

## The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme 5-year self-evaluation summary report

### Background information

The German European School Manila (GESM) is the chosen school for more than 300 students from very diverse social and linguistic backgrounds. They all share a very international-minded and multicultural education, which in many ways reflects and is necessitated by the particularly great mobility of the school's parents.

As such, the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) is the ideal platform from which to launch the tertiary education of our students.

Following a ground breaking agreement between the IB Organisation and the Standing Committee of Ministers of Cultural Affairs in Germany, the German European School Manila was given the honour of being chosen among twelve other schools worldwide to be one of the first German Schools Abroad ("Deutsche Auslandsschule") to introduce the International Baccalaureate Diploma as an alternative to the German Abitur.

On June 5, 2003 the European International School (EIS) received the authorisation as an IB World School. This was an EIS initiative wherein grade 11 and 12 students from both the French and the German School participated and completed the programme. In August 2007, LFM decided to follow the French Baccalaureate leaving the German School to solely offer and operate the IBDP.

Every five years, from the time of authorisation, each IB World School is required to complete a self-evaluation. The school evaluates if the IB Standards and Practices are being implemented and maintained at a level of deemed satisfactory by the IB. In April 2018, GESM completed its third 5-year review, prior reviews occurred in 2008 and 2013.

The Standards and Practices of the International Baccalaureate are published on the IB website <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/become-an-ib-school/programme-standards-and-practices-en.pdf>. These apply to both our Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) with some requirements varying in nature. The three guiding standards are as follows:

- Standard A: Philosophy
  - The school's educational beliefs and values reflect IB philosophy.
- Standard B: Organisation
  - Leadership and structure
    - The school's leadership and administrative structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme(s).
  - Resources and support
    - The school's resources and support structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme(s).
- Standard C: Curriculum
  - Collaborative planning
    - Collaborative planning and reflection supports the implementation of the IB programme(s).
  - Written curriculum

- The school's written curriculum reflects IB philosophy.
- Teaching and learning
  - Teaching and learning reflects IB philosophy.
- Assessment
  - Assessment at the school reflects IB assessment philosophy.

### Self-evaluation process

The process for the April 2018 self-evaluation began back in November 2016. The school received notification from the IB that GESM was selected for site visitation in April 2018. (The IB intends to visit approximately one-third of all schools completing the self-evaluation in each region.) All of our stakeholders were informed and the 5-year review team was assembled.

Over the next 17 months, the IBDP monthly collaborative meetings continued to implement and evaluate our progress of the previous action plan developed in 2013. The academic honesty, assessment and special needs policy were reviewed and revised to meet our ever-changing needs. Open forums were held with parents to discuss their view of our programme implementation. Meetings were held with the German as a foreign language teacher to discuss changes to the existing language policy as well as the discussing the progress of the Deutsches Sprachdiplom Stufe I and II (German language certificates) curriculum. The curriculum unit planners were revised to reflect the focus on Approaches to Teaching and Learning (ATLs), Theory of Knowledge (TOK) as well as Language and Learning (all teachers are language teachers). Each group of stakeholders was surveyed to determine the opinion of the programme's development and implementation under the period of review. The IB documentation on the Standards and Practices was the basis of the surveys created.

In February of 2018, all the documentation collected over the past 15 months was analysed. Based on the findings, the school was able to highlight areas of success as well as develop an action plan to address the areas the school deemed necessary to improve. During March our self-study and supporting documents were sent to the IB to be read by the site visitors in anticipation of the visit.

### Site visit of our school

In April 2018, GESM had two representatives from the IB visit the school over a period of three days. During the three days, the site visitors met with members of the school community; board of directors, headmaster, head of IBDP, Core coordinators, learning support counsellor, guidance counsellor, school librarian, subject teachers, and grade 11 and 12 students/parents. Each group had the opportunity to give additional feedback to that which was already expressed in the surveys.

After the IB visitors had the opportunity to discuss the findings of the self-evaluation, supporting documents and interviews conducted, an exit meeting was held with the Head of School and Head of IBDP. During this meeting, the visitors highlighted the areas of strength as well as initial recommendations for areas of improvement. The final report was completed and sent to our IB World School representative. This person is responsible for the oversight of the IB schools under their jurisdiction. Our representative is responsible for the 34 German IB (GIB) schools abroad.

