



# Rockridge Secondary School Assessment Policy

*Students can achieve a learning goal only if they understand that goal and can assess what they need to do to reach it. So self-assessment is essential to learning. Many teachers who have tried to develop their students' self-assessment skills have found that the first and most difficult task is to get students to think of their work in terms of a set of goals. Insofar as they do so, they begin to develop an overview of that work that allows them to manage and control it for themselves. In other words, students are developing the capacity to work at a metacognitive level.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B. & Dylan, W. (2002). *Working inside the black box: assessment for learning in the classroom*. London: King's College London Department of Education and Professional Studies.

## Philosophy of Assessment

Ultimately, assessment is used for learning. The assessment process reveals – to the teacher and to the student – what a student understands, knows and can do. Authentic assessment provides ongoing feedback to teachers, students and possibly parents in order to enhance student learning and involves feedback on students' thinking process as well as their work towards their achievement of outcomes. We recognize the importance and the motivational benefits of involving students in the process of assessment in meaningful ways such as peer and self-assessment and even, in some cases, in co-creating assessment tasks.

Assessment is different from evaluation: the evaluation process indicates the quality of performance based on learner outcomes against prescribed learning objectives. Evaluation indicates the level of achievement a student has reached in this regard.

Assessment occurs when teachers and students gather information to monitor student progress and plan their teaching or learning (*formative assessment*); evaluation occurs when teachers measure students' degree of achievement of learning outcomes for the purpose of reporting out to the school community (*summative assessment*). A formative assessment could be used for evaluative purposes according to teachers' professional judgment.

We believe that assessment's purpose "dictates how assessment is constructed and used. If the purpose is enhancing learning, the assessment needs to give students an opportunity to make their learning apparent without anxiety or censure. If the purpose is checking learning for reporting, teachers need to be especially concerned about the quality of the assessment, and how it might be used by others. It is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to serve three different assessment purposes at the same time. It is important for [us to] recognize the need to balance among them, know which one [we] are using and why, and use them all wisely."<sup>2</sup>

### Definition of terms:

#### **Authentic assessment**

the use of learning activities, related to real-life situations where possible, to assess student competency in designated skills, what a learner understands and can do<sup>3</sup>

#### **Criterion – reference approach**

style of assessment that measures how well a student performs against an objective or criterion rather than in comparison to another student. Criterion-referenced classrooms are mastery-oriented, informing all students of the expected standard and teaching them to succeed on related outcomes.

#### **Common assessment**

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<sup>2</sup> Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education. (2006). "Rethinking classroom assessment with purpose in mind: assessment as learning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning." 14.

<sup>3</sup> IB MYP Coordinators Handbook. (2012-2013). "Assessment Procedures: Introduction." F1.1.

when appropriate, each course uses consistent inquiry questions and assessment criteria across classes and teachers assess (at least a sample) together in order to ensure consistency in application of the criterion

### **Formative assessment**

occurs during the learning process with the purpose of informing the students and teachers as to a student's progress so that teachers may design their lessons appropriately and students may better self-regulate

### **Summative assessment**

occurs at the end of the learning process in order to assess students' achievement against the criterion for each learning objective

## **Reconciling the MYP and British Columbia Approaches to Assessment**

In the MYP assessment aims to

1. support and encourage student learning by providing feedback during the learning process
2. inform, enhance and improve the teaching process
3. promote positive student attitudes towards learning
4. promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real world contexts using the areas of interaction
5. promote the development of higher-order cognitive skills by providing rigorous final objectives that value these skills
6. reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
7. support the holistic nature of the programme by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student.

These aims are reflected in the BC Ministry's policies and publications dealing with assessment including the following:

- Principles for fair student assessment practices for education in Canada:  
[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom\\_assessment/fairstudent.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/fairstudent.pdf)
- Rethinking classroom assessment with purpose in mind:  
<http://www.wncp.ca/english/subjectarea/classassessment.aspx>
- Addressing student differences: Next steps  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/pdfs/adstudif.pdf>
- A research summary for schools planning intervention programs:  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/pdfs/startpoint.pdf>

### **Assessment Practice**

Rockridge teachers design and carry out continuous assessment, over the course of each class, according to

specified criteria that correspond to the learning objectives outlined in each of the MYP subject guides<sup>4</sup> and/or as outlined in British Columbia's Ministry of Education Curriculum Guides.

