

Assessment Policy

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Rationale

God's directive to parents in Deuteronomy 6:4-7 is to impress on the hearts of their children the way he wants his people to live. Parents are given the task of instructing and training their children, and today, the authority of educating children has been extended to teachers. As such, the school is accountable for the learning that takes place. "How will we know what the students have learned?" is the question that must be asked. At the same time, we want our assessment practices to be demonstrations of God's love and grace for the students. Assessment, therefore, should focus on encouragement and on growth and development rather than on judging, labelling, or ranking students.

Effective learning is based on three major components: curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The 'assessment of learning' will focus on the student's achievement of specific learning outcomes. 'Assessment for learning' will provide regular, informal feedback during the learning process so findings can become opportunities to further their learning and growth. 'Assessment as learning' will give opportunities for the students to self-assess and assess with peers against clear criterion.

Assessment also refers to the various strategies and techniques that teachers might use to acquire information on student learning. The purpose of assessment is to collect information from students about their progress toward attaining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be learned; it is also so that teachers can provide students with feedback to inform and improve their learning. Our grading system is criterion-related, where results are determined by performance against set standards, and not in relation to the performance of other students. Assessment should not only give information about where the student is at now, but provide clear targets that show what he or she can do in the future for improvement.

We also believe assessment should encourage an international perspective and intercultural skills where appropriate. For this reason, we believe it is important to have our students participate in international testing programs to ensure high standards of learning and the best preparation for university or post-secondary.

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Policy Statements	Regulations
1. Assessment tasks are designed to support and encourage good classroom teaching and learning.	<p>1.1 Assessment should be an integral component of course design and should be considered in the early stages of planning. The course design should focus on the objectives and assessment before the development of the activities.</p> <p>1.2 Assessment results should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, and instruction should guide its ongoing development.</p> <p>1.3 Year-long curriculum plans (course overviews) are developed keeping in mind assessment strategies.</p>
2. Assessment methods are developed or chosen so that inferences drawn about the knowledge, skills and attitudes possessed by each student are valid and reliable, and are not open to misinterpretation.	<p>2.1 Validity refers to the degree to which inferences drawn from assessments results are meaningful. Therefore, development or selection of assessment methods for collecting information should be clearly linked to the purposes for which inferences and decisions are to be made.</p> <p>2.2 Reliability refers to the accuracy of measurement from the assessment, and how likely it is that the same result would be produced in slightly different circumstances. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to use criterion-related assessments, and to develop common assessments in subjects across each grade level.</p>
3. Assessment methods are clearly related to the learning outcomes, and are compatible with the instructional approaches used.	3.1 To enhance validity, assessment should meet all of the prescribed learning outcomes. Planning an assessment design at the same time as planning instruction will help integrate the two in meaningful ways. Such joint planning provides an overall perspective on the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned and assessed, and the contexts in which they will be learned and assessed.
4. Assessment methods take into account the backgrounds and prior experiences of students.	4.1 Assessment methods should be free from bias brought about by student factors extraneous to the purpose of the assessment. Possible factors to consider include culture, developmental stage, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic background, language, special interests, and special needs. Students' success in answering questions on a test or in an oral quiz, for example, should not be dependent upon prior cultural knowledge, such as understanding an allusion to a cultural tradition or value, unless such knowledge falls within the content domain being assessed.

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	<p>All students should be given the same opportunity to display their strengths.</p>
<p>5. More than one assessment method is used to ensure comprehensive and consistent indications of student performance.</p>	<p>5.1 To obtain a more complete picture or profile of a student's knowledge, skills or attitudes, and to discern consistent patterns and trends, more than one assessment method should be used including both formative and summative measures. Student knowledge might be assessed using completion items; process or reasoning skills might be assessed by observing performance on a relevant task; evaluation skills might be assessed by reflecting upon the discussion with a student about what materials to include in a portfolio. Self-assessment and peer-assessment may help to clarify and add meaning to the assessment of a written communication, science project, piece of art work, or an attitude. Use of more than one method will also help minimize inconsistency brought about by different sources of measurement error (for example, poor performance because of an "off-day"; lack of agreement among items included in a test, rating scale, or questionnaire; lack of agreement among observers; or, instability across time). It is also important to 'value the most accurate demonstration of student performance, rather than just averaging attainment grades over a reporting period.'</p> <p>5.2 The assessment strategies may be put into practice using assessment tools such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubrics (established sets of criteria used for scoring) • Benchmarks/exemplars (samples of student's work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged) • Checklist (lists of data that should be present) • Anecdotal records (brief written notes based on observations) • Continuums (visual representations of development that show a progression of achievement) • Standardised tests • Exam papers (to test higher order skills, as well as content knowledge) • Portfolios <p>5.3 The IBDP provides formal assessments in each subject and also for each of the core requirements. The external assessment component includes examination papers</p>

