



INCLUSION POLICY

Arendal videregående skole recognizes the right and responsibility of every student to experience the joy of setting and achieving meaningful goals as a learner and as a human being, alone and together with others, and to contribute to the school community as a valued and unique member of it.

We believe that when students work with teachers and each other, the diversity of their backgrounds, abilities, skills and interests strengthen both the individuals' learning and the learning community. Therefore, our view is that students with special educational needs shall as far as possible take part in regular learning activities, and only in situations where a student has significant concentration, behavior, language or learning difficulties or illnesses that make learning in the classroom inappropriate shall more individualistic arrangements be made.

According to the Norwegian Education Act, every student has the right to adapted education. Students who cannot achieve satisfactory results in regular learning activities have the right to special education.

Adapted Education

Adapted education starts from the acknowledgement of each student's identity and worth. Another central acknowledgement for successful delivery of adapted education is that students' learning needs are diverse.

How a teacher (and every other adult member of the school community) treats every individual student and how he or she leads the class is decisive for these two acknowledgements to become the school standard. More pragmatically, teachers need to spend time in the beginning of the school year to find out about their students' backgrounds, abilities, skills and interests and to adjust teaching accordingly. This is not easy, as there is often great variation in the students' learning needs in any one class.

We at Arendal videregående skole believe that adapted education is best achieved through teachers varying the materials, methods, content, organisation, speed and intensity of learning. A most common strategy here is dividing students into small collaborative groups so as to differentiate learning. Most often, such groups are heterogeneously put together; in some instances, it may be justified to arrange some activities according to different levels of challenge.

A varied approach to adapted education means that a teacher will not always reach every student in an optimal way. However, given the importance of the social aspect of learning and the value we attach to building a class and a school community, this is still better than trying to individualise teaching maximally.

Other strategies for adapted education at our school are:

- Building a safe context for learning; a good and supportive class environment.
- Attempting to inspire students by making learning relevant to their young lives.



- Putting emphasis on the students participating in setting and understanding the goals of their learning, making the link between assessment and goals explicit, and helping students develop strategies for progressing from their present stage of learning towards the goals.

If these strategies are not sufficient, the school may give groups of students some voluntary extra lessons, a second teacher may temporarily be allocated to a class, or teachers give individual students strengthened in-class help in a discrete manner.

Special Education in Norwegian Schools

In some instances, adapted education is insufficient for a student to achieve satisfactory learning. If this is suspected, either upon intake to Arendal videregående skole or while at the school, a combination of discussions and learning diagnostics is conducted in order to determine the need for special education. The county's (school owner) pedagogic-psychological team, medical advice, school counsellors, school administration, teachers, student or parents can initiate such a process.

If a need for special education is uncovered, an individual learning plan is most often put together for the student in one or more of their subjects. This usually involves adjustments in the competence objectives the student attempts. An individual learning plan where either not all the competence objectives of a subject are attempted or are not attempted fully means that a student accepts that even if the same assessment criteria are used, the highest grades in the subject cannot be achieved. It is important to emphasise that all special education measures are meant to be temporary and are evaluated on a regular basis, and students with individual learning plans take part in the class community as far as possible.

Students who apply to IB Diploma Programme at Arendal videregående skole, do not typically qualify for special education accommodations. If such cases emerge, we shall consider case-by-case the most purposeful way of putting together an individual learning plan.

Assess to Learning Accommodations

Inclusive accommodations can be made for students who are professionally diagnosed with one or more of the following and can provide formal documentation:

- Autism Spectrum
- Learning Disabilities
- Medical Conditions
- Mental Health Conditions
- Physical or Sensory processing disorders
- Speech or communication issues

IBDP Exam Accommodations

"The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage, and would prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of access arrangements may be authorized" the Diploma Programme *Assessment procedures* 2020 states.

In order to be granted accommodations during exams, documentation must be submitted to the IB by Nov. 1st of the second year (examination year). Documentation from relevant professionals must



not be older than 3 years. The DP coordinator has the responsibility for applying for inclusive arrangements to the IB.

The following accommodations must be approved by the IB:

- Extra time
- A Reader
- Word Processor with or without Spell Check
- Scribe or Speech Recognition Software
- Enhanced lettering

The following accommodations can be granted to any student who needs it:

- Separate room
- Noise cancelling head phones (no Bluetooth)\ear plugs
- Rest Breaks

Short-Term Illness

Short-term or sudden illnesses that impacts a student's ability to perform under assessment circumstances need to be documented by a medical professional. Documentation should be delivered to both the contact teacher and DP coordinator. In some cases, assessment components can be excused depending on additional circumstances and proper documentation submitted to the IBO.

Long-Term Illness or Permanent Disability

The school provides counselling services according to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and training. The school counsellors will follow the guidelines and rules published by Norwegian authorities to support students' needs. Generally, the IBDP at Arendal VGS is not recommended for students with chronic illness that keeps them from attending lessons physically. However, exceptions are made for students who demonstrate academic interest and achievement. In such cases, the student's medical professional, and the special pedagogic counsellor at the school should create an individual learning plan that supports the student's health while studying. The IBDP coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the student has access to inclusive arrangements outlined by the IBO's policy.

Teacher Collaboration

Meetings for subject teachers, coordinators, and the contact teacher are organized throughout the school year. In these meetings teachers discuss their observations, experiences, and student performance in the classroom. During these meetings patterns of learning difficulties and challenges can more easily be identified, and plans can be put in place to ensure appropriate follow-up. The contact teacher is responsible to contact counsellors when necessary.



The Role of Counsellors and School Nurses

At Arendal VGS we provide students access to guidance counsellors, school nurses and a career counsellor, all of which can be contacted via email or SMS and can be visited during school hours. The role of counsellors and nurses is to safeguard the social, emotional and mental well-being of the students and act as liaisons with state authorities should a student require additional support.

The team of nurses and counsellors hold different assemblies throughout the school year to tackle topics from sex education and mental health awareness to hosting guest speakers.

Special educational needs policy revision

This policy is the responsibility of the Head of School. It is prepared in cooperation with the IBDP Coordinator and acknowledged by the school leadership team and all teachers.

The policy applies to all students at Arendal videregående skole. It is available on the school's electronic learning platform for staff, students and parents. The policy will be revised on a yearly basis.