Assessment Policy
International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme
Thomas Jefferson Middle School

Last Revised October 2021

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.

Jefferson Mission Statement:

Learning together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.

Purpose and Philosophy of Assessment

At Thomas Jefferson, the purpose of assessment is to support student learning. In the Middle Years Programme, it is critical that students receive regular, specific and meaningful feedback on their learning. We believe in educating with the "end in mind" and the principles of backward design (Wiggins and McTighe)[1]. Jefferson teachers use the IB MYP objectives for all subject-areas and align content with the Virginia Standards of Learning. During planning each content team develops a range of common, summative assessments based on the Virginia Standards of Learning and IB criteria to determine student understanding of subject concepts, skills and content. Every summative task is assessed using a rubric with four achievement levels with specific descriptors. Rubrics are shared with students from the beginning of the unit. Once a summative assessment is designed, then daily lessons are planned with regular formative assessment throughout the unit. This ensures that students learn and develop the skills they need to achieve at the highest level.

[1] Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

Principles of Assessment

Assessments at Thomas Jefferson:

- Are authentic, rigorous and student-centered.
- Give meaningful, timely feedback on student learning.
- Improve teaching through coaching and reflecting on instructional practices.
- Encourage students to transfer skills across subject areas.
- Foster a positive attitude toward learning.
- Promote deep understanding through creative and critical thinking.
- Reflect a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts.

Assessment Rights and Responsibilities

Teachers will:

- Ensure summative tasks are aligned with MYP criteria.
- Map out summative assessments for the year.
- Ensure each criterion is assessed each semester (at least one strand per criterion).
- Plan at least two summative tasks per quarter.
- Give summative tasks that are assessed with MYP rubrics with four achievement levels.
- Share rubrics with students before giving summatives.
- Include a check for understanding in every lesson.
- Standardize grades on summatives once a quarter.
- Accept late summative assignments through the end of the quarter, but not give extra credit.
- Not grade participation, homework, or behavior.
- Give students the opportunity to retake or revise summatives; if a student scores below a 3 they must retake or revise.

Students will:

- Strive to complete every formative and summative assessment.
- Be academic risk-takers, willing to take on challenging work.
- Check grades and ask for help if they are struggling.
- Work positively and collaboratively with other students.
- Make up any work they missed or scored below a 3 on by an agreed upon date.

Caregivers will:

- Regularly check-in with students about their academic success.
- Check student grades in ParentVue regularly, https://www.apsva.us/family-access-center/.
- Ask your student(s), teachers or counselors questions about academic concerns.

Practices in Assessment

Summative

A summative assessment measures a students' ability to demonstrate mastery of IB criteria in each subject and is given at the end of a period of significant learning. It is a task directly linked to the statement of inquiry for a unit to promote understanding. According to *MYP Principles and Practice*, assessment "is based on the theory that understanding is not something we have - like a set of facts we possess - but rather is something we can do" with new knowledge.

Summative assessments are the only components used in calculating a final grade. Grades must be determined by at least four summative assessment scores per quarter. In developing summative assessments, teachers should consider these questions:

- How does this assessment task relate to the statement of inquiry?
- Which MYP objectives are being addressed?
- How can we create meaningful performances of understanding?
- How and when will students receive feedback?

According to *Principles into Practices*, "The MYP uses the term "performance" in its widest sense to describe all forms of assessment." Types of summative assessments include: compositions, creation of solutions to problems or products, essays, examinations, questionnaires, investigations, research, performances, scored Socratic Seminars and presentations.

Figure 1 shows the MYP subject criteria summarized for every subject, including the community project and interdisciplinary units. For a complete list, see the following link: posted on the Jefferson website in the IB Assessment Policy section. In order to ensure that teachers, students and parents have a sense of how students will be assessed in every class, teachers are asked to outline every summative assessment for the upcoming quarter and post them online. Teachers will plan at least two summative tasks per quarter. Furthermore, teachers will ensure each criterion is assessed each semester (at least one strand per criterion).

The assessment maps for each subject are posted here: IB MYP Written Curriculum. This provides transparency in the grading process. The summative assessments that determine grades for every subject are mapped out at the beginning of the year, though these assessments may change based on student needs and interests. Students are given rubrics during each assessment explanation, and know exactly what it will take to achieve at the highest level for every subject.

