



Schola Europaea / Office of the Secretary-General

Ref: 2019-07-LD-28 AB

Brussels, 24 July 2019

Kathryn Máthé
President APEEE EEB I

Giles Houghton-Clarke
President APEEE EEB II

Anastassios Papadopoulos
President APEEE EEB III

Kristin Dijkstra
President APEEE EEB IV

Subject: Introduction of the New Marking System

Dear Ms Máthé,
Dear Mr Houghton-Clarke,
Dear Mr Papadopoulos,
Dear Ms Dijkstra,

I have read your letter of 17 July 2019 with attentiveness.

With your letter you seek on behalf of the parents of the four Brussels Schools clarity on the state of play of the New Marking System roll out and you share with us your concern that the European Schools might not be ready to take the next step with respect to the introduction of the New Marking System.

On behalf of the Office of the Secretary-General and as chairman of the 'Steering Committee New Marking System' I can assure you that the European Schools are on track and well prepared to continue the introduction of the New Marking System in S 6 as of the 2019/20 school year and in S 7 as of the 2020/21 school year.

With respect to the 'Guidelines for Use of the New Marking Scale' I can inform you that the chapter on the use of the new system in the European Baccalaureate will be added by the end of August 2019, meaning within the time frame endorsed by the Joint Teaching Committee in February 2017. The new chapter of the Guidelines will provide – as envisaged – a generic

approach to assessment in the BAC cycle and some guidelines on how to develop matrixes for the written and oral examinations.

Based on the examples provided in the new chapter of the Guidelines national inspectors together with their experts will develop a generic matrix and a sample paper for their subject. Inspectors have committed themselves to finalize this work as soon as possible for all relevant subjects. The relevant documents will be presented officially during the February 2020 pedagogical meetings. This has been confirmed by decision of the Board of Inspectors Secondary Cycle on 17 June 2019 (2019-06-D-3-en-1).

The BAC sample papers will be based on the last version of the syllabi and the attainment descriptors which have been – as you know – recently established and reflect the competence based approach of the teaching and learning in the European Schools.

As far as you refer to the release of updated math and science syllabi, I would like to clarify that these syllabi are supposed to be approved by February 2020 and then to be implemented in S6 as of the 2020/21 school year. The first BAC examinations, related to those new syllabi will be delivered at the end of the 2021/22 school year.

It might have skipped your attention that the document on 'Harmonised assessment at the end of year 5 and written examinations leading to B marks in year 5' (ref. 2013-05-D-34-en-16) was already cancelled and replaced in September 2018 by a document with the same title, but a new reference number (2018-01-D-19-en) following a request of parents in the Joint Teaching Committee in February 2017. The new document provides also a revised Annex XI ('New Marking Scale').

We agree with you that the analysis of the results of the current S 5 is of utmost importance to give further guidance to the implementation process. The Office of the Secretary-General currently analyses the S 5 results on system level and will share the outcome of this analysis with all stakeholders at the beginning of the coming school year.

The outcome of the analysis will be important in particular under two aspects:

Firstly, the analysis might help the Office of the Secretary-General identifying together with Directors and Deputy Directors Secondary Cycle areas where more harmonization is needed either on system or on school level and a common understanding of the New Marking System and its application needs further strengthening. This will then have to be addressed with individual trainings and information measures within the individual schools and the different sections of the schools. The Steering Committee will support the schools in their efforts in this respect.

Secondly, the outcome of the analysis of the application of the New Marking System in the current S 5 is supposed to guide Member States in the establishment of the national equivalence tables. This has already been envisaged in the information letter which had been sent to the Heads of Delegation on 29 March 2019, which also was shared with the President of Interparents at that time. The letter – as requested by you – provided a formal and open communication describing the new approach to marking and laid out the implementation timeline.

In a new communication, envisaged for the beginning of the 2019/20 school year, the Office of the Secretary-General will share with Member States the analysis of the S 5 results and renew its offer to provide the Member States with evidence and support when establishing the new equivalence tables. Nevertheless, it needs to be highlighted again that Member States - while respecting Article 5 of the Convention Defining the Statute of the European Schools – are autonomous in their decision with respect to the establishment of new equivalence tables.

Obviously, the document 'Equivalences between the European Baccalaureate and the Upper Secondary Leaving Certificates of National Schools and Admission of European Baccalaureate Holders to Universities in the Member Countries' (doc. 2014-03-D-25) will be updated in the light of the contributions of the Member States.

I sincerely hope that parents will understand that the Office of the Secretary-General, the 'Steering Committee New Marking System', Directors, Deputy Directors and Inspectors are fully dedicated to the second phase of the introduction of the New Marking System and are aware of our joint responsibility linked to this process.

The 'Steering Committee New Marking System' is open discussing the process more in-depth with you in a meeting to be scheduled early September 2019.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A. Beckmann', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andreas BECKMANN
Deputy Secretary-General

cc: Mr Konstantinos Batsillas (Head of Greek Delegation)
Directors of the European Schools Brussels
Deputy Directors Secondary Cycle of the European Schools Brussels
Board of Inspectors Secondary Cycle
Ms Mariana Saude (EU COM, DGHR Dir E)
Mr Pere Moles Palleja (President INTERPARENTS)

