



Inclusion and special needs policy

LULEÅ GYMNASIESKOLA
IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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Inclusion and Special needs policy – Luleå Gymnasieskola

Luleå Gymnasieskola is committed to academic honesty and is aligned with the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO) objective to "encourage students to become active, compassionate life-long learners"¹. However, how each student learns is different. Teachings must be individual to suit every individual's needs. Luleå Gymnasieskola as well as all schools within Sweden, is obliged to follow the Swedish Act against Discrimination. This policy will lay the foundation for how to address inclusion and students with special needs.

Some students might have barriers which will put them at a disadvantage of their learning and assessment. The IB states that barriers can be both fleeting and long term. Long term barriers might be chronic, meaning that they are medical issues "that lasts for more than 12 weeks"². For chronic barriers, the school must consider access arrangement so that the student can have a fair educational journey.

Special education needs (SEN)

The Swedish Authority for Special Education (SPSM) states that "[e]ducation in Sweden follows the principle of 'a school for all'"³. Students must be given support if they have difficulties in completing their education successfully. Luleå Gymnasieskola is committed to develop and implement inclusion and continuously supporting students with special education needs.

Identifying barriers

There are several different types of barriers that might prevent learning, as shown in figure 1.

Barriers created because of the school organization could be lack of leadership

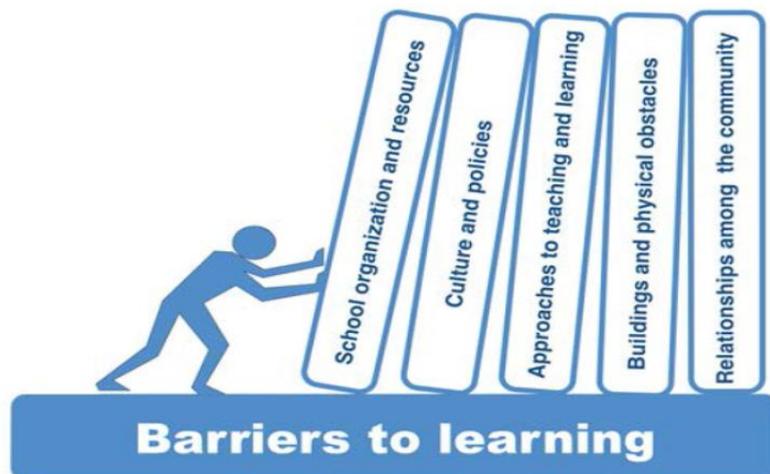


Figure 1. *Barriers to learning.*⁴

¹ International Baccalaureate Organization, Programme Standards and Practices, 2020.

² International Baccalaureate Organization, Access and inclusion policy, 2022

³ Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten, 2022

⁴ International Baccalaureate Organization, Learning diversity and inclusion in IB Programmes, 2020.

involvement, inflexible school development processes, rigid school routines, and poor lesson and school transitions.

A negative school culture and policies create barriers to learning because of aspects such as ignoring human rights and diversity, excluding some stakeholders from decision-making, limiting teachers' roles and responsibilities, and having policies that do not support inclusion.

When it comes to the school's and teachers' approaches to teaching and learning, barriers to learning can arise when a school does not respect and value human diversity and multiple perspectives, support professional development for inclusive strategies, sustain organizational knowledge and practice for access and participation, use the knowledge of all community members for inclusive practices or provide reasonable adjustments for learning and assessment in all IB programmes.

If there are obstacles regarding the facilities, barriers to learning occur when school facilities are inaccessible or when creativity and flexibility in physical spaces and classroom structures are discouraged.

Lastly, challenges that hinder the development of a positive and inclusive learning community are for example when daily interactions are not supportive or responsive to the needs and identities of all learners, the learner profile - which defines the qualities and values of an IB learner - is not used to foster agency and personal freedom, or when collaboration among different stakeholders is not encouraged or practiced.

By identifying these possible aspects that will have a negative effect on student learning and development, Luleå Gymnasieskola work actively to prevent barriers for learning. If a student for example has barriers regarding the facilities, we have a designated person within the school leadership team who is responsible for the physical environment and to whom we can address the issues. Moreover, to prevent barriers regarding school culture teachers are given ample time to collaborate in different collaborative spaces, such as within their subjects and within the IB team, so that they can express their view and creatively take on new challenges within their subjects.

To prevent barriers that might occur due to the school organization. Luleå Gymnasieskola has, in dialogue with teachers and other staff, implemented a new teaching platform, Unikum, which supports smooth transitions between schools and school stages. The platform is effective in gathering the information that needs to be known to all teachers working with a student who has a barrier to learning.

