



# Inclusion Policy



# IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

## As IB learners, we strive to be:

### **Inquirers**

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### **Knowledgeable**

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### **Thinkers**

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### **Communicators**

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### **Principled**

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

### **Open-minded**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

### **Caring**

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

### **Risk-takers**

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

### **Balanced**

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

### **Reflective**

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and

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weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities

## **IB's Mission Statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## **WAT's Mission Statement**

The mission of the World Academy of Tirana (WAT) is to cultivate internationally-minded students who connect their acquired knowledge to action in the real world. Our goal is to inspire children to become active, compassionate, lifelong learners who can relate harmoniously with other people and cultures.

As an IB school, WAT's Vision, Mission and Values are closely aligned with the IB Learner Profile and provide a framework of values to which we aspire as a community. The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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## Philosophy

The IB programmes are inclusive and holistic and are designed to meet the needs of all learners. We believe that all students should be included, challenged and successful at their own level within our programme.

## Purpose of the Document

**This document describes the following:**

- A. legal requirements for inclusive education in Albania
- B. limitations on support the school is able to provide to children with special needs
- C. the support students may need
- D. how we assess needs and monitor progress
- E. how we accommodate needs
- F. roles of the different stakeholders who support students
- G. the referral process of students to the school psychologist/guidance counselor
- H. the recommended practices for DP students with identified special educational needs
- I. future objectives

## Legal requirements and obligations; Nr 22, date 27.07.2022

The Inclusion Policy is in accordance with Legal requirements and obligations; Nr 22, date 27.07.2022. In addition, this policy needs to be known and adopted in each school.

- Registration with priority in educational institutions for children with special needs: from families in need, from national minorities (Roma, Egyptians, etc.) and children with limited skills.
- The establishment and operation of multidisciplinary committees for special needs children and appointing the SEN support teacher under the legislation in force.
- Drafting and implementing individual educational plans for children with limited skills, from teachers in collaboration with persons who utilize parental support for children, psychologists, social workers, professionals from health and specialized social services facilities.
- School need to commit to inclusive education training

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## School's structures and processes for compliance to legal requirements and obligations

WAT is an inclusive school that welcomes students from many diverse backgrounds and circumstances. WAT's philosophy for admission is to provide an education to any student who can benefit from an IB education programme without disrupting or diminishing the educational opportunities of other students.

We value the team decision-making process in regard to intervention, special education identification and the provision of support services. Some students require more specific interventions, as determined by the child study team (CST). Appropriate policies and procedures are followed to a) ensure parent(s)/guardian(s) consent, b) determine student needs and c) provide the required individualized student support services. Each student with identified special needs is provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that has been developed by the school psychologist, child study team (CST) and in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s). Each IEP includes an aim and targeted areas of academic and social growth. It may also contain strategies and accommodations, which ensure student access to the curriculum.

WAT at all times retains at least one fully certified and accredited School Psychologist.

### A. Limitations on support to students with special needs

WAT is an inclusive school that welcomes students from many diverse backgrounds and circumstances. WAT's philosophy for admission is to provide an education to any student who can benefit from an IB education programme without disrupting or diminishing the educational opportunities of other students.

However, there are circumstances that WAT is unable to accommodate which includes the following:

- **Students with physical disabilities requiring assistance.** WAT provides extra time for students with confirmed disabilities to go to and from classes and other activities. However, it is required that students can independently navigate the facility without assistance. WAT does not have facility infrastructure such as ramps to all areas and elevators that some students with certain physical disabilities may require.
- **Students unable to care for themselves and maintain their own hygiene.** WAT personnel are not available to assist students who are unable to care for themselves or maintain their own hygiene for the purposes of the following:
  - Eating
  - Going to the bathroom
  - Dressing
  - Grooming
  - Showering

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WAT is only able to accommodate students with such needs if the parents provide a caregiver at their expense.

