

B1 General regulations: Diploma Programme

B1.1 Introduction

From 2021, the *General regulations: Diploma Programme* publication will constitute a section within the Diploma Programme (DP) *Assessment procedures* and will no longer exist as a separate publication. Therefore, IB World Schools delivering the DP and students completing assessments in May and November 2021, are subject to the “[General regulations: Diploma Programme](#)” in part B of this version of the DP *Assessment procedures*.

These “General regulations: Diploma Programme” set out the expectations that IB World Schools and their students must follow for their assessment results to be validated by the IB, including how to maintain integrity and ensure full compliance when delivering assessments and examinations.

Some sections have been removed from the previous version of the *General regulations: Diploma Programme* publication, in order to avoid duplication of information that is available in either the [Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme](#), DP *Assessment procedures* or the relevant subject guides.

The following sections from the previous *General regulations: Diploma Programme* publication are now wholly or in part found only in [Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme](#).

- Role and responsibilities of schools
- Use of candidate data
- Governing law
- Arbitration

Where new policy documents have been published or separate documents exist, summarized information is maintained in part B of this document, “[General regulations: Diploma Programme](#)”, with links to the related documents clearly indicated. Some examples include the following.

- Academic integrity ([article 16](#))
- Candidates with access requirements ([article 14](#))
- Appeals ([article 17](#))

Article 1: Scope

1.1 The International Baccalaureate Organization (hereinafter, together with its affiliated entities, the “IB”) is a foundation that has developed and offers four programmes of international education: the Primary Years Programme (hereinafter “PYP”), the Middle Years Programme (hereinafter “MYP”), the Diploma Programme (hereinafter “DP”) and the Career-related Programme (hereinafter “CP”). It authorizes schools (known as IB World Schools and hereinafter “schools”) to offer one or more of these programmes to their students (hereinafter “candidates”).

1.2 This document describes the regulations that apply to those schools that have been authorized as IB World Schools to offer the DP, and is intended for schools, candidates and their legal guardians. When used herein the term “legal guardians” encompasses parents and individuals with legal guardianship of any candidate enrolled in the DP. If a candidate is of legal age, the school’s duties towards legal guardians specified herein also apply towards the candidate.

1.3 The IB has developed the DP as a pre-college/pre-university programme aimed at candidates in the 16–19 age range. It is implemented in the last two years of secondary education. The DP is designed to lead to “the Diploma of the International Baccalaureate” (hereinafter “*IB Diploma*”) or “Diploma Programme Course Results” (hereinafter “*DP Course Results*”) for subjects/elements forming part of the DP.

1.4 These regulations are intended as guidance for schools about their roles and responsibilities, and as information for candidates and legal guardians about the IB and the DP.

Article 2: Role and responsibilities of schools

2.1 In addition to articles in these “General regulations: Diploma Programme” (hereinafter “general regulations”) schools must comply with the *Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme*, available in a separate document, as well as with the administrative requirements detailed elsewhere in this *DP Assessment procedures*, which contains detailed information on assessment procedures for DP coordinators and teachers and is made available to schools by the IB.

2.2 Schools are responsible for informing candidates and legal guardians about the general characteristics of the DP and how the school implements it. Additionally, schools must inform

candidates and legal guardians of the assessment services offered by the IB and any restrictions or prohibitions that apply to the DP.

2.3 To qualify for the award of the *IB Diploma*, a candidate must follow the course of study and undertake assessment for the DP at a school authorized to offer the DP or via an IB-approved online course provider. In addition to subject requirements, the IB Diploma has three further requirements (collectively known as the “core”): an extended essay (hereinafter “EE”) and theory of knowledge (hereinafter “TOK”), which are both assessed, as well as creativity, activity, service (hereinafter “CAS”), a programme of activities that must be successfully completed.

2.4 A candidate will be awarded *DP Course Results* if they follow the course of study and assessment for the selected subject(s) and/or one or more core elements. Subjects of the DP normally include both internal and external assessment.

