



# Diploma Programme Evaluation Report of 5-Year Self-Study

*American International School of Mozambique  
(2357)*

**IB Africa/Europe/Middle East**

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for completing and returning the five-year self-study questionnaire which is required of all IB Diploma schools. It allows us to assess the extent to which authorized schools are committed to the underlying philosophy, aims and objectives of the IBO. It is also designed to engage schools in a process of evaluation undertaken by the entire school community: administrators, teachers, students and parents. In this way, strategies for further improvement can be developed.

We hope that you and your colleagues found this a worthwhile exercise. The documents and commentaries you provided enabled us to access the required information, and this report is based on them, your website, and your recent exam results.

It is important to be open in the delivery of such a challenging curriculum and to be self-critical where necessary, while taking deserved satisfaction from where things are going well. The attached report briefly reviews each *IB Standard* and its *Practices*, drawing conclusions on each and overall.

## PART 1: A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS REGARDING THE STANDARDS

Section	Standard	School evaluation	IB evaluation
A: Philosophy	A1	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
	A2	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
B: Organization	B1	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
C: Curriculum	C1	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
	C2	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
	C3	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
	C4	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
D: The Student	D1	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>
	D2	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>	<i>Shows satisfactory development</i>

## **PART 2: DETAILED COMMENDATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL IN ITS SELF-STUDY**

### Section A: Philosophy

#### **Standard A1**

There is close alignment between the educational beliefs and values of the school and those of the programme.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

#### **Commendations:**

1. It is pleasing to see that the school works with a five-year strategic plan, which will allow the school to progress philosophically, to keep its practices relevant and meaningful and to reflect on its position at a particular period in time.
2. The mission statement is fully in line with that of the IB and is prominently displayed in the school.
3. The school website is up to date and includes a section on the DP.
4. The school is committed to continuous improvement.
5. Naturally it is a school's choice where the DP fits within the school as a pre-university programme, but it is pleasing to see that numbers appear to be increasing.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. It is interesting to note that there is a high degree of implementation given to the statement that the school promotes concurrency of learning for each student, but then notes the transition between the MYP and the DP as potentially challenging. It is pleasing to see that you have considered the challenges involved, but would suggest that you consider this in as broad a sense as possible including the role of ToK, across the different programmes operating in the school, and between a wide range of subject areas within the DP.

## Standard A2

The school promotes international-mindedness on the part of the adults and the students in the school community.

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The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

### Commendations:

1. The school certainly appears to be a supportive community, where the ideas of understanding and respect are fully promoted. The fact that the school is reflective and always seeking to improve should help promote international-mindedness and the ethos of the IB Mission Statement.
2. The school considers itself to be a safe, secure and stimulating environment, which is based on understanding and respect.
3. Mention is made of many school-wide events that promote international-mindedness and are an important part of this philosophy.
4. The school has a culturally diverse student and teacher population which should help to produce the conditions under which international-mindedness can flourish.
5. It is pleasing to see that international-mindedness has been a topic of discussion with the parent, teacher and student communities and has been promoted through the school newsletter. Furthermore the school has conducted a number of surveys to gain a fuller picture.

### Recommendations:

1. Although all of the above help to promote international-mindedness, none of them in their own right make a school internationally-minded. It is important to remember that international-mindedness is a philosophy and that for a school to demonstrate this, both students and teachers have to understand and believe in the premises behind it. We would recommend that the school consider how the concept works in day-to-day teaching situations.
2. If this is not already the case, we would suggest that you explore the possibility of making more contact with other IB world schools, both locally and further afield, as this will give your students a different perspective on schooling and circumstances elsewhere in the world. If this is not already the case, given that this is a relatively small school and that teachers sometimes operate on their own, you could consider making more formal teacher links with the schools that the students work with and this could include the sharing of resources and possibly teacher exchanges.

## Section B: Organization

### Standard B

The school demonstrates ongoing commitment to, and provides support for, the programme through appropriate administrative structures and systems, staffing and resources.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

#### Commendations:

1. The school has clearly thought about the position of DP coordinator. Currently the DP coordinator is also the secondary school principal, which enables her to help ensure the status of the programme within the school. However as the programme grows, we agree with the decision to appoint a DP coordinator with a 40% time allowance, which should allow him or her the time to further develop the pedagogy and develop the role of being a curriculum leader.
2. It is pleasing to see that as the cohort of DP students has grown, so have the number of subjects being offered by the school.

