



Goetheschule Essen

## Inklusive Education Policy

### 1. Inclusive Education in the IB Diploma Programme at Goetheschule Essen

The IB Diploma Programme at Goetheschule Essen is for highly motivated students who demonstrate a talent for language learning as well as scientific thinking and creative ability. IB students need to be willing to go well beyond what is required for the German Diploma over a two year-period, since our school combines the IB with the Abitur. As the school community creates and maintains a positive learning environment, which is based on mutual support and respect, gifted students with disabling weaknesses like attentional disorder, physical disability or sensory impairment receive equitable access to the Diploma Programme. Special arrangements for these students and for candidates affected by a temporary or long-term illness may be authorized by the IBO.

### 2. Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

The entire school community, including administrators, teachers, students, and parents, plays a crucial role in promoting inclusive education and ensuring that all students have equal access to a high-quality education.

We consider these rights to be essential:

- the right to a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment;
- the right to equal access to the curriculum and educational resources;
- the right to receive the necessary support and accommodations to enable full participation and success;
- the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to have one's individual needs and strengths recognized and valued.

It is the **coordinator's** responsibility to establish whether the Diploma Programme can be taught and assessed. Before accepting a student with inclusive needs as a candidate for the Diploma Programme, the coordinator needs to consider whether suitable arrangements for both teaching and assessment can be made. To accommodate a candidate with a special assessment need, it is essential that the coordinator consults all teachers concerned at an early stage in a candidate's study of the Diploma Programme.

The **school board and the school administration** will ensure that students with disabilities have access to the necessary supports and accommodations to fully participate in the educational process. This may include assistive technology, and other specialized services, such as a prompter or reader.

**Teachers and staff** will receive training and professional development on how to effectively support and teach students with disabilities, as well as how to create inclusive classrooms and school environments.

**Parents** should be involved in the decision-making process and give their input and feedback on issues related to inclusive education.

The **students** are expected to be proactive in asking for assistance from the school administrators, teachers and staff, to participate actively in classes and to respect the requirements outlined below.

Overall, the responsibilities of the school community in an inclusive education policy are diverse and multifaceted, and require a collective effort from all stakeholders to ensure that all students have the support and resources they need to succeed.

### **3. IB Requirements**

Disadvantage compensation, also known as extra support or accommodations, refers to the extra help or support that is provided to students who face challenges or barriers that may impact their ability to fully participate in and benefit from their education. The specific requirements for students to be entitled to disadvantage compensation are outlined here. In general, students may be eligible for disadvantage compensation if they have a documented disability or other special need that impacts their ability to access or fully participate in the curriculum or school activities. This may include physical or cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities, behavioural or emotional challenges, or other special needs.

#### **3.1 Inclusive Access Arrangements**

Once a student is enrolled in the school, it is the responsibility of the school to meet the student's learning needs, including provision of access to learning and teaching with suitable inclusive access arrangements.

The inclusive access arrangements provided to a student must be planned at the start or early on during the course of study and be incorporated as the usual way to access classroom work and tests.

The inclusive access arrangements provided for a student must:

- be carefully individualized, evaluated and monitored;
- reflect the optimal support that the student requires;
- be based on current, not past, requirements;
- be drawn upon teacher observations in the classroom;
- be considered in line with the eligibility criteria for inclusive access arrangements in this policy;
- be strictly based on individual requirements.

The purpose of inclusive access arrangements is to remove or reduce, as far as possible, any disadvantage that may occur due to the student's learning support requirements. Under no circumstances should it give the student an advantage.

#### **3.2 Deadline for Submission of Request for Inclusive Access Arrangements**

Requests for inclusive access arrangements must be submitted six months prior to an examination session to the IB coordinator, that is, by 10 November.

#### **3.3 Supporting Documentation**

To be entitled to disadvantage compensation, students typically need to provide documentation of their disability or special need, such as a diagnosis from a medical professional or an evaluation from a specialist. To submit requests for inclusive access arrangements the following two forms of supporting documentation are required

- a psychological/psycho-educational/medical report or evidence from a language test for additional language learners
- educational evidence from the school.

All supporting documentation must:

- be legible, on a document with a letterhead, signed and dated
- state the title, name and professional credentials of the person(s) who has undertaken the

testing

- state specifically the tests or techniques used
- be consistent with the coordinator's request for access arrangements
- be accompanied by a translation into English, French or Spanish, if it is not written in one of these IB working languages.

