



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

The policy is annually reviewed and revised – current version September 2020

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) Mission Statement

“The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.”

Pierce - The American College of Greece Mission Statement

“The mission of Pierce is to provide a holistic education to form intellectually independent, morally responsible, socially engaged global citizens. “Non ministrari sed ministrare” (“Not to be served but to serve”) defines our institutional character and our aspiration for our students.”



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Special Education Needs (SEN) Policy

Pierce is required to comply with the *Greek Law 3699/2008*, as amended by the *Greek Laws 4186/2013*, *4452/2017* and *4547/2018*, for testing students with special educational needs. Pierce also complies with the standards and practices of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) for the IB Diploma Program students as specified in the *Access and Inclusion Policy (IBO 2018)*, in the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures (IBO 2020)*, in the *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom (IBO 2019)* and in the *Universal Design for Learning (IBO 2016)*. There are no exclusions in the Pierce IBDP admissions policy for students with special needs.

Summary of the requirements of Greek educational law for students in the Pierce non-IB program

A. Oral examination **requirements** for students:

Upon official request, students are entitled to sit an oral examination when it has been determined that a written examination is not sufficient or accurate for them. The right for an oral examination is granted to students that have been evaluated with learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and/or serious difficulties in math, reading and spelling. In the event a student prefers to answer in writing, the answers are graded and added to the final grade. A medical report granting an oral examination must be issued by one of the *National Centers for Diagnosis and Support of Students with Learning Disabilities (Hellenic K.E.S.Y.)* or by one of the accredited pedagogical medical centers of the Hellenic Ministry of Education. The report must state the specific learning difficulty and the time allotted for the student's next examination.

Students on the autistic spectrum may also be examined orally or through a written exam. A written medical report by the *National Centers for the Diagnosis and Support of Learning Disabilities (Hellenic K.E.S.Y.)* or by the accredited pedagogical medical center of the Hellenic Ministry of Education is required. In the report there must be reference to the learning difficulty of the student, specify the oral or written method of examination, and the time allotted for the student's next examination. The official request for exam modification must be submitted to Pierce accompanied by the official report. All requests and medical reports must be submitted to the Pierce Deputy Director at any day of each academic year.

B. Oral examination **procedures** for students:

Pierce students who have been granted the oral examination for the final exams will be tested on the same topics as other students. This exam is conducted before a faculty committee established for this purpose by the Pierce Director. This faculty committee is presided by the Pierce Director or the Deputy Director and is composed of two faculty members. The faculty members are teachers of the subject being examined or in a similar subject. The two grades the student is awarded by the two examiners are then averaged in order to create a Grade Point Average (GPA) for the course. The exam is held in a different classroom and the duration of the examination may be extended upon the decision of the faculty committee. The written exams are collected with the written exams of the rest of the students and sent to the grade center for grading. During the school term, the teacher of the respective course will orally invigilate any daily quizzes or in-class exams as requested.

The IBDP and its requirements are recognized in Greece through a national statute; this recognition includes the terms and conditions of assessment in the IBDP.

C. IBO regulations for IBDP students:

Pierce provides support for learners with special educational needs in the IBDP as specified in the *Access and Inclusion Policy (IBO 2018)*, in the *Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures (IBO 2020)*, in the *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom (IBO 2019)* and in the *Universal Design for Learning (IBO 2016)* documents. The wide range of learning profiles of IBDP students is considered a source of enrichment for the program. In the student-centered classroom environment, faculty will provide individualized learning activities to help each student set high but realistic goals building self-esteem.

Faculty provide a variety of instructional and assessment methods in the classroom to accommodate for students' specific learning needs and styles. Faculty are provided with resources enabling them to differentiate their teaching to optimize the learning experience and well-being of the students. The school psychologist is consulted by faculty to develop differentiated teaching methods for the special needs students and is available to collaborate with teachers and students on developing further resources.

Students are identified as gifted and talented when their abilities, talents, and potential for academic accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced they require special provisions in the classroom to meet their educational needs. Inclusion is defined as an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Access arrangements do not change what the student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations, but instead provide the optimal support to address challenges and to enable the student to work around them. At a fundamental level, they address equal access and fairness to learning and teaching and, in addition, validity and meaningfulness to assessment. A candidate with access requirements is one who requires access arrangements in teaching, learning and assessment. The purpose of access arrangements is to remove or reduce barriers that students may face in teaching, learning and assessment. When the school recognizes that a student has access requirements, this policy is used in conjunction with teacher observations to plan the necessary access arrangements for the student. This IB policy is based on the principle of optimal support, which means that the access arrangements must be accurately planned to remove or reduce barriers; they must neither be more nor less than what the student requires. The access arrangements for a student must be used for learning and teaching; this means that they must be used during classroom instruction, classwork and related activities and tests. Access arrangements are also continuously monitored to ensure that they remain the optimal support for that student.

References:

Greek Law 3699/2008 (last access: 28/09/2020)

https://www.kodiko.gr/nomologia/document_navigation/142858/nomos-3699-2008

Greek Law 4186/2013 (last access: 28/09/2020)

https://www.kodiko.gr/nomologia/document_navigation/75831/nomos-4186-2013

Greek Law 4452/2017 (last access: 28/09/2020)

https://www.kodiko.gr/nomologia/document_navigation/253229/nomos-4452-2017

Greek Law 4547/2018 (last access: 28/09/2020)

https://www.kodiko.gr/nomologia/document_navigation/372828/nomos-4547-2018

Access and Inclusion Policy, *International Baccalaureate Organization*, (November 2018).

Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, *International Baccalaureate Organization*, (September 2020).

Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom, *International Baccalaureate Organization*, (December 2019).

Universal Design for Learning, *International Baccalaureate Organization*, (December 2016).

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