

Assessment Policy for the IB Diploma Programme at the Literargymnasium Rämibühl ¹

1. Philosophy

Assessment in general and IB assessment in particular at the Literargymnasium (LG) Rämibühl is part of a student's learning process and supports the curricular and educational goals of both the IB Diploma Programme and the Swiss national curriculum. Innovative and varied approaches to teaching and learning ensure student engagement and learning. Assessment informs students, teachers and parents through diagnostic, formative and summative components. It is varied, continuous and purposeful.

This document explains the assessment principles implemented at the LG Rämibühl for its IB Diploma classes and links assessment in the IB Diploma Programme and assessment within the Swiss national curriculum.

2. Assessment purposes

At LG Rämibühl we appreciate that assessment can and should be different things: formative and summative and the focus should always be on improving student learning. "Assessment as learning" ² has become more important in the past few years and is our primary focus now, together with providing our students with information on their progress.

In our student assessment, we focus on:

- different forms of assessment
- insight into the individual student's leaning
- documenting student development
- assessment and in-depth feedback
- motivating students to go the extra mile
- transparent reports to both students and parents
- gaining data to match achievements to other students in the same year and against cantonal and national norms

3. Types of assessment

Our teachers have great freedom in choosing assessment methods appropriate to different practices of teaching and learning. Additionally, we encourage individualized means of assessment if they benefit student learning or individual students who might have joined our school late in their school career or who might be struggling due to personal reasons. Students are assessed regularly: There is a rule of thumb about the minimum number of assessments per term (number of weekly lessons taught minus one) and oral participation must also be assessed and included in the final end-of-term grade.

¹ This document is based on the *Assessment Policy for IB Diploma Programme* of our sister school, the Realgymnasium Rämibühl. It is adapted to suit the requirements of the Literargymnasium Rämibühl.

² *Assessment principles and practices – Quality assessments in a digital age*, International Baccalaureate Publications, URL: https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Assessment/works/edu_11162-47165?root=1.6.2.8.5&lang=en

Each IB Diploma Programme subject has its own set of subject criteria, which our students are introduced to at an early stage of the Diploma Programme. Students are graded against objective attributes by distinguishing between different levels of attainment, which is different to the norm-referenced philosophy of the Swiss “Lehrpläne”. All assessment in the two-year Diploma course is based on IB criteria. These are described in subject-specific guides and the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*. It is expected that IB teachers know these documents and the subject guides are made available to the students. The IB’s principles and practices of formal assessment are detailed in the document *Assessment principles and practices – Quality assessments in a digital age*.

3.1 Formative assessment

As defined in the *Assessment principles and practices – Quality assessments in a digital age*, formative assessment is “ongoing assessment aimed at providing information to guide teaching and improve student performance”. This formative assessment is part of our daily teaching and provides feedback to both teacher and student. It helps the teachers plan the next stages of learning. This regular and transparent feedback engages the student and makes him/her responsible for his/her own learning and progress. It helps them become critical thinkers and foster self-reflection. Formative assessment is highly individualized and a central part to teaching and learning. Formative assessment is supported by summative measurement.

Formative assessment may include:

- assessment of prior learning
- written or verbal comments to students
- self-assessment
- peer assessment
- learner profile reflections; student reflections in general
- student discussions
- “students as teachers”
- assessment of drafts as a diagnostic to improve the final outcome and to help students align their expectation

3.2 Summative assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning process and provides students with an opportunity to show what they have learned. Several elements can be assessed simultaneously, it informs and improves student learning, measures student understanding and points students towards action/improvement. It includes examinations assignments during the course and is an important part of the final IB Diploma Programme qualification.

Summative assessment provides accurate, timely and regular grades to students. Summative assessment occurs in a number of ways:

- Exams (written and oral)
- Research papers
- Oral presentations
- Homework assignments
- Class work (oral participation)

4. Assessment process

The school's assessment philosophy, policy and procedures are known to the school community. The responsibility for the development and communication of assessment policies and their implementation lies with the pedagogical leadership board. Department heads assure that all colleagues adhere to standards and practices and that the faculty as a whole is involved in the development and communication of assessment policies.

