



LA JOYA HIGH SCHOOL

A COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE



"THE STRENGTH OF THE PACK IS THE WOLF, AND THE STRENGTH OF THE WOLF IS THE PACK"

IB Assessment Policy

The IB Programmes @ La Joya Community High School will prepare and empower all Lobos with holistic experiences that develop continuous growth of knowledge, skills, and inquisitive attitudes to become principled, caring, and globally-minded individuals who contribute to an everchanging, more peaceful world.

Purpose

Created by IB teachers and leadership, this assessment policy is fundamental to the inner workings of La Joya Community High School's IB programs. Following IB program standards and practices, this policy provides an overview of our school's philosophy and practice for assessment. Teachers, families, students, staff, and administration will use this policy to deliver fair, valid, and reliable expectations regarding assessment practices. The single most important aim of assessment is to support and encourage student learning. Assessment results communicate determined achievement levels and must be reported to students and parents in a clear and timely manner. When planning assessments, teachers clearly set out what will distinguish students' engagement with unit questions and learning objectives.

IB Programs at La Joya Community High School

La Joya Community High School offers two distinct International Baccalaureate programs that together provide a comprehensive, globally-recognized education from grades 9 through 12. These programs are both part of the IB continuum and share the common goal of developing inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people, yet they differ in their structure, assessment approaches, and educational focus.

Middle Years Programme (MYP) - Grades 9-10

The Middle Years Programme serves students in grades 9 and 10 (freshmen and sophomores) and focuses on building foundational skills and conceptual understanding. MYP assessment is criterion-referenced and internally conducted, meaning that teachers design and grade assessments based on IB subject-specific criteria, which are then monitored and moderated by IB. Students complete a Personal Project in their sophomore year, demonstrating independent learning and creative application of their skills. MYP assessment uses a scale of 1-8 across four criterion categories (Thinking and Knowledge Skills, Organizing Skills, Application and Communication Skills, and Evaluating Skills) for each subject area. The emphasis is on developing approaches to learning, interdisciplinary understanding, and preparing students for the Diploma Programme.

Diploma Programme (DP) - Grades 11-12

The Diploma Programme serves students in grades 11 and 12 (juniors and seniors) and represents the culminating experience of IB education. DP assessment combines both internal and external components, with the majority of assessment coming from externally marked examinations administered in May of each year. Students must complete coursework in six subject groups, along with the DP core requirements: Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay (EE), and Creativity, Action, Service (CAS). DP uses a grading scale of 1-7 for each subject, with TOK and EE graded on an A-E scale. To earn the full IB Diploma, students must achieve at least 24 points total, with specific requirements for Higher Level courses. The DP prepares students for university-level academic work and emphasizes critical thinking, research skills, and international-mindedness.

Key Differences Between MYP and DP

While both programs share IB's commitment to developing internationally-minded learners, they differ in several important ways. MYP focuses on building broad-based skills and understanding through interdisciplinary learning and criterion-referenced assessment, with all evaluation conducted internally by teachers. In contrast, DP is more subject-specific and academically intensive, combining internally-assessed coursework with externally-marked examinations that serve as the primary basis for final grades. MYP encourages exploration and skill development through the Personal Project, while DP requires demonstrated mastery through the Extended Essay, TOK, and CAS components. Students and parents should understand that success in the MYP program prepares students for the increased academic rigor and independence required in the DP, as both programs work together to develop the IB learner profile attributes and prepare students for success in higher education and beyond.

Assessment Philosophy

Assessments connect teachers, administration, students, and families with clear information so that educating students becomes a common goal. Continuous feedback allows for better understanding of what is expected and needed for students to be lifelong, successful learners. Through this process, we adjust and modify teaching to better meet students' needs. La Joya Community High School's mission vision and values, in partnership with parents and the community, is to provide students with rigorous educational experiences to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in an ever-changing world. Our mission, vision and values enhance the IB goals of developing inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people by involving all stakeholders in the learning process. Students and parents should focus on the learning process and not necessarily the final grade. Student assessment results are included as part of a review of both teacher and program efficacy. Students will be expected to recall, adapt, and apply their knowledge and skills to respond to new questions and contexts.

