



THE 5-YEAR DP EVALUATION

IBMA NETWORKING SESSION
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Outline of the self-study questionnaires

The IB programme evaluation self-study questionnaire that you submit will follow the general outline below. The electronic version of each programme's *Evaluation guide and self-study questions* template can be accessed on the IB Americas site at <http://www.ibo.org/iba/schools/>

School presentation

1. General information (name, school type, number of students, etc.)
2. Questions about the school and community and changes since prior authorization or evaluation

Section A: Philosophy

- Names of individuals that participated in review of this section
- Questions related to school philosophy and perception of parents and students
- Standard and practice implementation rating for each standard
- Conclusions for each standard (achievements, progress on prior recommendations, practices in need of further development or improvement)

Section B: Organization

- Names of individuals that participated in review of each standard
- Questions related to organization, policies, participation and resources
- Standard and practice implementation rating for each standard
- Conclusions for each standard (achievements, progress on prior recommendations, practices in need of further development or improvement)

Section C: Curriculum

- Names of individuals that participated in review of this section *
- Standard and practice implementation rating for each standard
- Questions about practice(s) that produce more diverse answers in the group for each standard
- Conclusions for each standard (achievements, progress on prior recommendations, practices in need of further development or improvement)

**see directions in document regarding how MYP and DP complete subject specific and summary versions*

Conclusions

- Signatures
- Additional supporting documentation

Programme specific charts

- DP has 7 charts
- Last chart for each programme is the school's action plan organized by standard

Supporting Documentation

The table below provides an overview of the additional documents schools are required to submit along with the self-study questionnaire. The complete programme evaluation is a combination of the self-study questionnaire and these documents.

In the table of required supporting documents below, you can identify where you are with each of these.

Additional Required Documents	Create	Revise	Sufficient	Notes:
School Presentation				
A description of the self-study process implemented in the school, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline • Means used to gather feedback from the different stakeholders • Meeting schedule for the self-study • The school-developed descriptors for assessing the practices 				
Section A: Philosophy				
School brochure that includes information about the implementation of the programme.				
Section B: Organization				
School organization chart showing the programme's pedagogical leadership team situation (including the programme coordinator) and reporting lines				
Job description of the programme coordinator, including all additional responsibilities besides the programme coordination. Indicate the percentage of the coordinator's weekly schedule that is devoted to complying with the coordination responsibilities				
Language policy				
Assessment policy				
Academic honesty policy				

Special education needs policy				
Additional Required Documents	Create	Revise	Sufficient	Notes:
Calendar of school deadlines for student submission of internal and external assessment components: it is expected to reflect different dates from the IB deadlines as they are for internal use of teachers and students.				
Description of the process of the supervision of extended essays that includes timelines, how students choose their extended essay supervisors and how many students each supervisor is normally responsible for.				

Sample checklist for completing the programme evaluation self-study

This checklist was designed to help you organize and make sense of the programme evaluation process. The actual process at your school may have fewer or more steps. Schools need to adopt a process that fits their own culture and timeline.

Order	Item	Who's involved	Due date	Done?
	Receive notification of programme evaluation (10-12 months in advance of report due date or visit)			
	Collect programme evaluation documents from IB website or the OCC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Programme evaluation guide</i> • <i>Self-study questionnaire</i> 			
	Review programme evaluation requirements			
	Identify how partner schools will complete the programme evaluation study (if applicable)			
	Inform staff of programme evaluation			
	Form programme evaluation team			
	Identify programme evaluation team roles and responsibilities based on requirements and required documentation			
	Create timeline for completion of the evaluation			
	Decide on the support that the team members will receive in order to carry out the programme evaluation activities (financial resources, clerical/technical, etc.)			
	Review previous programme evaluation and report or authorization visit report			
	Review IB action plan from initial authorization or previous programme evaluation			

	Come to agreement on descriptors for degrees / levels of implementation for the practices in sections A, B and C			
	Make preliminary “hunches” of programme strengths and areas that need to be strengthened			
	Collect data / evidence for each programme standard with an eye on completing the self-study appendices or charts and collecting the required supporting documents (surveys, brochures, focus groups, interviews, classroom observations, assessment data, school budget, school bell schedule, meeting minutes, teacher professional development plans, student handbooks, etc.)			
	Review data for each standard and compare against “hunches” to identify strengths and weaknesses			
	Complete the self-study questionnaire degrees / levels of implementation for the practices in sections A and B			
	Subject specific groups complete the self-study questionnaire degrees / levels of implementation for the practices in section C			
	Complete the self-study questionnaire degrees/levels of implementation for the practices in section C			
	Share findings with larger group			
	Revisit findings after sharing with larger group to collect more evidence (if needed)			
	Celebrate achievements			
	Complete school presentation section of self-study questionnaire			
	Complete the questions, tables summary rating and conclusions for standard(s) in section A: philosophy			

	Complete the questions, tables summary rating and conclusions for standard(s) in section B: organization			
	Complete the questions, tables summary rating and conclusions for standard(s) in section C: curriculum			
	Individual subject areas complete the questions, tables summary rating and conclusions for standard(s) in section C: curriculum			
	Review conclusions for sections A, B and C			
	Complete all appendices / charts using data collected from previous findings (CAS Review is now a chart, #6, and part of the review)			
	Complete action plan in the required IB template using objectives drawn from the conclusions of the self-study; it is the last chart of the template for each program			
	Celebrate achievements			
	Collect all required supporting documentation for the self-study and put into electronic form			
	Review the submission guidelines from the regional office			
	Organize all documents electronically and give them obvious file names			
	Upload all of the documents, including the self-study questionnaire and additional documents, to the IB document administration site (www.ib.ecampuspro.com)			
	Celebrate achievements			
	Wait for report and implement action plan to continue strengths and address areas of weakness			

How to organize the work of the self-study

Some steps to programme evaluation / needs assessment

Part 1: Build support within the school/programme

- Create an evaluation team and support structures (people, time, space, materials, collaborative process, decision-making process)
- Expand ownership by creating opportunities for participation
- Communicate what you are doing with all stakeholders
- Build enthusiasm and proceed

