



FELIX-KLEIN-GYMNASIUM

Felix-Klein-Gymnasium

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Assessment Policy

1. General regulations

The assessment practice of Felix-Klein-Gymnasium is based on the requirements and regulations prescribed by the Government of Lower Saxony¹ for oral and written assessments².

a) Philosophy

The philosophy of FKG is that the process of observation, assessing and measuring of learning results has to fulfill a formative and a summative function. The formative aims are: Encouragement, support of self-assessment, and identifying knowledge, skills and understanding that are not yet developed, with the aim of supporting the individual learning progress. Its summative function aims at assessing the results of the learning process at the end of each term to decide on grading and graduating. Learning processes happening at school are regarded to be essential in the individual's development as a lifelong learner.

b) Major Principles

FKG has adopted the following major principles of assessment:

- Assessment must be valid, reliable, and objective.
- Assessment must not solely depend on selective performance tests but consider all aspects and stages of a learning process.
- Assessment is based on written, oral and practical tests or forms of presenting skills and understanding. Active participation in class is seen as an important element of assessment in all subjects.
- Assessment must constitute an opportunity for all students, regardless of their individual developmental level, to show their achievements.
- Assessment performance does not equal student achievement – the individual's holistic development lies at the centre of the FKG mission.

c) Assessment Practices

The specific practices of assessment and its indicators vary from subject to subject. They are agreed upon by teachers, students and parents during the respective department conferences and communicated to the school community.

¹ Decree for Years 5-10 by the Ministry of Education: Die Arbeit in den Schuljahrgängen 5 bis 10 des Gymnasiums. *RdErl. d. MK v. 23.6.2015 - 33-81011 - VORIS 22410*

² Schriftliche Arbeiten in den allgemein bildenden Schulen. *RdErl. d. MK v. 22.3.2012 - 33-83201 (SVBl. 5/2012 S.266) - VORIS 22410 -*

The Heads of Department are responsible for the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the assessment policy in the subject curricula and the annual conferences. As parts of the curricula, assessments are a means to improve the students' performances and to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching procedures. The Heads also introduce and train new teachers to apply the respective subject's practices. New colleagues must be enabled to use assessment as a formative and summative instrument in their classes and will receive induction training by the Heads of Department.

This includes an understanding of a criterion-based method of assessment and a distinction between summative grading and the supporting formative processes that students need for their individual development. Teachers are responsible for introducing their students to the goals of instruction and assessment early on in their school career.

Twice each semester, students discuss their situation with their subject teachers in individual counselling sessions, and receive advice concerning improvement, ranging from general encouragement and practical help to serious warnings.

2. Assessment in the Abitur Programme

The assessment practices in the German Abitur Programme follow the principles mentioned above. Formal assessment in the national system is externally set by the respective school authorities, i.e. the Ministry of Education. The rules and regulations about assessment practices are clearly set in the legal framework published by the ministry (Verordnung über die gymnasiale Oberstufe / VO-GO).

A distinction between formative and summative assessment is made throughout the last two years before graduation (Qualifikationsstufe). Students take 2-4 written exams per school year; classroom participation including group work, quizzes, and individual projects makes up approx. 60% of the final semester grade, class tests make up the remaining 40%.

The departments decide on the focus of the assessment process in team meetings, develop criterion-based mark schemes and evaluate assessment practices in an ongoing process.

It is common practice that subject teachers are asked to hand in samples of student work in class tests regularly in order for the school administration to ensure the implementation of standards. During the Abitur exam period, exam papers are re-marked by other teachers (internally or externally), thus exerting an external moderation on the school's grading. If significant differences in the marking occur, a third check by the local school authorities will be done.

The grading scheme has 6 levels, which are expressed as Grades 1-6 in Years 5-10, and as Grades 15-0 in Years 11-13:

Grade for Years 5-10	Descriptor	Grade for Year 11-13
1	Excellent performance	15-13
2	(Very) good performance	12-10
3	Satisfactory performance	09-07
4	Mediocre performance ³	06-04
5	Poor performance	03-01
6	Very poor performance	00

³ A mark 4 is considered a passing grade in Years 5-10. In Years 11-13, a mark 05 is considered a passing grade.

3. Assessment in the IBDP

The following five points summarize the underlying principles of IB assessment.