School responsibilities

The School Principal is responsible for ensuring that all students receive the education to which they are entitled. Despite there already being some actions in place to prevent barriers to learning, students still might face difficulties during their studies. In order to work out a student's individual learning needs, the school must identify what type of barriers the student has. Identification of barriers are:

- Observations in the classroom

- Information from past teachers
- Information from legal guardians
- Reports from professionals (doctors, psychologists)

Teachers use internal systems used to flag students with learning challenges. The teacher meets with the school principal and the student health team on a scheduled meeting (ET) to discuss the student's needs and to identify barriers. The teacher makes appointments using the schedule found on Teams. The needs can be:

- Support to plan and structure their study schedule and routines.
- Differentiated teaching methods.
- Support in how to start and structure texts.
- Help to understand texts.
- Digital technology with appropriate software, such as speech-to-text tools.
- Other extra equipment needed.
- Differentiated resources and learning tasks.
- Tutoring to practice basic skills.
- Having to extend the education by adding on an extra school year.
- Performing oral assessments in a calmer environment.
- Extending time or deadlines to complete assignments during the course (not final examinations).

The staff involved during ET-meetings are:

- Head of school
- Diploma programme (DP) coordinator
- School nurse
- Career guidance counselor
- School counselor
- Special education teacher

The ET-meetings are documented and followed up regularly. If a specific action is decided, the coordinator will document the action on the digital platform Unikum so that all involved teachers can take part of the action plan.

Students with special education needs will be taught in the classroom along with their peers. If a student continues to struggle with several areas of the curriculum, they are offered help by tutors and/or subject teachers at the school study center.

Arrangements made will not be more nor less of what the student actually requires. The arrangements must be put in place immediately after being identified and be in place throughout the course of learning, teaching and formative assessment. It is important to evaluate the student and monitor their progress as their needs might change throughout the course of their studies.

The following figure shows the appropriate decision pathway when identifying and monitoring a student's inclusive arrangements:

