

PYP: From principles into practice FAQs

last updated – OCTOBER 2018

ACTION

- 1) **Should students be made explicitly aware of the terminology for the different demonstrations of action?**
 - a) Students should be aware that there are multiple ways of demonstrating action – schools have the flexibility to explore these in similar ways to how they would explore the attributes of the learner profile and the approaches to learning.
- 2) **Will there be expectations of a balance in the demonstrations of varied action types across the years?**
 - a) No. Demonstrations of action should be authentic and contextual.
- 3) **How can action – specifically social justice and entrepreneurship - be addressed in ways which remain safe and age appropriate but also relevant to our context?**
 - a) Increased clarity around demonstrations of action in the enhanced PYP, together with teacher support materials, will help to unpack this more for teachers in the digital resource [PYP: From principles into practice](#).

AGENCY

- 4) **How will agency be evaluated in a school?**
 - a) Agency is not a skill, so cannot be measured as such. It is more about creating a culture which honours the full participation of the learning community in learning and teaching.
- 5) **In schools that have prescribed curriculum, how will we support agency in what students learn?**
 - a) Agency is a further development of our student-centred learning approach, involving the entire learning community. Agency does not negate the need for the schools to create a written curriculum that incorporates appropriate local, national and IB guidance. When thinking about supporting agency, consider opportunities for voice, choice and ownership for all members of your learning community.
- 6) **What is personalized learning and how is this different from differentiation?**
 - a) With differentiation, the teacher adapts the curriculum to groups of students according to their needs while personalisation involves students in determining their own goals according to their interests and needs.
- 7) **Why agency AND action? Isn't agency part of action?**
 - a) Agency supports action. When students are supported in exercising their agency they are confident and capable in taking student-initiated action.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING (ATL)

- 8) **In the existing programme, the ATL already have subskills, will those no longer stand?**
 - a) Schools have the flexibility to identify their own approaches to learning sub-skills in support of their students and their school context. Some of these may be the same as the ones cited in MTPYPH, while others may be different. The new digital resource, PYP: From principles into practice also offers additional sub-skill considerations.
- 9) **Could you share some examples of the subskills?**
 - a) Some examples of subskills include:
 - thinking** – critical, creative, transfer
 - research** – ethical, media and information literacy
 - communication** – listening, speaking, interpreting
 - social** – interpersonal, social and emotional intelligence
 - self-management** – mindfulness, time management, organisation.

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ASSESSMENT

- 10) Will there be more structured ways of assessing learners in the PYP, as a preparation for MYP?**
- Assessment should be designed in ways appropriate to the development levels and ages of students and includes the monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting of learning. As the learning community supports students to inquire into, learn about and reflect on approaches to learning, knowledge, conceptual understandings and action they will be ready to transition into the MYP or any other middle school programme.

CONCEPTS

- 11) Since "Reflection" is no longer one of the key concepts, could it still be in the programme of inquiry for the following school year, or should it be taken off?**
- By removing reflection as a key concept, the intention is to highlight its importance as an ongoing, dynamic process that is fully integrated into the learning process. Reflection should therefore become embedded inside and outside the programme of inquiry, even if it is not listed as a key concept. We recommend using the transition period to reflect on the difference between highlighting it as a key concept in specific units, and embedding it throughout all planning, learning and teaching.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAMME OF INQUIRY

- 12) How many units of inquiry should be planned for each grade level, including subject specific units of inquiry?**
- Your programme of inquiry for students from 6-12 years will continue to be horizontally and vertically mapped against all six transdisciplinary themes. You may opt for students from 3-6 years to address a minimum of four units in their programme of inquiry each year, to include the transdisciplinary themes Who we are and How we express ourselves.
- 13) How will the enhancement affect multi-age classrooms? In the past teachers had a cycle A and B**
- Multi-age classrooms can continue to plan on a cycle of A and B
- 14) Does the minimum recommendation of 3-4 weeks for each unit of inquiry apply for the entirety of the unit? For example, if you have a unit that is being revisited would this perhaps have a two week focus and then be picked back up or would we need 4 solid weeks as an initial point?**
- An inquiry into a central idea considers the breadth and depth of the learning; therefore, a minimum duration of a total of **3–4 weeks** is recommended for each transdisciplinary unit of inquiry. Greater flexibility on starting points and time frames for your units of inquiry will create a range of learning opportunities, for example, one unit could run throughout the whole year, while others could be revisited once or numerous times, with some overlap where appropriate. Decisions around starting points and time frames for units of inquiry should always prioritise students needs and the impact on their learning.