Furthermore, all psychological/psycho-educational reports must:

- state the candidate's performance on nationally standardized psychological tests (where available and published, recent editions of standardized tests should be employed)
- report results as standard scores, which have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, and not percentiles or age/grade equivalents.

### **3.4 Arrangements Requiring Authorisation**

Access to the following assistive technology, specialized services or accommodations must be authorised by the IBO:

- modified papers and examination papers in Braille,
- changes to the print on examination papers,
- printing on coloured paper,
- access to electronic (PDF) examination,
- modified papers,
- additional time,
- graphic organizers,
- scribe,
- word processor,
- speech recognition software.
- transcriptions,
- reading software,
- sign language interpreters,
- augmentative communication device,
- a calculator where a calculator is otherwise not allowed in the examination,
- extensions to deadlines,
- deferral of external assessment,
- additional opportunities to retake exams,
- access to alternative venues,
- access to other reasonable adjustments.

### **3.5 Adverse Circumstances**

If an adverse circumstance, such as family bereavement or temporary illness, affects a candidate, either during the preparation of work for assessment or during written examinations, the IB coordinator needs to be informed. The affected candidate may not always be eligible for compensation; the coordinator will counsel the student on this issue based on IB rules and regulations.

### **3.6 Adverse Circumstances during Examinations (Authorization from the IBO required)**

If a candidate is too ill to attend school, but on medical advice is capable to take the examinations at home or in hospital, authorization may be given for the examination to be taken at an alternative venue. In principle, the examination should be taken at the same time as other candidates in the group, but if necessary the application for an alternative venue may include a request to reschedule the examination. Authorization to take an examination at an alternative venue must be obtained. The use of an amanuensis is permitted for all forms of assessment where a candidate is unable to provide a handwritten response or use a word processor. Additional time may be authorized for written examinations and for certain activities connected to internal assessment according to the candidate's assessed needs.

### **3.7 Adverse Circumstances during Examinations (No Authorization from the IBO required)**

At the discretion of the coordinator (or head of school), the following arrangements are permitted in examinations without prior authorization from the IBO. A candidate is permitted

to take an examination in a separate room if it is in the best interests of the candidate or other candidates in the group as long as all regulations governing the conduct of IB examinations are being observed. The coordinator may arrange for appropriate seating to meet the needs of individual candidates (for example, sitting near the front may be appropriate for a candidate with a visual or hearing impairment). A candidate may take medication and/or refreshment to alleviate a medical condition such as diabetes. A care assistant may be in attendance if this is necessary for the welfare or safety of a candidate. A candidate who normally uses an aid (for example a hearing aid) is allowed to use the aid in examinations.

### **3.8 Extensions to Deadlines**

This arrangement applies to cases of illness or accident when a candidate is genuinely prevented from completing work in time. A request for an extension to a deadline must in these cases be received before the normal deadline.

### **3.9 Exemptions from Assessment**

Exemptions are not normally granted for any assessment component of the Diploma Programme. However, if an assessment component or part demands a physiological function that a candidate is not able to perform, an exemption may be authorized. If a diploma candidate is unable to complete all requirements for CAS owing to a medical condition, the coordinator must contact the IBO regional office for advice.

## **4. How Our School Complies with the Requirements**

To ensure access arrangements for students with inclusive assessment needs, we follow the following process.

1. The school will identify students who may have special educational needs or disabilities and assess their needs to determine the support they require. This may involve consulting with parents, teachers, and other professionals, such as occupational therapists or speech therapists.
2. For students with identified special educational needs, the school will develop an individualized education plan (IEP). The IEP is a document that outlines the student's specific needs, goals, and strategies for meeting those goals. It is developed in collaboration with the student, their parents, and their teachers.
3. The school will regularly monitor and review the progress of students with special educational needs to ensure that they are receiving the support they need to succeed. This may involve periodic meetings with parents and teachers to discuss the student's progress and make any necessary adjustments to their IEP.
4. The IB coordinator collaborates with parents, school psychologists and school health professionals to verify the necessary assessment arrangements and collect supporting documentation.
5. The candidate's progress will be evaluated twice a year by the IB Staff Conference. If necessary, suitable means of support will be recommended, which may range from the use of additional learning material to intensive counselling and tutoring.
6. If necessary, the IB coordinator will submit a request for inclusive assessment arrangements during the final exams to the IBO.

## **5. Principles**

All inclusive arrangements that may be authorized by the IBO are based on the following principles.

