

Germantown High School International Baccalaureate Assessment Policy

Mission Statement

The mission of Germantown High School is to educate all students in a supportive, challenging, and disciplined environment to become lifelong learners who are a credit to themselves and society.

School Beliefs

As a school community we believe:

- All students can learn, achieve, and succeed.
- Students learn in different ways.
- A safe and physically comfortable environment fosters student learning.
- A student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff.
- Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.
- Students, teachers, parents, school staff, and the community share the responsibility for the support of the school's mission.
- Exceptional students require special services and resources.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.
- Embracing cultural diversity can increase students' understanding of different peoples and cultures.

Teacher Responsibilities

At Germantown High School, we believe that all students have the ability to achieve at high levels. The faculty and staff of GHS are committed to:

- Exposing students to a rigorous and challenging curriculum that is aligned to the standards, practices and content expectations of the IB Diploma Program as well as the established State and District Education Standards.
- Providing students with as much time and expert instruction as is needed for students to achieve at high levels in each of their classes.
- Encouraging students to put forth their best effort in class and to seek out assistance, from a variety of resources, when needed.
- Enabling all students to demonstrate what they have learned, assessing their progress, and identifying specific strategies to maximize their potential.
- Maintaining a productive and positive learning environment.
- Grading all assignments in a timely manner and then reviewing these assignments with the class to maximize student learning.

Student Responsibilities

In accordance with the attributes of an IB Learner, students at Germantown High School strive to:

- Attend school each day and be a respectful participant in class at all times.
- Adhere to the academic honesty policy, maintain personal integrity and follow ethical behavioral practices.
- Apply critical thinking skills to a wide range of issues using inquiry, logical reasoning, and thoughtful consideration.
- Collaborate with others in a respectful manner while appreciating varied perspectives, cultures and histories.
- Search out new opportunities for educational and personal growth while exploring connections across various disciplines of study.
- Strive to make a positive impact on the local, national or international community by making a commitment to personal dignity, empathy and service.

This document outlines the principles, policies and indicators of effective assessments and the practices and strategies that are utilized to maximize student achievement at Germantown High School.

Assessments: Principles and Practice

Germantown High School recognizes that learning and assessment are fundamentally interdependent activities that are essential in providing a measure of student achievement. The characteristics of learning and the methods of assessment must be clearly articulated. We affirm the value of a variety of assessments in holistic education and are guided by the following statements.

Learning is:

- dependent on prior knowledge and developmental in nature.
- influenced by gender and socio-economic, cultural and linguistic factors.
- shaped by well-informed and purposeful instructional approaches.
- enhanced by direct experience and compelling situations.
- ongoing throughout life.

Assessment is:

- designed by teachers to incorporate a variety of methods and to be relevant and motivating to students.
- geared toward appraisal of a broad range of concepts, attitudes, knowledge and skills appropriate to an international and increasingly complex world.
- criterion-referenced using guidelines established by the IBO and made clear to students by teachers before coursework begins.
- reflective of the attributes and desired outcomes of the IB Learner Profile.
- a valuable aspect of lifelong learning.

Assessment Practices

Equity in assessment is afforded through fair, meaningful, and consistent opportunities for students to demonstrate their mastery of concepts and skills. Assessments are checked for validity, reliability, and comprehensiveness and include psychometric, essay, and performance tasks across the curriculum, departments and grade levels.

Four categories of assessments are utilized at GHS:

- Placement—used to determine specific knowledge or proficiency in a subject area for the purpose of assignment to appropriate classes
- Diagnostic—used to determine students’ understanding in a subject area for the purpose of directing instructional practice with the whole group or individual
- Formative—used to monitor student learning in order to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by both teachers and students for improvement; this type of assessment allows instructors to address issues immediately.
- Summative—used to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it to some standard or benchmark.

These categories of assessment types are all criterion-referenced; that is, the student results are determined by performance against set standards, not by each student’s position in the overall rank order. The assessments utilize a variety of styles: multiple-choice style quizzes and tests, short and extended response questions and essays, research papers, projects, portfolios, class discussions, group and individual oral presentations, individual oral commentaries, data-response questions, case-study questions, multimedia presentations, skits and performances, problem solving teams, group critiques, historical investigations, experimental investigations, sketchbooks, investigation workbooks, studio work, fieldwork, response journals, and reflection logs. An accurate measure of the student’s true achievement is continuously sought to inform teaching and learning. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program also utilizes the same assessment types for either the external or internal assessments. Teachers will inform students which criteria and assessment styles will be used to evaluate their work for both the internal and external assessments.

