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EUROPEAN BACCALAUREATE UNIT

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## **FOLLOW-UP OF RECENT REPORTS OF THE CHAIRMEN OF THE EUROPEAN BACCALAUREATE EXAMINING BOARD (2008-2014)**

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**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Meeting on 15, 16 and 17 April 2015 - Prague

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## INTRODUCTION

The following document summarizes the proposals of the chairpersons of the European Baccalaureate sessions from 2008 until 2014 and it comments on them. It is also indicated if the proposals were adopted and implemented and up to what extent.

Recommendations are presented in a chronological order, but reference is made to similar recommendations received by other Presidents (see column n. 2).

To draw the conclusions to this document the following has also considered:

Former insights on the European Baccalaureate that were analysed in detail by the **external evaluation of the European Baccalaureate carried out by the University of Cambridge**. This study started in 2007 and the final report was issued in 2009.

As a follow-up of the Cambridge Report a mandate was given by the Board of Governors set up a **Reform of the European Baccalaureate Working Group** so as to analyse and debate the different proposals and the views of all stakeholders. The general goal was to assure the academic quality and improve the organisational efficiency of the European Baccalaureate.

Some reforms were proposed and decisions were adopted by the Board of Governors to be implemented gradually in the coming Baccalaureate sessions. The **final report of the Working Group was approved by the Board of Governors in December 2011 and it contains reforms to be implemented until the Baccalaureate session 2014**.

**Other official documents** that are mentioned in this paper in relation to the proposals issued by the different chairpersons.

The reports issued up to the moment (February 2015) concerning the **external evaluation of a Proposal for the Reorganisation of Secondary Studies in the European School System** by the Institute of Education London.

# **Summary of proposals and comments**

YEAR 2008		PRESIDENT : Aatos LAHTINEN (FI)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1	#3 by Mrs. Krizaj Ortar  #8 by Mr. Bankov	Different Bacculaureate structure: - 6 written (LI, LII, Math, 3 options) - 2 oral (LI & LII) exams	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> Not all pupils are required to choose three options. Increasing the number of written exams is not cost-effective In many systems the overall number of exams is smaller.
2	#3 by Mr. Pachler  #1 by Mrs. Krizaj Ortar	More weighting to be attached to the external assessment in calculation of marks	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> Actually the recent reform of the Bacculaureate gave more weighting to the internal assessment. See <b>document 2011-12-D-14-en</b> "Reform of the European Bacculaureate: Decisions of the Board of Governors". Point 4c
3		Recording marks for written and oral examinations next to the Final Mark on the Bacculaureate certificate.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> There are two separate documents. The Bacculaureate Diploma stating the overall final mark and the Certificate of European Bacculaureate marks with indication of all marks obtained.
4		Abolish deliberation process.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
5		Exams based on syllabuses years 6 and 7.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
6	# 2 by Mrs. Tirpakova	Abolish the proposals for the examinations. Examination papers to be elaborated by a team of experts and inspectors right from the outset.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> The proposals from teachers assure that the tasks will be adjusted to the syllabus and common teaching and learning practices. The subject coordination meetings to elaborate the proposals are also useful to have a pedagogical debate on syllabus delivery. This is a very important element of harmonization.
7		Bac Unit is to be responsible for appearance, layout and legibility of the examinations. Bac Unit to perform final proofreading of the exams.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> The harmonised formal criteria of Bacculaureate examination papers are monitored by the Bacculaureate Unit. <b>(2013-01-D-41-en-4)</b>  Final proof-reading is under the responsibility of the inspectorate.

YEAR 2008		PRESIDENT : Aatos LAHTINEN (FI)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
8		Presentation of the exams to the Bacc President, Head of Bacc Unit and experts during 3 days.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> The procedure of presentation of the examinations to the Chairman of the Examination Board was abolished. The responsibility for the quality of the examinations falls under the inspectors, who act as vice-chairpersons. This was felt to be a redundant and inefficient protocol.
9	# 2 by Mr. Pachler	External experts should prepare the oral questions.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Oral questions are still prepared by the teachers. However, different mechanisms for quality control have been introduced. Revision of questions by external experts / examiners / inspectorate. Clear assessment guidelines and instructions.
10	# 7 by Mr. Pachler # 11 by Mr. Ekholm	Guidelines for Special Arrangements to be drawn.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
11	# 6 by Mr. Bankov	Clear marking instructions for each written exam.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
12	# 8 by Mr. Pachler	Evaluation guidelines for the oral exams.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
13	# 6 by Mr. Ekholm	Decentralisation and dematerialisation of second marking.	<b>Proposal partially implemented (very limited)</b> This has been implemented with certain subjects with a small number of pupils. The process is now well described in the Arrangements for implementing the regulations of the European Baccalaureate. Art 6.5.9.4 "Distance correction procedure..."
14		An analysis to be made after each examination of how well the examination fulfilled its purpose.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> A statistical analysis of all marks is done after every session, the European Baccalaureate report with annexes per subjects, languages, schools... Some general conclusions are drawn.

YEAR 2008		PRESIDENT : Aatos LAHTINEN (FI)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
15		Speeding up the complaints and appeals process.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> See document Arrangements for implementing the regulations of the European Baccalaureate. Article 12.4
16		Two-years mandate for the Bacc President.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> Presidency of the BAC in rotation together with the yearly presidency

YEAR 2009		PRESIDENT : Mats EKHOLM (SE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1		The internal perception of the Baccalaureate needs to be changed from being loaded with a large amount of external inputs to a view that it is mainly an internal affair.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> The Baccalaureate report is the most important document for the analysis of the functioning of the sessions, their outcomes and the performance of the pupils. It is produced internally and year by year more data and analysis are provided. It constitutes a full and internal vision that is subject to debate in the different organs and instances of the European Schools.
2	# 2 by Mr. Pachler	More professional approach to elaboration of the examination papers.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> The elaboration of papers follows the same formal procedure. However, efforts have been made towards more harmonization and quality assurance. Alternatives to the current system of elaboration of papers could be explored / piloted.
3		More comprehensive approach towards the examination procedures.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> The examination procedures are well described in the Arrangements for implementing the regulations of the European Baccalaureate. Maybe a detailed manual / handbook(s) should be produced aimed at the different actors involved.
4		The examinations need to be based on the Reference Framework of the Lisbon Strategy for the European Union.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Document <b>2011-09-D-47-en-3</b> establishes a new structure for all syllabuses in the system of the European Schools. In chapter 1 of the document, General Objectives..., it is clearly established that all European School Syllabuses will seek to develop the key competences defined in the Lisbon Strategy. From here it follows that assessment will therefore test the degree at which those competences have been attained by the pupils. The revision of some syllabuses is still ongoing

