

AARHUS  
GYMNASIUM

# Assessment Policy



## Aarhus Gymnasium's Assessment Philosophy

At Aarhus Gymnasium, assessment is viewed from a developmental perspective. We continuously and assiduously work to create a constructive culture of assessment, because we consider such a culture to be essential in improving the quality of the work that the students, teachers and management of the school produce. It is the overarching aim of the school to facilitate the academic and personal development of students of diverse types and the school staff strive to support student learning to the very best of our abilities.

We believe that a school should harbour ambitions for its students in order to help them fulfil their potential. When that is said, it is our philosophy to engender growth mindsets in our students so that they will develop academically, despite any setbacks they may face, and continue to enjoy learning after they have completed the Diploma Programme at our school. As IB learners and teachers, we “work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development” (description of the *The IB Learner Profile* attribute ‘Reflective’.) At Aarhus Gymnasium, both formative and summative forms of assessment are thus used as a means of communication between teachers and students in order to improve not just learning, but also teaching practices and methods. Via feedback from assessments, we are able to gauge our students’ current level of achievement, initiate adjustments to the curriculum and revise pedagogical practices to facilitate improvement.

## Tracking student progress

At Aarhus Gymnasium, the development of each student is followed closely by three key figures involved in the work around each class or cohort. This group is made up of the class/cohort team teachers, the student counsellor and either the pre-IB Coordinator or the DP Coordinator. This team meets every six weeks to go over the well-being of the students and cohorts and to discuss potential needs for further development and / or initiatives, for example as outlined in the school’s *Access and Inclusion Policy*. The aim of this collaboration is to help ensure that students remain on the right track of their education and it is targeted not only at the academically weak student, who requires support and guidance in order to stay in school, but the purpose of these status meetings is also to offer support and help for academically strong students.

The pre-IB / DP Coordinator, student counsellors and team teachers for the specific cohort schedule a status meeting following the giving of term grades. At this meeting, students whose grades are low in a certain subject (or subjects) are considered with the aim of providing the necessary help and support to the student. This process results in meetings between the student and their student counsellor and/or Coordinator, after which plans are made and measures taken in collaboration with the reading counsellor and/or subject teachers to help the student improve upon their present grades.

## Formative and summative assessment

**Formative assessment** “represents the process of gathering, analysing, interpreting and using evidence to improve student learning and to help students to achieve their potential” (*Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme*, p. 1.) In the words of the IB document *Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice*, assessment is therefore a “tool or process that teachers can use to improve student learning; it is about assessment **for** learning, rather than simply assessment **of** learning.” (p. 78; our use of bold text for emphasis).

At Aarhus Gymnasium, formative assessment reflects the school's assessment philosophy and enables teachers to amend teaching and learning to suit the developmental needs of students. Danish educational traditions and culture place great emphasis upon student responsibility for learning, but also prescribe that the requisite backing and scaffolding from teachers are in place. Examples of formative assessment used at Aarhus Gymnasium that support these aspects are as follows:

- Peer evaluation and feedback, both teacher-mediated and not, are regularly used in classroom activities.
- Feedback on written work can be given in the form of written comments, screencasts or face-to-face meetings with teachers to encourage reflection on the part of both teacher and student.
- Detailed assessment criteria (such as rubrics, matrices) are introduced to the students and applied formatively, for example during the EE process, in assessing mock exams or other types of assessment.
- The Extended Essay process is organised so that students are asked to reflect upon various aspects of the research process during the process itself and this reflective process is discussed and documented after the concluding viva voce interview. Other opportunities for reflection are embedded in other subjects, including the Group 4 project, TOK, and CAS.

“Formal **summative assessment** is defined as assessment directly contributing to the final diploma qualification” (*Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice*, p. 79.) Aarhus Gymnasium understands the importance of IB teachers gaining an understanding of how formal **summative** assessment is conducted. With this in mind, the school emphasises IB-accredited teacher training and encourages teachers to become IB examiners. Internal assessment of some summative assessments (IAs) requires teachers to mark the work to accepted IB standards. The DP Coordinator is responsible for checking how the marking of internal assessments aligns with grades given by external moderators. Teachers receive component grades and moderator feedback for IAs and, where there is disparity, this is discussed with the DP Coordinator. If necessary, the school also makes enquiries upon results (EURs) to help clarify any discrepancies that are outside of what the school considers acceptable or understandable marking tolerance.