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Figure 1 - IB MYP Subject Criteria

Subject	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Arts	Knowing and Understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Design	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
Individuals and societies	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Language acquisition	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Language and literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Mathematics	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-life contexts
Physical and health education	Knowing and Understanding	Planning for Performance	Applying and Performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Sciences	Knowing and Understanding	Inquiring and Designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Interdisciplinary	Evaluating	Synthesizing	Reflecting	-
Community Project	Investigating	Planning	Taking action	Reflecting

Task-Specific Clarifications

Each summative assessment includes a rubric based on at least one set of criteria with a task-specific clarification. The MYP publishes assessment criteria in rubric form that is holistic, in that they offer general, qualitative value statements about student achievement. Task-specific clarifications require teachers to write the value statements in a rubric in terms of given assessments. It must be completed at the beginning of each unit and shared with students. Task specific clarifications are shown in blue in Figure 2, on page four.

Achievement levels

Each criterion is divided into various achievement levels (numerical values) that appear in bands. The bands contain general, qualitative value statements called level descriptors (written in bolded black in Figure 2).

The level descriptors for each band describe a range of student performance in the various strands of each objective. At the lowest levels, student achievement in each of the strands will be minimal. As the numerical bands increase, the level descriptors express greater achievement levels in each of the bands

Each summative assessment rubric includes specific command terms or specific words used to give students directions in summative tasks. The MYP gives common definitions for these terms that teachers use across grade levels and subject areas. These rubrics should be shared with students when the summative task is assigned.

Figure 2 - Example below from Individuals and Societies - History 6

Achievement Level	Level Descriptor **red denotes command term** **bold black denotes qualifier** **blue denotes the task-specific clarification**
0	The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1 - 2	• **Formulates** a **limited** action plan or does not follow a plan to investigate a research question **about the industrial revolution.** • **Collects** and records **limited** or sometimes irrelevant information **about the industrial revolution.**
3 – 4	• **Formulates** and **occasionally** follows a partial action plan to Investigate a research question **about the industrial revolution.** • **Uses** a method(s) to collect and record **some** relevant information **about the industrial revolution.**
5 – 6	• **Formulates** and **mostly** follows a sufficiently developed action plan to investigate a research question **about the industrial revolution.** • **Uses** methods to collect and record **appropriate** relevant information **about the industrial revolution.**
7 – 8	• **Formulates** and **effectively** follows a consistent action plan to investigate a research question **about the industrial revolution.** • **Uses** methods to collect and record **appropriate and varied** relevant information **about the industrial revolution.**

Formative Assessment

Formative assessments include activities completed during a unit that build skills necessary for success on a summative assessment. Effective formative assessments can help personalize learning and provide opportunities for students to refine or rehearse performances for summative assessments. Formative

assessments should happen often and in a variety of ways. Examples of effective formative assessments include: 1-minute essays, thrash-outs, small quizzes, surveys, brief summaries, exit tickets, number talks, quick writes, think-pair-share, peer interviews, among many others. We expect a variety of formative assessments to be given before every summative assessment. Formative assessments could be graded for completion, with thorough feedback. But because formative assessments build understanding and are safe opportunities for students to make mistakes, formative assessments are not included in a students' final grade.

Differentiation

Differentiation modifies teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs and allows students to pursue appropriate learning goals. A differentiated classroom has clear content goals that take into account students' language profiles, interests, learning styles and both academic and social readiness. Assessments in a differentiated classroom should include pre-assessments, formative assessments and summative assessments. It is the expectation that inclusion classes, English language learning classrooms, and gifted clusters are differentiated on a regular basis.

If students demonstrate the ability to achieve at the highest level of the IB rubric on a pre-assessment, then that is documented and students should be given the opportunity to further their learning with a new, more challenging assessment task. In other words, it is the expectation that students are given the opportunity for growth. Differentiation can occur with content - what students should know, process - what activities will help students make sense of new information, and products - what tasks will provide evidence of students' understanding and ability.

Internal Standardization

If more than one teacher assigns the same summative assessment, the process of internal standardization must take place to ensure consistency in grading. The process involves teachers meeting to come to a common understanding of the criteria and achievement levels that are applied to specific summative assessments. It can start by standardizing grades with an example from the 7-8, 5-6, 3-4, and 1-2 levels of student work. The purpose is for teachers to agree on examples of student work at each achievement level. Finally, teachers have found it helpful to meet about outliers in student work.

