

# **International Baccalaureate Diploma Inclusive Assessment Policy**

Holy Heart of Mary High School

## ***Philosophy***

Holy Heart of Mary High School recognizes and endorses the International Baccalaureate's philosophy of making an IB education inclusive and accessible. Holy Heart of Mary also acknowledges the academic rigor of the program and the importance of encouraging students to pursue the full diploma. The school asserts that barriers to student participation can be minimized as teachers strive to meet the educational needs of a diverse population by utilizing a variety of teaching and learning strategies as well as accommodations for assessment.

The Newfoundland and Labrador provincial Department of Education promotes an inclusive education in all K to 12 schools in the province. This policy adheres to the principles directed within the province and provides specific accommodations for candidates as permitted by principles espoused by the International Baccalaureate Organization (see Appendix A).

## ***IB Candidate Inclusive Assessment Arrangements***

At Holy Heart of Mary High School students are immersed in an inclusive environment in which a delivery model of services focusing on reasonable, non-intrusive assessment arrangements are provided to students who have assessment access requirements. A collaborative planning structure is employed to make the most effective use of resources and learning opportunities. The student, parents, instructional resource teacher, guidance counselors, school administrators, IB Coordinator, and subject teachers (hereafter referred to as the team) form a collaborative approach to deliver appropriate programming and assessment access requirements. These accommodations are quantified via medical documentation or a comprehensive psycho-educational assessment.

Members of Holy Heart of Mary's teaching staff and all members of the team, who are directly involved with the student maintain confidentiality with regards to the student's assessment access requirements. All inclusive arrangements and differentiated instruction are provided within the regular classroom, as necessary, to ensure the student with assessment access requirements avail of the standards of assessment consistently applied to all IB candidates. A supervised alternate setting is provided within the school for use as needed by the student.

## ***Delivery of Services***

At the time of admission to Holy Heart of Mary, a student with assessment access requirements is assigned to an instructional resource teacher (IRT, a special education trained teacher) who becomes the student's case manager; educational and relevant information is provided directly from the feeder school special support services team; the student's cumulative and confidential records are reviewed; discussions are held between the IRT, student, parent and guidance counselor to review the individual case and implications regarding academic, social, and post-secondary planning; and individual meetings are conducted with the student, parent and school team. Early in the school year, the IRT informs subject teachers of instructional and assessment accommodations required for the student; has frequent contact with the student; monitors supports in class instruction and assessment, as required; and ensures any additional required supports outside of regular classroom are provided, e.g., student tutoring, direct instruction, credit recovery, social skill development, speech language services, sign language interpreters, outside agency support, parental contact, access to assistive technology, etc. Subject teachers provide the student with access and assessment arrangements i.e., extended time on tests and assignments and any modifications to materials and instructional practices. The subject teacher conveys any concerns to the student, parents, IRT and/or guidance counselor. The student's case manager (IRT) conducts an annual review, or more frequently as based on the student's individual needs, and evaluation of student supports and progress with relevant team members.

## ***Inclusive Assessment Arrangements***

Team members complete a formal IBO request for inclusive assessment arrangements for a candidate. This request is then submitted via IBIS, by the IB Diploma Coordinator, to the IBO at least six months prior to the student writing the IB final exam(s). Supporting documentation, such as a medical certificate or a psycho-educational report, must accompany this request. When the IB Diploma Coordinator is informed of IBO's decision she conveys this information to team members.

*Candidates with Assessment Requirements* (2014) document outlines the characteristics of students who may require special assessment arrangements due to one or more of the following:

- Specific learning issues, speech and/or communication disorders
  - Significant issues in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers associated with issues in processing symbolic language (for example, problems interpreting music notation, dyslexia, dyscalculia).
  - Speech and communication disorders (for example, aphasia, dysphasia, articulation problems).
- Social, emotional and behavioural issues
  - Includes: attention deficit disorder (ADD)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); autistic spectrum disorders; withdrawn, depressive or suicidal attitudes; obsessive preoccupation with eating habits; school phobia; substance abuse; disruptive antisocial and uncooperative behaviour; and anger, frustration and violence.
- Physical and/or sensory conditions
  - Physical disabilities include a wide range of conditions that are not always immediately obvious, but affect mobility.
  - Sensory issues: hearing – embraces an extensive range of hearing loss from mild to profound and can present communication difficulties; visual – includes difficulties with either the structure or function of the eye, affecting vision.
- Medical conditions
  - The most common being: congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, renal failure, eczema, rheumatoid disorders, allergies, leukemia and other cancers.
- Mental health issues
  - A wide range of conditions that can affect a person's state of mind, ranging from psychotic conditions, such as schizophrenia and manic depression, to eating disorders, anxieties and emotional distress caused by circumstances in a candidate's life.

The following is a list of accommodation arrangements that maybe granted once IB0 has reviewed the required documentation:

- Additional time – 10 to 50% more time is allowed for the candidate, as outlined within the DP Inclusive Assessment Policy.
- Rest periods – supervised rest time maybe allowed, during which time the candidate is not allowed to work on their exam.
- Information and communication technology – a computer could be used to type the answers to the exam instead of hand writing the answers. The student cannot use any software that would the candidate an unfair advantage during the exam. Voice-activated technology or augmentative speech equipment can be requested when this has been the candidate’s normal way of working in the school.
- Scribes – a person who writes down dictated answers from the candidate.
- Readers – a person who reads allowed the questions to the candidate and can also read back answers the candidate has provided. The reader cannot explain a question or give advice on how to answer the question.
- Communicators – a person who is able to convey information to a candidate with a hearing impairment, through the use of lip-speaking, finger-spelling or sign language.
- Prompters – a person who ensures that a candidate is paying attention to the examination. This would normally be authorized for candidates diagnosed as having a neurological or cognitive disability resulting from a severe attention problem.
- Modifications to examination papers – normally made for candidates with hearing or visual issues, such as providing an exam in Braille, enlarged print, printing on colored paper, modifications to the visual complexity of the exam or modifications to the language of the exam paper.
- Audio recordings on examination papers – the IB may provide an exam paper on a CD. This is a limited service and is not available for exams with illustrations, tables, diagrams or sketch maps.
- Audio recordings of responses to examination papers – The candidate dictates answers into an appropriate recording technology. This is used when a scribe is not available and cannot be used for examinations in Groups 1 and 2 or with examinations that require the candidate to produce visual material such as an illustration, table, diagram or sketch map.
- Transcriptions – A candidate’s response to an assessment component is submitted in a form other than the candidate’s own handwriting. Transcription is justified when a candidate with a specific learning issue, or a physical disability, has very poor handwriting skills and cannot use a computer. Transcription is not available to candidates with poor handwriting for whom some form of special need cannot be diagnosed.
- Alternative venues for examinations – if a candidate is too ill to attend school, but on medical advice is able 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. A qualified invigilator must be present.
- Extensions to deadlines – this arrangement applies to cases of illness or accident when a candidate is genuinely prevented from completing work in time for the coordinator to submit the work to the examiner.

- Assistance with practical work – if a candidate has a physical disorder, assistance with practical work can be requested. This arrangement is normally confined to the requirements of internal assessment (for example, practical work in experimental science or geography fieldwork). It is particularly suited to situations where there is a concern for a candidate’s health or safety.
- Exemptions from assessments – exemptions are not normally granted for any assessment component of the Diploma Program. However, if an assessment component or part demands a physiological function that a candidate is not able to perform, an exemption may be authorized.

## ***Resources***

Department of Education Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2014), *Inclusive Practices Guidelines: School Level*

International Baccalaureate Organization (July 2014), *Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements*, Cardiff: IBO.

International Baccalaureate Organization (August 2010), *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes*, Cardiff: IBO.

## ***Note:***

Acknowledged as a working document, Holy Heart of Mary’s IB Diploma Program Inclusive Assessment Policy is reviewed annually by members of the faculty, IB coordinator, administration, and guidance department. Within this context, avenues are explored for professional development that provide a heightened teacher understanding of processes that address students’ differentiated learning and instructional needs. A recent example of professional development that promoted this awareness was a half day in-service for all teaching staff regarding inclusive assessment arrangements and in recent years another relevant in-service entitled, “Helping Struggling Students Succeed”.

The access requirement policy for various schools available online were viewed and it was concluded that in many cases we concurred with their phrasing of some policy components.

Holy Heart of Mary’s IB Diploma Program Inclusive Assessment Policy is available on the school’s website.

## Appendix A

All access and assessment arrangements that may be authorized by the IB are based on the following Principles as found in *Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements*, pages 4-5.

**1.1** The IB 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 learning support requirements.

**1.2** Inclusive assessment arrangements are intended to reduce the adverse effects of a candidate's long-term challenges when demonstrating his or her level of attainment. The arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment component.

**1.3** The inclusive assessment arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the award of the diploma or course results.

**1.4** If inclusive assessment arrangements are necessary for a candidate during the course of their study of the Diploma Programme or practice examinations, the school may provide the arrangements. If the arrangements are required for assessment, this document lists the arrangements that do not require prior authorization from the IB. For all other arrangements, prior authorization from IB Assessment centre is mandatory. Similarly, if Diploma Programme candidate has difficulties meeting the requirements for creativity, action, service (CAS), IB Answers must be consulted.

**1.5** The IB aims to authorize inclusive assessment 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 IB. It should not be assumed that the IB will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by a school. Coordinators are required to provide information on the candidate's usual method of working in the classroom.

**1.6** The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international mindedness. Therefore, the inclusive assessment arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with assessment access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practice in different countries.

**1.7** The IB will ensure that, wherever possible, arrangements for candidates with a similar type of access requirements are the same. Due to the cultural differences that occur in the recognition of learning support requirements and the nature of access arrangements granted in schools, there may be some compromise which may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

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

**1.9** The IB treats all information about a candidate as confidential. If required, information will only be shared with appropriate IB personnel and members of the final award committee, who will be instructed to treat such information as confidential.

**1.10** The IB does not flag or annotate in any way the result of a candidate for whom inclusive assessment arrangements have been authorized

**1.11** If school does not meet the conditions specified by the IB when administering inclusive assessment arrangements or makes arrangements without authorization, the candidate may not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned.

**1.12** If it can be demonstrated that a candidate's lack of proficiency in his or her response language(s) arises from an identified learning requirement, inclusive assessment arrangements may be authorized. (For subjects in groups 3 to 6, all candidates are allowed to use a translating dictionary in the written examinations.)

**1.13** If inclusive assessment arrangements are authorized for internal assessment, the IB may require the candidate's work to be submitted to IB Assessment centre for review.

**1.14** 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 IB will ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered.

**1.15** The list of inclusive assessment arrangements available is revised regularly. The IB will consider alternative arrangements proposed by a coordinator, provided those arrangements could be made available to all candidates with similar requirements.

**1.16** According to the document General regulations: Diploma Programme, a Diploma Programme candidate may participate in three examination sessions to be awarded the diploma. At the discretion of the IB, a candidate with learning support requirements may be allowed additional sessions.

**1.17** If the nature of a candidate's challenge and/or the authorized inclusive assessment 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.

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

**1.19** Any issues that arise from the nature of the inclusive assessment arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate, should be reported to IB Answers as soon as possible.