

A3 General regulations: Diploma Programme

In the rules that follow, the term *Vade Mecum* has been used although this publication has been renamed the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*. Similarly, the term IBCA has been retained, although IBCA is now termed as IB Cardiff.

I General

Article 1: Role and responsibilities of schools

- 1.1 The International Baccalaureate Organization (hereinafter “IBO”) has developed the Diploma Programme as a pre-college/university programme aimed at students in the 16–19 age group. The Diploma Programme is designed to lead to the International Baccalaureate diploma (hereinafter “IB diploma(s)”) or to certificates (hereinafter “certificate(s)”) for subjects forming part of the Diploma Programme.
- 1.2 The IBO sets the curriculum and assessment requirements leading to the award of the IB diploma and certificates and is the sole organization entitled to award IB diplomas and certificates. The IB diploma or certificates are awarded to students (hereinafter the “candidates”) who have satisfied the assessment requirements in accordance with these *General regulations: Diploma Programme* (hereinafter “general regulations”). Administrative details and procedures relating to these general regulations are contained in the current *Vade Mecum*, which is the handbook for Diploma Programme coordinators and teachers, supplied to schools by the IBO. Schools must comply with the details and procedures stated in the current *Vade Mecum*.
- 1.3 To qualify for the award of the IB diploma or a certificate in a subject (or subjects), a candidate must follow the Diploma Programme or the course of study and assessment for the subject(s) selected. The Diploma Programme includes both internal and external assessment. In addition to subject requirements, the IB diploma has the additional requirements of an extended essay, theory of knowledge and extra-curricular activities that are not assessed known as creativity, action, service (hereinafter “CAS”).
- 1.4 Because the IBO is not a teaching institution and does not provide teaching services to candidates, the Diploma Programme is implemented and taught by authorized schools (hereinafter the “school(s)”). The schools are private or state entities, all of which are entirely independent from the IBO and solely responsible for the implementation and quality of teaching of the Diploma Programme. Consequently, the schools bear sole responsibility to candidates and legal guardians for any shortcomings in the implementation or quality of teaching of the Diploma Programme. The IBO is excluded from any responsibility in such shortcomings, particularly concerning the marks and grades obtained by candidates or their failure to satisfy all or part of the assessment requirements necessary to obtain the IB diploma or a certificate.
- 1.5 The schools are responsible for informing candidates and legal guardians regarding the general characteristics of the Diploma Programme and how the school implements it.

- 1.6 The IBO cannot guarantee that a school will remain capable and willing to implement the Diploma Programme. Consequently, the schools bear sole responsibility to candidates if, for any reason, a school's authorization to implement the Diploma Programme is withdrawn by the IBO or a school decides to terminate its authorization. The IBO is excluded from any responsibility for any sunk costs and/or lost opportunities suffered by candidates as a result of the Diploma Programme no longer being taught by a school.

Article 2: Recognition of the IB diploma

The IBO actively promotes wide recognition and acceptance of the IB diploma as a basis for entry to courses at universities and other institutions of higher education, but the requirements of individual institutions and the relevant authorities of a country are subject to change beyond the IBO's control. The IBO, therefore, does not guarantee recognition of IB diplomas or certificates, and does not accept responsibility for the consequences of any change of practice by a university or other institution or relevant authorities in a country. Consequently, candidates bear the sole responsibility of verifying the entry requirements of the universities and other institutions of higher education to which they are interested in applying.

Article 3: Property and copyright on examination materials produced by candidates

- 3.1 Examination materials in a variety of forms are produced by candidates and submitted to the IBO as part of the assessment requirements. These materials include all forms of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data and, in certain cases, may contain images of the candidates (hereinafter the "materials").
- 3.2 Candidates retain copyright on all materials submitted to the IBO on their behalf for assessment purposes, but by submitting those materials they thereby grant the IBO a non-exclusive, charge-free, worldwide licence, for the duration of the statutory copyright protection, to reproduce the materials in any medium for assessment, educational, training and/or promotional purposes in relation to the IBO's activities or those related activities of which it approves. Such licence shall become effective from 1 June following the May examinations and 1 December following the November examinations. Where the IBO uses these materials for purposes other than assessment, it may modify, translate or otherwise change them to meet particular needs and, in order to protect the identity of the candidate and of the school, will anonymize them before publication in print or in electronic form.
- 3.3 Under exceptional circumstances, a candidate may wish to retain exclusive copyright over a single piece of work; in which case the IBO must be notified before the date given above (see paragraph 3.2). In accordance with the procedure described in the current *Vade Mecum*, the candidate must submit a written notification to the school's Diploma Programme coordinator who has the duty to inform the IBO by the due date. In these cases, the IBO will use the material only for assessment purposes.