Differentiation of instruction and assessment occurs when necessary for students to demonstrate their understanding. Teachers utilize a variety of teaching strategies and assessment opportunities to account for the variety of learning styles and the diverse backgrounds of the students.

Ongoing class discussions and private conferences take place throughout each course. Peer and self-assessments help students to develop a range of effective strategies as they actively build their understanding of new concepts and learn how to judge the quality of coursework against well-defined criteria.

Grading/Marking

IB classes are assessed through both internal and external assessments. All assessment procedures are designed to value both process and content and to achieve a balanced assessment of a student’s performance. The assessment procedure emphasizes understanding and application of knowledge, not just the student’s ability to regurgitate information.

Assessment for the IB diploma is criterion-referenced, not norm-referenced. This means that students are not placed onto a normal distribution curve with a set portion of students deemed as having failed the course. Knowledge and skills are assessed according to the student's own achievement against a set of criteria.

In order for students to have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, a variety of assessment methods, which take into account the different learning styles and cultural experiences of students, are used. All subjects are externally examined, which means that an international grading team evaluates the student's work. All subjects also require internal assessment, which involves an external moderation procedure to ensure that uniform standards are maintained.

All forms of assessment are designed to measure the extent to which the individual student has met the aims of the subject. Therefore, the assessment tools go far beyond testing the ability to memorize isolated facts and bits of information. The assessment tools measure what students have acquired in terms of their ability to integrate knowledge, apply academic skills, and effectively communicate their understanding of subject matter.

The Shelby County School's grading scale is used along with subject specific IB assessment rubrics to assess student work. Both are given to students at the beginning of each course and are applied to all assessments.

The IB Diploma Program uses the following scale for each of the subject areas:

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

The IB Diploma is awarded with a total exam score of 24-27 under these conditions:

- No grade of 1 on any exam.
- No grade of 2 on HL exams.
- No more than one grade of 2 on SL exams.
- No more than three grades of 3 on any exams.
- At least 12 points earned on HL exams.
- At least 9 points earned on SL exams.
- Successful completion of CAS, ToK, and Extended Essay.

The IB Diploma is awarded with a total exam score of 28 or above under these conditions.

- No grade of 1 on any exam.
- No more than two grades of 2 on any SL exams.
- No more than one grade of 2 on any HL exam.
- No more than three grades of 3 on any exams.
- At least 11 points earned in HL exams
- At least 8 points earned in SL exams.
- Successful completion of CAS, ToK, and Extended Essay.

Additional points toward the diploma are available from a candidate's combined performance in the extended essay and theory of knowledge requirements.

ToK/EE	A	B	C	D	E
A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition
C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition
D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition
E	Failing condition				

Students will be able to access exam scores at <https://candidates.ibo.org> from 1200 hours GMT during the first week of July. In late May, the IB Coordinator provides all students who are registered for an IB exam a document containing a unique username and PIN needed to access IB exam scores. Students are responsible for accessing results from the above website. The IBO will not discuss results with candidates, their legal guardian(s), or representative(s). If a student has an issue regarding IB exam results, the student must contact the IB coordinator for assistance.

Students who fail to satisfy the requirements for the full diploma will be awarded certificates in each successfully completed subject area.

IB students must formally request that exam results be sent to a specific college or university. The IB Coordinator will electronically submit all requests. The IBO will send exam scores to the designated institutions.

Recording and Reporting

Shelby County Board of Education policy in accordance with the Tennessee Uniform Grading System establishes the grading system for grades 6-12.

Germantown High School Report Cards are based on a scale of:

- A 93-105
- B 85-92
- C 75-84
- D 70-74
- F 0-69

Students who are enrolled in Honors classes receive an additional 3 points added to each quarter average and students who are enrolled in IB classes receive an additional 5 points added to each quarter average. Therefore, it is possible to have grades in excess of 100 points.

Report cards are sent to parents at the end of each nine-week period. Parents must be notified within a report card period when a student is not doing acceptable work. Parent-teacher conferences should be held for gaining parental support in an effort to improve student performance.

Grades given at the end of each nine-week period will be determined by the average of daily work, oral and written assignments, and tests. A minimum of twelve grades for the nine-week period should be recorded for each subject. Fifty percent of the twelve grades should be earned and recorded by the interim of the nine-week term. This gives the teachers the basis for the grades at the end of the grading period. The teacher will assess all student assignments and weigh the value of grades given for various assignments within the nine-week term in computing the term grade. This procedure will enable the teacher to allow for individual student differences in the grading process.