IB assessments must:

1. be valid for the purposes for which they are intended. This means they must be balanced between the conflicting demands of construct relevance, reliability, fairness (that is, no bias), comparability with alternatives and manageability for candidates, schools and the IB
2. have a positive backwash effect, that is, their design must encourage good quality teaching and learning
3. be appropriate to the widest possible range of candidates, allowing them to demonstrate their personal level of achievement
4. be part of the context of a wider IB programme, not considered in isolation. Does it support concurrency of learning and the overall learner experience?
5. support the IB's wider mission and student competencies, especially inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators and internationally minded.

These principles are in line with the major assessment principles determined by FKG for the whole school community.

a) Assessment requirements and use of programme assessment criteria

Assessment practices in the IB DP at FKG are in line with the philosophy and principles described under 1. and 2. They are criterion-based and ongoing and make use of summative and formative assessment methods.

Written assessment (mock exams, essays, reflections), oral assessment (presentations, interviews), and practical assessment (Visual Arts) are carried out regularly throughout the two-year programme, which helps the students improve performance in a formative way for the IB Diploma. By assessing the students' progress and reporting it back to them, teachers encourage them to evaluate and improve their performance. Teacher comments and suggestions for improvements enable them to identify their strengths and work on their weaknesses. Students are encouraged to use markschemes and develop a strong focus on criteria. Feedback is given in classroom contexts as well as in individual reflection sessions (see above). Peer evaluation and assessment (of group results, e.g. in the Group 4 project) forms a further layer of assessment in the classroom.

b) Assessment Practices

Formative and summative assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ongoing formative assessment in all subjects – Internal assessment (according to deadlines) in all IB DP subjects – External assessment at the end of the Diploma Programme in all 6 IB DP subjects – Predicted grades which represent expected overall performance, grades 7 - 1
Recording and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff meetings on student development and assessment procedures twice a year – Individual feedback to students on drafts, essays, presentations and other subject-specific tasks – Semester report cards with evaluations of performance in every subject (grades 1–7) and CAS – Parents and students can consult teachers and the IB Coordinator any time for individual feedback and counselling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – School-wide online assessment calendar for transparent planning and stress monitoring. Students can access their individual assessment calendar, which supports them in developing stress and time-management skills.
Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Oral/written/practical tasks aimed at revising, consolidating or applying of syllabus criteria and knowledge – Oral/written/practical tasks aimed at preparing new (aspects of) syllabus criteria – Tasks to help students practice the assessment expectations and standards (see above) – Tasks to help students develop their creative potential and personal skills – Tasks tailored to momentary development goals allowing for an individualized learning process

The cognitive skills tested in written papers cover three levels of performance:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Application and analysis
- Reflection, evaluation, critical thinking, synthesis

In higher-level courses, emphasis is put on higher-order cognitive skills.

The criteria for course grades cover

- The ability to reproduce, apply knowledge, analyse, put forward reasoned arguments, and evaluate
- Problem-solving skills
- Interaction and cooperation with other students
- The use of appropriate methods and language
- Presentation skills
- Quality and quantity of classroom participation (engagement in classroom discussions)

4. Procedures for deadlines and uploads

It is the responsibility of the students and the IB subject teachers to make sure that all internal deadlines are met. Teachers provide the IB Coordinator with all the necessary assessment documentation, predicted grades and the student work handed in for internal assessment (in digital format). The IB Coordinator uploads the predicted and internal assessment grades as well as the externally assessed student work and the samples for external monitoring and is responsible for meeting the IB deadlines. In some cases, subject teachers take on the responsibility to upload their students' work in the place of the IB Coordinator.

Students can receive extensions of the internal deadlines for the drafts and final versions of assessment components based on medical reasons. In case a student does not hand in a draft version of an assessment component by the time published in the assessment calendar, and cannot present a doctor's note on the day or was granted an extension previously, they will not have the opportunity to discuss a draft with the teacher; they can hand in their final draft by the deadline. In case a student has handed in a draft, but does not hand in a final version by the deadline without presenting a doctor's note or having been granted an extension on this deadline, the draft version will be uploaded as the final one.

The IB DP Coordinator distributes final examination papers to the teaching staff after the examinations each year and passes on the internal assessment feedback provided by the IB with the aim to inform teaching and marking practices.

