

## **Inclusive Arrangements Policy**

### **EF Academy New York**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to:

- Communicate to all stakeholders in our community the expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for all learners, a requirement for IBO
- Provide clear guidelines
- Establish roles & responsibilities
- Outline various accommodations and support opportunities available

EF Academy currently has a Head of Learning Support to work with our students and staff to ensure that students are accessing the curriculum with the support that they need. If a student needs to receive a Psychoeducational Evaluation, these will be outsourced and arranged.

#### **About EF Academy New York**

EF Academy New York is an international boarding school located in Thornwood, New York in Westchester County. We educate a diverse student population, with 95% of the student body consisting of international students. Over 70 different countries are represented among our student body, and for most, English is not their native language. Our mission mirrors that of the IBO, in that we aim to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

#### **Program philosophy**

EF has recently created a Learning Support department to help support our students with documented Learning Disabilities. The goal is to help students create access points to the curriculum, using specific targeted strategies based on each student's unique learning profile. The Learning Support department is committed to giving each learner the skills and strategies to ultimately use independently. The Head of Learning Support will work with teachers and staff to help support all of our students with documented learning disabilities to access the IB curriculum.

#### **Roles**

The Head of Learning Support will work with teachers, staff, and Administration to create tools to best support the students. If there are students identified that may need to be evaluated, the



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Head of Learning Support will work with teachers, parents, and administration to plan to receive an evaluation. The Head of Learning Support will collect data that has been collected from teachers in order to have concrete evidence to give to the evaluators. Information will be kept strictly confidential and will be shared only with those who need to know the information. The Head of Learning Support will communicate with the Deputy Head of School for Academics to ensure that he is within the line of communication. Every three years evaluations should be re-done in order to be kept up to date; therefore, the Head of Learning Support will work with the family to arrange this step.

### Legal

In the United States, children are expected to be in school until at least the age of 16 unless there are extenuating circumstances. Public Schools in the U.S. do follow laws such as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); however, as EF Academy is an International School, we do not have to follow these laws. EF Academy is nonetheless committed to helping all children succeed.

### Support for students with documented learning disabilities

EF Academy and the IB believe that all candidates must be allowed accommodations if they have a documented learning disability in order to ensure that they are given an equal opportunity to succeed. If a student does not have documentation from a psychologist or health professional, EF cannot diagnose or support students without medical documentation.

Where standard 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 accommodations may be authorized based on what their evaluation says. Candidates eligible for alternative testing arrangements are those with Documented learning disabilities such as:

- Documented communication and speech difficulties
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Social, emotional, and behavior challenges
- Medical or mental health issues
- Hearing-impaired

### Accommodations

For major tests, IB external and internal examinations, under certain conditions, special accommodations are allowed. When granted, these may include:



- Extension of deadlines for major assignments
- Additional time based on what is in their evaluation (most frequently it's time and a half)
- Movement breaks
- Scribe
- Readers
- Alternate testing environment
- Use of Assistive Technology

## Differentiation

Differentiation of instruction is one strategy for teaching students with learning disabilities. This is also a method of teaching that is helpful for all students, whether they have a documented LD or not as it addresses all learning styles.

## Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

For students who enter EF Academy already holding an IEP/504 and or a Psychoeducational evaluation, EF Academy will follow each recommendation of the Evaluation with the resources available. We value the time and efforts put into each evaluation and want our students to have all the support possible to ensure positive learning outcomes. Once we receive an evaluation, the Head of Learning Support will create an Individualized Learning Plan that will be for internal use only and includes students' individual accommodations, goals, strengths, and challenges. These will be helpful for teachers to be able to constantly review.

In some cases where an evaluation is not on file but there are documented concerns/information from teachers and staff, the Head of Learning Support can discuss with parents the opportunity to get a Psychoeducational evaluation.

### General learning difficulties

Students experience difficulties in the acquisition of basic skills, knowledge, and conceptual development. These students are generally at the low end of the developmental range for their age.



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<b>Specific learning difficulties</b>	Students have difficulties with basic reading, writing, and/or number skills. There is often a marked difference between their performances orally and on paper. Often a specific diagnosis has been provided by a psychologist/specialist/medical doctor (e.g. disorder in reading, dyspraxia, a disorder in math, etc.)
<b>Executive functioning difficulties</b>	Students may struggle with organizational systems, time management skills, as well as study skills.
<b>Attention deficits</b>	Attention deficits may include hyperactivity, inability to focus
<b>Social / emotional / behavioral difficulties</b>	Students exhibit behaviors that make it challenging to function effectively in school. Interventions/structures will be helpful for students with behavioral challenges.
<b>Motor skills</b>	Students have difficulties with either fine and/or gross motor skills. Such challenges can affect one's ability to fully access the curriculum.
<b>Physical disabilities</b>	Students may require differentiation of the environment in order to allow adequate access to the curriculum. Students may have temporary physical disabilities as a result of hospitalization or injury.
<b>Visual difficulties</b>	There are a variety of levels of visual impairments that can have an impact on a student's ability to fully access the curriculum.
<b>Hearing difficulties</b>	There are many levels of hearing loss that can affect a students' ability to access the curriculum fully.



## COVID 19

Despite the limitations of the pandemic and many students still in their home country, students will receive the support that they may need regardless of where they may be. The Head of Learning Support will work with students both via Zoom and in-person to best support our students with documented Learning Disabilities at EF Academy. She will also work with teachers and families via phone, in-person, and via Zoom.

## Policy review and implementation

The EF Academy Leadership Team is responsible for coordinating the implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Learning Support Policy. A formal review of the policy will take place at the end of each academic year. The policy will be communicated to students and parents in handbooks published annually. EF Academy New York handbooks will also be made available through PowerSchool. We acknowledge that the International Baccalaureate defines these practices as Inclusive Arrangements; however, we felt the connotations of “inclusive” did not adequately reflect our philosophy.

**Updated:** August 2020

**Approved by:** Senior Academic Leadership Team, EFANY

**Sources:** IBO (2018a). [Access and Inclusion Policy](#). Cardiff: Peterson House.

IBO (2015). [Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Diploma Programme: Teaching differentiated to meet the needs of all learners](#). Cardiff: Peterson House.

IBO (2016). [Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes](#), updated 2018. Cardiff: Peterson House.

International School of Amsterdam Inclusion Policy