5.1 The IBO must ensure that a grade awarded to a candidate in any subject is not a misleading description of that candidate's level of attainment, so the same standards of assessment are applied to all candidates, regardless of whether or not they have special inclusive needs.

5.2 Special arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's inclusive needs when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The inclusive arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.

5.3 The special arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the intellectual capacity to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or individual IB courses.

5.4 The school, not the IBO, is responsible for establishing whether the Diploma Programme can be taught and assessed.

5.5 If it can be demonstrated that a candidate's lack of proficiency in their response language(s) (English, French or Spanish) arises from a diagnosed need, special arrangements may be authorized. For subjects in groups 3 to 6, all such candidates are for example allowed to use a translating dictionary in the written examinations.

5.6 The IBO aims to authorize special arrangements that are compatible with those normally available to the candidate concerned. However, authorization will only be given for arrangements that are consistent with the policy and practice of the IBO. It should not be assumed that the IBO will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by a school. Coordinators are required to provide information on both the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom and under assessment conditions.

5.7 The IBO is committed to an educational philosophy based on internationalism. Therefore, the inclusive education policy of the IBO may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with special assessment needs, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practice in different countries.

5.8 The IBO will ensure that, wherever possible, arrangements for candidates with a similar type of need are the same. Given that cultural differences occur in the recognition of learning difficulties and the accommodations allowed, some compromise may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

5.9 If special assessment arrangements are necessary for a candidate, consultation with the IBO is mandatory. Similarly, if a diploma candidate has difficulties meeting the requirements for creativity, action, service (CAS), the appropriate IBO regional office must be consulted.

5.10 A school must not inform an examiner of a candidate's condition or adverse circumstance. Similarly, in the case of internally assessed work, teachers must not make any adjustments when marking a candidate's work. If appropriate, the IBO will ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered.

5.11 The IBO treats all information about a candidate as confidential. Information will only be shared with appropriate IBO personnel and members of the final award committee, who will be instructed to treat such information as confidential.

5.12 The school respects and protects student privacy and acts according to German data protection law during transition stages.

5.13 If inclusive arrangements are authorized for internal assessment, the IBO may require the candidate's work to be submitted to IBCA for scrutiny.

5.14 The same special arrangements may not be available if a candidate retakes a subject after six months. This is because some arrangements, such as transcribing examination papers into Braille, take several months of preparation.

5.15 The list of inclusive arrangements available is revised regularly. The IBO will consider

alternative arrangements proposed by a coordinator, provided those arrangements could be made available to all other similarly affected candidates.

5.16 According to the diploma regulations, a diploma candidate may participate in three examination sessions to be awarded the diploma. At the discretion of the IBO, a candidate with special needs may be allowed additional sessions.

5.17 If a school does not meet the conditions specified by the IBO when administering special arrangements, or makes special arrangements without authorization, the candidate may not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned.

5.18 Each request for special arrangements will be judged on its own merit. Previous authorization of special arrangements, either by the IBO or another awarding body, will not influence the decision on whether to authorize the arrangements that have been requested by the coordinator.

5.19 The IBO does not flag or in any way annotate the results of a candidate for whom special arrangements have been authorized.

5.20 If the candidate's disability and/or the nature of the special arrangement might disturb other candidates during an examination, the candidate must take the examination in a separate room and be supervised according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations.

5.21 Any difficulties that arise from the nature of the special arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate, should be reported to the coordinator.

5.22 Written examinations must be invigilated according to the regulations governing the conduct of Diploma Programme examinations. The person invigilating the candidate must not be a relative of the candidate, or any other person with whom there may be an apparent or perceived conflict of interest.

## **6. Our School's Vision for Implementing an Inclusive Dual Diploma Programme**

Goetheschule Essen is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued and supported, and where they have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders work together to identify the needs and goals of individual students, and to develop and implement strategies to support their success. We see inclusive education as a way to foster a sense of community and belonging, and to promote respect and understanding among students of diverse backgrounds and abilities. Our ultimate goal is to provide equal educational opportunities for all students.

## **7. Revision of the Inclusive Education Policy**

The school's inclusive education policy is regularly reviewed within a 5-year cycle. It was first developed on the basis of *Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes* © IBO 2010, *Candidates with special assessment needs* © IBO 2007, and the *IB Handbook 2011* and went into effect on 5 October 2011. It was last revised by the IB Staff Conference in January 2023 under consideration of *Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom* © IBO 2013 and *Access and inclusion Policy*. Published by the IBO in November 2018; Updated February 2022.