EARLY LEARNER

- 15) What is the rationale behind allowing 4 units of inquiry for 5-6 year olds? What if we had an MTBA for this in our last report? Will we still have an MTBA for this if our authorization/evaluation is before Oct 2018?**
- Younger students require more time for their inquiries, as reported by many of our existing PYP schools. With regards to matters to be addressed and forthcoming authorization and evaluation, these are addressed in the [transition guide](#) (June 2018).
- 16) How does the IB define play?**

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- a) As defined in the multilingual glossary in the new digital resource, play describes a range of child-initiated activities that involve freedom and choice.
- 17) Won't 4 units for the older early years learners result in less 'coverage' of the curriculum?**
- a) This would depend on how the curriculum is mapped to the transdisciplinary themes and the learning experiences designed in the units of inquiry. Four units allow more time for student-initiated inquiries and deeper exploration of the transdisciplinary themes. Schools also have the flexibility to implement five or six units of inquiry, depending on what works best in their contexts and for their students.
- 18) What about the role of play for students beyond the early years?**
- a) There is a definite role for play for students beyond the early years. Schools have the flexibility to plan for play as they see fit.
- 19) With the extension in age range for the early years and call for uninterrupted play, what role do/should specialist teachers have in this area?**
- a) All teachers, regardless of their roles or subject expertise support learners in the early years by fostering capacities such as investigating, asking questions, solving problems and thinking critically. Play is the starting point for young learners to experience and build these capacities along with language development, self-regulation and conflict resolution for they do not compartmentalise their world into subjects at this age.
- 20) Would we still be required to address all the key concepts across the four units of inquiry for students from 3-6?**
- a) The seven key concepts will continue to be mapped across your programme of inquiry, including students ages 3 – 6.
- 21) Would we still implement six units of inquiry for students 5-12?**
- a) A minimum of four units of inquiry will be required for students aged 3-6 years, with a minimum of six units of inquiry for students aged 6-12 years. Flexible unit of inquiry timeframes will offer new possibilities for authentic learning, eg year-long or two units running simultaneously.
- 22) Why were Who We Are and How We Express Ourselves selected as required units of inquiry to be included in the programme of inquiry for students aged 3-6 years?**
- a) These transdisciplinary themes remain cognitively and developmentally appropriate for students in this age range.

EXHIBITION

- 23) When it says “start from a guided exhibition and move to a student led exhibition? Does this mean over the course of one exhibition or over the course of several years?**
- a) This means over the course of several school years. Schools may wish to move from a more guided experience to a more student-led experience as they become more comfortable with the exhibition process and wish to support student agency.
- 24) Will the exhibition be assessed and reported on?**
- a) Assessment includes student reflection, and teachers' monitoring and documentation of students' learning throughout. As the exhibition is an example of student agency, students are encouraged to regularly reflect upon the goals and success criteria set out for their exhibition. Schools are not required to report on the PYP exhibition.
- 25) Can we have 7 units in the final year of the programme? Do we still have to do all 6 transdisciplinary themes?**
- a) Schools will now have the flexibility to implement the exhibition outside of the programme of inquiry. If the exhibition is outside the programme of inquiry it is not seen as a 7th unit and a PYP planner is not required. Teachers and students will monitor, document and reflect on the process in a manner they see fit. Schools may also choose to keep the exhibition inside the programme of inquiry in which case a PYP planner would be required.
- 26) What is an example of an exhibition outside the POI, does it need to connect to a transdisciplinary theme?**

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- a) As the exhibition is intended to be student designed it is difficult to give a specific example. Teachers may choose to have students create central ideas that sit inside one transdisciplinary theme or create a central idea that encompasses concepts from more than one transdisciplinary theme.
- 27) Does the exhibition still have to be organised around an issue or opportunity or can it be around an interest area?**
- a) Students may wish to inquire into issues or opportunities based on their interests.

