International School of London

Admissions Policy

Date reviewed:
April 2025

To be reviewed:
April 2026

Mission statement

Since 1972, we have established a welcoming and inclusive community. Our diverse cultures and languages drive all our learning experiences.

We nurture creativity and curiosity to stimulate deep thinking. We foster insight, compassion and resilience to enable us to play a meaningful part in a changing world.

Vision statement

We celebrate our stories, our worth and our purpose to make a difference in a shared world

At the International School of London, we believe in:

Empowering students to maximise their learning opportunities and to fulfil their potential.

Actively integrating cultural diversity in the curriculum.

Creating inclusive, vibrant and innovative learning communities.

Offering a diverse and extensive international programme that supports personal, social and professional growth.

Policy Context

The International School of London operates within the UK and under the guidance and parameters of the Independent School Standards and Education Regulations. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School we are authorised to offer educational programmes in accordance with the published IB standards and practices and accompanying programme requirements. In addition, the school has sought accreditation with the Council of International Schools (CIS) and must comply with the CIS standards for the accreditation document. The school policies and practices are designed to comply with the guidance from these different agencies.

Students enrolled at ISL will have equal opportunities to access the academic curriculum that meets their needs, to take part in co-curricular activities and to take part in the full life of the school. The school will endeavour to meet the needs of each individual so that they benefit fully from the education they receive and achieve their full potential. The school aims for a policy of inclusion as we seek to provide an education for any child while acknowledging that, in certain cases, for example, for students with significant academic or physical needs, we may not be able to provide the support a student requires with the resources available.

Education at ISL is holistic, aiming to support the growth of the child in all aspects, including personal and social development. All employees of ISL play a role and share a responsibility in this regard. We recognise the importance of establishing a constructive, working partnership between the school and parents, and the building of student self-esteem to help them realise their own potential.

The student and staff population at ISL is culturally and linguistically diverse and great importance is placed on promoting international mindedness and multicultural understanding within the curriculum and various activities and school events.

At ISL there is an expectation that all staff involved in Admissions will be vigilant for any potential safeguarding concerns at every stage of the process in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Admissions

Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community and is based on the core values expressed in the school's mission statement. The School accepts children without discrimination of gender, religion, race, sexuality or nationality. Upon receipt of the required and fully completed documentation, admission to the School will be determined by the relevant Principal and Head of Admissions, with the advice of the specialist teaching staff, based on information obtained with respect to:

- The potential of the applicant to benefit from the education that ISL can provide.
- The capacity of the school to meet the educational needs of the applicant.
- The eligibility of the student to reside and study in the UK.

Applications for admission will be considered in order of date of application. Students are assigned to classes primarily on the basis of age (see below). However, factors such as previous records, measured aptitude and achievement, physical and emotional development and other relevant details are also considered. The final decision rests with the relevant Principal. If, in the judgment of the school, an applicant meets the criteria described above, and space is available, acceptance will be unconditional. However, under some circumstances, a conditional acceptance may be offered. The conditions of acceptance will be clearly stated. The school reserves the right to deny admission or re–enrolment to any applicant if, in its opinion, there were reasons to believe that admission or re– enrolment would not be in the best interest of the applicant or the school or if relevant information was withheld at the point of application. The school also reserves the right to postpone admission if the maximum class capacity has been reached in a particular year level. In this case, the applicant is placed on a waiting list. The qualified applicants are then accepted in order of date of application.

Documentation Required for Admission

The following documentation needs to be supplied for an application to be considered complete:

- Completed application form with one passport-size photo.
- School records for the previous two years and all available records for the current year, as available.
- The results of any and all standardised testing, including educational evaluations or psychological and any other medical reports.
- Completed Teacher Reference Form.
- Completed Student Questionnaire (applicants for Grade 4 and above).
- Copies of the applicant's passport and UK visa if applicable.
- Confirmation of payment of the school application fee

Grade Placement

Students are placed according to their age at September 1st of their year of entry to ISL. Where it is considered to be of benefit to the student, they may be placed in a lower grade than requested. Only under exceptional circumstances will a student be placed in a higher grade than their age group. If a student is placed in a grade higher than their age group, the parents are clearly informed that this initial placement is tentative, and that the school may advise a change of grade after the student has been thoroughly observed.