5. Links between the assessment policy and other documents

a) Assessment policy and language policy

The principles and practices of the assessment policy apply to the assessment of student performance in first and foreign languages. Specific criteria that concern the assessment of language proficiency are described in the respective section of the language policy. Most students at FKG are not native speakers of English (their native languages are extremely diverse, only a minority are German natives or bilingual with German) but take the IB DP in English. This is why specific relevance is placed on English proficiency and students are particularly made aware of the role English language skills play in assessment situations (see language policy). Students that fall below the expectations regarding their level of English will not be punished for language mistakes and errors in their assessments in non-language Subject Groups, however, they must understand that communication of skills and knowledge will likely lack clarity and / or depth, which then does affect their grades. Whenever possible, students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning progress in ways and formats tailored to their needs.

b) Assessment policy and admissions policy

Performance levels in the subjects taken in previous years at FKG or other schools serve as an indicator of whether a candidate should be encouraged to enroll in the IB DP. However, the mere grades a candidate can present do not determine whether they are granted a place (cf. admissions policy).

c) Assessment policy and inclusion policy

When it comes to assessing the performance of students each student should be able to show their full potential. Thus, the special needs of students are catered for by technical equipment, an extension of the working time or other suitable means to balance out disadvantages. The parents, students, and teaching and counselling staff work together to ensure that adequate access arrangements are in place. The IB DP Coordinator is responsible for requesting access arrangements for formal IB assessment (cf. inclusion policy).

d) Assessment policy and academic integrity policy

In cases of malpractice or other breaches of academic integrity in student work used for formative, summative or formal assessment, the principles and practices described in the academic integrity policy apply (cf. academic integrity policy). Students are made aware of the decisive role academic integrity plays in assessment and will receive training to develop an understanding of the academic integrity philosophy, the ethical and competent use of technologies, and to avoid common pitfalls.

6. Roles and responsibilities for implementing, standardizing, communicating, and reviewing the assessment policy

Parents and applicants are informed thoroughly about the FKG assessment policy early on in the admissions process during information events and individual meetings with the IB DP Coordinator. At the beginning of Year 1 in the IB DP, students are reminded about the assessment in the IB Diploma by their

tutor (homeroom teacher). The subject teachers are responsible for addressing subject-specific regulations early on and for providing guidance to the students.

Teacher training in Germany involves an intensive 18-month post-university educational training programme which is organized as a combination of didactic instruction and practical experience. Teacher trainees are instructed about assessment procedures during their teacher training and will carry out assessment practices first under the supervision of an experienced teacher and – at a later stage of their training – independently. They may be assessed on their knowledge about and understanding of assessment practices in their final examination (2. Staatsexamen).

All IB DP teachers at FKG have undergone this thorough training. They also attend officially recognized IB workshops in the subject they will teach, at which the principles of IB assessment are presented and put into practice. Guidance and support are provided by other subject staff and the IB Coordinator. The IB Coordinator provides new teachers with access to the relevant IB-related documents (e.g. subject guide, subject support material, recent subject reports, examination mark sheets).

Teaching staff in the IB DP at FKG have the responsibility to stay up to date regarding the IB Assessment Principles and Practice and to familiarize themselves with the subject-specific grading and grade descriptors. They organize internal moderation procedures within their respective IB DP departments.

When a new IB curriculum is introduced, the IB Coordinator ensures that at least one subject teacher attends a subject-specific workshop who afterwards informs their colleagues on changes so that previous practices can be reviewed and new assessment strategies introduced, if necessary. This encourages collaborative planning as well as common assessment practices. Where new general assessment guidelines are published by the IB, the IB Coordinator communicates those in staff meetings and organizes training sessions for the IB DP staff if necessary.

Student assessment appeals procedures

If a student is not satisfied with their grades (Report Cards, Predicted Grades, estimated grades for Internal Assessment Components), they have the right to file a complaint following the procedures detailed in the FKG Complaints Procedures.

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the final award of a grade by the IB, they have the right to request an Enquiry Upon Results as detailed in the IB Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures for the respective year of examination. The IB DP Coordinator will file this EUR with the IB on behalf of the student (see Appendix 2: Enquiry Upon Results Form). The IB DP Coordinator is responsible for informing the students about the different categories of EuRs, the costs and the results of the respective outcomes of the EUR for their final grades and will advise them on the procedure.