The DP Coordinator is responsible for explaining to staff and students how formal, summative assessment is conducted by the IB, for example with regards to dynamic sampling or ‘holistic’ assessments of Extended Essays. At Aarhus Gymnasium, summative assessment is used regularly in the form of tests and the like, the most significant of these being mock exams at the end of DP1 and in February/March of DP2. Furthermore, summative evaluation is used to ‘screen’ students, an example of which are the tests done in Maths at the start of DP1 to ascertain the mathematical abilities of students. This information is then used to help ensure that students are placed in suitable Maths classes.

Likewise, the pre-IB Coordinator is responsible for explaining to pre-IB staff and students how formal, summative assessment is conducted in the pre-IB. Summative assessment is carried out throughout the year in the form of subject tests, and most notably at the end of year in relation to the pre-IB End-Of-Year (EOY) tests. The purpose of which is to officially mark the end of the pre-IB programme but also to assist in determining whether a pre-IB student is ready to be promoted into the Diploma Programme.

## **Assessing homework**

The purpose of assessing homework is threefold. Assessment of homework serves to monitor a student's progress, to document the work and progress of the student, and to inform the student, teachers, and parents of the student's progress.

Homework is set by the subject teachers in alignment with the aims and objectives of each subject. A clear expectation of the outcome of the homework is provided by the teachers, along with instructions on how to meet the outcome. The homework is assessed according to set criteria, based on the IB subject criteria. The criteria should be available to the students at all time, and they are encouraged to ask questions on how best to fulfil them.

Homework can consist of a variety of tasks, for example reading, research, solving set problems, and handing in projects or assignments. The level of preparation when reading is monitored through the student's participation in class, while handed in work is assessed by the subject teacher.

Feedback, for especially written work, is often given as a written comment by the teacher. As a principle, feedback on written assignments should be given max. 14 days after the assignment has been handed in.

## **Assessment outline for the pre-IB**

The pre-IB is a one-year preparatory course for the Diploma Programme with a structure similar to that of the first year of the Danish STX (General Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate). All teaching is conducted in English, and after its completion it is possible for the students to either move on to the Diploma Programme or to continue in the second year of the STX. Danish educational legislation stipulates that pupils completing the Danish secondary school system, or '*folkeskole*' are obliged to complete this one-year course prior to entering the Diploma Programme proper.

The pre-IB year prepares the students academically and linguistically for the Diploma Programme, and enables the school to introduce the Diploma Programme and its requirements to both students (e.g. by angling pre-IB teaching towards DP requirements, through pre-CAS, and subject-specific presentations by IB teachers) and to parents (e.g. at parents' evening and during an 'open house' event held in January each year).

## **Formative Assessment**

In December, March/April and June each student receives a mark for general proficiency in all subjects. These grades are awarded according to the Danish 7-point grading scale and reflect how well the student's work meets the academic requirements at the given time (see table below)

Mark	Explanation of the mark	ECTS mark	General distribution of passing grades (%) (The Danish Ministry for Children and Education)
12	For an excellent performance	A	10
10	For a very good performance	B	25
7	For a good performance	C	30
4	For a fair performance	D	25
02	For an adequate performance	E	10
00	For an inadequate performance	FX	-
-3	For an unacceptable performance	F	-

In addition to the academic grade, the pre-IB students are awarded an effort grade ranging from A-D (see table below).

