

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

A) DURING THE PRE-DIPLOMA YEAR

The Diploma Programme is preceded by a pre-Diploma (pre-DP) year aiming at developing the students' general knowledge as well as study and language skills. The pre-DP students follow the modified version of the Finnish national curriculum (LOPS2016) and the language of instruction is English. From August 2021 onwards, the schools follow the new National core curriculum for general upper secondary schools (LOPS2019). The evaluation of the pre-DP year follows the principles of the National core curriculum for general upper secondary schools:

“Evaluation is always linked to objectives and the context. In high school education, evaluation has two main tasks:

- 1) Supporting and guiding learning. This task is carried out by the course feedback during formative assessment. Feedback describes the student's progress in relation to the set goals. This is an important part of student-teacher interaction. Feedback during the course as well as self-assessment and peer review during high school studies with the support of a teacher help students understand their own learning, identify their strengths, correct their mistakes and develop their work so that the goals set for learning can be achieved.*
- 2) Make the achievement of the goals set for competence and learning visible. This task is carried out by the assessment of competence and learning, summative judgment. Competence assessment is based on verified evidence of how well and to what extent the student has achieved the objectives set for the course. The course grade is determined by the objectives of the subject, the core content, broad competence objectives defined in the subject and according to the criteria.”* (LOPS2019 National core curriculum for upper secondary schools)

B) DURING THE DP STUDIES

The student's assessment in the Diploma programme is a two-year continuum, where feedback from the teachers helps and supports the student's individual goals as well as the objectives set by the IBO in all subjects and core elements. As a part of effective assessment, the study program is a thoroughly planned entity that helps students find the ethical and academical ways to learn about the world around them. The aim of the assessment is to make the objectives of learning transparent. The large variety of assessment methods within and between subjects support students' individual reflection and give them tools to develop their learning strategies. The assessment is transparent and equal. It takes into account the student's individual strengths and challenges to give every student equal possibilities to be successful in their studies.

The purpose of the assessment is to give the student and the teacher a realistic idea of the student's knowledge and subject specific skills and to support their growth to become an active member of modern society.

2. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

A) Assessment practises during Pre-DP studies

The school year in the upper secondary school is divided into five periods of equal length (7-8 weeks). When a student has studied 3 x 75 min lessons a week through one period, they have done one course in the subject in question. Students complete 25-30 courses in the pre-DP year depending on their language choices.

Table 1. Subjects and number of courses offered during the pre-DP year.

Subject	Number of courses
Language A (mother tongue/best language)	3
Language B: German/French	2 (advanced)/4(beginners)
Language B English (for students not having English as their language A)	3
Language B: Finnish (Students of International section)	3 (advanced)/4 (beginners)
Language B: Swedish (Finnish students)	4

Mathematics (1*)	4 (Students aiming to choose Math AI SL in the DP) or 5 courses (Students aiming to choose Math AA SL or HL in the DP)
Natural Sciences	Biology 1, chemistry 1, physics 1-2(1**) Integrated Science 1, Biochemistry course 1 (1**)
Humanities	History 2, Psychology 1, Social Studies 1, Academic thinking skills 1, World today 1 (1***)
Other Subjects	Visual arts or Music 1, Physical Education 1

1*) Students who aim to choose Mathematics AI SL in the DP study at minimum 4 courses. Students who aim to choose Mathematics AA SL or HL in the DP study 5 courses.

1**) The second course of physics or the biochemistry course is mandatory for the students.

1***) Mandatory for students not studying Swedish

Students are assessed five times a year at the end of each study period. The grade reports are available for the students and guardians in Wilma*) after the period has finished. The courses are evaluated on a scale of 10 (excellent) to 4 (fail). If all course work is not submitted the student is awarded the grade T (= Supplementary). Teachers are not required to accept work which is turned in late.

Students can try to raise a course grade once by signing up for a retake exam via Wilma regardless of which grade they have received. The dates for the retake exams can be found on the school's website. Students can also retake exams on other dates, if agreed with the teacher. If the student is not able to improve the course grade in the retake exam, the student must study the course again to get a higher grade.

For requirements to continue the studies in the Diploma Programme, please see the admission policy.

*) Wilma is a secured electrical platform that is used for secured communication between students, teachers, school staff and guardians.

B) Assessment practises during the Diploma Programme studies (DP1 and DP2)

The school year in the upper secondary school is divided into five periods of equal length (7-8 weeks). When a student has studied 3 x 75 min lessons a week through one period, they have done one course in that subject. HL students study a total of 9 courses of the subject (>240 h) and SL students study a total of 6 courses of the subject (>150 h).

Turun normaalikoulu follows the grading system of the Diploma Programme in the subjects, grade 1 being the lowest and grade 7 being the highest grade. If the student fails to submit the coursework, they will be awarded grade T (Supplementary) which means that the student has not done all the coursework. As soon as the student submits this work, the grade T will be changed to a numerical grade 1-7. In the end of DP2, the student cannot receive a predicted grade in a subject for which they have one or more grade T. In some cases, the actions to support the students' learning, may be needed. (Please see the Inclusion policy.)

The student receives grades for the courses that they have studied in each period. Each course of the subject is assessed separately showing the student's performance during that period. A course is assessed once it has been completed. All grades are marked on Wilma. If a student has inclusive access arrangements, those are also recorded in Wilma (please see the Inclusion policy.) Course grades are available for students and guardians in Wilma after the period has finished. Guardians have access to Wilma until the student is 18 years old. After that, the guardians can access Wilma if the student gives them permission.

