



Perceptions of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme among Australian and New Zealand Universities

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Executive Summary

Context and Objectives

The number of secondary students completing an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma has risen rapidly in recent years, and the IB is playing an increasing role in preparing people for university study. The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is interested in universities' perceptions of the IB as a preparation for undergraduate study, and engaged the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to research this area of higher education.

The aim of the study was to investigate university representatives' perceptions of the IB Diploma. A key aspect of the research was to determine what university representatives knew about the IB Diploma, and whether they felt it provides a suitable preparation for university study. A further aspect was to examine the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, both on its own and in comparison with alternative qualifications, so as to determine how the IB Diploma might be enhanced to better prepare students for university study. It is hoped that the results of the research will help enhance the value of the IB to universities, schools and students.

This study must be framed within the wide-ranging work done by the IBO to integrate IB graduates and the IB Diploma into university education. Among other activities, the IBO encourages universities to develop a recognition policy, offers universities secure access to the IBO website, and works with tertiary admissions centres and directly with universities. The secure website contains: IB curriculum guides, past IB examinations, and mark schemes; IB exam results for individual candidates or groups of candidates; and an IB recognition policy. The current analysis should be read with this context in mind.

The study commenced in September 2006 and ran until early 2007. In late 2006 a survey was conducted of 644 senior academic and administrative university staff at 47 Australian and New Zealand universities, with 159 usable responses received. Individual interviews were conducted with 11 of the survey respondents in order to capture more detailed information about the perceptions of university representatives. This report presents a consolidated analysis of the survey and interview results, and makes several suggestions on further developments that might be considered by the IBO.

Experience with IB Students

In total, 56 per cent of the surveyed university representatives indicated that they had some administrative or academic involvement with an IB Diploma student in the last five years. Contact was most likely among representatives working in an administrative role. Overall, university representatives reported that IB Diploma students were more likely to study in the humanities, sciences, commerce, health or law. These patterns were confirmed by the interviews, which also suggested that most institutions do not systematically collect information about the performance of entering students, IB Diploma students included.

There was good reception during the interviews to the idea that university staff might become further involved in aspects of the IB Diploma. To this end, the IBO might consider developing strategies for engaging a wider range of university staff in the IB Diploma. Discussions with the university representatives suggested that a multifaceted approach would provide the best means of helping university staff learn about the IB Diploma and IB graduates.

Views on the IB diploma

The survey invited respondents to rate the level of importance of seven aspects of the IB Diploma in helping to make it a successful program. The most responses, and the highest levels of agreement, were associated with broad statements about the IB Diploma, which covered matters such as the use of a range of assessment strategies, the breadth and depth of the curriculum, and having students study at least three subjects in depth. Respondents were most uncertain about the three compulsory elements of the IB Diploma: the extended essay; the study of theory of knowledge; and the creative, physical and community services component.

Several themes emerged from analysis of the open-ended survey responses. Most comments were supportive of the IB Diploma, often highly so. Among these were broad suggestions that the IB had no specific weaknesses and that the program is valuable. More specifically, many respondents commented that it enhanced university students' academic competence and capability, that the program gave them experience of greater breadth and depth, that it provided an internationalised educational experience with a greater emphasis on community engagement, and that it should be more widely adopted.

The comments also exposed a lack of awareness of the IB Diploma. Many commented that they had no information on which to base their response, nor to evaluate the relative performance of IB students or the program. A similar set of responses noted that as students generally self-select into the IB program, it may be difficult to separate the relative success of the students from the program.

A small number of responses were more critical of the program, indicating that the IB provided no specific advantage over alternative preparations for university study, or that it was elitist. Individual respondents reported that IB students can experience adjustment problems, or that there are problems with the delivery of the program at schools, the focusing and scoping of the program, or the scoring and conversion of IB scores.

Comparing the IB diploma

The survey invited respondents to compare the IB Diploma with other forms of preparation for university study. In general, both the survey and interview results suggested that the IB Diploma was viewed as providing a university preparation that is as good as, and in nearly all instances better than, that of the state certificates, or of other international certificates. Despite such views, university staff also reported a general view that state certificates should be supported, and that promotion of the IB Diploma might diminish support for a pathway that they should be working to enhance.

Importantly, all respondents who reported having enough information on which to base a response indicated that they were satisfied that the IB Diploma prepared students well for undergraduate study. Respondents were asked to indicate how well, compared with other qualifications, they felt that the IB Diploma prepares students for success in a number of areas of higher education. These aspects included first year study, academic learning, university life, course completion, graduate employment and postgraduate study. The IB Diploma was seen to provide an effective preparation in each of these areas, and particularly for first-year study, academic learning and university life.