<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b> A student making an excellent effort is highly committed to getting the most out of all learning opportunities available.
<b>B</b>	<b>Good</b> A student making a good effort is responsible and hard-working and tries their best almost all of the time.
<b>C</b>	<b>Acceptable</b> A student making an acceptable effort is probably doing most of what they are supposed to do but is failing to push themselves to the most of their abilities.
<b>D</b>	<b>Insufficient</b> A student making an insufficient effort does not take their learning seriously and needs to drastically improve their attitude

The grades are entered in Managebac, and all teachers are encouraged to add comments regarding the student's general performance. On two occasions, however, it is mandatory for the teacher to make explanatory comments, namely when:

- The student drops two grades or more
- The student is awarded a failing grade

At least once following the awarding of grades in November or March/April the subject teachers are to invite the students to a meeting to discuss their academic performances. The aim of this meeting is to make the student understand why the particular grade was awarded and how they can improve. These meetings contribute to the school's *Access and Inclusion Policy* by strengthening the students' motivation in the subjects and also enabling the school's student counsellors to identify any necessary help for specific educational needs.

In January of the pre-IB year, parents and students are invited to attend the annual parent-teacher meetings. Here, parents can discuss the academic performance of the student with the teachers, who begin the meeting by presenting their view on the student's development and achievement.

### **Summative Assessment**

In order to fulfil the requirements of the Danish STX programme and to prepare them for the rigorous assessment in the Diploma Programme the pre-IB students at Aarhus Gymnasium are to complete and receive separate grades in the following components:

- The written test in the General Linguistics (GL) course (October)
- The oral test in the General Science (GS) course (October)
- The History Research Project (HRP) and viva voce (May - June)
- The EOY tests in Maths, English and one science subject (June)

In addition, all subject teachers evaluate the students both formatively and summatively to track the students' development and progress throughout the school year in connection with general coursework and in-class testing.

### **Assessment outline for the Diploma Programme**

The IB Diploma Programme is a two-year upper secondary school programme conducted in English and respected by leading universities around the world. As an IB World School, Aarhus Gymnasium is aware of the importance of transparency and consistency where grades are concerned. The school strives diligently to give accurate appraisals of students, for example, when predicted grades are given to students applying to universities.

Assessment is based on teachers' professional understandings of IB assessment criteria. When in doubt, teachers collaborate with colleagues to ensure that assessment is as accurate as possible. This collaboration both takes place at the regular subject group meetings, and on a colleague-to-colleague basis when the need for such collaboration occurs in everyday life in school. In August, at the first IB meetings of the school year (both subject group meetings and the joint IB staff meeting), the assessment data from the previous May examination session is discussed and analysed.

## Formative Assessment

In December, March/April and June each student receives a mark for general proficiency in all subjects. These grades are awarded according to the IB scale ranging from 7 to 1, with 7 being the highest, and these grades should reflect how well the student's work meets the academic requirements at the given time. 1 and 2 are considered failing grades.

IB mark	Explanation of the mark
7	Excellent
6	Very good
5	Good
4	Satisfactory
3	Mediocre
2	Poor
1	Very poor

The grades are entered in Managebac, and all teachers are encouraged to add a comment on the student's general performance. On two occasions, however, it is mandatory for the teacher to make a comment, namely when:

- The student drops two grades or more
- The student is awarded a failing grade

Assessment in the form of grades is registered electronically in Managebac and students can see the history of the grades given, as well as teachers' comments, during their time at the school. At least once following the awarding of grades in November or March the subject teachers are to invite the students to a meeting to discuss their academic performances. The aim of this meeting is to make the student understand why the particular grade was awarded and how the student can improve. These meetings contribute to the school's *Access and Inclusion Policy* by strengthening the students' motivation in the subjects and also enabling the school's student counsellors to identify help for specific educational needs.

The Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science is responsible for converting IB grades for use in Danish educational institutions. Through its membership of the Danish Association of IB Schools, Aarhus Gymnasium contributes actively to national discussions about how IB grades are converted, appraised and applied for use in Danish educational institutions.