General Principles and Practices

Assessment Principles

1. La Joya students participating in the International Baccalaureate program are assessed in multiple ways, including all assessments utilized within our district, state-mandated testing, and numerous teacher-made assessments throughout each year.
2. Students are assessed with reference to IB curriculum, IB approaches to learning, and IB-required student presentations or projects at each level. At the Junior/Senior level, tests are external, created and graded by IB International. Assessment of freshmen and sophomores is internal, both created and graded within the school, and monitored periodically by IB.
3. Assessment data are collected over periods of time, in conjunction with other forms of assessment, to evaluate both student performance and program effectiveness. Assessment emphasis is upon gathering and analyzing information about student performance, with feedback provided to students in a timely manner.
4. Assessment tasks address specific objectives while allowing students access to all levels of achievement.
5. Assessment within IB programs is a continuous process.
6. Departmental collaboration takes place regularly to ensure consistency of assessment practices and procedures, and to develop cross-curricular assessments when possible.
7. All new teachers receive an overview of IB policies from the IB Coordinator and/or the IB Pedagogical Leadership Team.
8. This policy is reviewed annually by IB faculty to ensure it remains current.

Assessment Practices

Acceptable Assessment Strategies

- **Observation and Judgment:** Informal teacher checks for understanding using effective questioning techniques to determine student understanding levels and ensure all students are engaged
- **Selected Response:** Multiple choice, matching, true/false, tests and quizzes that allow teachers to give immediate feedback and students to see academic progress
- **Constructed Response:** Short answer responses
- **Open-ended Tasks:** Given a specific prompt or stimulus, students create original responses such as presentations, essays, diagrams, or problem solutions. These tasks encourage imagination, creativity, and ingenuity, and may include discussions, projects, or writing tasks
- **Performance Tasks:** Oral presentations, debates, demonstrations, and artistic performances that are usually open-ended with multiple possible answers, allowing students to be creative and innovative

- **Process Journals:** Reflection is essential for effective learning. Student reflection and metacognition are essential stages in developing higher-order thinking skills and conceptual understandings
- **Portfolio Assessment:** Records learning achievements and may include reflections or evidence from other assessments to show achievement levels and understanding
- **Hands-on Application:** Students demonstrate practical application of classroom knowledge
- **Criterion Referenced Tests:** Based on course standards to assess student learning levels
- **Homework:** Various assignments to assess student knowledge of standards, designed to enhance classroom learning rather than be tedious or repetitive tasks
- **Formative Assessment:** Measures student understanding to drive effective support and instruction as needed
- **Summative Assessment:** Measures student understanding based on all course standards, administered at the end of each unit of study

Assessment Tools

Assessment tools include but are not limited to:

- Individual progress reports
- Anecdotal records
- Continuums providing visual representation of learning stages
- Rubrics describing different attributes and levels of achievement
- Charts and checklists
- Samples of student work
- Notebooks and lab books
- Paper/pencil examinations
- Presentations and team projects

Environment: Responsibilities of Stakeholders

All students learn at different levels and paces, with varying amounts of prior knowledge and understanding. We incorporate teaching strategies to help students assess their prior knowledge, allowing teachers to work with students in determining understanding levels and navigating new learning experiences. This process allows for differentiated instruction for students who have mastered concepts and those who need additional support.

Teachers Will:

- Use a variety of assessment methods (formative, summative, technology) to create authentic learning experiences
- Provide accommodations and modifications on assessments so all students have equal opportunity to demonstrate learning

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- Plan suitable and rigorous assignments and assessments in alignment with IB guidelines
- Provide assessments aligned with state standards, district standards, and IB curriculum
- Provide students with defined rubrics and task-specific clarifications for each assignment, project, and assessment
- Allow time for students to self-reflect
- Provide quality and timely feedback to students and parents showing growth and areas of concern
- Work collaboratively to maintain consistent assessment practices
- Use best judgment, expertise, and quantitative data when determining achievement levels
- Work with administration to incorporate this assessment policy as needed

Students Will:

- Strive to represent the IB learner profile in learning and assessments
- Meet deadlines as given by teachers, coordinators, and IB
- Work on understanding criteria rubrics and learning objectives for each subject group
- Use reflection to understand content knowledge and skills being developed
- Interact with teachers and peers to grow content knowledge and skills
- Ask for help when needed
- Participate in class discussions, lesson inquiry, group collaborations, and classroom explorations
- Regularly check grades in Synergy
- Use teacher feedback to reflect on progress and set goals for continuous improvement

Administrators Will Ensure:

- All IB assessment materials are kept in secure, locked storage with restricted access
- Training of teachers, administration, and invigilators on IB regulations and procedures for assessments/projects
- All sophomore students are registered for moderation of the personal project
- Time, resources, and focus are provided to teachers for upholding and maintaining the assessment policy
- IB meetings are conducted to review the assessment policy and make recommendations when necessary
- Opportunities for IB professional development are available, with rotation ensuring all core areas stay current with IB curriculum changes
- Parent and student conferences are held with all MYP and DP teachers as needed
- Confidence in teachers' determination of student achievement levels
- Collection and use of data that informs operation and sustainability of IB programs
- Continued support for technology as a key classroom component
- Proper facilitation of IB parent meetings and campus tours