YEAR 2009		PRESIDENT : Mats EKHOLM (SE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
5		A template for the content of school subjects is recommended to be used when constructing tasks for examination.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> Uniformity in the presentation of Baccalaureate examinations is important. The issue of Pre-Baccalaureate harmonization (formal and contents) still remains pending
6	# 13 by Mr Lahtinen	The European Schools are asked to stop the use of restricted paper and pencil tests. The use of digital techniques and other means that are used in realistic situations need to become more common.	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not feasible)</b> Computer-based tests are not available yet
7		The European Schools are asked to adjust their examination routines to the demands to cover broad aspects of student knowledge.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> The European School syllabuses are moving from content-based to competence based, therefore covering broader areas not only of knowledge but also of skills and attitudes adjusted to the specific circumstances
8		Assessments need to be made in an adjustment to the kind of knowledge that the students develop and not restricted to ritualised examination periods.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> Assessment in the European School system is very comprehensive; it covers formative and summative assessment. There is a working group leading assessment improvement a clear policy paper has been produced among others. <b>2011-01-D-61-en-3</b> Assessment Policy in the European Schools
9		A recommendation is given that the European School system trusts school directors, educational advisers and teachers to conduct the European Baccalaureate.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> European Schools become examination centres under the authority and responsibility of the School Director.
10		The financial resources that until now have been used for a common use of second examiners during written and oral examinations instead ought to be used for randomly sampled second examinations of student achievements and for a larger involvement of universities in the analysis of the outcomes of the examination system as well as in the construction of examination tasks.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> Second marking has not been modified. All papers are marked a second time rather than a sample. Structured implication of universities in the elaboration of examination papers or in external correction has not been implemented.



YEAR 2009		PRESIDENT : Mats EKHOLM (SE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
11	# 10 by Mr. Lahtinen  # 7 by Mr. Pachler	The European Schools are recommended to restrict their rules for how students with special needs will be met during examinations to a simple article that says that the school needs to adjust to the needs of the student.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> Special arrangements for candidates with special needs have been developed. Document <b>2012-05-D-15-en-9</b> "Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools – Procedural document" has a whole chapter regarding the Baccalaureate (chapter 6)

YEAR 2010		PRESIDENT: Martina KRIZAJ ORTAR (SI)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1	# 2 by Mr. Lahtinen	Higher level of external factor in the Baccaalaureate.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b>
2		<p>The objectiveness and the comparability of the examination papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- abandoning the optional tasks on a non-essay type</li> <li>- examination of linguistic adequacy of translations</li> <li>- the conceptual compliance of different language versions of the same exam paper.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proposal implemented</b></p> <p>The question of choice in examinations has been debated at length. Choice questions are no longer to be found in examination papers in most subjects. However, in languages choice can still be found. However, when choice is present it has to be considered that still the examination must be comprehensive and test all the required competences that the pupil needs to attain. The examinations must be elaborated in such a way that pupils cannot leave out parts of the syllabus without studying.</p>
3	# 1 by Mr. Lahtinen	<p>Different Baccaalaureate structure: 3 compulsory and 3 optional exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- non-linguistic subjects should be written exams only</li> <li>- compulsory languages should be both written and oral exams</li> <li>- optional languages should be written exam only.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b></p> <p>It is thought that the overall number of exams should be reduced. However, pupils should demonstrate their oral and written LI and LII competences.</p>
4		Prolongation of the exam time for SWALS	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b>

YEAR 2011		PRESIDENT : Anna TIRPAKOVA (SK)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1		External examiners should not be the teacher of the pupil.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
2	# 6 by Mr. Lahtinen	Proposals for the exams should be reviewed by the external experts.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> The proof-reading of the examination papers is carried out by the external experts who also participate in their elaboration. Maybe the final proof-reading should be made by external experts who did not participate in the elaboration.
3		Written at least two pre-test in the period of two - three weeks.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> Pre-Bac examinations take place over 10 days (2 weeks)
4		Pre-test should take place earlier than two – three months before Baccalaureate.	<b>Proposal implemented</b>
5	# 4 by Mr. Devlamminck	Keep in touch with graduates. Launch a quality survey for feedback	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not feasible)</b> Attempts for this have been made. However, it has proven very difficult to collect relevant and consistent data. Schools should make a greater effort towards this.

YEAR 2012		PRESIDENT : Norbert PACHLER (UK)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1		A review to be conducted to ascertain whether all internal teacher assessment meets research-informed principles and to ensure a more explicitly criterion-referenced approach to teacher assessment.	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not feasible)</b> No consistent evaluation of marking and assessment practices within or across schools has been made. Common in-service training structures lack in our system. Very limited and isolated sampling or moderation experiences have been carried out.
2	# 9 by Mr. Lahtinen  # 2 by Mr. Ekholm	An audit to be conducted in relation to quality assurance arrangements, in particular in relation to the professionalization of the setting of examinations and strategic oversight and operationalization of innovation and change in the system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- greater degree of external specialist expertise, e.g. through test setters</li> <li>- greater degree of central commissioning, monitoring and quality assuring</li> </ul>	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties)</b> No consistent external evaluation of the work of experts regarding the elaboration of examination has been carried out. University observation and trial of papers are not present in our system yet.
3	# 2 by Mr. Lahtinen	There is a need for the re-conceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Examiners, External / Subject Examiners and the Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in externality,</li> <li>- re-structuring of the Board,</li> <li>- lengthening of period of office and</li> <li>- reconsideration of terms of reference.</li> </ul>	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Several documents have been produced in this sense Document <b>2007-D-185-en-2</b> (Quality and reliability of assessment), describes the criteria that should be applied in choosing the experts. Letter <b>2014-09-LD-16-MBV/cc</b> also deals with the appointment procedures for external experts and external examiners based on document <b>2010-D-305-en-1</b> Procedure to be followed for the appointment of external examiners for the European Bacculaureate examinations. Some modifications in the Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Bacculaureate have been introduced to that end. See article 5 The Examining Board and its responsibilities. However, there has not been an increase in externality and the length of period of office for the Chairman stays the same.