Part 2: Plan, gather and go

- Set the scope (depth, breadth and upon whom it touches)
- Identify sources of information (data files, records, people, past evaluations)
- Make a plan (meeting times, deadlines, responsibilities, data collection tools, summarizing, analyzing and reporting)
- Collect and organize data
- Identify and fill the data gaps
- Analyze and summarize the data
- Share the initial results
- Gather more data and revise analysis if necessary

Part 3: Set goals, make an action plan and act

- Review the team (make changes if needed to membership and decision making)
- Review the findings
- Identify main obstacles (one obstacle may be cause of many symptoms)
- Develop goals for improvement
- Brainstorm ideas for solutions
- Share your ideas
- Develop a plan (including professional development and accountability)
- Follow through and monitor

Adapted from:

Sylvie Hale. (2000). *Comprehensive School Reform: A Guidebook on School-Wide Improvement* San Francisco, CA: West End

Timeline and process for completing the self-study questionnaire

DP Example

Overview

The self-study questionnaire, supporting documentation, and appendices will be completed through the cooperation of the following people and committees:

- The IB Advisory Board
- Discipline-specific teacher committees (groups 1-6 and TOK)
- A cross-discipline committee
- The IB Coordinator
- The Principal
- An assisting teacher

The IB Advisory Board, originally designed to be our Steering Committee during our application and affiliation phases, consisted of a cross-section of stake-holders in the program and is charged with the responsibility of providing guidance and advice regarding the on-going implementation of our IB Program. Serving as one of the mechanisms of our internal evaluation scheme, each member (consisting of students, teachers, parents, a guidance counselor, and our principal) provides a voice from their segment of the IB community. The Advisory Board provides an excellent model for stake-holder involvement, and as such has been expanded to include greater representation, including a School Board member who also has children in the program.

The IB Advisory Board will be responsible for sections A and B of the self-study questionnaire. Members will be asked to consider specific standards and practices for each scheduled meeting, to discuss the practices with other members of their stake-holder group, and to email the IB Coordinator with their “ratings” on a scale of 1-4. The IB Coordinator will collate these initial ratings and share them with the group during the meetings. Though the discussion during each meeting may be prompted by any of the practices, priority will be given to those practices which were rated inconsistently by members of the board and those practices that were consistently rated as low. The rating to be recorded on the questionnaire will be the consensus decision of the board.

An IB teacher (the “assistant teacher” noted above) has been provided with release time to assist in the completion of the Program Evaluation. One of our social science teachers and that department’s chairperson who is very knowledgeable about the IB Program’s philosophy and expectations. In addition to serving on the Group 3 (Social Sciences) Curriculum Committee, his responsibilities will be to provide guidance to the other curriculum groups and to assist in the collection of supporting documentation.

Timeline

October

- Organizational structures
 - Increase IB Advisory Group to include more representatives from different stake-holder groups.
 - Establish curriculum groups.
 - Provide time for curriculum groups to meet.

November

- IB Advisory Board begins to meet.
 - Meetings scheduled to address standards in sections A and B of self-study questionnaire, following the procedure outlined above.
- Curriculum groups begin to meet to complete section C. Each group may design its own meeting structure and data collection mechanisms as long as they are consistent with the goals and requirements of the program evaluation.
- IB Coordinator and the assisting teacher begin to collect and/or create the supporting documentation.
- IB Coordinator begins the process of completing the appendices to the questionnaire.

December-January

- IB Advisory Board continues to meet to address sections A and B.
- Curriculum groups continue to meet. They will submit their completed questionnaires electronically in January, accompanied by comments, explanations, and elaborations in a separate Word document.
- IB Coordinator and assisting teacher continue to collect supporting documentation.
- IB Coordinator continues to complete the appendices to the questionnaire.

February

- Cross-disciplinary team is formed to address section C.
- IB Coordinator collates responses to each practice from each curriculum questionnaire and presents them to the cross-disciplinary team for review. Discussion will be initiated by responses that vary greatly or are consistently rated as low. The team will record a consensus rating based on the discussion of the input provided from the original 7 discipline-specific questionnaires.
- IB Coordinator and assisting teacher continue to collect supporting documentation
- IB Coordinator continues to complete the appendices to the questionnaire.

March-April

- Cross-disciplinary team continues to meet and work as outlined above.
- IB Coordinator and assisting teacher continue to collect supporting documentation.
- IB Coordinator continues to complete the appendices to the questionnaire.

May-June

- Preparation of final document (sections A, B, and C) for review by principal.
- Completion of supporting documentation.
- Principal completes Summary of Main Conclusions.
- Preparation of final Program Evaluation document for submission to IBA.

Creating your own timeline for the evaluation self-study

Having an established timeline may help your school complete the self-study process with more input, less stress and still be able to send the review to the regional office by the deadline. Create a timeline that your school might follow based on the real amount of time that you have to complete the programme evaluation questionnaire. Identify your deadline and work backwards or forwards.

Write down the months in which you want to schedule or complete certain evaluation activities (creating your team, collecting parent survey, writing initial drafts). Remember to note when school is in session (or not) and when there are specific school events. You do not need to use all of the months. Select a timeline and number of months that fits your school and community.

Month	Activities
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	

Identifying major achievements and areas in need of improvement:

“The IB is aware that for each school, the implementation of an IB programme is a journey, and that the school will meet these standards and practices to varying degrees along the way.” *IB Programme Standards and Practices* (2010)

When completing the IB programme evaluation, schools should celebrate their major achievements and cite their strengths. Go ahead. Boast a little. Schools should also realize that “you don’t have to be sick to get better.” Be honest about what could be better. Everyone can stand a little change.

What does your programme do well? What could your programme do better? What happens in your programme that makes it special? What happens in your programme that keeps it from reaching its potential? These are the questions that you should ask yourself when deciding what you mark as your programme’s strengths or major achievements and your programme’s areas that need strengthening or further development.

The strengths or achievements and areas that need strengthening or further development should leap out at you from the data you have collected. If nothing stands out, perhaps you have not collected enough data or have been looking in the wrong place. The adults and students at your school know best what they are most proud of in your programme and what your programme needs to do better. Make sure you have included a broad range of opinions during your data collection and analysis.

