

The Lebanese School – Qatar Access and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

At the Lebanese School of Qatar, we are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that meets the unique needs of every student. Our commitment to equal opportunities for academic and personal success is reflected in our policy. This policy applies to all members of the LSQ community, including students, staff, and parents. It encompasses all aspects of school life, such as curriculum and instruction, assessments, accommodations, extracurricular activities, physical and social environments, communication, and collaboration.

Purpose

LSQ firmly believes in creating a welcoming environment that empowers young individuals to achieve their full academic, social, and physical potential. We are committed to fostering a culture of understanding, mutual respect, fairness, and support. Our goal is to build a community where all stakeholders, including students, faculty, administrators, staff, and parents, are encouraged to participate and actively share diverse perspectives.

At LSQ, we provide equal access and opportunities to learners who need additional support. While we don't cater specifically to students with learning disabilities, we offer many student support services, including counseling, a child protection policy, hybrid/online learning, differentiated instruction, peer coaching, and a Student Support Committee. We strive to accommodate students' varied learning needs by providing customized support based on specialist recommendations.

Our policy objectives are to establish a comprehensive framework that promotes access and inclusion, outlines the school's responsibilities to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, and implements procedures for identifying, assessing, and addressing students' needs. Furthermore, we strive to create a safe and supportive environment for students to learn, work, participate and be assessed, while fostering a culture of learning that upholds dignity, fairness, and respect, and is free of discrimination.

Roles and Responsibilities

All LSQ community members play a role in promoting access and inclusion, with specific responsibilities:

School Administration

- Develop and implement the Access and Inclusion Policy
- Provide leadership and support for inclusion initiatives
- Allocate necessary resources to support inclusive education, including counselling, teacher training, differentiated instruction, and accommodations as needed for students.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion practices

Teachers

- Create and maintain a safe learning space

- Identify and assess students with minor disabilities or difficulties.
- Provide appropriate accommodations and support services
- Collaborate with parents, specialists, and staff
- Use a variety of assessment methods that allow students to demonstrate their understanding in different ways.

Parents

- Partner with the school to support their child's needs
- Communicate with the school about their child's needs and progress
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Advocate for their child's rights and interests
- Participate in school-based events

Students

- Take responsibility for their learning and access needs
- Communicate challenges with teachers and parents
- Respect and support peers with different abilities

Access and Inclusion Planning and Procedures

LSQ prides itself on maintaining a discrimination-free admissions process. To ensure that each student receives the necessary support, LSQ works closely with parents and professionals to assess their needs. To meet the needs of students, LSQ engages in an ongoing process that involves collecting data on students' learning needs, identifying and addressing barriers to access and inclusion, allocating resources to support initiatives, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of planning.

The school invests in ongoing professional development for its faculty to implement effective inclusion strategies. They develop and implement Individualized Action Plans for students with diverse needs, and a Student Support Committee is in place to review and update support strategies as needed.

The Student Support Committee is dedicated to helping students overcome social, emotional, behavioral, and academic challenges. The team comprises the Head of Section, the school counselor, and the student's teachers. They collaborate throughout the year, convening regularly to address individual student needs.

Their role includes:

- recognizing that each student's situation is unique. Support strategies are differentiated based on the specific nature and severity of the concern. While some students may benefit from less frequent check-ins, others may require more intensive and ongoing support.
- working in close collaboration with the student's teachers, and parents to gain a holistic understanding of the challenges faced. This collaboration ensures coordinated interventions and a unified approach to support the student's success.

- monitoring student progress and adjusting support strategies as needed. This ensures that students receive the most effective and appropriate assistance throughout their academic journey.

Additionally, LSQ ensures physical infrastructure accessibility by making necessary accommodations for mobility and engagement.

Assessment Arrangements for DP Students with Access Requirements

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme prioritizes fair and equitable assessment for all students.

Students with documented learning needs or minor disabilities should submit a formal request for access arrangements through their school IB DP coordinator. Required documentation may include a recent psychoeducational or medical assessment.

The following arrangements are sample measures. They will be granted in accordance with the IB Access and Inclusion Policy. Certain measures require IB authorization.

- Extra time: Students may be granted additional time to complete examinations or in-class assessments.
- Assistive technology: Approved tools such as spell checkers or screen readers may be permitted.
- Modified presentation: Students can present their work in alternative formats, such as audio recordings or presentations instead of written essays.
- Scribe/reader: In some cases, a scribe or reader may be provided to assist students with specific needs.
- Alternative room for class tests: To provide a better learning environment, students can be seated in a separate room that allows them to focus more effectively.

All access arrangements are implemented to remove barriers and ensure fair assessment, not to provide an unfair advantage. The nature of the access arrangements will be documented and communicated to examiners, but it will not be disclosed in student reports.

Referral Process

It is essential to understand that exceptional learning needs can arise anytime. In such cases, the teacher will notify the relevant counselor and the HOS. Families may also refer their children. The HOS will then collaborate with the counselor to study each case separately, which may involve various methods, such as:

- Liaising with parents and teachers
- Reviewing previous education history
- Observing the classroom
- Collecting data on academic abilities

Parents may be requested to have their child assessed by outside specialists to identify their needs if required.

Once the necessary evidence has been collected, the HOS may call and chair a meeting attended by the student, parent(s), teacher(s), subject coordinators, IB DP coordinator, counselor, and Support Committee members. During the meeting, the team will review and draft a plan to better meet the student's needs. This plan will specify the student's learning objectives, the methodology, assessment arrangements, the staff/faculty responsible, and the time frame for evaluation and review, as guided by the Assessment Policy. Note that the plan will be subject to staffing, materials, and physical resources limitations. All the accommodation and support provided to the student will be documented in their file on the school portal. This will ensure that the student's needs are met and monitored with the best possible care and attention.

Policy Review

This policy was generated in December 2023 and will undergo regular reviews to ensure its continued effectiveness. Feedback from stakeholders, including students, parents, and faculty, informs ongoing improvements in inclusive practices.