



Barack Obama Academy of International Studies Assessment Policy



Obama Academy Mission Statement

The Barack Obama Academy of International Studies is an International Baccalaureate World School that prepares students to become well-rounded, globally competitive, compassionate, and confident, in a safe and supportive environment.

Assessment Philosophy

Effective assessment plays a central role in supporting the students of the Obama Academy as they progress through the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programmes. Fulfilling the Mission Statements of the Obama Academy, and the IBO, necessitates that students are able to gauge their progress as they “become well-rounded, globally competitive, compassionate and confident.” Comprehensive assessments provide accurate information about students’ increasing skills and knowledge, enabling students, and their families, to address shortcomings, explore strengths, and maintain perspective on their progress. Proper assessments enable teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching, monitor students’ development and guide future instruction. The common assessment language and philosophy employed by teachers and students across the subjects aids in the transfer of knowledge across disciplines and helps create interdisciplinary understanding.

Beyond tracking strictly academic progress, assessments, when properly administered, provide a framework for students, teachers and families to develop many of the skills of the **IB Learner Profile**. Assessments do more than monitor increasing **Knowledge, Thinking** and **Inquiry** skills. The structure provided by assessments also enables **Communication** between parties about students’ progress and learning by providing a common point of reference and language. **Reflection** is encouraged through formalized, contextual feedback about submitted work. Everyone involved in the

The IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

process must be **Open-Minded** so that differencing perspectives on assignments and how they were evaluated can be discussed.

For assessments to be able to achieve these goals, students must be presented with multiple, varied assessment opportunities. These opportunities must consist of authentic tasks that enable students to demonstrate conceptual understanding, and not be dependent on mere recall of facts or simple descriptions.

Assessment Practices

Summative Assessments- At the end of each unit of work, all Obama Academy students in both MYP and DP classes will have an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by completing a summative assessment. Summative assessments can take many forms. Some possible summative assessments include, but are not limited to; presentations, lab reports, research papers, exams and compositions. These summative assessments will require students to apply what they have been learning in authentic and novel situations. The scheduling and frequency of summative assessments can vary widely, depending on the length and depth of the unit being taught. The only constraint on the frequency of summative assessments is that by the end of the year, all MYP students must be evaluated with all four strands of the criteria at least twice.

At the start of each new unit of work, all teachers will inform the students about their requirements for the final summative assessment for the unit. To enable students to properly prepare and help them to contextualize their learning throughout the unit, teachers will provide rubrics, examples and discuss the expectations for the assignments.

Summative assessments will count towards the student's Pittsburgh Public School's report card grades. Teachers are asked to record all summative assessments every two weeks on the student's individual grade portal. Parents can keep up to date with their student's progress with a parent access account.

Formative Assessments- MYP and DP teachers will engage in formative assessments over the course of each unit. Formative assessments are designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for students to address the final summative assessment through a wide variety of different evaluations, both formal and informal. Formative assessments also enable students, teachers and families to assess the effectiveness of everyone's efforts and allow for reflection and improvement. To this end, teachers return descriptive feedback, in a timely fashion, to enable everyone to use the formative assessments to guide the process of learning. Although there is no set timetable for formative assessments, teachers are expected to provide regular and frequent formative assessments to encourage and support student growth. Formal formative assessments may be graded, but informal, ungraded assessments are also vital to maintaining student growth.

MYP Assessment Procedures

All 6th -10th grade students at the Obama Academy are enrolled entirely in MYP classes, corresponding with MYP Year classifications 1-5. Therefore all Obama Academy teachers use the prescribed MYP Criteria to evaluate their students' performance on summative assessments.

Work in each subject area is assessed with 4 equally weighted criteria.

	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Arts	Knowing and Understanding	Developing Skills	Thinking Creatively	Responding
Individuals and Societies	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking Critically
Language and Literature	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing Text	Using Language
Language Acquisition	Comprehending Spoken and Visual Text	Comprehending Written and Visual Text	Communicating in Response to Spoken, Written and Visual Text	Using Language in Spoken and Written Form
Mathematics	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating Patterns	Communicating	Applying Mathematics in Real-Life Contexts
Physical and Health Education	Knowing and Understanding	Planning and Performance	Applying and Performing	Reflecting and Improving Performance
Sciences	Knowing and Understanding	Inquiring and Designing	Processing and Evaluating	Reflecting on the Impacts of Science
Design	Inquiring and Analyzing	Developing Ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
Interdisciplinary	Disciplinary Grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting

Each of the Criteria above are subdivided into subject specific strands that delineate what knowledge, skills and understanding students are expected to master. Over the course of an academic year, teachers are expected to evaluate their students with all of the strands of all 4 Criteria at least 2 times.

