



LAMAR ACADEMY ADMISSIONS POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the International Baccalaureate Program at Lamar Academy is to educate all students to become lifelong learners and caring, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society.

Through the employment of inquiry, community, and technology in a comprehensive, academically rigorous program of studies, students will develop into more knowledgeable individuals who understand the value of culture and open-mindedness in promoting a more peaceful world.

SYSTEM

Lamar Academy is an IB authorized school offering the Diploma Programme and years 4 and 5 of the Middle Years Programme. As a centrally located campus in the McAllen school district, Lamar Academy's IB Programme serves the three city high schools and neighboring communities. Interested students must complete an application for the International Baccalaureate Programme at Lamar Academy (DP and MYP). Lamar Academy operates as a full MYP and DP campus. As a result, students attending Lamar Academy come into the program with the expectation that they will fulfill all of the requirements of the full MYP and DP curricula.

Lamar Academy aims to provide access to interested students while maintaining the academic rigor of the programme. Because the programmes "encourage both personal and academic achievement, challenging students to excel in their studies and in their personal development," (IBO.org) it is important to help students determine the best course of action in meeting their educational goals and needs.

THE APPLICATION

Applications are available online or for pick up at Lamar Academy beginning in October. The typical deadline for submission of all materials is in late January-early February. Late applications are accepted through June 1. A selection committee comprised of the head of school, program coordinators and faculty help to review and make decisions on the applications. Notification of admission is sent out to applicants via email and/or phone calls.

Because of the various educational experiences of student applicants from different schools, cities, states or countries, the application process has been streamlined to ensure that the variety of student applicants can be fairly assessed against established criteria.

Diploma Programme

Rising juniors may apply for the Diploma Programme. Rising seniors may also apply if they are coming from an existing IB Program and can meet graduation requirements for the State of Texas. The application for the DP requires four components be completed:

- submission of first semester grades
- submission of state assessment scores
- letters of recommendation from current English, history, math, science teachers
- entrance exams in English, history, mathematics

The application also requires students and parents sign an Admission Agreement, an Honor Code, and an Exit Policy Agreement as part of the submitted materials.

Part of the Diploma Programme application examines the scores earned on the state mandated tests in the areas of language and mathematics. At minimum, it is expected that in-coming students pass the state exams in all of the tested areas. Students are also expected to be passing all of their courses.

Letters of recommendation from core course teachers employ a checklist of learner attributes, and help provide a sense of the applicant's current skill set, strengths and areas for growth, and behavior in the classroom. The form contains an open space for a teacher to write any specific comments and to recommend or not recommend the student for the DP Program.

Another portion of the application assesses writing skills through responses crafted based on provided prompts. Since the language of instruction is in English, it is important to gauge existing writing abilities of in-coming students. The Language A and Individual & Societies teachers grade the writing samples and then mark the sample with a grade of 0-5. Students with a minimal grade of 2 are considered to have good basic skills. This writing portion helps inform teachers of instructional needs for students.

Math skills are also assessed through an examination that features mathematical problems representing the range of math experience applicants may have. Applicants indicate which math course they are currently studying in order for the examination to be fairly graded based on what problems they can complete. The Mathematics teachers grade these examinations and mark the exam with a grade of 0-5. Students with a minimal grade of 2 are considered to have good basic skills. This math exam helps inform teachers of instructional needs for students, and can guide decisions on math course placement.

These components are reviewed as a whole in determining entrance into the program. No component alone can keep a student from entering the IB Programme at Lamar Academy (DP and MYP).

Middle Years Program

Rising freshmen may apply for the Middle Years Programme. Rising sophomores may also apply if they are coming from an existing IB Program and can meet graduation requirements for the State of Texas. The application for the MYP requires two components be completed:

- submission of first semester grades
- submission of state assessment scores

The application also requires students and parents sign an Admission Agreement, an Honor Code, and an Exit Policy Agreement as part of the submitted materials.

Part of the Middle Years Programme application examines the scores earned on the state mandated tests in the areas of language and mathematics. At minimum, it is expected that in-coming students pass the state exams in all of the tested areas. Students are also expected to be passing all of their courses.

These two components are reviewed as a whole in determining entrance into the program.

Additional Information

In the event the selection committee cannot make a definitive decision based on the provided information, or the information is incomplete, additional information may be requested through:

- A scheduled interview with the applicant
- A review of more current semester or state exam grades
- A review of a sample of assessed coursework completed by the applicant
- An additional entrance examination

APPEALS

Students who do not gain admission to the IB Programme (DP or MYP), after the first round of decisions have been made, may appeal the committee's decision by providing additional information in the form of more current course grades and examination scores.

Based on review of the more current information, the committee may recommend admission to the DP:

- as a full Diploma Program candidate
- as a course certificate student in the Diploma Program
- conditionally, based on attendance to a summer Bridge Camp or other enrichment course program before beginning the DP

The committee may also maintain the original decision of no admission based on the current information if no significant change or improvement is noted.

In regards to MYP, the committee will review the more current information and may recommend

- admission to the MYP
- admission, conditionally, based on attendance to a summer Bridge Camp or other enrichment course program before beginning the DP
- no admission based on the current information if no significant change or improvement is noted. The committee may recommend the applicant consider applying for the DP when in 10th grade.

ACCEPTANCE

There is no specific number of student applicants admitted for the DP and MYP each year. In order to maintain the quality and rigor of the IB Programme at Lamar Academy, the focus of the admissions process is on ensuring the students minimally meet the criteria set forth in the application.

Students in the Lamar Academy MYP who are in good standing, and who have completed all of their MYP requirements automatically advance to the Diploma Programme and do not need to apply.

Students receiving admission into the IB Programme at Lamar Academy (DP and MYP) must accept or decline the invitation within a specified time frame so that course sections can be set and course materials can be ordered.

References:

IBO.org

Appendix:

IB at Lamar Academy Admission Agreement (from application)



**INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM @ LAMAR ACADEMY
Admission Agreement**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is a challenging rigorous curriculum designed for the academically able student who has the potential to earn the International Baccalaureate Diploma. For a student to be prepared to sit successfully for externally validated IB internal and external assessments, he/she must be a consistent, dedicated learner. Therefore, Lamar Academy requires the following commitment to be made:

I agree to the following terms and conditions for participating in each MYP/DP class in which I am enrolled. I will:

- follow the rules of McAllen ISD and Lamar Academy as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- meet the expectations set forth in each class. I will actively participate in class daily by being prepared, listening attentively, offering relevant comments, posing insightful questions, taking notes, etc.
- work seriously to improve my writing skills, which involves writing, editing, rewriting, asking for assistance outside the class period, etc.
- seek out and attend tutoring sessions as needed or as recommended by my teacher(s).
- schedule medical and dental appointments outside the school day when possible and trips for recreation during school holidays.
- submit quality work in a timely fashion.
- manifest the highest degree of academic integrity. Direct or indirect cheating is grounds for removal from the program.
- remain in the program unless released by recommendation of the IB Coordinator and staff. Continuance in the IB Program will be determined by student progress, attitude and motivation.

I understand that if I do not meet the standards of the Middle Years/Diploma Program, either because of the quality of my work or because of my performance as a serious learner, I may be asked to withdraw from the program to enroll in a course of studies which better meets my level of performance.

Student Signature

Date

I hereby grant permission and consent for my son/daughter to enroll in the MYP/DP IB Program @ Lamar Academy and agree to all terms of the contract. I will support my child’s academic growth and encourage development of independent study skills.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date