- 3.4 The IBO, for assessment purposes, may electronically scan or reproduce materials in different media, such as photographing works of art; it may also copy materials in the same medium, such as printing or photocopying examination scripts and essays. These materials are either internally assessed by teachers in the schools whose marks are moderated by IBO examiners, or externally assessed by IBO examiners. Wherever the materials are held during their assessment, for example, by the school, an IBO examiner or at the International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment Centre (hereinafter “IBCA”), they are always held on behalf of the IBO.
- 3.5 All such materials submitted to the IBO for assessment, whether in the hands of a school, an examiner or IBCA, become the property of the IBO, which, once the assessment is complete, is entitled to retain the materials for record-keeping purposes or to destroy them according to its needs. Candidates are entitled to request the return of their externally assessed work, including a copy of their examination scripts, provided such application is made for a May examination session by 15 September in the same year and by 15 March of the following year for a November examination session. In all cases, to be valid, the application must be submitted to IBCA by the school’s Diploma Programme coordinator.

II The Diploma Programme

Candidates must use the school’s Diploma Programme coordinator as the intermediary for any communication with the IBO.

Article 4: Content of the programme

- 4.1 Candidates for the IB diploma must satisfy assessment requirements in six subjects, each studied over a period of two years, except that not more than two standard level courses (excluding languages *ab initio* and pilot subjects) may be completed in the first year of the programme. The six subjects must be selected from six groups as described in the current *Vade Mecum* for the appropriate examination session, at least three and not more than four subjects being offered at higher level and the others at standard level. Recommended teaching time is 240 hours to complete higher level courses and 150 hours to complete standard level courses.
- 4.2 In addition to the six subjects, candidates for the IB diploma must:
- (a) take a course in, and complete the required assessment in, theory of knowledge, for which the IBO recommends at least 100 hours of teaching over the two-year period of the Diploma Programme
 - (b) complete an approved programme of extra-curricular activities known as CAS
 - (c) complete and submit for assessment an extended essay in a subject available for this purpose. Work on the essay, which is expected to occupy approximately 40 hours, must be done under the direct supervision of a teacher at the school who is familiar with the Diploma Programme.

- 4.3 If the special conditions of entry into an institution of higher education require an IB diploma candidate to offer a choice of subjects different from that specified in the current *Vade Mecum*, a candidate may be allowed to make a reasonable substitution on presentation of appropriate documentary evidence to the IBO. This is referred to as a “non-regular diploma” and must be authorized by the IBO.

Article 5: Languages

- 5.1 Candidates must write their examinations and other forms of assessment in subjects in groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Diploma Programme in English, French or Spanish as the response language. Assessed work in theory of knowledge and the extended essay must also be presented in English, French or Spanish, except that an extended essay in a group 1 or group 2 subject must be written in the language of the subject chosen. However, an extended essay in Latin or classical Greek (group 2) must be written in English, French or Spanish.
- 5.2 The same response language must be used for all components of a subject.
- 5.3 From time to time, candidates may be able to write their examinations and other forms of assessment in languages other than English, French and Spanish, in groups 3 and 4 and in theory of knowledge, as part of special pilot courses introduced by the IBO.
- 5.4 A language A1 SL school-supported self-taught candidate is not permitted to offer an extended essay in his or her language A1.
- 5.5 Extended essays in group 2 are intended for foreign/second-language learners. Candidates are not permitted to submit a group 2 extended essay in a language A1 that is a subject for their IB diploma.

III Examinations

Article 6: Registration process

A candidate for the IB diploma or certificates must be registered by an authorized school for each intended examination session and must take the requisite courses and examinations at that school. The school must complete such registrations and pay the related fees by the relevant deadlines.