- **Students with special needs who require an independent teacher/monitor.** WAT is unable to provide teachers/monitors for individual students with extensive special needs. If students require independent teachers/monitors to supplement regular teachers while in class, the child's parents will be required to provide such assistance at their own expense.
- **Students with pre-existing medical issues that cannot be responded to in a timely manner.** WAT maintains a medical office and a full-time medical staff. However, some medical conditions (heart problems, severe allergic reactions, etc.) may precipitate an emergency situation that is beyond the capabilities of WAT medical staff and local first responders.
- **Students that may represent a threat to themselves or others.** The safety and security of WAT staff and student body is a primary concern at all times. If a student's behavioral or psychological history indicates that they may pose a threat (physically or emotionally) to themselves or others they may be ineligible to attend classes at WAT.
- **Students with significant behavioral issues.** If reports from other schools, or prior attendance at WAT, demonstrate that a student has significant behavioral issues that may disrupt the academic performance of other students or consume a disproportionate amount of staff resources, they may be ineligible to attend classes at WAT.

If any of the above conditions are not disclosed by parents during the application/interview/testing process WAT reserves the right to unenroll the student.

## B. Support students may need

Teachers may provide extra support to students by assisting them with the following:

- developing an understanding of the concepts studied in the unit
- gaining a depth of understanding beyond grade level expectations
- decoding the texts through which the concepts are presented
- expressing their understanding through oral, written or visual language
- organizing themselves
- developing students' social skills and managing emotional issues
- providing education to other students about the benefits of a diverse school community and the need to support students with special needs
- when possible, gaining additional training for students with special needs or coming from diverse backgrounds
- allowing religiously observant students the time and privacy required for religious practices as long as it does not adversely affect the student's academic performance or interfere with the academic progress of other students
- providing flexibility and opportunities for special needs student to demonstrate learning in their own way
- Creating IEPs for students in coordination with professionally trained staff
- Organizing regular meetings with parents to maintain good communication and a better understanding of what is happening at school

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- Providing an environment for students to work in that is better suited to meet their needs (outside in the hall, in a spare classroom, in the library) and to receive one to one attention

## C. Assessing the needs of students

Student needs are assessed on an ongoing basis through the use of formal as well as informal tools.

Informal tools include:

- ongoing observations in the classroom and extracurricular settings by school staff and trained professionals
- anecdotal information of student performance collected by the Homeroom Teacher / subject leader and other teachers with relevant information

Formal tools include:

- mathematics and language tests, for secondary students, administered during the admissions process
- formative and summative assessments that are an integral part of the units
- horizontal student review meetings (twice a year per class)
- observations and informal assessment conducted by the school psychologist/guidance counselor resulting in individual educational plans

The school systematically collects documents and files information for all students on the following:

- personal and family data
- academic progress
- behavior
- medical information

Homeroom teachers have the responsibility of reading all relevant information in student folders on Google drive (e.g. Students of Concern/SOC) for students in their class. They also have the responsibility of briefing other teachers/co-teachers who teach their students when necessary. They brief all teachers before the year starts and on an ongoing basis as situations arise during the year.

The following information will be collected in the student file:

### During the admissions process

- Admissions forms, including personal, family and health data
- Reports from previous school(s)
- Reports from specialists (psychologists, speech therapists etc.) obtained at previous schools (parents are required to provide reports from non-school provided psychologists and therapists for the five-year period prior to the start of the admissions process)
- Entry assessments
  - **Primary:** all students must attend a meeting with a member of the primary academic staff before enrollment. If the meeting or previous reports generate a concern an entry

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assessment may be required by the school. A visit in a whole group setting might also be required.

- **Secondary:** all students need to do an ESL and Mathematics placement, administered preferably before enrolment and at least within the first week of enrolment. These tests will be saved in the student file.

In addition, *horizontal student review meetings* are done twice a year for every grade level, in which all students in that grade level will be discussed. The participants at student review meetings are all teachers who teach that grade, the school psychologist/guidance counselor, Homeroom teachers for that grade level and the relevant IB Programme Coordinator. The homeroom teacher /IB Programme Coordinator will use a template to take notes at this meeting and these will be stored in the Students of Concern folder on the shared drive.