YEAR 2012		PRESIDENT : Norbert PACHLER (UK)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
4	# 5 by Mr. Devlamminck	The introduction of greater degrees of and scope for standardization of written and oral examinations and results as well as of formative assessment across subjects and schools is desirable.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Many efforts are being made in this sense
5		There should be a re-examination of the role of inspectors in relation to the safeguarding of the quality of the European School system and the European Baccalaureate: they appear to be asked to perform too many diverse functions with a (severely) stretched resource envelope.	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not adopted)</b> The inspectors' availability is often conditioned by the dedication time that their member states allocate to their tasks in the European School system. Some inspectors are full-time while others have a very large envelope outside the European School system. There is also a large turnover of inspectors in the system which makes very difficult to keep expertise in the system. This is an area that could benefit from more structure and development.
6		The European School system should take steps to strengthen the quality assurance arrangements in relation to the European Baccalaureate in Type 2 schools.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Type 2 schools need to furnish a thorough "dossier of conformity" and are subject different investigations carried out through the inspectorate, especially through the national inspector of the country where the school is settled. With the opening of the system it would be necessary to establish a framework to assess the quality of Accredited Schools continuously

YEAR 2012		PRESIDENT : Norbert PACHLER (UK)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
7	# 10 by Mr. Lahtinen  # 11 by Mr. Ekholm	A review of the current regulations is recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more differentiated arrangements for pupils with special educational needs;</li> <li>- clarification of re-take options;</li> <li>- development of an exit examination as well as an alternative award;</li> <li>- third marking;</li> <li>- the role of quality of language in examinations;</li> <li>- cheating;</li> <li>- lines of reporting</li> </ul>	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Some of these points have been already taken on board. In new documents Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools - <b>2012-05-D-14-en-7</b> Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools - Procedural document - <b>2012-05-D-15-en-9</b> Or in the revision of the the Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate The development of an exit examination or an alternative award is still under discussion Third marking stays as it was.
8	# 12 by Mr. Lahtinen	Work on the use of criterion-referencing in oral examinations should continue.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> There is a working group taking care of that. Some documents have been recently updated and produced. <b>2015-01-D-12-en-1</b> Quality assurance of the 2015 Baccalaureate written and oral examinations. Procedure. <b>2015-01-D-2-en-1</b> European Schools' criteria for the assessment of the 2015 oral Baccalaureate exams.
9		The lack of consistency in communicating results across schools should be addressed, e.g. a greater attention should be paid to preserving the privacy of students.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> Some modifications have been made in that sense and added to the Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate. See article 7 Communication of the results

YEAR 2012		PRESIDENT : Norbert PACHLER (UK)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
10		The lack of feedback on the appropriateness or otherwise of their judgments to task setters and first markers is an issue of concern to key stakeholders.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Efforts are being made in this sense. External experts and correctors and inspectors are encouraged to give feedback to the schools regarding the adequacy of the examination proposals and the marking. However, this does not happen consistently. A clearer framework for this should be defined.
11		The desirability of the pass mark being set at 6 should be explored.	<b>Proposal implemented</b> The proposed new marking scale considers 5 as a pass mark. See document <b>2015-01-D-23-en-1</b>

YEAR 2013		PRESIDENT : Bernard DEVLAMMINCK (BE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1		A stronger focus on the special characteristics of the European School system around culture, values and languages seems desirable in terms of curriculum development.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Document <b>2011-09-D-47-en-4</b> "Structure of all syllabuses..." makes this explicit. Most syllabuses will have to be revised in this light.
2		The European School system should work towards a greater sense of shared understanding of the purpose of oral examinations within the European Baccalaureate across teachers, subjects and schools.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Efforts are being made towards the assurance of the quality of oral examination questions. Also the issue of marking oral exams is subject to continuous debate. The term "harmonization" is always present in all reflections on how to assure and improve the quality of the oral questions and in oral assessment.
3	# 11 by Mr. Bankov	For the lower secondary years, it might be advantageous to follow the examples of the Luxembourg and Culham Schools by widening participation in the PISA survey to include all the schools. The European Schools would thus be in possession of important indicators on the education that they provide.	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not feasible)</b> This would be a very interesting initiative
4	# 5 by Mrs. Tirpakova	The validity of the results achieved in the Baccalaureate examinations should be guaranteed by the most systematic tracking possible of how Baccalaureate-holders fare in higher education and of their outcomes.	<b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties / not feasible)</b> Attempts for this have been made. However, it has proven very difficult to collect relevant and consistent data. Schools should make a greater effort towards this.
5	# 4 by Mr. Pachler	Harmonisation of the criteria used for the award of Part examinations and class marks amongst the Schools.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> Efforts are being made towards the assurance of the quality of part examinations and formative assessment.



YEAR 2013		PRESIDENT : Bernard DEVLAMMINCK (BE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
6		<p>Setting of the Baccalaureate examination questions: The teaching staff should be able to receive fast feedback on the judgment made of the questions proposed and, at the same time, should be able to receive specific training on one of the essential tasks entailed by their profession: that of proposing pertinent, valid and reliable examination papers for assessment purposes.</p> <p>In-service training courses to be organised on a regular basis.</p>	<p><b>Proposal not implemented (difficulties)</b></p> <p>Feedback on written examination proposals is uneven. More attention should be given to this.</p> <p>Contact among the core experts and the teachers writing the proposals or the subject coordinators would prove very beneficial as it was the case with the Chemistry meeting this school year 2014-2015</p>
7		<p>The four marking days at the correction centre in Brussels:</p> <p>Systematic comparison of the marks awarded by the teachers with those of external markers, feedback for the teachers with comments on points of agreement and disagreement and the taking on board of these observations in drawing up the implementing regulations for studies might be discussed at meetings organised during this very intensive period with respect to quality of assessment. Qualitative and quantitative indicators might be evolved, allowing a judgment to be made as to whether the objectives pursued have actually been achieved.</p> <p>An extra day might be scheduled for this purpose.</p> <p>Scripts which have to be marked a third time should also form part of this process of evaluation of the correction work.</p>	<p><b>Proposal partially implemented</b></p> <p>This varies from subject to subject.</p> <p>A plenary meeting with all correctors marking the same subject where assessment criteria, marking instructions, etc. are re-examined is very beneficial for the harmonization of marking.</p> <p>Moderation on a particular paper or on parts of it as correction is happening makes results more coherent and consistent.</p> <p>Sampling of papers and benchmarking also proves very important for harmonization of assessment.</p>

