

AARHUS  
GYMNASIUM

# Access and Inclusion Policy



As an inclusive World School that offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, as well as Danish educational curricula, Aarhus Gymnasium follows both Danish education regulations and practices and the principles and guidelines of the International Baccalaureate's *Access and Inclusion Policy* (IBO.org 2018).

As a school, we sincerely believe that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under educational and assessment conditions that are as fair as possible.

Where standard assessment conditions could put candidates with special educational needs at a disadvantage by preventing them from fully demonstrating their ability, application for special arrangements will be submitted to the IB.

In addition, we aim for all our students to get as much help and guidance as possible throughout their time with us. This assistance is provided by a close-knit team made up of, among others, the IB coordinator, the student counselors, the reading support counselors, mentors and teachers.

This policy will outline the support offered to students who need inclusive access arrangements, either periodically or throughout the full period of studying with us, including the final exams.

## Admission

Through Aarhus Gymnasium's admissions process, the IB Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that applicants have the intellectual capacity to meet all relevant curriculum and assessment requirements.

Some subjects may pose particular difficulties for an applicant with special educational needs. With this in mind, careful consideration must be given to an applicant's choice of subjects and levels and whether extra preparation through the school's pre-IB classes would be beneficial.

Upon application, applicants are responsible for informing the school of any known conditions that may need to be addressed or given support by the school.

If possible, a programme of support for the candidate must be agreed with the candidate and parents, supporting agencies, teachers, counsellors etc. must be consulted at an early stage.

## Responsibilities

As stipulated in the IB *Access and Inclusion Policy*: "[o]nce 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" (p. 8). At Aarhus Gymnasium we work closely together to live up to this responsibility.

### Coordinator

Together with the school's admissions officer and student counselors, the coordinator is responsible for screening and admitting students to the programme and in this process gather information about any inclusive access arrangements needed for new students. The coordinator is responsible for collecting the

necessary documentation, such as evidence of dyslexia levels or professional assessment of the degree of medical conditions, and for submitting the request for inclusive access arrangements to the IB no later than six months prior to the exam session.

Every six weeks the coordinator participates in status meetings with the student counselor and team teachers to focus on individual students' absence, academic level and general behavior. The coordinator is available for students and parents, should they have questions and / or requests regarding the IB programme, assessment, and inclusive access requirements. In addition, the coordinator should act as a guide for students, teachers and counselors in all matters of inclusive access requirements within the IB programme.

### **Student Counsellors**

The student counsellors provide a mix of pastoral care, guidance and counseling in different areas of the students' lives. In collaboration with management, teachers, parents, relevant authorities and various support groups, the counselor focuses on providing support and guidance that enables each student to thrive and complete their education.

Most of the counseling is based around office hours and status meetings. The weekly office hours give all students an opportunity to meet with the counselor and discuss any personal or academic issue they might have. The status meetings are held between the counselor, the coordinator and the team teachers every six weeks and focus on individual students' absence, academic level and general behavior. The counselor follows up on the decisions made at the status meetings and will communicate these to the students – as well as teachers, parents, mentors, if relevant.

Danish authorities provide funds for individual mentoring, study aids, etc. (SPS) for students with documented special needs, such as physical or psychological disabilities and the student counselors facilitate the process of getting access to these funds and finding suitable aids or a mentor for the student, typically a teacher. This means that for example students with psychological issues will typically have a mentor to meet up with every week to guide and support them in their personal and academic development.

As a school we also offer referrals for a range of different mental health professionals, if and when we, the student and parents find that the student would benefit from therapy.

Apart from the individual counseling, the counselors take part in open house events, introduction to the IB to transition classes or at info meetings. Also, there is a certain amount of group counseling to the individual year groups about exams, further education, study skills, etc.

### **Reading Support and Reading Counselors**

The reading support and reading counseling in the IB at Aarhus Gymnasium focuses on helping students with reading difficulties achieve their full potential and meet the academic requirements. In close contact with subject teachers and study counselors, the reading support counselors assess the needs and difficulties of each student based on an introductory reading and writing screening in English as well as Danish in the pre-IB and IB Diploma Programme.

A standardized score is used to identify students with needs and difficulties, and the aim of this is to help the students develop and strengthen the academic writing skills needed to perform well in the IB.

