Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Outbreak FAQs

Last update: 12 February 2020

What actions has the IB taken to protect its community during the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak?

At the IB, our top priority is the safety of our IB community. We are continuously monitoring the rapidly evolving situation and will provide IB stakeholders with updates as we have them. Following the recommendations by the various governing bodies including local Ministries of Health, the IB has decided to postpone planned events and activities in China, Macau and Hong Kong SAR China until the end of May. These will be rescheduled at a future date. Furthermore, the decision has been made to cancel the IB Global Conference Bangkok.

For our IBEN members located in China, Macau and Hong Kong, or who have travelled there since 31 December, the IB has decided not to allocate visits or workshops until further notice.

IB Global Conference Bangkok

What is the status of the IB Global Conference Bangkok?

Due to the continuing spread of the Coronavirus and taking into consideration the travel restrictions in place the IB has made the decision to cancel the Bangkok Conference 17-19 March 2020. At the IB, our top priority is the safety of our IB community and vendors. The IB will reimburse participants registered to attend.

Can I attend another IB global conference?

There are conferences later in the year in Toronto and the Hague. You can find out more about our other conferences here.

How will I be refunded for my registration?

Refunds are being processed automatically and will be completed in 30 days. If you have not received your refund 30 days after receiving your cancellation email, please contact myaccount@ibo.org

I was going to pay for my conference place through invoice- what should I do?

If you were due to pay via Invoice, we will cancel the invoice and you will not be charged.

Assessment
My school is under a forced closure due to Coronavirus – how will the IB support us meeting coursework deadlines?

The deadline for IBIS eCoursework early component upload is 15 March, however under the circumstances the IB will implement an extension to this deadline for schools in Mainland China, Hong Kong Sar China, Macau and Mongolia. This extension will give an additional four weeks to complete the IBIS eCoursework upload before the new deadline of 12 April.

As the situation is difficult to predict at this stage, we ask that schools impacted by the Coronavirus get in contact with the IB’s Adverse Circumstances team at adverse@ibo.org should they require additional support due to ongoing challenges.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will make decisions as needed for further deadlines.

Is the IB extending deadlines for eCoursework?

We have offered a deadline extension for the first eCoursework deadline (15 March) to the schools impacted in Hong Kong SAR China, Mainland China, Macau and Mongolia and will continue to review deadlines as the situation unfolds. This extension will give schools an additional four weeks to complete eCoursework upload. As the situation is difficult to predict we are continuing to monitor closely, and schools can contact the IB for further assistance via support@ibo.org

Is the IB extending the April deadline for eCoursework?

The IB will continue to monitor the situation over the coming weeks and review deadlines as the situation evolves. We will share updates with the community as we have them.

Will the IB be extending the MYP ePortfolio deadline?

The IB will continue to monitor the situation over the coming weeks and review deadlines as the situation evolves. We will share updates with the community as we have them.

How can teachers authenticate work that is being completed remotely?

Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of an IB education which should be embedded throughout the learner journey and school ethos. Teachers should follow normal procedures to authenticate work to the best of their knowledge and reiterate the importance of academic integrity with their students. The IB expects teachers to use best endeavor but recognizes the difficulties faced as the result of remote working. The IB will undertake additional checks for plagiarism and collusion.

How can we use video chat / voice calls for language orals / TOK presentations / the extended essay viva voce when a candidate’s school is closed, and the candidate is located in another country?

a. The candidate can take the oral / conduct the TOK presentation / complete the extended essay viva voce at another local IB World School, with the host school providing a teacher to conduct the assessment and the recording being sent to the candidate’s registered school for marking.

b. The candidate can take the oral / conduct the TOK presentation / complete the extended essay viva voce at another local IB World School over video chat / voice call with their usual teacher conducting the assessment but with a teacher from the host school present as an invigilator for the candidate. In this way a candidate can do their assessment remotely with their usual teacher but without compromising examination integrity.
In neither scenario do we require any paperwork such as an alternative venue form to be completed or additional notes to be added in teacher comments. This arrangement does not need approval from the IB and can be managed by the school with no need to notify us.

Sourcing a host school to support this arrangement is the responsibility of the candidate’s registered school. We recommend using the Find an IB World School search on the public website to support your research.

Is the IB going to change the May 2020 examination schedule?
The IB will not be changing its May 2020 exam schedule. The IB examination schedule is a global schedule and therefore it would be unreasonable to change it for students who are not affected. Schools can opt to defer to a future session, transfer to an alternative school or organize an alternative venue where appropriate.