Article 7: Registration

The following categories of registration are available.

- (a) Anticipated: candidates intending to complete the requirements for one or two standard level subjects (excluding languages *ab initio* and pilot subjects) at the end of their first year of the Diploma Programme. They must complete all remaining IB diploma requirements in the corresponding examination session (May or November) in the following year.
- (b) Diploma: candidates intending to complete the requirements for the award of an IB diploma.
- (c) Certificate: candidates taking one or more subjects who are not seeking the award of the IB diploma.
- (d) Retake: previous IB diploma candidates who are seeking to improve on their results. The highest grade obtained for a subject will contribute towards the IB diploma.

The subject grade awarded for a certificate cannot subsequently contribute to the award of an IB diploma. However, the moderated mark for the internal assessment component of a certificate can be carried forward and used to complete the assessment of the same subject as part of an IB diploma, provided the course content and assessment for the subject have not changed.

At the discretion of the school, a certificate candidate may pursue the course in theory of knowledge, undertake an extended essay and/or engage in CAS but the IBO will not accept the registration of certificate candidates for these IB diploma requirements.

Article 8: Notice of assessment requirements

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that candidates comply with all assessment requirements of the Diploma Programme and that they are properly registered. This includes ensuring each candidate is in good standing at the school at the time of the examinations. Non-compliance with these requirements can lead to the disqualification of candidates registered by the school.

IV Responsibilities of candidates

Article 9: Responsible and ethical behaviour

Candidates are required to act in a responsible and ethical manner throughout their participation in the Diploma Programme and examinations. In particular, candidates must avoid any form of malpractice.

V Conditions for the award of the IB diploma

Article 10: Assessment

Examiners appointed by the IBO assess candidates' work in Diploma Programme examinations and other forms of external assessment using common markschemes. This external assessment may be complemented by internal assessment by schools of other required work, moderated by IBO examiners.

Article 11: Grades

Performance in each subject is graded on a scale of 1 point (minimum) to 7 points (maximum). For the IB diploma, a maximum of 3 points is awarded for combined performance in theory of knowledge and the extended essay. The maximum total Diploma Programme points score is, therefore, 45.

Article 12: Award of the IB diploma

- 12.1 All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional IB diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB diploma, except under the conditions stipulated in Section VIIC "Special cases: incomplete assessment" of these general regulations.
- 12.2 The IB diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 24, 25, 26 or 27 points, provided all the following requirements have been met.
 - (a) Numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the IB diploma.
 - (b) All CAS requirements have been met.

- (c) Grades A (highest) to E (lowest) have been awarded for both theory of knowledge and an extended essay, with a grade of at least D in one of them.
 - (d) There is no grade 1 in any subject.
 - (e) There is no grade 2 at higher level.
 - (f) There is no more than one grade 2 at standard level.
 - (g) Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below.
 - (h) At least 12 points have been gained on higher level subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects must gain at least 16 points at higher level).
 - (i) At least 9 points have been gained on standard level subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 6 points at standard level).
 - (j) The final award committee has not judged the candidate to be guilty of malpractice.
- 12.3 The IB diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 28 points or above, provided all the following requirements have been met.
- (a) Numeric grades have been awarded in all six subjects registered for the IB diploma.
 - (b) All CAS requirements have been met.
 - (c) Grades A (highest) to E (lowest) have been awarded for both theory of knowledge and an extended essay, with a grade of at least D in one of them.
 - (d) There is no grade 1 in any subject.
 - (e) There is no more than one grade 2 at higher level.
 - (f) There are no more than two grades 2 at standard level.
 - (g) Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below.
 - (h) At least 11 points have been gained on higher level subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects must gain at least 14 points at higher level).
 - (i) At least 8 points have been gained on standard level subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 5 points at standard level).
 - (j) The final award committee has not judged the candidate to be guilty of malpractice.
- 12.4 A maximum of three examination sessions is allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB diploma.

Article 13: Form of the IB diploma document

- 13.1 Successful IB diploma candidates will receive an IB diploma and a document listing the total diploma points score, the subject grades, the completion of all CAS requirements and any points awarded for the combination of theory of knowledge and the extended essay.