Do not select a strength or achievement just to make someone happy. Do not select an area that needs strengthening or further development just to pursue a personal agenda. Select the ones that the data reveal. As they say in television series CSI, “Go where the evidence leads you.”

For strengths or major achievements, look for:

- Consistently high marks in the levels or degrees of implementation for a standard.
- Things that you might highlight in promotional material.
- Hallmarks of the way your school implements the programme that distinguishes your school and attracts students and teachers.

For areas in need of improvement:

- Consistently low marks in the levels or degrees of implementation for a standard.
- Things most frequently cited as “that’s something we are working on” or “Someday, I wish we would.”
- Hallmarks of the way your school implements the programme that reinforce the status quo and limit access, quality or infrastructure.

Sample matters to be addressed

Having matters to be addressed in your report can sound ominous. After a school has completed its review it is likely it already knows what matters it needs to address. Here are a few abridged sample matters to be addressed that could be found in PYP, MYP and DP schools. Matters to be addressed are areas within a school's practice in an IB programme, which cause serious concern and which, if not addressed with some urgency, would endanger the school's standing as an IB World School. Generally a concern rises to the level of a matter to be addressed if the school does not meet the programme standard or does not submit required documentation for the self-study questionnaire. Schools are asked to submit evidence that the matter to be addressed has been resolved.

Guiding questions: For each matter to be addressed, what might a school need to submit as evidence that the matter has been resolved?

What is a likely matter to be addressed that exists in your school? How should the school go about addressing it?

Standard A

The mission statement of the school was not submitted and no other evidence exists that there are clear and close connections between the school's published statements of mission and philosophy, and the beliefs and values of the programme.

The school's schedule does not promote the concurrency of learning for each student as evidenced by its description of the schedule for the Theory of Knowledge, Creativity Action and Service, Extended Essay, English HL, and Math Studies SL.

The school does not provide students with many opportunities for learning about issues that have national or global significance, nor do units of inquiry promote the use of resources that offer access to different cultures, perspectives and languages.

Standard B1

The school's schedule indicates that it does not allocate adequate time for each subject group according to programme requirements and the needs of the students.

The school does not have a job description the programme coordinator that reflects the current duties and requirements for the position.

The school does not provide sufficient professional development opportunities to staff to ensure the continuity of the programme. Only a few members of the current staff teaching the program have attended training in the programme, as reported on Appendix 3.

Standard C1

Not all of the responses to standard C1-C4 were submitted. In addition, in those that were submitted, boxes were simply ticked. No statement of conclusion was given.

A comprehensive, coherent, written curriculum, based on the requirements of the programme and developed by the school, is not available to all sections of the school community. No documents exist to inform parents about the curriculum and what is taught in the programme.

Standard C2

There is no a system in place through which all teachers plan and reflect in collaborative teams. Only teachers from a two grade levels have common planning time preventing most teachers from collaborating on units, discussing teaching strategies, reviewing assessment, or gaining an overview of the students' whole learning experience.

Standard C3

The school did not supply the required statements describing policies regarding the placement and promotion of students in instructional groups.

Standard C4

The recording and reporting of assessment data do not reflect the practices and requirements of the programme. Assessment does not address all of the essential elements of the programme nor is there evidence that teachers within the same grade level consistently address a common scope and sequences for each subject group in their assessment.

Possible pitfalls in the process

Wow. My brain hurts. We have covered a lot of ground in just two short days. Here is a summary of things you will want to remember when you return home.

Once you receive notification

- Get started on it right away. Don't put it off.
- Spend a considerable amount of time reading and gathering all of the documents before you begin. Don't consider this to be an easy exercise that can be done effectively with only a minimal amount of work.
- Involve the administration from the start. Don't count on them understanding the magnitude of the job until you explain it to them.
- Ensure that you have adequate secretarial support, if available, or a buddy to help you. Don't try to put the self study document together on your own.
- Develop a calendar within the time frame that you have. Don't assume that everything will get done without some planning.

When you are completing the self-study

- Delegate responsibility to a committee for different parts of the self study. Don't attempt to do everything on your own.
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- Answer every question related to your programme. Don't skip sections, appendices or supporting documents meant for your programme. You will be asked to submit all missing parts when you get your feedback.
- Be truthful. Don't try to invent things that aren't there. If you do not have a school language policy or an assessment policy, say so. Better yet, write about the plans that you have in place to develop one. Some things might not be done on time, but you should demonstrate you are aware of it and not "sweep it under the carpet" or pretend to be surprised later.
- Be open to the findings your school discovers. Don't treat this as an exercise that must be endured. Instead, treat it as an opportunity to grow the program in your school and make it the best that it can be.

Before you submit the self-study

- Read the document, in its entirety, before you submit it. Don't think that the document doesn't get read. The entire document is read and inconsistencies can sometimes become matters to be addressed.
 - Put it together in a way that is easy for the reader to understand your responses to all of the questions, in an orderly fashion. Don't embed answers in text where it is difficult to determine whether or not something has been answered. Try to avoid asking the reader to hunt for something in another section. Address questions in the order given to avoid misunderstandings.
 - Put together what is needed. Emphasize quality over quantity. Don't think that ten samples will necessarily explain something better than one.
 - Be sure to keep a copy of everything that is submitted. Don't assume that materials will not be lost.
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After you submit the self-study

- Be sure to check with your principal and coordinator periodically to determine when the final report is sent back. Don't count on your principal or coordinator coming to you with the report in hand.
- Begin addressing the areas that need strengthening you know exist or that were mentioned during your visit. You don't have to wait for the report to begin correcting obvious needs or to start acting on the things you included in your action plan.