Teachers structure “varied and valid assessment tasks that will allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the required objectives within each subject ... In keeping with the ethos of approaches to learning, [teachers] are encouraged to use a variety of formative assessment methods that involve the learner. The choice of quantitative and qualitative assessment strategies and tools (rubrics, performance records and checklists, portfolios) is the responsibility of the subject teachers, with an emphasis on self-assessment and peer-assessment.”<sup>5</sup>

In the MYP, for Years 3 and 4, teachers will use interim objectives that reflect interim criteria. These objectives and criteria will be standardized vertically and horizontally within each subject. In year 5 of the MYP, teachers will use the objectives and criteria as published in each subject guide.

In all years of the programme, teachers clarify the criterion for each task in a manner best suited to the context (orally, co-created with students, written in student friendly language, a task sheet, etc). This clarification will occur at the beginning of the task so students are afforded the opportunity to succeed in accordance with expectations. In year 5, when clarifying the criterion and expectations with students, teachers must ensure not to alter the standards.<sup>6</sup>

To summarize, in accordance with the IB document called *Developing modified assessment criteria*<sup>7</sup>, we note the following:

- ❑ Assessment criteria should be modified in years 1–4 of the MYP. This is best done through the use of rubrics.
- ❑ It is vital that the modified assessment criteria should be developed from the interim objectives, whether these are the published exemplar interim objectives or interim objectives developed by the school. Any modification of criteria must stem from, and be aligned with, modified objectives.
- ❑ Every strand of each interim objective must be represented in the modified criteria. The year 5 assessment criteria in the subject groups should be used as a model for how the strands of the objectives are represented in the criteria for that subject.
- ❑ Modification in years 1–4 can involve changing or defining the language in the level descriptors to make it more comprehensible to students and to adjust the achievement level expected of students.
- ❑ The words in bold in the level descriptors indicate the difference between the achievement levels in each assessment criterion. The gradation in the value statements in each of these levels should remain the same and should clearly differentiate degrees of achievement.
- ❑ Both the words in bold and in plain font in the criterion level descriptors can be changed for years 3 and 4.
- ❑ Assessment criteria cannot be modified in year 5 of the MYP but can be clarified (task-specific clarification), making the criteria specific to a unit of work. For example, in arts it is expected that

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<sup>4</sup> IBO. *The Middle Years Programme: A basis for practice*. “Assessment.” (2009). 12.

<sup>5</sup> IBO. *The Middle Years Programme: A basis for practice*. “Assessment.” (2009) 12.

<sup>6</sup> IBO. *MYP Coordinators Handbook*. (2012-2013). “Assessment Procedures: Introduction.” F1.2.

<sup>7</sup> IBO. *Developing modified assessment criteria*. (October 2011) Accessed from

<http://occ.ibo.org/ibis/occ/home/subjectHomeMYP.cfm?subject=imple> on January 6, 2013.

criteria A and B would be clarified for the unit of work they are being used to assess.

Some students at Rockridge have Individual Education Plans that specify adaptations or modifications to their assessments which must be accommodated in accordance with our Provincial School Act. Teachers will adapt or modify the assessment tasks as required by these IEPs and in consultation with students' case manager if necessary.

### Sample Assessment Tasks

The following **non-exclusive** list is of descriptions of tasks that might be used as summative or formative tasks. They are grouped somewhat by learning modality. We refer to this list with thanks to the teachers at Stratford Hall IB World School who created it.<sup>8</sup>

#### Written

- Create or participate in a blog or other social medium – share ideas in an interactive and ongoing way
- Creative writing assignment – a story or account, a poem
- Demonstration – evidence of a skill or attitude, often through teacher observation and anecdotal report
- Essay – multiple paragraph, structured
- Examination – broad based task that covers multiple topics
- Lab assignment – a write-up based on scientific criteria
- List or record – a directed set of short responses
- Piece of writing – any writing that does not fall under another category or has multiple categories
- Quiz (limited coverage, recently taught material, under 15 minutes)
- Report – an in-depth study or analysis that is not organized as an essay
- Response/commentary – an analysis, like a book report, that makes a judgement
- Test (wide breadth coverage, but usually single topic or unit, longer period of time (30 minutes +))
  - Test: Multiple choice
  - Test: Open response (paragraphs, essays, problem solving)
  - Test: Directed response (fill in the blanks, matching, true-false)

#### Oral

- Debate – group exercise where sides of an issue are defended or attacked
- Demonstration – evidence of a skill or attitude, often through teacher observation and anecdotal report
- Interview – dialogue between two or more people. May be a written assignment.
- Performance (as in music or acting) – demonstration of taught skills
- Presentation or report – organized and scripted
- Quiz – oral response to a set of questions
- Response/commentary – an analysis, like a book report, that makes a judgement
- Seminar – participation in an open discussion about a topic
- Speech – prepared or impromptu

#### Visual

- Create a video or slideshow – using technology for a visual presentation

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<sup>8</sup> Stratford Hall IB World School. (2011). Assessment Policy.

