

Ramallah Friends School

Assessment Policy

Philosophy

Assessment is a key component of our students' educational experience. Ramallah Friends School (RFS) Upper School's assessment policy is designed to support and encourage students' learning and to help them improve. We believe students have the right to learn in a suitable educational environment that meets their needs and abilities. We believe all educators must have the knowledge and skills to develop, administer, interpret, and analyze assessments effectively.

This policy sets guidelines and procedures for assessing students in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB DP) and the Middle Years Program (IB MYP). It aligns with the principles, standards, and regulations established by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) for both programs.

Assessment extends beyond measuring achievement; it is integral to teaching and learning. Students use assessment evidence to reflect on their progress and improve their learning, while teachers use it to refine instruction, provide appropriate support, and plan future learning experiences.

Assessment Principles

1. **Authenticity:** Each assessment must be the student's own work and reflect their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
2. **Validity:** Assessments should measure the intended learning outcomes and align with each program's curriculum goals.
3. **Reliability:** Assessment processes and criteria should be applied consistently so that all students are evaluated fairly and accurately.
4. **Transparency:** Communicate assessment criteria and expectations to students, teachers, and parents/guardians to ensure everyone understands them clearly.
5. **Deadlines:** Students must meet assessment deadlines set by their subject teachers. Late submissions may incur penalties under the school's policies.
6. **Academic Integrity:** Students must uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism, collusion, and other academic misconduct are strictly prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action.
7. **Criterion-Referenced Assessment:** Both the IB DP and MYP assess students against predetermined criteria rather than ranking them against one another.

Rights and Responsibilities in Assessment

Assessment is a shared responsibility among students, teachers, parents/guardians, program coordinators, Heads of Departments, and school leadership. All members of the school community have the right to assessment practices that are fair, transparent, inclusive, and consistent with IB requirements and RFS policies.

This section sets out what each member of the school community is entitled to expect from assessment and what each is expected to contribute. Concerns about an assessment decision are handled through the procedure in “Assessment Queries and Appeals” at the end of this section.

Students

Students have the right to:

- know, when a summative task is set, the learning objectives, the assessment criteria (with task-specific clarifications in the MYP, or the relevant criteria, markbands or markschemes in the DP), the format of the task, and its deadline;
- a balanced workload, with summative tasks listed on the school assessment calendar and coordinated across subjects so that no more than two major summative tasks are scheduled for the same day;
- receive marked work back with achievement levels and written feedback within ten school days of submission;
- be assessed against the published criteria rather than compared with other students;
- receive access arrangements and appropriate support in accordance with the RFS Inclusion Policy and IB regulations;
- Ask their teacher how a mark or achievement level was determined and raise any concerns using the school’s procedure.

Students are responsible for:

- reading the assessment criteria and asking for clarification if anything is unclear;
- submitting their own authentic work, acknowledging all sources, and adhering to the RFS Academic Integrity Policy;
- meeting internal deadlines, and informing the teacher in advance (with supporting documentation where required) if a deadline cannot be met;
- taking part in formative assessment, self-assessment and peer-assessment, and acting on feedback;
- in the MYP, maintaining their Personal Project process journal; in the DP, meeting the internal deadlines for Internal Assessment, the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge and CAS.

Teachers

Teachers have the right to:

- exercise professional judgment when applying IB assessment criteria;
- time set aside in the school meeting calendar for collaborative planning, standardization, and moderation;
- professional development, including IB workshops, and access to current IB subject guides, teacher support material, exemplars and subject reports;
- support from the Head of Department, program coordinator and Principal when dealing with suspected academic misconduct or assessment disputes.

Teachers are expected to:

- plan for summative assessment in unit planners in a way that ensures that, in the MYP, each strand of each criterion is assessed at least twice each year, and in the DP, students have practice for every assessment component before the final assessment;
- provide students with written criteria and task-specific clarifications when assigning the task;
- ensure summative tasks appear on the school assessment calendar at least two weeks before the due date;
- marking work to the best-fit approach outlined in this policy and returning it with feedback within ten school days and recording achievement levels in Edunation;
- participating in departmental standardization through retention of samples of marked work with annotations.
- providing differentiated support and approved access arrangements;
- reporting suspected academic misconduct in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy; using assessment evidence to adapt teaching and plan support.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- receive this policy, along with an explanation of how MYP criteria, achievement levels, and DP grades work, through the policy on the school website and the annual program information sessions;
- follow their child's progress through Edunation, quarterly report cards and parent-teacher conferences;
- request a meeting with a teacher and raise a concern about assessment through the school procedure.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading this policy and monitoring their child's progress on Edunation;
- supporting their child in meeting deadlines without completing or editing the work on the child's behalf;

- promptly informing the school of absences or circumstances that affect assessment, and providing medical or other documentation upon request;
- attending parent-teacher conferences and communicating with the school when concerns arise.