Grade Descriptors and Grade Equivalencies

Our grade reports of student achievement communicate the student's achievement level for each assessment criteria. It allows students and parents to know how students are performing on each objective. Teachers analyze student summative scores paying attention to **patterns in the data, including increasing performance, consistency** (in Synergy the scores within the criterion defaults to the mode) and mitigating circumstances to determine the student's final achievement level. In the two examples of student gradebooks shown in Figure 3, determining a final score by looking at patterns gives a better sense of what a student understands at the end of the grading period rather than simply averaging. It is important to understand that these criteria-based summative assessments will be developed during the entire semester or year of a course. Since formatives don't count toward the final grade, students aren't penalized while they are learning.

Figure 3 - Example of Students grade in Assignment View in Synergy

Student	*Formative* Homework Max 8*	*Formative* Quiz Max 8*	*Formative* Exit-ticket Max 8*	*Criterion A Unit Test Max 8*	*Criterion A Project Max 8*	*Criterion A DBQ Max 8*	*Criterion A Slide-deck Max 8*	*Criterion A Essay Max 8*	***Final score Criterion A Max 8***
Sophia	8	3	4	5	6	8	8	8	**8**
Jose	1	1	2	1	5	4	5	5	**5**

**Formative scores may be reported, but are not used in the determination of a final grade. At least one formative should be provided before each summative assessment.*

To arrive at a criterion level total for each student, Synergy takes the mean of each student's final achievement scores in all four criteria for each subject, which is equivalent to the grade level boundaries. For example, if Maria has the following criterion level totals scores as shown in Figure 4, then the final achievement level would be a score of 27 with a mean of 6.75. On the 8 point standards score, that matches the MYP boundary level for a "B+" as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 4 - Final Criterion Scores

Class	Final Score Criterion A	Final Score Criterion B	Final Score Criterion C	Final Score Criterion D	Final Score	Standards mean
Sciences	7	5	8	7	27	6.75

Lastly, the end of term final score is matched with the following grade level boundaries to determine the final letter grade. In order to ensure alignment between APS and MYP, we have added the APS description of growth to the MYP description. Note how MYP grade descriptions match with the APS letter grades in Figure 5, below.

Figure 5 - APS Grades Aligned with IB MYP Boundaries

APS Grade	Standards Range	IB MYP Boundaries	Alignment of Arlington Public School Grades with MYP Grade Descriptions
A	7.00-8.00	28-32	Produces high-quality, **frequently** innovative work. Communicates **comprehensive**, **nuanced** understanding of concepts and contexts. **Consistently** demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations. Demonstrates significant growth in the subject area.
B+	6.00-6.99	24-27	Produces high-quality, **occasionally** innovative work. Communicates **extensive** understanding of concepts and contexts. **Demonstrates** critical and creative thinking, **frequently** with sophistication. **Uses** knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, **often with independence**. Demonstrates noticeable growth in the subject area.
B	4.75-5.99	19-23	Produces **generally** high-quality work. Communicates **secure** understanding of concepts and context. **Demonstrates** critical and creative thinking, **sometimes** with sophistication. **Uses** knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations, and, **with support, some** unfamiliar real-world situations. Demonstrates noticeable growth in the subject area.
C+	4.00-4.74	16-18	Produces **good** quality work. Communicates **basic** understanding of **most** concepts and contexts with **few** misunderstandings and minor gaps. **Often** demonstrates **basic** critical and creative thinking. **Uses** knowledge and skills with **some** flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but **requires support** in unfamiliar situations. Demonstrates some growth in the subject area.

C	2.50-3.99	10-15	Produces work of an **acceptable** quality. Communicates **basic** understanding of **many** concepts and context, with **occasionally** significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate **some** basic critical and creative thinking. Is **often inflexible** in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations. Demonstrates some growth in the subject area.
D+	2.00-2.49	8-9	Produce work of **limited** quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and context. **Infrequently** demonstrates critical or creative thinking. **Generally** inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, **infrequently** applying knowledge and skills. Demonstrates marginal growth in the subject area.
D	1.50 - 1.99	6-7	
E	0.00-1.49	1-5	Produces work of **very limited** quality. Conveys **many significant** misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. **Rarely** demonstrates critical or creative thinking. **Very** inflexible, **rarely** using knowledge and skills. Demonstrates inadequate growth in the subject area.