## Summative assessment

To complete the Diploma Programme, IB students are to finish both internal and external assessment in each subject. The internal assessment (IA) is marked by the school's teachers and then moderated by the IB, whereas only external IB examiners mark material for external assessment. IAs consist of both research papers or written products (in Maths, the sciences, Economics, History etc.), engagement activities (Global

Politics) and oral examinations (the languages) and all have to be finished before April in the final year (DP2). The remaining part, and the majority, of the external assessment takes place in connection with the official IB written exams in May of the final year.

In order to prepare the students as well as possible for the written exams, mock exams are arranged in June of the DP1 year and in February / March of DP2.

At Aarhus Gymnasium, the Diploma Programme is taught concurrently. With a view to enabling interdisciplinary understanding and collaboration, the assessment timeline for internal and external assessments, including the constituent phases of the Extended Essay process, TOK deadlines and CAS-related activities, is presented and discussed at a meeting for IB teachers in August. Teachers are informed of any resultant changes to the timeline. Assessment deadlines are subsequently entered into the school's information and scheduling platform.

The deadline calendar for the DP students can be viewed as Appendix 1 of this document.

### Processes for conducting DP exams

As an IB school we have committed ourselves to conducting all exams and exam-related activities according to IB protocol. To ensure that we live up to the IB's high standards of academic integrity, we have the following procedures in place:

- All externally assessed coursework is uploaded to eCoursework by the students themselves, and the work is subsequently checked for authenticity by their teachers before final submission
- All predicted grades and IA marks are entered into IBIS by the teachers and subsequently checked by the IB Coordinator before final submission
- All IA samples required for submission are uploaded to eCoursework and authenticated by the teachers
- All exam papers are stored in a safe location living up to the regulations of the secure storage of confidential examinations material
- All exams (oral as well as written examinations) are conducted according to the rules and regulations outlined in *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures*

### Processes for recording and reporting DP assessment

Upon publication of IB results in July, the DP Coordinator discusses final grades individually with students and their parents if this is required. Any evident incongruities in relation to expected grade levels are noted at this time. The DP Coordinator compiles a spreadsheet of the results and this is sent to the head of school and the school's IB teachers. Component grades for the IB subjects are sent to the respective teachers and, when justified, Enquiries Upon Results (EURs) are made if this is so wished by the graduating student concerned. The DP Coordinator presents the results for the May session at an IB teachers' meeting after school reconvenes in August. The school's board of governors, which contains staff representatives, as well as governors from external institutions, are provided with a presentation of the school's IB results at a meeting in the autumn. To provide context and to help evaluate results, the school benchmarks against the world mean and results from previous sessions in individual subjects and also for IB results in general.

After the May exam session, teachers are encouraged to provide feedback to the IB upon relevant exam papers by completing the online form on MyIB. Subject teachers are given feedback on internal assessment

by the DP Coordinator and are obliged to discuss this feedback with other teachers of the same IB subject groups. Furthermore, teachers are required to read the relevant subject reports for their subjects when these are published and discuss these at subject group meetings in the autumn. This provides a forum for mutually discussing and understanding DP assessment criteria and, if necessary, implementing revised teaching or assessment practices.

### Teacher development, collaboration and the standardisation of assessment

Aarhus Gymnasium's IB teachers are obliged to participate in teacher training appropriate to their subjects as quickly as possible upon teaching an IB subject for the first time. The school follows the IB's cycle of curriculum development and subject teachers participate in relevant workshops that concern updates to curricula and assessment in order to keep up to date with IB assessment regulations and practices. Teachers are expected to inform their students of how they will be assessed throughout the two-year Diploma Programme. Teachers are required to introduce the requirements for completing both internal and external assessment for the subject. As the school embraces moves towards greater implementation of ATL (Approaches to Teaching and Learning), teachers will also be required to register pedagogical progression towards assessment elements on their unit plans.

It is the responsibility of the DP Coordinator to inform teachers of any notifications from the IB concerning changes to IB assessment as quickly as possible. Accordingly, Aarhus Gymnasium sends at least one representative to the annual IBAEM conference and a particular area of focus for Aarhus Gymnasium's representatives during and after the conference is the aspect of assessment.

