



LAIS Special Educational Needs Policy (revised March 2024)

The concept of Special Educational Needs applies to any student who shows a need for extra support and at LAIS we recognize a wide spectrum of needs and abilities including students with learning disabilities as well as students with talents that go beyond the general curriculum.

Our Special Educational Needs Policy is based on the idea of inclusion, an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. (International Baccalaureate)

What are the barriers our students are faced with?

To the individual student, barriers to learning may be found in the way LAIS is organized with its systemic peculiarities of both academic as well as athletic challenges and the physical aspects of the school building.

Who is responsible for removing barriers to learning?

It is the responsibility of the LAIS leadership team, all teachers, parents and guardians, learning support professionals and students to put in place processes to remove barriers to learning for all students of the school community.

Who are our students?

As Lower Austrian International School is a selective high school for high performance athletes we generally do not have students with physical needs. Nevertheless, we are open to all students and recognize a wide range of needs and abilities. In addition, as a public institution, the school follows Austrian law and is therefore accessible for people (e.g. injured students, visitors ...) with impairments and it is equipped with the following features:

- an orientation system for blind people including an information board and signs in Braille writing
- two disabled parking spaces
- two elevators

Mag. Michael Hofbauer
Mag. Karl Hametner
Mag. Mario Lahner

- one bathroom for the disabled on every floor (equipped with emergency buttons)

The school has had one integrated class and a student with permanent physical impairments for five years. This student brought his own assistant to the school and graduated in June 2019.

Procedures to support students in their learning process

On demand, the school develops and implements inclusive arrangements that support all students in their learning process. This principle can only be obtained if all educators are aware of an individual student's learning or special educational needs. In order to do so, collaborative planning and reflection are considered essential and form the basis of a differentiation for students' learning needs and styles. As a result, teaching methods and forms of instruction as well as arrangements differ, so all our students' learning needs and styles can be met.

The planning process of inclusive access arrangements during a LAIS student's IB Diploma Programme course

- Once a student is enrolled in the LAIS, it is our responsibility to meet their learning needs, including access to learning and teaching with suitable inclusive arrangements.
- Inclusive access arrangements provided to a LAIS student must be planned at the start or early on during their Diploma Programme and be incorporated in classroom work and tests.
- The inclusive access arrangements provided for a LAIS student are individualized, and are not provided as a standard to all students with learning support requirements.
- Inclusive access arrangements need to provide the optimal support for a student with their current requirements.
- Inclusive access arrangements are based on the collaborative planning process of the LAIS teacher team and subject to teacher observations in the classroom.
- During the course of a student's two-year IB Diploma Programme, inclusive arrangements are evaluated on a frequent basis and undergo adaptations on demand.

Exams and inclusive access arrangements

The deadline for the submission of a request for inclusive access arrangements during IB exams must be submitted by the IB Coordinator six months prior to the May examination session, that is, by 15 November. In order to submit requests for inclusive access arrangements, evidence in the form of documentation needs to be provided to the IBO.



Examination arrangements (not) requiring authorisation

Based on the IB Access and Inclusion Policy, a catalogue of measures is provided based on which we can apply arrangements for students with learning or special educational needs, including measures that require authorization from the IB, and others, which are at the discretion of the IB coordination team.

The measures not requiring authorization include but are not restricted to: Separate examination rooms, extra lighting, the provision of care assistants, communicators using sign language. The measures requiring authorization from the IB include but are not restricted to: The provision of a scribe, access to additional time, an alternative accessible font, the use of speech recognition software or a word processor.

Approaches to teaching and learning

As an IB World School we adhere to the IBO's approaches to teaching and learning. Thus, teaching at LAIS is based on inquiry, focused on conceptual understanding and developed in local and global contexts. We are focused on effective communication as well as collaboration, and teaching is differentiated to meet the needs of all our learners. Hence, the concept of inclusion is one that must be taken into consideration during all phases of a student's learning process. Consequently, we provide a basis for all students to become internationally-minded people and strive to develop their thinking, communication, social, research and self-management skills.

Sources:

- Approaches to Teaching and Learning (Last access: 05/05/2021)
- Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes (Last update: 07/05/2020)
- The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development (2015)
- IB Access and inclusion policy (2018)