Assessment and Evaluation Practices (Grades 7-12)

Administrative Procedure

Status:	**Active**
Effective:	September 2016
Revision Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2030
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 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, mandatory final 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 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. Mandatory Final Evaluations (Grades 9-12)

Mandatory Final Evaluations should provide an accurate and fair measure of student learning and align with course expectations and instructional practice.

In Grades 9 and 10, a student's final mark is based on:

- 65% classroom work completed throughout the course
- 20% mandatory final evaluations, broken down as described below
- 15% attendance and participation

In Grades 11 and 12, a student's final mark is based on:

- 65% classroom work completed throughout the course
- 25% mandatory final evaluations, broken down as described below
- 10% attendance and participation

Mandatory final evaluations are administered at or towards the end of the course and provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course. Mandatory final evaluations are based on a final written examination, a culminating task(s) or a combination or both, as determined by

subject area breakdown (per the Mandatory assessment and evaluation requirements for students in Grades 9 - 12). The design and delivery of the mandatory final evaluations must provide students with IEPs the appropriate accommodations and/ or modifications specified in each student's IEP. The design and delivery of the mandatory final evaluations must provide students with an MLL profile the appropriate accommodations and/ or modifications specific to each student's MLL profile. Schools should coordinate the timing of the mandatory final evaluations to support student wellness and achievement.

3.1. Final Written Examinations

3.1.1. Final written exams take place during the "Final Evaluation Block", the specific days identified at the end of the semester for the completion of mandatory written exams.

3.1.2. Courses which do not require a mandatory written exam may include in-class written evaluations and/ or other final evaluations such as projects, presentations and portfolios.

3.1.3. Online courses which require a mandatory exam must write this exam in person, at a designated school board location.

3.2. Final Culminating Task

3.2.1. Final culminating task(s) refers to evaluative tasks (i.e. conference, interview, essay, inquiry-based project, portfolio, etc.) completed during class, at or towards the end of the course and outside the Final Examination Block.

3.2.2. For courses with a final written examination, final culminatory task(s) will take no more than eight classes of work and evaluation; for courses that do not require a final written exam, culminating task(s) will take no more than fifteen classes of work and evaluation.

3.2.3. Final culminating task(s) which include group work must ensure each student's work within the group is evaluated independently and that each student is assigned an individual mark, as opposed to a common group mark.

3.2.4. The final culminating task is the demonstration of a student's achievement of a course's overall expectations conducted, wherever possible, under the supervision of a teacher.

4. Attendance and Participation

Final student grades are reflective of attendance and participation to recognize the impact that student presence in class has on student achievement. Excused absences do not negatively affect a student's mark. Excused absences may include unavoidable circumstances like illness or inclement weather, approved absences such as cultural days and holy days and school-sanctioned events (i.e. field trip, academic competition, school sports event, etc.).

Assessment and participation criteria for attendance and participation (per the Mandatory assessment and evaluation requirements for students in Grades 9 - 12).

5. 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, written examinations). 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.

5.1. 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 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.

6. 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:

6.1. 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.

6.2. 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.

6.3. 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.

7. 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:

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

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

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

7.4. 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)
Policy/ Program Memorandum 119
Policy/ Program Memorandum 155
Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide (2017)

Board Policies, Procedures & Protocols

Addressing Public Concerns Administrative Procedure
Equity and Inclusive Education Policy
HDSB Special Education Plan
Indigenous Education Policy
Positive School Climate Administrative Procedure
Suspensions and Expulsions Administrative Procedure

Revision History:

- September 2026 - Updates include alignment to the Ministry of Education: Mandatory assessment and evaluation requirements for students in Grades 9 to 12; updates include changes to course breakdowns with respect to mandatory final evaluations, and attendance and participation assessment criteria.
- 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