



# ADMISSION POLICY

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## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

At Boston School International we offer quality education which promotes in students the development of fundamental academic, technological and humanistic competencies. Our commitment is the development of an individual who demonstrates social responsibility, the capacity to assume challenges, and a leadership endeavor which will generate social, ethical, and sustainable progress. Our goals, beliefs, and values are encompassed in the following:

### **MISSION**

To develop in our students, active, creative minds and the capacity for critical thinking through a technologically advanced, international bilingual education program.

### **VISION**

To be one of the best schools in Panama and the world providing an education system based on personal competency that will enable students to meet and surpass the individual and academic demands of our modern world.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

At Boston School International we believe that all students can learn. We promote learning through inquiry, leadership, development of tolerance, intercultural understanding, and citizenship.

### **VALUES**

Commitment to Excellence, Integrity and Solidarity

## **Admission Form**

All applicants must fill out the Admission Form with the required information. This form is available on our website under Admissions, Forms <https://bostonschool.edu.pa/en/forms/>

The Admissions Coordinator may send via email or provide printed forms to applicants as well.

## **Availability**

Place are available if the class size has not reached its maximum capacity. Class sizes are as follows:

- PK3: 12 students
- PK4: 16 students
- Kindergarten: 18 students
- First to Twelfth Grade: 23 students.

If the class size has reached its maximum capacity, the applicant is added to a waiting list to be contacted if a spot becomes available.

The current students' siblings and the staff children will have preference in a waiting list.

### **Admission by age**

The Ministry of Education of Panama (MEDUCA) requires a child to have an specific age by the first day of a school year.

According to this requirement, Admission for preschool will be as follows:

- PK3: three years old
- PK4: four years old
- Kindergarten: 5 years old. Kindergarten is the only preschool grade required by the MEDUCA.
- First grade: 6 years old and completion of Kindergarten
- Second grade: 7 years old and completion of First grade and so on.

### **Admissions Test**

The admission test is applied by the school Psychologist or the Special Needs Teacher. The applicant is notified that within three business days he/she will receive an answer. The answer could be one of the following:

- The student can be admitted to the school
- The students is admitted with a commitment letter signed by parents. This letter has recommendations from the Psychology Department that the parents must follow.
- The student is admitted to audit a lower grade than what he or she aspired due to language or other academic issues.
- The student is denied admission if the school cannot meet the applicant's needs.

For each scenario, the parent will receive the results of the admissions test and referrals from our Psychology Department. A meeting can be set up through the Admissions Coordinator if necessary.

### **Required Documents to present the Admission Test**

- Admission Form
- Last two report cards
- Any existing educational/psychological reports for the student

### **Admissions Decision**

The Admission of a student depends on the following:

- The Admissions Test, which is applied in English and involves comprehension, vocabulary in context, and math
- A review of the last 2 report cards of the applicant, which should include the final grades for each term as well as a report of the student's behavior

- An interview with a member of our Psychology Department

Once we have these completed, the coordinator, the Academic Director, and the Headmaster make a final decision.

### **Auditing Students**

A student is considered as auditing when he or she is admitted in a grade which he or she has already completed at another institution. The Admission Committee of Boston School International decides what the best option is for all applicants. An auditing student will go to class like regular students with the only difference of not having trimestral exams nor a report card at the end of a school term.

### **Tutoring**

BSI recommends that applicants with low performance on the admission test receive tutoring after school. This tutoring will be paid by the parent. The coordinator can help to arrange for a teacher to tutor in school after classes. The parent may also get a tutor outside the school.

### **Foreign School Credits**

If the applicant comes from a foreign school and is admitted to grades second through twelfth, he or she must present the transcripts from the previous school validated by the Panamanian Ministry of Education (MEDUCA). BSI advises parents to begin this process in a timely manner, to have the transcripts authenticated at the Panamanian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin. This process is necessary for grade placement, as MEDUCA determines to what grade a student may be admitted.

