

Inclusion Policy: II. gimnazija Maribor



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International Baccalaureate

Inclusion Policy

for the IB Diploma Programme at II. gimnazija Maribor

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1. IB 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 organisation 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.

2. IB Learner Profile



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 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.



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3. The purpose of this document

“Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.” (*Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB programmes*).

This policy aims to encompass the full diversity of IB DP students at II. gimnazija Maribor, ensuring support is provided where necessary due to various challenges. These challenges may include but are not limited to, language barriers, economic hardship, gender and sexual identity, ethnicity, differing abilities, emotional and mental health concerns, medical conditions, disabilities, or other long-term difficulties.

4. General Overview

At II. gimnazija Maribor, we promote the IB Diploma Programme not only regionally but also introduce it to grammar schools in countries with bilateral educational agreements with Slovenia, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Our goal is to provide as many students as possible from diverse cultural and social backgrounds with the opportunity to apply and, if they meet the entry requirements outlined in the Admission Policy, to be considered for selection. The selection process is conducted with fairness, ensuring that all applicants are treated equally and given the same chance of being selected.

The Mission of II. gimnazija Maribor is to develop quality knowledge, skills, critical thinking, creativity, self-initiative, and independence in students through lessons and extracurricular activities. We promote holistic personal development, advocate for sustainable social progress, and emphasise the importance of community, collaboration, solidarity, and intercultural understanding. To successfully fulfil our mission, we adopt an inclusive approach that recognises and addresses learning barriers while simultaneously creating opportunities for all students to thrive. This means providing equal support to gifted students, helping them pursue advanced research, and preparing them for academic competitions and Olympiads. We also collaborate with universities to ensure our students have access to expert guidance and resources. In addition, we offer extensive opportunities for students with talents or interests in the arts, sports, or other fields. These students receive guidance and support through a wide range of extracurricular activities to further develop their skills and passions. This approach enables them to excel in their areas of interest while fostering a well-rounded, enriching educational experience.

The inclusion policy at II. gimnazija Maribor is supported by national legislation IB documents, specifically the *Act on the Guidance of Children with Special Needs 58/11 and amendments 40/12 and 90/12* and the IB’s *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*.

4.1. Language barriers

In accordance with our Language Policy, we aim to provide as many students as possible with the opportunity to study their mother tongue as Language A. We offer various opportunities for students to communicate in their native languages, and the school’s library provides literature in multiple languages to support this.

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Recognising that most IB Diploma Programme students at II. gimnazija Maribor are not learning in their first and strongest language we begin courses by introducing subject-specific English vocabulary to ease the transition. Furthermore, in line with our Assessment Policy, we adjust the language of instructions in assessments to ensure that students are not penalised for language-related errors. If the language barrier presents a significant challenge, students can request inclusive assessment arrangements as outlined in the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*.

4.2. Economic hardship

In accordance with the *Regulations on Granting Financial Aid to Students at II. gimnazija Maribor*, the school may allocate financial resources to socially disadvantaged students of II. gimnazija Maribor, collected at charitable school events with the help of sponsors and donors and through contributions from parents and teachers. The school announces a call for financial aid for socially disadvantaged students on September 1st, January 1st, and April 1st. Students apply for the call by submitting an application, which they can obtain from the school counsellor, along with the required documentation, within 15 days of the announcement. The school also has a textbook fund, through which students can borrow a textbook for two years at one-third of the price of a new textbook.

4.3. Gender and sexual identity

At II. gimnazija Maribor, we are committed to fostering an environment that embraces and respects all forms of gender and sexual identities. We believe every student should feel safe, accepted, and valued, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. In cases where students face challenges related to their gender or sexual identity, we provide access to psychological support and counselling services to ensure their well-being.

4.4. Ethnicity

At II. gimnazija Maribor, we welcome students from diverse nationalities, creating an inclusive and supportive environment. In line with national legislation, all international students are required to take free Slovene language lessons during their first year in Slovenia, and we organise these lessons for them. In accordance with our *Language Policy*, international students have ample opportunities to speak their mother tongue and can also choose it as a Language A subject. Additionally, we provide support in arranging essential documents, including residence permits, health insurance, dormitory accommodations, and other necessary paperwork to ensure a smooth transition when starting life in a new country. We aim to ensure every student feels supported when they settle into their new environment.

4.5. Differing abilities

At II. gimnazija Maribor, we embrace diverse teaching and learning approaches, ensuring that students of varying abilities and learning styles have equal opportunities to succeed. According to the Assessment policy, we employ various assessment methods to accommodate different strengths, recognising that students develop different types of intelligence, as outlined by Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

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4.6. Psychological and mental well-being

At II. gimnazija Maribor, we prioritise the psychological and social well-being of our students. In the IB Diploma Programme, each class teacher is responsible for only 20 students, allowing for personalised support and closer guidance. A counsellor is also available for advice if professional help is needed. We organise workshops and class lessons focused on mental health and time management. Additionally, we foster a sense of community by organising activities such as movie nights, dances, hikes, and trips to strengthen bonds, improve relationships, and promote team-building among students.

4.7. Gifted students, students pursuing parallel education, top-level athletes, students preparing for cultural events and others

Based on the *Regulations on Adjustments of School Obligations for Students in Secondary Schools 30/18* the school can adjust school obligations for gifted students, students pursuing parallel education, perspective athletes, top-level athletes, students preparing for international knowledge competitions or other international educational and cultural events and exchanges, students participating in other sports and cultural activities, and students coming from foreign countries. Application and instructions for obtaining the status of an athlete, cultural participant, or student pursuing parallel education are published on the school's web page.