YEAR 2013		PRESIDENT : Bernard DEVLAMMINCK (BE)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
8		High turnover of teaching staff, pedagogical training which differs according to the academic paths followed in the various countries and the emergence of differences in status in terms of the service regulations applicable to the teachers are all to be observed.	<b>Proposal partially implemented</b> The high turnover of staff is conditioned by “the 9-year rule”. A more consistent, comprehensive and suited common framework of in-service training should be explored
9		The coordinators should have a recognised place in the hierarchy of the institutions. It is probably not necessary to introduce them in all sectors or in all schools.	<b>Proposal not implemented (not adopted)</b> Annex I document <b>2011-01-D-33-en-9</b> "Internal structures ..." deals with this very superficially. The role of subject coordinator could be extended and better described. The idea of middle management is currently under discussion

YEAR 2014		PRESIDENT : Kiril BANKOV (BG)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
1		Regular organisation of in-service training courses would contribute to the emergence of trainers. The need for training courses intended for the teachers as a whole, with particular reference to the concept of competence and its assessment.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> A common structure for in-service training would help the harmonization of teaching practices. It is acknowledged that the reform of the syllabuses and the assessment practices moving into a competence-based approach need to be supported by specific training.</p>
2		Pedagogical training and experience, mainly in terms of the objectives pursued and of the assessment methods, should be capitalized on to develop a common integrated culture, with valuable input from sometimes very different backgrounds.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> More harmonization in assessment and marking is necessary. It seems that national practices and approaches are difficult to abandon and as a result it can be seen clear trends deviating from the overall averages consistently in certain sections. This is an issue that should be also tackled through in-service training and the development of more precise common assessment tools and instructions.</p>
3		The issues with respect to security of the European Baccalaureate Diploma, setting of questions, reception of candidates' scripts, use of communication tools, etc. are to be evaluated on the basis of the experience of the inspectors and executive secretaries.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> A technological jump is badly needed. It must be remembered that tools and resources are needed so that pedagogy (teaching and learning, assessment, educational administration...) is at the state of the art. A thorough revision with added functionalities of the School Management System is needed concerning the BAC module. Anonymisation, computer based exams and dematerialization are pending issues. A reliable and secured system of file exchange and collaborative work is needed. It is time to make efforts in staffing and investment in technology and training for our core business: education.</p>

YEAR 2014		PRESIDENT : Kiril BANKOV (BG)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
4		Pre-Bac examination papers to be prepared at the Central Office for harmonisation purposes.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> This would make the Baccalaureate experience more uniform and comparable across the system. However, with the current methodology of elaboration of the BAC papers this would not be feasible (timeframe / costs). Centralised Pre-Bac papers would also imply very rigid planning and syllabus delivery.</p>
5		Clear specifications for the Bac (and Pre-Bac) examinations are needed for every subject.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> The revision of the different syllabuses, the efforts for harmonization through several framework documents produced by the working group “Assessment” will work towards this goal.</p>
6	# 11 by Mr. Lahtinen	Detailed guides for correction of candidates’ scripts are required.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> It is very important that Bac papers are accompanied of very thorough assessment criteria, marking instructions and tools and when deemed convenient suggested answers. Marked papers must be followed of a justification comment and measured against the attainment descriptors for each subject.</p>
7		Involvement of university professors in some of the Bac activities.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> The Bac Unit welcomes this suggestion.</p>
8	# 1 by Mr. Lahtinen	Two oral examinations.	<p><b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> 8 Baccalaureate examinations (5 written and 3 oral) are too many. 2 oral would be enough. LI and LII or a subject taught through LII. The assessment made during the year (both formative and summative) would be enough to assure that the pupils have attained the requirements in many subjects.</p>

YEAR 2014		PRESIDENT : Kiril BANKOV (BG)	
N°	Ref. to recomm. by	PROPOSAL	STATUS
9		Harmonisation of oral examinations.	<b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> There is a working group dealing with this issue.
10		Maintaining a database and conducting in-depth analysis of the Bac results.	<b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> The Bacalaureate Unit intends to change the structure of the BAC reports. For next school year it will have a general part but also individual reports concerning the results per school and per subject. Based on the data provided by the BAC unit, the directors of the schools and the inspectors responsible for each subject will be able to lead a more in-depth analysis. Alternatively, analysis could also be externalized
11	# 3 by Mr. Devlamminck	Participation in international educational studies.	<b>Comment from the BAC Unit:</b> The Bac Unit welcomes this suggestion.

## CONCLUSIONS

The last 7 European Baccalaureate chairperson's reports have offered the European School system some 60 proposals recommending to implement changes of different nature.

Around two thirds of the proposals have been either completely or partially implemented. Anyway, all proposals certainly contributed to generate a very interesting debate in the European School system, even when not implemented. It is well possible that some of them should be revisited since the European School system has been evolving alongside the trends in education and the changes in society, which may make them now fitting or even necessary to increase the quality and reputation of the European Baccalaureate.

There is an important group of proposals not yet implemented, despite attempts. They are all related with the absence of a suitable **technological platform** to deal efficiently with all processes and data related to the European Baccalaureate management.

They correspond to the following:

An upgrade and customization of the BAC module in the School Management System (SMS)  
A reliable and secure platform for the exchange of files and collaborative remote work on-line for the elaboration of examination papers, etc.  
Technology to allow digital correction and marking  
User-friendly reporting and data analysis tools, especially concerning results

A decision of the BoG not yet implemented, the one referring to the use of teachers in the system for both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> correction, might need to be revisited to the light of the various recommendations received on the internal/external input on assessment of final exams. This work could be joined to the process of anonymizing of copies and distance correction of scripts.

The remaining recommendations would fall in the following areas:

Number and nature of examinations  
Process of elaboration of examinations  
External expertise and continuous teachers training

## **PROPOSAL**

The Secretary General together with the Bacca-laureate Unit would be willing to receive mandate to draft a proposal for future actions in the areas mentioned in the conclusion.

The proposal would be presented to the coming round of meetings in Autumn 2015 for opinion and eventual adoption.

## **OPINION OF THE BOARD OF INSPECTORS**

The BIS expressed a favourable opinion on the document 'Follow-up of recent reports of the chairmen of the European Bacca-laureate Examining Boards 2008-2014'.

## **OPINION OF THE JOINT TEACHING COMMITTEE**

The Joint Teaching Committee expressed a favourable opinion on the document and gave a mandate to the Bacca-laureate Unit to put forward concrete proposals, along the lines indicated in the document's conclusions.

