



## School of the Nations. Special Educational Needs Policy-IB Diploma Programme.

The School of the Nations has, as one of its guiding statements, the following:

*Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.<sup>1</sup>*

The School, therefore, seeks to provide an education to all students regardless of ability or aptitude. We seek to provide any student accepted into the School with a programme designed to suit the individual child's needs within the confines of the resources of the School. This approach also extends to the students who are enrolled or seek to enrol in the School's IB Diploma programme.

### **Philosophy:**

The faculty and staff of the School of the Nations IB Diploma programme strive to build a community that is supportive of all of our students. As such, we provide for students who have special needs. These individual needs may be diagnosed as having (but are not limited to): learning disabilities; autism spectrum disorders; and/or physical, sensory, mental health or other medical disorders. Through this provision, we strive to ensure that the education of all our students is as fair and equitable as possible. We appreciate the academic rigour of the IB programme and the importance of supporting students studying the full diploma; we commit to minimizing barriers to student participation.

### **Identification:**

Students enrolling in the School of the Nations IB Diploma programme must indicate in their application to the programme any identified special needs and present the Diploma assistant-coordinator with the relevant documentation. The School may seek additional documentation or request specific testing to ensure that the School is able to support the learning needs of the student. Each student's earlier schooling and learning strategies are discussed. If any special needs are indicated, a meeting with the special education teacher is set up to discuss the best strategies and methods for student learning and assessment, which are documented in an "Individualized Education Plan" (IEP).

It is important that parents share with us any knowledge they have concerning a student's special needs and cooperate with us regarding professional documentation.

### **Meeting Needs:**

The School of the Nations has a special education department dedicated to meeting the needs of a wide variety of learners and working with the classroom teachers to achieve these ends.

The IB Coordinator meets with the student, parents, and special education teacher and mentors to

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<sup>1</sup>Bahá'u'lláh. Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh



discuss necessary provisions. The teachers work with the student and parents concerning how the student's needs will be met in each classroom environment and with the special education teacher, to provide the best monitoring and communication of the student's progress and to make suitable arrangements for undertaking assessments. We at the School of the Nations continue to strive to differentiate teaching and assessments so that students with different learning profiles have the best chance to reach their full potential. Teachers, the special education teacher and mentors keep the IB Coordinator suitably informed.

### **Meeting Needs for IB Assessments:**

The IB Coordinator informs the IBO using the appropriate forms (D1/D2) and providing the necessary documentation of the special needs of students requiring accommodations such as extended time on examination papers, writing on a computer or sitting in an individual room. Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision of the IB, the student, parents and teachers involved will be informed.

We understand and endorse the principle that any assistance tendered to students through our SEN process is not intended to compensate for lack of ability. We also recognise that our responsibility to determine whether accommodations can be made for individual candidates and that all such accommodations must be in agreement with IB-policy. We appreciate that application for special arrangements have specific requirements and may need appropriate supporting documentation. We shall ensure that all special arrangements comply with Section 4 of the *Candidates with special assessments needs* document.

"The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of accommodation may be authorized" (Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme 2013 77).

### **The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) and Special Needs**

The IBO believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Special access arrangements can be applied for given that the student has the necessary documentation from a person of the medical profession. We therefore welcome all information and documentation concerning students with special needs, which will enable us to apply for the correct access arrangements and supply the appropriate learning support.

Access arrangements for dyslexics and students with concentration difficulties usually entail extended time for exams and the use of a word processor. In their day-to-day work, students with special needs are offered sessions with the special education teacher for training of study skills and help with specific assignments. The role of the special education teacher is to collate information about the student and work collaboratively with subject teachers, parents, and other staff in order to find ways of supporting the student.