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Enquiry Upon Results procedure, they have the right to request an appeal against their grade as detailed in the IB publication Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure. A request for appeal against a candidate's grade will only be considered if the school presents new evidence demonstrating that standard procedures in deriving the grade may not have been correctly followed by the IB and if the school has exhausted all appropriate avenues through the EuR process.

If a student is not satisfied with the inclusive assessment arrangements granted to them or with a decision in respect of adverse circumstances, they have the right to request an appeal as detailed in the IB publication Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure. It is the responsibility of the IB DP Coordinator to guide the student in this process, initiate the appeal and collaborate with the IB in order for the process to result in the best possible outcome for the student.

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Appendix 1 (IB DP Assessment Overview)

Assessment in the IB Diploma Programme

The assessment of performance in the IB Diploma Programme is different from that of the German school system in many ways. The IB assessment scheme shows 7 grades:

- Grade 7 Excellent performance
- Grade 6 Very good performance
- Grade 5 Good performance
- Grade 4 Satisfactory performance
- Grade 3 Mediocre performance
- Grade 2 Poor performance
- Grade 1 Very poor performance

*Grade 4 = Minimum grade required for each subject by the Standing Conference of German Ministers of Education for university recognition of the IB Diploma. One subject may be awarded Grade 3 if in a subject at the same or higher level 5 grades are reached.

The final course grade

is composed of **External Assessment (EA)** (determined by IB examiners) and **Internal Assessment (IA)** determined by the teachers of the school, which can be moderated (altered!) by IB examiners. External Assessment amounts to 50 – 80% of the final grade (differences between individual subjects can occur). Thus, IA carries considerably less weight than in the German Abitur system.

BUT: Assessment by the teacher is much more significant than these percentages seem to express: Shortly before the final written exams, teachers are required to submit Predicted Grades (PG) to the IB, and universities often require PGs, too (see below).

Predicted Grades

are determined on the basis of mock exams and the subject-specific types of IA, with classroom participation considered to a lesser extent. They are supposed to give honest and reliable information on the expected exam results, to students, parents, and institutes of tertiary education or employers. Many universities require PGs well before the final examinations (sometimes in November or December before the exam session). They also determine chances to receive scholarships. Deadlines for submitting PGs differ from country to country, even from university to university. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure deadlines are met and the required information is sent to universities in time. Teachers will submit PGs to the IB in April before the exams.

Semester report cards (“Zwischengutachten”)

are solely based on assessment by the teacher. They are mainly a form of feedback to parents and students. When calculating the PGs, report card grades are of some significance. Report Cards are issued at the end of each of the four semesters and have to be signed by a parent / legal guardian, even in case a student is of legal age. Signatures must be shown to the tutor (when classes are resumed) to prove that parents are informed of the student’s standing. For the calculation of the report card grades, the following are considered: mock exams, the teacher’s evaluation of EA and IA, written homework and classroom participation.

Award of the Diploma and Recognition of the Diploma in Germany

All IB DP students at FKG enroll as Full Diploma Candidates. Should a candidate not obtain the full Diploma, they will still receive IB Diploma Certificates automatically.

FKG offers only those subjects that are recognized by the German authorities (Kultusministerkonferenz) to guarantee access to the German tertiary education sector.

The IB Diploma is awarded to a candidate if the following conditions are met:

- CAS requirements are met.
- The candidate has achieved at least 24 total points.
- A grade has been awarded in all subjects, TOK and the EE.
- A grade of at least a 2 has been awarded in all subjects
- The candidate does not have a grade 2 awarded 3 or more times.
- The candidate does not have a grade 3 awarded 4 or more times.
- The candidate has at least 12 points on HL subjects. (For candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
- Candidates have at least 9 points on SL subjects. (Candidates who register for two SL subjects must be awarded at least 5 points at SL).

For recognition of the Diploma in Germany, a grade of 3 can only be awarded in one subject, and needs a 5 in another subject of the same or higher level to balance out the 3.

For applications to university courses with restricted access, the average grade for an IB Diploma will be calculated in the state in which the certification is evaluated. The calculation of the average grade (N) will be based on the total points (P) and on a maximum of 42 points (Pmax) and a minimum of 24 points (Pmin). Any extra points achieved will also be taken into consideration. Points totals between 42 and 45 will be equated to the German average grade of 1.0.

The calculation is made using the following formula:

$$N = 1 + \frac{3 \text{ Pmax} - P}{\text{Pmax} - \text{Pmin}}$$