Figure 1

The decision pathway for inclusive access arrangements

Inclusive access arrangements: Decision pathway

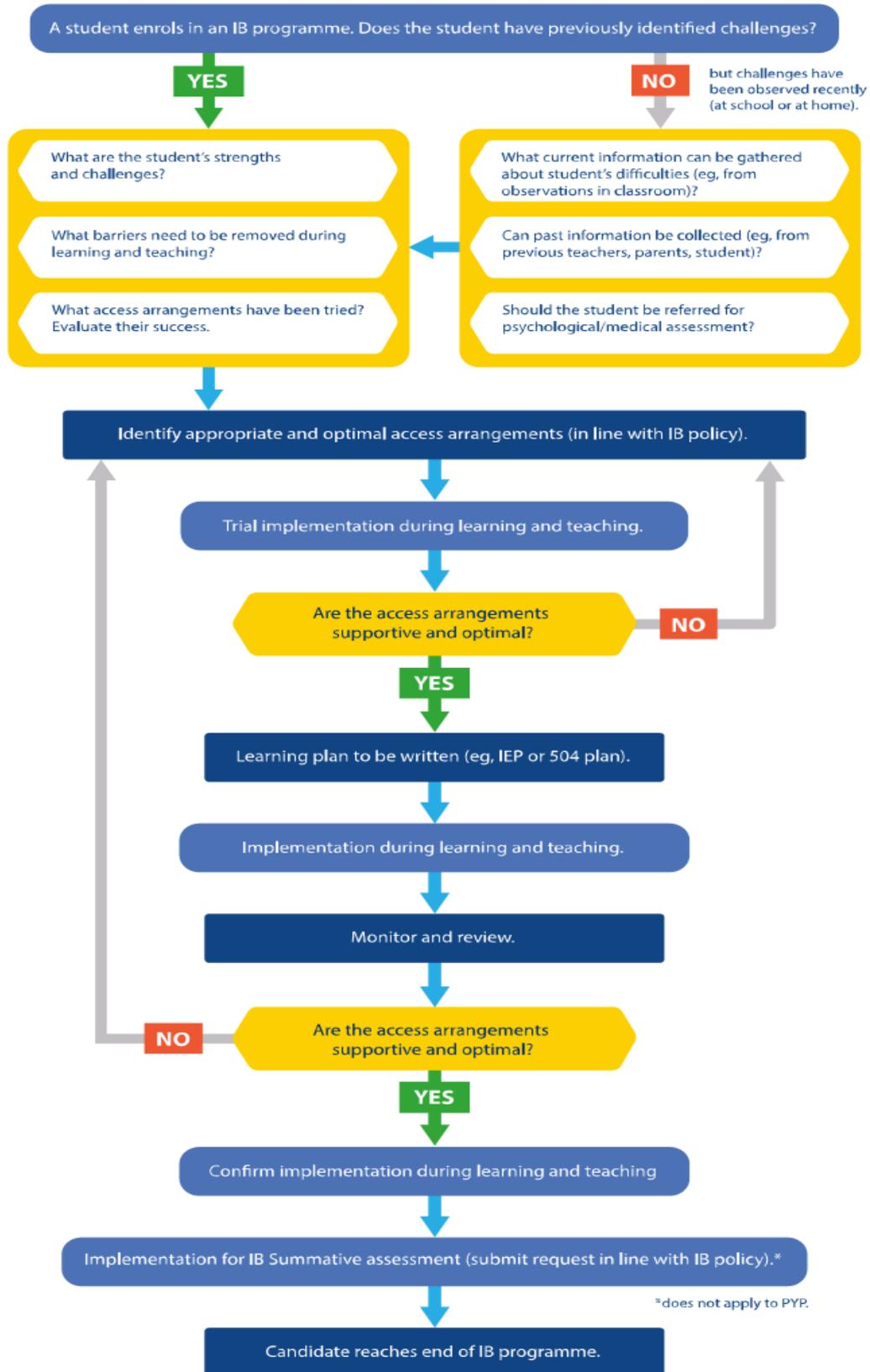


Figure 1. The decision pathway for inclusive access arrangements⁵

The DP Coordinator is the one responsible for submitting access arrangement for students. The DP Coordinator must submit an official report (from a medical professional or psychologist and/or language test evidence) as well as educational evidence from the school. Medical/psychological reports must not be older than 3 years and the language test no older than 1 year.

The school must reschedule IB exams if there are students with extra time allowances have exams taking more than 6 hours and 30 minutes in one day.

The school can challenge an IB decision on access arrangements. The DP coordinator must then submit a request for re-evaluation within a month of receiving the IB decision.

[Access arrangements for IB assessments](#)

All access arrangements made for a student for IB assessments must comply with IB's Access and inclusion policy⁶. Arrangements are made to reduce barriers, not to give an undue advantage.

All arrangements made for examinations must have been reported in advance by the coordinator and approved by the IB organization. The reporting includes two parts: official document (e.g., medical assessment) and an assessment from the school. The assessment from the school must contain observations from the classroom environment as well as a summary of what measures have been taken in teaching to support the student. The school can also send in a selection of the student's schoolwork or a detailed study plan.

For internal assessment the teacher must base their assessment on the assessment criteria and not based on their challenges or other factors. Exemptions in assessment are last resort and is only applicable for students with severe barriers. For example, a student who is deaf cannot be assessed on their listening skills in a Language B course. Exemptions are approved by the IB.

Arrangements approved by the IB can be additional time during exams, rest breaks, extensions of deadlines, modified paper-based examinations, vision aids and devices, hearing aids, reading software, or word processor, to mention a few.⁷

The student and legal guardian must give their approval before the school send in access arrangement documentations. If the student transfers to another IB school, any access arrangements made will be visible for the coordinator in the new school.

[Other resources within the school to promote inclusion](#)

Luleå Gymnasieskola is run by the municipality and has no tuition fees. Furthermore, students are provided, free of charge, with textbooks, computers, school lunches and, in

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ International Baccalaureate Organization. Access and inclusion policy. 2022:26-47

some cases, school transportation. The Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN) aids students with study allowance during their school years.

The school library provides extensive literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The library also introduces the digital resource Legimus for students with reading disorders who are in need of audio books.

The physical environment is adapted to fit the needs of all. Some students need further inclusive arrangements. Special arrangements can include arranging/equipping classroom for those with some impairments (sensory, cognitive, emotional, health, communicative) or other type of arrangements within the student's regular class.

Teachers have access to an in-house special educator, who provides consultancy on methods and practices concerning special needs.

The school has a psychologist. If needed, the student can have appointments with the psychologist. The psychologist will have sessions with students who needs more help than what the school counselor or the SEN-teacher can provide. The school psychologist can facilitate links between the student, the school environment and outside medical establishments and resources.

Mattecentrum is available for students who need extra help with mathematics. Mattecentrum is a non-profit in Sweden that promotes STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education for students. It provides free online and offline math support and aims to boost students' confidence, knowledge, and interest in math.⁸

Gifted and talented students

Students who exhibit significantly above average performance or potential in one or more domains, relative to their peers of the same age, background or context, are gifted. These individuals have advanced cognitive abilities that enable them to process information, solve problems and make judgments at a high level of complexity and sophistication. To fully realize their potential and talents, they require specialized educational services and support that are tailored to their specific needs and interests.⁹

To support gifted and talented students, Luleå Gymnasieskola applies the strategies required by Skolverket, the Swedish administrative authority of education. There are two main strategies to support gifted students: acceleration and enrichment. Acceleration means that the student starts with a teaching moment at an earlier age than usual. It can be about whole grades or individual subjects. Enrichment means that the student has the opportunity to work with more complex material, go deeper into details, do something that is outside

⁸ Mattecentrum, About Mattecentrum. <https://www.mattecentrum.se/om-oss/about-mattecentrum> Accessed 2023-06-28

⁹ Davidson Institute, What is Giftedness? 2021. <https://www.davidsongifted.org/gifted-blog/what-is-giftedness/> Accessed 2023-09-04.

the course or subject plan, or compress the course content.¹⁰ Students who, for example, are gifted in mathematics, can also make use of Mattecentrum, to hone their skills.

¹⁰ Skolverket. Särskilt begåvade elever behöver stimulans och samhörighet, 2021.
<https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/forskning-och-utvarderingar/artiklar-om-forskning/sarskilt-begavade-elever-behoover-stimulans-och-samhorighet> Accessed 2023-09-04.

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