A certain degree of variation in assessment is to be expected but certain measures are taken to keep this in check. Subject-specific guidelines ensure that the school's assessment policy is implemented and important exams, like finals (written or oral), are often assessed by a group of teachers.

Individual subject teachers are responsible for explaining to students all aspects of assessment practice, f. ex. the weighing of the individual grades, assessment criteria, the role of each assessment as formative or summative, the value of predictions, etc.

4.1 Inclusive education policy

Students with assessment access requirements can apply for "Nachteilsausgleich" at any time in their school career. The guidelines are explained in the «Richtlinie über die Gewährung von Nachteilsausgleichsmassnahmen an kantonalen Mittelschulen».

5. Relationship of IB assessment principles with cantonal/federal laws/requirements

The *Promotionsreglement für die Gymnasien des Kantons Zürich* (see Appendix 1) written by the educational board of the canton of Zurich is the basis for all our grading and reporting. Important points are summarized below:

- In addition to the 6 IB subjects the following subjects will be graded when taught: a fourth language, chemistry, physics, geography, computer science and music/art.
- Students and parents receive a report of their achievements for each semester, in which Performance in the individual subjects is graded with full and half grades. 6 is the highest, 1 is the lowest grade. Grades below 4 indicate unsatisfactory performance.
After each semester the class council decides whether the student passed the semester in accordance with the regulations (The conditions are met if their double total of negative points (i.e. marks below 4.0; a 3.5 = -1 negative point) is not greater than their total of positive marks (i.e. marks above 4.0; a 4.5 = 0.5 positive point) and no more than three grades below 4 have been awarded)
- In order to keep the workload manageable for students the IB internal assessments and the Extended Essay are not only used to generate an IB mark but also to generate a mark according to the Swiss marking scale.

6. IB Assessment and grades

The DP Programme uses both internally and externally assessed component to assess student performance. The final written exams at the end of the DP contribute to up to 80% of the final grade of a subject. This external assessment provides a high level of objectivity and reliability. Additional externally assessed coursework is completed by students over extended periods of time in different subjects and the core (ToK and EE). Some of these in-class assessment tasks are graded by the teachers and then moderated by the IB, as regulated in the Assessment principles and practices – quality assessment in a digital age, section C. The following text is based on this publication.

6.1 DP assessment

In the DP, students receive grades ranging from 1-7, 7 being the highest possible grade. Students receive a predicted grade from their teachers for each DP course in which they have registered for the final examinations. The Diploma is awarded to students who gain at least 24 points, subject to certain other conditions, see overleaf.

6.2 The DP core

Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and the **Extended Essay (EE)** components are awarded individual grades and can collectively attribute up to 3 additional points, bringing the total number of Diploma points to 45. A grade E in either the EE or ToK is a failing condition. The points for the core are calculated according to the following matrix.

		Theory of knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No grade N
Extended essay	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade E	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition
	No grade N	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition

The third element of the core, **Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)**, does not contribute to the points but completion is a requirement for the IB Diploma.

6.3 Diploma Programme award and failing conditions

The Diploma can only be awarded if the following conditions have been met:

- CAS requirements have been met.
- The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
- There is no "N" awarded for ToK, EE or for a contributing subject.
- There is no grade E awarded for ToK and/or the EE.
- There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL).
- There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL).
- The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
- The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points in SL).
- The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.

7. Internal assessment and deadlines

Student workload is closely monitored at LG Rämibühl and internal assessment deadlines are adhered to. It is of utmost importance that teachers have enough time to provide students with meaningful feedback on drafts and that students have enough time to work on their final internal assessments. Teachers make sure that each internal assessment assignment is the student's own work, according to the IB's *Academic Integrity* guidelines.

Deadlines are published in a yearly calendar and are made available to students and teachers. It is the responsibility of the IB Coordinator and the class teacher that the workload is evenly distributed and that everyone involved is aware of the deadlines.

Deadlines are binding for students and the school has the right to refuse work if it is submitted after the final date. The procedure for students who hand in late work is as follows:

1. Students inform the teacher in advance if there are extenuating circumstances for not handing in assignments on time.
2. Teachers check with students if work is handed in late and decide whether there is just cause for a deadline extension.
3. If this second deadline is not met, a final deadline is set and the IB Coordinator and the (vice) Principal are informed. Usually the parents are informed.
4. If the work is not completed, disciplinary measures might be taken (“reprimands”).

