



Schola Europaea / Bureau du Secrétaire général
European Baccalaureate Unit

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MEMORANDUM

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To: Directors, Deputy Directors for the Secondary Cycle of the European Schools and the Accredited European Schools, Members of the Board of Inspectors Secondary Cycle of the European Schools

From: Andreas Beckmann, Deputy Secretary-General

Subject: Organisation of the Pre-Baccalaureate Examinations in **S7** during the school year 2020-2021

Introduction

This Memorandum aims to provide schools with guidance on the organisation of 2020-2021 Pre-Bac examinations (short and long exams) in S7 when *in-situ* teaching and learning is suspended. The recommendations consider the specific contexts while ensuring system-wide consistency and equal treatment of students.

- The Memorandum focuses on the assessment activities carried out in the Secondary Cycle in year **S7** and is based on a consultation of the Working Group ‘Assessment Secondary’.
- This Memorandum complements the ‘Guidelines for the Bacculaureate 2021 session’ (document 2020-10-D-74-en-2) and the ‘Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Bacculaureate (Applicable for the year 2021 European Bacculaureate session)’ (document 2015-05-D-12-en-25), both submitted by the Task Force ‘Preparation of the European Bacculaureate session 2021’ to the Board of Governors for approval at its meeting from 1 to 3 December 2020.

In the context of this Memorandum, the decision taken by the Board of Governors at its extraordinary meeting on 20 October 2020 needs to be recalled.

According to this decision, Article 59.6 of the General Rules (2014-03-D-14) reads as follows (amendments are highlighted in **bold**):

“The marks in year 7 (European Bacculaureate) follow the specific rules established in the Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations of the European Bacculaureate.

In such a situation where the short and/or long written examinations cannot be performed on site, preference will be given to the short and long written examinations identical to the ones in situ. In addition, the short and long written examinations can be replaced by alternative tasks for assessment. The same is valid for the assessment of other subjects taught in S7.”

Article 59.6 of the General Rules clarifies that if it is not possible to organise the B tests and examinations *in situ*:

- schools should set remote assessments which are identical (i.e., matching closely) to the ones that would be used in normal circumstances,
- or replace them by alternative tasks, which should be considered **as last resort solutions**.

This Memorandum provides some further guidance in this respect and recalls that schools need to give absolute preference to assessment ‘in situ’ and shall, in case teaching and learning ‘in situ’ is suspended, search in consultation with the national, regional and local authorities of the hosting Member State for solutions to carry out the Pre-Bac exams ‘in situ’ even if the teaching and learning ‘in situ’ is suspended.

Moreover, possibilities for scheduling the exams in alternative premises need to be analysed, before switching to alternative tasks. Detailed guidelines in this respect can be found in document 2020-10-D-74-en-2 TASK FORCE “Preparation of the European Bacculaureate session 2021”– ‘GUIDELINES for the Bacculaureate session 2021.

Scenario 1: assessment can be done on site

a) Adaptation of the location

When *in-situ* teaching and learning is suspended, the school management must do its utmost to organise the examinations leading to the B marks on-site, if necessary, applying different arrangements respecting hygienic and safety measures imposed by the authorities of the Member State hosting the school. Even if in a Member State it is forbidden to teach *in situ*, it could be possible that examinations are allowed to take place *in situ* under specific conditions.

Therefore, the school management may decide to utilise the school building (spreading pupils in several rooms) for examination purposes or may organise the examinations in an external venue (such as an examination centre or exhibition hall). In any case it is advisable to consult the local authorities before such a decision is taken.

b) Adaptation of the calendar

A school can also decide to adapt the tests and examinations calendar to make it possible to organise the tests *in situ* at a later date in line with the 'Guidelines for the European Baccalaureate session 2021'¹.

Scenario 2: assessment must be done remotely

General principles

Remote assessment should be carried out in such a way that the assessment principles of the European Schools are respected, as defined in the following documents:

- Relevant sections of the General Rules (2014-03-D-14-en-9);
- Assessment Policy in the European Schools (2011-01-D-61-en-4);
- Relevant sections of the Educational Support Policy (2012-05-D-14-en-9) and the Procedural document (2012-05-D-15-12);
- Marking system of the European Schools: Guidelines for use (2017-05-D-29-en-9) + Annexes;
- Structure for all syllabuses in the system of the European Schools (2019-09-D-27-en-3 - principles and Attainment Descriptors);
- Distance Learning Recommendations for course continuity during temporary suspension of obligatory regular attendance of pupils at school (2020-03-D-11-en-7);
- The assessment instructions included in the syllabuses. Emphasis should be put on the matrices and sample examination papers that have been developed and published for the Baccalaureate final written examinations. Sample matrices can be found here: <http://www.schola-europaea.eu/download/Peda/NMS/>

¹ Document 2020-10-D-74-en-2.