## **PROPOSAL**

The Board of Governors is requested to take note of the present document and to grant the Office of the Secretary General, through its European Bacca-laureate Unit, a mandate to draft a proposal for future actions in the areas mentioned in the conclusion.

# **Annex I**

# **Reports 2008-2014**



# **I. Report of the chairman of the 2008 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor Aatos LAHTINEN**

## **1. Proposal regarding the examination's structure**

In my view, the most obvious aspect of the Baccalaureate in need of close attention is the oral examinations. The way the questions are drawn up for the oral examinations and how the candidates are evaluated tends to give one cause to doubt the examination's impartiality and objectivity. The results of the oral examinations seem to correlate strongly with those of the written examinations (cf. report [2]), which raises the additional question of whether they are actually necessary. On the other hand, there are cases where a candidate who has otherwise done poorly miraculously gets a mark in the oral examination that is sufficient for him or her to pass the Baccalaureate. Moreover it is expensive to hold the oral examinations and they need an arduous logistic operation which clearly places a burden on schools.

Nevertheless, oral examinations in languages have an obvious function in view of the importance of spoken language skills. Consequently, the Language 1 and Language 2 oral examinations could be preserved. Eliminating the other two oral examinations could be compensated for by adding a sixth written examination to the Baccalaureate on an optional subject, which could even be a two-period one.

I would therefore suggest a switch to the following exam structure, something that has already been proposed in reports [1] and [2]:

**The European Baccalaureate consists of six written examinations and two oral examinations**

**The written examinations are:**

- **Language 1 basic or advanced course**
- **Language 2 basic or advanced course**
- **Mathematics 5 period or 3 period or advanced course**
- **3 other examinations, at least two of which are based on 4 period courses**

**The oral examinations are:**

- **Language 1**
- **Language 2.**

It was estimated in report [1] that a structure such as this would be at least 200,000 euros cheaper than the present structure.

## 2. Proposal for calculation marks

For the reasons I gave earlier on in this report, far more weight should be attached to the external assessment. It should be realised in particular that harmonising the basis of the written examinations to cover the syllabuses in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> classes will give them additional weighting. Either one of the following models could be used to calculate the marks and total final mark:

### Model A

- **Internal assessment 25%**
  - o **A mark assessment 2/5**
  - o **B mark assessment 3/5**
- **Six written examinations 55% (i.e. around 9.2% per exam)**
  - o **External assessment only**
- **Two oral examinations 20 % (i.e. 10% per exam)**
  - o **Teacher's assessment 1/4**
  - o **External assessment 3/4**

### Model B

- **Internal assessment 25%**
  - o **A mark assessment 2/5**
  - o **B mark assessment 3/5**
- **Six written examinations 55%**
  - o **Teacher's assessment 1/4**
  - o **External assessment 3/4**
- **Two oral examinations 20 %**
  - o **Teacher's assessment 1/4**
  - o **External assessment 3/4**

In Model A, internal assessment accounts for around a third of the overall score (30%). In Model B it is just under half (43.75%). In both cases the external assessment has more weighting attached to it than the internal. This would have a positive effect both on the objectivity of the marking system and the Baccalaureate's public image. It should be realised in particular with regard to Model A that the marks gained in written examinations which some universities attach so much importance to are based exclusively on external assessment, a system that is widely held to be reliable. Both models are based on suggestions in report [1].

## 3. Proposal regarding the marks recorded on the certificate

Because of the frequent need to know the marks achieved in the written and oral examinations I would suggest, as report [1] also does, that they should be recorded on the Baccalaureate certificate. In other words, the certificate would state the following:

- **the total final mark**
- **the marks for the six written examinations**
- **the marks for the two oral examinations**

#### 4. Proposal regarding the deliberation process

The deliberation process should be abolished. It should be replaced with **the opportunity to retake one or more of the examinations in the case of a candidate failing to achieve the total final mark of 60.00.**

#### 5. Proposals for drawing up the written examinations

At present the written examinations are mainly based on the syllabuses for just the 7th class. However, studies in all subjects in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> classes form a natural entirety. What is more, the type of mechanical questions set, especially in natural science subjects, make it hard to measure the candidate's knowledge and ability. I would therefore suggest that **the examination questions are based on the syllabuses for both the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> classes and that the questions should be made less mechanical in nature and should instead be developed to measure the candidate's maturity in that particular subject**

The process where the questions are based on proposals coming from the schools does not seem to be promoting the development of the examinations. It could also lead to doubts about the Baccalaureate's impartiality. In my opinion, it is vital both for the sake of the objectivity of the system and the high standard of the Baccalaureate that **the examination questions should to be written by a separate team of Inspectors and external experts right from the outset.**

#### 6. Proposals regarding the quality control of the written examinations

Quality control was dealt with in several earlier reports (cf. [1], [2], [3], [5], [6]). Nevertheless, the situation is still not satisfactory. Quality control needs to be stepped up and responsibility for it should be clearly designated.

**The team drawing up an examination should be responsible for the content of the questions, the equivalence of the translations of the questions into various other languages, and compliance with the agreed principles of harmonisation. The BAC Unit should be responsible for the appearance, layout and legibility of the questions. The BAC Unit should have a person responsible for checking compliance with the principles of harmonisation, checking the linguistic equivalence of the questions in different languages, and correcting typos.**

#### 7. Proposal regarding the presentation of the written examinations

The final stage of quality control should be when the questions are presented to the Chairman of the Examining Board. This should not merely be the formality it is today, but a proper presentation as follows:

**The written examinations are presented to a work group led by the Chairman of the Examining Board also consisting of the Head of the BAC Unit, the Inspector assisting the Chairman and an adequate number of competent examiners. The huge number of examinations make it necessary to set aside three days for the presentation, rather than just the one. The work group should be able to familiarise itself with the questions at least a week before the presentation. The questions should be in their final form when they are being**

presented. Following the presentations, any changes may be made only with the authorisation of the Chairman of the Board.

#### 8. Proposal for drawing up the oral examinations

To strengthen the image of reliability for the oral examinations, there needs to be a switch to a procedure in which **an external team writes all the questions in the examination**. If this is not thought to be possible immediately, there should be a procedure in which **the external examiner writes some of the questions**. Both the internal and external examiners must have enough time to familiarise themselves with the questions and comment on them. **The questions in the oral examination for each subject should have the same level of difficulty** (cf. [4]).

#### 9. Proposals regarding the examination arrangements

Candidates should only see the examination questions when everyone has received the paper.