## The results

In May 2018, GESM received the final report of the self-evaluation. Within the report are commendations as well as recommendations. The action plan created by the school was revised reflect all the recommendations stated.

### Standard A

GESM is has spent the second half of the school year evaluating "Who we are and where do we want to go?" This has been a task involving all stakeholders. As a part of this the vision, mission and guiding principles have been discussed and revised. As mentioned above, the school's educational philosophy should align with that of the IB. The work the school community has completed shows a strong connection between GESM and the IB's philosophy of education.

Through conversations with the CAS coordinator and advisor as well as samples of our student's CAS documentation illustrated an understanding of the "promotion of responsible action within and beyond the school community". The IB has given a commendation on the success of our CAS programme.

In addition to this, since our last review in 2013, GESM has improved open communication based on understanding and respect. The visiting team noted that this was visible on campus in the various activities held over the three days.

Several of our IBDP teachers are involved in the wider IB community as network chairs, subject examiners and network job-alike facilitators. The best form of professional development is for teachers to seek IB educator roles. The IB encourages more of our teaching staff to get involved in the global IB community.

### Standard B

A core group of our IBDP teaching staff have been with the school for several years. This has allowed the department to show strong, consistent growth under the period of review. The school received a commendation for the strength in pedagogical leadership for the development and implementation of the DP.

As the school has seen changes over the last 5 years, it is important for the policies to reflect this change. The addition of the international section has increased the number of students learning German as a foreign language. We have also increased the number of mother-tongue languages represented on campus. Therefore, it is necessary for the school to revise the language policy to continue to meet the needs of our changing student population.

EIS has seen a significant amount of growth on campus with the addition of classrooms. Our new science rooms have been designed and built to meet German standards. These rooms have been found to provide safe and effective learning environment for all our secondary students. In the future we look forward to more improvements made together on campus with our LFM partners.

Due to the limited physical space of our current school library, we are researching ways to provide additional resources to support independent research for the various subjects including

Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. This may include, but not limited to, access to digital resources through a paid online library.

Finally, we are restructuring the groups of courses we offer to ensure that students do not have large gaps within their school day and can finish the school day at a reasonable hour. This will allow our students to participate in extracurricular activities without a conflict of schedule. It is one-way GESM can support the IB learner profile attributes.

### Standard C

It was only a few years ago, we had one Theory of Knowledge teacher for both grade levels. We now have several teachers responsible for the course. This is a positive point for the programme. It is important now to ensure that we have a TOK coordinator who is responsible for supporting TOK integration and TOK teaching through a structured approach to coordination and develops formal structures for collaboration to enhance cohesion of the programme across all subjects building on the evident commitment of teachers working together.

During the structured monthly collaborative planning meetings, the teachers will be sharing best practices to continue the incorporation of differentiation to meet the needs of the students. One of the ways this can also be addressed is through common projects across different subject areas. This is already a practice seen in the Group 4 project carried out each year.

Our model for curriculum writing is a strength of the programme. The DP department implements a careful and methodical way including a quality assurance process to ensure all curriculum unit plans are completed in a reasonable time frame and located in a place directly accessible to all faculty. It is also available to the wider school community upon request.

With the ever-growing amount of resources on the internet, authenticity of work has become more labour intensive over the last few years. As a part of supporting the programme's academic honesty policy, the school is searching for plagiarism detection software to assist the teachers in checking all student work to ensure authenticity has been strictly adhered to.

As a Deutsche Auslandsschule great emphasis is placed on language development. The IB commended the school for offering a considerable choice of language courses given its size and demonstrates an openness to considering further expansion based on student needs.

Finally, GESM has systems for reporting student progress clearly and regularly using formal and informal forms of communication and follows up effectively in situations where there is cause for concern.

### Conclusion

As with the BLI inspection in September 2018, our teachers understand the expectations of the IB and effectively teach the syllabus. As with anything, nothing is perfect and there is always room for teachers to better their craft. The department is open and willing to do so.

The continuing development of GESM will include the on-going implementation of the IBDP. Our 5-year reviews show evidence that the school is taking the necessary means to support the DP. There are more commendations than in past reports. GESM looks forward to what the future must hold for our school community.