- Demonstration – evidence of a skill or attitude, often through teacher observation and anecdotal report
- Performance – prepared and/or rehearsed
- Representation (2D) – a poster, brochure, pamphlet or similar visually-oriented work
- Representation (3D) – a model or project

## Assessment and Late or Missed Work

The following outlines the policy regarding student absences from class resulting in late or missed work.

Students need to demonstrate understanding of learning outcomes. If a student is absent, it is expected that students take the responsibility to immediately find out from teachers or a classmate what learning was missed and how to make up any assignments. It is the teachers' option to either:

- a) not include the assessment task, or
- b) provide a make-up assessment task.

We do not advise that students go on holiday during school time. If parents opt to take their children out, any work missed is solely the student's responsibility. Teachers are not expected to provide extra classes, make-up tests or specific work to be completed.

If a student misses assessment and/or evaluation tasks (such as tests or assignments) the report grade may be "INCOMPLETE". If this becomes the case, teachers will inform administration via an Incomplete Report.

## Reporting Achievement

### For the Middle Years

Evaluation of student learning is determined on one or more IB MYP assessments that are based on the MYP curricular criteria, as outlined by the MYP subject guides, and, when they don't match, the Prescribed Learning Outcomes outlined by British Columbia's Ministry of Education. Each summative task is assessed to measure students' level of achievement. Teachers then convert the IB grades into letter grades in accordance with the mandate and descriptors specified by the British Columbia Ministry of Education standards. Please see below for more specific details.

### Reporting on Common Summative Assessment Tasks

We recognize the benefits of having consistency across each subject and grade. We also recognize that the MYP requires us to standardize our summative assessment criteria. To be authentic, this process will take time.

### Reporting Schedule

In accordance with our reporting mandate from the BC Ministry of Education and in keeping with the aims of the IB MYP, teachers will report out to parents on students' achievement five times a year as detailed below.

1. First Term Interim Progress Report
  - This report specifies whether or not a student is meeting or not meeting expectations. As the report goes out to parents after only 6 or so weeks of instruction, this report serves as more of a check-in. It is often the first formalized contact between parents and teachers.
2. First Term Report Card on Achievement
  - This report indicates the degree of achievement the student has reached by the end of the first

term in each of his or her classes.

3. Parent – Teacher Interviews

- ❑ Parent-teacher interviews take place in January. Parents and guardians have an opportunity to indicate their preferred times for interviews and to select the teachers with whom they would like to meet well in advance of the interview dates. The interview dates are published in the school calendar. If a parent is unable to attend Parent-teacher interviews or does not have the opportunity to talk to a specific teacher, alternate arrangements can be made with that given teacher or teachers.

4. Second Term Report Card on Achievement

- ❑ This report is organized in the same way as is the First Term Report.

5. Third Term Report Card on Achievement

- ❑ This report indicates the degree of achievement the student has reached by the end of the third term in each of his or her classes in addition to a final mark to represent the students' achievement in consideration of the entire year.

### MYP Reporting Implementation Plan

Here is our plan for implementing a report card that communicates MYP assessment practices.

#### 2013/14

Term Report Cards will indicate a percentage to represent student achievement in each course. The percentages are mandated by our provincial government<sup>9</sup> and are outlined below. Each report card will also include a notation to indicate each student's demonstration of work habits as mandated by our provincial government<sup>10</sup> and outlined below.

The Final Report Card will also indicate the IB grade each MYP student has achieved in each of his or her MYP courses.

Letter Grade	%	Meaning
A	86-100	The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
B	73-85	The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C+	67-72	The student demonstrates good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C	60-66	The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C-	50-59	The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
F	0-49	(Failing) The student has not demonstrated, or is not demonstrating, the minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. The letter grade "F" may only be assigned if an "I" (In Progress) letter grade has been previously assigned for that course or subject and grade.
I	n/a	(In Progress or Incomplete) The student, for a variety of reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected

<sup>9</sup> BC Ministry of Education. (March 2009) *Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice*. 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> BC Ministry of Education. (March 2009) *Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice*. 10-11.

		learning outcomes. An "I" letter grade may only be assigned in accordance with section 3. <sup>11</sup>
<b>Work Habits</b>		<b>Meaning</b>
Good		Student demonstrates good attitudes, effort, attendance, and social responsibility.
Satisfactory		Student demonstrates satisfactory attitudes, effort, attendance, and social responsibility
Needs Improvement		Student needs to improve attitudes, effort, attendance, and social responsibility.

