Assessment and Evaluation Practices (Grades 7-12)

Administrative Procedure

Halton District School Board

Status:	**Active**
Effective:	September 2016
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Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education - School Programs

Intended Purpose

The Halton District School Board, along with the Ontario Ministry of Education, believes the purpose of public education is to achieve excellence, ensure equity and promote well-being for every student. Assessment and evaluation practices must be aligned with these goals and with the rights of the child as provided in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, echoed in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, prescribed in the Ontario Education Act and protected and enforced through the Ontario Human Rights Code. The educator's ethical standard of respect, identified by the Ontario College of Teachers, requires that members of these professions respect human dignity, emotional well-being and cognitive development.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and Evaluation practices in the Halton District School Board reflect the policies and practices described in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1-12 (2010)* and the *Ministry of Education: Assessment & Evaluation (2024)* updated to align with *Growing Success* policy. The seven fundamental principles below (excerpted from *Growing Success*, page 6) support the collection of meaningful information to inform instructional practice, support student engagement and improve student learning. These principles are central to all assessment, evaluation, and reporting, requiring teachers to use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable;
- support all students, including those with special educational needs, those who are learning the language of instruction, and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;

- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students' self assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.

As outlined above, one of the seven Fundamental Principles of Growing Success calls on educators to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. The identity of a student is confidential. Through upholding Indigenous Rights and taking anti-colonial approaches to educational practices every student will be reflected in the course content. This includes remembering the whole child, multi-modal forms of learning and expression, and asset based assessment practices that are responsive to the individual learner, using reciprocal feedback cycles to allow for student self-expression, gifts to surface, strengths and agency over their learning.

Culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP) reflects and affirms students' cultural and social identities, languages, and family structures. It involves careful acknowledgement, respect, and understanding of the similarities and differences among students, and between students and teachers, in order to respond effectively to student thinking and promote student learning.

Engaging in assessment from a CRRP stance requires that teachers gain awareness of and reflect on their own beliefs about who a learner is and what they can achieve.

When teachers engage in the process of examining their own biases regarding classroom assessment and evaluation practices, they might consider some of the following questions (excerpted from Assessment and Evaluation 2024, "CRRP" Section):

- Are the tasks accessible to, and inclusive of, all learners? Do the tasks include appropriate and varied entry points for all students?
- Do the tasks connect to students' prior learning and give them opportunities to be sense makers and to integrate their new learning? Do the selected tasks reflect students' identities and lived experiences?

- Do all students have equitable access to the tools they need to complete the tasks being set?
- What opportunities can teachers build into their practice to offer students descriptive feedback to enhance learning? Are graded assessment tasks used in a way that complements the use of descriptive feedback for growth?
- How can information be conveyed about students' learning progress to students and parents in an ongoing and meaningful way?
- What is the purpose of assigning and grading a specific task or activity? Are student choice and agency considered?
- How do teacher biases influence decisions about what tasks or activities are chosen for assessment?

As outlined in *Growing Success*, the primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. To further this goal, the Halton District School Board has developed administrative procedures in the areas of late and missed assignments, academic honesty, final 30% evaluations, and determining grades below 50%.

1. **Late and Missed Assignments**
   Where possible, students are encouraged to take responsibility for maintaining a schedule of responsibilities, tasks and timelines, to ensure all assigned work is completed on time. To promote timely assignment submissions, teachers will also use proactive strategies such as:

   - establishing and clearly communicating timelines for evaluations.
   - monitoring and supporting student progress in completing evaluation tasks (i.e., frequent check ins).
   - engaging in regular teacher-student communication using the assessment feedback cycle to inform any instructional scaffolding and accommodations that might be needed.
   - providing strategies and tools for students to complete complex tasks including understanding the complexities of the assigned tasks and supporting the development of advocacy skills in managing competing priorities.

   In the event of late or missed assignments, teachers will use their professional judgement to determine the appropriate strategies to use to promote task completion. These strategies include:

- conferencing with the student to discuss the late or missing assignment to determine if there are factors, skills and/ or barriers preventing the completion of the tasks and supporting the student to develop strategies for submission.
- offering alternative assessments (where appropriate) to demonstrate the student's developing mastery of a skill or their growing understanding of a concept.
- communicating with parents/guardians/caregivers (if the student is under the age of 18) regarding incomplete assignment(s) which may significantly impact the student's overall achievement and/or student success.
- collaborating with the school and community support teams to determine additional strategies (i.e., Department Head, Student Success, Special Education, Guidance Teams, School Team, School Administration, Indigenous Rights and Education Department, Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education Department).
- collaborating with the student to establish a revised submission plan outlining a clear and agreed upon alternative submission date.
- as a last resort, deduct marks for late assignments with the approval and support of school administration.

