

GERMAN EMBASSY SCHOOL TEHRAN

INTERNATIONAL SECTION

INCLUSION POLICY

Last modified: June 2022





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Equality



Equity



Empowerment



Introduction

'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*

The IB program encourages students around the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.' *IB mission statement of 2013*

As a school we have a strong commitment to the concept of inclusion and pastoral support for our students and their families. Our policy describes the way in which we meet the needs of students who experience a variety of barriers to learning.

Vision

At the German Embassy School Tehran- International Section, we believe it is our responsibility to help every child find their own purpose, happiness and balance their personal well-being, to provide them with the ability to become a global citizen in the future.

Mission

Our team truly believes that every child matters and that they can achieve their true potential through proper educational provision. Every member of our school community strives to provide an inclusive educational program which moves beyond labels and negative associations to ensure students are empowered and fully prepared to pursue their goals in the future.

How We Overcome Barriers to Learning

We must consider barriers to learning from multiple perspectives. As a school we are aware of these barriers and have ensured that each one is approached objectively. We plan to overcome these barriers in the following ways:



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School organization and resources

The school's mission and vision are aligned with the concept of inclusion which therefore enables the leadership team to be involved in developing effective strategies to increase inclusion opportunities within a school. Our whole school development plan embodies inclusion and as a result our school routines are flexible; lesson transitions are facilitated, school transitions are facilitated, human and material resources are readily available and collaborative teaching and learning practices are a key feature of the school organization.

Culture and policies

As a school we ensure that all our policies and practices consider diversity, human rights, and empowerment, hence reflecting the inclusive nature of our school. We have a clear understanding that the entire school community is responsible for developing these cultures, and that teachers consider themselves teachers of all students.

Approaches to teaching and learning

Our school provides inclusive arrangements and reasonable adjustments for learning and assessment. We have created a culture which embraces the knowledge that all community members are involved in our inclusive practices and that these practices need to be maintained and sustained. Professional development is offered to the whole school community to raise awareness and equip them with effective strategies for their participation in inclusivity. In addition, our teaching and learning addresses diversity and multiple perspectives.

Buildings and physical obstacles

Our school facilities are assessable to all members of our community, and we show a willingness to reorganize physical spaces, classroom orientation and structure to include all students possible.

Relationships among the community

The learner profile plays an important role in promoting agency to affirm identity and to provide personal freedom. Collaborative practices are promoted amongst the members of our school community and the overall environment promotes a sense of safety, self-worth and belonging for every member of our community.

Criteria Used to Collect Information

It is important to reinforce that student are considered in terms of their strengths instead of identifying students with deficit labels. Our focus is on areas of challenges which students may experience. We take into consideration learner variability which embraces all students and does not exclude them on the grounds of strengths, challenges, age, social status, economic status, language, gender, race, ethnicity, or sexuality. Learner variabilities is a shifting combination of strengths and challenges that learners face.

Therefore, to better support our students we take into consideration three key categories:

- 1- Diagnostic Criteria
- 2- Learner Challenges
- 3- Other relevant data



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Diagnostic Criteria

Diagnostic criteria enable teachers to locate information and possible teaching strategies for students. This information is gathered through diagnostic categories which are psychiatric diagnoses based upon agreed and observed behaviors. These are not physiological diagnoses and using these solely to label a student can undermine both the student and their learning. Key Diagnostic criteria or labels include autism, ADD and ADHD, dyscalculia, dyslexia, dyspraxia, gifted and talented, hearing impairment, medical conditions or chronic illness, mental health issues, physical disabilities, speech, visual impairment.

Learner Challenges

The learner challenge index enables teachers to find information and possible teaching strategies with students who have a challenge within reading, writing, mathematics, social and emotional learning, mental health and psychological well-being, speech, language and communication, visual, hearing and giftedness. These challenges are identified by teachers, not professionally diagnosed.

Other Data

Other relevant data needs to also be taken into consideration such as students' interests, strengths, previous experiences, and preferences through face-to-face conversations with students.

Resources to remove the barriers to learning

Our teachers embrace the knowledge that they are teachers of all students and ensure that each student is exposed to teaching and learning in a way that reaches them as individual learners.

As a school we recognize the importance of identifying learning barriers as soon as possible. The resources we use to remove these barriers are:

People: Educators, buddy systems, external support

It is the responsibility of all educators to create a positive learning environment to support the learning of all students. This requires that all students are given:

- the opportunity to be appropriately challenged
- the opportunity to be valued for their strengths
- the sense that they belong to the community
- the sense that they feel understood, valued, safe and cared for
- the opportunity to develop as multilingual citizens
- the opportunity to develop attributes of the learner profile
- the opportunity to reflect on their learning
- opportunities to make decisions about their learning
- high but realistic expectations

Space or Environment: Learning spaces free from distraction, reflective areas for calming down, flexible grouping, flexible workspaces, physical space, lighting, acoustics

Materials, Strategies and Frameworks: UDL (Universal Design for Learning), Blooms Taxonomy, Solo Taxonomy, De Bono hats, timers, diaries, timetables, calendars, planners, mind maps, graphic organizers, stress balls, headphones, assistive technologies (consolidate or enable learning)



