



Akal Academy, Baru Sahib

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Akal Academy Mission Statement

Akal Academy aims at developing young people who have cultivated mind imbued with a spirit of inquiry, thirst for knowledge, respect for diverse world cultures and a keen desire to serve the community in which they live and work, as well as aspire to serve humanity at large through their spiritual values and knowledge acquired through modern education.

Akal Academy Vision

Our vision is to establish permanent peace in the world through value based education and spiritual rejuvenation, creating good global citizens.

IB Rules and general regulations

5.7 – Schools must ensure that teachers and administrators receive IB recognized professional development as required. Minimum requirements for professional developments are outlined in the guide to program evolution.

Professional Development Philosophy

We believe that children deserve highly efficient teachers. To meet the growing demand for better facilitators, Akal Academy has an ongoing Professional Development Policy in place.

The Professional Development Plan is linked to the school's improvement plan. It is a step in continuum of professional learning for teachers to support effective teaching, learning and assessment.

New Teachers

Induction of new teachers is being done continuously and orientation programme is in place for them as soon as they are appointed.

Orientation program for these new entrants is designed to provide with information on values, ethics, professional expectations, new strategies, professional support, personal support etc.

New teachers are supported in a variety of ways like observing other teachers lessons, engaging in professional discussions, personal reflections, assessing student works, preparing lessons and resources, in-school sessions by senior faculty members/Leadership team, buddy pair , team teaching etc.

Mentoring is another way of professional development in the school both for new inductions and existing ones. A school-based mentor, from the group of experienced teachers, is designated to guide the new faculty members to grow. The mentor will plan with them, view their classroom practices and helps them to reflect on their teaching-learning practices.

Training is given in areas such as literacy and numeracy strategies, student success, safe environment, classroom management, effective communication skills and instructional strategies that address the learning and culture of students with special needs and other diverse learners.

Existing Teachers

Training Need Analysis is conducted for existing teachers to upgrade their skills. This is done regularly by the PYP Coordinator in consultation with the Subject Mentors. Regular school visits, participating in network activities such as Job Alike Sessions, online forums like Program Communities and In-house sessions by experts on various aspects of the teaching- learning process are common forms of professional development for existing teachers.

If teachers have been sent out to attend a training program, they are expected to share materials and learning from the session with all/relevant peers.

School organizes/hosts regular IB workshops on campus ensuring that all teachers are trained by IB resource persons. Teachers will be provided Category 1 workshop if they are new to the Program ; Category 2 workshops if they have completed Cat.1 PYP workshop and IB Category 3 workshops for the experienced staff.

Teachers will be sent to different IB and non-IB schools to observe good practices which are in place. This will also be an opportunity for teachers to engage in professional dialogue with colleagues from different schools.

Finally, individual teachers must take responsibility for improving teaching-learning process through recommending/enrolling for appropriate professional development program and by responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.

The school will subscribe and purchase relevant publications that enhance the professional acumen of the PYP teachers. These works will be read by teachers and discussed through experience sharing for 10 minutes during collaborative and reflection meetings.

Visiting Volunteers

The school has the unique privilege of hosting volunteers from across the world. Some of these are from the field of education or associated domains. The volunteers work closely with appropriate teachers ensuring that the teachers get exposure to diverse teaching methodologies to reflect/polish their own style.

Professional development and Learner Profile:

Inquirer: We believe that being a researcher help teachers to grow professionally, and to show how they are extending their own professional knowledge. In addition to this, teachers can explore innovative means to deliver instructions and plan a range of learning experiences.

Knowledge: PD sessions help teachers develop new knowledge directly related to their classrooms. Professional development workshops facilitated by IB delegated educators empower the teachers.

Courageous: We recognize that learning something new involves courage. Teachers are encouraged to be independent, confident and eloquent.

Thinkers: Regular PD sessions/ collaborative planning and reflection meetings foster teachers to develop and demonstrate curious thinking for practicing creative learning environments.

Reflective: We believe that reflective teaching is an example of professional development. The process of reflection comes with a cycle: Teach - Self assess the effect of your teaching on learning - Consider new ways of teaching that can improve the quality of learning -Teach.

Open-minded: Teachers at Akal Academy accept, respect, appreciate, adopt and implement innovative ideas from others and hence are open-minded.

