

Access and Inclusion Policy for the IB Diploma Program at Gjøvik videregående skole

Access and Inclusion Philosophy and Goals

According to the school's pedagogical platform, *the school environment shall be characterized by knowledge and learning, well-being and tolerance, safety and mutual respect. All students and employees shall experience the school as being inclusive.*

Admission to the IB Diploma Program at Gjøvik videregående skole is selective, and based solely on grade average. We recognize that students who have gained admission to the program may require specialized support in order to meet their academic, social and emotional needs. Teachers, leaders, and support staff have a duty to use reasonable endeavors to make reasonable accommodations for students with identified disabilities or diagnoses that pose challenges to their ability to learn effectively.

Categories of Special Access and Inclusion Needs

An inclusive school environment must meet the needs of students with a range of challenges. Special needs categories, each of which may require individualized teaching strategies and/or examination accommodations, include but are not limited to:

- Attention disorders
- Autism spectrum
- Chronic illness
- Communication and speech disorders
- Mental health problems
- Physical disabilities (including motor disorders)
- Sensory impairment
- Specific learning difficulties

Responsibilities of the Diploma Program Coordinator

- Collecting and archiving official documentation (in English, whenever possible) of a student's specific needs (e.g. letter from physician or psychologist, dyslexia test scores, etc.)
- Applying to the IB for inclusive access arrangements for students
- Communicating information about students' special needs to teaching staff
- Communicating information about inclusive access arrangements granted by the IB to the student, parents, invigilators, and teaching staff
- Following up on a students' progress and ensuring that staff uses reasonable endeavors to accommodate all students' individualized support needs
- Referring student to members of the school's support staff, such as a counsellor, school nurse, pedagogical intervention team (IKO) or special education leader, if necessary

Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

- Implementing access arrangements and accommodations which the school or the IB have granted the student
- Differentiating teaching strategies to meet the student's individual needs
- Observing and monitoring student performance
- Evaluating effectiveness of teaching strategies on student performance
- Share information on progress with the student and his/her parents
- Referring student to members of the school's support staff, such as a counsellor, school nurse, pedagogical intervention team (IKO) or special education leader, if necessary

Making Provision to Ensure Full Access to the Curriculum

All students regardless of background, age, study programme etc., have the same rights and the same to apply for special accommodation according to existing rules. Access to documents, rules, tutoring, guidance and such is encouraged and the school routinely reminds the student body of this, through the teaching staff, the counsellors and the DPC.

Making Provision in Evaluation Situations

It is important to note that all components of a student's grade (internal assessments, external assessments, and examinations) are set according to how the student scores on the evaluation criteria provided by the IB. All students are therefore evaluated according to the same standards, regardless of any special need they may have. However, when the student provides formal documentation of their special need(s), the DPC may apply to the IB for permission for accommodation in evaluation situations. The IB may grant one or more of the following provisions:

- Access to additional time on timed examinations
- Rest breaks
- A separate room
- A reader
- A scribe
- A sign language interpreter
- A word processor (with or without spell check)

Access and Inclusion Policy and Local Legislation

Norwegian Educational Law is strict in its focus on giving all students equitable access to education. There are large provisions for accommodation in evaluations situations, including final exams (Supplement to the Education Act §4-25) as well as a strong right to individually differentiated teaching strategies. There is also a possibility of having the judicial right of public education in Upper Secondary school extended from 3 to 5 years as well as giving students with disabilities preferable treatment in the application process to make it possible for them to complete an education. This is all to be found in the Supplement to the Education Act.