INQUIRY

- 28) What is the difference between agency and open inquiry?**
- a) Agency is the power to take meaningful and intentional action, and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of the individual, supporting voice, choice and ownership for everyone in the learning community. Schools can support purposeful student-initiated inquiry and foster agency by encouraging student interests, questions, discoveries and their evolving theories.
- 29) What kind of inquiry strategies support students with diverse learning needs?**
- a) Schools make conscious decisions about inquiry to fit the purpose of learning and the needs of their students. PYP teachers and students collaborate to plan for inquiry through a wide range of strategies, tools and practices that suit learning goals, reflect the learner profile, respond to students' interests, understandings and needs, and the school's culture and context. The upcoming digital resource will provide several strategies for teachers to consider.

LANGUAGE

- 30) Many schools lose the time for additional language learning for students who have diverse learning needs. How do we support both language and learning needs with the constraints of time?**
- a) We would advise schools to revisit policies and practices around language, inclusion and access, and consider the support and resources they have in place to ensure that the learning needs of all students are being met. Schools facing the same challenge may be able to offer practical advice and strategies through the PYP online communities.
- 31) What is the difference between a language profile and a student language portrait?**
- a) The **language profile** refers to the language experiences and situation of a student (eg. the student is from x country, speaks 3 languages, is strongly literate in one and uses two languages at home etc). The **language portrait** is the name we have given to the **documentation** of the student's situation, experiences, goals etc. The language portrait represents the student's profile in written or digital form, and is used to inform decisions about learning and teaching.

LEARNER PROFILE

- 32) Should we still be explicit with the attitudes or just let them 'rest' within the learner profile?**
- a) The attitudes are embedded within the descriptors of the learner profile attributes. As such, schools will support students in developing the attitudes, but there is no longer a requirement that the attitudes are assessed and reported on.
- 33) Is it essential to have the LP attributes included formally on the programme of inquiry?**

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- a) Learner profile attributes have relevance across the transdisciplinary themes and for all grade/year levels. These are documented on PYP planners and other curriculum documentation as part of the collaborative planning process. Schools have the flexibility to include the learner profile attributes on the programme of inquiry if desired.

34) Can we modify the learner profile?

- a) Schools can add to the learner profile attributes to reflect their context, providing they are still developing the full set of 10 IB learner profile attributes.

LEARNING COMMUNITY

35) Who does the learning community/a community of learners involve?

- a) The learning community may include, but is not limited to the following:
- Students
 - Teachers
 - Leadership
 - Parents / guardians / families
 - Support staff
 - The board
 - Local community
 - Global community

PD

36) What about PD, will this be changing to support PYP: From principles into practice?

- a) Following your current programme of Professional Development (PD) is highly recommended as this will support your progress towards implementation of the enhanced PYP. The transition workshop **“Building for the future”** builds on existing knowledge and is most suitable for experienced coordinators/pedagogical leadership. At least one member of each school must attend this workshop by 31 December 2021. You can find more details of all the NEW and updated PD offerings via the [public website](#) and in the new [PD catalogue](#).

37) What are the PD requirements for candidate schools?

- a) All PD requirements for candidate schools are outlined in the [Transition guide](#) for schools on the programme resource centre.

38) What are the PD requirements for authorized schools?

- a) One teacher/coordinator or head/principal from every IB World School implementing the PYP MUST attend the **“Building for the future”** transition workshop by 31 December 2021. All other PD requirements for authorized schools are outlined in the [Transition guide](#) for schools on the programme resource centre.

39) Who is the “Building for the future” workshop for? / We would like our whole staff to undergo the ‘Building for the future’ transition workshop.

- a) This workshop builds on existing knowledge and is aimed primarily at experienced PYP Coordinators, but is also suitable for other experienced pedagogical leadership and teaching staff. Teaching staff new to the PYP would be better served by a workshop explaining the programme as it is now, and taking a Category 1 workshop.