After you receive the evaluation report

- Address the Matters to be Addressed (if you have any) with appropriate support. Don't think that you, alone, are responsible for any necessary further reporting. Don't put off responding to these matters by the due date selected by the regional office.
 - Take the recommendations seriously and evaluate how they might improve your program. Don't think that the recommendations are not important. You are not required to act on them like the matters to be addressed but they are there to help you think about ways to strengthen your programme.
 - Celebrate the commendations. Don't forget to thank folks and praise those who have done a good job.
 - Start working on the next program review even as this one is finishing. Continued growth is the plan. Don't forget to learn from your experience and establish continuity within your school community.
 - Update your action plan as you reach the objectives you made for yourself or when you need to adjust the timelines if you realize that what you originally thought is taking much longer than expected. You are going to have to come back to it again in five years time. Don't let it just sit there for one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five days without giving it a regular check-up.
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Sample Summaries from Standard A (international-mindedness)

All schools are asked in the self-study how they promote and practice international-mindedness. What is international-mindedness? How do you define it in words or practice?

Guiding questions: What confirmations, surprises or questions do you have based on the excerpts? If this was your school what would you do differently? How do the excerpts compare in style and length?

Excerpt 2: DP school self-study

By what means does the school promote international-mindedness throughout the school community?

The school promotes international-mindedness in the following ways:

- Curriculum – The district has made a concerted effort to include the contributions of people from different lands and cultures in our curriculum at all levels and in all disciplines. The authorization to deliver the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme has furthered this goal. IB curricula, by their very nature, promote international-mindedness.
- Music Performance – The school's band, orchestra, jazz band, choir, and chorus perform musical selections from an array of cultural sources during public performances.
- Global Link – The result of a CAS project completed by our IB students who graduated in 2005, Global Link was designed to engage IB students in different countries in cooperative CAS endeavors to raise funds to benefit a humanitarian organization in one of the participating countries. Global Link's focus and direction have changed somewhat and the attention paid by our current students to the endeavor has varied. A core group of students is currently attempting to re-energize Global Link.
- Building with Books – A co-curricular activity that is available to all students and serves as a CAS activity for IB students, Building with Books engages students in fundraising activities that contribute to the building of schools in developing countries. The national organization provides instructional materials (videos, speakers) that facilitate the exploration of the cultures of developing nations. Representatives of different Building with Books chapters throughout the country travel to the building sites to help in the construction process.
- HACIA Democracy – A university organizes and runs a model Organization of American States, engaging students in the preparation and defense of proposals designed to assist the developing countries of the Americas. Some of our students participate in HACIA as part of the CAS program. The experience culminates with a conference held in Latin America.
- World Affairs Council – Another CAS opportunity for our students, our World Affairs Council is a chapter in the larger state and national organization. Students participate in programs that explore issues of local, national, and international importance through a variety of activities including interacting with guests and participating in mock United Nations programs.
- Save Darfur – An ad hoc committee of the World Affairs Council and a CAS endeavor, Save Darfur is designed to raise awareness, provide information, raise funds, and promote political action to remedy the situation in Darfur.

- ESL Events – The school district’s ESL program sponsors a variety of events that bring together the families of students who are receiving ESL services (i.e., families from countries in which English is not the primary language), to which faculty and staff are invited.
- International Travel – Prior to the events of September 11, 2001 the Spanish and French departments organized and directed programs of international travel including home stays, immersion experiences, cultural travel and coursework. Though our efforts in this regard have been thwarted in recent years, there is a concerted effort to revise this program.

Major Achievements:

- Attention to international-mindedness is inherently present in all IB curricula, and the attention paid to this matter in our IB classes is a strength.
- The general climate of our school is one of understanding and support, demonstrated by the actions of student and adults alike. When students act contrary to this principle, appropriate measure are taken to rectify the situation and to assure that the incident becomes a learning experience for the student(s) involved.
- The World Languages department of the school offers a wide array of language for a relatively small high school. We offer classes in Spanish, French, Latin and Japanese. Our district is considering the addition of Chinese to our course offerings.
- Students who are not native speakers of English complete the Group 1 (first language) requirement through a self-taught Language A1 SL course option. Native speakers of other languages who have acquired native or near-native proficiency in English have been encouraged to pursue their native language on a self-taught basis, according to IB regulations, even though they are able to fulfill the group 1 requirement in English. The IB coordinator, with the help of the students’ families, has constructed self-taught curricula in German A1, French A1, and Chinese A1.
- There is a willingness among teachers to engage students in internationally-conducted surveys, studies, etc. For example, our IB Psychology teacher engaged our students in a Freedom and Religion survey conducted by an IB school in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the data gathered by our students became confused and therefore, unusable, so they were not submitted. The desire to participate, however, was evident, and our psychology teacher will engage our students in the is and/or similar experiences in the future as opportunities arise.
- Global Link is the result of ambitious vision from previous IB students. Though the current student leadership of this organization has faltered, it remains in theory a strong opportunity for student to engage in international community service.
- We have had some success in inviting local community members to engage our students in discussions that promote international mindedness. A retired US ambassador in Latin America, who lives in our community, met with our IB juniors and seniors this year.

Needs improvement:

1. Though our promotion of international-mindedness as an outgrowth of the curriculum is relatively strong, it is not consistently strong in all disciplines. Additionally, more overt discussion and related experiences would be a benefit to our students as a positive enhancement of our program.
2. The international network of IB schools offers substantial opportunities for students to engage in communication and activities that cross geographic borders, easily

facilitated by ICT. Though the coordinator makes such opportunities available to teachers, opportunities are not seized due to time constraints, etc. Suggestions have included coordinating with collection of data from different parts of the world for a Group 4 (science) Project, connecting with students in Spanish and French speaking countries through our Language B (second language) classes, and connecting our History of the Americas students to students elsewhere in the Americas.

Required school wide policies for IB World Schools

Language policy

For all three programmes, the IB requires schools to “develop a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations” with their self-study.

WHAT IS IT?

A school’s language policy describes the beliefs and practices in place at the school to support language learning. The development of your school's language policy is important but may not need to be such a difficult task, especially if you have clear policies already written or understood regarding how the school provides for instruction and support to students in:

- *The language of instruction.* The language of instruction is the language in which most of the curriculum is taught. In some schools, there may be two or more equal languages of instruction. Language of instruction support should be a key focus point in the language policy, particularly for those whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction.
- *The school’s additional language(s)* (a.k.a., language B in the MYP or the subjects in group 2 in the DP). The additional language refers in this document to the language that the school offers in addition to the language of instruction. The teaching of an additional language is a requirement of all programmes, unless in the PYP a school has two or more equal languages of instruction.
- *Support for the students’ mother-tongue languages.* The complexities of a student’s language profile may make the process of determining a mother tongue difficult. The mother tongue describes the language most frequently spoken at home, but there may, of course, be more than one language that a child uses comfortably at home.