The purpose of the horizontal student review meetings is to do the following:

- systematically and proactively monitor student performance and behavior from multiple perspectives and make informed decisions on possible action
- share perspectives on students in order to learn from each other and understand individual students better, their study patterns and to establish which circumstances affect the behavior of students
- update documentation on students to ensure it remains current - IEPs are maintained online by the school psychologist.

In addition to horizontal student review meetings, we organize annual *transition meetings* in May / June between Grade 5 and Grade 6 teachers to discuss students moving from primary to secondary school Grade 10 to Grade 11 is also done for the transition from MYP to DP..

There may be additional information for students who are assessed by the school psychologist/guidance counselor, or external specialists. These notes will be kept in the files in the school psychologist's office. Whenever the school psychologist will file a report on a student, she will leave a note in the student file in the admissions office that a report is available with the school psychologist and can be shared with teachers on a need to know basis.

## **D. Accommodating student needs**

The school accommodates student needs as much as possible within the regular programme, using the following channels:

- differentiated teaching and support within the classroom context
- English as Second Language (ESL) support
- Meetings for students and parents with the school psychologist/guidance counselor

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## E. Roles of the different stakeholders

We believe that there are many stakeholders who can positively influence student learning.

Learning is effective if:

- students challenge themselves, reflect on their own performance, communicate their questions, needs and wishes to their teachers and seek support in time
- parents engage in regular dialogue with teachers to discuss the learning of their children and support them at home (please refer to WAT Community Handbook for more information)
- teachers evaluate the learning of the students through a variety of strategies, design assessments that fit the task, are appropriate to the level and refer to clear assessment criteria and indicators, differentiate their teaching, provide effective feedback to students and communicate regularly with parents, communicate with IB Coordinator's, homeroom teachers and the school psychologist/guidance counselor when necessary (*Refer to Assessment Policy for more information*)

The school has created specific posts to provide and coordinate specific support to students beyond the support offered by the subject teachers. These posts are as follows:

- School psychologist/guidance counselor
- English as Second Language (ESL) or Lang. B teacher

The responsibilities of each of these posts are described in job descriptions that should be read in conjunction with this inclusion policy.

## F. Referring students to the school psychologist/counselor

There may also be some instances during the school day in which the role of school psychologist should be included as a mediator, as referred by the homeroom teacher or a teacher on duty during recess time.

The idea is to minimize the number of cases in which the parents become involved in issues that can be managed at school.

### **For example:**

If, during class, something out of the ordinary happens (disrupting classmates or the lesson, yelling, negative behavior etc), the student can be directed to the school psychologist.

Referral may be student initiated, school initiated or parent initiated. (See sections below).

In cases when a conflict happens, between two students or a group, the school psychologist can mediate and work with these issues.

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During recess, many situations can create conflict between students, so after evidence has been given by the teacher on duty, a counseling intervention can be very effective for the student so as not to prolong the problem.

When you see that a small group of students in your class has something to discuss regarding their group, they can be directed to the school psychologist's office.

### **Student initiated**

Students may visit the school psychologist of their own free will at any time. Any resulting intervention will require parents to be informed of the meeting (but not the content, unless there is a child safety issue).

Teachers might suggest a 'chat' with the school psychologist if the student feels the need to talk to someone but the student is the one who initiates the meeting, not the teacher.

Teachers will be informed that the child is with the psychologist so that attendance at school can be verified.

### **School initiated**

In the case that a teacher observes behavior that is of concern, s/he can request in-class/whole class observations that help gather information about the student in the context of different situations.

The next step would be to organize a child study team (CST) involving as many teachers as possible in a virtual or face-to-face meeting to discuss observations and strategies that are effective (or not) with the student. The homeroom teacher and/or psychologist will organize the meeting and record notes in the case of an individual education plan (IEP) being necessary at that point or in the future.