Learning Support

ISL has a specialist Learning Support Team that supports students with a range of academic, emotional and language needs. Parents of applicants with a specific need must submit complete reports with the application, these may include Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), Educational Psychologist reports or speech and language reports. The school will only admit students whose specific academic, physical or other learning needs can be provided for by the existing resources and personnel at the school.

Students needing Learning Support may be admitted if it is believed that the school can offer appropriate support and that the children can be placed in the regular classroom. When reviewing the application of a student with specific needs, the Admissions Team will consult with the Learning Support specialists. Students may be admitted pending agreement to engagement in a programme of additional support, e.g. Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), counselling, other kinds of learning support, as appropriate, which may in cur additional fees.

In the case where a specific need has not previously been identified, the school reserves the right to review the situation in order to assess the appropriateness of the student's presence in the school based on our capacity to address their needs.

Differentiated Learning

Students joining ISL come from a variety of backgrounds with varying levels of English, prior educational experience and abilities. Differentiation is an expectation from teachers and this is evident in the teachers' planning. All students are expected to progress at a reasonable pace and achieve their full potentials.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Learners

Fluency in English is not a criterion for admission at ISL and therefore is not considered to be a 'special educational need'. Depending on the section of the school and the language level of the student a range and/or combination of in-class and withdrawal support is provided to students by EAL teachers and teaching assistants for English language development.

For students who are non-native English speaking;
A - English Language Entry Requirements
Grades EC to 9: There is no minimum level entry requirement
Grade 10-12: Minimum requirement of B1 level with additional English support (please see below*) or B2 without additional English support
B - Admissions Screening:
Grades 10-12: Prior to admission, for non-native English speakers with no or limited (less than 2 years) MYP or equivalent data. This includes a paid for English level test (in person or via Microsoft Teams). The same fee applies to Grade 9 students, who will be tested after admission.
C - Intensive English requirement
*Grade 9 or 10 students arriving below B1 will require additional intensive English support, to succeed in their studies. This will incur an additional fee payable until the student acquired English level B2.
D - Progression & Enrolment Considerations
Parents will have a realistic progression discussion when completing admission;
DP enrolment is not guaranteed unless the student reaches B2 English proficiency or commits to Intensive English support.
Progress varies per student; those entering Grade 10 at B1 are not guaranteed B2 by Grade 11.
Students not reaching B2 may be advised to take the IB Certificate instead of the full Diploma or other alternative arrangement.

Entry into the Early Childhood Grades

It is expected that students joining Early Childhood 1 and 2 (3 & 4 years old) are fully toilet trained and able to feed and dress themselves with a reasonable level of independence.

Entry into the Diploma Programme

There is a selection process for students entering the IB Diploma. The process is based on the suitability of the programme as the best course of study for the student. The College publishes a protocol of admission that can be found in the appendix below.

Re-enrolment of Students

Student re-enrolment should be completed for each academic year the student intends to study at the school. The school will seek confirmation and communicate deadlines by which intentions should be received. If re-enrolment information is not received within these deadlines student places cannot be guaranteed Additionally, if there are financial, academic or behavioural issues with a student, parents may not be invited to re-enroll until the situation has been resolved and could result in possible refusal of re-enrolment.

Appendix 1. DP admission

This annexe describes the additional requirements and procedures for admission to the IB Diploma College for students aged 16-18 years. As such, the assumption in the application of this annexe is that students have already met the conditions described in the whole school policy on Admissions and Inclusion and that the standards for admission and inclusion described in the whole school policy apply to the Diploma College.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is intended as a pre-university qualification, regulated in the UK by OFQUAL at level 3. The IB Diploma College offers the full IB Diploma to the majority of students.

Students also qualify for the ISL High School Diploma and Advanced High School Diploma through credit awarded for IB Diploma subjects – refer to ISL IB Diploma College policy on Awards and Qualifications for details.

The school offers an annual rolling programme of orientation and information events for students and parents. The admissions categories described here will be applied to all candidates to join the IB Diploma programme (grades 11 – 12), whether previously on roll or otherwise.

