

## May 2023 new examination start times: Frequently Asked Questions

[Why is the IB introducing a new format for the May 2023 examination schedule?](#)

It is important that we uphold the integrity of assessments and protect the reputation of IB qualifications. The IB understands that change is never easy, but we must adapt together to this constantly changing world where digital technology and social media are profoundly changing the way we work, learn, and interact.

[There is no way that our school can conduct examinations at the times provided by the IB—what options do we have?](#)

The IB needs to take this step to be able to offer an examination session that considers our wider global footprint and supports the security of the session. Therefore, schools cannot take the examinations outside of these times. However, we recognize this may present challenges for you and we will talk with schools on an individual basis to determine the best possible solution. For concerns regarding examination times, please contact [support@ibo.org](mailto:support@ibo.org).

[There are three different exam schedules for May 2023. How do I know which one to use for my school?](#)

The three different exam schedules relate to three different exam zones (Zones A, B and C). Each school's exam zone depends on its geographical location and associated international time zone:

- Zone A for UTC +12 to UTC +3.5
- Zone B for UTC +3 to UTC +0
- Zone C for UTC -1 to UTC -10

All schools will be informed which specific exam zone and schedule applies to them via an email sent to their programme coordinator as well as their head of school. If you are unable to locate this email, please contact [support@ibo.org](mailto:support@ibo.org) for further clarification.

[Can we still use the morning/afternoon sessions as was possible prior to May 2023 \(e.g., Morning examinations must start after 0700 hours and finish by 1300 hours local time\)?](#)

No—examinations must commence at the specific time defined for each school by the IB in the new and final examination schedule for May 2023. Schools must ensure all copies of the old schedule are removed, and any school-based systems updated to reflect the new examination schedule.

Will the IB make the same changes to November 2023 examinations and future examination sessions?

Yes. From May 2023, all IB examinations will have set start times and there will no longer be a window of time (e.g., Morning examinations must start after 0700 hours and finish by 1300 hours local time) provided for morning/afternoon exams.

### **Rescheduling**

Can we request rescheduling for students with exam conflicts/clashes??

Rescheduling of IB examinations can be requested for those students with a conflict/clash. An update to the *Rescheduling of IB examinations guide* will be published to explain the new approach. An IBIS news item will be published when the guide has been updated and published.

Will there be changes to the Emergency rescheduling guidance because of this new format?

The process for Emergency rescheduling can be accessed via [this link](#).

### **Timing and invigilation issues**

My school has several exams designated at the same time, but we do not have enough examination rooms/space. What should we do?

The expectation is that IB examinations start at the designated time. Where examinations cannot be held in one room (an examination hall for example), the school is able to use other suitable facilities within the campus or suitable offsite venue.

Where examinations are not being held in one room, the school has the flexibility to start the examinations in sequence from the specified time. All students must be supervised with no access to phones or Internet from the IB start time.

If a candidate arrives late, can we still allow them to sit the examination if less than 60 minutes has passed since it began? What if this creates a conflict with their next designated examination?

The instructions set out in section 17.0 of the Examination Conduct booklet (2023) must be followed. The 2023 edition will be published in December 2022.

The IB does not take responsibility for any disadvantage caused by the late arrival of a student.

My school does not have enough staff to invigilate at the times specified by the IB. What should we do?

Part of the responsibilities of an IB school is to provide sufficient invigilators to meet the requirements of the Conduct of Examinations.

Does the process for early departures from an exam still apply (students cannot leave the exam for the first hour and last 15 minutes)?

The instructions set out in the Conduct of examinations booklet (2023) must be followed. The 2023 edition will be published in December 2022.

If all my students have finished the examination do I still need to supervise them? What if my school cannot offer a supervised room for those who leave early and they have all finished, can I just let them leave the examination hall?

The IB has considered the international context in setting the start times for the examination schedule. Even if all students in a school have completed the exam, there may be other students in other countries who have not yet started the exam. Therefore, the requirement to keep students supervised is to ensure they do not have access to phones, internet social media or digital messaging services until the planned end of the examination.

### **Access and inclusion**

Some of my students have additional time for their examinations due to access arrangements. What should we do if this extra time creates conflicts with the examination times designated by the IB?

If a student has additional time to complete the written examinations, the school has the flexibility to start the examination early for that student. In such cases the school must ensure that the student is supervised if the examination in question finishes earlier than the rest of the cohort. The student must have no access to phones, internet social media or digital messaging.

Rescheduling of IB examinations can be requested for those students with a conflict/clash. An update to the *Rescheduling of IB examinations guide* will be published to explain the new approach. An IBIS News Item will be published when the guide has been updated and published and will be shared with schools as we continue to work together for the May 2023 examination session.

Will there be changes to the Alternative Venue process because of this new format?

No, although the student would need to take the examination at the start time associated with the alternative venue.