In all, the survey and interview results suggest that senior university representatives have a very high level of regard for the IB Diploma. While representatives' direct experience with IB Diploma graduates appears to be limited, it is clear that they see value in the program, both in itself and in comparison with other possible preparations for university study. There remain several ways, however, in which the IBO should work to further enhance university representatives' knowledge of, and engagement with, the IB Diploma.

01

Introduction

1.1 The research context

Developed in 1968, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma is a two-year curriculum aimed at students aged 16 to 19. “The two-year curriculum is rigorous and intellectually coherent, encouraging critical thinking through the study of a wide range of subjects in the traditional academic disciplines while encouraging an international perspective” (IBO, 2006). The Diploma aims to encourage students to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens.

The IB values both depth and breadth of learning. “The two-year course of study leads to final examinations in six subject areas and a qualification widely recognised by the world’s leading universities” (IBO, 2006). Students need to study at least three subjects at a ‘higher level’ (240 teaching hours), and three subjects at a ‘standard level’ (150 teaching hours). Subjects need to be selected from each of the following six groups: language A; second language; individuals and societies; experimental sciences; mathematics and computer science; and the arts. All subjects are studied over two years, and involve a range of assessment strategies.

In addition to study in the six subject areas, students must complete: a 100-hour course on the theory of knowledge, which requires written and oral presentations; an extended essay of 4,000 words on a topic of the student’s choice; and 150 hours of creative, physical and community service activities.

The four essential characteristics of the IB Diploma, its international standing, academic rigour, breadth of study and academic and non-academic core elements, make it attractive as a preparation for university study. It may be due to this, coupled with general increases in university enrolment, that the number of secondary students completing an IB Diploma has risen rapidly in recent years. As a result, the IB is playing an increasing role in preparing people for university study. The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is interested in how senior university representatives view the IB, and engaged the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to develop understanding of this area.

These growth trends are common to many countries, and research on this matter has already been conducted in the UK (IBO, 2003). The UK study involved distributing a questionnaire to Pro Vice-Chancellors and other staff at all UK higher education institutions. A total of 122 survey responses were received from 71 institutions. Following this, 34 respondents were selected for follow-up interviews.

The current research was in many respects designed to replicate and extend the UK study. The survey instrument was designed to provide comparison data, and also deliver information on

many broader areas of relevance to the IB. As per the UK study, the current study also involved follow-up interviews that were used to flesh-out the survey results and develop the richness of the results. The UK results provide useful points of comparisons, which are presented at relevant points throughout this report.

The aim of this study was to investigate Australian and New Zealand university representatives' perceptions of the IB Diploma. A key aspect of the research was to determine what university representatives knew about the IB Diploma, and whether they felt it provides a suitable preparation for university study. A further aspect was to examine the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, both on its own and in comparison with alternative qualifications, so as to determine how the IB Diploma might be improved to better prepare students for university study. It is hoped that the results of the research will help enhance the value of the IB to universities, schools and students.

This study must be framed within the wide-ranging work done by the IBO to integrate IB graduates and the IB Diploma into university education. An overview of the IBO's work with universities is provided in *University Guide to the IB Diploma Programme (IBAP, 2007)*, which is distributed to Australasian universities. Among other activities, the IBO encourages universities to develop a recognition policy, offers universities secure access to the IBO website, and works with tertiary admissions centres and directly with universities. The secure website contains: IB Curriculum guides, past IB examinations, and mark schemes; IB exam results for individual candidates or groups of candidates; and an IB recognition policy. The current analysis should be read with this context in mind.

1.2 Caveats and limitations of the study

It is important to emphasise that this study is of university representatives' perceptions. The systematic collection of perceptions using surveys and interviews represents an important move beyond anecdote, but the study by no means represents a fully validated empirical exploration or validation of the IB Diploma program. The study specifically did not examine, for instance, the nature of selection processes and issues such as the weighting and conversion of IB scores. The study did not examine the actual academic performance of IB students. Further, it focused on senior university representatives, as outlined below, and did not explicitly sample teaching staff, students, or operational staff in state or institutional admissions centres.

The statistics presented in this report are based on a relatively small non-random sample of responses, and must be interpreted with appropriate care. A number of approaches may be taken. A difference of around 0.2 on the five-point scales reflects a difference of around one third of a standard deviation and hence a meaningful 'effect size'. A difference of just 0.05 is likely to be 'statistically significant' when the whole sample is considered, although the difference would need to be around 0.1 for many of the smaller subgroup comparisons. A difference of one response scale unit reflects the difference considered meaningful by respondents as they were completing the survey form.

The study specifically targeted 'senior university representatives'. The views are therefore of people working in decision-making capacities within universities, and may not necessarily be the same as those of people who have routine operational involvement with the IB Diploma or other senior secondary qualifications.

