success criteria
- Varied - using a wide range of tools and strategies

- Developmental - focused on an individual student's progress and not on their performance in relation to others
- Collaborative - involving both teachers and students
- Interactive - with ongoing dialogues about learning
- Feedback to feedforward - where feedback is used to inform future learning.

Assessment Methods

All assessment and the recording of assessments is based upon the IB philosophy on assessment. The school uses different types of assessment to support students' learning process:

Pre-assessment: Assessments used to determine existing knowledge and experiences. This can also involve diagnostic assessments.

Self-assessment: Tasks in which students actively reflect on their performance on assignments.

Peer and group assessment: Tasks in which students actively evaluate each other's learning by providing feedback.

Formative assessment: Assessments that are woven into the daily learning process. Formative assessment provides teachers and students with information about how the learning is developing. It raises student awareness and helps them reflect on their learning. It guides the teacher when planning the next stage of learning.

Summative assessment: Occurs at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by applying their knowledge in a range of contexts and formats.

The Exhibition as Summative Assessment:

The Exhibition is the culminating experience for the IB Primary Years Programme. It requires students to synthesize their prior knowledge and to apply it within a student-selected, real-world problem, which warrants an extended investigation. It is a celebration, which unites students, teachers, and families in the around the 5 essential elements of the PYP.

The Community Project as Summative Assessment:

The Community Project is an important part of the IB Middle Years Programme. The Community Project represents a truly personal and creative piece of work that stands as a summative review of their ability to conduct independent work. The Community project consists of three main components: a Process Journal, a Product, and a Written Report. The supervising teacher and Community Project lead assesses this with the Community Project Rubric.

Portfolio Guidelines

Portfolios are used to guide student learning through the PYP, as well as show the development of the whole child across all disciplines. Portfolios are used by students to communicate their knowledge, learning and growth with parents/caregivers at student-led conferences, and with teachers and peers throughout the

year. Portfolio content at each grade level includes evidence of the essential elements of the programme and learning engagements that have been reflected upon, showing a student's progress across all disciplines.

Portfolio Management

Portfolios are student-managed. The balance of "teacher-selected" versus "student-selected" content in portfolios depends on the age and maturity of students. Teachers guide students to thoughtfully choose which items to include/keep in their portfolios. Ownership of the portfolio is given to the student.

Portfolios are easily accessible to students. They are meant to be working documents that students can add to throughout each reporting period. Portfolio content may not be limited to written work. A variety of media can be represented to reflect different learning styles and experiences.

Reporting and Communication with Parents: Guidelines

Involving parents and guardians in the assessment process

We assume a responsibility to communicate effectively, continuously and swiftly with parents and guardians by providing them with meaningful information. This can be through formal and informal communication. Listed in the teacher support documents are many guiding questions to assist you in communicating regarding assessment. The following are key points to consider:

- Involving parents/guardians in the process of three way reporting
- Involving parents/guardians in the process of informal communication
- Involving parents/guardians in the process of collecting evidence of their child's learning
- Involving parents/guardians in the process of student reflection

Communication is frequent and ongoing and may include the following:

- School and home assignment feedback
- Portfolio update and reviews
- Phone calls
- Emails
- Mini- conferences
- Google Classroom
- Student agenda
- Student self reflection and goal setting
- Anecdotal records
- Parent and Student-Led Conferences
- PowerSchool (PTPro) - including both numerical grades and on-going comments

At the conclusion of each term, the students and their guardians will be given the opportunity to participate in a student-led conference. The students will showcase their portfolio and the growth achieved during the reporting period. Parents will have access to the ongoing reporting of their child's progress on PowerSchool. Assessment practices are ongoing throughout the year, and MYP student gradebooks are "live" for parents to access at any time. A printed report is available upon request twice a year, in January and June.

Student Led Conferencing

Student-led conferences at St. Edmund are designed to celebrate student learning. Student-led conferencing takes place twice a year in November and March. These characteristics have been our practice:

- Students take a lead role
- Portfolio driven
- are used to show evidence of learning
- Parents/Guardians actively participate in this process and give specific feedback

Role of students

- Students demonstrate their learning using appropriate terminology
- Highlight their unit of inquiry learning through the portfolio
- Celebrate their accomplishments and determine their goals and next steps
- Use their Google Drive and Google Classrooms to demonstrate work

Role of teachers

- Teacher as facilitator
- Guide the use of portfolios
- Teach the students how to demonstrate their learning
- Provides opportunity for one on one dialogue with parent
- Designs opportunity for parents to understand how their child is achieving
- Revisits goal setting throughout the term

Role of parents/guardians

- Actively participate in the conference
- Provide feedback to students

ELL Programming

English Language Learners (ELL) who are not working at grade level may be placed on adapted programs. In most cases, ELL students are on accommodated programming and are achieving at grade level with modifications. It is the responsibility of the teacher to document this accommodation on PowerTeacherPro. In addition, it is the responsibility of the teacher to communicate and receive consent for programming as an ELL student. Student progress is assessed based on an Alberta benchmarking system as there is funding for the first 5 years of a student's arrival in Canada through immigration or a foreign student. It is the responsibility of the English as an Additional Language Designate to communicate to the teachers who are ELL students and requires additional assessment or documentation through writing samples and the 4 benchmarks of a language (reading, writing, listening and speaking). A comment is required in the main comment box ("Y1") of all ELL students where it is the responsibility of the teacher to comment on the progression of language proficiency for said student. Furthermore, accommodations that are used should be documented here as well as in the specific assignment comment box on the discretion of the teacher.

Assessment of language learning is an on-going process throughout the school year in both formal assessments (formative and summative) and informal situations (learning experiences and inquiry). All four skill areas (reading, writing, listening, speaking), as well as the students' knowledge of grammatical structures and their ability to use these correctly, are assessed regularly at levels appropriate to the students' language phase and abilities.

