

Assessment Policy

Purpose

This policy reflects the collective philosophy and practice of the faculty of Luther College High School (LCHS). The faculty is committed to the standards of assessment and the aspirational goals outlined in this document.

Philosophy

THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a critical part of the learning process for all a school's stakeholders. Thus, assessment has a range of purposes according to the needs of each stakeholder.

Assessment for Learning

Formative assessment informs teaching and learning by providing essential feedback to teachers and students. It allows teachers to monitor students' progress, informing future teaching, and it allows students to reflect on their learning process.

Assessment of Learning

Summative assessment measures learning against pre-established criteria and benchmarks to determine, for example, course completion and graduation status. Like formative assessment, it should provide actionable feedback to inform students' reflection. It also allows the school community to compare students' performance to others' to, for example, assign scholarships and awards and communicate with university admissions departments. Summative assessment also provides accountability through reporting to educational authorities and the school community, affirming that teachers are teaching to the required curricular outcomes.

Assessment as Learning

Providing students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning further reinforces the understandings and skills they are developing. It facilitates further skill development as they learn to represent their knowledge in new ways, and it provides students the opportunity to reflect on their learning process, adjusting it if necessary.

INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

It is important for teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their assessment practices. As we reflect, the following criteria may be useful.

Effective assessment:

- utilizes a balance of strategies
- evaluates a balance of the learner's process and product
- is directly tied to curricular outcomes
- has a clear purpose that is clearly communicated to students
- is based on clearly communicated, predetermined criteria
- applies criteria consistently so similar achievement produces similar grades
- is structured to provide feedback that is useful and informative
- provides meaningful opportunities for students to reflect on their learning process
- is consistent horizontally (among teachers at the same subject/grade level)
- is internally moderated within each subject area
- progresses vertically (across grade levels) within a subject area
- is accessible to all students, so students' limitations do not limit the reliability of assessment
- is reported in a way that is meaningful to students and parents
- is focused on learning and development, not competition or advancement



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSESSMENT?

Assessment is a shared responsibility. Teachers provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, and students are expected to provide the fullest possible demonstration of their learning. It is not the teacher's responsibility to extract demonstration of learning from a student. For this reason, we are willing to assign a failing or zero grade when the student has failed to complete the requirements of the assessment or course. Likewise, as teachers are committed to providing timely feedback, students are expected to provide timely demonstration of learning. For this reason, teachers are free to consider for themselves how to handle late work.

Practices

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment provides teachers and students with feedback to inform the teaching and learning process. It can be informal or formal and take seconds or hours.

We are committed to using formative assessment to inform our teaching practice and provide timely, meaningful feedback to students on their progress. We are committed to the process of reflection, so we provide opportunities for students to participate in the assessment process.

Formative assessment also allows us to provide students with feedback on outcomes that are not assessable as curricular outcomes (e.g. approaches to learning, content that supplements provincial curricula).

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT - GRADING, RECORDING, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING

The purpose of summative assessment is to report students' achievement of curricular outcomes. It allows students' achievement to be

meaningfully compared across classes and schools according to established criteria.

Summative assessment must be made based on predetermined criteria, not relative to other members of the school or a cohort. The outcomes, understandings, skills, and applications prescribed in local and IB curricula are the sole benchmarks for summative assessment criteria. This allows our assessment to be comparable with other schools following the same curricula. While, in some cases, it may be valuable to work to achieve outcomes not prescribed in curricula, summative assessment must arise from curricula.

In all cases, assessment must be transparent in that students understand the assessment criteria and are able to clearly see how their grade was determined. Students must be given opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of curricular outcomes in a variety of forms.

Reports are provided to parents twice per semester, and include comments from teachers to provide context for the mark awarded.

HOMEWORK

Homework is useful for reinforcing what is done in class, providing further practice, facilitating deeper engagement with ideas, and engaging parents and families in the learning process.

Homework must be purposeful in achieving curricular outcomes, and the time required for its completion must be proportional to the extent to which it helps the student achieve curricular outcomes.

FREQUENCY OF ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment is ongoing through every stage of the learning process. Summative assessment need occur only frequently enough to allow students to meaningfully demonstrate their progress. There is no minimum number of recorded grades per semester. Teachers should



consider what constitutes an appropriate balance between providing students with sufficient opportunities to demonstrate their progress and maintaining a manageable workload.

For final assessment in Diploma Programme (DP) courses, a yearly timeline will be developed to ensure that assessments are spread evenly through the year. Internally assessed work will be assigned a portion of the course grade, be completed in the time allotted for the course, and be designated in course outlines as a required component of the course.

INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT

We strive to make our assessment inclusive of all learners, allowing *all* learners to fully demonstrate their progress.

In an effort to ensure that all learners have equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, we endeavour to use a variety of assessment tools involving diverse forms of expression and student choice. Teachers must also consider how to allow English language learners to fairly demonstrate their learning. We are committed to providing inclusive assessment arrangements (such as alternative venues and formats for examinations, transcription assistance, or access to a reader) where necessary.

The school will request and facilitate the provision of inclusive assessment arrangements for external assessments (such as IB exams) as needed.

IB AND LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

In the case where courses are expected to fulfill the curricular requirements of the Ministry of Education and IB, we will fulfill the curricular outcomes of both and assess to whichever is the more demanding standard.

When reporting grades to the Ministry of Education for an IB course, the grade will reflect as closely as possible the grade a student would

have received in a corresponding non-IB class. If a teacher feels that IB grading criteria are more demanding than the provincial criteria, the grade should be adjusted accordingly. Teachers will consider on an ongoing basis whether their grades reflect this practice.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Since assessment is part of the learning process, efforts to circumvent the assessment process cause individual learning to suffer and undermine the school's learning climate. We strive to promote a culture where all students seek to maximize their learning, and for that reason do not seek ways to avoid rigorous assessment.

Part of creating this culture involves training students to cultivate habits of academic honesty. We also use plagiarism-checking software to provide more effective feedback to students and minimize incidents of dishonesty.

For more information, see LCHS's Academic Honesty Policy.

Communication and Review

This policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary by a committee composed of faculty and administration members every three years at minimum. Any changes to this policy must be subject to a process of consultation with the entire faculty.

This policy will be communicated to the school community via the school's website and intranet.

Resources

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2010, Nov). Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practice.





International Baccalaureate Organization. (2013, May). Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2017, Aug). Candidates with assessment access requirements.

Luther College High School. (2016, Mar). Academic Honesty Policy.

Luther College High School. (2018, April) Inclusive Education Policy.