40) How do we arrange in school workshop/training?

- a) Read more about [in-school workshops](#), or request to host one using the [IB information system \(IBIS\)](#).

41) Where can I get more information on new PD workshops?

- a) Check out the new [PD catalogue](#) and [public website](#)

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PLANNERS

- 42) If some science and social studies learning takes place outside the programme of inquiry, do teachers still have to write a unit planner for this? What about planners for language and mathematics?**
- a) For content taught outside the programme of inquiry, a planner will be no longer required as documentation. Schools have the flexibility to determine, monitor and document (using the planning process) content taught outside the programme of inquiry and if it will be taught before a unit is implemented, to ‘frontload’ concepts to be explored more deeply during the unit, to deepen understanding during the unit, or to follow up student inquiries after a unit is completed.
- 43) When can we get a copy of the planners?**
- a) The new PYP planning process and optional planning templates have been released as part of the enhanced content, PYP: From principles into practice, in October 2018. Schools also have the option to design their own unit of inquiry planner using the PYP planning process. Please discuss and share your planning challenges and suggestions online with our global community of learners.
- 44) How is the IB working with companies like ManageBac to support the new planning process and planning templates?**
- a) The new planning templates, which follow the PYP planning process, will be available through ManageBac sometime after October 2018.

PROGRAMME STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

- 45) Are the Programme standards and practices (PS&P) changing in line with the enhanced PYP?**
- a) Revised PS&P are now available on the programme resource centre. We currently envision that the transition to full implementation will be completed in 2020 but will keep you updated via the programme resource centre.
- 46) Are PS&P changing for the other IB Programmes too?**
- a) Revised Programme standards and practices are available on the programme resource centre for all programmes. Specific programme requirements for programmes other than the PYP are in development and will be communicated shortly.

PYP FRAMEWORK

- 47) Is the new graphic the programme model for the enhanced PYP?**
- a) No, the current graphic being used in communications was designed to illustrate the new organising structure of the PYP framework. The enhanced programme model has been slightly amended to align better with the enhanced PYP and other IB programmes.
- 48) What about some of the key aspects of the programme, are they changing?**
- a) Check out our release from [May 2017](#) – What’s not changing, found on the Programme resource centre.
- 49) Will we still have the written, taught and assessed curriculum?**

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- a) Introducing the concept of agency changed the way we looked at the framework. Augmenting the original learning and teaching focus of the ‘written, taught, assessed’ structure with the human element—the learner and the learning community—underlines that everyone connected to the school community has an important role to play in supporting student learning. Although the term ‘written, taught, and assessed curriculum’ is no longer used throughout the PYP enhancements, these three elements still reside (separately) within the learning and teaching section of the digital resource, [PYP: From principles into practice](#).

50) Are the essential elements still present?

- a) Yes, the essential elements are still present in the programme, but not featured as ‘the five essential elements’. The PYP attitudes have been embedded within the descriptors of the learner profile attributes.

51) Will the old documents still be available? Will they still be relevant or are they all being replaced?

- a) Making the PYP happen and supporting documents will remain on the programme resource centre until the transition period is concluded. The new digital platform will be regularly updated and is your one-stop resource for all new materials relating to the enhanced PYP. For more information – please check out our short video guide – [“Getting started...”](#)

52) Will we be able to access/print the replacement content when offline?

- a) Yes. You will be able to bookmark and save content for later use, download, or print. Please keep in mind that additions or modifications to the programme will occur on the digital resource so it is important to remain current with this resource. For more information – please check out our short video guide – [“Getting started...”](#)

53) Will the digital platform be accessed through the programme resource centre directly or will we have to sign in separately to the platform?

- a) A single-sign on through [My IB](#) will enable you to access the new PYP digital platform on the programme resource centre, IBEN central and other portals relevant for your IB role. For more information – please check out our short video guide – [“Getting started...”](#)

TRANSDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

54) Now that the teaching of science and social studies will no longer be required to take place solely within the programme of inquiry, is it left to schools to document the scope of that content?