Teacher collaboration is a highly important aspect at Aarhus Gymnasium. Teachers work together to develop schemes of work and there is a strong tradition for sharing ideas, lesson plans etc. Close collaboration is particularly important in subjects where more than one teacher sends internal assessments to moderation as IAs are moderated as school samples. When this is the case, teachers are required to meet and cross-check their assessment of IAs. As an example, two History teachers, who teach the standard level (SL) and higher level (HL) classes respectively, are required to meet and check that there is standardization between their marking of the school's IAs before these are sent for moderation. This is done using the assessment criteria for the IA as a point of departure. This type of collaboration is mutually beneficial as it leads to a greater sense of security in terms of the marks given, provides new perspectives upon student work and enables teachers to justify marks awarded to external moderators. At a national level, Aarhus Gymnasium's teachers are also regularly involved in collaborative seminars with teachers from other IB schools in Denmark in which assessment practices are frequently discussed.

## Evaluation

### **Student evaluation of teaching**

All class teaching is evaluated twice a year in December and April. On at least one of these occasions the evaluation is to be based on the school's standard questionnaire, which can be found and completed electronically on the school's communication platform. The teachers are encouraged to add questions targeted at their own teaching and curriculum.

The evaluation of the teaching is to be designed in a way that promotes dialogue between the students and the teacher. On the one hand, the school wants students to have a constructive impact on both the planning and content of lessons, but on the other hand we also want students to realise that with involvement comes responsibility and active participation, encouraging them to become actively responsible for their own learning.

Unless anything else has been decided by school management, the teacher in charge is responsible for making conclusions based on the evaluation.

The teacher presents and discusses the results of the evaluation with the students. Then, the teacher saves the evaluation results and brings them to their next appraisal interview.

### **School evaluation**

In an effort to make Aarhus Gymnasium an increasingly attractive place of learning, teaching and working, an Employee Satisfaction Survey is completed every year as well as a Student Satisfaction Survey is completed every other year.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey is carried out by the school's Dialogue Committee, who are also responsible for communicating the results of the survey to the school community, and for deciding which initiatives should be launched to improve satisfaction among school staff.

The Student Satisfaction Survey is carried out by school management. School management is also responsible for communicating the results of this survey to the stakeholders (the Student Council, the teachers and the Dialogue Committee) and for establishing grounds for a dialogue with said stakeholders to improve student satisfaction.

### [Policy Review](#)

This policy was reviewed in June 2020 and will be reviewed again in June 2021 to reflect the requirements of IB Standards and Practices and to include any changes to school practices and/or wishes from school stakeholders. The review will be carried out by the school's Assessment Committee.

### [Committee action plan for 2020-2021](#)

- In the school year of 2020-2021 student representatives should be included in the Assessment Committee
- The committee is to discuss whether it should be mandatory for teachers to insert a comment for all term grades awarded both in the pre-IB and the DP
- The committee is to reflect on ways in which Approaches to Teaching and Learning can be integrated into the Assessment Policy
- In cooperation with the DP coordinator, the committee will develop a new version of the school's online template for teaching evaluation available on itslearning
- There are multiple initiatives in place supporting the weaker students. It will be our focus in the years to come to initiate developmental opportunities for our academically strong students as well

## Bibliography

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## Calendar of deadlines for IB Diploma students at Aarhus Gymnasium

<b>IB1 / DP1</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Assignment / Exam component</b>	<b>Subjects</b>
September	CAS Semester plan	CAS
October	Process Portfolio	VA HL/SL
January	Process Portfolio CAS Semester plan IA Eco (Commentary 1) first draft (mid-Jan)	VA HL/SL CAS ECO HL/SL
February	IA Eco (Commentary 1) final version (early Feb) IA Hi choice of topic and sources (end of Feb)	ECO HL/SL Hi HL/SL
March	Comparative Study 1 draft EE proposals submitted (13/3) EE subject revealed (18/3) IA Hi section one draft (end of March)	VA HL/SL EE EE Hi HL/SL
April	Process Portfolio CAS Interview IA Hi section two draft (beginning of April) IA Hi section three draft (end of April)	VA HL/SL CAS Hi HL/SL Hi HL/SL
May	IA Hi first draft (25/5) IA Phys Intro and choice of topics (15/05) HL Essay Outline	Hi HL/SL Phys HL/SL Eng. A Lit HL
June	Process Portfolio IA Hi final version (16/6) EE first draft (23/6) TOK Exhibition	VA HL/SL Hi HL/SL EE TOK