All of the MYP Criteria use an 8 point scale to evaluate students' achievements. The MYP provides descriptors to clarify how success at each increasing level is defined. The 8 point scale is broken down into 4 bands, which are described below.

0	The students does not meet a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student shows a limited or partial understanding.
3-4	The student shows an adequate or satisfactory understanding
5-6	The student shows a solid understanding
7-8	The student shows exemplary understanding

To ensure that assessment is consistent within, and across, subject groups, teachers will engage in a regular process of standardization.

Subject Standardization - At least once a month, during subject specific meetings scheduled in advance, teachers will participate in standardization exercises. These exercises can take a number of different forms. They may all evaluate samples of student work individually, and then come together to compare their results and see if there were any discrepancies. They may all evaluate a sample of student work together and talk through their thought process as they determine which level is appropriate. The particular activities will be determined by the needs of each subject's teachers.

Cross Subject Standardization – At least once a semester, teachers will come together to look at work samples evaluated by teachers from other subject areas. There will be no process of blind evaluation in these exercises. Additionally, the yearly evaluation of Personal Projects by the entire school staff will refine everyone's understanding of the descriptors in each goal and the final

DP Assessment Procedures

All Obama Academy students are enrolled in IB Diploma Programme (DP) Classes for their 11th and 12th grade years of study. All Obama Academy students will receive report card grades, but only the students who chose to sit for IB Course Certificates or the IB Diploma will have their assessments submitted to IB for evaluation and moderation. All Obama Academy students will have a scheduled meeting with the DP Coordinator during their Junior year to discuss their options and plans in regards to the Diploma Programme and their testing options. Parents should plan to attend this meeting.

A distinction must be made between REPORT CARD GRADES and IB DP ASSESSMENT and EXAM GRADES.

REPORT CARD GRADES:

These are the grades that students will receive on their report cards and will count towards their Quality Points Average and class rank. This grade will take into account the same district mandated grade categories as all other Pittsburgh Public schools. These grades will include both formative and summative assessments. This grade will appear in a A-E scale on the student's report card. IB DP assessment work may go toward the report card grade.

IB ASSESSMENT GRADES:

IB has two different forms of assessment. The first form is the **INTERNAL ASSESSMENT** which is a piece of work (typically a paper or project) that is evaluated by a student's content teacher, and then moderated (checked) by external examiners in the IB Organization. The second form of assessment is the **EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT**. An external assessment is given by the school, and is evaluated by IB examiners outside of the school. For example, the film comparative study, the written assignment in Literature, or the Extended Essay. Internal and External assessments are due throughout the year. The due dates will be determined by the subject teachers.

IB DP Examinations will take place in the month of May and are conducted in school by the Diploma Programme Coordinator. All IB Exams are scored by IB evaluators and are not seen by their teacher. The IB Scores of 1-7 on all academic subjects and A-F on the Extended Essay and TOK are determined by combining the scores in multiple assessments. For further information on how this scoring takes place for each class, please contact the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator. The students will receive their IB results on July 5th. Students will be provided log in information where they can view these scores. Log in information will be made available to parents by request to the DP Coordinator.

Students who are sitting for IB Certificates or the IB Diploma will be provided with additional assessment information upon registration.

Reporting of Results

District Mandated Report Card and Progress Reports

Over the course of the school year there will be different avenues for reporting on the results of assessments and student progress. District policy requires teachers to assign letter grades A-E for each student at the end of each marking period to provide families with an overview of how each student is progressing in the subject. The grades for each subject are determined by the following scale

90-100%	- A
80-89%	-B
70-79%	-C
60-69%	-D
0-59%	-E

By District policy, each subject has a predetermined set of categories that must be averaged together to determine the marking period grade. These categories are consistent for each subject across grade levels.

The marking period grades reported by the district will contain results from both summative and formative assessments. Assignments that are evaluated with MYP or DP Rubrics will be converted into a percentage grade for purposes of submitting them into the categories outlined by the district.

Reporting MYP Specific Grades

It is important the students in the Middle Years Program receive feedback solely dedicated to MYP Criteria.

At the end of each school year, families will receive an MYP report card that chronicles the students' development over the year. This report card will have records of the students' scores on all assignments assessed with MYP rubrics, and a final MYP grade, determined by the individual teacher. The grade assigned by the teacher will adhere to the following grade boundary chart, provided by the IB.

Grade	Boundary Guidelines	Descriptor
1	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6-9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10-14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15-18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19-23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24-27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28-32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

Review of the Assessment Policy

At the end of every school year, there will be an opportunity for the Obama community to reflect on and modify the Assessment Policy. Information will be sent out to families and staff informing them of the review, a committee of interested individuals will be organized and proposed changes to the policy will be submitted to the Instructional Cabinet for final approval.