What options are available for exams if our school is closed?
There are a number of processes that exist to support schools who need to change their examination venue. Schools can contact their IB World School Manager for advice and follow local advice and travel restrictions. For further details, please see section B2.10 of Assessment Procedures.

Transfer
The term “transfer candidate” refers to a candidate who moves from one IB World School to another IB World School during their Diploma Programme in order to continue their studies and to take IB examinations. Schools may accept or refuse transfer candidates at their own discretion: the IB places no obligation on schools to accept such candidates. Coordinators are advised to carefully consider the implications of accepting transfer candidates before they make a decision. For further information schools should contact support@ibo.org

Offsite examination
If your school plans to administer the IB exams in a location other than your school building. Submit the completed form as an email attachment to schooldelivery@ibo.org. This form should not be used to request an alternative venue since these are handled differently by the IB.

Alternative Venue
An alternative venue involves a candidate taking an IB examination at the time indicated on the schedule, but in a different location. The only recognized examination centres for IB examinations are IB World Schools authorized to offer the DP. The examination(s) must be conducted in full compliance with the procedures and regulations for the conduct of IB examinations at the time and on the date scheduled by the IB. To submit a request for an alternative venue, use the form in IBIS.

Can candidates transfer to other schools?
Schools can follow the normal transfer process for candidates which is detailed in assessment procedures. Schools can contact Assessment registrations (AssessmentRegistrations@ibo.org) for further information.

Are the assessment criteria going to be changed, e.g.: ‘will be any flexibility in terms of the minimum number of pieces required for the exhibition of the Visual Arts students’?
The IB will not be changing the criteria it assesses or the work that is required to be submitted for assessment. Where an activity is not assessed, for example the DP visual arts or MYP personal project exhibitions, schools have discretion to pursue alternative ways of providing this experience. The IB has offered a deadline extension for the first eCoursework deadline (15 March) to the schools impacted in Hong Kong SAR China, Mainland China, Macau and Mongolia and will continue to review deadlines as the situation unfolds.
Visual Arts exhibitions
Should planned Visual Arts exhibitions be cancelled schools may wish to explore alternative options such as holding the exhibition at an alternative venue and/or for individual students to make their own arrangements. Schools should bear in mind that the space where an exhibition is presented does not influence the marking and must not constitute any bias.
A candidate who is unable to set up a formal exhibition due to quarantine issues can instead photograph the artworks they have selected for their exhibition all together as a collection. The collection must include only those pieces that the candidate will submit and upload as individual pieces for assessment. The two images of the collection can be uploaded as exhibition photographs, alongside the individual images of the required number of artworks. The actual set up of the exhibition is not assessed and in their curatorial rationale the candidate can refer to how they would have done this. In their supporting comments, the teacher should explain that the IB has been consulted and approved the upload of the exhibition in its current format.
As usual, teachers must assess the candidate’s exhibition awarding marks against each of the IA assessment criteria referring to the digital, on-screen version of the candidate’s submission.

Will blanket special consideration be approved for schools having to close?
Schools are responsible for their business continuity arrangements as best they can under these circumstances, such as making alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures, and any student who has not received sufficient teaching has the option to defer to a subsequent assessment session. The IB will not be authorizing special considerations for school closures. We have offered a deadline extension for the first eCoursework deadline (15 March) to the schools impacted and will continue to review deadlines as the situation unfolds.

Will predicated grades be used as final grades if exams cancelled?
The use of predicated grades is not valid for final assessment outcomes. We have offered a deadline extension for the first eCoursework deadline (15 March) to the schools impacted and will continue to review deadlines as the situation unfolds. This extension will give schools an additional four weeks to complete eCoursework upload. As the situation is difficult to predict we are continuing to monitor closely, and schools can contact the IB for further assistance via support@ibo.org.

Mock exams have to be cancelled, our students will be at a disadvantage, how will the IB mitigate this?
We have offered a deadline extension for the first eCoursework deadline (15 March) to the schools impacted and will continue to review deadlines as the situation unfolds.
Schools are responsible for their business continuity arrangements as best they can under this rapidly evolving situation. This includes making alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures, and any student who has not received sufficient teaching has the option to defer to a subsequent assessment session. For advice on supporting teaching and learning, please contact your School Relationship Manager directly or support@ibo.org.