The written policy should simply describe a school's agreed upon practice. If there is no agreement then it might be a more daunting task. Don’t forget to check to see if your governing board already has specific policy language for the instruction and support of second language speakers (e.g., English learners, heritage speakers).

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The IB's *Guidelines for developing a school language policy* (2006) can help you devise a process for creating a language policy if you need help in how to go about the process. It may also be a simple matter of pulling together and reviewing existing policies. The IB has also developed documents specific to language learning, such as *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes* (2008)

Assessment policy

For all three programmes, the IB requires schools to “develop an assessment policy that is consistent with IB expectations” with their self-study.

WHAT IS IT?

A school’s assessment policy describes the beliefs and practices in place at the school regarding the purpose and use of assessment. The development of your school's assessment policy is important but may not need to be such a difficult task, especially if you have clear policies already written or understood regarding the assessment process and how the particular requirements of the IB programme either shape or fit with practices in the school. The policy should cover:

- *Purpose.* An assessment policy’s statement of purpose is the answer to the question: “What do we assess and why?” The agreed upon purpose of assessment in the school should drive all of its assessment practices.
- *Strategies.* Assessment strategies are the collection of common practices and tools used by people in the school to achieve the defined purpose of assessment. Some strategies may be formal with strict rules and standardized administration requirement; others may be informal, such as “checking for understanding” or student reflections. The description of assessment strategies in a assessment policy answers the question: “How do we assess?”
- *Recording and reporting.* The recording and reporting of student assessment generally comes with an established procedure and a specific vocabulary for relaying results to students, parents and to individuals or parties that need to be informed of student learning. A description of a school’s recording and reporting of assessment will likely include the means and frequency of official reports (e.g., transcripts, marks or progress updates) and the audience for the documents. A description of the school’s assessment vocabulary will include the words or symbols used to convey information about student learning and progress (e.g., letter grades, percentages, criteria, descriptors, mark bands). This may be IB vocabulary or local vocabulary.
- *Responsibilities.* The assessment responsibilities in the policy define who is responsible for what in the assessment process from development to administration and reporting. It can include both formal and informal and may include some student responsibilities.
- *Programme requirements:* All authorized schools must follow the assessment requirements specific to each IB programme (e.g., reporting on the Learner Profile in the PYP, using subject specific criteria in each year in the MYP, and internal assessment requirements in the DP). Each programme also has a culminating project and the policy should demonstrate the school follows the IB requirements for it.
- *Review:* The IB also wants to know how the school periodically reviews its assessment policy or policies.

The written policy should simply describe a school's agreed upon practice. It does not need to be an instruction manual or a lengthy treaty. If there is no agreement then it might be a more daunting task. Don’t forget to check to see if your governing board already has specific

policy language regarding the use of assessment and grading practices. Even more important, don't forget the IB has nine specific practices under standard C4: Assessment as well as programme-specific requirements that should be reflected in your policy, if they are not already.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The IB philosophy on assessment is included in many official documents including:

- *From Principles into Practice: Diploma Programme*
- *Programme standards and practices*
- *Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme*

Some of these documents explicitly address how to create an assessment policy and may be particularly helpful if you are starting from scratch. They can also be helpful in identifying where your current policies need to be augmented or strengthened.

Special educational needs policy

The IB will require all schools to submit a special education needs policy with their self-study.

WHAT IS IT?

A school's special educational needs policy describes the beliefs and practices in place at the school regarding the instruction and support of students within the IB programme with special educational needs. The development of your school's special needs policy is important but may not need to be such a difficult task, especially if you have clear policies already written or understood regarding how special education needs are defined, identified, and supported. In North America, many of these are mandated by law. The policy should cover:

- *Definition.* The definition of special education needs in the policy indicates what special educational needs are recognized and how students are identified as having them. Who or what qualifies as special educational needs is not universally agreed upon.
- *Responsibilities.* The special educational needs responsibilities in the policy define who is responsible for identifying and supporting students with special needs. It will shed more light on the process of identification and support of special needs students.
- *Differentiated support.* The policy should provide information on how teaching approaches and supports are differentiated to match students' needs. According to the IB, "differentiation should be visible and transparent in policy documents in order to meet IB expectations for authorization and evaluation."
- *Accommodations for assessment.* The policy should include information on how accommodations are made in the assessment process for students with special educational needs. For Diploma Programme schools, the accommodations should match those that are allowed by the IB.

The written policy should simply describe a school's agreed upon practice. If there is no agreement then it might be a more daunting task. For most state sponsored schools, most of the work is already done since it is often regulated by state, provincial or national laws and departments or ministries of education. Don't forget to check to see if your governing board already has specific policy language regarding the identification and support of students with special educational needs.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The IB has made a commitment to providing more information and suggestions for schools about the field of special education needs. There is a special section of the OCC where you can find the following documents.

- *Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes* (2010)
- *Diploma Programme: Candidates with special assessment needs* (2009)

These documents will be useful references to see if your school's approach to supporting students with special educational needs matches the IB's recommendations.

Academic honesty policy

The IB requires the Diploma Programme schools to submit an academic honesty policy with their self-study.

WHAT IS IT?

A school's academic honesty policy describes the beliefs and practices in place at the school regarding the development of student skills, knowledge and attitudes towards what academic honesty is and how breaches of academic honesty are handled by the school and by the IB. The development of your school's academic honesty policy is important but may not need to be such a difficult task, especially if you have clear policies already written or understood regarding how academic honesty is defined, supported and enforced. A school's academic honesty policy should include:

- *Definition.* The definition of academic honesty in the policy sets the boundaries and expectations for students. It outlines what is and is not acceptable behavior on the part of students and makes reference to the IB's regulations on academic malpractice.
- *Responsibilities.* The academic honesty responsibilities outline teachers' and students' roles in developing and furthering students' understanding of academic honesty; providing ongoing support for the development of skills and behavior to reinforce academic honesty; and holding students' accountable for violations.
- *Accountability.* The policy should indicate the procedures and consequences for students when dishonesty is discovered. The policy should note both the procedures and consequences of the school and those of the IB when it relates to programme-specific assessment components.