If the assessment is to take place at a distance or online, whether with identical or alternative tasks for assessment (as stated by Article 59.6 of the General Rules), the latter must be:

- aligned with the learning objectives of the relevant syllabus²;
- based on the content covered and the competences developed during previous teaching and learning;
- in line with the principles of the New Marking System;
- harmonised, if relevant and whenever possible;
- in line with the conditions established in the Individual Learning Plan of the pupils receiving Intensive Support and the special arrangements for assessment authorised for the pupils by the Directors and/or the Joint Board of Inspectors.

Moreover, when assessing remotely, the school management (with cycle and subject coordinators) must also ensure a well-balanced workload for all students. This should be achieved by communicating to pupils in which subjects written assessments (e.g., examinations) are to be taken and in which subjects alternative tasks are requested. A general decision should be taken for each year level, across language sections.

In the following sections, you will find some modalities of alternative tasks. Each school is free to adapt to these modalities according to its situation.

Possible assessment tasks

a) Open-book or take-home examination formats

Open-book and take-home examinations allow students to access supplementary information (from peers or external resources).

In open-book examinations, students can use any material (notes, books, texts or other resources, including online material) during examinations, without plagiarism or help from another person. Questions on facts as well as knowledge- and content-based questions are easy for students to look-up during a remote exam. Therefore, teachers should not ask for factual knowledge or remember level questions but aim at more complex questions that prompt students to show understanding, apply, analyse, evaluate and create. Conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge should be preferred to factual knowledge. Similarly, teachers may adjust the weighting of the grading criteria so that higher order thinking questions have more value.

b) Remote oral examinations

Oral tests and examinations assess students' learning by speaking, and their format ranges from open discussions and presentations to formal interviews.

Oral examinations also assess defined competences. The competences being assessed must be communicated to the students in advance.

² See 'Guidelines for use of the New Marking System' (ref. 2017-05-D-29-en-9): "A valid examination accurately tests the learning objectives of the relevant syllabus. Thus, in a valid examination, there should be an alignment between the syllabus, the learning objectives, the assessment itself and the related evaluation."

While designing oral examinations, teachers should align themselves on the guidelines available (valid for the final oral Baccalaureate examinations) to develop oral examinations in the various subjects.

Remote oral examinations guarantee sufficient academic integrity in many subjects. Therefore, teachers may organise stand-alone oral examinations with students using a videoconferencing tool (e.g., Microsoft Teams). In this exceptional case, the use of a camera is mandatory, however the recording will require the consent of the pupil or his/her legal representative if the pupil is minor.

The consent form for should be provided to the pupil or his/her legal representative before the remote oral examination takes place. If no consent is received before the examination, no recording can be executed. In such case the pupil or his/her legal representative cannot request viewing part examinations as foreseen in article 6.3.10 of AIREB³ and cannot use this in case of appeal (article 12 of AIREB) as there is no possibility to request the script (or equivalent).

An example of consent for will be provided to the schools.

c) Short-term works or projects

Students have a short preparation time (several days) around an imposed or chosen theme. Teachers can also consider problem-based learning (PBL) or inquiry-based learning (IBL) projects.

d) Long-term digital portfolios

A digital portfolio is a cumulative collection of a student's work. Students decide what examples to include that characterise their growth and accomplishment over the term. Students select their documents (texts, videos, audio files, various, products) and present them in a structured format, accompanied by personal reflection. This task would presume that the teacher has given instructions to students on how to make a well-structured digital portfolio. Digital portfolios could for example be used in Art or Music in order to evaluate the progression made by the students.

It is recommended that subject coordinators and subject referents facilitate professional discussions on how to best design such examinations and alternative tasks.

³ Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate (Applicable for the year 2021 European Baccalaureate session' (document 2015-05-D-12-en-25)

Process

a) Preparation

School management, in coordination with the subject and cycle coordinators should decide which type of examination and alternative tasks the pupils should undergo in the different subjects or group of subjects.

Teachers will develop the examinations/alternative tasks under the responsibility of the subject coordinators and subject referents. Whenever possible a harmonized approach should be chosen, where relevant and where appropriate. Equal treatment needs to be ensured at least on class/subject group level.

Schools and teachers are advised to base the construction and assessment of the open-book/take-home examinations and the remote oral examinations on the general approach outlined in chapter 7 of the document *Marking system of the European Schools: Guidelines for use* and the specific Baccalaureate examples which have been provided during the autumn by the inspector(s) responsible for each subject. Emphasis should be put on higher order thinking skills as well as open-ended questions, where students must be able to argue in different directions and questions asking students for personal reflections and statements.

The examinations (written, oral or projects) should be developed on the basis of the relevant syllabus, for the learning objectives that developed so far in class.

Teachers must consider that effective test design should include the preparation of a test matrix. Such a framework or specification ensures that an examination paper appropriately tests the relevant competences and desired learning objectives in appropriate balance and that there is a clear link to the related assessment criteria, marking scale and attainment descriptors. The weighting of competences must be adapted to the needs of take-home and open-book examinations.

b) Testing

Teachers must communicate to students the purpose and nature of such examinations, along with explicit instructions such as time management, length, academic integrity, timelines, and due dates.

c) Grading and marking

The criteria for assessment criteria should be shared with all the students in advance. The examinations and alternative tasks must be assessed in accordance with the different levels mentioned in the attainment descriptors of each Syllabus. Assignment of a grade/mark must likewise be based on the descriptors. A weighting of competencies assessed should be established in advance.

Teachers should use an assessment record sheet for the transparent documentation and justification of the mark given (harmonised by subject, at school level). Whilst a record sheet may be more analytical or holistic/composite in nature, every record sheet must include certain elements:

- Part/elements of the examination or alternative task
- Competence(s) being assessed – weighting of competences
- Criteria defined at each of the 7 levels of the NMS
- The relevant attainment descriptor

Article 6.3 The part examinations (Pre-Baccalaureate) (...) of the AIREB applies.

Quality assurance

Each school must ensure that subject coordinators/subject referents under the responsibility of the Deputy Director of the school collaborate to design sufficient quality assurance of the alternative tasks for assessment, based on the approved attainment descriptors of each syllabus.

The marking and grading could be done according to a well-established matrix within a subject department.

Specific guidelines for Subject groups

a) Languages (L1, L2, L3, L4)

Possible alternative tasks

Teachers should prepare a timed written examination.

In the case of L1 and L1 Advanced, the format of the Bac examination should be used.

In the case of L2, L2A, L3 and L4 there would be two parts to the examination: an unseen reading comprehension and a written production task. In the case of L2 and L3, understanding literature will not be assessed. The reading comprehension and the written production parts should be thematically linked. The reading comprehension questions should be open and general. Written competence should only be assessed in the written production task, and language errors should not be penalised in the reading comprehension questions.

For all remote written exams, it is recommended that teachers use Microsoft Teams, using the Assignment function: students receive the exam paper via Teams at the chosen time. They complete their answers, and submit the answers to the teachers via Teams, before the deadline. Students should scan the handwritten script using a scanner or their mobile phones and upload to Teams (e.g. in one single pdf file).

The weighting of competences in L2 and L3 should reflect the balance of the weighting as shown in the generic matrix.

The same approach should be followed as far as possible for Latin, Ancient Greek and ONL.

b) Mathematics

Teachers might choose between an oral examination or a written examination with a shorter oral follow-up. Whatever the format chosen, only the learning objectives covered so far in year S7 should undergo any assessment.

Competences to be assessed are knowledge & comprehension, mathematical processes, problem solving, interpretation and communication.

Guidelines for how to ensure a well-balanced examination covering the full range of competences can be found in the document "Matrix Manual Mathematics" related to the Baccalaureate examinations in Mathematics with the New Marking System.

c) Scientific subjects

Teachers might choose in between take-home/open-book examinations, an oral examination or a short-term work.

Whatever format chosen, only the learning objectives covered so far in year S7 should undergo any assessment.