- a) Yes, it is left to schools to determine which content fits inside and outside of the programme of inquiry and how to monitor and document student learning.

55) Is it okay if we have a unit of inquiry where we have just two subjects integrated? E.g. science and language?

- a) A unit of inquiry based on only 2 subjects is interdisciplinary in nature. For a truly transdisciplinary learning experience we recommend planning for more than 2 subjects in each unit of inquiry, making authentic links to the transdisciplinary themes.

56) What balance should we be aiming for in the programme of inquiry?

- a) A well-designed programme of inquiry ensures students experience a balance of subject-specific knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills, alongside opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile and to take action.

TRANSITION

57) When will we learn more about transition from the existing to the enhanced PYP?

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- a) A guide to transition for schools at various stages of their IB journey was released in June 2018, and is available on the Programme resource centre.
- 58) When is first teaching?**
- a) Although we currently envisage this will be in 2020, first teaching/authorization/evaluation is dependent upon the transition process to the new Programme standards and practices for all IB World Schools. Updates and additional information for all IB World Schools will be shared on the Programme resource centre as soon as this is available.
- 59) Are all these enhancements/changes applicable to candidate schools who have applied two years ago and are still applying for authorization?**
- a) For specific guidance, please see the Transition guide or speak directly with your IB contact.
- 60) As a workshop leader, how can I support schools in preparation for the enhanced PYP and incorporate the new vision in workshops?**
- a) The transition guide will advise IBEN on development activities/workshops. Please also see communication (May 2018) from the IBEN team, detailing upskilling dates for workshop leaders.
- 61) Why is there a gap between release of the enhanced content and the first teaching date?**
- a) There are many considerations affecting the release date of new content. In addition to allowing schools ample time to familiarize themselves with the revised content before first teaching, there are many internal processes involved including:
- Translation
 - Publishing
 - Digital platform design
 - Teachers support materials
 - Professional development design
 - Design and planning of upskilling workshops
 - Modification of authorization and evaluation processes
 - Aligning with new standards and practices
- 62) When will upskilling for Team Visitors and consultants take place?**
- a) Please see the May communication from the IBEN team, detailing upskilling dates for site visitors and consultants.

OTHER, GENERAL QUERIES

- 63) Do schools still have to have a PYP coordinator? Is this person still the point of contact for the IB?**
- a) Yes, and yes!
- 64) What are informal leadership roles?**
- a) Informal leadership applies to any leader outside of the pedagogical leadership team, and includes students, teachers, parents and others in the learning community. Additional information on Leadership was released in May 2018, as part of our communication on 'The learning community.'
- 65) It sounds like Technology will require a lot of resources our school doesn't have. What should we do? Will there be a curriculum guide for technology? Tell me more about technology.**
- a) Technology builds on the IB's most recent guidance on technology and learning, immersing students in the interplay between learning technology, learning about technology and learning through technology. You will be guided through the possibilities offered by multiliteracies and multimodalities, alongside computational learning, design and systems thinking to integrate learning. More information on Technology was available in our May 2018 communication on 'The learning community.'
- 66) Are the PYP scope and sequence documents being reviewed?**

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- a) Review of the scope and sequence documents were beyond the scope of the review and release of the enhanced programme, but we are now starting the review process as part of ongoing programme developments. Meanwhile, you can still access the existing scope and sequence documents for guidance on the programme resource centre.
- 67) I can't find the link to the webinars in My IB under PYP programme resources. Could you post it here?**
[The Learner webinar](#)
[Learning and teaching webinar](#)
[The learning community webinar](#)
- 68) How will technology be utilized within the enhanced PYP?**
a) For more information on technology, please review our communication on 'The learning community' posted on the Programme resource centre.
- 69) Will there be more clarity involving that aspect of digital portfolios and their role as a tool for assessment, knowing where a student is at any given time given our day and age with tech?**
a) Schools have the flexibility to make school-based decisions for utilizing digital portfolios – these decisions would be dependent on resources, school context and the needs of the learning community.