

What is student assessment?

The following excerpt comes from Measuring Up: Student Assessment in Alberta

“Assessment is the process of collecting and interpreting information about students, which is done for two reasons:

1. “To inform students and their parents how well the student has progressed in learning the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours, most typically by means of report cards.
2. “To help various people in the education system make important decisions about matters such as instruction, program placement, yearly promotion, graduation requirements, post-secondary placements, curriculum review and redesign, program planning, policy development and accountability.” (Rymer, p.3)

Good assessment is a challenge

“Assessment is a challenging undertaking because it is complex. All assessments have three critical elements:

1. “Clearly specified, meaningful goals or outcomes to measure
2. “A task that permits observation of a student’s performance related to these goals
3. “A method of interpreting the evidence the student provides; that is, a way of making inferences, judgments and evaluations

“The curriculum describes the outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours) we expect students to attain. All outcomes represent what our society values and believes is important for our children to learn.” (Rymer, p.3)

Rymer, J. (2012, November 19). *Measuring Up: Student Assessment in Alberta*. Retrieved November 22, 2012, from Alberta School Boards Association. http://www.asba.ca/files/pdf/student_assessment_report.pdf

For an illustrative example regarding assessment, please refer to *Appendix A: The Uses of Assessment – An Analogy*

At Archbishop O’Leary we understand that the success of a student is dependent on a partnership between the home and the school. As such, each stakeholder–be it the parent, the student or the teacher– have responsibilities to attend to in order for proper assessment and evaluation to occur. The table that follows outlines these responsibilities:

	Preparation	Communication	Use of Additional Resources
The Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear understanding of what learning outcomes are expected for the course, as prescribed by the Alberta Education Programs of Study • Designs assessments to be accomplished within the course framework • Practices clear and fair criteria and standards, as per the Programs of Study • Designs <i>formative assessments</i>♦ to assist students with mastery of outcomes • Designs <i>summative assessments</i>♦ that require students to demonstrate mastery • Establishes summative exercises with clear goals as to which skills are being assessed. • Sets up GradeBook and course outlines based on the separate skills being assessed (e.g. Tests, projects, and essays, etc.) <p>♦Refer to <i>Appendix B</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines course expectations by describing assessment practices at the beginning of the course in print form • Provides feedback on learning in a timely and consistent manner by providing assessment results directly to the student and through PowerSchool. • Provides accommodations for students who have been approved by Alberta Education through the Special Education Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains accurate and up-to-date student records on PowerSchool and monitors attendance patterns to ensure student has legitimate reason for missing assessments • Communicates with parents and students by phone, through email, and through PowerSchool • Logs all communications for that student or parent on PowerSchool • Communicates with students through Google Classroom and/or through PowerSchool • Adds notes to PowerSchool to provide additional information on the assessment, as needed

	Preparation	Communication	Use of Additional Resources
The Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches learning with a positive attitude • Takes responsibility for own learning • Is prepared to adhere to course expectations as outlined by the teacher • Is aware of timelines and the expectations for missed assessments, as outlined by the teacher • Is aware of the pre-requisite mark for the course and the teacher recommendation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends classes regularly and punctually to maximize learning potential • Communicates learning struggles and takes advantage of opportunities teacher provides to support or reinforce learning (e.g. PDT) • Communicates, to the teacher and to the parent/guardian, in a manner that indicates personal responsibility for learning • Demonstrates active participation in learning by completing assigned work and through achieving curriculum standards in the time frame provided • Communicates interruptions to learning in a timely manner (e.g. field trips, medical issues, etc.) • Understands that interruptions to learning will have a significant impact on student achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses PowerSchool as a tool to inform learning and monitors personal achievement and progress on a regular basis • Makes use of Google Classroom and on-line resources, when applicable and/or available