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	<p>marked externally by independent examiner. Another external assessment component is supervised by teachers, completed by students over an extended period, and also marked externally by independent examiner. The internal assessment component is student work marked by a teacher and provides evidence of student achievement particularly as it relates to process skills.</p>
<p>6. Assessment information can be collected in a variety of ways, such as, observations, oral questioning, interviews, oral and written reports, tests and portfolios.</p>	<p>6.1 In assessments involving observations, checklists, or rating scales, the number of characteristics to be assessed at one time should be small enough and concretely described so that the observations can be made accurately. Student learning often changes so rapidly that it may not be possible simultaneously to observe and record all the learning. One way to manage an observation is to divide the learning into a series of components and assess each component in sequence. By limiting the number of components assessed at one time, the data and information become more focused.</p> <p>6.2 When collecting criterion-based assessment, interactions with students should be appropriate and consistent. Care must be taken when collecting assessment information to treat all students fairly. For example, when oral presentations by students are assessed, questions and probes should be distributed among the students so that all students have the same opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge. While writing a test, a student may ask to have an ambiguous item clarified, and, if warranted, the item should be explained to the entire class.</p> <p>6.3 In assessments involving selection items (e.g. true-false, multiple-choice), students should be encouraged to use whatever partial knowledge they have when choosing their answers, and to answer all items.</p> <p>6.4 Teachers are advised to use alternate procedures for collecting assessment information from students with special needs and students whose proficiency in the language of instruction is inadequate for them to respond in the anticipated manner. (Refer to WRCA Educational Support Services and Language policies). This ensures a consistent and valid assessment of those students who, because of special needs or inadequate language, are not able to respond to an assessment method (for example,</p>

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	<p>oral instead of written format, individual instead of group administered, translation into first language, providing additional time).</p>
<p>7. Students are told why assessment information is being collected, how this information will be used and when they will be assessed.</p>	<p>7.1 Students who know the purpose of an assessment are in a position to respond in a manner that will provide information relevant to that purpose. For example, if students know that their participation in a group activity is to be used to assess cooperative skills, they can be encouraged to contribute to the activity. If students know that the purpose of an assessment is to diagnose strengths and weaknesses rather than to assign a grade, they can be encouraged to reveal weaknesses as well as strengths. If the students know that the purpose is a summative assessment for reporting purposes they are well advised to respond in a way that will maximize strength. This is especially true for assessment methods that allow students to make choices, such as with optional writing assignments or research projects.</p> <p>7.2 The directions provided to students should be clear, complete, and appropriate for the ability, age and grade level of the students. Lack of understanding of the assessment task may prevent maximum performance or display of the behaviour called for. In the case of timed assessments, for example, teachers should describe the time limits, explain how students might distribute their time among parts for those assessment instruments and describe how students should record their responses. For a portfolio assessment, teachers should describe the criteria to be used to select the materials to be included in a portfolio, who will select these materials, and, if more than one person will be involved in the selection process, how the judgments from the different people will be combined. Where appropriate, sample material and practice should be provided to further increase the likelihood that instructions will be understood.</p>
<p>8. An assessment procedure is used under conditions suitable to its purpose and form.</p>	<p>8.1 Optimal conditions should be provided for obtaining data from and information about students so as to maximize the validity and consistency of the data and information collected. Common conditions include such things as adhering to examination invigilation standards and procedures, proper light and ventilation, comfortable room temperature, and freedom from distraction (e.g.,</p>

