



## **Baccalaureate 2023 - feedback from InterParents Support Group**

Dear All,

InterParents (IP) representatives had their last meeting with the Head of the BAC Unit last week on the problems identified by students and parents via the InterParents Baccalaureate support platform. All in all, three meetings with the Head of the BAC Unit and one meeting with the Chairperson of the BAC Examination Board have taken place since the beginning of the 2023 written exams, in which IP had raised points submitted on several subjects via the platform for consideration and follow-up, including moderation as appropriate. Many of your observations were, among other things, about lack of harmonised translations between the examination papers, divergence from the curriculum, unexpected levels of difficulty and non-appropriate teaching of the subjects. We presented also concerns about local conditions with a systemic impact (absence of teachers) that hampered a smooth preparation and/or examination process, including for students with special arrangements.

We must stress that IP BAC core group was supported actively by the COSUP President in all contacts.

In summary, the BAC Unit considered that all exam papers were in conformity with the curricula and that there were no abnormal difficulties or major procedural irregularities. They promised to respond to any minor technical issues with regular improvement of the process. In some subjects set out below, they agreed to corrections before the publication of final marks.

The final position of the BAC Unit on all written exams is as follows:

### **1) Math5**

- The compensation for Math 5 – without calculator – Question 7 a/b was established to be 7/100 points. This is the final decision after two consecutive exchanges with the BAC Unit on this subject. IP are aware, that 10 points were obtainable when answering this question. Although IP repeatedly pointed out the extent to which the error stressed the students, the BAC Unit, after consulting the math inspector decided, that in Question 7b part of the answer could have been given irrespective of the error, which is why only 7 out of 100 were compensated.
- The complaints regarding Question 8 have not been accepted by the BAC unit.
- MAT5 translation issues were raised for several languages. However, the position of the inspector and of the BAC Unit was that only the Spanish version presents a point to be

considered for correction, while all other language versions are considered by the inspector and the expert as “correct”.

It is of course true, that students lose precious time, when such errors occur and that prevents them from finishing or checking other questions. IP continuously addresses this issue but this argument was essentially rejected because of the non-quantifiable and highly individual nature of any impact these disturbances may have had on students.

**2) MATH3** - The compensation for Math 3 – without calculator – Question 1 and 2 was unfortunately not accepted, on the grounds that the text was correct and the students could arrive at the correct interpretation. This is the final decision after two consecutive exchanges with the BAC Unit on this subject and based on the feedback given by the subject inspector.

**3) CHEMISTRY (CHE)** the wrong symbol (+/-) in an equation will not be considered negatively; thus, any line taken by the students will be regarded as correct.

**4) ECONOMICS (ECO)** The exam paper was considered normal and in line with the curriculum without requiring any correction. Only in **the ECO DE** version a term related to unemployment will not be marked negatively either; all other parents’ claims, including in relation to a higher (more theoretical) level of difficulty in 2023 exam paper cannot be agreed by the inspector and the expert consulted.

**5) In GEOGRAPHY (GEO)** nothing abnormal was found, albeit given the written submissions and the oral defence of student remarks.

**6) In HISTORY (HIS),** the position was also that no correction would be possible.

**7) As regards L1,** no particular issues would require correction. Only **L4 FR** was confirmed instead for correction.

Moreover, it was stressed that **all corrections in L2 / L3 and L4 will be based exclusively upon the specific exam paper in the language concerned** without correctors being able to assess the examination under a comparative angle of quality (no cross-checking with other languages); in simple words, students would suffer no negative assessment for any language errors, if they used a reasonable interpretation in their own language examination paper.

**8) PHYSICS (PHY)** - It remains unclear if and when a “moderation” will occur for all marks in **PHY**, as statistics point to a lower average marking in 2023. We raised the change of the curriculum as well as the uneven level of preparedness of teachers across the schools. We noted also the higher level of difficulty of this exam compared to previous years, thereby asking for appropriate follow up. As regards a specific situation of the teaching preparation in the DE section in EEB4, although the Head of BAC unit admitted a systemic issue, she refrained from accommodating any reasonable request for “compensation” in marking, on the grounds that any complaint for non-appropriate teaching should fall within the responsibility of the Director and not of the BAC Unit.

In terms of ticket numbers, 165 were received in total, the biggest number for Math5 (56), followed by Math3 (35) and ECO (29). GEO and PHYS received 12 and 10 tickets respectively.

For other subjects less than 10 tickets were opened: LIII (6), LIV (5), LII (4), LI (4), HIS (2), CHEM (1) and BIO (1).

InterParents has asked Head of BAC unit for a meeting with the BAC Chair with a view to insisting on the appropriate corrections as conveyed in our written submissions of the relevant tickets. The Head of BAC Unit will relay our potential interest, even though she could not guarantee its final acceptance. IP recalled the very constructive and productive atmosphere in the 2022 exchanges with the Croatian Presidency's BAC Chair.