### **Required Documents for enrollment**

- Enrollment Application / Formulario de Admisión
- Birth Certificate / Certificado de Nacimiento
- Copy of Passport / Copia de Pasaporte (extranjeros)
- Two Pictures 4 x 3 cm / Dos fotos Tamaño carnet
- Copy of Guardian's ID or Passport / ID de acudientes o Pasaporte
- Health Certificate and Vaccines / Certificado Médico de Salud y Registro de Vacunas
- Last Report Card Apostille/ Último Boletín apostillado
- Complete Academic Records / Créditos Académicos completos
- Letter of Behavior / Carta de Conducta
- Certification by MEDUCA – Convalidación de MEDUCA (Extranjeros)
- New School Contract Services (is this the School Contract?- should list first) / Contrato Actualizado de Servicios de Enseñanza
- Admissions Test / Prueba de Admisión
- For students enrolling to tenth through twelfth grade, Ninth Grade Pre-Media Certificate / Certificado de Pre-Media – 9<sup>º</sup>.

### **IB Diploma Programme**

We are pleased that Boston School International is a candidate school for the Diploma Programme as of September 1, 2017. We are pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy—a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education—that we believe is important for our students. Only schools authorized by

the IB Organization can offer its academic programmes. The Diploma Programme (DP) candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted, though we anticipate being authorized by September 2019.

### **What does the DP offer students?**

BSI in collaboration with the IBO strives to develop students who:

- have excellent breadth and depth of knowledge
- flourish physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically
- study at least two languages
- excel in traditional academic subjects
- develop the tools needed to succeed at college and as lifelong learners
  - a sense of preparedness
  - self-confidence
  - research skills
  - the ability to manage their time
  - a sense of the world around them and their responsibility to it
- explore the nature of knowledge through the programme's unique **Theory of Knowledge course**
- gain international recognition with a first-rate qualification for university entrance

### **The Diploma Programme Curriculum**

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a curriculum framework designed by the International Baccalaureate (IB) for students in the last two years of high school.



At BSI Diploma Programme students will study:

| Eleventh and Twelfth graders |                              |                |  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 3 Subjects at Higher Level   | 3 Subjects at Standard Level | IB Core*       | Additional Courses for <i>Science Bachelor</i> |
| Biology                      | Language A: Literature       | Extended Essay | Cívica: Gobierno, Estado y Nación              |

|   |                                       |                                      |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Mathematics   | Lenguaje A:<br>Lengua y<br>Literatura | Theory of<br>Knowledge               | Historia de Panamá I and II<br>(Relaciones Panamá y<br>E.E.U.U.) |
| Information technology<br>in a Global Society   | Physics                               | CAS (Creativity,<br>Action, Service) | Chemistry  |
| In addition to these requirements, students must earn: <b>a minimum of 24 points out of a possible 45 points</b> on the final assessments which are externally marked and moderated by the IB, in order to receive an IB diploma. |                                       |                                      |  |

All stakeholders of the BSI community must understand that students that do not intend to comply with the Ministry of Education of Panama's requirements in order to obtain the diploma of *Bachiller de Ciencias* do not need to comply with the classes on the last column of the table above.

### \*Core parts of the Diploma Programme

As well as studying six subject areas, students complete three core parts of the IB Diploma which are central to the philosophy of the programme. These are:

#### 1. Extended Essay (EE)

The extended essay introduces students to the demands and rewards of independent work. Emphasis is placed on doing personal research and communicating ideas effectively in order to write a 4,000-word essay in an area of personal interest.

Doing this helps students:

- Develop their capacity to analyse, synthesize and evaluate knowledge
- Prepare for undergraduate research
- Explore a topic of special interest to them in depth
- Formulate an appropriate research question
- Learn how to communicate ideas
- Develop an argument

The essay might be related to one of a student's six DP subjects. It can also be about an issue of contemporary global significance including: the food crisis, climate change, terrorism, energy security, migration, health and technology.

#### 2. Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

TOK is an interdisciplinary course designed to help students question and understand how they know what they know. Students study how individuals from various disciplines view the world in order to develop their own ways of thinking. By stimulating analysis of knowledge across disciplines, TOK seeks to help students make sense of school and the world.