If the CST agrees on the need for an IEP, the school psychologist will contact the parents to explain the process and invite them to a meeting with representatives of the CST to discuss possible interventions and contribution to the IEP. The IEP will be reviewed according to timelines set and agreed with the teachers, psychologist and parent.

Meetings with the school psychologist may be part of the intervention as agreed with the parents.

### **Parent initiated**

If a parent wishes to arrange meetings for their child with the school psychologist, they may approach the psychologist directly but thereafter step B, C, and D above are followed.

In the week before the PTCs, the School psychologist/guidance counselor will contact the homeroom teachers to ask if there are issues that may be raised with the parents during the PTC. The homeroom teacher may ask for support from the School psychologist/guidance counselor in preparing and attending the PTCs. After the PTCs, the school psychologist/guidance counselor will ask the homeroom teachers if there is any follow up required. If needed, the school psychologist/guidance counselor will document the issues.

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## **Individual Educational Plans (IEP)** (template to copy)

As above, a CST may agree to develop a formal plan with clear targets, strategies and a clear timeline of review. This plan is called an IEP. The IEP is based on interviews with teachers and parents (and in some cases, where it is relevant, the student), student observations, diagnostic tests and any external psychological reports that have been generated. The School psychologist is responsible for leading the CST, documenting and keeping track of the IEP. The implementation of the IEP may involve support from the homeroom teacher, single subject teachers, co-teachers and parents. When appropriate, the IEP will be presented to teachers during weekly PYP/MYP/DP meetings.

### **Review**

Progress on the IEP will be reviewed regularly as stipulated on the IEP. The Review will look at progress made in relation to the targets set. Targets may be modified, added or removed to account for changes in the child's development. Following the Review process, the student will either begin to work from a modified IEP, continue with the current targets in their existing IEP or will exit the IEP but will continue to be monitored.

### **Record keeping**

The School psychologist is responsible for keeping copies of all referral forms and reports and records of meetings. These records could be in the form of formal approved minutes or informal, anecdotal, dated records. When a meeting between parents and homeroom teachers warrants a formal record of the discussion, then the relevant Academic Director/Principal as well as the school psychologist/guidance counselor should receive copies of this report. The school psychologist/guidance counselor will file the information in the student's learning support file.

## **G. Recommended practices for DP students with identified special educational needs:**

1. A student file should be built by the admission's office with his or her sample work, admission forms, interview records, meeting records with parents and other related information. The file should be accessible to any relevant teacher at WAT.
2. Parents consult with the coordinator and teachers concerned at an early stage in a student's study of the Diploma Programme and receive guidance on careful choice of subjects which best fit the student's educational needs.
3. Students will be encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition processes.
4. All teachers of the students of special educational needs respond to needs through differentiation/IEP. Strategies and approaches should be documented in unit planners, and provide support within and outside of the classes.
5. Homeroom teachers need to keep record of their students' school behaviors (in class and out of class) and work closely with subject teachers, IB Coordinators, Principals, and parents to complete more extensive observation notes.
6. The coordinator should apply for inclusive assessment arrangements for the students according to the IBO guidelines listed under *Access arrangements for IB assessments*. The relevant coordinator must submit the application for inclusive access arrangements on behalf of the student (IBO)

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## H. Future Objectives

1. To continue raising teacher consciousness of inclusion philosophy and possible barriers to learning
2. To empower teachers through professional development opportunities and consultative support for planning and lessons
3. To review the communication channels available for learning support information.
4. To align learning plans, differentiation strategies and school reports.
5. To encourage the development, understanding, and acceptance of diverse learning resources and teaching styles.
6. To research relevant materials that support learning and make these available to all staff and parents.
7. To develop a peer support programme in which teachers/senior students act as mentors to younger students.
8. To further strengthen links with other support professionals/agencies that work within the school community.
9. To empower student voice, access to the curriculum and proactive learning.

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## Supporting Documents

- IB Documents:
  - IB Access and Inclusion Policy (2022)
  - Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB programmes (2016)
  - Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom (2013)
  - Candidates with Assessment Requirements (2013)

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