2.5 Schools are responsible for the secure storage of IB examination stationery and examination papers for a forthcoming examination session and for the conduct of the examinations according to the procedures described in *Secure storage of confidential IB examinations material booklet 2021*. The school must immediately notify the IB via IB Answers of any breach in the procedure for the secure storage of such material. The school must provide the IB with statements and other relevant information concerning the breach, and reasonably cooperate with the IB in investigating and addressing such a breach.

2.6 Schools are expected to uphold the principle of academic integrity and not to engage in any form of maladministration. The publication *Academic integrity* provides examples of forms of maladministration and subsequent possible consequences for schools.

Article 3: Candidates and their legal guardian(s)

3.1 Except where provided otherwise in these general regulations or the *DP Assessment procedures*, candidates and their legal guardian(s) must use the school’s DP coordinator as the intermediary for any communication with the IB. If either a candidate or his or her legal guardian(s) has a question about the general characteristics of the DP, its administration or how the school implements it, they must raise the matter with the school’s DP coordinator.

3.2 Candidates, whether studying for the *IB Diploma* or *DP Course Results*, must complete all requirements within the two-year period of the programme or within an extended period of study if a candidate retakes one or more subjects.

3.3 Candidates are required to act in a responsible and ethical manner throughout their participation in the DP, as determined by the IB at its sole discretion, which includes not engaging in academic misconduct (as defined in [article 16](#)) and must be in good standing at the school at the time of the examinations.

3.4 The IB is entitled to refuse to mark or moderate assessment submissions if a candidate has acted in an irresponsible or unethical manner in connection with that part of the assessment, or if a candidate submits inappropriate material that is unrelated to the content of the assessment. In such cases the Final Award Committee (defined in [article 13](#)) is entitled to take action.

Article 4: Equal opportunities statement

4.1 It is the practice of the IB to make its programmes available to all students from IB World Schools. No student will be excluded by the IB on the grounds of race, nationality or national origin, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political beliefs, disability or any other personal characteristic, as prohibited by law. Schools must implement their duties under these rules in a manner that enables this practice to be upheld.

4.2 It is the practice of the IB to make its assessments available to all candidates from IB World Schools who have fulfilled the school's and the IB's academic requirements and paid the required fees to register for an IB examination session. No candidate will be excluded by the IB on the grounds of race, nationality or national origin, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political beliefs, disability or any other personal characteristic, as prohibited by law. Schools must implement their duties under these rules in a manner that enables this practice to be upheld. The IB will make all reasonable efforts and/or accommodations, or as may otherwise be required by law, to enable candidates to participate in its assessments.

Article 5: Recognition of the *IB Diploma*

The IB actively promotes wide recognition and acceptance of the *IB Diploma* as a basis for the exit from secondary/high school education and/or entry to courses at universities and other institutions of further or higher education. However, the requirements of individual institutions and the relevant authorities of a country are beyond the control of the IB and are subject to change. The IB, therefore, does not guarantee recognition of the *IB Diploma* or *DP Course Results*, and does not accept responsibility for the consequences of any change in recognition practice by a university or other institution or relevant authorities in a country. Consequently, candidates and legal guardians bear the sole responsibility for verifying the entry requirements of the universities and other institutions of further or higher education to which they are interested in applying.

Article 6: Property and copyright in materials produced by candidates

6.1 Candidates produce materials in a variety of forms that are submitted to the IB as part of the assessment requirements. These assessment materials (hereinafter “materials”) include all forms of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data and, in certain cases, may contain images or voices of the candidates.

6.2 Candidates retain copyright in all materials submitted for assessment purposes, but by submitting those materials, subject to article 6.4, candidates and their legal guardians thereby grant the IB a non-exclusive, charge-free, worldwide licence, for the duration of the applicable jurisdiction’s copyright protection, to reproduce submitted materials, to use the image and voice of the candidate where they appear on audio or video materials and to reproduce any musical performances in any medium for assessment, educational, training, commercial and/or promotional purposes relating to the IB’s activities, or to related activities of which it approves. Such licences become effective from the date of submission to the IB.