The written policy should simply describe a school's agreed upon practice. If there is no agreement then it might be a more daunting task. Many secondary schools talk about the need for academic honesty and the consequences for cheating in their student or parent handbooks. Don't forget to check to see if your governing board already has a specific policy language regarding the use of assessment and grading practices.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The IB's *Handbook of procedures* and *General regulations* for the MYP and the DP provide clear definitions of what constitutes malpractice (i.e., breaches of academic honesty) and what the formal IB procedures are in the context of IB awarded grades. For the Diploma Programme, IB has published an *Academic honesty* (2009) document and has a ethical practices poster on the OCC in a special academic honesty section.

IB Programme Standards and Practices

Section A: Philosophy

Standard A

The school's educational beliefs and values reflect IB philosophy

1. The school's published statements of mission and philosophy align with those of the IB
2. The governing body, administrative and pedagogical leadership and staff demonstrate understanding of IB philosophy
3. The school community demonstrates understanding of, and commitment to, the programme
4. The school develops and promotes international-mindedness and all attributes of the IB learner profile across the school community
5. The school promotes responsible action within and beyond the school community
6. The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect
7. The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages
8. The school participates in the IB world community
9. The school supports access for student to the IB programme and philosophy

Requirements for the Diploma Programme

- The school provides for the full Diploma Programme and requires some of its student body to attempt the full diploma and not only individual subject certificates.
- The school promotes access to the diploma and certificates for all students who can benefit from the educational experience they provide.
- The school has strategies in place to encourage students to attempt the full diploma.

Things to think about:

- Is our mission known and shared by our school community?
- How is the school's mission "lived" at the school?
- What do we understand by "international-mindedness"?
- How many full diploma candidates do we have compared to our certificate candidates?

Section B: Organization

Standard B1: Leadership and structure

The school's leadership and administrative structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme(s).

1. The school has developed systems to keep the governing body informed about the ongoing implementation and development of the programme(s).
2. The school has developed a governance and leadership structure that supports the implementation of the programme(s).
3. The head of school/school principal and programme coordinator demonstrate pedagogical leadership aligned with the philosophy of the programme(s).
4. The school has appointed a programme coordinator with a job description, release time, support and resources to carry out the responsibilities of the position.
5. The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s).

Requirements for the Diploma Programme

- The school has an admissions policy that clarifies conditions for admission to the school and Diploma Programme
- The school develops and implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations

- The school develops and implements a special educational needs policy that is consistent with IB expectations and with the school's admission policy
 - The school develops and implements an assessment policy that is consistent with IB expectations
 - The school has developed and implements an academic honesty policy that is consistent with IB expectations
 - The school complies with the IB regulations and procedures related to the conduct of all forms of assessment for the Diploma Programme.
6. The school has systems in place for the continuity and ongoing development of the programme(s).
 7. The school carries out programme evaluation involving all stakeholders.

Things to think about:

- Do we have systems in place that ensure the continuity of the IB programme beyond the individuals currently involved?
- How do we engage relevant stakeholders
- Which policies do we already have in place?
- Are these in writing?

Standard B2: Resources and support

The school's resources and support structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme(s).

1. The governing body allocates funding for the implementation and ongoing development of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The allocation of funds includes adequate resources and supervision for the creativity, action and service (CAS) programme and the appointment of a CAS coordinator
 - The allocation of funds includes adequate resources to implement the theory of knowledge course over two years
2. The school provides qualified staff to implement the programme(s).
 3. The school ensures that teachers and administrators receive IB-recognized professional development.

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The school complies with the IB professional development requirement for the Diploma Programme at authorization and evaluation
4. The school provides dedicated time for teachers' collaborative planning and reflection.
 5. The physical and virtual learning environments, facilities, resources and specialized equipment support the implementation of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The laboratories and studios needed for group 4 and group 6 subjects provide safe and effective learning environments
 - There are appropriate information technology facilities to support the implementation of the programme
 - The school provides a secure location for the storage of examination papers and examination stationary with controlled access restricted to senior staff
6. The library/multimedia/resources play a central role in the implementation of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The library/media centre has enough appropriate materials to support the implementation of the Diploma Programme
7. The school ensures access to information on global issues and diverse perspectives.
 8. The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.
 9. The school has systems in place to guide and counsel students through the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The school provides guidance to students on post-secondary educational options
10. The student schedule or timetable allows for the requirements of the programme(s) to be met.

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The schedule provides for the recommended hours for each standard and higher level subject
 - The schedule provides for the development of the theory of knowledge course over two years
 - The schedule respects concurrency of learning in the Diploma Programme
11. The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programme(s).
 12. The school allocates resources to implement the PYP exhibition, the MYP personal project (or community project for programmes that end in MYP year 3 or 4), the DP extended essay and the IBCC reflective project for all students, depending on the programme(s) offered.

Things to think about:

- Are the library/media center and science labs well equipped? Do they need an update?
- How are the librarian or specialists involved in the resources analysis?
- How do we use the subject guides to improve our facilities?

Section C: Curriculum

Standard C1: Collaborative planning

Collaborative planning and reflection supports the implementation of the IB programme(s).

1. Collaborative planning and reflection addresses the requirements of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- Collaborative planning and reflection includes the integration of theory of knowledge in each subject
 - Collaborative planning and reflection explores connections and relations between subjects and reinforces knowledge, understanding and skills shared by the different disciplines
2. Collaborative planning and reflection takes place regularly and systematically.
 3. Collaborative planning and reflection addresses vertical and horizontal articulation.
 4. Collaborative planning and reflection ensures that all teachers have an overview of students' learning experiences.
 5. Collaborative planning and reflection is based on agreed expectations for student learning.
 6. Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles.
 7. Collaborative planning and reflection is informed by assessment of student work and learning.
 8. Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
 9. Collaborative planning and reflection addresses the IB learner profile attributes.