Student language level and ability is acknowledged and incorporated into the planning of assessments. Whenever reading, writing, listening or speaking tasks are assigned, expectations are set according to the student's language level.

*Please refer to our Inclusive Education and Language Policy for further information.

Learning Diversity

Inclusion

Students placed on adapted programs must have an Individual Program Plan (IPP) as this describes a student that is 2 grades below grade level in a particular core. Key learner outcomes for these students may be modified and they receive differentiated instruction. Teachers will differentiate their instruction in order to ensure that students are successful. In differentiated instruction, students provide evidence of their learning in a variety of ways.

Differentiation is inclusion in practice. Differentiation is our accepted method of continuing review and adaptation of goals and learning methods within a classroom. Differentiation brings forth a culture of collaboration that encourages and supports problem solving. Students with identified learning difficulties are

allowed inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (e.g. additional time, use of assistive technology, breaks, etc.) for all assessments in one or more subjects throughout the year, as appropriate to their needs.

In addition, students with identified learning needs can receive accommodations. An accommodation is a change or alteration to the regular way a student is expected to learn, complete assignments or participate in the classroom. There are three types of accommodations:

- classroom/physical accommodations; e.g., alternative seating, adaptive devices
- instructional accommodations; e.g., providing copies of notes, alternative reading materials
- evaluation/testing accommodations; e.g., extra time, oral tests

Students with identified learning needs may also receive adapted or modified programming. Students with learning disabilities usually require adapted programming and additional learning resources so they can actively participate. These additional resources may include adapted instructional strategies and materials, assistive technology, personalized learning materials, assessment accommodations, or supplementary supports. These learning resources must be reflected in the student's individual program plan (IPP).

Some students with learning disabilities may require modified programming because they are not on a graded curriculum but receive programming that focuses on life skills, foundational skills and academic readiness skills. Modified programming outcomes are specifically selected to meet a student's special education needs and are outlined in the student's IPP.

Academic Integrity

We strive to develop in students the skills needed to demonstrate integrity when completing assessments. Students are explicitly taught to be principled and honest about their work while appreciating and formally acknowledging the work of others. We encourage teachers to design assessments that lead students to produce original and authentic work.

As a result, three essential questions shape instruction and directs planning for assessment (***Edmonton Catholic Schools Assessment 360***) which is aligned with the ministerial order and is research based,

Division Guidelines

- Students will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning through multiple means of expression, within a reasonable time frame.
- A student's grade represents his/her relevant, consistent and recent learning and achievement; a zero, as part of a student's grade, will only be used in exceptional circumstances when, after additional support and multiple opportunities, evidence of learning is not available.
- When determining a Level of Achievement multiple sources of assessment (such as observations, conversations and products) will be used.
- Teachers are required to use the outcomes that are pre-selected on PowerSchool

MYP

- Teachers can enter a raw score or percentage and overall mark is communicated in a percentage
- All core classes (Language & Literature, Individuals & Societies, Mathematics, Science) have a Common Summative Assessment that is worth 15% of the overall final mark.

In the MYP, subject group objectives correspond to assessment criteria. Each criterion has eight possible achievement levels (1–8), divided into four bands that generally represent limited (1–2); adequate (3–4); substantial (5–6); and excellent (7–8) performance. Each band has its own unique descriptor that teachers use to make “best-fit” judgments about students’ progress and achievement. Teachers are required to document the criterion assessment as a percentage based on the below scale. Teachers use conversion scales in their

classrooms to convert the levels into percentages to align with our Division reporting policies. The MYP grades are not weighted in the student's final mark.

Conversion Scale:

IB Rubric Level	Percentage	IB Rubric Level	Percentage
0	0%	5	70%
1	30%	6	80%
2	40%	7	90%
3	50%	8	100%
4	60%		

Assessment Practices and Provincial Standards

In using current and best teaching practices, teachers are expected to implement common language, planning, marking and assessment practices across subject disciplines and grades. Teachers are also required to engage in a practitioner-to-practitioner model of collaboration to ensure there is continuity and consistency with assessments. Teachers use an Understanding by Design (UBD) framework when creating and developing their unit and lesson plans which align with Alberta Education's Program of Studies that reflect the learner outcomes. The expectation is for teachers to hone in on a focused approach to teaching and learning to ultimately improve student learning, achievement, and success.

Do students understand what success looks like? Do they know what they are learning today and why it is relevant to them? According to the research of Dylan Williams and Sandra Herbst, diverse and engaged learners, in an intentional learning environment can respond to the following questions: *What are you learning today? Why are you learning it? How will you know you have learned it?*

Alberta Education administers Provincial Achievement Tests (standardized exam) in grades 6 & 9 that serve as final exams in the following core subject disciplines: Language & Literature, Individual & Societies, Science and Mathematics. New this past year, the Edmonton Catholic School Division administers Common Summative Assessments (final exams) for students in grades 7 & 8 in the same four core subject areas. Schools are mandated to report percentages achieved on final exams separately on the report card. Provincial Achievement Tests cannot be converted into MYP grades

The school implements and reviews an assessment policy that makes the school's philosophy clear and is aligned with the IB philosophy concerning learning and assessment. (0301-05-0100)

The school identifies in its assessment policy all necessary local and IB requirements, and outlines how the school is adhering to these requirements. (0301-05-0200)

The school describes in its assessment policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states what constitutes good assessment practice. (0301-05-0300)

The school ensures relevant support materials, resources and processes are implemented for fair and valid assessment. (0301-05-0400)

The school describes in its assessment policy the value of assessment for continuous learning and growth. (0301-05-0500)

The school considers the Learner Profile in all its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0500)

The school considers international-mindedness in all its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0600