6.3 Where the IB uses these materials for purposes other than assessment, it may modify, translate or otherwise change them to meet particular needs and will, in most cases, anonymize them before publication in print or in electronic form. If the purpose of the publication is to focus on work of a particularly high standard, then the candidate and school may be identified. In such cases, the IB will inform the school beforehand and the school will inform the candidate.

6.4 Under exceptional circumstances, a candidate and/or a candidate's legal guardian may withdraw the aspects of the licence relating to use of a candidate's work outside an assessment context, as referred to in article 6.2, for a specific piece of work. In such cases, the IB must be notified in accordance with the procedure described in the *DP Assessment procedures*. The candidate must submit a written notification to the school's DP coordinator, who has the duty to inform the IB by the due date set forth in the *DP Assessment procedures*. In these cases, the IB will use the material only for assessment purposes, as defined in article 6.5.

6.5 Under the licence granted upon submission for assessment purposes, the IB can electronically scan, store or reproduce submitted materials in any medium in order to allow the materials to be communicated to examiners, moderators and any other persons involved in the assessment process or any subsequent appeals (including third-party vendors and/or services providers). The materials may also be used in the training of examiners. Materials for which a candidate has withdrawn the aspects of the licence relating to use of candidate work outside an assessment context will not be placed in any IB publications or used for any commercial or promotional purposes.

6.6 Materials submitted for assessment, or reproductions of them, are either internally assessed by teachers in the schools (whose marks are moderated) or externally assessed by IB examiners. Wherever the materials or reproductions are held during their assessment, for example, by the school or a third party, they are always held on behalf of the IB and in a manner that is compliant with applicable privacy regulations.

6.7 All materials submitted to the IB for assessment, and reproductions of such materials, become the property of the IB. Once the materials have been assessed, the IB is entitled to retain the materials for record-keeping purposes or to eventually destroy them according to its needs and legal obligations.

6.8 Candidates are entitled to request the return of a copy of their externally assessed work, provided such application is made for a May session by 15 September in the same year and for a November session by 15 March of the following year. In all cases, to be valid, the application must be submitted to the IB by the school's DP coordinator according to the procedures stated in the *DP Assessment procedures*.

Article 7: Use of candidate data

Candidate data, including data relating to assessment, may be used:

- a. to register candidates in the DP and administer the DP and its requirements for the candidate and school, including sensitive personal data if making determinations about assessment accommodations
- b. to provide DP support and services for the candidate and school, including website services and online forums, assessment services and accommodations, delivery of courses online to the candidate and assisting candidates and their school with providing information to institutions of higher education (such as universities and colleges or governmental authorities related to admission to institutions of higher education)
- c. for use in research and statistical analysis related to the IB's mission, including research on assessments and results, and the effectiveness of the DP
- d. for advertising and promotional purposes for the IB (such as student and/or alumni networks and social media platforms)
- e. for educational, training, commercial and other compatible purposes
- f. to engage in, and process, transactions with the candidate or school
- g. to fulfill statutory, regulatory, reporting and/or legal obligations.

Article 8: Content and requirements of the *IB Diploma*

Candidates for the *IB Diploma* must satisfy assessment requirements in six subjects and the core. All higher level (hereinafter "HL") subjects, the core and at least one standard level (hereinafter "SL") subject must be taught over the two years of the programme. Should circumstances demand it, up to two SL subjects may be taught during the first year and assessed at the end of that first year as anticipated subjects. It is also permissible, should circumstances require it, to teach one SL subject during the first year and one SL subject during the second year, with assessment requirements met at the end of each corresponding year. Language ab initio and pilot subjects must always be taught throughout the two years of the programme.

