

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme—Frequently Asked Questions



What is the Diploma Programme?

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a curriculum framework designed by the International Baccalaureate (IB) for students in the last two years of high school. IB students graduating with the IB diploma are able to study at universities all around the world, often with advanced credit. Students report that their involvement with the IB has given them the tools needed to succeed at college. In particular, students comment on their sense of preparedness, self-confidence, research skills, and their ability to manage their time. Even more importantly, they have developed a sense of the world around them and their responsibility to it. Diploma Programme students study six subjects (three at standard level and three at higher level) over two years and complete three additional requirements: the theory of knowledge (TOK), the extended essay, and CAS—creativity, activity and service experiences outside of the classroom. In addition to these requirements, students must earn a minimum of 24 points out of a possible 45 points on the final assessments which are externally marked and moderated by the IB, in order to receive an IB diploma.

What is Theory of knowledge (TOK)?

TOK is an interdisciplinary course designed to help students question and understand how they know what they know. Students study how individuals from various disciplines view the world in order to develop their own ways of thinking. By stimulating analysis of knowledge across disciplines, TOK seeks to help students make sense of school and the world.

What is Creativity, activity, service (CAS)?

CAS is an experiential and reflective learning component of the DP. Students complete a wide variety of extracurricular, community service, and athletic options to fulfill this requirement.

What is the Extended essay?

The extended essay introduces students to the demands and rewards of independent work. Emphasis is placed on doing personal research and communicating ideas effectively in order to write a 4,000-word essay in an area of student interest.

How do colleges and universities view the Diploma Programme?

The DP is internationally recognized as representing one of the highest standards in university preparatory education. More than 1,000 colleges and universities in North America, including all universities in North Carolina, have recognition policies on how they weigh it in admissions, advanced standing, college credit, and scholarships.

What kind of student is a good candidate for the DP?

The DP is a rigorous course of study for motivated students. That said, prior academic success is less an indicator of ability to earn the diploma than are a student's determination to do his or her best, willingness to be organized in order to complete the work while leading a full, balanced life, and a strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom.

Do DP students have time for anything beyond academics?

Absolutely. Most successful Diploma Programme students lead very full lives. They are often members of athletic teams and involved in a wide range of activities. Time management and organization are key skills the IB develops in students.

Do DP teachers receive special training?

All DP teachers receive professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for IB World Schools implementing the DP.

How does the IB DP differ from other university-preparatory programs such as Advanced Placement, Cambridge, or Dual Enrollment (CCP)?

The IB DP is a two-year comprehensive curriculum with a culminating set of externally graded final exams. IB, Advanced Placement (AP), and other college-preparatory curriculums like Cambridge are all university preparatory, academically rigorous programmes. There are important differences, however, in the content and exams. The DP is a cohesive and comprehensive programme, not a collection of individual courses as is the case with Advanced Placement. The most important distinguishing factor is the core of the Diploma Programme (CAS, TOK and extended essay).

10 Reasons



why the IB Diploma Programme (DP) is ideal preparation for university

1



It increases academic opportunity

Research* shows that DP graduates are much more likely to be enrolled at top higher education institutions than entrants holding other qualifications.

2



IB students care about more than just results

Through creativity, action, service (CAS) you learn outside the classroom and develop emotionally and ethically as well as intellectually.

3



It encourages you to become a confident and independent learner

For example, the extended essay requires independent research through an in-depth study.

6



The IB encourages critical thinking

Learn how to analyse and evaluate issues, generate ideas and consider new perspectives.

5



Graduates are globally minded

Language classes encourage an international mindset, key for increasingly globalized societies.

4



It's an international qualification

The DP is recognized globally by universities and employers.

7



DP students have proven time management skills

Take good study habits and strong time management to further education and the working world.

9



Subjects are not taught in isolation

Theory of knowledge (TOK) classes encourage you to make connections between subjects.

10



It encourages breadth and depth of learning

You are able to choose courses from six subject groups and study subjects at different levels.

8



It assesses more than examination techniques

Learn to understand, not just memorize facts or topics and prepare for exams.



International Baccalaureate®
Baccalaureat International®
Bachillerato Internacional®

*Based on IB research - www.ibo.org/research

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2014

International Baccalaureate® | Baccalaureat International® | Bachillerato Internacional®

