

# Vernon Christian School

## Assessment Guidelines

### Grading and Reporting

1. We believe that the purpose of grading is to communicate an accurate evaluation of a student's ability to meet the learning outcomes of each course/subject. Therefore, student progress will be reported in two **separate** ways:
  - a. *Grades*: a percentage and/or letter-grade, which is a measurement of academic achievement (what a student knows and is able to do)
  - b. *Behavior*: descriptions of the characteristics, actions, and work habits that support achievement
  
2. In order to assign accurate grades, which support learning and encourage student success, teachers should follow these guidelines:
  - a. Individual achievement of learning outcomes should be the only basis for grades. Other student characteristics such as effort, attitude, behavior, work habits, late completion of assignments, absences, etc., should not be factored into grades, but should be treated as behavioral issues, and should be addressed and/or reported separately.
  - b. Grades should only include summative assessments (assessments OF learning), while formative assessments (assessments FOR learning - practice) are marked and recorded, and/or given feedback only to support the learning process, and are not included in grades.
  - c. Grades should always be assigned in reference to specified achievement targets, comparing students' performance against a standard or rubric, rather than against other students in the class (on a curve).
  - d. Grade calculation procedures should be carefully considered, to ensure that the grade each student receives is an accurate and up-to-date measurement of what he/she knows and can do:

Examples:

    - i. emphasizing the most recent summative assessment information
    - ii. basing grades on a "body of evidence" (using the most consistent level of achievement rather than always using the average)
    - iii. exercising professional judgment (discerning and determining, rather than just "calculating" grades)
    - iv. not assigning 0's for missing assessment evidence, but using alternatives such as "I" (incomplete)
  - e. Grades should be based on quality assessment methods with evidence properly recorded
    - i. summative and formative assessments should be recorded separately

- ii. tests, quizzes, projects, etc. should meet the standards for quality assessment (clear targets, clear purpose, appropriate target-method match, appropriate sampling, and avoidance of bias or distortion)
  - f. Students should be provided with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate mastery of learning outcomes, including opportunities to be reassessed to reflect re-taught/re-learned content. Teachers will determine areas where reassessment is possible, and inform students of the conditions that apply (examples: requiring students to make test corrections or provide study notes as evidence of new learning)
  - g. Students should be active participants in the assessment and grading process to ensure that they understand how their grades will be determined, and so that they can communicate meaningfully about their own achievement and progress.
3. Non-completion of essential tasks:
- Some tasks are essential for evidence of learning and must be completed for students to meet the requirements of a course or subject.
  - If such a task has not been completed before the end of a grading period, an “I” (Incomplete/In-progress) will be used on the report card to indicate that course requirements have not been met, and therefore course credits have not been earned. All I’s assigned by teachers will be accompanied with an action plan and timeline.
4. Communicating about student progress:
- We believe that partnership between the school and the home is vital in the growth and education of each student, and therefore recognize the schools’ responsibility to keep parents informed about student progress. Parents can expect timely, understandable, meaningful information about student progress, including work habits, behavior, and academic achievement.
  - Teachers may use a variety of methods to communicate information about student progress:
    - Parent/teacher conferences
    - Report card grades and comments
    - Formal or informal interim reports which may take a number of forms: mark-book print-outs, anecdotal updates or narrative descriptions (letter/email/phone/face-to-face), checklists, or portfolios of various kinds.
    - Test/quiz/project assessment results sent home with students or communicated by email/phone
  - Teachers will communicate learning expectations and assessment criteria to students in clear, easily understandable language, indicating how summative assessments will be calculated into course grades. Teachers shall discuss classroom assessment practices with students at the beginning of instruction.