Competences to be assessed:

- Comprehension, application, analysis and written communication for any written assignment;
- Knowledge, comprehension, application, analyses and oral communication for any oral examination;
- Knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, digital and information competences, as well as written competences for any short-term work.

The weighting of the different competences is left at the discretion of the teachers.

- In the written assignments, context-based documents have to be analysed (different ones than those that were already used in class). In order to analyse the provided documents, students can have access to their textbooks.

There must be at least one open-ended question, a kind of essay wherein the pupil must also be able to argue in different directions, as well as making a personal statement.

- The oral examination should be developed considering the available guidelines and assessment record sheets for the scientific subjects.

Ideally, the Student has a “big picture” view of biology. Can move easily and unaided among types of data and techniques of analysis, demonstrating mastery of factual content and vocabulary. Is at ease analysing (un)familiar problems, and can propose experimental or investigative approaches. Has clearly and concisely organized responses to set problems, and engages fluently in follow-up discussion.

In both written and oral assignments, students should be prepared to analyse documents and data sets, to bring their own contextual knowledge to bear, and to synthesise complex responses, including propositions for further investigation.

- As for the short project work an initial question for investigation should be raised or a hypothesis formulated. The hypothesis should then be analysed and the question for investigation developed. The student must be able to find, and assess the reliability of information on scientific subjects.

d) Human Sciences subjects

• Geography, Economics and History

Teachers might choose in between an open-book examination and a short-term work.

The open-book written examination should be timed. It is recommended that teachers use Microsoft Teams, using the Assignment function: students receive the exam paper via Teams at the chosen time. They complete their answers, and submit the answers to the teachers via

Teams, before the deadline. Students should scan **the handwritten script** using a scanner or their mobile phones and upload to Teams (e.g. in one single pdf file).

It is recommended to avoid relying on heavily knowledge-based questions and definitions which can be checked online easily and quickly, instead, teachers should consider the application of knowledge and analysis.

In the case of History, the following competences should be assessed:

- Comprehension and understanding
- Application and interpretation
- Analysis and synthesis
- History communication skills

In the case of Geography, the following competences should be assessed:

- Comprehension and understanding
- Analysis (application of ideas)
- Evaluation and critical thinking
- Application and interpretation

In the case of Economics, the following competences should be assessed:

- Comprehension and understanding
- Application and interpretation
- Analysis and Discussion

The weighting of the different competences is left at the discretion of the teachers, but higher order thinking skills should be given a larger weight than factual knowledge.

As for the short project work, an initial question should be raised, based on a source, a document or picture, which is included in the paper. The outcome of this work is a structured essay. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to produce analytical and/or evaluative written essays about historical, economic or geographical issues and events in depth.

- **Philosophy**

Philosophy 2p

Teachers should prepare an open-book examination, which allows students to access information from the course. Students are required to compose a philosophical essay, which is comparable with the usual *in situ* examination. The open-book approach requires an

extended timeframe, which takes into account the research and the actual writing of the personal answer to the philosophical question provided by the teacher.

The weighting of competences should reflect the attainment descriptors, with special attention to the students' creative competence.

Philosophy 4p

Teachers should prepare an open-book examination, which allows students to access information from the course and external sources. The open-book approach requires an extended timeframe, which takes into account the research and the actual writing of the personal answer to the philosophical question provided by the teacher.

The weighting of competences should reflect the balance of the weighting as shown in the generic matrix.

Complementary guidance will be provided to the Philosophy departments at a later stage.

e) Other subjects

• Music 4p

Teachers should prepare an individual remote oral examination, which allows them to assess the same competences and in the same way as during the in-situ examinations. In the exceptional case of a remote examination, the use of a camera with microphone is mandatory, however the recording of the exam session will require the consent of the pupil or his/her legal representative if the pupil is minor.

The remote oral examination consists of three separate parts:

Part 1: Performance

The student performs, depending on the major chosen, one or two pieces of music from different musical traditions. The sheet music of the performed piece(s) as well as the pro forma sheet, which can be found in the MUSIC Teachers ES group on One Drive, must be provided at the beginning of the examination. The competences to be assessed remain the same as for the in-situ version of the exam. Furthermore, students should be able to demonstrate the ability to produce a self-reflection of their work and to engage fluently in the follow-up discussion.