Heads of Department

- lead departmental standardization at least once each semester, before final achievement levels or grades are decided;
- review unit planners and summative tasks to check that criteria, task-specific clarifications and mark schemes are used correctly;
- support teachers who are the only teacher of a subject by arranging standardization with another teacher in the subject group or with the program coordinator;
- keep records of standardization meetings and agreed samples of student work.

MYP Coordinator

- ensures that the current MYP subject-group guides, criteria and grade boundaries are in use;
- coordinates the MYP assessment calendar and the standardization schedule;
- oversees the Personal Project, including supervision, standardization and grading;
- introduces MYP assessment practices to new teachers, students and parents/guardians.

DP Coordinator

- manages IB registration, the internal deadline calendar for Internal Assessment, the Extended Essay, TOK and CAS, and the submission of marks, samples and predicted grades;
- applies to the IB for access arrangements within IB deadlines;
- shares IB moderation feedback and subject reports with teachers, then follows up on recommendations;
- ensures that IB examination conduct and academic integrity regulations are followed.

School Leadership (Head of School and Principals)

School leadership is responsible for ensuring that the assessment policy is implemented consistently; teachers receive appropriate professional development and resources; assessment practices meet applicable IB and local requirements; and the policy is regularly monitored and reviewed. Leadership also provides time for standardization in the school calendar, approves the assessment calendar, makes final school-level decisions on assessment appeals and academic misconduct, and ensures the policy is communicated to the whole school community.

Learning Support & Counseling Staff

Learning support staff and counselors identify students who may need access arrangements, coordinate with teachers to put those arrangements in place, and support student wellbeing during periods of heavy assessment.

Assessment Queries and Appeals:

A student or parent/guardian with a concern about an assessment decision must follow these Steps:

1. Within five school days of receiving the mark, the student (or parent/guardian) discusses it with the subject teacher, who explains the decision based on the criteria.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, submit a written request to the Head of Department. The Head of Department reviews the work against the criteria, consults a second teacher if needed, and responds within ten school days.
3. If the concern is still unresolved, it is referred to the relevant program coordinator and the principal. Their decision is final at the school level.

Internal Assessment marks submitted to the IB are subject to IB moderation. The DP Coordinator handles inquiries about final IB results through the IB's Results Service, within the IB's inquiry deadlines.

Types of Assessment

1. **Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment is an ongoing process that provides feedback to students during their learning journey, helping them improve their understanding and performance. It does not contribute to the final grades.
2. **Summative Assessment:** Summative assessment measures students' achievement against the program objectives and contributes to the final grades.

Assessment Practices

1. Students are provided with written instructions related to any given task. The instructions include sufficient detail on the content, structure, task, and relevant assessment criteria for students to demonstrate their learning.
2. Differentiated Assessment: Teachers can meet diverse learners' needs by offering assessment options, topic or task choices, and varied approaches while maintaining learning objectives and standards.
3. Rubrics and Marking Schemes: Clear and consistent rubrics and marking schemes should be developed for assessments. These tools should outline the specific criteria and standards used to evaluate student work, promoting transparency and fairness in grading.
4. Assessment Moderation: Regular moderation meetings should be conducted among subject teachers to ensure consistency and fairness in the application of assessment criteria and grading practices. This process helps maintain the validity and reliability of assessments across different classrooms.

5. **Feedback and Reflection:** Students should receive constructive feedback on their assessments, highlighting areas of strength and areas for improvement. Students should have opportunities to reflect on their performance and progress, encouraging metacognition and self-directed learning.
6. **Data Analysis and Review:** Schools should analyze assessment data to identify trends, patterns, and areas for instructional improvement. This analysis can inform curriculum development, teaching strategies, and targeted interventions to enhance student learning outcomes.

Assessment Components

MYP assessment focuses on tasks created and marked by classroom teachers who are professionally trained to make judgments about student achievement. These tasks are rigorous and embrace a variety of assessment strategies. MYP teachers assess the prescribed subject-group objectives using the assessment criteria for each subject group in each program year. (The subject groups are language acquisition; language and literature; individuals and societies; sciences; mathematics; arts; physical and health education; design.)

In the final year of the MYP program, each student independently develops a “personal project” over an extended period. The personal project is a summative review of the student’s ability to conduct independent work.