- 13.2 A bilingual diploma will be awarded to a successful candidate who:
- (a) takes two languages A1
or
 - (b) takes a language A1 and a language A2
or
 - (c) takes examinations in at least one of the subjects from group 3 or group 4 in a language that is not the same language as his or her language A1 nominated for group 1
or
 - (d) submits an extended essay in a group 3 or group 4 subject written in a language that is not the same language as his or her language A1 nominated for group 1.

Article 14: Award of the certificate

Certificate candidates will receive a certificate indicating the results obtained in individual subjects. An IB diploma candidate who fails to satisfy the requirements for the award of an IB diploma will be awarded a certificate indicating the grades obtained in individual subjects, together with results in theory of knowledge and the extended essay and the completion of all CAS requirements, as appropriate.

VI Assessment

Article 15: Determination of grades

Chief examiners, examiners responsible and the chief assessor in theory of knowledge, or their nominees, are responsible for determining grades in their subjects.

Article 16: Enquiry upon results

Candidates' examination results may be further checked and their work may be re-marked if a school requests an enquiry upon results and pays the appropriate fees. This reconsideration may lead to a higher grade for a subject, but not to a lower grade.

Article 17: Final award committee

- 17.1 The final award committee is the body that formally awards the IB diplomas and certificates on the basis of grades determined by chief examiners, examiners responsible, the chief assessor in theory of knowledge, or their nominees.
- 17.2 The final award committee consists of representatives of the Council of Foundation, of the examining board and of IBCA, and is chaired by the chair of the examining board.
- 17.3 The final award committee considers and makes the final decision in all special cases with respect to the award of IB diplomas and certificates.

VII A Special cases: disability

Article 18: Definition of disability

Disability is any permanent or temporary diagnosed disability that could put a candidate at a disadvantage and prevent him or her from being able to demonstrate skills and knowledge adequately.

Article 19: Applicable procedure

- 19.1 The school is responsible for verifying before candidates enroll in the Diploma Programme whether it includes any requirements that are incompatible with any known diagnosed disabilities.
- 19.2 Disabilities must be reported by the candidates/legal guardians to the school's Diploma Programme coordinator when the candidate enrolls in the programme, with appropriate medical documentation. Temporary disabilities, resulting from illness or accidents, should be reported to the coordinator as soon as possible after they arise, together with supporting medical documentation and other relevant information.
- 19.3 If a candidate with a disability requires special assessment arrangements, the coordinator must request the arrangements according to procedures stated in the current *Vade Mecum*. Special assessment arrangements can only be authorized by the IBO.

VII B Special cases: adverse circumstances

Article 20: Definition of adverse circumstances

Adverse circumstances are defined as those beyond the control of the candidate that might be detrimental to his or her performance, including severe stress, exceptionally difficult family circumstances, bereavement, or disruption during examinations or events that may threaten the health or safety of candidates. Adverse circumstances do not include shortcomings on the part of the school at which a candidate is registered.

Article 21: Applicable procedure

- 21.1 Any application for special consideration in cases of adverse circumstances must be submitted to IBCA by the school's Diploma Programme coordinator on behalf of the candidate(s). The application must be submitted within ten days of the completion of the final assessment component of the subject concerned and must be supported by a statement written by the coordinator as well as by appropriate evidence.
- 21.2 If a candidate's performance has been affected by adverse circumstances, the final award committee may give special consideration to the case, provided that this would not give an advantage in comparison with other candidates.

VII C Special cases: incomplete assessment

Article 22: Definition of incomplete assessment

Incomplete assessment exists when a candidate has not submitted one or more components of the assessment requirements in the subject.

Article 23: Applicable procedure

- 23.1 Any application for special consideration in cases of incomplete assessment must be submitted to IBCA by the school's Diploma Programme coordinator on behalf of the candidate. The application must be submitted within ten days of the completion of the final assessment component of the subject concerned and must be supported by a statement written by the coordinator as well as by appropriate evidence.
- 23.2 In cases of incomplete assessment in a subject, the final award committee may, at its discretion, award a grade for the subject if both the following circumstances are established.
- (a) An acceptable reason is provided by the school for the incomplete assessment being beyond the candidate's control, such as illness or injury, the death or funeral of a close relative, unavoidable attendance at a hospital or law court.
and
 - (b) The candidate has submitted sufficient work, leading to at least 50% of the total marks available in that subject and including an externally assessed component.
- 23.3 If the foregoing conditions are fulfilled, marks for missing component(s) will be calculated using a procedure based on the candidate's marks for completed components and on the distribution of marks of other candidates in the same subject.