Through an oral presentation and a 1,600 word essay, this part of the IB Diploma gives students an opportunity to reflect on how we know what we claim to know.

By answering this, and related questions, students:

- Gain greater awareness of their personal assumptions and biases
- Develop an appreciation of the cultural perspectives of others



- Become aware of themselves as thinkers and more familiar with the complexity of knowledge
- Can recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world

### 3. Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)

CAS is an experiential learning component of the DP. Students complete a wide variety of extracurricular, community service and athletic options to fulfill this requirement of roughly 150 hours of involvements. The range of activities alongside their academic studies, include:

**Creativity:** arts and experiences that involve creative thinking

**Action:** physical exercise

**Service:** voluntary involvements that benefit others, the community, or the wider environment or world and has a learning benefit for the student

#### Doing CAS:

- Enhances students personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning
- Provides an important counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Programme
- Offers a challenging and enjoyable, personal journey of self-discovery
- Provides often profound and life-changing opportunities

Students need to record their activities and provide evidence that they have achieved the eight key learning outcomes.

#### Diploma Programme Assessment (Is this part necessary?)

- The Diploma Programme is graded over 45 points giving ample scope to differentiate student ability
- Diploma Programme assessment includes both final examinations and internal assessment undertaken by the teacher to IB criteria and then externally moderated by the IB
- All examiners are 'quality checked' through a process of moderation
- The IB undertakes random inspections of schools during exams
- Results are published in early July for May exams
- All DP teachers receive professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for IB World Schools implementing the DP

#### Fees for the IB Diploma and Certificates

Fees for IB Examinations and assessment for subjects and core elements are communicated yearly to students and parents. All students must pay their final IB exams.

### IB DP & University Entrance

The DP is internationally recognized as representing one of the highest standards in university preparatory education. More than 1,000 colleges and universities in North America have

recognition policies on how they weigh it in admissions, advanced standing, college credit and scholarships. A list of colleges and universities that grant credit, scholarships and/or advanced standing for IB Diplomas and Certificates is available at [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org). BSI students receive personal guidance and preparation for university applications and admissions. The Diploma Programme and BSI experience provide a solid base for a smooth transition to the rigors of university study and successful university admissions.

### **What kind of student is a good candidate for the DP?**

The DP is a rigorous course of study for motivated students. Prior academic success is less an indicator of ability to earn the diploma than are a student's determination to do his or her best; willingness to be organized in order to complete the work while leading a full, balanced life; and strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom.

### **At BSI, pursuit of the IB Diploma requires a choice in the third trimester of tenth grade.**

Students choosing to pursue the Diploma complete the programme as described above. Meeting all the requirements earns both the IB Diploma and the Ministry of Education *Bachiller de Ciencias*.

Students who opt not to pursue the IB Diploma complete the same curriculum without the Extended Essay and without the TOK essay, earning the *Bachiller de Ciencias*.

Those students may also choose to sit for one or more IB examinations to potentially earn IB Certificate(s). IB Certificates show advanced subject knowledge and support university admissions worldwide, sometimes earning advanced university credit.

### **Students receiving support services**

Note that the IB Diploma Programme allows for curriculum and assessment *accommodation*, but does NOT allow curriculum or assessment *modification*. For special needs students to enter the IB Diploma Programme parents and students will sign a commitment letter to the programme.

**At the beginning of the third trimester of eleventh grade, students that have a grade point average lower than 3.8 in any of the subjects will be ask to meet with their parents, DP coordinator, and subject class teachers in order to consider the student's options. The school will try its best to support the student in the programme, but the parents and the student will have to sign a commitment letter in order to obtain any external support when needed.**

### **Two great options**

BSI affirms that both the *Science Bachelor and the IB Diploma* are strong and viable choices for our students, and the option of one or both depends on their individual needs, interests, strengths, and motivation.

## Acknowledgments

This policy was developed with reference to and use of elements from the International Baccalaureate Organization and from international schools, including The International School of Turin, The International School of Amsterdam, The International School of Dongguan, Confluence International School of Khartoum, and The International School of Berne.