8. Reporting to stakeholders

Students and their families are regularly informed about student progress: There are mid-term provisional grade reports, end-of-term final grade reports, informal grade reports by subject teachers (if requested) and parents’ evenings. Class teachers and the (vice) principal(s) are readily available for feedback and discussions and parents and students can ask for individual meetings at any time throughout the school year.

8.1 Predicted grades

Predictive grades are used as both a learning tool and to support student applications to universities abroad. They are part of the IB assessment in March of the final term when the teachers inform the IB of probably students achievement levels. Students see predicted grades as measurements against IB criteria – they are thus a motivational element.

Predicted grades are come by using a wide variety of different elements such as exams, classroom work, oral participation, workshops, homework assignments, student self-reflection, etc. Teachers predict grades based upon student achievement so far and how a student is likely to fare in the final exams. Predicted grades at the LG Rämibühl tend to be quite accurate and rarely deviate more than one point from the final mark.

Since there is a high correlation between grading in the Swiss national curriculum (6-point grading scale from 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest mark) and final IB grades, teachers are allowed to arrive at IB predicted grades by converting assessment grades from the national curriculum using the following conversion table:

GPA	1.0-1.8	1.8-2.5	2.5-3.0	3.0-3.6	3.6–4.4	4.4-5.1	5.1–6.0
Percentage	0 - 16	17- 30	31 - 40	41- 52	53 - 67	68- 82	82-100
IB-Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Performance	very poor	poor	mediocre	satisfactory	good	very good	excellent

Appendix 1: Promotionsreglement des Kantons Zürich / Graduation regulations for secondary schools in the Canton of Zurich (translation)

Graduation regulations for secondary schools in the Canton of Zurich

(Dated March, 10th 1998)¹

A. Scope of validity

§ 1.6 These provisions are applicable to the graduation at the end of a qualification period.

B. Relevant subjects

§ 2.5 Graduation subjects in the lower secondary school include German, French, English, Latin, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, IT, History, Geography, Visual Arts and Music, to the extent that they are taught in the relevant certification period.

Graduation subjects in the lower secondary school (9th and 10th School year)⁶

§ 3.5¹ Graduation subjects in the upper secondary school include the basic, core and supplementary subjects in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Council and the Federal Conference on the Recognition of Secondary School Diploma Certificates dated January 16th / February 15th 1995³ as well as the following subjects IT and Introduction to Economics and Law, to the extent that they are taught in the relevant certification period.

Graduation subjects in the upper secondary school (11th to 14th School year

² Each graduation subject counts towards gaining graduation.

³ If the sub-subjects in the core subjects "Biology and Chemistry" or "Physics and Applications of Mathematics" are taught individually, each of them shall count individually as a graduation subject.

⁴ In the core subject of Philosophy/Pedagogy/Psychology, the weighted average of the grades from the Philosophy and Pedagogy/Psychology components, to the extent that they are taught in the relevant certification period, counts towards the doctorate. If the weighted average results in a quarter grade, this should be rounded up to the nearest whole or half grade.

⁵ Provided that Visual Arts and Music are taught at the same time in the basic subject, the rounded average of the two grades shall count towards the graduation. If the average results in a quarter grade, this should be rounded up to the nearest whole or half grade.

⁶ If the same subject is granted both as a basic subject and as a core subject or supplementary subject in one certificate period, then the grades for both areas must be stated separately in the certificate; the average of both grades counts for the graduation.

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Other subjects § 4.4 The grades for subjects not relevant to the graduation will be listed on the certificate.

C. Assessment of performance

Certificate § 5.6¹ Students receive a certificate of performance for each semester of the course, with the exception of the last two school years before the diploma examinations.

² They receive an annual certificate at the end of the last two school years. For the purpose of assessing their current status, they will receive a written interim assessment of their performance in full and half grades at the end of the first semester of the second-last school year and at the end of the calendar year of the last school year.

³ For diploma subjects that are taught in both semesters in the second-last school year and in one semester in the last school year, the performance for the second semester of the second-last school year is reported separately.

Grades § 6. Performance in the individual subjects is assessed with full and half grades. 6 is the highest grade, 1 the lowest. Grades below 4 denote unsatisfactory performance.

