



Assessment Policy for Mandarin within the IB Programme

At Christopher Whitehead Language College and Sixth form we are proud to say that our assessment philosophy aligns with IB's principles of assessment. This means that it believes 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**, despite perhaps only being taught as a standalone Language B qualification. It will support a concurrency of learning.
5. **support the IB's wider mission** and student competencies, especially inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators and internationally minded.

The following procedures are designed to provide Quality Assurance regarding the standards of assessment at our school so that they meet expected standards for assessing IB Mandarin. They will create a fair, transparent, and effective framework for evaluating Mandarin proficiency within the IB programme.

1. Purpose and Objectives of the IB assessment policy for Mandarin:

- 1.1 The primary purpose of assessing Mandarin in the IB programme is to evaluate students' proficiency in the language and their ability to communicate effectively in both written and spoken forms.
- 1.2 These assessment objectives include promoting language acquisition, cultural understanding, and developing critical thinking skills in Mandarin.

2. Assessment:

2.1 There are two types of assessment identified by the IB:

- An integral component of ATL, **formative assessment** informs both teaching and learning. It is concerned with providing accurate and helpful feedback to students and teachers on the kind of learning taking place and the nature of students' strengths and weaknesses in order to help develop students' understanding and capabilities. Formative assessment can also help to improve teaching quality, as it can provide information to monitor progress towards meeting the course aims and objectives.
- **Summative assessment** gives an overview of previous learning and is concerned with measuring student achievement.

2.2 Summative Assessment will be based on the four language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, in alignment with the IB Mandarin syllabus.

2.3 **External assessment** (3 hours) – weighting 75%

Paper 1 (1 hour 15 minutes) Productive skills—writing (30 marks) – 25%

- One writing task of 250–400 words from a choice of three, each from a different theme, choosing a text type from among those listed in the examination instructions.

Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes) Receptive skills—separate sections for listening and reading (65 marks) - 50%

Listening comprehension (45 minutes) (25 marks) – 25%

Reading comprehension (1 hour) (40 marks) - 25%

Comprehension exercises on three audio passages and three written texts, drawn from all five themes.

2.4 **Internal assessment** – weighting 25%

This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.

Individual oral assessment A conversation with the teacher, based on a visual stimulus, followed by discussion based on an additional theme. (30 marks) 25%

2.5. Please see *Appendix 1* for the Language B (SL) grade descriptors re: language acquisition.

2.6. There are three assessment criteria for the **external assessment of paper 1 - writing**.

These include:

Criterion A: Language: How successfully does the candidate command written language?

- To what extent is the vocabulary appropriate and varied?
- To what extent are the grammatical structures varied?
- To what extent does the accuracy of the language contribute to effective communication?

Criterion B: Message: To what extent does the candidate fulfill the task?

- How relevant are the ideas to the task?
- To what extent are ideas developed?
- To what extent do the clarity and organisation of ideas contribute to the successful delivery of the message?

Criterion A & B are marked on a five band scale from marks 0-12

Criterion C: Conceptual understanding:

- To what extent does the candidate demonstrate conceptual understanding?
- To what extent is the choice of text type appropriate to the task?
- To what extent are register and tone appropriate to the context, purpose and audience of the task?
- To what extent does the response incorporate the conventions of the chosen text type?

Criterion C is marked on a four band scale from 0 – 6

2.7. For **internal assessment**, a number of assessment criteria have been identified. Each assessment criterion has level descriptors describing specific achievement levels, together with an appropriate range of marks. The level descriptors concentrate on positive achievement, although for the lower levels failure to reach certain minimum requirements may be included in the description.

Productive and interactive skills: Individual oral assessment

Criterion A: Language:

- How successfully does the candidate command spoken language?
- To what extent is the vocabulary appropriate and varied?
- To what extent are the grammatical structures varied?
- To what extent does the accuracy of the language contribute to effective communication?
- To what extent do pronunciation and intonation affect communication?

Criterion B1: Message : visual stimulus

- How relevant are the ideas to the selected stimulus?
- How well does the candidate engage with the stimulus in the presentation?
- How well are the ideas linked to the target culture(s)?

Criterion B2: Message : conversation

- How relevant are the ideas in the conversation?
- How appropriately and thoroughly does the candidate respond to the questions in the conversation?
- To what depth are the questions answered?

Criterion C: Interactive skills : communication

- To what extent does the candidate understand and interact?
- How well can the candidate express ideas?
- How well can the candidate maintain a conversation?

3. Formative and Summative Assessment:

3.1 Formative assessments will be conducted throughout the course to provide ongoing feedback and support students' language development.

3.2 Summative assessments will be administered at the end of each half term to evaluate overall language proficiency. This will be in line with the school assessment calendar.

[ASSESSMENT CALENDAR September 2023 to 2024.pdf](#)

4. Assessment Tools:

4.1 Various assessment tools will be utilised, including written exams, oral exams, presentations, essays, and projects, to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of students' language skills.

4.2 Technology may be incorporated where appropriate, such as online language proficiency tests or multimedia presentations.

5. Assessment Integrity:

5.1 All assessments will be conducted with a focus on academic integrity, and any form of plagiarism or cheating will be strictly prohibited (as detailed in the Academic Integrity Policy). We are also already bound by JCQ and therefore also adhere fully to the following documents:

[Plagiarism-in-Assessments.pdf](#)

[Malpractice Sep23 FINAL.pdf](#)

[JCQ-AI-Use-in-Assessments-Protecting-the-Integrity-of-Qualifications.pdf](#)

5.2 Students will be encouraged to use their own voice and express their thoughts authentically in Mandarin.

5.3. Malpractice is considered to include:

- plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own.
- collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another student, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.
- duplication of work: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements.
- any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a student or that affects the results of another student (for example, taking unauthorised material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, falsifying a record).

