

ASSESSMENT POLICY
VALENCIA HIGH SCHOOL (IB WORLD SCHOOL 1433)

PHILOSOPHY

The teachers at Valencia High School adhere to the proposition that one of the primary purposes of assessment is to allow students an opportunity to demonstrate what they know rather than to find out what they do not know. We also recognize that students have different learning styles. As such, assessment should incorporate a variety of methods to truly measure a student's mastery of subject matter.

In order to better assess students, the teachers at Valencia High School believe that both students and parents should be informed of the aims and objectives of a course, the methods of assessment of a course, and the teacher's grading policy.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Teachers at Valencia use a range of formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment focuses on assessment as an essential learning process. The purpose of formative assessment is to allow teachers to monitor student progress and ensure that students are learning concepts on a day-to-day basis. It not only allows teachers to modify instruction (for example, re-teaching concepts that students may have difficulty grasping), but also prepares students for summative assessment typically given at the end of a unit or a course. Summative assessment is the teacher's final opportunity to assess learning before moving on to new topics or skills.

For both formative and summative assessment, an emphasis is placed on criterion-related assessment so that a student's work can be measured in relation to identified levels of attainment, rather than in relation to the work of other students.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

While the following list is not exhaustive, it provides examples of formative and summative assessments used in the various courses at Valencia High School.

Formative Assessment

--Homework

--Papers

--Problem Sets

- Quizzes
- Orals
- Questions/Discussion
- Peer Assessment
- Self-Assessment

Summative Assessment

- Projects
- Portfolios
- Papers
- Oral Exams
- Unit Exams
- Final Exams

IB ASSESSMENT

The IBO uses internationally benchmarked criterion-referenced assessments and awards points leading to an IB Diploma (see the “Earning the Diploma” section of the Valencia IB Handbook). The grading guidelines and rubrics used are identical for all IB schools.

Performance in IB courses is based on a 7 point grade scale. A passing score is a 4. A student may still earn the diploma if they score lower than a 4 in a Higher or Standard Level subject (see the “Failing Conditions” section of the Valencia IB Handbook).

Internal Assessment

Internal Assessments are assignments completed during the course and are typically graded by teachers (assignments like the World Literature Papers, Theory of Knowledge Essays, and Extended Essays are externally graded). They are then moderated by the IBO. These assignments can count for up to 50% of the students IB grade. A complete list of all internal assessments for IB courses offered at Valencia High School is provided in the IB Handbook.

External Assessment

External Assessments are essentially the final exams associated with each IB course. These exams are administered in May and then graded by IB examiners. A complete list of all external assessments for IB courses offered at Valencia High School is provided in the IB Handbook.

HOMEWORK

Valencia adheres to the district policy. Typically, homework assignments are related to school work and are used to practice and reinforce skills, standards, and concepts taught during class. Homework, especially in high school, may also be an extension of class work and used in part to measure the level of student achievement. Homework for students in college-preparatory courses should require an average of 30 minutes per academic class of daily homework. AP or IB courses may require up to 60 minutes per academic class of daily homework. There will be some weekend and or long-range assignments. These include, but are not limited to, certain internal assessments and the extended essay.

GRADING AND REPORTING

Part of grading is ensuring that students are aware of how they will be assessed. When applicable, rubrics are provided and discussed before completion of any assignment. IB criteria are always provided and discussed with students. When possible, sample work is provided to help students understand what is expected. Lastly, teachers provide feedback on assignments and exams. Such feedback could be oral, in the form of annotations, or be an overall summative comment.

Courses at Valencia adhere to a 4 point grading scale. Students may receive either an A (4 points), B (3 points), C (2 points), D (1 point), or F (0 points). Grades are based on the various forms of assessment mentioned above. However, the weight given to homework and projects versus in-class testing is dependent on the course and teacher.

Grades are communicated to parents every five weeks with progress reports. Also, with Aeries (our online student information system), students (and parents) can access their academic progress at any time. While it may vary slightly from course to course, an A falls within the range of 90 to 100 percent in a typical Aeries grade book, a B falls within the range of 80 to 89 percent, a C falls within the range of 70 to 79 percent, a D falls within the range of 60 to 69 percent, and an F falls within the range of 0 to 59 percent. In most cases, an A in a course or on an exam is the equivalent of a 6 or 7 on the IB 7 point grading scale, a B is the equivalent of a 4 or 5, a C is the equivalent of a 3 or 4, a D is the equivalent of a 2 or 3, and an F is the equivalent of a 1 or 2.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND THE VALENCIA IB PROGRAM RETENTION POLICY

Academic honesty and integrity are expected at Valencia High School. Students are also expected to maintain a minimum level of academic performance to remain in the IB Program. Both of these policies are distributed to and discussed with students upon entering Valencia High School. These documents are also publicized on the school website (www.vhstigers.org) and in the Valencia IB Handbook.