MYP Assessment Criteria and Determining Achievement Levels

RFS employs the prescribed MYP subject-group assessment criteria and achievement-level descriptors as per the current IB program documentation. The assessment is criterion-referenced: student achievement is determined against the published criteria and descriptors, not by comparison with other students. For each summative task, teachers develop task-specific clarifications that make the published MYP criteria accessible and relevant to the specific assessment, without altering the intent or standard prescribed for the criterion. Teachers apply their professional judgment using a best-fit approach to determine the achievement level for each criterion. The teacher considers the student work against the descriptors as a whole and selects the level that most appropriately represents the quality of work demonstrated. When determining the final achievement level for each criterion, teachers consider the available evidence of student achievement and apply their professional judgment to determine the level most accurately representing the student's achievement at the time of reporting. At the end of the reporting period, the final achievement levels for the subject-group criteria are aggregated to form the student's criterion-level total. The appropriate current MYP grade boundaries are then applied to determine the final MYP grade on the 1–7 scale. Teachers do not determine an MYP final grade by simply averaging percentages or assessment scores. Departments engage in collaborative standardization to develop a shared understanding of the MYP criteria, achievement-level descriptors, and standards.

Common practice for using the MYP criteria

All MYP teachers follow these steps:

1. **Planning:** Each subject group has four criteria (A–D), assessed on a scale of 0–8. The unit planner records summative tasks and the criteria and strands they assess. Each strand of every criterion is assessed at least twice each year.
2. **Task-specific clarifications:** For each summative task, the teacher rewrites the relevant descriptors in student-friendly language tailored to the task. These written clarifications are given to students when the task is set, without changing the level of demand in the published descriptors.
3. **Applying descriptors (best fit):** The teacher starts at the lowest band and moves up until the work no longer fits. In the selected band (e.g., 5–6), award the higher level when the work convincingly meets the descriptor, and the lower level when it only partly meets it. Award 0 only if the work meets no descriptor.
4. **Missing evidence:** If a student has not submitted a summative task, the teacher provides an additional opportunity before the reporting deadline. If there remains insufficient evidence for a criterion, the case is referred to the MYP Coordinator and the Principal.
5. **Feedback and recording:** Marked work is returned with an achievement level for each assessed criterion and written feedback linked to the descriptors. Education records achievement levels, not percentages.
6. **Final achievement levels:** At the end of each reporting period, the teacher assigns each criterion a final level (0 – 8) based on summative evidence, giving priority to recent, consistent evidence. Levels aren't averaged.
7. **Final grade: The four final criterion levels are summed (0–32) and converted to an MYP grade of 1–7 using the IB grade boundaries below. The MYP Coordinator verifies the boundaries against current IB publications each year.**

MYP grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Criterion total (0 – 32)	1–5	6–9	10–14	15–18	19–23	24–27	28–32

8. **Personal Project:** The Personal Project is assessed using three criteria: A (Planning), B (Applying skills), and C (Reflecting). Each is scored from 0 to 8, for a total of 0–24, which is converted to a grade of 1–7 using the IB Personal Project grade boundaries. Supervisors standardize their marking before grades are finalized.
9. **Language acquisition and interdisciplinary units:** Language acquisition teachers assess each student using the criteria for their assigned phase. Interdisciplinary units are assessed using the MYP interdisciplinary criteria.
10. **Standardization:** Before determining semester levels, department teachers independently assess at least three student samples (one high, one middle, and one

low), compare results, and agree on a shared standard. They annotate the samples and retain them as departmental references. In departments with only one subject, teachers coordinate with the Head of Department, the MYP Coordinator, or a teacher in a related subject to standardize.

DP Assessment Components

Each subject within the IB DP has specific assessment components with defined weightings. These weightings may vary across subjects and are communicated to students at the beginning of each course.

Internal assessments are conducted and evaluated by subject teachers within the school, aligning with the subject-specific criteria provided by the IB. They may include coursework, investigations, projects, presentations, and other forms of teacher-guided assessments. RFS teachers mark the internal assessments and submit scores and samples to the IB for moderation.

External Assessment: External assessments are conducted by the IBO and marked by trained examiners appointed by the IBO. They include written and oral examinations, as well as other externally assessed components. This external evaluation adds an additional layer of objectivity and expertise to the assessment process.

Determining Achievement Levels in the DP

1. **Criteria and mark schemes:** Teachers assess DP work using the criteria, mark bands, and mark schemes outlined in the current IB subject guide. School-based summative tasks are modeled on the subject's IB assessment components.
2. **Best fit:** When using mark bands or level descriptors, teachers follow the MYP's best-fit approach: they assign the level matching the work overall, then choose a mark within the band based on how fully the work meets the descriptor.
3. **Converting marks to grades:** Raw marks are converted to grades on a 1–7 scale using the subject- and level-specific IB grade boundaries from the most recent examination session. No fixed percentage conversions are used.
4. **Core:** Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay receive grades from A to E based on IB criteria. CAS is not graded, but completing it is required to meet IB requirements.
5. **Drafts and feedback:** For the Internal Assessment and Extended Essay, teachers may provide feedback on one draft, in accordance with IB rules, but they do not edit students' work.