The survey and interviews invited respondents to provide their overall impressions of the IB Diploma and other preparations for university study. This breadth of analysis is in-keeping with the aim of the study. It should be remembered that the instruments and collection methods were not designed to capture detailed information about various aspects of the IB Diploma. While comments were made about the use of IB scores in selection processes, for instance, this matter was not examined in detail.

It is very likely that the results are biased by the fact that not all members of the target population returned a completed response. The extent of this bias is determined by whether those who did not respond to the survey might have answered differently from those who did. The examination of the representativeness of the secured sample of responses presented in Chapter 2 provides some assurance as to the representativeness of the results, but the essential limitations of the current data must nonetheless be borne in mind.

A number of UK comparison figures are provided throughout this report. These provide a useful context for interpreting the Australasian results, particularly as they are international in scope. Comparisons should be made with appropriate caution, however, given that the UK and Australasian studies used different instruments and collection and analysis methods.

02

The research process and scope

2.1 The target population

This study involved 40 Australian and 7 New Zealand universities. The target population for this study included senior academic and administrative institutional leaders who have responsibility for the selection and management of students. These people may not have direct operational interaction with IB matters but they can generally be taken as representing the view of their institutions.

The group of senior university representatives includes a diverse list of roles that vary according to institutional structures and individual portfolios. In broad terms, it included people working as Deans or above, along with senior managers of academic units. Specifically, this included Vice-Chancellors, Deputy and Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Directors and Managers of selection, recruitment and admissions offices (both domestic and international), Academic Registrars and Vice-Presidents, Presidents of Academic Boards, Chairs of selection committees, and various other senior academic or administrative staff who might be expected to have experience with the IB.

A list of this target population was compiled by integrating information from institutional and other agencies' web pages, by seeking information directly from institutions, and by drawing on existing lists. While no central population data exists on senior university administrators against which the population frame could be verified, the population list was validated against alternative sources to check its veracity.

2.2 Survey instrument and data collection

The survey cover letter and form are shown in Appendices A and B. Developed in consultation with the IBO, the form provided a brief overview of the IB Diploma, and began by seeking feedback about respondents. It continued in three sections, asking respondents about their experience with IB students, their views on the IB Diploma, and to compare the IB Diploma with other preparations for university study. It included a series of questions that invited a closed form response, and several open-ended questions.

A total of 644 paper survey forms were mailed out on Thursday 9 November 2006. In all, 573 of these were sent to staff at 40 Australian universities (around 14 per institution) while 71 were sent to staff at seven New Zealand institutions (around 10 per institution). Around

four-fifths went to people working in Deaneries or Chancelleries, with the remainder despatched to various administrative or academic units.

Data collection was completed on Friday 22 December 2006. By then, a total of 159 usable responses were received, representing an overall response rate of 24.7 per cent. Two reminder emails were sent to non-respondents during the six-week collection period. These emails provided extra copies of the survey forms and invited potential respondents to email their completed form to ACER. This response rate was higher than the 20 percent that was expected, and sufficient to enable a reasonable level of confidence to be placed in the results, particularly at the whole-sample level.

A range of descriptive statistical methods was used to summarise and bring out relevant patterns in the data. These are summarised in the figures and tables in this report.

2.3 Individual interviews

The survey was followed by telephone interviews with a selection of the survey respondents. These people were selected because they provided a heterogeneous mix of responses to the survey, and were chosen from all those who indicated a willingness to be interviewed. They were interviewed to capture different perspectives on the IB Diploma.

A total of 11 individuals were selected from 11 institutions. These individuals were spread across a number of roles, types of institutions and states. The state location was important in the Australian context given the different secondary education contexts and distribution of IB Diploma programs.

The interviews were semi-structured in nature and designed to take around 30 minutes. A schedule was developed based on review of the study aims, relevant contexts, analysis of the survey results, and in consultation with the IBO. A copy of the schedule is including in Appendix C. The interviews were conducted as 'conversations with a purpose', which used this schedule as a guide.

Extensive notes were taken during each interview, and an iterative and thematic approach was used to analyse the interview data. The initial analysis was conducted without reference to the survey results with a view to identifying the major patterns in the conversations. These patterns were then integrated into the results produced through analysis of the survey data, including the open-ended comments.

2.4 Overview of the sample

Of the 159 responses, 146 (92 per cent) were secured from staff at Australian universities while 13 (8 per cent) came from New Zealand institutions. Figure 1 presents the distribution of survey numbers, returns and IB programs by country. It shows that a slightly higher percentage than expected of returned responses were from people working at Australian universities, although the difference is very small. In general, the sample is representative of the population distribution of IB programs and surveyed representatives between the countries. The sample of secured responses is also balanced against the number of IB programs in Australia and New Zealand. A total of 90 per cent of Australasian IB programs are in Australia which is close to the 92 per cent of Australian responses in the sample.