Note: “Collaborative planning and reflection” is used as a single concept as the two processes are interdependent.

Standard C2: Written curriculum

The school's written curriculum reflects IB philosophy.

1. The written curriculum is comprehensive and aligns with the requirements of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- The curriculum fulfills the aims and objectives of each subject group and the core
 - The curriculum facilitates concurrency of learning
 - The curriculum is balanced so that students are provided with a reasonable choice of subjects
 - The school develops its own courses of study for each subject on offer and for theory of knowledge
2. The written curriculum is available to the school community.
 3. The written curriculum builds on students' previous learning experiences.
 4. The written curriculum identifies the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed over time.
 5. The written curriculum allows for meaningful student action in response to students' own needs and the needs of others.
 6. The written curriculum incorporates relevant experiences for students.
 7. The written curriculum promotes students' awareness of individual, local, national and world issues.
 8. The written curriculum provides opportunities for reflection on human commonality, diversity and multiple perspectives.
 9. The written curriculum is informed by current IB publications and is reviewed regularly to incorporate developments in the programme(s).
 10. The written curriculum integrates the policies developed by the school to support the programme(s).
 11. The written curriculum fosters development of the IB learner profile attributes.

Standard C3: Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning reflects IB philosophy.

1. Teaching and learning aligns with the requirements of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- Teaching and learning at the school addresses all of the aims and objectives of each subject
2. Teaching and learning engages students as inquirers and thinkers.
 3. Teaching and learning builds on what students know and can do.
 4. Teaching and learning promotes the understanding and practice of academic honesty.
 5. Teaching and learning supports students to become actively responsible for their own learning.
 6. Teaching and learning addresses human commonality, diversity and multiple perspectives.
 7. Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue.
 8. Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
 9. Teaching and learning uses a range and variety of strategies.
 10. Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles.
 11. Teaching and learning incorporates a range of resources, including information technologies.
 12. Teaching and learning develops student attitudes and skills that allow for meaningful student action in response to students' own needs and the needs of others.
 13. Teaching and learning engages students in reflecting on how, what and why they are learning.
 14. Teaching and learning fosters a stimulating learning environment based on understanding and respect.
 15. Teaching and learning encourages students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.
 16. Teaching and learning develops the IB learner profile attributes.

Note: "Teaching and learning" is used as a single concept as the two processes are interdependent.

Standard C4: Assessment

Assessment at the school reflects IB assessment philosophy.

1. Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme(s).

Requirements of the Diploma Programme

- Assessment of student learning is based on the objectives and assessment criteria specific to each subject
2. The school communicates its assessment philosophy, policy and procedures to the school community.
 3. The school uses a range of strategies and tools to assess student learning.
 4. The school provides students with feedback to inform and improve their learning.
 5. The school has systems for recording student progress aligned with the assessment philosophy of the programme(s).
 6. The school has systems for reporting student progress aligned with the assessment philosophy of the programme(s).
 7. The school analyses assessment data to inform teaching and learning.
 8. The school provides opportunities for students to participate in, and reflect on, the assessment of their work.
 9. The school has systems in place to ensure that all students can demonstrate a consolidation of their learning through the completion of the PYP exhibition, the MYP personal project (or community project for programmes that end in MYP year 3 or 4), the DP extended essay and the IBCC reflective project, depending on the programme(s) offered.

Things to think about:

- Is there time allocated for IB teachers and the Diploma Programme coordinator to plan and reflect collaboratively?
- Do we have a written curriculum for the Diploma Programme? How do we communicate this curriculum and to whom is it communicated?
- Do our teaching and learning strategies consider the attributes we want to develop in our students as part of the IB community?
- What do our teachers think about the IB curriculum?
- How can they improve upon its articulation to all stakeholders?

Exploring a curriculum that is international

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Section 1

Internationalism as a perspective that pervades all aspects of school life is foundational to the Primary Years Programme and the IB. Although everyone agrees that international mindedness should characterize the school climate, student body, staff and curriculum, moving from beliefs into actual practice, particularly in embedding internationalism* as thoughtful perspective throughout the curriculum is a more complex discussion.

Internationalism in the curriculum is sometimes left to chance, based on the assumption that an international perspective will just happen as a result of exposure to the local host culture and of relationships between students and teachers from different national cultures within a school. Other times, it occurs through lessons on human relations and sensitivity training along with units on the cultural elements that are most clearly visible, such as **food, fashion, folklore, famous people and festivals**. This lens limits internationalism to adding more content and books about other countries to the existing curriculum. These approaches typically lead to superficial appreciations of cultural differences that can actually reinforce stereotypes, instead of creating new understandings about cultural perspectives and global issues and challenges.

One problem with the term “international curriculum” is that international is used as an adjective, signaling a special kind of curriculum. If internationalism is an attitude of mind that permeates the curriculum, and not just a special unit or activity, then a more appropriate term may be “a curriculum that is international”. This view of internationalism is based on broad understandings of culture. Clifford Geertz, an anthropologist, defines culture as “the shared patterns that set the tone, character and quality of people’s lives” (p.216). These patterns include language, religion, gender, relationships, class, ethnicity, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, family structures, nationality, and rural/suburban/urban communities. These shared patterns however, go beyond external characteristics to include the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives held by a group of people. Culture is a way of living and being in the world’ it is a design for living that involves ways of acting, believing, and valuing.

Ludwick Fleck, a Polish scientist and philosopher, argues that thought collectives form when groups of people learn to think in similar ways because they share a common interest, exchange ideas, maintain interaction over time, and create a history that affects how they think and live. Since most individuals think and act within several thought collectives at a time, this view captures the dynamic, evolving nature of culture as each person interacts with, and is changed through, transactions with other cultures. These understanding highlight the diverse ways in which culture is reflected in people’s lives and within particular social groups.

A curriculum that is international

Given these perspectives on culture and internationalism, the issue becomes one of exploring models/frameworks for moving from beliefs into practice in classrooms. The following curricular framework reflects one attempt to make explicit the various features of a curriculum that is international and to visually depict the relationships between those features. The four curricular components are all essential and each interrelates to and builds from the others. Surrounding these components is an environment in which readers are encouraged to read the word and the world multiculturally to become aware of how race, class, and gender matter throughout the curriculum. This framework offers a way to evaluate the current curriculum of a classroom or school and to plan instruction that reflects the complexity of internationalism.

