

The IB Core (Matlidents gymnasium)

An inclusive and safe environment that inspires you to make a positive impact.

Explore, grow, and understand together.



The curriculum aims to develop learners with an IB learner profile who are:

- inquirers
- knowledgeable
- thinkers
- communicators
- principled
- open-minded
- caring
- risk takers
- balanced
- reflective

The IB Diploma Programme - general information about subjects offered

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is an internationally recognized matriculation examination which qualifies candidates for admission to universities and colleges all over the world. The programme consists of a two-year course (grades 11-12), which in Finland is often preceded by a preparatory year (grade 10).

The IB Curriculum consists of six subject groups and students must choose at least one subject from each of the groups. Three of the subjects must be studied at higher level (HL) and three at

standard level (SL). Standard level subjects are equivalent to 150 teaching hours and HL subjects 240 teaching hours.

The subjects offered in the different subject groups in Mattlidens Gymnasium are as follows:

Studies in language and literature

English A: Literature (HL/SL)

Finnish A: Literature (HL/SL)

Swedish A: Literature (HL/SL),

Language A Literature school-directed self-taught (SL)

English A: Language and Literature (HL/SL)

Language acquisition

Finnish B (HL/SL)

French B (SL)

Swedish B (SL)

Swedish ab initio (SL)

Individuals and Societies

History (HL/SL)

Economics (HL/SL)

Global Politics (HL/SL)

Sciences:

Biology (HL/SL)

Chemistry (HL/SL)

Physics (HL/SL)

Mathematics:

Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches (HL/SL)

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations (SL)

The Arts

Visual Arts (SL)

Note: Instead of a subject from this group, students can choose an additional subject from one of the other groups (excluding mathematics) for their sixth subject.

Due to factors such as the size of the groups and timetable clashes, it can be difficult to carry out all desired combinations of subjects and levels. For a group to start or a higher level subject to be taught there needs to be a sufficient number of students interested in studying this particular subject and level. Thus we cannot guarantee which subjects and levels will be taught each year.

When students choose their DP subjects in preDP, they cannot take more than three subjects at HL or more than six subjects. In the beginning of DP1, students may be allowed to take a fourth HL subject or an additional (7th) subject if it can be arranged within the existing schedule and groups and the student has a good academic standing in preDP. These options must be approved by the DP coordinator beforehand.

Before choosing their subjects the students have classes with the DP coordinator, guidance counsellor and the subject teachers who inform them about the different subjects, the differences between HL and SL subjects and important aspects to bear in mind when choosing their diploma programme subject (workload, university requirements etc.)

The IB Core

In addition to the diploma subjects each diploma student must fulfil the Core requirements. The Core lies at the heart of the IB Diploma programme (see diagram above) and includes participation in and successful completion of Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS), the Extended Essay (EE) and Theory of Knowledge (TOK).

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)
<p>CAS consists of regular extra-curricular participation in creativity, activity, and service “experiences” throughout the IB diploma. Students also engage in reflection on their experiences.</p> <p>Throughout their CAS program, students engage with all 5 ATL skills (communication, research, social, thinking, and self-management) to varying degrees, depending on the nature of their experiences. Due to the nature of CAS, there will be more of a focus on communication, social, and self-management. They are encouraged to consider these aspects when writing their reflections.</p> <p>Additionally, there are opportunities for students to integrate international-mindedness into their CAS experiences through activities such as international projects, charity work, and participation in events such as MEP and MUN.</p>
Aims and Criteria
<p>The CAS programme aims to develop students who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reflective thinkers—they understand their own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth ● willing to accept new challenges and new roles ● aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment ● active participants in sustained, collaborative projects ● balanced—they enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences. <p>Learning outcomes are differentiated from assessment objectives because they are not rated on a scale. The completion decision for the school in relation to each student is, simply, “Have these outcomes been achieved?”</p> <p>As a result of their CAS experience as a whole, including their reflections, there should be evidence that students have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identified their own strengths and developed areas for growth ● Demonstrated that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process

- Demonstrated how to initiate and plan a CAS experience
- Shown commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences
- Demonstrated the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
- Demonstrated engagement with issues of global significance
- Recognized and considered the ethics of choices and actions

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Communication skills

The CAS programme is by nature collaborative, and we encourage students to reach out to the local community. To this end, students are put in contact with at least one local community organisation to engage with CAS Service, with which they must communicate themselves and establish how they will embark on a CAS experience with that organisation.