2. **Academic Honesty**

   All students must demonstrate academic honesty when completing course work. Teachers will implement proactive strategies that foster integrity and encourage responsible academic behaviours to promote academic honesty and to cultivate the development of learning skills (i.e., collaboration, responsibility, organization), confidence and academic integrity in all students. These proactive strategies include:
   - Ensuring students understand the gravity of academic dishonesty and that the work they complete must be their own.
   - Designing tasks that emphasize critical thinking, process documentation, and originality that are linked directly to curriculum expectations and activities/discussions/explorations conducted in the classroom.
   - Providing explicit instruction and expectations in the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence.
   - Providing explicit instruction and expectations related to research and citation (including Generative Artificial Intelligence and other external sources) and guidance on ethical decision-making.

2.1. Response to Incidents of Academic Dishonesty

In the event of a situation of academic dishonesty, the consequence will reflect a continuum of behavioural and academic responses that take into account the grade and pathway of the student; the maturity of the student; the number and frequency of incidents; the significance of the evaluation, and the individual circumstances of the student and situation.

When a serious incident of academic dishonesty has occurred (i.e. plagiarism and/ or cheating) that may impact a student's success or in cases in which there are repeated incidents by a student, teachers are required to complete the following the process:

2.1.1. Clearly explain and review the evidence of academic dishonesty with the student to ensure understanding.

2.1.2. Consult with school administration to determine appropriate consequences.

2.1.3. Inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregivers (if the student is under the age of 18).

2.1.4. Determine the next step and engage in a plan to build targeted skills, as needed.

2.1.5. School administration will document the incident(s).

Consequences for academic dishonesty are intended to reinforce academic integrity and accountability and represent a continuum of responses taking into account the unique circumstances of the incident, learner portrait and student. These may include:

- Requiring the student to redo the assignment (or a portion of an assignment) or complete an alternative task.
- Engaging the school support team, as appropriate (i.e. Department Head, Student Success, Special Education).
- In consultation with school administration, assigning a grade penalty, up to and including the full value of the assignment.
- Determining if the student's eligibility for school awards is to be compromised.
- Consider progressive discipline.

3. **Final 30% Evaluations**

    For Grades 9 to 12, a final grade for a course is determined as follows (excerpted from *Growing Success*, page 41):

    Seventy percent of the grade is based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration should be given to more recent evidence of achievement.

    Thirty percent of the grade is based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course. This evaluation is based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: an examination, a performance, an essay, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content. The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course.

    3.1. **Defining "Evaluation Block" and "Final Performance Task(s)"**

    Final 30% evaluations include different activities (i.e. exam, conference, interview, essay, inquiry-based project, portfolio etc.) and take place towards the end of the course. These evaluations may take place during class time or during the evaluation block at the end of the semester.

    3.1.1. "Final Evaluation Block" describes the specific days set aside at the end of the semester for final evaluation tasks which   may be scheduled during this time period (i.e. interviews, exams, presentation).

    3.1.2. "Final Performance Task(s)" refers to the evaluation tasks completed during class, at or towards the end of the course and outside of the Final Evaluation Block. Final Performance Tasks are not restricted to protected time and should be scheduled to be supportive of student well-being and achievement.

    3.2. **Expectations for Final 30% Evaluations**

    Final 30% Evaluations should provide an accurate and fair measure of student learning and align with course expectations and instructional practice. Expectations for the Final 30% Evaluations include the following:

- **Maximum length of Final Performance Tasks** - For courses with a scheduled activity during the Final Evaluation Block (as defined above), the Final Performance Task(s) will take no more than eight classes of work and evaluation. For courses with no scheduled activity during the Final Evaluation Block, the Final Performance Task(s) will take no more than fifteen classes of work and evaluation towards the end of the semester.

- **Maximum length of Final Evaluation Block Tasks** - The duration of the tasks scheduled during the Final Evaluation Block may differ from school to school but will not exceed the Subject Council agreed upon limit for the course.

- **Components of the Final 30%** - Most courses will have at least two components of the Final 30% Evaluation as determined by the Subject Council: one occurring during the Final Evaluation Block and one occurring in the final weeks of classes.

- **Weighting of Final 30% Components** - Each component is worth at least 10% of the course. Subject Councils may recommend a weighting of less than 10% for one component, or elimination of a component, subject to the ratification of the HSPA Executive.