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	<p>movement in and out of the room, noise). Adequate work-space, sufficient materials, and adequate time limits appropriate to the purpose and form of the assessment are also necessary. For example, if the intent is to assess student participation in a small group, adequate work space should be provided for each student group, with sufficient space between subgroups so that the groups do not interfere with or otherwise influence one another and so that the teacher has the same opportunity to observe and assess each student within each group.</p> <p>8.2 If there are adverse conditions that affect the assessment environment, the teacher will relocate the group, postpone the assessment to another time, or provide a new assessment as soon as possible after the original date.</p>
<p>9. Reporting student progress involves a formal report card measuring learning against specific criteria for summative assessment purposes.</p>	<p>9.1 The academic leadership team will annually review and produce the internal assessment deadlines calendar for students in Grades 8-12. Two separate calendars (G8-10 and G11-12) will be produced to guide students, teachers and parents regarding the completion of internal assessments. These calendars will be produced in consultation with teachers, students and co-curricular programme coordinators. The internal assessment calendar addresses two competing concerns: time needed to complete assessment tasks and time needed to prepare students for the assessment tasks.</p> <p>9.2 Each term, the student progress report contains summative assessments for each subject based on learning outcomes. Student work habits are also reported each term for each subject.</p> <p>9.3 In the junior school, teachers will indicate on a scale the extent to which students are meeting expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Exceeding expectations 3 Meeting expectations 2 Approaching expectation 1 Not yet meeting expectations <p>9.4 In the senior school, teachers will indicate student performance on the IBMYP and IBDP 7-point assessment scale:</p>

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	<p>7 Excellent or outstanding performance in relation to the learning outcomes.</p> <p>6 Very good performance</p> <p>5 Good performance</p> <p>4 Satisfactory performance</p> <p>3 Minimally acceptable performance</p> <p>1-2 No demonstration of minimally acceptable performance (this mark is primarily used at the end of Term 1 and 2)</p> <p>F No demonstration of minimally acceptable performance (this mark is only used at the end of year)</p> <p>9.5 Reports should be complete in their descriptions of strengths and weaknesses of students, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed; however, the teacher will only report on the learning outcomes taught during that term. Accuracy in reporting strengths and weaknesses helps to reduce systematic error and is essential for stimulating and reinforcing improved performance. Reports should contain the information that will assist and guide students, their parents, and teachers to take relevant follow-up actions.</p>
<p>10. Reporting student progress may also include portfolios, presentations, student-led conferences and parent/teacher conferences.</p>	<p>10.1 Opportunities are provided for conferences between teachers and parents. Whenever it is appropriate, students should participate in these conferences. Conferences are scheduled at the end of Term 1 and 2, and, if necessary, upon request by teachers or parents. The purpose of the conference is to discuss assessment procedures, clarify and elaborate understanding of the assessment results, summary comments and grades, and reports, and, where warranted, to develop relevant follow-up activities or action plans.</p>
<p>11. There should be opportunity for both teachers and students to reflect on their practice and learning through formative assessment.</p>	<p>11.1 Formative assessment should be an integral part of daily classroom activities, which will allow reflections for setting goals and future growth and checking for understanding.</p> <p>11.2 Formative assessment allows students to receive feedback on their learning and performance in a regular and timely fashion.</p> <p>11.3 The Pedagogical team will annually coordinate a senior school homework timetable for all students.</p> <p>11.4 Teachers will collaborate and share with each other regarding assessment practice. This will be addressed at scheduled collaboration times.</p>

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<p>12. This policy will be communicated to the school community, and teachers will review the policy on an annual basis</p>	<p>12.1 This policy will be made available to the community on the school website.</p> <p>12.2 This policy will be included in the staff handbook and will be reviewed with teachers on an annual basis.</p> <p>12.3 As part of the school policy review process, all teachers will be consulted regarding any suggested revisions or changes</p> <p>12.3.1 Draft revisions or changes are distributed to teachers</p> <p>12.3.2 Changes are discussed at a staff meeting</p> <p>12.3.3 Following the staff meeting teachers are given a period of time, up to 2 weeks, to respond to the revisions or changes before the final draft is submitted to the WRCA Board of Directors for approval.</p>
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The school leadership team through consultation with the school staff developed this policy, and it was approved by the WRCA Board of Directors. It will be communicated to the school community and made available on the school website. The leadership team will review the policy and the WRCA Board of Directors will approve suggested revisions every two years.