How can CAS requirements be met?
The CAS program does not count hours, only the achievement of learning outcomes. Due to the virus, we would understand that schools/students may not be in session for a time and thus may not be able to continue with CAS. In this situation, the safety of our students comes first, and hopefully they have many of their learning outcomes already completed.
How should online teaching and learning be managed?
Schools are responsible for their business continuity arrangements as best they can under this rapidly evolving situation. This includes making alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures, and any student who has not received sufficient teaching has the option to defer to a subsequent session for some or all of the assessments. For advice on supporting teaching and learning, please contact your School Relationship Manager directly or support@ibo.org.

Online teaching is not equal to face to face - how do we ensure students are not disadvantaged?
Schools are responsible for their business continuity arrangements as best they can under this rapidly evolving situation. This includes making alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures, and any student who has not received sufficient teaching has the option to defer to a subsequent session for some or all of the assessments. For advice on supporting teaching and learning, please contact your School Relationship Manager directly or support@ibo.org.

My student does not want to defer due to university admissions deadlines
Students should discuss their options with their DP/CP coordinator and university admissions officers to make a personal choice. Any student who has not received sufficient teaching has the option to defer to a subsequent session for some or all of the DP assessments.

Should we host our PYP exhibition?
Please refer to the enhanced PYP information on the exhibition. The exhibition should focus on the process as opposed to the final product and a physical exhibit is not necessary. Much of the process could be done digitally with guidance and feedback from the teacher and supervisor remotely. These exhibitions may not be as in-depth, but there is lots of opportunity for exciting learning experiences for the students.

We were due to host an event/award ceremony should this go ahead?
Schools should follow local guidelines and travel restrictions when making decisions about school events.

What happens if the courier company will not deliver examination papers to my school?
The IB is currently investigating the best procedures. We have a standard approach of allowing schools to receive one off papers through digital delivery and are investigating the implications for schools of implementing this on a larger scale.

How do students complete collaborative work when schools are closed?
Where collaborative work is required, we have extended deadlines with the expectation that schools may open later in term. The IB is monitoring this and will provide further guidance at a later date.

Professional Development

Our school in Hong Kong SAR China/ Mainland China/ Macau had a workshop/site visit scheduled – what do we do?
Following the recommendations by the various governing bodies including local Ministries of Health, the IB has decided to postpone the IB related events at schools in Hong Kong SAR China/Mainland China/Macau. These will be rescheduled at a future date. The IB will keep monitoring the situation and as soon as circumstances improve, we will contact schools to reschedule the events/activities.
At the IB, our top priority is the safety of our IB community. We are continuously monitoring the rapidly evolving situation and will provide IB stakeholders with updates as we have them.

I am due to attend a regional workshop/event in in Hong Kong SAR China/Mainland China/Macau - what do I do?

Following the recommendations by the various governing bodies including local Ministries of Health, the IB has decided to cancel upcoming Regional Workshops in Hong Kong SAR China/Mainland China/Macau. We are processing full refunds of registration fees. If travel arrangements have been made, we are unable to refund those costs. We apologize for this inconvenience and encourage participants to contact their travel provider to see what accommodations are available.

The IB will keep monitoring the situation and will be in touch to provide alternative workshop options available in the region and through our online events.

What if I am an attendee of a professional development workshop and would like to attend an IB event in another country?

If you are planning on attending an IB event or workshop and would need to travel from a Coronavirus affected area we encourage you to follow the guidance of your local Health Ministry, The World Health Organization and the country specific travel restrictions where the workshop is located to determine if travel and entry into that country will be permitted.

I’m scheduled to attend a professional development workshop - I am from/have travelled (in the past two weeks) in Hong Kong SAR/Mainland China/Macau - should I come?

As you may be aware, some countries are issuing travel restrictions into countries where IB Professional Development workshops are being held. These restrictions may impact your ability to attend the workshop. Please review the country specific travel restrictions where the workshop is located prior to making travel reservations or traveling to ensure you have the most up to date information. If, unfortunately, you need to cancel your workshop registration, the IB will issue a refund.

Will I be refunded for my workshop place?

For participants/schools based in mainland China we will provide a full refund.
For participants/schools in Hong Kong SAR China we will provide a credit note to be used for future events.

For participants outside of mainland China and Hong Kong SAR China our normal refund policies will apply. Please contact support@ibo.org for advice.