Permanent written guidelines should be drawn up for the Directors regarding special arrangements for candidates who are ill or disabled.

#### 10. Proposal regarding the evaluation of the written examinations

**Each written examination should have clear and detailed written instructions for marking.** This has been dealt with in earlier reports [1], [2] and [6]. In order to narrow the dispersion of assessment, **each subquestion should be divided into smaller units in the instructions** to ensure consistent marking of incomplete answers. **The external examiners for each examination should also be encouraged to contact one another at the start of the marking session to ensure that everyone interprets the guidelines in the same way.**

#### 11. Proposal regarding the evaluation of the oral examinations

There is a huge risk of dispersion in the evaluation in the oral examinations. This is due not just to the large number of examiners but also the number of language sections (cf. report [2]). To minimise this, **each oral examination should have evaluation guidelines that are as precise as possible. In addition, consistency of marking should be monitored using methods of statistical analysis.**

#### 12. Proposals regarding the logistics of the evaluation process

The evaluation process we now have is logistically awkward and expensive. It cannot be improved at once so intermediate steps has to be used. This has already been dealt with in reports [1] and [2].

An initial and immediately available solution to the problem of space at Brussels 1 is that the **marking could be done in several of the European Schools**. I think it would be worth introducing this notion of decentralisation immediately.

The next step should be to look into **the possibility of sending the examination papers directly to the external examiners**, which would save enormously on costs. One possibility would be - in principle, at least – for the papers to be mailed from the school directly to the examiner. Another possibility is **the use of IT-technique in conveying the content of examination papers to the external examiners**. This must surely be the next natural step to take to make improvements to the system.

The ultimate solution, and one which is still looming on the horizon, is for the candidates to do their examinations from start to finish on a computer, after which the whole process can be computerised.

### **13. Proposals for monitoring the feasibility of the examination**

This year for the first time teachers were asked to make comments on the written examinations on a special form. This is an excellent and worthwhile procedure. In the future they should be asked to make their comments using a computer. That would be easier if the form could be completed and sent on-line.

But monitoring feasibility is more than just processing comments such as these. **An analysis should always be made after each examination of how well the examination fulfilled its purpose**. In my opinion, this is not done in any systematic way with regard to all the examinations.

In addition to follow-up analyses, each round of Baccalaureate produces important statistical data that can be used to monitor the feasibility of the Baccalaureate as a whole. Monitoring based on time series in this way provides an excellent basis for improving the examination. The BAC Unit already produces statistical data on the Baccalaureate. But it seems that there is no comprehensive approach to thinking about what kind of statistical and other analyses are needed to monitor and develop the examination's feasibility. I think **a working group should be set up to set targets for monitoring the Baccalaureate's feasibility**. This has already been remarked upon in earlier reports ([2] and [3]).

### **14. Proposal for speeding up the handling of complaints and appeals**

The Chairman should take a decision on complaints and appeals that are clearly unfounded directly on the basis of the BAC Unit's opinion. The Chairman could continue to consult the Board of Inspectors (Secondary) concerning possibly justified complaints, but the meeting should be scheduled for the beginning of August. Speeding up the complaints process has already been proposed in report [3].

### **15. Proposal for the length of the Chairmen's term of office**

The work of the Board of Inspectors (Secondary) and that of the European Baccalaureate Examining Board would be more effective if the chairmanship were for at least two years. The

equitable treatment of Member States could certainly be ensured at some other way. This has already been suggested in report [3].

## **16. Proposals regarding the development of the BAC Unit**

The BAC Unit should be given more responsibility for the typographical layout and final proofreading of the exam questions, if necessary by increasing resources. The Unit should also be given more responsibility for making more in-depth statistical analyses and for monitoring the exam's feasibility, again if necessary by increasing resources. This has already been mentioned in reports [2] and [3].

## **SOURCES**

- [1] Report of the 'European Bacculaureate' Working Group, 2007-D-172-en-1
- [2] Report of the Chairman of the 2007 European Bacculaureate Examining Board, 2007-D-2010-en-1
- [3] Report of the Chairman of the 2006 European Bacculaureate, 2006-D-2910-en-2
- [4] Report of the Chairman of the 2005 European Bacculaureate Examining Board, 2005-D-3010-en-2
- [5] Report of the Chairman of the 2004 European Bacculaureate Examining Board, 2004-D-3110-en-1
- [6] Recommendations of the Chairman of the 2003 European Bacculaureate Examining Board, 2004-D-42-en-1
- [7] Arrangements for implementing the regulations for the European Bacculaureate, 2007-D-227-en-2
- [8] Memorandum sur l'organisation de la session 2008 du Baccaauréat Européen, 2008-D-11-fr-3
- [9] Draft Report on the European Bacculaureate 2007, 2007-D-2110-en-1
- [10] Past exam questions for the European Bacculaureate
- [11] Internal guidelines of the European Schools on practical arrangements for the Bacculaureate
- [12] Discussions with Directors, Deputy directors and those responsible for practical arrangements for the Bacculaureate.

## **II. Report of the chairman of the 2009 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor Mats EKHOLM**

A critical review is presented for this well-functioning examination system. The contents of the examination tasks are looked upon through the lens of the ambitions that the European Union has spelled out for schools in its Reference Framework of the Lisbon Strategy. To an astonishingly small extent the examination tasks care for the eight core ambitions of this strategy. The use of the first language and of a second language is covered to some degree which also goes for parts of the competencies that the students have in mathematics and in natural sciences. Digital competence, learning to learn, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression and learning to learn are examples of ambition areas that have disappeared in the examinations. A school knowledge template has been used to illuminate what areas that the examination items succeed in measuring. Most items that the students have faced during the written part of the examination have been classified into five categories. In mathematics and natural sciences little effort was given to test the competence of the students to take a stand. In these subjects a dominant part of the written examination dealt with the competencies that the students have acquired to use the tools of the disciplines. The examination items used in geography, history and philosophy show a broader coverage of the knowledge that the students have acquired. The optional examination tasks that are presented to the students during the examination create variations that lead to conclusions that students are not passing the same Baccalaureate.