Article 9: Response language

9.1 For subjects in the studies in language and literature, and language acquisition groups, candidates must complete their examinations and other forms of assessment in the target language. For subjects in the remaining four groups (individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, the arts), and TOK, candidates must use English, French or Spanish as their response language. Other response languages (including Chinese, German and Japanese) are also available for certain subjects, as stated in the *DP Assessment procedures*. An EE in subjects in the studies in language and literature, and language acquisition groups must be written in the language of the subject chosen. For subjects in the remaining four groups (individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, the arts), an EE must be presented in English, French or Spanish. Other available response languages for an EE, and exceptions to the above, are specified in the *DP Assessment procedures*.

9.2 Candidates may be permitted to write their examinations and other forms of assessment in languages other than English, French or Spanish for certain IB projects in the individuals and societies, and sciences groups, TOK, and the EE. The IB reserves the right to make such languages for such projects mainstream from time to time and therefore available to all candidates as response languages upon notice by the IB.

9.3 The same response language must be used for all components of a subject. However, if a subject is being retaken and the desired response language is not available in the target session for the subject concerned, internal assessment (hereinafter “IA”) can be carried over from a previous session resulting in more than one response language for the same subject.

Article 10: Candidate registration

10.1 Candidate registration is an application by a candidate to take DP assessments. The registration process is conducted using the IB information system (IBIS), a secure web-based service used by DP coordinators. Registration must be undertaken by the school’s DP coordinator. No other method is available to register candidates. Candidates cannot register themselves for an examination session or make amendments to an existing registration. This cannot be done on their behalf by their legal guardian(s) either.

10.2 A candidate for the *IB Diploma* or *DP Course Results* must be registered by a school for each intended examination session, and must take the requisite courses and assessments at that school. The school must complete the registration requirements on behalf of the candidate and pay the related fees by the relevant deadlines. It is the sole responsibility of the school to ensure that candidates are registered correctly for an examination session.

10.3 A school may accept an external candidate from another IB World School authorized to offer the DP if the school the candidate normally attends does not offer a particular IB subject. However, all academic and administrative responsibility for that candidate will remain with the school that has registered, or will register, that candidate for a DP examination session. The candidate must not be registered by both schools, unless advised to do so by the IB. Similarly, in the case of a retake candidate, the school at which he or she is registered must accept all academic and administrative responsibility for that candidate, and responsibility cannot be delegated elsewhere. Candidates taking online courses with an IB-approved online provider are subject to the conditions specified in the current version of the *DP Assessment procedures*.

10.4 If a DP candidate retakes a subject to improve his or her results, the highest grade for the subject/core requirement will contribute to the award of the *IB Diploma*. Similarly, if an anticipated candidate retakes a subject in his or her IB diploma session, the highest grade will normally contribute to the award of the *IB Diploma*.

Article 11: Form of the results

Successful IB diploma candidates will receive an *IB Diploma* and a document titled *Diploma Programme Results* listing the total IB diploma points score, the subject grades, confirmation of the completion of all CAS requirements and any points awarded and individual grades for the combination of TOK and the EE. An IB Diploma candidate will receive a bilingual version of the *IB Diploma* if they meet the requirements as given in the *DP Assessment procedures*.

An IB diploma candidate who fails to satisfy the requirements for the award of an *IB Diploma* will receive *DP Course Results* indicating the grades obtained in individual subjects, together with results in TOK and the EE, and confirmation of the completion of all CAS requirements, as appropriate.

DP course candidates receive *DP Course Results* indicating the results obtained in individual subjects and the core requirements, as appropriate.

Article 12: Enquiry upon results

12.1 A candidate's assessment material may be re-marked, returned to the school (in electronic format or as a photocopy) and/or subject to remoderation (for IA) as part of the enquiry upon results service, the details and fees for which are specified in the *DP Assessment procedures*. The categories and conditions of this service are subject to change and, therefore, are in accordance with the details given in the *DP Assessment procedures* for the examination session concerned. All enquiries upon results must be submitted by the school on behalf of the candidate.

12.2 Re-marking a candidate's assessment material may lead to a higher or a lower grade for the subject. Therefore, before submitting a request for an enquiry upon results service that may result in a change of grade, the school must obtain the written consent of the candidate or his or her legal guardian ensuring that the candidate and/or the legal guardian are aware that the grade may go up or down.

