



**THE CODRINGTON SCHOOL (TCS)
DIPLOMA PROGRAMME (DP) ASSESSMENT POLICY**

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A: Statement of philosophy & underpinning principles

Assessment in the DP at TCS aligns with guidelines set out by the International Baccalaureate (IB) in the *DP: From Principles into Practice (for use from August 2015)* handbook and in the subject guides.

Assessment in the DP is an integral part of all teaching and learning. Assessment in the DP informs all stakeholders in a student's education about performance, achievement, progress, areas of strength and areas for growth. The feedback that assessment provides to teachers plays a fundamental role in guiding future planning. Assessment in the DP is always relevant and authentic. That is, it allows for practical application of learned skills and concepts, through the use of real-life situations. Teachers ensure that students understand what the assessment expectations, standards and practices are, and these are introduced early in the DP and revisited routinely throughout. Such expectations, standards and practices are prevalent in instruction, class, tested, examined and homework activities.

The results of assessment form the basis for further teaching and learning, as they are the indicators of a student's current levels of knowledge, understanding and application of concepts explored within the classroom. The results of much assessment are analysed.

Assessment in the DP makes use of the rubrics, criteria and descriptors provided by the IB in the discrete subject guides.

In short, assessment in the DP:

- Supports curricular goals, i.e. course aims and objectives.
- Ensures students' readiness for the formal assessment requirements.
- Encourages student learning.
- Measures student learning.



B: Forms of Assessment

Assessment at TCS is a continual process that occurs at key points throughout the school year, allowing for thorough and consistent evaluation. It is mostly formative in its nature, but is summative at the end of the course and at some intervals throughout the DP. All assessment is criteria-referenced. That is, students are assessed against IB criteria and not against each other. Formative assessment is geared towards recurrent assessing during a unit of inquiry. Feedback for formative assessment ranges from informal discussion to written commendations and recommendations, depending on the nature of the assessment task. This form of assessment may not make use of criteria-referenced levels, as it is intended to provide students and teachers with information regarding discrete skill progression within the context of one unit of inquiry. End of unit assessments occur at the end of each unit of inquiry, and the feedback provided is formally presented, along with a criteria-referenced level of achievement.

B1: Summative Assessment

The DP: From Principles into Practices (Aug. 2015) guide defines formal **summative** assessment as “assessment directly contributing to the final diploma qualification. **Most of these assessments are externally assessed**, and include examinations or work completed during the course and then sent to an external examiner. Some formal **summative** assessments are **internally assessed**, requiring the teacher to mark the **work to the accepted IB standard. Their standard is then confirmed or moderated by an external moderator**”. Teachers are fully cognizant of the summative assessment arrangements and requirements that pertain to their area of the DP; appropriate teacher professional development is available when and where necessary. Where more than one teacher is involved in teaching a subject group for a single year group, summative assessment is standardized, ensuring that a common system of criteria-referencing is used. Finally, at the beginning of each academic year students and their families are issued a DP calendar that shows internal assessment timelines. A faculty calendar also shows these internal assessment deadlines and other related timelines.

B2: Formative Assessment

Formative assessment encompasses “all those activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.” (Black and Wiliam 1998: 7). *The DP: From Principles into Practices (Aug. 2015)* guide defines formative assessment as a tool or process that teachers can use to improve student learning; it is about assessment for learning, rather than simply assessment of learning”. Teachers provide ongoing formative assessment that informs students about their learning. Teachers seek to make the student a better judge of his or her own performance, while also helping him or her develop strategies to improve. It is important to note that assessment instruments primarily designed for formal summative assessment at the end of the course, for example Internal Assessments and examination papers, are also adapted and used formatively as part of the learning process. Teachers use a range of strategies and tools to assess student learning, which are shown in DP Vertical and Unit Plans.



B3: Formative/summative assessment feedback

Feedback on specific assessment tasks is varied. **Formative assessment** may involve both oral and written feedback, and can be instantaneous depending on the nature of the task. Feedback for formative assessment ranges from informal discussion to written commendations and recommendations, depending on the nature of the assessment task. This form of assessment may or may not make use of the IB grade levels of 1-7. Feedback on written formative assessment tasks (which can include classwork and homework) is given within three to five business days. For an **end of unit assessment** feedback is delivered as soon as possible, within practical parameters (such as teacher workload, nature of the test, etc.). For **end of unit assessments** the feedback provided is formally presented and a grade is awarded, i.e. 1-7. This achievement level will be based on grade descriptors*, relevant assessment mark bands and grade boundaries used in recent summative assessment instruments. The moderated/confirmed outcomes of **summative assessment** will come in the July of the final year of the DP.

B4: Examinations

At TCS we use formal, bi-annual examinations as one form of assessment. These examinations (which take place at the end of the first term and the end of the third term of the academic year) carry special weighting when it comes to determining levels of achievement.

B5: Group work

At TCS we encourage collaborative work as a valid, even necessary, skill set in any student's personal development. As such, it is often used during formative assessment, in order that students grow together, scaffolding each other's learning. We do not, however, base any end of unit assessment on group or team work. Each student's end of unit assessment is conducted on an individual basis. The only exception to this is the Language and Literature further oral activity, for which the IB allows the option of working in pairs or small groups.

B6: Reporting of assessment & analysis of assessment data

Overall assessment outcomes at TCS are formally reported through termly, detailed report cards. Additionally, assessment is reported using regular progress reports, an annual parent-teacher conference day and individual parent-teacher conferences (by appointment). At TCS we value the most accurate demonstration of student performance, rather than averaging attainment grades over a reporting period. The relevant faculty also collaboratively analyse assessment data, along with students, the aim being to use such data to devise qualitative and quantitative targets for all. By virtue of the TCS's target-setting process, students are provided with regularized opportunities to participate in, and reflect on, the assessment of their work. These occur after each reporting period. These opportunities run alongside the routine opportunities afforded by the outcomes of formative assessment activities in class, and as part of homework activities.

**DP Grade Descriptors (Faculty document available to others upon request)
Vicky Mayers, Head of Secondary School, April 2016*



C: Final Assessment

Students receive their final DP grades and overall point score at the end of the two year programme. For detailed guidance on final assessment please refer to the appropriate subject guide.

D: Links with other TCS policies

Assessment in the DP does not 'live' on its own at TCS, it is part of TCS' whole-school policy 'community'. That is, it 'resides' alongside TCS's policies on: Academic Honesty, Learning Support, and Language. This policy community should be read as a whole to ensure that each of us is aware of the inter-relatedness, and of how this relates to our role within the school community.

E: Policy formulation, implementation, evaluation & review

The *DP Assessment Policy* has been written by the Head of Secondary School (based, in part, on TCS's existing MYP Assessment Policy), but extensive collaboration with DP teachers has occurred. All faculty involved in the DP at TCS need to espouse the principles and practices that this policy sets out. At the beginning of each academic year, or sooner if experiences dictate, the *DP Assessment Policy* should be reviewed and revised (if deemed necessary). It is the responsibility of the DP Coordinator, and new teachers themselves, to ensure that (as) new teachers (they) are cognizant of the policy and its ramifications.