The mixture of external and internal assessment is scrutinized. Comparisons are made between markings made by the teachers and the external examiners as well as between preliminary marks and final marks. The changes in markings that follow from the use of external examiners constitute a small percentage of the initial marking. The question is raised whether the costs for the external assessment during the written as well as the oral examination are worth their price. The use of the term external for the second examiners is questioned. A fair amount of second examiners are selected from earlier teachers in and school leaders of European Schools and do not represent a true external perspective when acting during the examinations. The inspectors are not either an external force as they are deeply involved in the management of the system. The European Baccalaureate is perceived as less external than it wants to be with a low degree of uniformity and it is also seen as an old fashioned variant of examinations.

Based on the critical review of the European Baccalaureate several proposals are made for future use. The internal perception of the Baccalaureate needs to be changed from being loaded with a large amount of external inputs to a view that it is mainly an internal affair. A more professional approach to the construction of tasks for examination use is recommended. A more comprehensive approach towards the examination procedures is recommended so that the European Baccalaureate will mean the same thing in the future. The examinations need to be based on the Reference Framework of the Lisbon Strategy for the European Union. Some kind of template for the content of school subjects is recommended to be used when constructing tasks for examination. The European Schools are asked to stop the use of restricted paper and pencil tests. The use of digital techniques and other means that are used in realistic situations need to become more common. The European Schools are asked to adjust their examination routines to the demands to cover broad aspects of student knowledge. Assessments need to be made in an adjustment to the kind of knowledge that the students develop and not restricted to ritualised examination periods. A recommendation is given that the European School system trusts school directors, educational advisers and teachers to conduct the European Baccalaureate. The financial resources that until now have been used for a

common use of second examiners during written and oral examinations instead ought to be used for randomly sampled second examinations of student achievements and for a larger involvement of universities in the analysis of the outcomes of the examination system as well as in the construction of examination tasks. The European Schools are recommended to restrict their rules for how students with special needs will be met during examinations to a simple article that says that the school needs to adjust to the needs of the student.

***Drop the choices to obtain uniform examinations***

***Oral skills are not well-tested***

***Science skills are not well-tested***

### **III. Report of the chairman of the 2010 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor Martina KRIŽAJ ORTAR**

My opinion and proposals are quite similar to those generated by my predecessors and the external evaluation of the European Baccalaureate. This means that I would also like to draw attention **to the need to ensure a higher level of external factor in the Baccalaureate** (e.g. in preparation of exam papers and oral examination questions and assessment criteria, in selection of examiners, in the calculation of the final note, etc.) and the need to ensure the objectiveness and the comparability of the examination papers (for instance by abandoning the optional tasks of a non-essay type, by examination of linguistic adequacy of translations and by the conceptual compliance of different language versions of the same examination paper).

Concurrently, I partly supplement the proposals of my predecessors for a **different Baccalaureate structure (this means that I propose 6 exams, that is 3 compulsory and 3 optional** – the non-linguistic subjects exams should be written only, compulsory languages exams should be both written and oral, optional language exam should be written only) and I add a proposal for a possibility of **prolongation of examination time for SWALS** (because they will no longer receive the examination papers in their mother tongue).

### **IV. Report of the chairman of the 2011 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor RNDr. Anna TIRPÁKOVÁ**

- External examiners of written and oral examinations should not be the teacher of the pupil.
- The examiner should present the proposition of questions not only to responsible inspectors for a given subject but also to the external experts, who would review them, respectively their production could be also in charge of external experts and the questions could be afterwards controlled by corresponding inspectors.
- There should be written at least two pre-tests in the period of two or three weeks.
- Pre-tests should be written earlier than only two or three month before the Baccalaureate.
- ES should keep in touch with its graduates. I suggest elaborating a questionnaire which every candidate of the European Baccalaureate would get. A student would complete a questionnaire and send it back only after completing the first semester. In the questionnaire, he/she would answer questions such as: Did the knowledge you



achieved in a given subject in the secondary school help you? Which study units would you suggest to integrate, respectively to leave out? Etc. The questionnaires would be scored regularly and could serve as an appropriate tool within the process of curricula innovation. ES would besides other advantages thus have a feedback – the survey of the successfulness of their graduates and could thus very flexibly react on the requirements of universities. For example, they would be able to prepare students for new accredited fields of study established by the universities.

## **V. Report of the chairman of the 2012 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor Norbert PACHLER**

1. Teacher assessment is a potential strength but the European School system may wish to conduct a review to ascertain whether all internal teacher assessment meets research-informed principles and to ensure a more explicitly criterion-referenced approach to teacher assessment.
  - clear standards are set for performance based on holistic criteria;
  - assessment processes are shared with pupils;
  - pupils are encouraged to monitor themselves;
  - mastery and progress orientated feedback is given;
  - encourages pupils to think and is based around good-quality tasks that are anchored in important and relevant subject matter and are engaging, contextualised and equitable;
  - is concrete and within the experience of the learner and takes place in conditions that are not threatening;
  - values the overall quality of the response;
  - features assessment by teachers who have a good understanding of the constructs they are assessing as a key component. (Gipps, 1994/2012)
2. The European School system may wish to conduct an audit in relation to quality assurance arrangements, in particular in relation to the professionalization of the setting of examinations and strategic oversight and operationalization of innovation and change in the system:
  - greater degree of external specialist expertise, e.g. through test setters
  - greater degree of central commissioning, monitoring and quality assuring
3. There is a need for the re-conceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Examiners, External / Subject Examiners and the Chair:
  - increase in externality,
  - re-structuring of the Board,
  - lengthening of period of office and
  - reconsideration of terms of reference.
4. The introduction of greater degrees of and scope for standardization of written and oral examinations and results as well as of formative assessment across subjects and schools is desirable.
5. There should be a re-examination of the role of inspectors in relation to the safeguarding of the quality of the European School system and the European Baccalaureate:

- they appear to be asked to perform too many diverse function with a (severely) stretched resource envelope
6. The European School system should take steps to strengthen the quality assurance arrangements in relation to the European Bacculaureate in Type 2 schools.
  7. I recommend a review of the current regulations:
    - more differentiated arrangements for pupils with special educational needs;
    - clarification of re-take options;
    - development of an exit examination as well as an alternative award;
    - third marking;
    - the role of quality of language in examinations;
    - cheating;
    - lines of reporting
  8. Work on the use of criterion-referencing in oral examinations should continue.
  9. The lack of consistency in communicating results across schools should be addressed, e.g. a greater attention should be paid to preserving the privacy of students.
  10. The lack of feedback on the appropriateness or otherwise of their judgments to task setters and first markers is an issue of concern to key stakeholders.
  11. The desirability of the pass mark being set at 6 should be explored.
  12. In terms of curriculum development a stronger focus on the special characteristics of the European School system around culture, values and languages seems desirable.

