



CIS and IB Synchronised Visits to Schools: Frequently Asked Questions

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) have developed and agreed on a joint understanding to synchronise IB school evaluation processes with the CIS accreditation protocol.

Are such visits compulsory?

No. A synchronised visit is not compulsory and is a service provided on request from schools.

Who can request such a visit?

The service may be requested by CIS Member Schools which offer IB programmes throughout the school (PYP, MYP and DP, and in the future IBCC) or schools which only have students in certain grades, provided that all grade levels offer authorised IB programmes.

Who are the visitors to schools?

Because visiting teams will include both IB and CIS representatives, the organisations will also develop a pool of jointly-trained educators who understand both the IB programmes and the CIS accreditation process.

CIS visitors will, in most cases, be representatives from CIS Members Schools which have committed to participating in the CIS accreditation process.

At what stages are such visits relevant?

A synchronised visit is possible at the initial CIS accreditation visit stage and during a Five Year Visit or a reaccreditation visit. Schools need to be authorised for each of the IB programmes before undertaking such a visit. These visits serve as the evaluation visit for IB programmes.

Will there be one self-study and one report?

No. Within this process the school submits its IB programme self studies to the IB regional office through IB Docs as required and also includes the self studies in its submission to CIS in place of Section B. In turn, the IB will send its evaluation reports separately to the school, and these same reports will be included in the final CIS report to the school.

Are IB and CIS operating as one entity?

No. Each agency operates independently with respect to its accreditation/evaluation decisions and the financial obligations of the school. Follow up procedures are done separately but every five years the agencies synchronise their visits.

So what is added value for schools?

The synchronised visit was developed to allow schools to bring together their external evaluation processes in a seamless manner. This saves schools time and other resources. Above all, the synchronised visit enriches the evaluation process by enhancing dialogue within the school community during the self study process and contributing multiple perspectives and inputs at the visit stage. As synchronised visits take place every five years in alignment with CIS and IB evaluation cycles, the time between evaluation visits can be more effectively dedicated to school improvement and development efforts.

How long are the visits?

CIS-IB synchronised visits are 5 days and the full IB team is in attendance for three of those days. Five Year Visits are of three days' duration and both CIS and IB teams will be on-site for the three days.

How many visitors attend?

For the IB there are two visitors per programme. The IB chair is chosen from one of the team members. Therefore, for continuum schools of PYP, MYP and DP, there will be six IB visitors. For CIS, there will be a minimum of four visitors for a full visit (increasing according to school size) and, usually two visitors for any follow-up visit.

How do the two agencies ensure coherence?

The IB and CIS work on a joint schedule to ensure coherence during the visit. To further provide a consistent message to the school, there is a close working relationship between the CIS chair and the IB chair. The IB chair will be present for the whole of the 5 day CIS-IB visit. Further, many IB visitors will be CIS trained and vice versa.

How can I get more information?

For more information about the joint evaluation process, please contact the IB through their regional offices (iba@ibo.org; ibaem@ibo.org; ibap@ibo.org) or CIS at accreditation@cois.org.