<b>Going from assessed tasks to IB grade for the final report card</b>
Where more than one teacher is involved, common standards are set (standardization of internal assessment). In working to develop common standards across each subject and grade level, teachers must continue to work collaboratively in designing their units, reflecting upon their units, and revising their units.
Student performance is assessed against the interim (for years 3 and 4) or published (for year 5) assessment criteria for each subject.
Criterion levels totals for each subject are established for each student.
Teachers apply the grade boundaries to determine the final grade for the student in each subject.

<b>IB Grade</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
1	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives.
2	Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support.
3	Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support.
4	A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
5	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
6	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
7	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation is shown where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality.

<sup>11</sup> BC Ministry of Education. (2012) *Provincial Letter Grades Order*. "Letter Grades." <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m192-94.pdf>. Accessed on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

First and second term reports will include the letter grades and work habit notations as explained above. In addition, term reports will communicate each student's achievement in each of the criterion for each of their MYP courses.

The final report at the end of third term will indicate the IB grade the student has achieved in each course. "The general IB grade descriptors [outlined above] indicate the achievement required for the award of each grade. These descriptors ... [will] appear on the back of the record of achievement."<sup>12</sup> The IB grade will be derived in accordance with the practice outlined by the IB and noted above.<sup>13</sup>

The BC percentages will be derived from teachers' matching the percentage range to the IB grades. Each department will be responsible for agreeing on a conversion chart and may use the chart above, as created by the British Columbia Association of International Baccalaureate World Schools (BCAIBWS) MYP Coordinators.<sup>14</sup>

It is important to note that some courses may need to measure students' learning of objectives mandated by the BC Ministry of Education and which do not equivocate, match or otherwise reflect those objectives specified by the MYP subject guides. In this case, the BC percentage equivalencies may not be appropriate as defined above.

### Reporting student progress beyond the formal reports

Teachers will contact a student's parents if the student has not met the learning outcomes covered during the course of a term (In Progress or Incomplete report).

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school is in possession of their current contact information.

### Reporting English Language Learner's achievement

Students whose English language skills are not yet proficient enough to enable a subject teacher to assess their understanding of the course objectives fairly will not receive a grade on the report card until at which time their language improves enough to allow it.

### Honour Roll Policy

- ❑ Students must not have a failing letter grade in the term for which honour roll status is being calculated.
- ❑ Those students who receive an "I" on their report card in any given term will have their honour roll status calculated upon conversion of the "I".
- ❑ Work habits are important. Students who receive an "N" (Needs Improvement) in their work habits on the final term's report card are not eligible for the Honour Roll. Grade 12s cannot be on the honour roll if they receive an N on their second term report card or if their work habits decline significantly in the third term.

<sup>12</sup> IBO. *MYP Coordinators Handbook*. (2012-2013). "Assessment Procedures: Grade boundaries and final grades" F1.6.

<sup>13</sup> IBO. *MYP Coordinators Handbook*. (2012-2013). "Assessment Procedures: Summary: From final assessment to IB grades." F1.7.

<sup>14</sup> BC MYP Coordinators Roundtable Discussion. *BCAIBWS Annual General Meeting*. November 2010.

- ❑ Honour Roll is based on Rockridge or SD45 school performance.
- ❑ Honour Roll will be posted at the end of the year\* and is based on the final marks for grades 8-11 and term 2 for grade 12 students.
- ❑ Honour Roll is calculated by percentage\*\*
  - A calculated average percentage of 79.5 to 85.4 will be recognized as Honours.
  - A calculated average percentage of 85.5 to 100 will be recognized as Honours with Distinction.

\* Based on the final mark, all students achieving honour roll at the end of year will be presented with certificates of achievement. Students earning more than one “N” for work habits over the course of the year will not be eligible for certificates of achievement presented at the end of the year.

\*\*External courses (courses not taken in the West Vancouver School District) will not be included in the Honour Roll calculation.

## **GRADE 8-10**

1. Honour Roll is calculated on the student’s best seven courses with letter grades.
2. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of eight courses.
3. Health and Career Education 8 and 9 marks are not included in the calculations.

