



Salem

Schule Schloss Salem
International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Assessment Policy

Valid from September 2019



I. Our Policy

Schule Schloss Salem is a German secondary boarding school on Lake Constance with a multinational orientation. It guides students from over 40 nations to one of two possible diplomas, the German Abitur or the International Baccalaureate.

Schule Schloss Salem draws from the rich Christian-humanist tradition of Europe. In the spirit of its founder, Kurt Hahn, it aims to educate young people into personalities that are able and prepared to take on responsibility for themselves and others.

Our aim is to support our students, with their diverse backgrounds and learner biographies, in both the national and the international systems we offer. We are academically selective in so far as we aim to establish whether a student is suited to our academic programme, not because we aim for top results as a school (see our **Admission Policy**). We hope to help our students and their families formulate realistic goals and become reflected and fulfilled learners in full ownership of their process of development and transition into adult life.

This general principle informs our approach to assessment. As regards the formative dimension, we assess...

- to identify a given student's attainment - what the student knows, understands and can apply.
- to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses.
- to aid the identification of students whose learning needs support through the school's provision of extra lessons, formal study time or subject specific student self-help groups.
- to enable teachers to plan effectively for continuity and progression in the learning process both for individual students and for learner groups.
- to communicate accurate information to the student so that he or she can take responsibility for learning. Effective communication of accurate information is also necessary in contact with parents, fellow teachers and other educational institutions.



II. Our Practice

Our assessment tools

- Observation
- Continuous feedback, reflection and discussion
- Marking written work, with reference to IB guidelines and consisting of written teacher feedback the grade in the context of IB criteria
- Timed written tests structured in a timetable allocating slots to each subject
- Formal examinations in the full IB format at the end of IB1 and in the winter of IB2 (mock exams)
- Formal feedback in interim reports (see timetable below)

Transparency of assessment

Every teacher at Schule Schloss Salem, in both the German and the international systems, is expected to be able to justify the grade that is given for each piece of work that is assessed and the mark given at the end of each grading period (Blitzlicht)¹ or semester. To this end and in compliance with German law, teachers are required to provide their classes with information regarding how grades are constructed at the beginning of each course. This process also entails increasing familiarity with the IB grading criteria as an integral part of IB learning.

Record keeping

Teachers are required to keep detailed records of student assessment, thus allowing both teacher and student to track development and attainment, set targets and analyse strengths and weaknesses over time.

IAs and moderation

Internal assignments are created in close reference to IB guidelines regulating the nature and extent of teacher instruction and feedback. They are introduced in a staged sequence with corresponding internal deadlines to prevent overload. Missing deadlines is followed up by a system of catch-up sessions, warnings and binding adjusted deadlines for groups or individuals. It has to be realized that non-submission of an IA constitutes a failing condition and continuously missing internal deadlines can be a factor in not being allowed to proceed from IB1 to IB2.

¹ A *Blitzlicht* (flashlight in its literal translation) is a brief interim report



Subject teams moderate IA grades in-school before upload; 'single' subject teachers in a given session implement a moderation process with experienced colleagues momentarily not teaching a course, or colleagues in neighbouring IB schools with whom we maintain professional exchange (such as cluster workshops et cet.).

In some areas, joint assessment has become the standard practice, e.g. TOK presentations are always observed and graded by at least two TOK colleagues.

Reporting to colleagues

The assessment and feedback cycle involves regular conferences attended by both academic and pastoral staff discussing the respective interim reports. These conferences enable both positive trends and problem cases to be identified. Students concerned can then be supported through appropriate measures agreed with House tutors, teachers and school management as appropriate.

Reporting to parents

Parents receive all interim reports after the respective conference, sometimes including additional communication, suggestions and measures.

The assessment and reporting cycle

Years 5-10

- Blitzlicht 1 – teacher comments, grade optional (October)
- Parents Meeting (Elternkaffee): parent-teacher talks (mid-end October).
- (“Big”) General Teachers Conference: discussion of individual student progress
- Blitzlicht 2 – teacher comments, grade mandatory
- Parents Day (Elterntag): parent-teacher talks (before Christmas)
- (“Small”) Teachers Conference: mentors and classteachers only (early December).
- Blitzlicht 3 – Half-Year Report – grades only.
- Half-year conference – subject teachers only – to confirm half-year grades (end January)
- Classteacher and Mentor mid-year reports (detailed assessment and description of student progress)
- Blitzlicht 4 – comments and grades (before Easter)
- Parents Day (Elterntag): parent-teacher talks
- (“Big”) General Teachers Conference: discussion of individual student progress



- Blitzlicht 5 – teacher comments, grade mandatory (May)
- (“Small”) Teachers Conference: mentors and classteachers only (May)
- Blitzlicht 6 – Final Report – grades only (early July)
- Report conference – subject teachers only – to confirm final grades (early July)
- Mentor end-of-year reports (detailed assessment and description of student progress).

The reporting cycle in the Diploma Programme

IB1

- Blitzlicht 1 with teacher comments (October)
- Autumn Parents Day (Elternkaffee, early November)
- Blitzlicht 2 with teacher comments and conference (December)
- Blitzlicht 3 and Semester Report with short House tutor’s report and conference (end of January)
- Spring Parents Day (Elternkaffee, February)
- Blitzlicht 4 with teacher comments and conference (April)
- Blitzlicht 5 and Semester Report with House tutor’s report, conference and decision regarding progression to IB2 in cases of less than 24 points and/or other significant failing conditions (July)

IB2

- Autumn Parents Day (Elternkaffee, early November)
- Blitzlicht 1 with teacher comments and conference (end of November)
- Blitzlicht 2 and Semester Report and conference (end of January)
- Spring Parents Day (Elternkaffee, February)
- Feedback to parents about problematic mock exam results (March)

In both years, individualized high-frequency reporting patterns are in operation for students struggling for whatever reason to realize their potential.

Parents’ meetings take place in November upon return from the autumn half-term and over a full weekend between the end of February and the middle of March. In special circumstances meetings are also arranged outside this normal cycle.

Next updating of this Policy:

Reading and commenting by the Executive, the Director of Studies Team, the Head of Boarding, the Heads of Department, the teaching faculty during the 2020 summer term planning session followed by updating for September 2020