12.3 If the school's DP coordinator believes the process leading to the grade upon re-marking or remoderation did not respect the procedures defined in these general regulations and/or the *DP Assessment procedures*, the DP coordinator may request, on behalf of the candidate, a report on the re-mark. Before requesting a report the school must obtain the consent of the candidate(s) or his or her legal guardian(s).

12.4 Beyond the enquiry upon results service, the DP coordinator may not request a subsequent re-marking of assessment material or a further moderation of marks for IA. However, the candidate is entitled to submit an appeal under the conditions defined in [article 17](#).

Article 13: IB DP/CP Final Award Committee

13.1 The IB DP/CP Final Award Committee is the body that formally awards the *IB Diploma*, *IB CP Certificate*, *DP Course Results* and *CP Course Results* on the basis of the grades determined by grade award procedures. The award is made by the committee on behalf of the IB Board Governors.

13.2 The Final Award Committee consists of representatives of the IB Board of Governors, of the Examining Board and senior IB assessment staff, and is chaired by the chair of the Examining Board. The IB Board of Governors established the Examining Board, which comprises senior IB examiners, with the principal aim of safeguarding and enhancing the academic standards of the DP/CP.

13.3 The Final Award Committee may delegate decisions on cases of alleged academic misconduct to a sub-committee, but the Final Award Committee is the body that has authority to make the final decision in all special cases with respect to the award of the *IB Diploma*, *IB CP Certificate*, *DP Course Results* and *CP Course Results*.

Article 14: Candidates with access requirements

Inclusion is defined as an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Access arrangements do not change what the student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations, but instead provide the optimal support to address challenges and to enable the student to work around them. At a fundamental level, they address equal access and fairness to learning and teaching and, in addition, validity and meaningfulness to assessment. A candidate with access requirements is one who requires access arrangements in teaching, learning and assessment.

The IB approach to access and inclusion is articulated in the [Access and inclusion policy](#) with details on the access arrangements that are available for IB assessments if they are used as part of teaching and learning. The procedure to request authorization from the IB for access arrangements for IB assessments is set out in section “C6”.

Article 15: Candidates affected by adverse circumstances

Adverse circumstances are situations that have their onset or occurrence during the examinations or up to three months before the examinations in May/November, which are beyond the control of a candidate and/or the school, which affect candidates and have a bearing on their performance in IB assessments. They may impact an individual candidate, or multiple candidates where the same circumstance may affect a group of candidates or the entire cohort.

The IB approach to adverse circumstances is set out elsewhere in section “C7”. It details what is included and not included as an adverse circumstance and the possible actions that the IB is able to apply in such situations.

Article 16: Candidates suspected of academic misconduct

The IB approach to academic misconduct is set out in the publication *Academic integrity*.

The IB defines academic misconduct as behaviour (whether deliberate or inadvertent) that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more components of assessment. Behaviour that may disadvantage another candidate is also regarded as academic misconduct.

For further information on investigation procedures and outcomes, please refer to the publication *Academic integrity*.

Article 17: Admissibility of an appeal

17.1 The IB accepts appeals in relation to five areas of decision-making during an examination session. Appeals are possible against:

- a. results—when a school has reason to believe that a candidate’s result(s) are inaccurate after all appropriate enquiry upon results procedures have been completed
- b. a decision upholding academic misconduct, but not against the severity of a penalty
- c. a decision in respect of special consideration—following a decision not to give special consideration to a candidate as a consequence of alleged adverse circumstances
- d. a decision in respect of inclusive assessment arrangements
- e. an administrative decision not covered by one or more of the foregoing circumstances that affects the results of one or more candidates.

17.2 The appeals process is divided into two stages. Each stage will usually require the payment of a fee. The fee will be refunded if the decision being appealed changes.

For further information on the appeals process, please refer to the document *Diploma Programme assessment appeals procedure*.