#### Recommendations:

1. It is clear that the school has shown a reasonable commitment to professional development, but no mention is made specifically of level 2 or level 3 training. We would suggest that, where appropriate, there is a priority given to this sort of training as this will increase understanding and will further strengthen the philosophy of the DP within the school.
2. We note that the number of hours allocated to both your higher level subjects and standard level subjects is 249 hours. In itself this is not a huge problem and it is likely that in many cases that the students benefit from the “additional contact time.” However, for most students this means they are gaining an extra 297 hours of instruction time above that recommended by IB. One of the most common issues raised by DP students is work overload and it is recommended that the school explore this and ensure that it is not happening.
3. One way in which teachers involved in the DP can gain further experience is by becoming involved in IB activities outside of school, such as examining and curriculum review. We note that one teacher is involved in this way, but would suggest that you might wish to encourage more of your staff.

## Section C: Curriculum

### Standard C1

A comprehensive, coherent, written curriculum, based on the requirements of the programme and developed by the school, is available to all sections of the school community.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

#### Commendations:

1. The school appears to have a clear entry policy set up for the DP, which provides appropriate information and allows students to make informed choices. There appears to be a thorough induction programme for the DP.
2. According to the self-study the curriculum provides opportunities for students to work both independently and collaboratively.
3. There is strong evidence to suggest that the school has developed a comprehensive, and coherent written curriculum, which is based on the requirements of the DP and which is reviewed regularly.

#### Recommendations:

1. There are indications that the role of ToK in the school should be considered further. There are two components to this: ToK as a timetabled subject and the incorporation of ToK ideas and thinking into all subject areas. In terms of ToK as a timetabled subject, there do not seem to be any particular concerns, but we would suggest that the incorporation of ToK ideas and thinking into all subject areas may deserve further consideration. Whatever strategy is put in place needs to be explored over a reasonably prolonged period of time and, if necessary, the school may need to be flexible to different approaches. This may also be an area where you would consider bringing someone from outside the school to provide some in-service training for staff.
2. The school does not appear to have a language policy. There is an indication from the self-study questionnaire that more could potentially be undertaken in terms of mother-tongue language development as there is a wide range of opinion expressed on this and also on the concept that all teachers are language teachers; there are also clearly concerns about students who are not fluent in the language of instruction. Clearly work has been undertaken on the role of languages within the school and it is pleasing to see that the school offers school supported self-taught A1 languages and that the number of languages on offer has increased since authorisation. However, we would strongly suggest that this is taken to the next stage, part of which would be to develop a language policy and that consideration is given the purpose of a language policy document and how it can be drafted in order to be seen as a relevant, working document. You may also want to contact other schools to see how they have developed this aspect of the DP.

## Standard C2

The school has implemented a system through which all teachers plan and reflect in collaborative teams.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

### Commendations:

1. The coordinator seems to be aware of her role and is able to advise teachers and students. The school has a calendar for the two-year cycle, which gives the major deadlines.
2. There appears to be good communication between members of staff, which is enhanced by the fact that the DP is small. This seems to be happening on both a formal and an informal level and there is evidence that members of staff in the school are used to reflecting on both practices and planning.

### Recommendations:

1. Overall we believe that there is enough evidence to suggest that the standard shows satisfactory development, but group three teachers suggest that it needs significant attention and a number of groups give some aspects of this standard a low degree of implementation. We would suggest that you discuss this further with the teachers concerned to see if there are issues that need to be addressed.
2. Although there is good communication at the school and it is clear that DP teachers meet on a regular basis and that there is a degree of collaboration, there are strong indications from the group responses that collaborative working practices might need further consideration. There are two aspects to collaborative planning; one is collaborative within subject areas and the other is collaborative across subject areas. Both need to have a priority, as it is essential that teachers have time to work together in a variety of groupings. We encourage you to look into this further. This should also be linked to recommendation two in standard A2 as collaboration within subjects are very difficult in departments staffed by one person.
3. From the documentation it is not clear to what extent all DP teachers are involved in the delivery of the three core elements of the DP. If this is not already the case, we would suggest that teachers are strongly encouraged to become actively involved in this, through working as a CAS supervisor, through working or helping as an Extended Essay supervisor, and through helping out with the delivery of the ToK programme.
4. Some teachers feel that they do not have much of an overview of student learning. Perhaps teachers could be given the opportunity to make mutual observations to allow them to gain a greater understanding of what happens in other subject areas.
5. There is quite a diversity of responses to the statement that planning at the school accommodates a range of learning needs and styles, as well as varying levels of competencies. We would recommend that you find out why there is a diversity of opinion in the school and would also suggest that this could be the basis for a wider discussion on the students' whole learning experience.