	Preparation	Communication	Use of Additional Resources
The Parent and/or Guardian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports learning at home by providing time and a study space • Is informed about course timelines and expectations by reviewing print version of course outline with the student at home • Is aware of the timelines and expectations for <i>missed assessments</i>, as outlined by the teacher through course outlines • Is conscious of students' academic course load and provides support and encouragement at home • Is aware of the pre-requisite mark for the course and the teacher recommendation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides detailed and updated contact information so communication can occur • Communicates, to the school and teacher, interruptions to learning in a timely manner • Communicates directly with the teacher for extended or multiple absences • Encourages regular attendance and minimizes interruptions to learning (e.g. vacation, medical, etc.) • Validates absences by contacting the school • Assists student with adhering to timelines for assignments and other assessments • Stays in contact with the teacher and school about their child's progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses PowerSchool as a tool for monitoring student by reviewing attendance and current achievement on a regular basis. • Communicates with the school AND teacher through various mediums: phone, email, and/or PowerSchool

Assessment & Grading Guidelines

These guidelines are founded by the following principles:

- ❖ A student should take advantage of all educational opportunities.
- ❖ A student's grade should reflect relative mastery of course content.
- ❖ A student's grade should reflect the relative quality of the work produced.
- ❖ A student should be afforded a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate mastery of course content.
- ❖ A student should be informed of academic progress in a timely manner.

Grading succeeds as a means of communicating student learning to the extent that students are provided meaningful feedback that encourages further growth and development. All practices must adhere to Administrative Procedure 360 - Assessment (<https://edmontoncatholicschools.sharepoint.com/sites/D0002/Administrative%20Procedures%20Manual/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewid=d62453d0%2D57e4%2D49f9%2D9116%2D9035de7a8977&id=%2Fsites%2FD0002%2FAdministrative%20Procedures%20Manual%2FAP%20360%2EPDF&parent=%2Fsites%2FD0002%2FAdministrative%20Procedures%20Manual>)

Effort, Participation, Attitude Guidelines

Teachers at O'Leary understand and value the importance of effort, participation and attitude. Those students who regularly attend, try their best, and have a positive attitude toward learning generally succeed. Effort, participation, and attitude, however, will NOT be included in the student's grade unless it is a stated part of the learning goal as indicated on the Programs of Study (e.g. Physical Education).

At Archbishop O'Leary, the report card mark will reflect only the outcomes stated in the Programs of Study. Teachers are encouraged to communicate effort, participation and attitude in a variety of other ways.



Cheating and/or Plagiarism Guidelines

Cheating is a serious offense and will NOT be tolerated. Any student who is found to be cheating on on a formative/summative assignment/assessment shall, in consultation with the teacher will have an opportunity to access an alternative assignment/assessment. Contact will be made home to a parent/guardian, noted on PowerSchool and administration notified. Cheating also includes possession of materials not allowed in an examination room or area (e.g. cell phones).

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. Offering the work of another as one's own without proper acknowledgment is plagiarism. Therefore, any student who fails to give appropriate credit for ideas or material he or she takes from another, whether it is a fellow student or a published resource writer, is guilty of plagiarism. Any classroom material submitted for evaluation determined to be plagiarized will require the student to re-do an assessment, following contact home by the classroom teacher to the parent, the infraction noted on PowerSchool and administration notified.

Repeated plagiarism or cheating will require administration involvement and may result in course changes and/or repeating the course.

Late Work Guidelines

- Students are expected to take tests, make classroom presentations, and/or demonstrate mastery and competence through performances when they are scheduled.
- A student who is absent from an assessment piece is responsible for providing the teacher with a valid reason for the absence.
- Assessments that are missed for a legitimate reason (e.g. family emergency, surgery, etc.) may be excused from the assessment, at the teacher's discretion.
- The Late Work Guidelines do not grant students an implied extension simply because they feel unprepared.
- The best educational practice is for students to complete work to the best of their ability and to submit this work on the due date. Additional interventions and consequences may be appropriate for students who are habitually late with assignments.

Late work will be accepted when it is submitted within a time window defined by **EITHER**:

A. the date when the assessment has been graded, recorded, and returned to other students in the class; or,

B. number of school days after the original deadline, as determined by the teacher

Please Note:

- Students with special circumstances should work with teachers to determine alternate individualized due dates when appropriate.
- Extensions to original due dates are subject to teacher discretion.
- Extensions for due dates should be requested **in advance** and will be issued at teacher discretion.
- If the student fails to complete the assessment despite being provided reasonable opportunities to do so, he or she will earn a zero for the assessment.



