

Structuring of syllabuses for the subjects taught in the European Schools

Board of Inspectors (Secondary)

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Introduction

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The structure of syllabuses is modelled on the following standard pattern which may be differentiated and extended depending on the subject:

- 1.0 Teaching objectives
 - 1.1 General objectives (identical for all subjects)
 - 1.2 Subject-specific objectives
- 2.0 Teaching content (**knowledge, abilities, skills**)
- 3.0 Teaching organization (**proposals for ways of teaching and use of materials and media**)
- 4.0 Assessment of learning outcomes
 - 4.1 Functions and principles of assessment of learning outcomes (identical for all subjects)

4.2 Written work/tests

4.3 Participation in class

4.4 The Baccalaureate

4.4.1 Baccalaureate written examination

4.4.2 Baccalaureate oral examination

Chapter 1 describes and explains the relevant teaching objectives for each subject:

- In the **first section (see 1.1)** the **general objectives**, compulsory for all subjects, are set out. (The text of this section is therefore included in the syllabuses for all subjects.)
- In the **second section (see 1.2)** the **subject-specific objectives** are set out, supplementing the ones mentioned in section 1.

In **Chapter 2** the **teaching content** pertinent to each subject is set out. This is done at three different description levels: **teaching areas, themes** and **topics**, the latter being merely suggestions for the teacher (and hence not compulsory).

The presentation of teaching content is related to the three curriculum units (years 1-3, years 3-4 [4-5?] and years 6-7).

Chapter 3 deals with principles and forms of **teaching organization** in each subject.

Chapter 4 deals with **assessment of learning outcomes** in each subject.

- Section 4.1 contains the general functions and principles of assessment of learning outcomes applicable to all subjects.
- Section 4.2 comprises rules and advice on assessment of learning outcomes in the "**written work/tests**" area.
- In Section 4.3 rules and advice on assessment of learning outcomes in the "participation in class" area are set out.
- Section 4.4 comprises provisions for the Baccalaureate examination in each subject. Recommendations and examples for the Baccalaureate written and oral examinations should be appended.

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1.0 Teaching objectives

1.1 General objectives

The secondary section of the European Schools basically needs to perform the dual task of schooling, namely to provide both instruction and education in the broader sense. In this context the concept of "instruction" refers primarily to the passing on of knowledge, **understanding**, skills and abilities: when tackling the chosen topics and themes in the individual subjects, pupils should learn to understand, describe, interpret, judge and apply with respect to certain facts, problems, solution possibilities and knowledge. The concept of "education", on the other hand, refers primarily to the passing on of ways of acting and behaving in the social context: when faced with themselves and their environment - with its historical background, current problems, future duties - pupils should learn to develop their own identities and to act in socially responsible fashion. In practice, these two concepts are inseparable in the school context. Both tasks interpenetrate each other permanently and influence one another mutually.

These two major objectives of all secondary education acquire their specific significance and their special dynamism in the European context in particular through highlighted awareness of European reality, the characteristic feature of which is the richness of European cultures. This awareness and the experience acquired as a result of shared European life should lead to the development in pupils of behaviour showing clear respect for the traditions of each individual country in Europe, while at the same time preserving their own identities.

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4.0 Assessment of learning outcomes

4.1 Functions and principles

Assessment of learning outcomes is an ongoing process. Its purpose is to provide information about pupils' learning processes. It should also be a basis for pupils' further achievement and plays an important role for pupils, parents or guardians and School in the provision of educational guidance for pupils. Assessment of learning outcomes need not involve the award of a mark reflecting performance in every case and it should not be punitive, but it should evaluate performance, enable pupils to engage in self-assessment and motivate them to improve their performance.

For teachers the findings of assessment of learning outcomes provide an opportunity to review the objectives, methods and results of their teaching.

The following general principles of performance evaluation are closely associated with this pedagogic objective of assessment of learning outcomes:

- All performances by pupils connected with the course, i.e. oral and written contributions, class tests and, where appropriate, practical work, are evaluated
- Performance evaluations relate to what is imparted, learned and practised in lessons.
- Performance evaluation starts from the premise that pupils have had the opportunity in the course to become familiar with the standards to be attained in terms of requirements and range and to prepare themselves to meet them.
- The extent of knowledge, its independent and correct application and abilities, skills and method of presentation are all assessed. This means that the standards to be attained in the course must be structured in such a way that - according to the learning level - not just reproduction but more complex performance (such as application of knowledge, problem-solving and judgment) can be required. The definition of grading levels and the related mark ranges should be observed.
- The evaluation of their performance should be transparent for pupils - in comparison with their fellow pupils too. In this connection, the comparability of performance evaluation among the language sections is ensured through coordination of the subject teachers concerned.