Parents and Guardians Will:

- Encourage their children to pursue academic integrity and good character throughout their IB program
- Monitor their child's grades in Synergy and work with teachers to support academic growth
- Attend IB parent nights and be involved in IB activities where possible
- Be proactive in communicating with teachers, students, and administrators about their child's academic progress in DP and MYP
- Familiarize themselves with the IB program their child is enrolled in, focusing on details regarding achievement requirements
- Contact teachers at any time with questions regarding assessment

Assessment Types and Grading

External Assessment

External assessments enable students to show their work overtime and outside examination environment restrictions. These assessments are evaluated according to established subject area criteria and marked externally by IB examiners, not by subject teachers. External assessments focus heavily on the quality of finished written products in IB subject areas. External assessments are given in May of each year and form the basis of assessment for most courses due to their high levels of objectivity and reliability. They include essays, structured problems, short-response questions, data-response questions, text-response questions, case-study questions, and multiple-choice questions.

Internal Assessment

Internal assessments are student work pieces evaluated by content teachers who give scores that may be moderated by external evaluators to ensure international equality aligned to IB assessment criteria. Internal assessments allow greater student flexibility in exhibiting acquired knowledge and skills according to IB criterion-referenced rubrics, with opportunities to show work overtime outside examination environment restrictions. Teacher assessment is used for most courses, usually in the form of written documents, portfolios, or recorded media, including oral work in languages, laboratory work in sciences, investigations in mathematics, and artistic performances.

Recording and Reporting

Throughout the academic year, IB teachers collect evidence of student achievement by grading summative and formative assessments, projects, and performances using IB program guidelines. Final IB grades are determined by teachers based on the entire body of evidence.

Assessment is:

- Designed by teachers to incorporate a variety of methods
- Geared toward addressing various concepts, attitudes, knowledge, and skills
- Criterion-referenced using guidelines, rubrics, and grading scales established by IB and communicated clearly to students before coursework begins
- Reflective of IB Learner Profile attributes and desired outcomes
- A valuable aspect of lifelong learning

Grading Scales and Reporting

General Grading Scale

Grade	Performance	Grade Points	IB Courses
A (90-100)	Superior	4	5
B (80-89)	Above Average	3	4
C (70-79)	Average	2	3
D (60-69)	Below Average	1	1
F (59 or below)	Failure	0	0

International Baccalaureate Grade Scale for Juniors and Seniors

Unlike the standard grade scale, the IB grading scale for juniors and seniors uses the following numerical scale in each individual subject:

- 7 – Outstanding/Superior
- 6 - Excellent
- 5 – Very Good
- 4 - Good
- 3 – Satisfactory/Mediocre
- 2 - Poor
- 1 - Very Poor

Theory of Knowledge course and Extended Essay follow a letter grade system:

- A – Outstanding/Superior
- B - Excellent
- C - Good
- D - Mediocre
- E - Elementary

International Baccalaureate Grade Scale for Freshmen and Sophomores

The IB for freshmen and sophomores grades based on criterion categories with a maximum numerical score of 8:

Criterion Categories Relating to Skills:

Criterion A = Thinking and Knowledge

Criterion B = Organizing Skills

Criterion C = Application and Communication

Criterion D = Evaluating

Numerical Scale:

1-2 Beginning

3-4 Developing

5-6 Accomplished

7-8 Exemplary

Each criterion is assessed based on IB subject guides.

Data-Driven Instructional Decisions

Exam results, along with other collected assessment data, will drive instructional decisions at La Joya Community High School. Teachers and IB staff work together to analyze data annually, determine areas of concern, and adjust teaching accordingly. Three-year trend data are also analyzed to identify patterns requiring attention. This allows for collaboration within subject areas, vertical articulation, and in-depth analysis. The combination of assessment approaches allows IB staff to collect assessment data over time, in conjunction with other assessment forms, to evaluate both student performance and IB program effectiveness.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

In response to growing technological advances, La Joya Community High School supports IB guidance in the use of Artificial Intelligence. Clear expectations are given to all students regarding individual thinking and work production - any work acquired through AI must be cited and documented in both body text and bibliography/references. AI can be used as a teaching tool to review weak versus strong writing and other content assessments. We use AI to teach ethical and effective use of technological tools.

Following IB expectations, teachers evaluate these four criteria in assessing student work validity:

- Teachers have seen students develop work over time (IB coursework is not designed for single-evening completion)
- Students can sufficiently explain their work, providing confidence in their creation
- Students are clear when quoting others' ideas versus claiming ideas as their own work

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- Final work quality aligns with expected student capability levels

IB assignments continue to be reviewed through online sources and cite-based generators. When new software becomes available to monitor Artificial Intelligence, we will use it to monitor and enhance learning.