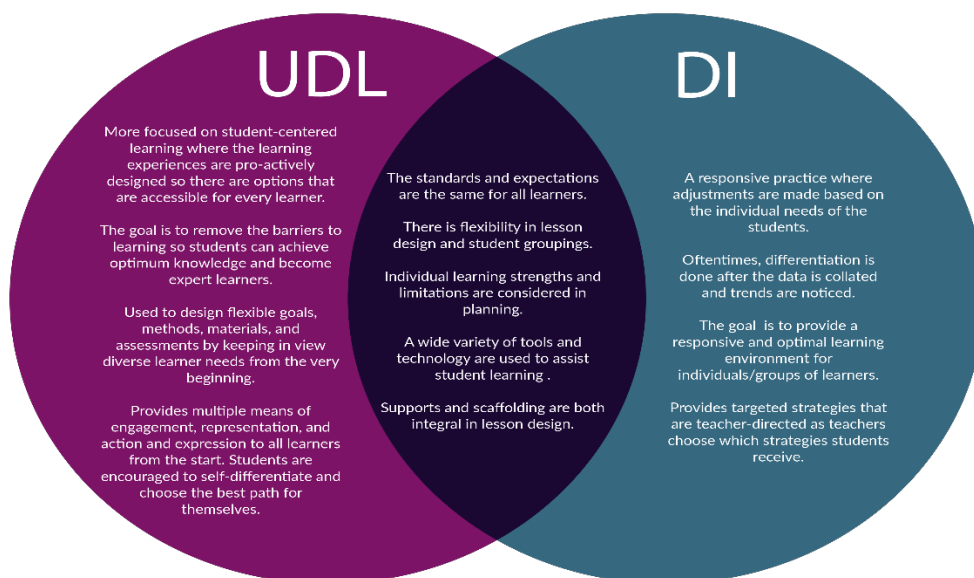
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Specialist therapies or agencies: Occupational therapy, behavior management, speech, and language therapy (these will be outsourced to relevant agencies)

Steps we take to remove barriers to learning

These are the steps we take to ensure all students are supported and assessed appropriately.

Step 1: Classroom and specialist teachers are trained to provide differentiated support by following a UDL which proactively meets the needs of every student in a classroom. It is based on the premise that variability among learners is a norm and is an approach to teaching and learning that gives all children equal opportunities to succeed. Some examples of UDL are posted lesson goals, assignment options, flexible workspaces, regular feedback, digital and audio text.



Step 2: If a student's needs are not being met through a UDL they are referred to Head of Inclusion (by teachers/parents/admission test advisor) where possible ILPs (Individualized Learner Plans) are created for the student, with a meeting with parents and other Inclusion Team members where appropriate.

Step 3: If additional support is required, which our school cannot provide (such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc.), the Head of Inclusion will work with external agencies and parents to provide the necessary support.



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Assessment

This is an integral part of our learning cycle and involves all the evidence gathered constantly throughout the teaching and learning process. Assessments provide students with the chance to self-reflect and be actively engaged in their own learning. Assessments create an opportunity for teachers to gain information about individual learners to help remove barriers of learning.

As a school we focus on the UDL design cycle which is used to design flexible assessment and develop flexible and engaging methods and materials based upon the preferences, needs and goals of learning, to help identify and remove barriers for learning. The three UDL principles are engagement, representation, action and expression.





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Inclusive assessment arrangements can include but are not limited to, extra time for written assessments, the use of a word processor and a reader, the use of a calculator, mind maps, step-by-step instructions.

We ensure that assessments are:

- diverse and relevant to the learner
- meaningful and assess existing strengths, knowledge, and interest
- ongoing and assessable in terms of content, design, and outcome
- focused on learner progress
- allows for differentiated assessment
- flexible and provided multiple opportunities in varied media

Gifted and Talented

As a school we are aware that inclusion also involves gifted and talented students. Below is a suggested learning model for working with gifted students within our school community.

The Autonomous Learner Model, George Betts



Inclusion Team

We are fully aware that it is the responsibility of the senior leadership team and school board to consult with its educators and learning support professionals, parents, students, and stake holders to provide the necessary arrangements to remove barriers to learning for every member of our school community.

To support this further we have a specialized and designated team to ensure procedures happen smoothly.



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Inclusion Team

Titles	Responsibilities
Head of Inclusion	<p>delivers professional development to all staff twice a year</p> <p>supports teachers to create effective UDL lesson planning</p> <p>liaises closely with all members of team to ensure students are challenged and supported at all levels</p> <p>makes external connections for ILP's or diagnostic testing</p> <p>holds regular meetings with parents to update them on the progress their child is making</p>
Head of EAL	works closely with the Head of Inclusion and teachers to ensure effective strategies are developed and implemented to remove language barriers to learning
EAL support teachers	offer support and guidance to our students and liaise closely with the Head of EAL and homeroom teachers
Learning support teacher	<p>works with individual students who have ILP's to offer support in reaching their targets</p> <p>has meetings with homeroom teachers to check progress of targets and set new ones</p> <p>liaises closely with Head of Inclusion</p>
School nurse	provides first aid and initial emergency support for students when necessary
External agencies	<p>psychologists</p> <p>counsellors</p> <p>occupational therapy</p> <p>speech therapy</p>

Review Cycle

This document will be reviewed biannually.