Connections to other Policies

Professional development and language

Orientation programme for the new entrants is designed to provide with information on values, ethics, professional expectations, new strategies, professional support, language and personality development.

Akal Academy has teachers from many Indian states and hence they are used as experts to facilitate a group of students those who will be learning their mother tongue of that particular region. Mother tongue makes it easier for children to understand and learn other languages. Mother tongue develops a child's personal, social and cultural identity. Using mother tongue helps a child develop their critical thinking and literacy skills.

Professional development and Inclusion

At Akal Academy, underprivileged young women from remote areas of North India are being educated with a blend of modern scientific education and spiritual learning. The Kalghidhar Trust, that runs 130 Akal Academies, empowers women from such rural pockets and helps them to be graduates and postgraduates from the universities run by the Trust.

After completing courses, these young girls are given placements to serve as educators in the IB authorized school as well as in the other 129 Akal Academies spread in the northern states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Those selected to work in the world school in Himachal Pradesh are IB trained as PYP teachers.

Professional development and integrity

At Akal Academy, the following practices are considered dishonest:

- If a teacher uses any online translation tools or websites to reproduce and redesign a task card/ rubric without mentioning references/footnote/bibliography.
- While using new idea (graphical organizer/ strategies) and learning from a professional development session/ workshop is not acknowledged.
- If the teacher receives support from another teacher without the approval of that teacher.
- During the self assessments teacher is not being principled.

Professional development and assessment

Assessments of the newly inducted staff members are done after the completion of the orientation period and thereafter at regular intervals including self appraisals. Annual assessment report, in terms of teaching strategies and pastoral care of students, of the entire staff is shared by the PYPC to the management.

PD requirement for all programmes:-

Staff: “Staff appointed during the period under review” refers to staff that are new to their role or to an IB program during the period covered by the program evolution.

-Staff who completed a relevant IB-recognized workshop at another school meets the requirement.

-Staff who serves as workshop leader for a relevant workshop meets the requirement.

-relevant workshops are those that pertain to the program and the role of a participant. Workshops for a different program or different role do not meet the requirement.

-completion of either an IB educator certificate or an IB leadership certificate meets the requirement for participation in workshops.

Program Coordinator: - An IB programme coordinator appointed during the period under review must attend an IB workshop, category 1,2 or 3, relevant to the role.

Head of School: - The head of school, if appointed during the period under review, must participate in a relevant IB workshop or attend an IB workshop or attend an IB Global Conference or attend IB Heads World Conference. The head of school may participate in the workshop, provided that the designee has decision-making authority over the indicated IB programme.

PYP requirements

In addition to the requirements for all programmes, IB World Schools offering the PYP must meet the minimum requirements outline:-

- Teachers hired during the period under review must participate in an IB workshop, category 1,2and 3.

- One teacher, coordinator or Head/ Principal from IB world school implementing the PYP must attend the “Building for future” transition workshop by 31st December 2021.

IB Standards and Practices for Professional Development:

Teacher support 2: The school ensures that leadership and teachers participate in appropriate and timely professional learning to inform their practice. (0203-02)

Teacher support 2:1-The school complies with IB-mandated professional development requirements, as outlined in IB documentation. (0203-02-0100)

Leadership-2: The school includes on its pedagogical leadership team an IB-trained programme coordinator who is empowered to facilitate successful programme implementation. (0201-02)

Leadership-2:1 The school appoints a programme coordinator with a job description, release time, necessary support, and an organizational position to facilitate curriculum and programme development. (0201-02-0100)

Leadership-2:2The programme coordinator completes required professional development that is up to date with the most current version of the programme(s) under their responsibility. (0201-02-0200)

Teacher support 1-The school ensures that teachers use current IB resources and regularly review their implementation of the programme. (0203-01)

Teacher support 1:1 The school ensures that all teachers have access to current and relevant IB content. (0203-01-0100)

Teacher support 1:2 The school demonstrates that teachers have used current and relevant programme documentation to implement the programme in their classroom teaching. (0203-01-0200)

Review Cycle

Following a full review by Teachers, Mentors, Parent representatives and the Pedagogical Leadership Team, this policy was first adopted in 2015; reviewed and updated annually in February / March with additions and modifications wherever necessary.

References:

- Guidelines for developing a professional development policy 2013
- IB standard and Practices document 2020
- Internet resources
- Rules for IB World Schools document 2020
- IB Guide to program evaluation 2020