A framework for a curriculum that is international

Personal cultural identities

All learners, adults and children, must first explore their own cultures before they can understand why culture matters in the lives of others around them. Internationalism does not begin with the ability to consider other points of view but with the realization that you have a point of view yourself.

At the heart of any curriculum that is international is personal and social knowing: the experiences that learners bring from their personal experiences from living in the world and being part of specific cultural groups and social contexts. Learners need to examine their own histories to understand how those experiences and interactions determine their view of the world and they need to find their lives reflected in classroom materials and experiences in order to value school as personally relevant. When students and teachers recognize the cultures that influence their own lives and thinking, they become more aware of how and why culture is important to others. They no longer see culture as “exotic”, but recognize that it is at the heart of defining who they are as human beings.

These engagements need to encourage students to focus on themselves as cultural beings, not just on self-knowledge and personal interests. Engagements can include having students bring in artifacts reflecting their cultural identities to create museum displays, drawing memory maps of their neighborhoods that identify stories from when they were “little”, and creating cultural memoirs using photography and stories of people and events in their lives. The sharing of these artifacts, maps and memoirs not only supports personal understandings of culture, but also leads to awareness and sensitivity to the experience of others.

Cross-cultural studies

Although internationalism is grounded in awareness of one’s own cultural perspectives, students also need to consider other points of view. Cross-cultural studies have often taken the form of thematic units on ethnicity or countries that focus on superficial aspects such as food and holidays.

However, thoughtful studies of other cultures can provide learners with a way to broaden their perspectives and to realize that other ways of thinking about the world exist. Not only can these studies provide a window on the world to learn about other cultures, but they can also provide deeper insights into the learners’ own cultural identities. Fleck points out that when people have no contact with other thought collectives, they may not be aware of the possibility that others think differently. Learners may not fully realize that they have a culture and a perspective until they encounter other possibilities of thinking about the world. Cross-cultural studies can provide both a mirror and a window for learners as they look out on other ways of viewing the world as well as reflect back on themselves in new light.

While thematic units around particular countries are criticized for their superficiality, these units can be more thoughtful and critical by organizing them across many dimensions of culture: a study of gender, class, race, family structures, or type of community – instead of just nationality. Another possibility is to emphasize the complexities and diversity within any cultural group, recognizing that focusing only on superficial aspects trivializes a culture and reinforces stereotypes, despite good intentions. Studies of a social group or culture should include a holistic emphasis on the economic, social, political, aesthetic, values/beliefs, historical, and geographic contexts of that group.

Integration of international experiences and materials

While an occasional cross-cultural study is appropriate, engagements and materials reflecting a wide range of cultural perspectives should be woven into every classroom study, no matter what the topic or curriculum area. The languages, lifestyles, ways of learning, and stories from many cultures can be integrated into all ongoing units of inquiry, not one or two special units each year. Whether the focus is folklore, family, living at peace with others, or the moon, materials and engagements reflecting a range of international perspectives should be sought.

Inquiries on global issues and problems

The fourth component is classroom inquiries that focus specifically on global issues and problems, many of which highlight difficult issues, such as violence, human rights, and social justice, environmental degradation, overpopulation, poverty, language loss, race and ethnicity, and economic imperialism. Students need to occasionally study a global issue in-depth and over time in order to understand the complexity of these issues and to consider ways of taking action in their lives. For example, a group of eleven year old students engaged in an inquiry about prejudice, examining both historical contexts and their own community and interpersonal relationships. Seven year old students studied language diversity, examining where and when they used particular languages and dialects and the differing attitudes of their community toward these languages. A class of twelve year olds examined the influence of popular culture through critiquing the social inequity of race and gender in cartoons and Disney films, while another class of fourteen year olds examined discrimination through a focus on white privilege.

Reading the word and the world multiculturally

All components of a curriculum that is international should be permeated with reading the word and the world multiculturally. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire used this phrase to indicate the importance of raising issues of power and oppression in everything that is studied. Without a focus on reading the word and world multiculturally, the other four components could easily become a superficial tour of culture where students learn about internationalism as tourists who pick up some information about different cultures.

A tourist curriculum is based on the assumption that if we all just learned more about each other, we would like each other and the world's problems would be solved. This approach does not consider difficult issues of social justice and so students are unable to make real changes in how they think about and relate to others.

Reading multiculturally is the stance that race, class, and gender matter in how we interpret and analyze our experiences in the world as well as the texts we encounter. Freire argues that we want students to wrestle with ideas and words, not just walk on top of them. Reading the word and the world with a "critical eye" provides the opportunity to talk about important social and political questions such as, what it means to be human; the relative worth of people from various racial, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic communities; the value of particular kinds of actions; and how we relate to one another.

Conclusions

Using a curriculum framework such as the one introduced here can provide a way for educators to evaluate what is currently happening with internationalism in their curriculum. This evaluation involves identifying what is working well along with what is missing or needs to be strengthened. Although all aspects of this framework will not be in place within a classroom at one particular moment in time, they should all be available to students across the school year because it is the interactions across the framework that builds complex and critical understandings of internationalism.

The books and experiences that students engage in at school have the potential to transform their perspectives through encouragement to understand their current lives and to imagine beyond themselves. Students do need to find their own lives reflected in the curriculum, but if what they read and do in school only mirrors their own views of the world, they cannot envision other ways of thinking and being. However, these experiences need to be imbedded within a curriculum that is international or their potential to challenge student to critically confront issues of culture is diminished or lost. A curriculum that is truly international offers all of us, educators and students, the most potential for enriching and transforming our lives and our views of the world.

An international-minded school promotes...

1. Cooperation, opening and curiosity
2. Cultural diversity
3. Understanding from different perspectives
4. Contact with reality outside school
5. Communication in several languages
6. Study trips and reflection on them
7. Teachers professional development
8. Real life experiences
9. Global significance of local issues
10. Experiential learning through service
11. International projects
12. An international curriculum
13. Different teaching strategies
14. Critical thinking