1. ADMISSION OF ISL MYP CANDIDATES

Candidates to IB Diploma with an MYP record will be considered under the following categories:

A: “Admitted”

These students are admitted to the IB Diploma programme as IB Diploma students, subject to ongoing review of their performance in line with the IB Diploma policy on Awards and Qualifications.

- G10 semester assessments are taken into account when discussing IB Diploma Programme subject choices with the students in the one-to-one interviews throughout the G10 to DP transition programme. These grades may be attained as semester summative grades or from internal examinations.

- attain a grade of at least 5 by the end of grade 10 / MYP in at least three MYP subject groups in which they intend to continue study at Higher Level in the IB Diploma.

- have demonstrated the necessary competency in English to access the IB Diploma.

- have satisfied attendance and punctuality requirements of the ISL MYP certificate, whether or not eligible for that certificate

- have a satisfactory service-learning record for grade 10, demonstrating an active engagement with the principles of the mission and vision of the International Baccalaureate Organisation and of the School.

B: “Admitted under advice”

These students are admitted to the IB Diploma programme with an expression of concern, and may be placed on an agreed contract of conditional academic probation with specified duration. Alternatively, these students may be offered an ISL High School Diploma

programme consisting of a reduced number or level of IB Diploma subjects, by agreement with the student and their family.

- Be predicted to attain low grades in the MYP G10 assessments.

- have not demonstrated the necessary competency in English to access the IB Diploma. In this case, a supplementary programme of English for Academic Purposes will be offered during grade 11 and attendance of this course will be a condition of admission.

    - have satisfied attendance and punctuality requirements of the ISL MYP certificate, whether or not eligible for that certificate
    - have a satisfactory service learning record for grade 10, demonstrating awareness of and engagement with the principles of the mission and vision of the International Baccalaureate Organisation and of the School.

X: “Not admitted”

These students do not meet the above requirements, are advised that the IB programme is not best suited to their abilities, and so are not offered a place on the College programmes. The school will make every effort to support and advise on identifying and securing an alternative educational pathway elsewhere.

2. ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES FROM SCHOOLS WITHOUT IB PROGRAMMES

Where a candidate’s academic record does not allow for a comparative judgement to be made, admission decisions will be made on the basis of

i. Academic reports from previous schools, as required in the school Policy on Admission and Inclusion. An evaluation will be made between the reported academic attainment in the prior school and the requirements for MYP students as given in section 1 above.

ii. Interview with the Head of Admissions and the IB Diploma coordinator, or their delegates, to ascertain the candidate’s awareness and understanding of the principles of the IBO mission and vision and those of the School.

3. ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students may occasionally transfer into the IB Diploma from another school after the beginning of the grade 11 academic year.

3.1 Transfer students from non-IB Programmes.

It is very rarely the case that a student can successfully transfer into the IB Diploma from another system after the IB Diploma has begun and succeed.

In exceptional cases such transfers will be limited to the first half-term of grade 11 only, where the student presents with exceptionally strong academic records, and demonstrates a high level of engagement and understanding regarding IB education at interview with the Head of Admissions and the IB Diploma coordinator or their delegates.

3.2 Transfer students from IB Diploma Programmes at other schools

The School will generally endeavour to provide a pathway for students applying to join the college from other IB Diploma schools. This will require that the transfer student’s subjects

can be matched. Details of subject coverage will be sought from the sending school. In some cases, the School will look to provide for this transition using a blended offering of ISL classroom and online learning with the IB approved online provider. In these cases, the same prerequisites will be applied during the admission process as are applied to candidates new to the programme (see 1 above), except that the grades concerned will also include any grades awarded by the sending school in the IB Diploma programme.

Appendix 2. Definition of terms

Disability

The UK Equality Act (2010) defines a disabled person as someone who has "*a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.*"

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
(ADHD).

Inclusion

The International Baccalaureate sets the following definition for inclusion and inclusive practice within IB world schools.

"*Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.*

Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire.

Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community."

(International Baccalaureate, Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, January 2016)

Special Education Needs

The UK Special Educational Needs Code of Practice identifies that children of school age are deemed to have special educational needs if they

"*have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally*
provided for children of the same age in schools"

Special educational needs: code of practice, DfES, 2001;
www.sen.ttrb.ac.uk/viewarticle2.aspx?contentId=12386.

At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.