Planned Absences Guidelines

Planned absences, such as vacations, should correspond with the holidays of the school calendar. Vacations during scheduled class days are *strongly discouraged*.

Students with planned absences should make every effort to keep up with class work during the absence. It is the *student's responsibility* to ensure the following is done:

- Attain a copy of the **Planned Absences Form** from the office and complete the sections that are required 2 weeks in advance of the planned absence.
- Discuss the absence with the teacher prior to securing their signature on the Planned Absences Form.
- Take all necessary steps to complete the work missed during the absence.
- Submit complete work upon returning to school within the time frame coordinated with each teacher. Work NOT submitted within the established time frame may warrant a zero.



Final Examinations

Since assessment and evaluation must reflect mastery of content, Final Exams are the best indicators of student level of proficiency with curricular content. To ensure the validity and security of exams is maintained, the following describes the process taken at Archbishop O’Leary High School regarding final examinations.

- Every student at Archbishop O’Leary High School is **EXPECTED** to complete the Final Exam on the **scheduled date or dates**. This allows the student to receive the mark for the Final Exam and for the course in a timely fashion so that registration for the following semester is appropriate and so marks can be submitted to Alberta Education.

- If a student is **UNABLE** to complete the Final Exam on the scheduled date or dates, the student may **CHOOSE** to **RECEIVE A ZERO** for the Final Exam and factor it into the final grade for the course.

- If a student is **UNABLE** to complete the Final Exam on the scheduled date or dates due to extreme circumstances (e.g. an acute medical condition or hospitalization), the situation will be reviewed on a per case basis. The circumstances will require the parent or guardian to provide a written document that describes the extent, severity, and duration of the student’s absence.

- *Exam Conflict Day* is scheduled each semester. It is made available only to students who have two exams scheduled on the same day.



Appeals

If a student wishes to appeal a mark or grade he/she received on an assessment, including an exam, for any given subject, the student must first consult the teacher of the course. The next step in the appeal process is with the subject area Department Head. If required, the last person to appeal to is the student coordinator—whose decision will be final.

Please Note:

- *If the mark being appealed is the final report card mark for a course, appeals proceed directly to the student coordinator.*
- *Teacher recommendations are based on student grades as well as their professional judgment on whether the student will be successful at meeting course expectations at the next level.*



Appendix A. *The Uses of Assessment– An Analogy*

Teachers use assessment to make instructional decisions during their students’ learning processes. This type of assessment could be compared to the way a chef creates a meal. Both the chef and the teacher know what they want to accomplish – the specific outcomes and standards they are trying to attain. The chef has recipes; the teacher has a curriculum.

Chefs taste the food repeatedly and adjust the spicing relative to the standards being sought. Teachers assess students as they progress through the lessons and activities to get information about how each child is doing. This information helps them decide how best to adjust or alter instruction to better enable each child to successfully progress toward the expected outcome. Teachers also use assessment information to provide comments that guide students and help them adjust their own learning strategies.

At some point chefs determine that the food has met their standard and is ready to be served to customers. The customers then assess the overall presentation and quality of the food. They make judgments and may tell others what they thought.

The teacher engages in a somewhat similar process. Instruction on a particular outcome, topic or unit also comes to an end, for example, when the school term ends. Assessment conducted at such an end point marks the learning accomplished up to that time. These judgments and evaluations are the ones we most frequently see on report cards.

Rymer, J. (2012, November 19). *Measuring Up. Student Assessment in Alberta*. Retrieved November 22, 2012, from Alberta School Boards Association.

http://www.asba.ca/files/pdf/student_assessment_report.pdf



Appendix B: *Formative and Summative Assessments*

Formative Assessment: provides information to students and teachers about student learning and progress, and direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program. Formative assessment includes opportunities for practice and is not part of an achievement grade (adapted from O'Connor, 2002). (ECSGSA Administrative Policy 108)

Summative Assessment: provides information to students, parents/guardians, and teachers about student achievement at the end of a period of instruction. Summative assessment is used to determine an achievement grade. (ECSGSA Administrative Policy 108). —

Administrative Procedure 360 - Assessment (<https://edmontoncatholicschools.sharepoint.com/sites/D0002/Administrative%20Procedures%20Manual/AP%20360.PDF>)

9. In alignment with the District assessment procedures and research-based assessment practices,
- 9.1 Students will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning through multiple means of expression, within a reasonable time frame.
- 9.2 A student's grade represents his/her relevant, consistent and recent learning and achievement; a zero, as part of a student's grade, will only be used in exceptional circumstances when, after additional support and multiple opportunities, evidence of learning is not available. Dialogue with the Principal is advised.