VII D Special cases: academic infringements

Article 24: Definition of an academic infringement

The IBO recognizes that work submitted by candidates for assessment may contravene the standard academic practice of clearly acknowledging all ideas and words of other persons. In cases where this is not deemed by the final award committee as a deliberate attempt by a candidate to gain an unfair advantage, this will be designated as an academic infringement and not malpractice.

Article 25: Applicable procedure

If the final award committee decides that an academic infringement has been established, no marks will be awarded for the component or part(s) of the component. The candidate will still be eligible for a grade in the subject or IB diploma requirement concerned. The head of school will be notified that this action has been taken. The case will not be recorded as malpractice.

VII E Special cases: malpractice

Article 26: Definition of malpractice

The IBO defines malpractice as behaviour that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components. Malpractice includes the following.

- (a) **Plagiarism:** this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own.

- (b) Collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.
- (c) Duplication of work: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or IB diploma requirements.
- (d) Any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, falsifying a CAS record, disclosure of information to and receipt of information from candidates about the content of an examination paper within 24 hours after a written examination).

Article 27: Applicable procedure

- 27.1 The school's Diploma Programme coordinator must inform the IBO if he or she suspects any malpractice in relation to a candidate's work after the work or an internal assessment mark has been submitted to IBCA. In such cases, or when an examiner suspects malpractice, the school will be required to conduct an investigation and provide the IBO with relevant documentation concerning the case.
- 27.2 Candidates suspected of malpractice will be invited, through the coordinator, to present a written explanation or defence.
- 27.3 Cases of suspected malpractice will be presented to the final award committee. After reviewing all evidence collected during the investigation, the committee will decide whether to dismiss the allegation, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made.
- 27.4 If the final award committee deems evidence of malpractice insufficient, the allegation will be dismissed and a grade will be awarded in the normal way.
- 27.5 If the final award committee decides that a case of malpractice has been established, no grade will be awarded in the subject(s) concerned. No IB diploma will be awarded to the candidate, but a certificate will be awarded for other subject(s) in which no malpractice has occurred. The candidate will be permitted to register for future examinations at least one year after the session in which malpractice was established.
- 27.6 If a case of malpractice is very serious, the final award committee is entitled to decide that the candidate will not be permitted to register for any future examination session. If the candidate has already been found guilty of malpractice in a previous session this will normally lead to disqualification from participation in any future examination session.
- 27.7 An IB diploma, or a certificate, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established.

VIII Decisions of the final award committee

Article 28: Appeal

Decisions of the final award committee are not subject to appeal to another body.

Article 29: Reconsideration

An application for reconsideration of a decision by the final award committee may be presented to the committee in the light of new factual evidence. To be admissible the application must be:

- (a) filed by the candidate via the school's Diploma Programme coordinator
- (b) received by the IBO from the school within three months of the date of the original decision by the final award committee
and
- (c) contain a summary of the new facts invoked and be accompanied by any evidence being relied on.

IX Final provisions

Article 30: Governing law

Swiss law governs these general regulations and all other procedures relating to the assessment requirements.

Article 31: Arbitration

Any dispute arising from or in connection with these general regulations shall be finally settled by one arbitrator in accordance with the *Swiss Rules of International Arbitration* of the Swiss Chambers of Commerce. The seat of the arbitration shall be Geneva, Switzerland. The proceedings shall be confidential and the language of the arbitration shall be English.

Article 32: Entry into force and transitory rules

This version shall come into force on 1 September 2006 for May session schools or 1 January 2007 for November session schools. The IBO may amend these general regulations from time to time. Each amended version applies to all candidates enrolling in the Diploma Programme after the date of entry into force of the amended version.

Geneva, 1 May 2006