Part 2: Composition

The student presents orally, depending on the major chosen, one or two compositions based on different musical traditions, forms and style(s). The sheet music of the composition(s) as well as the pro forma sheet, which can be found in the MUSIC Teachers ES group on One Drive, must be provided at the beginning of the examination. The competences to be assessed remain the same as for the in-situ version of the exam. The student should be prepared to analyse his/her own work, to bring his/her own contextual knowledge to bear, and to synthesise complex responses, including propositions for further compositional investigations and developments.

Part 3: Research paper

The student presents orally his/her research paper. The final document of the composition(s) as well as the pro forma sheet, which can be found in the MUSIC Teachers ES group on One Drive, must be provided at the beginning of the examination. The competences to be assessed remain the same as for the in-situ version of the exam. The student should engage fluently in an open discussion, should be able to present the central points of his/her research paper and finally synthesise complex responses, including propositions for possible further investigations.

- **Art 4p**

a. Long Term Digital Portfolios could be displayed as a cumulative collection of a student's work. This task presumes that the teacher has given instructions to students on how to make a well-structured digital portfolio. More precisely, the teacher can specify the examined artist and/or the specific period from the history of art that is under assessment. The teacher, also, has to explain the precise process of grading and marking of the selected assessment task.

The above assessment task could be combined with another task, that is:

b. Remote Open Book Examination, which describes how, exactly, teachers can set up more complex art questions so that, 1. their students can show understanding, evaluate, create on a specific period from the history of art or on a specific artist (e.g. students to criticize on a latter's work of art), and so that 2. their students may choose specific elements (and explain why) from the specific artist's work or/and methods, as such, and how they could apply them on their own work (as it might be presented throughout the students' long term digital portfolios, as analyzed above)

Teachers may check the originality of the work by following up with short and frequent oral interviews.

f) Physical Education

According to the Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate,

"For Physical Education the following arrangements will apply:

- *The B mark shows the results of the assessment held at the end of each unit of instruction*
- *Assessment will be purely practical, involving no written work of any kind"*

In practice, this means that the first semester B mark is composed of several assessment activities that are organised after each unit of instruction. If in situ P.E. classes have been organised for a longer period in the first semester, B marks can be awarded on the basis of the marks given after each completed unit of teaching while teaching was possible in situ.

Fostering academic integrity & fraud prevention measures

The European Schools aim to foster a climate for academic integrity and trust and to focus on supporting learning rather than on punishment and surveillance. The following strategies can be used to nurture academic integrity:

- Teachers should discuss with students the concept of academic integrity in the context of their subject and explain why it is important.
- Schools and teachers must inform students of the consequences of committing fraud (plagiarism, being helped by others), and of the measures the school has taken.
- Teachers can build in opportunities for students to demonstrate the thinking process informing their work, such as through multi-stage assignments, where students submit components of the assignment at staggered due dates.

In addition to fraud prevention measures, schools and teachers can take procedural steps:

- Teachers may check the exam work with an anti-plagiarism application when available. Such an application will require prior consultation from the school's Data Protection Officer and approval by the Director as data controller.
- Teachers may check the originality of the exam work by following up with short oral interviews.

Article 9 Procedure in the event of cheating or attempted cheating of the AIREB applies.

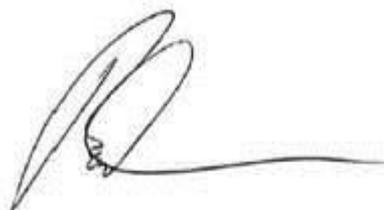
CONCLUSIONS

The school management is requested to organise Pre-Baccalaureate examinations (short and long exams) in S7 in line with the Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate (Applicable for the year 2021 European Baccalaureate session' (document 2015-05-D-12-en-25), document 2020-10-D-74-en-2 TASK FORCE "Preparation of the European Baccalaureate session2021"– 'GUIDELINES for the Baccalaureate session 2021' and this Memorandum, and to inform members of the school community accordingly.

Priority has to be given to the organisation of the exams in situ (including adapted location and/or adapted calendar).

This Memorandum enters into force with immediate effect.

This European Baccalaureate Unit remains at your disposal for any questions you may have on this subject



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Deputy Secretary-General

Copy: European Baccalaureate Unit and Pedagogical Development Unit.