## Standard C3

Teaching and learning at the school empowers and encourages students to become lifelong learners, to be responsible towards themselves, their learning, other people and the environment, and to take appropriate action.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

### Commendations:

1. According to the self-study questionnaire, teachers use a range and balance of teaching strategies for the DP.
2. Students seem to be well cared for and supported at the school, which is enhanced by the fact that the DP is relatively small.

### Recommendations:

1. Overall we believe that there is enough evidence to suggest that the standard shows satisfactory development, but group three teachers suggest that it needs significant attention, group six teachers give the majority of the statements in the standard a low degree of implementation and a number of groups give some aspects of this standard a low degree of implementation. We would suggest that you discuss this further with the teachers concerned to consider in much more detail the issues that need to be addressed. The details of these issues are not explored in either the practices in need of strengthening or the proposals for improvement.
2. There are indications to suggest that you may wish to consider ways in which students can work with teachers to enhance the programme. This could involve asking students to feedback on lessons and allowing students to influence and take responsibility for the development of the programme in the school.
3. There is a wide range of opinions about the needs of students who have reached different stages in their development and those who have different learning styles. The reason for the variety of interpretations between subject groups is not fully clear and we would recommend that the school consider this further.
4. There is a wide range of responses to the statement about the fact that teaching and learning at the school is supported by a range of appropriate resources, including ICT. We would recommend that the leadership team at the school investigate this further and carry out a full audit to find out if firstly what is missing and is an absolute requirement and secondly what staff would like that is not essential, but would significantly improve the experience of teachers and students.
5. It is not clear from the self-study or from the accompanying documentation to what extent differentiation of teaching and learning takes place within the DP. We would recommend that the school consider this in more detail and if the school wanted to take this further, it could be the focus of some in-service training at the school.
6. If this does not already take place in the school we would also suggest that the importance of environmental awareness and what the IB is terming “our shared humanity” be promoted.

## Standard C4

There is an agreed approach to assessment, and to the recording and reporting of assessment data, which reflects the practices and requirements of the programme.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

### Commendations:

1. Assessment is clearly taking place, is integral to the programme and is linked to planning, teaching and learning.
2. It is pleasing to see that all groups agree that student learning is regularly assessed against the objectives and assessment criteria specific to each subject.
3. All groups agree that assessment process allows for meaningful reporting to parents about students' progress.

### Recommendations:

1. All groups give a relatively high degree of implementation to the statement that there is a written assessment policy in place that is available to all sections of the school community, but this was not sent as part of the accompanying documentation. If this is not already the case we would suggest that the school use this as a working document, which is reviewed meaningfully at different intervals. You may also want to think further about the role of an assessment policy. In many schools the assessment policy is used solely by teachers, but it can also be used to help both parents and students understand assessment and grades, for example.
2. There is clearly a range of different assessment tools being used including formative assessment, summative assessment, peer assessment and self-assessment. However different groups rate these differently and make a variety of different comments about them. We would recommend that you consider to what extent each of these is happening in different departments, whether it would be possible for departments to share experiences, and explore ways in which these can be made more consistent across the school.
3. There are clearly differing views on the degree to which the levels of students' current knowledge and experience are assessed before embarking on new learning. We would suggest that you explore this further and consider whether departments can learn from each other.
4. Assessment should provide information about the individual needs of students and should then inform teaching and learning strategies. There are quite varied responses to statements 11 and 12 in this standard that indicate that not all groupings believe this to be the case. There are also concerns noted in standard C2 about using assessment data to inform planning. We would recommend that you consider this further and ensure that this is addressed in the written assessment policy.

## Section D: The Student

### Standard D1

Students learn to choose to act, and to reflect on their actions, so that they contribute to their own well-being and that of the community and the environment.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

#### Commendations:

1. Students appear to have the opportunity to choose their own CAS programme and hence have responsibility for their own development.
2. The value of experiential learning seems to be well regarded by the school.
3. It is pleasing to see that there is a school-wide service learning program, which appears to have resulted in a cohesive and coherent program of service learning projects and reflection throughout the school.

#### Recommendations:

1. We would suggest that many of the qualities that students need to demonstrate within the CAS programme are also relevant to their academic work and that they are responsible for their own learning. We would encourage you to continue to work with your students in order that they see the links between CAS and their academic programme.
2. If this is not already the case, we would suggest that you consider further the reflective nature of CAS and consider how students can be helped with this. Many schools are now using electronic formats for reflection and this could be an idea to pursue further
3. The school is clearly aware of the *Learner Profile*, and the implementation of the MYP should strengthen this further. However, if this has not already been done, we would suggest that the school consider how it is used and promoted, both as an underpinning philosophy of the DP and in a practical sense with students. Furthermore, it may be beneficial to ask staff to reflect on how a particular lesson allows students to develop and demonstrate the qualities noted in the *Learner Profile*.
4. We understand that producing a CAS programme can be challenging and the indications are that you have developed a strong basis. As you rightly point out, however, this does not necessarily mean that students take full advantage of these opportunities. The fact that CAS style activities are available throughout the school will strengthen this, but if this is not already the case we would suggest that you share CAS experiences with other schools in similar environments and explore different ideas. There are a number of very successful CAS programmes in schools on the African continent.