Teachers record grades on SMS PowerTeacher which provides online, daily access to students and parents. Grades are updated on PowerTeacher every three days. In addition, teachers record grades in a standard record book. Both written and oral feedback affirms progress, diagnoses needs, evaluates achievement, and assists in accountability.

Progress reports are issued in the middle of each grading period at approximately four and one-half weeks. Report cards are four times a year on a nine-week basis. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. As needed, teachers consult with parents on an individual basis either electronically or via phone.

Homework

Homework refers to activities prepared by students outside of school hours that are a properly planned extension of learning opportunities. It includes a wide variety of learning activities related to the curriculum under study.

The time spent by Germantown High School students on homework may vary depending on particular course loads and the nature of the assignments. Homework tasks are designed to provide optimal practice with a range of cognitive skills identified in course outlines. Regular review of homework promotes positive results in formative and summative assessments. Peer assessments and class discussions are constructive instruments in homework review.

Academic honesty is strictly enforced following the guidelines set forth in the Academic Honesty Policy. Each student who is accepted in the GHS IB Program will sign the GHS IB Academic Honesty Policy which each student and parent agree to uphold. The school regularly uses the online Turnitin service to verify authenticity of work submitted. Evidence of malpractice is discussed with the student and the parents and may result in any of the following consequences:

- The teacher will award no credit for the assignment.
- The teacher will notify the parent/guardian.
- The teacher will submit a referral to the IB Coordinator.
- The IB Coordinator will hold a conference with the parent/guardian and student.
- The IB Coordinator will enter the incident into the student's cumulative file.
- The IB Coordinator may recommend removal from any/all honor societies of which the student is a member.
- The IB Coordinator may recommend dismissal from the IB Program.

In addition, the school has a site license for the online Turnitin.com service. Students and teachers regularly use Turnitin.com as a means for submitting assessments electronically, self-assessment of work, and as a tool to ensure academic integrity of the work.

Integration and Evaluation of Assessment Policy

All International Baccalaureate teachers at Germantown High School are expected to meet once a month after school for an IB teachers meeting. During these meetings the IB Coordinator updates and informs teachers on accomplishments, concerns, updates, and events related to the IB Program. Teacher input and collaboration takes place during this time. The OCC is available to teachers and used regularly to evaluate instruction and to share best practices with colleagues around the world.

Teachers consult the appropriate IB subject guides along with the school's written IB Curriculum Guide available in print and on the school's website. Markschemes of previous exams are provided annually to guide teachers in evaluating their methodology, course content, and students' abilities.

When there is a need for an in-depth review of the marks awarded, an enquiry upon results is requested from IBO. This feedback, along with annual subject reports, provides further insight into IBO assessment standards.

As the IB Program moves forward, we commit to improvement and continuous self-evaluation. We will, as a faculty, revisit this assessment policy at the end of each school year.

Each of the areas of assessment, admissions, and language instruction are integral to providing GHS students with a comprehensive education.

Admissions Policy

Applicants to the Germantown High School International Baccalaureate Program are asked to meet the following requirements:

- Students must submit a copy of the most recent comprehensive report card showing A's and B's, with no more than one C as a semester average in academic subjects. Students must also have no D's or F's as a semester average in any subject.
- On a current nationally normed or TCAP Achievement Test, eligible students must score at or above the 80th percentile on the Reading/Language Arts subtest or its equivalent AND on the Mathematics subtest or its equivalent. Submitted achievement test scores must be from within the past academic year.
- On the Explore, PLAN, or ACT, scores in Reading, English, and Mathematics must be equivalent to the 80th percentile or higher.
- On the PSAT or SAT, applicants' scores on the Critical Reading, Writing Skills, and Mathematics sections must be equivalent to the 80th percentile or higher.
- Satisfactory conduct grades and attendance records (including tardies to school and each class) are also required. A total of more than 15 absences and/or tardies is considered unsatisfactory.
- The IB Coordinator will contact students who qualify for the program to schedule a personal interview and writing exercise.

Teacher Training

New teacher training and teacher update training are a constant priority and a critical component to student success. Each year the Shelby County School district allocates enough money for approximately 4-6 teachers to be trained. We have found this level of funding to adequately meet our needs for training. This training prepares teachers new to IB for work in IB schools and it refines and refreshes skills for those familiar with the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Collaboration between and within GHS faculty, as well as networking between other IB schools is encouraged to ensure the sharing of ideas, solutions, and concerns. Professional development days are offered that are dedicated to the collaboration of all district IB teachers.

All new IB subject teachers meet with the IB coordinator for an overview of the curriculum, practices, and assessments before classroom instruction begins.