DP Internal Standardization and Quality Assurance

DP departments carry out internal standardization of internally assessed student work in line with current IB subject requirements. Teachers use relevant subject guides, assessment criteria, mark schemes and IB exemplars, to support standardization. When a DP subject is taught by more than one teacher, teachers mark samples of students' work and discuss their judgments in order to reach agreement on standards and achieve consistency in marking.

When a DP subject is taught by one teacher, the teacher standardizes a sample of marked work with the Head of Department or DP Coordinator, using IB exemplars before submitting marks. This takes place before Internal Assessment marks are entered into the IB, and the department records the agreed marks. The Heads of Department and the DP Coordinator are available to advise and support teachers on standardization. Drawing on feedback from IB moderation and subject reports, teachers can review and, where appropriate, adjust their marking practices. This process ensures that internally assessed work is marked consistently against IB assessment criteria and that students' marks accurately reflect their achievement.

IB and Local Assessment Requirements

RFS administers assessments in accordance with current IB rules, regulations, program documentation, and subject-specific requirements for the MYP and DP, as well as the applicable requirements of the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). IB criterion-related assessment practices are maintained when RFS meets local grading and reporting requirements. Where a local reporting format requires a different representation of achievement, the school clearly communicates the relationship between the local reporting system and IB assessment practices to students and parents/guardians. When MoEHE requires marks in a different format, IB achievement levels and grades are determined first. A school leadership-approved conversion table is used only for local reporting and shared with students and parents/guardians. Local requirements do not alter prescribed MYP criteria, achievement-level descriptors, or DP subject assessment requirements. Program coordinators and school leadership monitor relevant IB and local requirements and update assessment and reporting practices accordingly.

Special Considerations

Students with special educational needs or temporary conditions that may affect their performance should inform the school administration and provide the necessary documentation. Reasonable accommodations may be made to support their assessment process.

Homework

Homework assignments should have clear learning objectives and serve to reinforce, extend, or apply concepts learned in class. They should be aligned with the curriculum and contribute to students' overall understanding and achievement.

The amount and frequency of homework should be reasonable and appropriate, taking into consideration students' age, grade level, and workload from other subjects. Teachers should strive to balance homework with other aspects of students' lives to promote their well-being and a healthy work-life balance.

Homework assignments should be accompanied by clear instructions that outline the task, expectations, and submission deadlines. Students should clearly understand what is expected of them and how their work will be evaluated.

Teachers should provide timely and constructive feedback on homework assignments, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. This feedback should be meaningful and help guide students' learning and progress.

Reporting Assessments

Teachers report to parents on student achievement regularly through various channels:

1. **Summative Task Marks:** These are reported on Edunation every time a child sits for a summative Task.
2. **Parent-Teacher Office Hour:** Parents are encouraged to meet with their children's teachers to receive overall feedback on student performance in class and during different learning experiences.
3. **Report Cards:** The upper campus releases report cards four times yearly at the end of every quarter.
4. **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** At the end of the first and third quarters, parent-teacher conferences are held for parents and teachers to discuss student progress and achievement throughout the grading period.

DP Predicted Grades

Predicted grades are generated during April of DP 2. These are submitted to the IBO and are used for results analysis and other IBO-related quality control and assurance purposes. These are confidential; IB recommends that schools do not share these predictions with students or parents. Predicted grades do not influence actual grades earned by the students. Teachers will take a holistic approach to students, emphasizing performance on both midterms and finals, as these are the two largest examinations and the closest to an official exam in length and rigor. They will also take into consideration a student's performance in class (quarter grade). The midyear and final grades account for 75% of the predicted grade, while the quarter grades account for around 25%. DP teachers mimic the percentages of official examinations and internal assessments. Teachers are asked to submit, along with their predicted grades, grade boundaries for each score out of 7. To complement the numerical calculation, teachers are encouraged to consider each student individually. Some subjects may have a special formula set by the IBO that teachers use, but most teachers create grade boundaries using calculations that take the IBO grade boundaries into account.

Evaluating and Reviewing

The assessment policy was written collaboratively with participation from the Head of School, Principals, IB Coordinators, Heads of Departments, and faculty. It is reviewed annually, and if changes appear necessary, they are discussed in faculty meetings.

The Head of School and program coordinators lead the annual review in collaboration with the Academic Council, Heads of Departments, teachers, and the wider school community. The review considers changes to IB and local requirements, findings from assessment practices and standardization, and feedback from the school community. The results of the annual review are communicated to stakeholders and implemented in the school's practice.

The policy is shared with all teachers at the start of each school year and with new teachers during induction. It is explained to students during MYP and DP orientation and published on the school website for parents/guardians. Student and parent/guardian feedback is gathered during each annual review.

Revised: September 2025 by the Head of School, program coordinators, the Academic Council, and teachers.

Revised in October 2026 by the Head of School, program coordinators, the Academic Council, and teachers for rights, responsibilities, assessment criteria, and achievement levels.