6. Feedback and Review:

6.1 Constructive feedback will be provided promptly after assessments to guide students in their language improvement journey.

6.2 Periodic reviews of assessment strategies and outcomes will be conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the assessment process.

7. Reporting on assessments:

7.1. Individual assessment components: Teachers assess various components internally, such as individual oral assessments, interactive oral activities, and written tasks. These assessments contribute to the overall evaluation of the student's language proficiency.

7.2 Internal assessment marks: Teachers assign marks for internal assessments, including individual oral tasks, interactive orals, and written tasks. These marks are based on specific assessment criteria provided by the IB.

7.3 External examinations: Marks for external assessments (Paper 1, Paper 2 and individual oral) are submitted to the IB after the external examinations are conducted. These marks contribute to the student's final grade.

7.4 Grade Boundaries: The IB sets grade boundaries for each subject, including Language B. These boundaries help determine the final grades based on the total marks attained by the student.

7.5 Monitoring grades: We will report on students' attainment and progress after three assessment points in the year, as illustrated by our reporting and assessment calendar (submitted to IB separately). These reports will also include target and projected grades.

8. Recording & Monitoring

8.1 Internal assessment records: Teachers maintain records of internal assessments, including marks for individual orals, interactive orals, and written tasks. These records contribute to the overall assessment of the student's language skills.

8.2 Teacher monitoring: Teachers monitor students' progress throughout the course, providing feedback on individual assessments and identifying areas for improvement.

8.3 Whole school monitoring: The school will conduct regular reviews of the Mandarin Language B programme to ensure consistency in assessment practices, alignment with IB guidelines, and overall effectiveness in promoting language acquisition.

8.4 Internal moderation: where possible, and if there is more than one teacher of IB mandarin, teachers will collaborate to ensure consistency in assessing and grading internal assessments. This will help to maintain the reliability and validity of the assessment process.

8.5 IB verification: The school will facilitate verification processes by IB to ensure that the school is adhering to assessment guidelines and that reported grades are accurate and reliable.

9. Special Considerations:

9.1 Accommodations will be made for students with special needs to ensure a fair and inclusive assessment process. This accommodation will be in line with JCQ requirements and the schools 'Special Consideration Policy' to ensure an equitable approach to awarding it to students.

9.2 Students who face challenges in language acquisition will receive additional support and resources tailored to their needs.

10. Continuous Professional Development:

10.1 Teachers involved in assessing Mandarin will engage in regular professional development activities to stay updated on best practices in language assessment and pedagogy.

10.2 Collaboration with other language departments within the IB community will be encouraged to share insights and enhance overall language education.

11. Implementation:

11.1 This assessment policy will be communicated to students, parents, and faculty at the beginning of the academic year together with the schools General Purpose Exams Policy (hyperlinked at the top of this document).

11.2 Regular reviews and revisions of the policy will be conducted to ensure its alignment with the evolving needs of the IB Mandarin programme.

Appendix 1: Grade Descriptors for Language B

Standard Level grades in Mandarin equate from grade A* (grade 7) to F (grade 1) at AS level and will accumulate the same UCAS points for university entrants. This is the level offered to students at Christopher Whitehead.

Language B (SL) grade descriptors for Language Acquisition

Grade 7 Students speak clearly, fluently and naturally; use a varied and idiomatic range of language accurately; handle ideas effectively with active and full interaction; demonstrate a very good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have little difficulty with more difficult questions; write detailed texts demonstrating a very good command of vocabulary and complex structures with a very good level of grammatical accuracy; adapt their writing effectively to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organise their work coherently and convincingly.

Grade 6 Students speak mostly clearly and fluently; use a varied range of language mostly accurately; handle ideas mostly effectively, with generally full interaction; demonstrate a good understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with more difficult questions; write fairly detailed texts demonstrating a good command of vocabulary with a good level of grammatical accuracy; adapt their writing appropriately to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organise their work coherently.

Grade 5 Students speak generally clearly; use a basic range of language correctly; handle ideas adequately with full interaction at times; demonstrate an adequate understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have some difficulties with almost all difficult questions and some average questions; write texts demonstrating an adequate command of vocabulary with an adequate level of grammatical accuracy; show a reasonable ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; express their ideas and organise their work appropriately.

Grade 4 Students speak hesitantly and at times unclearly; use a simple range of language correctly at times; handle ideas with some difficulty and with fairly limited interaction; demonstrate some understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with questions of average difficulty; write texts demonstrating a basic command of vocabulary and some awareness of grammatical structure; show some ability to adapt their writing to suit the intended audience and purpose; make some attempt at expressing their ideas and organising their work.

Grade 3 Students speak hesitantly and generally unclearly; use a limited range of language, often incorrectly; handle ideas with difficulty and with restricted interaction; demonstrate a fairly limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with some easy questions; write texts demonstrating a fairly limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type; make some attempt at basic organisation; content is rarely convincing.

Grade 2 Students speak hesitantly and unclearly; use a very limited range of language mostly incorrectly; handle ideas with great difficulty and with very restricted interaction; demonstrate a limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties even with easiest questions; write texts demonstrating a limited command of vocabulary and little awareness of grammatical structure; produce an identifiable text type with limited success; lack organisation to an extent that content is unconvincing.

Grade 1 Students speak very hesitantly and unclearly; use a very limited range of language incorrectly; handle ideas unsuccessfully and with very restricted interaction; demonstrate a very limited understanding of the meaning and purpose of written texts; have difficulties with almost all questions; write texts demonstrating a very limited command of vocabulary and very little awareness of grammatical structure; produce a barely identifiable text type; lack organisation to an extent that content is confusing.