Process of Standardization of Assessment

Teachers work collaboratively to create assessments meeting IB course requirements using Professional Learning Teams (PLT) for departmental collaboration and vertical articulation using a whole-school approach. Different departments discuss course requirements and determine assessments reflecting their goals. Multiple and varied assessments evaluate student achievement, providing opportunities for students to apply learned knowledge and skills to real-world applications. Examples include student interviews, peer assessment, self-assessment, collaborative or individual projects, performances, demonstrations, written assignments, labs, open-ended tasks, and presentations using various technological tools.

Formative Assessments

The most important goal of formative assessments in IB courses is checking student learning and progress toward course aims and objectives. These assessments provide teachers with detailed feedback about students' strengths and limitations. Examples include performance observation, journals, self, peer, and group reflection, multiple choice tasks, portfolios, formal written tests, projects, and presentations. Student self-reflection is a key component. Students must identify improvement areas and judge their progress. Homework assignments enhance classroom learning rather than being tedious, repetitive tasks, allowing students to apply class concepts. All IB teachers offer reasonable homework loads of no more than two hours per course, per week.

Summative Assessments

Teacher-created summative assessments are given at unit study completion and may include common assessments across school or district. Teachers use data from these assessments to guide preparation for future study units. IB teachers also use previous years' released IB examinations as course assessments.

Assessment Frequency

Teachers in each content area administer summative assessments at unit study completion and formative assessments more frequently throughout units. Formative assessment frequency depends on curriculum/unit and varies by subject.

Special Needs Accommodations

A differentiated approach allows accommodations for students with special needs, including:

- Extended time for oral or written responses
- Reducing test items or answer choices
- Oral reading of tests
- Small group testing
- Use of calculators or formula sheets
- Use of dictionaries
- Use of assistive technology

IEP and 504 plans guide teachers and students as integral parts of student learning. Students who are English Language Learners have available services to support their learning, following state requirements with necessary adjustments for success.

Personal Project for Freshmen and Sophomores

La Joya Community High School recognizes that action and service are integral pieces in helping students become inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who aspire to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners creating a more peaceful world. The personal project is a student-driven project occurring in sophomore year. Students choose topics to explore through learning new skills/knowledge and create products/outcomes. The personal project provides students with opportunities to consolidate learning and develop important skills needed in further education and life beyond the classroom. The personal project consists of three main components: a project, a process journal, and a report. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 25 hours on their project and participate in an organized showcase event to present their project to peers, teachers, and parents.

Communication and Reporting

Report cards are issued at the end of each grading period. Teachers report grades using Synergy (our online grade reporting system), with grades updated regularly so parents and students can see progress in real time. Synergy will be used to disseminate information and notices regarding grades and progress. Whenever student achievement in IB curriculum and general outcomes are reported to parents, performance levels in each criterion should be communicated. Assessment results should be accompanied by advice for improvement wherever possible.

Progress grades are reported regularly, and report cards are issued each semester. At semester end, respective program coordinators with IB teams discuss whether students are succeeding in their respective IB classes. If students have difficulties, teams discuss success plans and implement them with students. Through this collaboration, if changes are required, families will be contacted, and discussions will follow.

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Students may appeal final decisions. If students are granted approval to stay in the IB program, contracts will be created detailing proposals for conditional admission into appropriate IB study levels. Student status in courses will be reviewed according to contracts at any time. If contracts are not respected, students may be removed from courses with no further appeal possibility.

Diploma Program Assessment Requirements

To earn the IB Diploma, all the following must be met:

- Complete assessments in each IB subgroup (6 areas)
- 2 or 3 Standard Level and 3 or 4 Higher Level courses
- Complete Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course and paper/exhibition
- Complete an Extended Essay with advisor feedback
- Fulfill Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) requirements
- Score at least 24 points total and at least 12 points combined on the top three HL courses

Assessment Requirements

To be a full IB student as a freshman and sophomore, all the following must be met:

- Complete community/service-learning hours and thorough reflections
- Complete Personal Project (requiring minimum 25 hours of dedicated work)
- Be awarded grade of at least satisfactory in all coursework
- Complete two years of world language
- Take an individual and society course in the final year
- Take at least four IB courses

Implementation and Review

This assessment philosophy aligns strongly with IB assessment philosophy. The school aligns the assessment policy with IB requirements and local requirements, including mandated district common assessments in all core areas. Assessment aligns with each subject group's aims and objectives, as well as state standards. Assessment practices follow special education needs of students and their 504 or IEP plans. Unit planners, assessments, grading practices, and task-specific rubrics are designed by teachers.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually by school leadership and the IB Pedagogical Leadership Team. This policy is due to be reviewed in the Spring of 2027.