Performance assessment § 7. ¹ In addition to the written work, the oral performance must also be duly taken into account when assessing performance.

² The teacher informs the class in good time about the nature of the assessment in the respective subject.

D. Graduation decision

Decision § 8.6 The class council decides whether the student will move on to the next level at the end of each graduation period, the last time being one year before the diploma.

Graduation regulations for secondary schools in the Canton of Zurich **413.251.1**

§ 9. The conditions for the graduation are fulfilled if in all graduation Conditions
subjects that are taught in the relevant certification period,⁶

- a. the double sum of all grade deviations from 4 downwards is not greater than the sum of all grade deviations from 4 upwards
- and
- b. no more than three grades below 4 are awarded.

§ 10.^{6 1} Students are provisionally awarded graduation or not awarded graduation at the end of a certificate period if they do not fulfil the conditions for graduation in accordance with § 9*. They will not graduate if Provisional graduation and non-graduation
they

- a. are in the lower secondary school and have already been provisionally awarded graduation,
- b. were provisionally awarded graduation at the end of the 10th school year and again fail to fulfil the graduation requirements at the end of the following semester,
- c. have already been provisionally awarded a graduation in the upper secondary school,
- d. do not fulfil the conditions for graduation at the end of the 13th school year.

² A provisional graduation at the end of the 10th school year counts as a temporary qualification in the lower secondary school.

§ 11.⁶ Students can be provisionally graduated for the last time at the end of the Last graduation dates
of the

12th school year and not graduated for the last time at the end of the 13th school year.

§ 12. ¹ Students who are not graduated for the first time will be admitted Repetition
to retake the course at the next lower class level.

² Students can only do one retake during their entire time at secondary school. This is also the case if a student voluntarily retakes a class.

* In the case of an examination-free transition from a secondary school in the canton of Zurich or equivalent to the first class of a secondary school with follow-up to the second class of secondary school (short-term secondary school), provisional graduations, non-graduations and repetitions in accordance with §§ 10 and 12 are taken into consideration. Students who complete an entrance examination and pass the trial period - provided the opportunity to do so exists - can enter the first class of a short-term secondary school without having to take into consideration previous provisional solutions, non-graduation and repetitions.

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³ A repetition following a failed diploma examination shall not count as a repetition within the sense of paragraph 2.

E. Special conditions

Special cases § 13. The class council may deviate from §§ 9-12 of these graduation provisions in favour of the student in special cases.

Exchange stay § 14. The Education Board⁴ shall issue special provisions for the re-entry of students returning to the school after an exchange programme approved by the school.

Skipping a class § 15. Only in exceptional cases is it possible to skip a class, no later than two years prior to the end of secondary school, with the authorisation of the class council. Admission to the higher class is on a provisional basis; the provisional period is not counted towards the number of graduations in accordance with § 10.

F. Right of appeal

Appeals § 16.⁴ Decisions taken against a provisional graduation or non-graduation are subject to appeal to the Department of Education. The appeal period and the procedure shall be governed by the Law on Administrative Proceedings² of the Canton of Zurich.

G. Final provisions⁴

Transitional provision for core subject Philosophy/Pedagogy/Psychology
Philosophy/Pedagogy/Psychology § 17.⁶ It is possible to choose the core subject Philosophy/Pedagogy/Psychology from August 1st, 2024.

Graduation regulations for secondary schools in the Canton of Zurich **413.251.1**

§ 18.6 Students who commenced the upper secondary school prior to the 2022/2023 school year are subject to the graduation regulations for the secondary schools of the Canton of Zurich in the version dated April 12th, 2012.

Transitional provision for the amendment dated 12. March 2022

¹ OS 54, 556.

² [LS 175.2](#).

³ [LS 410.5](#).

⁴ Version as per resolution of the Education Board dated May 26th, 2008 ([OS 63, 445](#)).
In force since August 18th, 2008

⁵ Version as per resolution of the Education Board dated August 25th, 2021 ([OS 77, 91](#);
[ABI 2021-09-03](#)). In force since August 1st, 2022

⁶ Version as per resolution of the Education Board dated March 14th, 2022 ([OS 77, 271](#);
[ABI 2022-03-25](#)). In force since August 1st, 2022