



## European Schools

Office of the Secretary-General

Brussels, 29 June 2014  
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Dear Bachelors, Parents and Teachers,

A large number of Chemistry teachers reported that their students had experienced significant difficulties in answering some of the questions set in the 2014 Baccalaureate Chemistry written examination.

Firstly, the examination was considered to be too long and many candidates spent a great deal of time reading the questions in order to make the right choices and did not have sufficient time to think about and check their answers.

Secondly, the teachers suggested that the 2014 examination was more difficult than in many previous years.

These concerns were discussed at the meeting which was organised on 19 June in the presence of Mr Ries, Mr Kivinen and the external markers.

In the external markers' opinion, the level of difficulty of the examination was equivalent to that of past years. It was noticed, however, that some candidates had indeed experienced difficulties in answering the questions within the time allowed for the examination.

It was noted that as from the 2015 Baccalaureate, there will no longer be a choice of questions, which will give candidates more time to concentrate on the set of questions that they are required to answer.

The analyses of the draft results revealed that the overall average achieved in the 2014 Chemistry examination was at the lower end of the results for the past 10 years (the 10 year average being 6.95):

CHEMISTRY - WRITTEN EXAMINATION AVERAGES										
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
7.14	7.06	6.77	6.59	6.20	7.56	7.01	7.21	6.50	7.45	6.40

The other particularity of the examination results was an unexpected distribution of marks: rather than having the normal Gaussian distribution, there was a double Gaussian distribution. In other words, despite the fact that some candidates achieved really good marks, the number of fail marks was exceptionally high (34%). It is very difficult to standardise or moderate these types of results.

In accordance with Article 12 of the Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate, on the basis of a proposal from the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Baccalaureate Examining Board has decided to allow candidates to take a new Chemistry examination if they so request. The new Chemistry examination will be held at 9.00 on 2 September 2014 and will be subject to the following conditions:

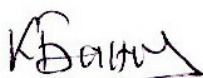
- If a student wishes to avail himself/herself of the option of resitting the examination on 2 September 2014, the student (or his/her legal representatives if he/she is a minor) must send a written request to that effect to the Director of the School within fifteen (15) calendar days of notification of the result of the examination, without it being necessary to lodge an appeal with the Chairman of the Examining Board in accordance with Article 12 of the Implementing Regulations.
- If, however, a student (or his/her legal representatives if he/she is a minor) intend(s) to submit a request for a purpose other than the possibility of resitting the Chemistry examination, the formalities referred to in Article 12 of the Implementing Regulations must be observed.
- If the student sits the examination on 2 September 2014, the results of that examination will automatically replace the results of the June examination, without the possibility for the student of going back to the previous mark awarded.
- To be validly allowed to sit the examination on 2 September 2014, it is imperative for the student to hand in on the day of the examination the original of the Baccalaureate certificate and the additional certificate received on closure of the June session. The original documents showing the results of the September 2014 examination will be handed over to students after their examination scripts have been corrected and a mark awarded for the examination.
- There is a possibility for a student who has been duly registered to sit the examination on 2 September 2014 to waive the right to avail himself/herself of this option. Students are invited to send notification to the School in writing of the fact that they are waiving the right to take the second examination, to facilitate the making of the practical arrangements for the examination. Nevertheless, a student who might fail to report for the September 2014 Chemistry examination, even if there is a valid reason for his/her absence, and a student who might fail to hand in the original of the Baccalaureate certificate and the additional certificate will be regarded as a student who has waived his/her right to sit that examination. Any student who waives that right will keep his/her June 2014 mark for Chemistry.

Should you have any further questions on the subject, please contact the European Baccalaureate Unit, on the following telephone number: + 32 2 298.62.60 or at the following email address: [org.bacc@eursc.org](mailto:org.bacc@eursc.org).

Yours sincerely,



Kari KIVINEN  
Secretary-General  
European Schools



Kiril BANKOV  
Chairman of the 2014  
Baccalaureate Examining  
Board



Edouard RIES  
Inspector responsible  
for the Chemistry  
subject