## Standard D2

In the final year of the programme, all students complete a programme-specific project that allows them to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning, in the case of PYP and MYP, and demonstrate the extension and development of their learning in the Diploma Programme.

The IB agrees with the school that this standard shows satisfactory development.

### Commendations:

1. The school appears to realise and value the importance of the Extended Essay.
2. It is good to see that teachers are willing to supervise Extended Essays and that they are fully briefed about the nature of and their role in the exercise.
3. The school has clearly thought about what students need as support and have provided a series of deadlines to keep students on track.
4. It is pleasing to see that the school runs an evening event to celebrate the successful completion of the Extended Essay.

### Recommendations:

1. There is strong agreement that the school has a consistent approach to academic honesty. However, there did not appear to be an academic honesty policy within the accompanying documentation. If this is not already the case, we would suggest that the school consider what the central focus of an academic honesty policy should be and then create a document. The school might also want to consider explaining a reference style within this and also subscribing to a service such as turn-it-in.com.
2. The Extended Essay is considered very highly by universities and colleges as excellent preparation for what will be required of students at this level of education. If this is not already the case, we suggest that this point be made clear to students.
3. Many schools produce an Extended Essay guide, which helps both students and teachers understand the process. If the school has not already developed such a document, it may wish to consider doing so in the future.
4. Little mention is made of the use of electronic resources with the Extended Essay or with other work students undertake on the DP. We would suggest that you contact a range of schools to see how they approach this issue and, if this is not already the case, ensure that the librarian plays a key role in this.

## PART 3: CONCLUSION

It is clear that the school has invested some time in this evaluation and in analysing how the DP is working within the school and we agree with the school on its assessment of all standards. It is clear from the completion of section C that many teachers were involved in this self-study, which certainly allowed for a diversity of response. This is to be expected and is actually an excellent starting point for discussion and reflection. The questionnaire itself was completed fully by the DP coordinator and there was clear evidence of reflection on the Standards and Practices. The school had supplied most of the necessary supporting documentation for us to gain a clear overview of the school.

The school seemed to have a good understanding of the Standards and Practices and everybody involved in the process of completing the self-study seemed to understand what is required. The evaluation of the Standards and Practices by the school seemed to have been undertaken fairly.

We would agree with your overall conclusions of strengths and of factors in need of strengthening, but suggest that you consider carefully places where there is a diversity of responses from staff and see if this can be the starting point for further discussion. The most major ones have been noted under the recommendations for each section. We would suggest that a priority is given to the following in order to strengthen your programme further.

- The transition from MYP to DP and the concept of concurrency of learning;
- The number of hours allocated to SL subjects and whether there is any cause for concern about student overload;
- The role that languages play in the school and the development of a language policy;
- The role and inclusion of ToK ideas and thinking in all subject areas;
- The role of collaborative planning in the school;
- The role of different assessment tools and the effectiveness of the current assessment policy;
- The involvement of all teachers in delivering the core;

There are many positive things about the school, and there is a strong suggestion that your programme is running smoothly and that you are happy with the current situation in your school. You have provided an honest evaluation of the position of the school and you recognise that although the programme has developed successfully over the past five, this is a work in progress, and the production of a five-year strategic plan should help this development continue over the next five years. The school has clearly thought about its mission statement and the role of international-mindedness suggesting that the philosophical basis for running the DP in the school is in place. It is also pleasing to see that the school has a DP coordinator who understands the programme and that the school appears to be a caring institution with a good appreciation of the DP.

Overall it is clear that the American International School of Mozambique is offering a successful programme, which is developing and that effective learning is taking place. You have clearly spent time on this study and we hope that you have found the process useful and that it has motivated your staff further in their already successful delivery of the programme. There is strong evidence to suggest that members of staff at the school are thoughtful and reflective and that this five-year review has been carried out thoroughly. There are no matters to be addressed from this report and hence there is no need for a response to the Regional Office about this report. We would now encourage you to continue this process and work on the issues highlighted. It has been a pleasure to review this evaluation and we look forward to reviewing your progress in the coming years.

Please pass on our thanks to all those who were involved in the process of this self-study. We wish you success in attaining your goals and in the continuation of the programme in your school.

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