## **GRADE 11**

1. Honour Roll is calculated on the student’s best six courses with letter grades.
2. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of eight courses. Academic Tutorial and Learning Assistance are included in the minimum eight courses, although no letter grade is assigned. Six of the eight courses must have letter grades assigned.

## **GRADES 12**

1. Honour Roll is calculated on the student’s best six courses with letter grades.
2. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of eight courses. Grad Transitions, Academic Tutorial and Learning Assistance are included in the minimum of eight courses, although no letter grade is assigned. Six of the eight courses must have letter grades assigned.

## **Assessment Policy Alignment**

Rockridge’s assessment philosophy and policy align with our values and policies as outlined below. In all of these policies and positions, the student is central.

### **... to our mission statement**

We aim to foster “excellence in personal achievement, compassion, curiosity and critical thinking”<sup>15</sup> and our assessment policy will be a major driver in helping us achieve this mission for the following non-exclusive reasons. First, it explains that we believe students need to be involved in assessment through peer assessment, self-assessment and even co-creating the assessments. There is a broad and deep evidence-base that shows

<sup>15</sup> Rockridge Handbook. (2012) “Mission Statement.” 4.

that using assessment in this way improves learning more than other approaches or interventions.<sup>16</sup> Second, the policy shows that our assessments are broad and varied and work directly to address the learning objectives in ways that require students to be engaged in critical thinking.

#### ...to IB's fundamental concepts

Rockridge's Assessment Policy reflects the MYP fundamental concept of communication because we work to be totally clear about our expectations of students with the students themselves and their parents. The policy also details how we model open communication with the school community around our assessment practices. Our Assessment policy also supports the IB's holistic approach to education as it encourages a growth mindset<sup>17</sup> in students, which supports a healthy self-esteem and emotional connection to learning.

#### ...to our Academic Honesty Policy

The Academic Honesty Policy is essentially about the process of acquiring and processing information. The Assessment Policy aligns with our Academic Honesty Policy because we set clear objectives for the process of acquiring and using information – objectives which we also assess in accordance with our Assessment Policy.

#### ...to our Admissions Policy

Our Assessment Policy aligns with our Admissions policy of welcoming all types of students within our catchment first and then from without because we do not require students to pass any assessments prior to being awarded entrance to our school.

#### ...to our Language Policy

Our Assessment Policy aligns with our Language Policy in that we all assess and teach language throughout our various curricula. How a student uses academic language, for example, will have clear criteria and objectives that the student will be fully aware of and receive or generate feedback on throughout the course of their learning.

#### ...to our Special Education Policy

Our Assessment Policy aligns with our Special Education policy because our Assessment policy applies to all of our learners – regardless of their learning abilities. Flexibility is built into our Assessment policy to recognize and allow for use of technology or other means when students' special needs hinders their learning. Our Special Education Policy aligns with our Assessment Policy in that students are supported, where possible, in showing their learning in a myriad of ways as is appropriate to the task and the students' abilities. As quoted in our assessment policy, "Assessment should be diverse and relevant to the learner, allowing for differentiated assessments with different entry and exit points. The purposes and outcomes of the assessment process should be explicit to all. Elements of social interaction and personal growth should be part of the assessment process."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Dylan Wiliam, Paul Black, C Harrison, L Earle, C Lee, B Marshall, Ken O'Connor, and many others have published widely on this connection.

<sup>17</sup> Dweck, C. (2006) *Mindset: The new psychology of success*.

<sup>18</sup> IB. Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes. "Assessment." (2010). Cardiff, Wales. 5.

## Policy Review Protocol

The Rockridge Assessment Policy is a working document. This policy will be reviewed and revised as needed each Fall through the Curriculum Coordinators in consultation with departments, students, and the parent community via the School Planning Council.

## Communication of the Assessment Policy

The Assessment Policy will be listed with the other school policies on our public website. Parts of it will be published in the student handbook.

## Works Consulted

Stockholm International School Assessment and Evaluation Policy (n.d.) <http://www.intsch.se/> viewed on November 10, 2011.

Carrollwood Day School Assessment policy (n.d.) <http://www.carrollwooddayschool.org> viewed on November 10, 2011

International School of Belgrade Assessment Policy (May 2009) <http://www.isb.rs/archive/file/files/ISB-MYP-Assessment-Policy.pdf> viewed on November 10, 2011

Carson Graham IB World School. (October 2011) *Assessment Policy*.