<b>IB2 / DP2</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Assignment / Exam component</b>	<b>Subjects</b>
August	CAS Semester plan IA Eco (Commentary 2) first draft (end Aug) IA Phys Experiments (by end of August) IA ESS Proposal (mid-August)	CAS ECO HL/SL Phys HL/SL ESS SL
September	Comparative Study 1 draft IA Eco (Commentary 2) final version (mid Sept) IA Phys firsts draft (by end of September) IA ESS first draft (by end of September)	VA HL/SL ECO HL/SL Phys HL/SL ESS SL
October	Process Portfolio Psychology IA first draft (before fall break) GP Film Case study 1 – IA (week before autumn break) EE final version (23/10) IA Phys Final version IA Bio Design (around week 40) IA Bio Lab (around week 43-44) IA ESS final version (end of Oct)	VA HL/SL Psy HL/SL GP HL EE Phys HL/SL Bio HL/SL Bio HL/SL ESS SL
November	Mock exam Psychology IA final hand in (end of Nov.) CAS Interview IA – IOC Da A SL/HL IA- IOC Eng. A HL/SL IA Bio First Draft (around week 48) IA Chem Design (week 45) Deadline for MLI-topic (November 15 <sup>th</sup> )	VA HL/SL Psy HL/SL CAS Dan A HL/SL Eng A HL/SL Bio HL/SL Chem SL/HL Music SL
December	Process Portfolio Screens 1 draft IA Eco (Commentary 3) first draft (early Dec) IA Eco (Commentary 3) final version (before winter break) GP Film Case study 2 – IA (week before winter break) GP IA Engagement activity – First draft (around 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec)	VA HL/SL ECO HL/SL ECO HL/SL GP HL GP HL/SL

	Eng A Lit HL Essay First Draft IA Chem LAB-days (week 49 - maybe better 50?)	Eng A Lit HL Chem SL/HL
January	Comparative Study /final draft GP IA Engagement activity – Final draft (around 7 <sup>th</sup> Jan) GP IA Case Study Cover sheet (around 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan) IA Eco (Commentary 4) first draft (end January) Eng A LL - EA – HL essay – First draft (end of January) Dan A - EA – Written Assignment Final Draft IA Bio Final Version (around week 5) IA Math AI-HL – first draft (middle of January) IA Chem First version (week 3)	VA HL/SL GP HL/SL GP HL ECO HL/SL Eng A LL/HL Da A SL/HL Bio HL/SL Math AI-HL Chem SL/HL
February	Process Portfolio Screens /final draft IA Eco (Commentary 4) final version (end Feb) Eng A LL- EA – HL essay – Final draft (end of February) IA- Maths AA-First draft (beginning of Feb) IA Math AI-HL final version (end of Feb) Eng A Lit HL Essay –Final Draft TOK Essay formal draft (before vinterferie) MLI first draft (February 1 <sup>st</sup> )	VA HL/SL ECO HL/SL Eng A LL/HL Math SL/HL Math AI-HL Eng A Lit HL TOK Music SL
March	Visual arts exhibition Group 2 IAs / orals  CAS final interview IA-Maths AA-Final Draft (Beginning of March) TOK Presentations (Late March, Early April) IA Chem Final version (week 11) MLI final draft (March 1 <sup>st</sup> ) IA Music (March 15 <sup>th</sup> ) - SL Creating and SL Solo Performance	VA HL/SL Orals in Danish B, English B and Spanish ab initio CAS Math SL/HL TOK Chem SL/HL Music SL Music SL
April	Language A Literature self-taught orals	Self-taught Language A Literature