

Villanova Preparatory School

IB Assessment Policy

Philosophy

Villanova Preparatory uses the assessment of learning, both formative and summative, to guide instructional decisions and to evaluate student learning. Assessment of learning provides a measure of how students are achieving the academic standards established by the school and the International Baccalaureate Programme. Formative assessment occurs regularly and is integrated into the teaching/learning process, and results are analyzed to improve student learning. Summative assessments are used to measure student progress against established benchmarks and standards. Formative and summative assessments provide teachers and administrators insight into effective teaching strategies and students' understanding of the curriculum presented.

Student progress toward meeting academic standards is regularly reported to stakeholders. Teachers report student progress through weekly postings on Edline, an online portal reached through the school's website, which is readily accessible to students and parents. Administrators and counselors also regularly review grade postings for all classes. Students with guidance from their teachers are encouraged to review and reflect on their progress and set individual learning goals for themselves and identify strategies to reach those goals.

Assessment Practices

Assessment is used to support student learning. To the end teachers use a variety of methods to determine student achievement. Formative and summative assessments used in both the college preparatory curriculum and the IB courses include: *multiple-choice quizzes and tests, structured problems, short and extended response questions, data-response questions, text-response questions, case-study questions, essays, research papers, in-class individual and group projects, individual and group oral presentations, class discussions and debates, multimedia presentations, historical investigations, mathematical investigations, experimental investigations, artistic performances, studio work, and written reflections*. Formative assessment is valuable in the delivery of all courses at Villanova, providing insight into student progress, and informing the planning of course content and delivery. Summative assessment indicates student progress toward criterion established by academic standards for each grade level in each course.

Grading/Marking

All Villanova Preparatory School courses, both college prep and IB courses, utilize the same grading scale. This grading scale is published in the Villanova Student Handbook. College-level and honors courses earn an extra grade point. The Villanova Preparatory School grading scale is as follows:

A = 90-100	I = Incomplete
B = 80-89	P = Pass
C = 70-79	
D = 60-69	
F = 59 and below	

Each academic department, with input from department members and administrators, has written grading policies that teachers use in calculating grades. These policies are explained to the students and parents in the course syllabus provided by each teacher at the beginning of the semester. Teachers new to Villanova Preparatory School are given an orientation to the school's philosophy of assessment and reporting student progress by administrators and department chairs.

Recording and Reporting

Student progress as noted by course grades is reported to parents and students on a regular basis through Edline, the online portal reached through the school's website. Teachers' class web pages, also accessed through the school website, provide information about assignments and assessments that are used as indicators of student progress. Teachers update grades online weekly so that students and parents have information about student progress in a timely manner. Report cards are issued twice during each semester, at the tenth week of school and at the conclusion of the semester. Families receive report cards by email, and may request a copy of their student's transcript at any time.

Homework

The purpose of homework at Villanova Preparatory School is to reinforce and practice learning, or to preview material in preparation for class instruction. Homework assignments may consist of written responses to questions, text to be read and annotated, or study in preparation for class discussion, assessments, or group work. Generally students at Villanova Preparatory School spend two to three hours at home each night on homework. Teachers are intentional in assigning homework so that tasks are clear, purposeful, and support the learning goals of the class. Homework also provides an informal way to assess student learning.

IB Assessment and Special Educational Needs

Sensitive to the special needs of some students, Villanova Preparatory School offers adjustments to the testing environment in order to allow the student to best demonstrate his or her understanding of the material. This is in accordance with the statement of IB policy, "...that all students should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard assessment conditions could put a student with special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing him or her from demonstrating his or her level of skill and knowledge attainment, special arrangements may be authorized." Such arrangements follow the principles and guidelines of the IB Diploma Programme as set forth in the IB document entitled "Candidates with Special Needs" (IBO, 2009). *Parents may access further information about possible special arrangements for their student on the Villanova IB website in the document entitled, "General Regulations: Diploma Programme."*

The IB Coordinator will inform the IBO using the appropriate procedures and providing the necessary documentation of the special needs of students requiring assessment accommodations. Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision from the IBO, the student, parents, and relevant teachers will be informed.

Assessment Policy Implementation, Evaluation, and Review

IB teachers are expected to design assessment tasks that reflect the values written in the *IB Assessment Policy*. IB teachers are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities through the IBO and other relevant organizations with the purpose of informing their overall instructional practices, which includes improving their use of various types of assessment. The IB Coordinator ensures that all IB teachers benefit from teacher training workshops in accordance with IBO regulations.

The Villanova Preparatory School IB Assessment Policy is a working document that requires regular review and update to ensure continued relevance. In order to facilitate the complex dynamic between teaching and learning, the IB Assessment Policy will be reviewed annually by the faculty, IB Coordinator, Board of Directors, and other school community members as appropriate. The IB Assessment Policy is communicated to parents and staff in print and as part of the IB Parent Handbook, and online on the Villanova IB Diploma Programme website.

Adapted from:

Bishop Amat Memorial High School IB Assessment Policy

Villanova Preparatory School, Student Handbook

Villanova Preparatory School, Faculty and Administration Handbook

Villanova Preparatory School, WCEA/WASC Self-Study Report (2011-2012)