4.8. Students with special needs (emotional and mental health concerns, medical conditions, disabilities, or other long-term difficulties)

According to the *II. gimnazija Maribor Inclusion Policy*, in line with the *Act on the Guidance of Children with Special Needs 58/11 and amendments 40/12 and 90/12*, students with special needs are those who require additional support beyond what is provided by the classroom teacher due to:

- learning disabilities,
- specific learning difficulties,
- communication and speech difficulties,
- autism spectrum disorders,
- social, emotional and behavioural challenges,
- physical and sensory challenges,
- long-term medical and/or mental health challenges,
- and other challenges.

These students are provided with tailored assistance to ensure their full participation and success in the educational process.

Our school has three guidance counsellors who work with students. One of them, a psychologist and former IB Diploma Programme student, is responsible for supporting IB Diploma Programme students at II. gimnazija Maribor.

Students with special needs may be accompanied by a guardian (an individual who supports the student during lessons and breaks) if mandated by *the Act on the Guidance of Children with Special Needs 58/11 and amendments 40/12 and 90/12*. However, individualised adaptations may also be required to help students meet curriculum objectives.

For students with special needs, the head of the school appoints a specialised team consisting of the class teacher (team leader), a counsellor (in a support role), the IB DP coordinator, and the head of the school. Additionally, all the teachers who teach the particular student are included in the team. This team collaborates to develop individualised programmes tailored to

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students' needs. These programmes are based on the student's current situation, expert reports, and an assessment by the school psychologist, all created in consultation with the student and their parents. The individualised programme outlines the necessary access arrangements, including teaching, learning, and assessment adjustments, to minimise or eliminate barriers to the student's success. All the in-class access arrangements are aligned with the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*. The class teacher and counsellor regularly monitor the student's progress and adjust the individualised programme as needed. The team is responsible for ensuring that all teachers working with the student are fully informed about the individualised programme and that the agreed-upon access arrangements are consistently implemented. The guiding principle is that these arrangements should provide the most effective support to overcome challenges without altering the learning objectives or lowering academic standards.

5. Responsibilities of the School

Once a student is enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme at II. gimnazija Maribor, our responsibility is to address their learning needs, including any necessary inclusive access arrangements described in paragraph 4. These arrangements, if required, are planned from the outset or early in the course of study and integrated as part of the student's regular classroom work and assessment process. We ensure that all special arrangements comply with this IB's regulations and that the students are informed about the inclusion policy from the beginning of the course.

6. Differentiated Support

Our school recognises the value of differentiated learning for students with different needs and the importance of accommodating students with diverse needs. Differentiated strategies enable students to meet learning outcomes or, where appropriate, extend those outcomes. Adjustments in variables such as time, organisation, and assessment methods are often necessary to support students effectively.

For students enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme, the focus is on achieving the assessment objectives outlined in each subject guide. It is understood that these objectives cannot be altered. However, special arrangements for coursework and final exams can be made if the student meets the criteria as detailed in the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*.

7. Accommodations for Coursework and Final Exams

When determining the need for inclusive access arrangements for the coursework and the final exams, our school adheres to the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures* and the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*. The DP coordinator must submit all requests for arrangements requiring authorisation via the online IBIS system at least six months before the exam date (by November 15 for the May examination session). Prior to submission, consent must be obtained from both the student and their parents. To request access arrangements for IB authorization, two types of supporting documentation are required.

- An official report, which may include:
 - a psychological or medical report,
 - evidence from a language proficiency test for additional language learners.
- Educational evidence from the school.

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In accordance with the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)*, the following access arrangements may be granted.

- Flexibility in duration (additional time, extensions to IB submission deadlines, rest breaks, and others).
- Flexibility in presentation of material and resources/reception of content (modified papers, vision aids, hearing aids, reader, and others).
- Flexibility in response (word processor, spell checker, scribe, graphic organiser, and others).
- Use of human assistance (care assistant, practical assistant, prompter, and others).
- Flexibility in equipment, setting or location (separate room, specific seating, special lighting, alternative venue, medical aids and equipment, and others).
- Reasonable adjustments (any flexibility introduced to learning, teaching and assessment that is not covered in the standard list above).

The IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy (2023)* provides further instructions on how to implement these access arrangements and the eligibility criteria when they are applied.

Only long-term challenges are addressed through the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy*. However, if a challenge arises or occurs within three months before the written examinations, it must be handled through the IB's *Adverse Circumstances Policy*.

8. Review of the document

The *Inclusion Policy* at II. gimnazija Maribor is reviewed annually by a designated team to ensure alignment with Slovene national legislation and the latest IB documents. Any updates to the policy are presented to the teachers during the August staff meeting. IB DP students and their parents are informed about the policy during the introductory meeting at the beginning of the academic year.

9. Resources

IBO: Access and inclusion policy, 2023.

IBO: Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2024, 2023.

IBO: Programme standard and practices, 2019.

IBO: From principles into practice, 2015.

IBO: Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, 2020.

IBO: Development of positive academic mindsets in diverse IB schools, 2017.

Act on the Guidance of Children with Special Needs 58/11 and amendments 40/12 and 90/12
Accessed at: [<http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO5896>] on 20. 8. 2024 at 08.00.

Regulations on Adjustments of School Obligations for Students in Secondary School 30/18
Accessed at: [<https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV13430>] on 21. 8. 2024 at 9.00.

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT (4o) [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com>