Individual support and help in academic writing are offered by the reading counselors. All students with or without reading difficulties are offered individual help and guidance in close contact with the reading

counselor, the study counselor, and the subject teachers. Assistance in academic writing skills is provided by both the reading counselor and the school's overall academic writing guidelines. Academic reading guidance is a core element in the reading support, and the reading counselor collaborates with the study counselors and the subject teachers in helping all students reach their full academic potential.

Included in the IB Reading Support Counselling Programme is:

- 1) A standardized screening in Pre-IB and the IB Diploma Programme
- 2) A teaching unit on Academic Writing Skills in Pre-IB and the IB Diploma (Danish A / English A collaboration)
- 3) Close contact between students and reading support counselors on day to day academic writing demands and tasks.

## **Mentors**

School mentors are IB teachers who regularly meet with students requiring inclusive access arrangements to offer academic, structural and mental support. The guidance offered by our mentors depends on each individual student's needs, but often it will consist of assistance with time-management and organization of assignments and homework. In some cases, the mentor can also become an extension of the student counselor in periods proven to be particularly stressful for the student. The mentor communicates regularly with the student counselor, the IB Coordinator, and – if need be – the parents.

## **Teachers (incl. Team Teachers)**

As early on in their course of study as possible, the subject teachers are responsible for monitoring their students and their learning needs so any barriers for learning can be prevented and / or overcome. If a teacher notices a student in need of access requirements, the teacher must contact the IB Coordinator and the student counselor, who will consult with the appropriate agencies for diagnosis and eventual documentation.

If teachers have students with access requirements in their classes, it is important that they organize their teaching in a way that supports these needs. I.e. by scanning homework to readable files or respecting a student's need for small breaks during class time, etc.

Team teachers are subject teachers who work closely with the coordinator and the student counselors in monitoring the students' academic performance, absence, and general well-being. The team teachers participate in the status meetings with the counselor and the coordinator taking place every six weeks.

## **Students and parents**

In order for inclusive access arrangements to be as custom-made as possible, it is important that both parents and students are in close communication with the coordinator, student counselor and / or mentor regarding special needs and developments in the students' learning process and access requirements.

In the event that a student suffers a temporary medical condition or experiences either adverse circumstances in the period of assessment or examinations, the coordinator and the student counselor must be informed immediately. If need be, the IB Coordinator will then contact the IB for guidance on what action should be taken at short notice.

### Eligibility for inclusive access arrangements

Any candidates with individual learning needs, who have the intellectual capacity to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements, and who require special arrangements to demonstrate their level of achievement, will be eligible for inclusive access arrangements. In most cases these arrangements will also be applicable at the official IB exams, but for this to be granted a formal application must be sent to the IB by the coordinator, as mentioned earlier.

Inclusive access arrangements may be granted on the basis of one or more of the following characteristics:

- Specific learning issues, language and communication disorders
- Emotional and behavioural issues
- Medical conditions
- Mental health issues

### Inclusive Assessment Arrangements for exams

For the official IB exams, a wide range of arrangements can be made for a candidate in order to take their special needs into consideration:

#### Access to modified papers

- Examination papers in Braille
- Changes to the print on examination papers
- Exam papers can be printed on coloured paper
- Access to electronic (PDF) examination

#### Access to additional time

#### Access to reading

- A reader
- Reading software
- An examination (reading) pen

#### Access to writing

- Access to word processor with, or without, spellchecker

- Access to a scribe
- Access to transcriptions of part of examination scripts
- Access to speech recognition software

Access to calculator (in cases of dyscalculia; must be a four-function calculator)

## Review and Action Plan

This policy is **reviewed** every year in May by the school's *Access and Inclusion Committee*.

### Action plan for next review:

- The school website must be updated with the *Access and Inclusion Policy* to inform current and potential students of our access and inclusion resources.
- Teachers in group 1 (English A Literature, English A Language and Literature, and Danish A Literature) must work together to create a formalized teaching unit on academic writing offered in year 1 of the courses.
- Integration into the IB of the methods used by the maths counsellor in the Danish programmes

## Bibliography

IBO.org. "Access and Inclusion Policy." *Resources.ibo.org*. November 2018.

[https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Inclusive-education/works/edu\\_11162-53587?lang=en](https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Inclusive-education/works/edu_11162-53587?lang=en)  
(accessed May 25, 2020).