Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Outbreak FAQs

Last update: 21 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.

Assessment

Deadlines

My school is under a forced closure due to Coronavirus (Covid-19) – how will the IB support us in meeting coursework deadlines?

The IB has implemented an extension to the 15 March eCoursework early component upload deadline for IB schools in Hong Kong SAR China, Mainland 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 with regards to extensions.

Is the IB extending the 20 April deadline for eCoursework and Internal assessment mark entry/Predicted grade entry?

The IB will continue to monitor the situation over the coming weeks and review deadlines as the situation evolves.

Will the IB be extending the 20 April MYP ePortfolio deadline?

The IB will continue to monitor the situation over the coming weeks and review deadlines as the situation evolves.
Completing assessment components

How do students complete collaborative work when schools are closed?
The IB will continue to monitor the situation over the coming weeks and review deadlines as the situation evolves.

Our School is not in one of the affected areas, but we do have candidates who travelled into one of the affected countries and as a result have been unable to return to lessons at the school?
We ask that schools with impacted candidates contact the IB’s Adverse Circumstances team at adverse@ibo.org.

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

a. The candidate can take the oral / 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.

We are reviewing the options for oral assessments and will update schools as soon as possible.

How can we use Virtual Presentations for Diploma Programme Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay and Global Politics HL Internal Assessments if our school is closed?
To enable DP students impacted by school closure because of Covid-19 to complete their assignment with their teacher, the IB supports the remote completion of Theory of Knowledge, the viva voce for the Extended Essay, and Global Politics HL extension presentations as virtual presentations using video conferencing applications such as Skype, Zoom, or similar methods.
Ideally, the teacher should set up a virtual situation that resembles the face-to-face presentation as closely as possible. The IB recognizes that presenting via video conference is a different skill to presenting in person and that the candidates may find it a more difficult experience. However, because of the nature of the presentations, where it is the quality of the student’s thinking and not their presentation skills which is being assessed, this is a viable alternative in these exceptional circumstances.
When marking the presentations, the teacher is reminded that it is the subject matter that is being assessed, and not to make any adjustments for poor quality connections or problems with the sound. Schools are also able to request an extension to submission dates should this be required. A reminder that for the EE, while the viva voce/final reflection may take place virtually, the student’s written summary of the meeting must still be included on their uploaded EE/RPPF for assessment.

This video conference option only applies to DP TOK, EE and Global Politics.

We are reviewing the options for oral assessments and will update schools as soon as possible.

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.

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.

MYP candidates are unable to meet their supervisors to sign off their Academic Honesty forms for the Personal Project. Can this be completed digitally?
The purpose of the Academic Honesty form is to record a candidate’s progress and the nature of their discussions with their supervisor, with at least three supervision sessions taking place. These should be spread out across the beginning, middle, and end of the project. We would anticipate two of the three supervisions to have already taken place according to the usual process before school closures impacted on the final session. Provided this process has been followed, we are able to accept a virtual meeting for the final supervision, to be signed off digitally by the candidate/their supervisor. Digital signatures may be typed or scanned.

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. We will be continuing to review deadlines in relation to this.

Examinations

**Is the IB going to change the May 2020 examination schedule?**
The IB is unable to change the 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. The IB is continuing to review deadlines and support options it can provide for schools.

**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 School relationship manager for advice and follow local advice and travel restrictions. If schools cannot use any of the below options, they should contact support@ibo.org.

**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 decide. For further details, please see section B2.10 of Assessment Procedures (and/or contact ibid-registrations@ibo.org).

**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.

If there is no IB World School available to host the examinations, an alternative venue will only be authorized if the IB is able to provide a representative to conduct the examinations. The school is required to cover the full cost of this arrangement.
To submit a request for an alternative venue, use the Alternative venue authorization request form.

**Off-site examination**
If your school plans to administer the IB exams in a nearby location other than your school building (for example, a local community centre). Submit the IB Off-site exam notification form (available on the programme resource centre) 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.

**What happens if the courier company will not deliver examination papers to my school?**
The IB is currently investigating best practice. 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.

**Are the assessment criteria going to be changed, e.g.: ‘will there be any flexibility in terms of the minimum number of pieces required for the exhibition of the Visual Arts students’?**
The IB will not change 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.

**Will blanket special consideration be approved for schools that have 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 predicted grades be used as final grades if exams cancelled?**
The use of predicted 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.

**Teaching and learning**

**How should online teaching and learning be managed?**
During this difficult time schools can use available means to try and make alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures including online or remote teaching. 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 IB World School Manager directly or support@ibo.org.

**Online teaching is not equal to face to face- how do we ensure students are not disadvantaged?**
During this difficult time schools can use available means to try and make alternative arrangements for study so that students are not disadvantaged by any closures including online or remote teaching. 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 IB World School Manager directly or support@ibo.org.

**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.

**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. The IB is communicating with universities global about the current situation and will continue to do so.

### 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.

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.