Appendix C. *Plagiarism and Cheating*

Plagiarism includes:

- Submitting material written by someone else or rephrasing the ideas of another without providing the author's name or source
- Taking someone else's assignment, wholly or in part, and submitting it as one's own
- Presenting the work of tutors, parents, friends as one's own
- Submitting papers from the Internet written by someone else as one's own
- Submitting purchased papers as one's own
- Supporting plagiarism by providing work to others, whether it is believed it will be copied or not

Please Note: all parties involved in copying whether it may be the lender of the information, or the person copying, will be treated as participating in the act of plagiarism.

Cheating includes:

- Duplicating assignments that are turned in, wholly or in part, as original work
- Exchanging assignments with other students whether it is believed they will be copied or not
- Using any form of memory aid during tests or quizzes without the expressed permission of the teacher
- Providing or receiving answers during tests or quizzes
- Accessing a test or quiz for the purpose of determining the questions in advance of its administration
- Taking credit for group work when the student has not contributed an equal or appropriate share toward the final result

Usingenglish.com. (2002–2013). *Cheating and Plagiarism*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from UsingEnglish.com. [Http://www.usingenglish.com/comprehension/32.html](http://www.usingenglish.com/comprehension/32.html)



Appendix D. *Final Exam & Diploma Procedures for Archbishop O’Leary High School*

1. Students will NOT be permitted entry into the writing area or to labs with ANY **personal belongings**. These include purses, knapsacks, books, binders, or electronic equipment –especially cell phones.
Supervisors located at doors will direct students to store all personal belongings in their lockers.
2. For exams that allow the use of dictionaries and thesauri, ALL dictionaries and thesauri will be checked by supervisors prior to entering examination area.
3. Any student in possession of materials NOT allowed in the exam area will have his/her mark INVALIDATED.
4. Students MUST display school ID or government ID before entering examination area. Student picture **I.D.** MUST be placed on the desk for the duration of the exam.
5. Tools for writing (e.g. HB pencil) are required from all students.
6. Students will be asked to verify they have the **CORRECT** Examination Booklet **and** Answer Sheet.
7. Students will be asked to cross out any incorrect information and clearly print in the corrections, when applicable.
8. Calculators, when used, will be cleared by Math/Science instructors at the beginning of exams. Supervisors will clear calculators before students leave, when applicable.
9. ALL students will put hands up when they have finished the exam so teacher may collect and check they have thoroughly completed the exams. Students will be allowed to leave only when this process is finished.
10. Students **CANNOT** remove any materials from any examination area. Any removal will be treated as cheating and the student will receive a zero for this assessment.

Diploma Exam Procedures.

- a. Students will be directed on how to place labels with their personal information on applicable areas.
- b. Students will be asked to complete the necessary information on the back cover and sign it.
Please Note: Any student without diploma stickers must include their Alberta I.D.– the 9 digit number on their school I.D.
- c. The supervisor will read the instruction to the students.
- d. Students will tear out the pages provided for rough work, data sheets, etc., as required by the Diploma Exam.
- e. ALL students must remain in the examination room for a MINIMUM of 1 hour.
- f. ALL students writing a diploma exam will begin at the scheduled time. Those who are unable to adhere to the pre-set time will NOT be permitted to write after 1 hour that the examination begins.
Please Note: This will be reported directly and immediately to Alberta Education.
- g. ALL students will put hands up when they have finished the exam so teacher may collect and check they have thoroughly completed the exams. Students will be allowed to leave only when this process is finished.
- h. Calculators will be cleared by Math/Science at the beginning of exams. Supervisors will clear calculators before students leave (if applicable) and Math and Science will clear new calculators at the end (if applicable).
- i. Students **CANNOT** remove any materials from examination room. Any removal will be treated as cheating and the student will receive a zero for this assessment.
Please Note: This will be reported directly and immediately to Alberta Education.