Social skills

The CAS project in particular requires collaboration in both the planning and execution of the experience, which requires good groupwork and social skills from the students. To this end, students are encouraged to start work on the project towards the end of DP1, to allow plenty of time to focus on this social aspect of the programme. But aside from this, the programme requires much in the way of social interaction, and social skills are developed throughout.

Self-management skills

The CAS programme at Mattliden is entrusted to a large extent to the student's own planning and engagement. While we provide them with contacts, and do put them in contact with one local community organisation in an attempt to kickstart their service strand, the programme is otherwise in their own hands.

Students are graded (pass/fail) at the end of each period to monitor that they are progressing, but they must themselves ensure the progress as expected with the programme. As such, there is an emphasis on self-management in the way our CAS programme is delivered.

More detailed information about Mattliden's CAS programme is available in the [CAS Handbook](#), which is shared with students in the school's CAS Google Classroom.

Extended Essay

Throughout the EE process, students engage with all 5 ATL skills (communication, research, social, thinking, and self-management) to varying degrees, depending on their chosen topic. Due to the nature of the Extended Essay, there will be more of a focus on thinking, research, and self-management.

Many students will choose topics that address questions of International-mindedness (e.g. works of literature in translation, development economics, examination of historical events, etc.).

Purpose and requirements

The Extended Essay is defined as an in-depth study of a limited topic chosen from one of the subjects of the IB curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the development of the skills of organising and expressing ideas logically and coherently. The Extended Essay of four thousand (4000)

words is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to engage in independent research.

Every IB Diploma candidate must submit an Extended Essay on a topic of their choice in one of the IB subjects. This need not be a subject chosen for the Diploma but must be supervised by a qualified teacher at the school.

The Extended Essay is externally assessed by an IB examiner. The total score obtained will determine in which of the following bands the extended essay is placed. This band, in conjunction with the band for Theory of Knowledge, determines the diploma points awarded for these two requirements.

The band descriptors are:

- A. work of an excellent standard
- B. work of good standard
- C. work of satisfactory standard
- D. work of mediocre standard
- E. work of elementary standard

More detailed information about the Extended Essay is available in the [MG EE guide](#), which is shared with students in the school's EE Google Classroom.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Thinking skills

Students are required to formulate a topic and research question and plan their research and writing throughout the EE process. Additionally, they need to analyse and evaluate the data / sources they use, as well as the guidance provided by supervisors, in order to complete the EE process.

Communication skills

Clear communication is necessary throughout the EE process. Students are expected to stay in regular communication with their supervisor throughout the EE process. As a minimum, students have scheduled meetings with their supervisor in preparation for writing their reflections. Students also give presentations to each other in different formats at several junctures throughout the EE process. Additionally, students need to communicate clearly in writing when producing their EE document.

Social skills

Interactions between students and supervisors are encouraged throughout the EE process, and mandated as part of the reflection-writing process. The presentations students are asked to give are in a smaller, seminar-style format, which encourages questioning of students by students. Additionally, some students will interact with third parties in order to complete their EE (in libraries, laboratories, via questionnaires, for example).

Research skills

The nature of the EE requires students to engage in research, as it is an academic piece of writing. To facilitate this, students are given workshops on academic honesty, how and where to find (reliable) sources, how to keep track of their sources (Zotero is the platform the school advocates) and how to cite and reference their sources in their EE.

Self-management skills

A clear EE schedule is published so that students can see the programme for the EE process, to help them plan their time. This is integrated into the Internal Calendars for DP1 and DP2, to help students see how the EE fits with the rest of their coursework / IA. Through meetings with supervisors, students are prompted to consider what work they need to do when, as part of the reflection process, to help them best manage the workload for this significant assignment.

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

In TOK, students engage with all **5 ATL skills** (communication, research, social, thinking, and self-management) to varying degrees, depending on their interests. Due to the nature of TOK, there will be more of a focus on social, thinking, and communication.