Only the APS letter grades of a “D” and “D+” share the same grade level description. Every other APS letter grade has a distinct MYP grade level description.

Practices in Assessment Reporting

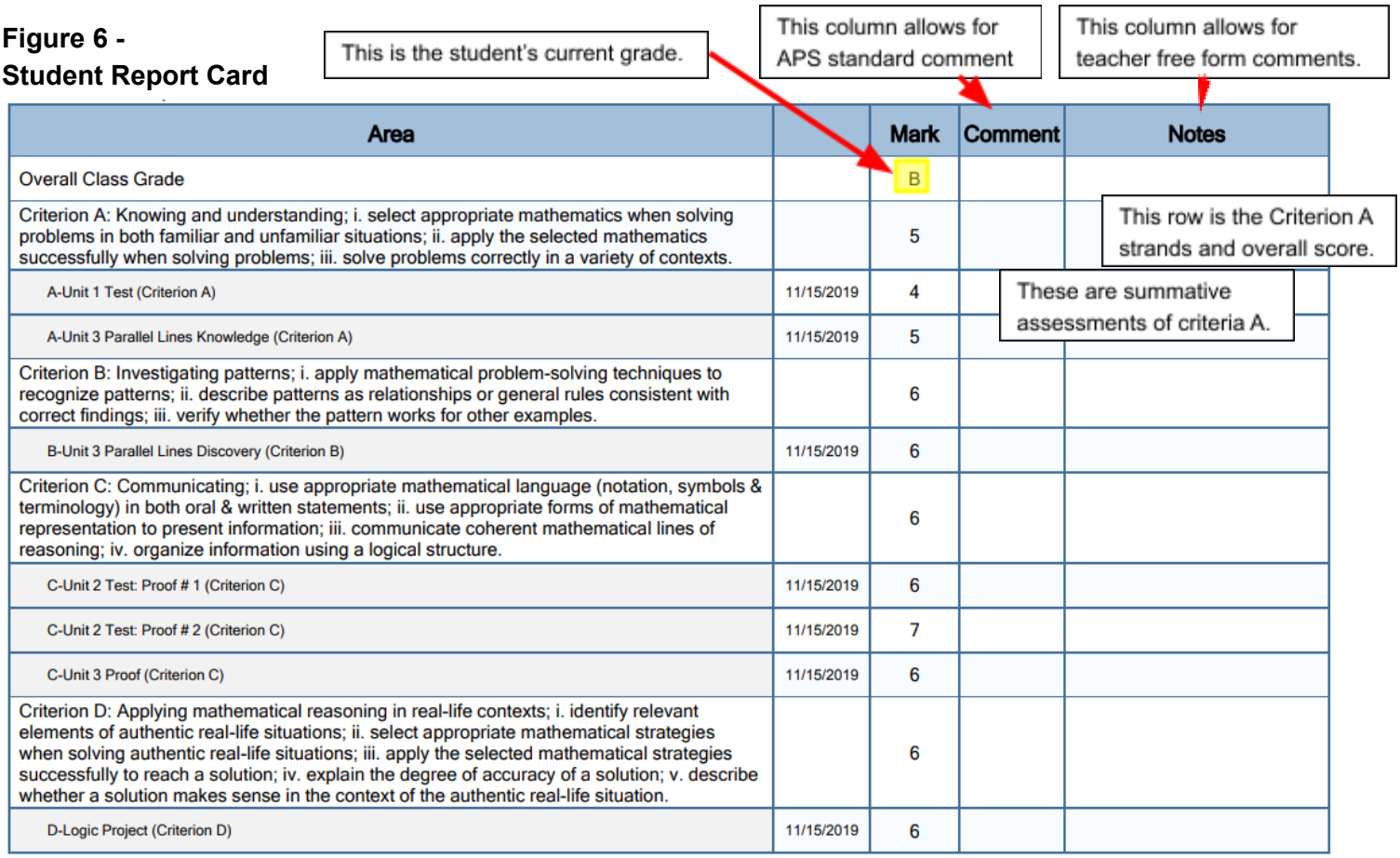
Late or missing work

Work that is turned in late should be recorded in Synergy with the comment “Late,” but lateness will not lower the score of student work. Missing work will be reported in Synergy. If a student does not show sufficient evidence of mastery, or does not complete summative assessments, a failing grade may result. Each subject area collaborative learning team will determine how long late work will be accepted after the due date. Every syllabus will include a late work policy.