- **Scheduling** - Schools will coordinate the timing of Final 30% Evaluations to support student wellness and achievement.

- **Individual Education Plans** - The design and delivery of the Final 30% Evaluations must provide students who have IEPs with the appropriate accommodations and/or modifications specified in each student's IEP.

- **Multilingual Language Learners (MLL)** - The design and delivery of the Final 30% Evaluation must provide students with an MLL profile the appropriate accommodations and modifications specific to each student's MLL profile.

- **Group Work During Final 30%** - Assignments for the Final 30% Evaluation may involve group projects as long as each student's work within the group project is evaluated independently and assigned an individual mark, as opposed to a common group mark.

- **Homework Expectations for Final 30%** - The Final 30% is an independent demonstration of a student's achievement of a course's overall expectations conducted, whenever possible, under the supervision of a teacher.

4. Determining Report Card Grades

Evaluations accurately summarize and communicate what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations. The evaluation of student learning involves professional judgement and the interpretation of evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student varied products (i.e. assignments, seminars, presentations, performances, interviews, demonstrations, projects, tests, exams). Students should have a clear understanding of how grades are determined, including an outline of the mark category breakdown and weighting methods used in the determination of a student's final course grade.

4.1. Expectations for Report Card Grades

Expectations for the determination of report card grades includes the following:

- Students will be given numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the overall curriculum expectations across all four categories of knowledge and skills.
- In determining a term grade, professional judgment will be used based on the student's most consistent level of achievement with special consideration to more recent evidence of overall expectations.
- Student achievement will be based solely on individual performance including individual performance within a group task.
- Achievement of learning skills and work habits will be determined and reported separately from the achievement of curriculum expectations.
- The evaluation of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher and must not include the judgment of the student or the student's peers or Generative AI.
- Teachers will collect evidence of student achievement for evaluation over time from three sources – observations, conversations, and student products. The triangulation of these sources will inform a teacher's professional judgment.
- Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations and which ones will be accounted for in instruction and assessment but not necessarily evaluated.

5. **Determining Grades Below 50%**

   The HDSB Promotion Meeting Process (Grade 9 - 12) provides direction regarding the determination of Grades Below 50% and includes the following:

   5.1. The process for a teacher to report a grade between 46% - 49% that provides for a fully informed determination of whether or not a student has demonstrated the course's overall expectations sufficiently to be granted a credit.

   5.2. The process for reporting an "I" mark for students in grades 9 and 10 courses when there may be insufficient evidence to assign a numeric grade.

   5.3. The process for referring a student with a mark below 50% or 'I' to the Credit Recovery Team where a decision will be made as to their suitability and eligibility for enrolment in Credit Recovery or Summer School programs to recover or earn the credit.

6. **Dispute Resolution**

   It is the teacher's professional responsibility to assess and evaluate student work. Where there are questions, issues or concerns, students should speak with their teacher to seek a resolution. If there are still concerns, the following procedure should be followed:

   6.1. Parent/ guardian/ caregiver and student discussions with teacher to resolve concern (students 18 years of age or older may exclude this step).

   6.2. If unresolved, the concern moves to the Department Head.

   6.3. If necessary, the issue is escalated to school administration.

   6.4. The Principal's decision is final after consulting with relevant parties.

Cross-Reference:

Legislation
Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c.H.19
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Ministry Policy & Program Memoranda
Achieving Excellence A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario (2014)
Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, First Edition, Covering Grades 1-12 (2010)
Growing Success: Mathematics Addendum Grades 1 to 8 (2020)
Growing Success: Language Addendum, Grades 1 to 8 (2023)
Growing Success: Mathematics Addendum, Grade 9 (2024)
Learning for All: A guide to effective instruction and assessment for all students, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (2013)
Ministry of Education: Assessment & Evaluation (2024)
Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009)
Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide (2017)
Policy/ Program Memorandum 119
Policy/ Program Memorandum 155

Board Policies, Procedures & Protocols
Equity and Inclusive Education Policy
Indigenous Education Policy
Positive School Climate Administrative Procedure
Suspensions and Expulsions Administrative Procedure
Addressing Public Concerns Administrative Procedure
HDSB Special Education Plan

Revision History:
- June 2025 - Updates include alignment with the Ministry of Education: Assessment & Evaluation (2024), updates on Academic Honesty and the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence, greater clarity on the Promotion Meeting Process and use of student-centered language to promote student learning and success.
- September 2021