

Tohoku International School (TIS)

Secondary Assessment Philosophy and Policies

Assessment Philosophy at TIS

At TIS, we believe that well-designed assessment benefits all parties involved in learning and teaching. It is a key method of feedback and confirms student achievement, which allows for students to reflect and identify areas of strength and weakness. After reflection, students can further take initiative and responsibility towards becoming lifelong learners. The assessment itself, and the promise of achievement, can also serve as a short-term motivation for students to encourage active participation in the learning process.

Assessment informs the teaching process. Teachers use data from assessments to guide the learning process. It also helps to define goals for learning and, when well defined and applied consistently, can help to maintain consistency across curricula and over the years.

Assessment provides parents with information on their child's learning, allowing them to encourage further growth both inside and outside of school. It also provides meaningful information to outside parties about students, allowing those parties to open opportunities for further growth and development to deserving students.

Well-designed assessment is, to the greatest extent possible, inclusive, reliable, and valid. Inclusive means that the assessment avoids bias that would put certain students at a disadvantage. Reliable means that the assessment will provide results that are consistent. Valid means that the assessment assesses the appropriate knowledge or skills related to the learning goals.

Homework Policies at TIS

At TIS, "Homework" refers to assignments meant to be done at home for practice, especially repetitive practice, not simply tasks like reading, finishing projects etc that normally do not fit in the school day.

For students in Grades 7-10, homework is assigned in order to reinforce learning and allow students to develop confidence in mastering concepts and skills that will connect to future topics. It is due between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM, in order to avoid encouraging students to be up late at night and allow "digital curfews" at the discretion of the student and parent.

For students in the Diploma Programme (DP) (Grades 11-12), homework is optional, and should be mainly offered to support the acquisition of skills and content by students.

Internal and External DP Assessment

All best practices and procedures for DP internal and external assessment must be followed as described in the most recent publication of the DP Assessment Procedures. ([Principles and practices: pg 78 - 162](#))

Formal Assessment

Formal assessment, both formative and summative, is designed by the secondary teaching team. It is integrated into the curriculum, and it is the final responsibility of the Secondary and DP Coordinator. Each formal assessment at TIS should be valid for the purposes for which it is intended; that is, it should be a balanced combination of relevance, reliability, fairness (that is, free from bias), and comparability. It should have a positive “backwash effect,” meaning its design and usage must encourage good quality teaching and learning.

Formal assessment should be appropriate to the widest possible range of students, allowing them the chance to demonstrate their personal level of achievement. It should be planned in coordination with the teaching and curriculum team, with attention paid to alignment with the TIS Stars, Philosophy of Assessment, and the IB (DP) Programme and Mission. Particular focus should be on how formal assessment is used to foster the underlying principles of IB assessment: inquiry, fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding, application), higher-order thinking (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking), communication, and international-mindedness ([p 77 Principles and Practice...](#)).

A range of formal assessments should be employed, including (but not limited to) standardized tests, projects, essays, experiments, and presentations.

Descriptions of assessments are made available to all relevant parties (teachers, students, and parents) on each course syllabus. The syllabus should also clarify how the final grade is formulated for a given course. Rubrics and other assessment frameworks should be clear to students at the start of a project or unit. The results of summative assessments, when applicable, should be recorded in our database, Alma, and shared with parents.

The opportunity should be provided for the student to be involved in the assessment of his/her work. The student is encouraged to reflect on each formal assessment. When deemed appropriate by the teaching and curriculum team, class time should be dedicated specifically for preparation for assessments including the Internal Assessments and External Assessments for the DP. Please see the [Course Guides for each DP course](#) and the all school [Assessment Calendar](#).

Late Work Policy

- 20% for any work turned in late. Work is not accepted after 7 days from the due date at which point students will receive a 0% on the assignment. This policy applies to summative assessments as well.
- Students who are forced to miss a deadline due to an absence will be given a chance to reschedule (especially important for quizzes, tests, and presentations). If the student is proactive about rescheduling, then the assignment will not be counted late.
- Students who do not complete and turn in a summative assessment by the cutoff date will receive an incomplete and must appeal to the head of secondary. The head of secondary will meet with the student to decide the consequences of the incomplete assessment.
- Revisions - Teachers will, whenever possible, plan in drafts (formative assessment). Drafting is considered to be part of the revision process. When drafting is not practical before the grade, students can earn 50% of the points the student missed for revisions handed in within a

week of the graded assessment being returned.

- In the case of special considerations like educational trips that happen during school, or serious health-related problems (e.g. the flu, hospitalization)- the head of secondary will work with the teachers to set realistic deadlines that are fair to both the student and the teacher.

The following documents were reviewed by all secondary teachers when drafting this assessment policy:

 **Principles and Practices in a Digital Age.pdf**

p. 12, and p 36-77.

 **Guidelines for developing a school assessment p...**

Review of this Policy:

This document was reviewed in September 2020 by:
Winnie Chan, Brian Scadden, and Joshua Bengtson