Formative assessment is based on the objectives defined in the beginning of each course. The methods of assessment are also defined, and are available in writing for the students, together with the objectives. The school uses a variety of different digital platforms (e.g. Moodle, Edmodo, TEAMS, Managebac, Class Notebook) that the teachers use for sharing the materials with the students, including the information about the assessment.

The methods of formative assessment of a course contain a large variety of assessment tasks, which are defined by the teacher together with the students in the beginning of the course. The formative assessment of a course may consist of written tests, self and/or peer evaluation, reflection, internal assessments, oral presentations, learning diaries and/or lesson and homework activity as a part of the course assessment. Students are expected to do their schoolwork regularly, including homework. The teachers may record the homework and lesson

activity and this is a part of the course assessment. The methods of assessment in the consecutive courses within a subject vary, so that every student has the possibility to both show their knowledge and on the other hand to develop the weaker parts of their performance.

Teachers aim at positive, constructive, encouraging and supportive evaluation and feedback. The teachers of subjects and core elements give the students individual feedback both orally and in writing. An assessment discussion can be arranged during the studies or at the end of the studies between the subject teacher and the student. If needed, the guardian is invited to this assessment discussion, too. In addition, every student has their own homeroom teacher, with whom they meet regularly. With the homeroom teacher, the student reflects on their studies on the whole, and sets goals for their studies. The homeroom teacher also has the possibility to meet with the student's guardians, which provides a wider perspective to the student's life. These meetings are arranged if requested by the student, a guardian or the subject or homeroom teacher. The guidance counsellor and multi-professional student welfare team (school nurse, psychiatric nurse, psychologist, school social worker and special education teacher) are also available for the discussions.

There are two major exam weeks ("Mocks") during DP2, one in the autumn (October) and the second one in the spring (March). These mock exams model the final exams and summarise all topics of each subject studied so far. The arrangements of the mock exams are very similar to the final exams, e.g. the durations of all papers, reading time and announcements follow the guidelines of the final exams. The exams follow the length and difficulty level of the final exams in the areas studied so far, so the students have the opportunity to practise e.g. their time management in the examination. During the mock exams, the students do not have regular lessons, they have only the exams following a separate timetable. The mock exams are part of the course assessment in that period.

The school regularly organizes parent's evenings, where both the homeroom teacher and the DP coordinator are present. The Diploma requirements as well as the general principles of the assessment during the studies are shared with the school community on the school's website (<https://sites.utu.fi/tnk/>).

After the last mock exams, students receive a Predicted grade report, which is also a temporary report used in university applications. In this report, all predicted grades and core elements are

considered. If the student has one or more T in their results, the school does not issue the Predicted grade report.

The final exams are held in May. To achieve the Diploma, the student must fulfil the following requirements (*IBO*; Assessment procedures 2022):

“Conditions for the award of the IB Diploma:

- Total points 24 or more
- At least 12 points in HL subjects
 - In case of 4 HL subjects, three highest grades count
- At least 9 points in SL subjects
 - In case of 2 SL subjects, 5 points is the minimum
- There is no grade E awarded for TOK and/or EE
- There is no "N" awarded for TOK, EE or any subject
- There is no grade 1 awarded in any subject
- There is no more than 2 grade 2s awarded
- There is no more than three grade 3s or below awarded
- CAS requirements have been met.
- The candidate has not received a penalty of academic misconduct from the final committee.

In addition, all pending fees need to have been paid. The final exams cost approximately 600 euros.

Failing to meet one or more of the criteria above means no Diploma is awarded.

Every year, after the issue of results in July, the school closely examines the dependence between the final grades and the predicted grades given by the school to be able to detect the inconsistencies if there are any. The first IB meeting in the autumn is focused on this topic. The inconsistencies are critically discussed, and these discussions will result in a change of assessment methods.

3. THE LINKS BETWEEN THE ASSESSMENT POLICY AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

This document should be read together with the following documents and sources:

- School website: <https://sites.utu.fi/tnk/>
- Admission policy
- Inclusion policy
- Academic honesty policy
- IB Deadline calendar for DP1 and DP2 students

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In the beginning of each study period, the subject teacher announces and discusses with the students the aims for the individual course and the assessment. These are summarised in a document that is available for the students on the electrical platform or is sent to the students and guardians by Wilma.

If more than one teacher is teaching the same subject, the teachers should meet and ensure that the student's internal and external assessment is internally standardized. If there is only one teacher teaching the same subject, the teachers of the same subject group should ensure the internal standardization of the students' assessment.

Teachers, students and the DP coordinator plan the two-year calendar for the students and teachers to help them plan their working and to support their time management. The DP coordinator ensures that the deadline calendar is planned in a way that allows reasonable time allocation for each task. If the student has difficulties returning their work by the deadline, the DP coordinator and/or the subject teacher and/or the homeroom teacher has a discussion with the student to find the ways the school can support the student's working. The multi-professional student welfare team (school nurse, psychiatric nurse, psychologist, school social worker and special education teacher) can support the student's studies from a wider perspective. (See also the Inclusion policy.)

This assessment policy is reviewed in the beginning of every school year in September. This ensures that also the new teachers are involved in this policy. New teachers attend an IBO workshop or online training during their first year of teaching.

This policy has been updated in August 2022.

5. Bibliography

Finnish national agency for education; National core curriculum for general upper secondary education 2019, 2020

International Baccalaureate; Assessment procedures 2022