## **VI. Report of the chairman of the 2013 European Bacculaureate Examining Board, Mr Bernard DEVLAMMINCK**

1. The system's general organisation operated smoothly in 2012-2013 but it is a complex system which can prove fragile whenever changes are introduced. I am thinking of the introduction of new accredited schools, of the new structure of schooling or of the composition of the teaching staff. To guarantee a reliable and fair Bacculaureate system, it is necessary to have a clear vision of the aims and to be in possession of indicators allowing the changes proposed to be evaluated.
2. Harmonisation efforts must be continued. Without calling into question measures aimed at harmonisation of processes which involve external interventions, action needs to be taken internally, within the European Schools, to develop a common pedagogical culture.

To achieve that objective, two means are proposed:

- in-service training of teachers for professional development purposes
  - the importance attached to coordinators in the schools' hierarchy.
3. To avoid turbulence in the system, reforms must be phased in and evaluated at each stage.

4. The days spent marking scripts at the correction centre in Brussels could be made more profitable if they were also used to identify good practices, with a view to even fairer assessment.

## **VII. Report of the chairman of the 2014 European Baccalaureate Examining Board, Professor Kiril BANKOV**

The recommendations below are based on my one-year observation of the European School System. The impression that I formed during my term of office is certainly not comprehensive and probably unbalanced to some extent. I believe that my duty is to give recommendations that are closely related not only to the Baccalaureate but also to the functioning of other aspects of the European School System.

Some of the recommendations will require more time (i.e. years) to be implemented. If accepted, these recommendations may become long-term goals to be achieved in the future.

**1. Pre-Bac examination papers to be prepared at the Central Office** as is the case with the Bac papers. This is an important step toward harmonisation of the Baccalaureate. Pre-Bac results are taken into account in the final marks in the Certificate. For that reason it is important for the Pre-Bac examination papers to be prepared in a uniform, standardised way.

**2. Clear specifications for the Bac (and Pre-Bac) examinations are needed for every subject.** The specifications should include the content and the cognitive aspects of the examinations. These documents will not only facilitate the development of the examination questions, but also will make possible judgement of the validity of the examination papers. I think that some of the problems in the chemistry written examination in the 2014 Bac session came about because of the lack of such specifications. These are problems such as: (i) the presence of a question in respect of which it is not clear whether or not it was included in the curriculum; (ii) the time allowed for solving/answering the questions; (iii) the expected level of difficulty of the examination, etc. These problems could be avoided (at least partially) if there were clear specifications for the chemistry examination and a check against them was made by experts. This certainly applies to the examinations in all other subjects.

**3. Detailed guides for correction of candidates' scripts are required.** The usual practice for the correction of candidates' papers for the Bac examinations is to give the markers guides that contain only the solutions and/or the right answers to the examination questions. It would be better to make these guides more detailed, considering different solutions and describing the award of different scores. The latter issue involves the following situation: how to award maximum or minimum scores is usually clear, but how to award scores for partially correct answers is less obvious. This is a critical issue in scripts with partially correct answers but not a complete solution. My observation showed that there was not usually a big difference in the scores awarded by the two markers. This is probably because the second markers are people who have previous experience as teachers in the European School System. However, I think that an important step towards harmonisation of the examinations is to have a clear common marking and grading scheme for each subject.

**4. Involvement of university professors in some of the Bac activities.** I found a similar idea mooted by one of my predecessors, Professor Mats Ekholm, in his report on the 2009 Baccalaureate. He proposed including university professors as second markers in the correction of the written examinations. I did not note any progress in that respect. I think that the involvement of university professors is important, for the following two reasons at least: (i) Even

though the European School System works quite well, it is pernicious for it to remain self-contained – communication with other education systems will keep the educational process fresh. (ii) The natural partners for fruitful communication are universities, since one of the goals of the European School System is to prepare students for university studies. University professors may be involved in the development of examination questions, the setting of examination papers and (as Professor Ekholm suggested) in the correction of candidates' scripts. Involvement in the latter activity requires detailed guides (see recommendation 3 above).

**5. Two oral examinations.** Article 6.6.1.1 of the Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate (Applicable for the year 2014 Baccalaureate session) states that candidates should take three oral examinations. I tried to find out what the purpose/rationale of the oral examinations is. Since I could not find a written statement on the subject, I decided to rely on the common understanding of what oral examinations are for, namely so that students can express their knowledge orally. In school education this is most appropriate for the so-called 'narrative subjects'. Mathematics and the (natural) sciences do not belong in that category. This is the reason why I believe that oral examinations in mathematics and the (natural) sciences do not make much sense. On that basis, I propose that Article 6.6.1.1 (above) be amended so that candidates are expected to take two oral examinations, namely: (i) Language 1 or Advanced Language 1, and; (ii) Language 2 or Advanced Language 2, or History (2 or 4 periods), or Geography (2 or 4 periods).

**6. Steps toward harmonisation of oral examinations.** I was surprised to find that in some subjects oral examinations are conducted with a different set of examination topics for different language sections, even in one and the same school. I think that it would be far more uniform and easier for each school to prepare only one set of examination topics for all sections. The Central Office should definitely control this process strictly (through the respective inspectors). I certainly understand that for language examinations and for some other subjects it is important to have different sets of questions for different language sections – I am not including them in this recommendation.

**7. Maintaining a database and conducting in-depth analysis of the Bac results.** The Bac results provide a wealth of data. It is a pity not to use them for in-depth analysis of students' achievements in Bac examinations. My suggestion to the Baccalaureate Unit is to create a 'statistics' section that will maintain the Bac data over the years and will conduct in-depth analysis of students' results. The benefits are that it will be possible not only to compare the level of difficulty of the examinations year by year, but also to track the differences between successful candidates, etc. Using contemporary methods of analysis of examination results, it will also be possible to equate examination papers from different years based on the basic items.

**8. Participation in international educational studies.** I was informed that the ES, Luxembourg I took part in the PISA study as a school coming under the Luxembourg education system. During my term of office I learned that the European School System is a unique educational entity, not connected to any national education system. In the modern world it is not possible to have a separate existence without information about the System's place amongst other education systems. The most reliable information in that respect can be obtained through participation in international educational studies. This why I recommend that the European School System should take part in studies such as PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, etc. There are many benefits to be gained from participation in international studies. They include the fact that these

studies provide intermediate (not just at the end of the school year) and periodic diagnostics of the system.