Retake Policy

Students will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning through formative and summative tasks. Since the complexity and variety of summative assessments vary widely by subject and grade level, each collaborative learning team will determine its retake policy. Every class retake policy will be posted in the syllabus.

Figure 6 -
Student Report Card



Area		Mark	Comment	Notes
Overall Class Grade		B		
Criterion A: Knowing and understanding; i. select appropriate mathematics when solving problems in both familiar and unfamiliar situations; ii. apply the selected mathematics successfully when solving problems; iii. solve problems correctly in a variety of contexts.		5		
A-Unit 1 Test (Criterion A)	11/15/2019	4		
A-Unit 3 Parallel Lines Knowledge (Criterion A)	11/15/2019	5		
Criterion B: Investigating patterns; i. apply mathematical problem-solving techniques to recognize patterns; ii. describe patterns as relationships or general rules consistent with correct findings; iii. verify whether the pattern works for other examples.		6		
B-Unit 3 Parallel Lines Discovery (Criterion B)	11/15/2019	6		
Criterion C: Communicating; i. use appropriate mathematical language (notation, symbols & terminology) in both oral & written statements; ii. use appropriate forms of mathematical representation to present information; iii. communicate coherent mathematical lines of reasoning; iv. organize information using a logical structure.		6		
C-Unit 2 Test: Proof # 1 (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	6		
C-Unit 2 Test: Proof # 2 (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	7		
C-Unit 3 Proof (Criterion C)	11/15/2019	6		
Criterion D: Applying mathematical reasoning in real-life contexts; i. identify relevant elements of authentic real-life situations; ii. select appropriate mathematical strategies when solving authentic real-life situations; iii. apply the selected mathematical strategies successfully to reach a solution; iv. explain the degree of accuracy of a solution; v. describe whether a solution makes sense in the context of the authentic real-life situation.		6		
D-Logic Project (Criterion D)	11/15/2019	6		

Calendar

Link to the APS Grading and Reporting Calendar.

Frequently Asked Questions

Isn't this subjective?

Yes, there will be an element of teachers' professional judgement in determining a final score. Subjectivity cannot be eliminated from the grading process. That said, all summative grades will be determined using detailed rubrics shown to students in advance of tasks. For each criterion, there should be at least two summative assessments showing evidence of student understanding. Furthermore, teachers are required to internally standardize grades to increase the reliability of the scoring process for the rubrics.

How will I know if my student is on track?

Students and parents can check their progress in Synergy. Before any summative assessments are given, students should have formative scores recorded in the gradebook, though these scores will not be for grading. Furthermore, the rubric for the next summative assessment should be shared with students well in advance.

How do we handle students that don't complete their work?

Refusal to complete class work is a behavioral, not an academic issue. Teachers will respond using tiered interventions to set up all students for success. Whether students complete work or turn it in late will be recorded in Synergy, but lateness will not be a factor in determining a student's final grade. In extreme cases, there may not be enough evidence for teachers to determine a final grade for a student, which would result in a failing grade.

Policy Review

This policy was written in 2019 by a variety of Jefferson teachers and the IB Coordinator. The first draft was written by the IB Coordinator, the Principal, the Gifted Resource Teacher, the Equity and Excellence Coordinator, Director of Counseling and the Instructional Lead Teacher. Then it was shared with the IB Committee and the Leadership Team. The draft Assessment policy will be sent to all teachers for their feedback in February 2020. After receiving that input, the policy will be adopted by the school leadership team. It will be reviewed annually every August by the IB Committee and approved every September by the leadership team.

Works Cited

IB. 2017. *MYP Principles into Practices.* Cardiff, UK. International Baccalaureate.

Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

Wormeli, Rick. *Fair Isn't Always Equal, Second Edition: Assessment and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 2018.