



VIS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY

The purpose of this document is to explain the workings of the Vittoria International School assessment system so as to ensure the best understanding for all stakeholders, teachers, students and families alike.

Underlying principles

VIS recognizes that teaching, learning and assessment are interdependent and that the range of formative assessment strategies and tools adopted by a school has to take into consideration students' different learning styles and needs.

Clear communication of assessment principles and practices is essential for students' academic and personal growth as well as for the successful implementation of the program.

Feedback to students on their performance is a key step and should be delivered and accepted in a constructive manner, pointing out strengths and proposing strategies to make up for weaknesses which might have emerged. Accurate recording of assessment results and systematic reporting to stakeholders are elements which ensure progress can be traced and provide data for meaningful analysis both internally and externally.

Rationale

As provided for by the University of Cambridge International Examinations and IB guidelines, assessment is criterion-based and relies on the "best-fit" model of the achievement descriptors. This principle applies to both formative and summative assessment.

The purpose of assessment is to build a clear picture of the student's strengths and weaknesses as well as assess his preparation towards the final result he/she wishes to attain.

Assessment is also key to determine and guide the effectiveness of teaching and the suitability of the written curriculum for both single subjects and the curriculum offered as a whole.

Assessment methods

The Coordinator and the subject teachers provide students with the information (grade descriptors, assessment criteria) necessary to fully understand the assessment requirements. The grade descriptors and criteria used are those indicated by the University of Cambridge International Examinations and IB.

Formative assessment

Students' performance is assessed throughout the two years in different ways to account for different learning styles and needs. The purpose of formative assessment is to help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses and foster the development of the skills necessary to succeed in the subject.

This takes place in a variety of ways depending on the subject and the specific topics, including but not limited to: multiple choice tests, short-essay questions, essay writing, short-answer tests, open-question papers, oral tests, oral presentations etc.

Homework and class-work and participation are also essential elements of formative assessments and count towards the grade students obtain in their progress report cards.

Marks are recorded on the online class register as well as communicated to the students. Teachers devote class time to give feedback on the test results. Parents can consult marks online through the password-protected website Scuolanet.

Summative assessment

Students' level of achievement against the University of Cambridge International Examinations IGCSE or IBDP objectives is determined at two specific intervals over the two-year course of studies prior to the official examination session. The purpose of these intermediate summative assessment sessions is to check the level students have reached on papers similar to the final examination ones.

Students face the first summative assessment at the end of Year 1 when they are required to take final tests in all subjects. These final tests are identical to formal examination papers but limited to the syllabus covered over Year 1. All tests are marked against the official IGCSE and IBDP subject/paper markscheme.

The second summative assessment takes place in February Year 2 and consists of mock examinations which are held upon completion of the syllabus in all subjects. Students are given a complete past paper for each subject and are assessed against the official IGCSE and IBDP subject/paper markscheme.

No exceptions or special arrangements will be made regarding formative or summative assessment which have not or would not be allowed for by the University of Cambridge International Examinations or IBO.

Grading system

University of Cambridge International Examinations / IGCSE

IGCSE marks are given as a percentage (%) and in letters:

A* = 90 – 100%

A = 80 – 89%

B = 70 – 79%

C = 60 – 69%

D = 50 – 59%

E = 40 – 49%

F = 30 – 39%

G = 20 – 29%

IB Diploma Program

The IBDP adopts a marking scheme out of 7 and letters A to E for Theory of Knowledge and CAS (on progress report cards).

Grade 7 = Excellent performance

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 analyze 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 analyzing and evaluating data or problem solving.

Grade 6 = Very good performance

Demonstrates: detailed knowledge and understanding; answers which are coherent, logically structured and well developed; consistent use of appropriate terminology; an ability to analyze, 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 analyze and evaluate data or to solve problems competently.

Grade 5 = Good performance

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 analyze and evaluate data or to solve problems.

Grade 4 = Satisfactory performance

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 = Mediocre performance

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 = Poor performance

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 = Very poor performance

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.

Students not writing in their first language

For assessments in many subjects, it is important to remember that some students will not be using their first language. Teachers are not marking for grammatical accuracy; what is important is that students present their thinking as clearly as possible. All teachers should aid English B students by highlighting and improving language errors, where applicable.