There are opportunities for international-mindedness in the TOK assessment and classroom discussions often **engage with specific real-life examples** from both a local and a global context. An example of such a lesson is one where students consider the KQ “Does the language that we speak shape the way that we think?” which starts out by asking them to navigate tasks that require the giving of directions using only geocentric directions, which then leads on to a discussion of the difference between languages that give directions egocentrically and those that give directions geocentrically, and then finishes with a discussion considering how such differences might lead to differences in thought between different cultural groups.

Lessons take place weekly, and the KQ that forms the central focus of each lesson’s discussion is shared with all subject teachers at the beginning of each week, allowing them to make links when appropriate in that week’s teaching.

Nature and aims

TOK explores the relationship between the various disciplines and ensures that students engage in **critical reflection** on the knowledge acquired both within and beyond the classroom. Theory of Knowledge encourages critical reflection on all that is connected with knowledge: the subjects and objects of knowledge, the codification and classification of knowledge, the ways in which knowledge is transmitted and distributed, the institutions responsible for these practices, and the purposes and implications of these.

Unlike other subjects, TOK is based around **the concept of the knower**, as opposed to the knowledge itself. Consequently, the course contains very little material of a factual nature that needs to be learnt. Instead of learning more knowledge, the goal of TOK is to improve students' abilities to examine the different ways in which people gain access to, process, perceive and represent knowledge of different kinds; and to present their ideas in a clear, well-argued manner.

The primary aims of TOK are to encourage students to reflect, to question, to understand different perspectives, to become more self-aware, to **draw links between other subjects**, to coherently argue their stance on issues, and to recognise the implications of the stances taken by themselves and others. Classes are usually discussion based, but will also include other activities. During the 2 years, **we focus primarily on the central TOK concepts** as well as the core Theme and two optional Themes (Knowledge & Language and Knowledge & Indigenous Societies). Throughout the programme, **discussions are related to the five Areas of Knowledge** and the Knowledge Framework. While some discussions are abstract and theoretical, a good number of them start with **real-life examples to appeal to students’ own experiences** and thus engage them more effectively.

TOK is graded at school as a Pass or Fail in each teaching period. Students are ultimately issued a grade for their TOK by the IB, based on two assessment components: the internally assessed TOK Exhibition, and the externally assessed TOK Essay. Grades are awarded from A to E, as with the EE, and the TOK essay is worth twice as much as the TOK Exhibition in determining the final TOK grade.

- TOK Exhibition: students connect three real-world objects to a TOK question by writing a commentary of about 300 words on each. Completed in DP1.
- TOK Essay: students write a maximum 1600-word response to one of six prescribed titles. Completed in DP2.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Thinking skills

Students are asked to respond to each lesson's central Knowledge Question (KQ) as a Google Classroom question before the lesson. This engages the student in critical reflection on the question before the lesson starts, and provides material to start class discussions and engage specific students with particular ideas and points of view.

Communication skills

Most classes follow a group discussion format, in which students are asked to take a stance on the day's KQ and argue that stance. This challenges students to express the nuances of their stance, as well as to express their ideas thoughtfully and respectfully.

Social skills

Engagement with different perspectives develops students' ability to see things from others' point of view, and the lessons in which ethical questions are explored offer opportunities to develop compassion and understanding with those whose stances differ.

The Learner Profile

The TOK classroom naturally favours many aspects of the Learner Profile. The following, in particular, are emphasised:

- inquirers & thinkers
 - TOK, like all philosophical enquiry, is inextricably linked to these two aspects of the Learner Profile. It is hard to conduct a TOK lesson with encouraging thought, and enquiry is fostered particularly through connections with students' own experiences and worldviews,
- communicators
- balanced
- open-minded
 - The discussion-based format of TOK at Mattliden ensures a focus on communication as well as developing balanced and open-minded points of view
- principled
- caring
 - The occasional lessons that deal with moral philosophy, starting with a focus on specific ethical questions, encourage students to develop their own principled and well-reasoned ethical outlook

More detailed information about TOK is available in this [course summary](#), which is shared with students in a TOK Google Classroom.