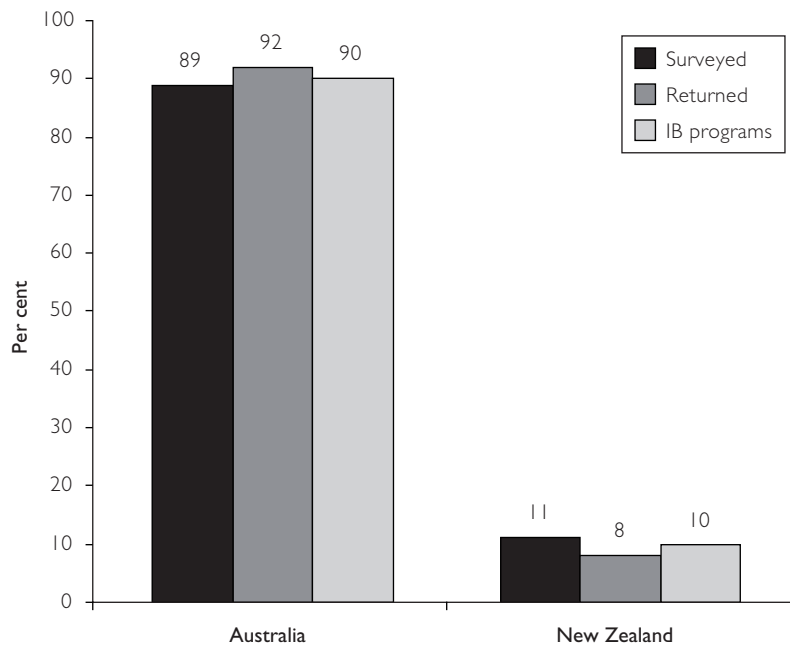


Figure 1: Distribution of target population and survey responses by country

The composition of the sample in terms of Australian state and territories is shown in Figure 2. New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland provided the largest number of responses with 52, 31, and 27 respectively. In all, 18 responses were returned from Western Australian university representatives, six from the Australian Capital Territory, five from Tasmania, four from the Northern Territory, and three from South Australia. Figure 2 shows that, with the exception of South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, the sample was broadly representative of the target population in terms of state.

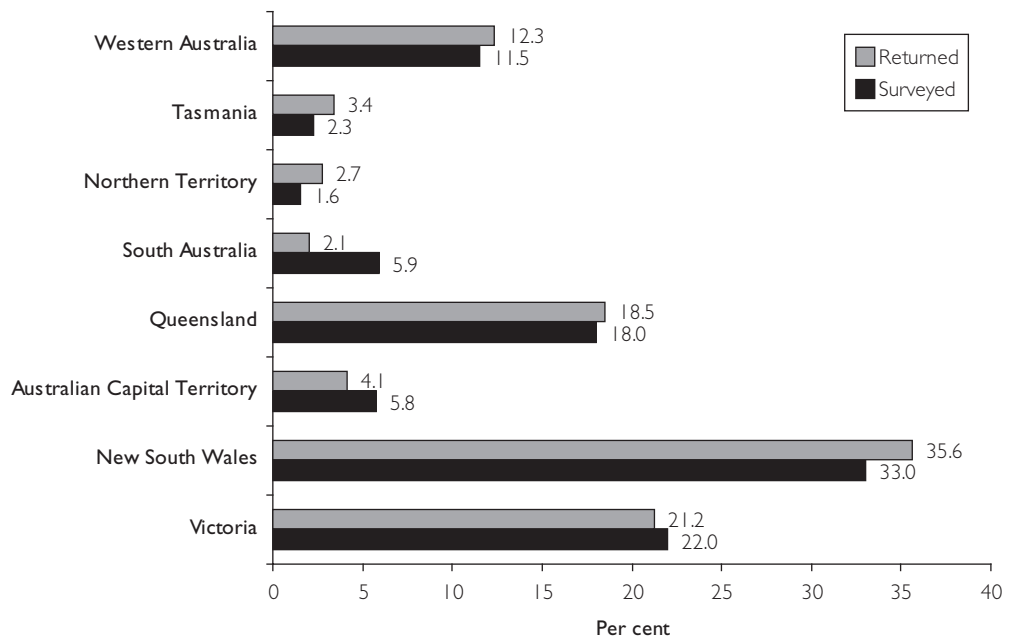


Figure 2: Distribution of target population and survey responses by Australian state and territories

There was an average of 3.5 responses per institution. Precise numbers varied from zero responses at one institution and one response at 11 institutions, to seven or more responses at four institutions. The most common number of responses from a single institution was three. Figure 3 compares the percentage of individuals at each institution in the target population and the respondents. It shows that responses were received from all but one institution. Seventeen institutions are slightly over-represented in the responses, 11 provided as many responses as expected and 19 are slightly under-represented. The variations are small, however, and the key point is that with only one exception a response was secured from all 47 institutions.

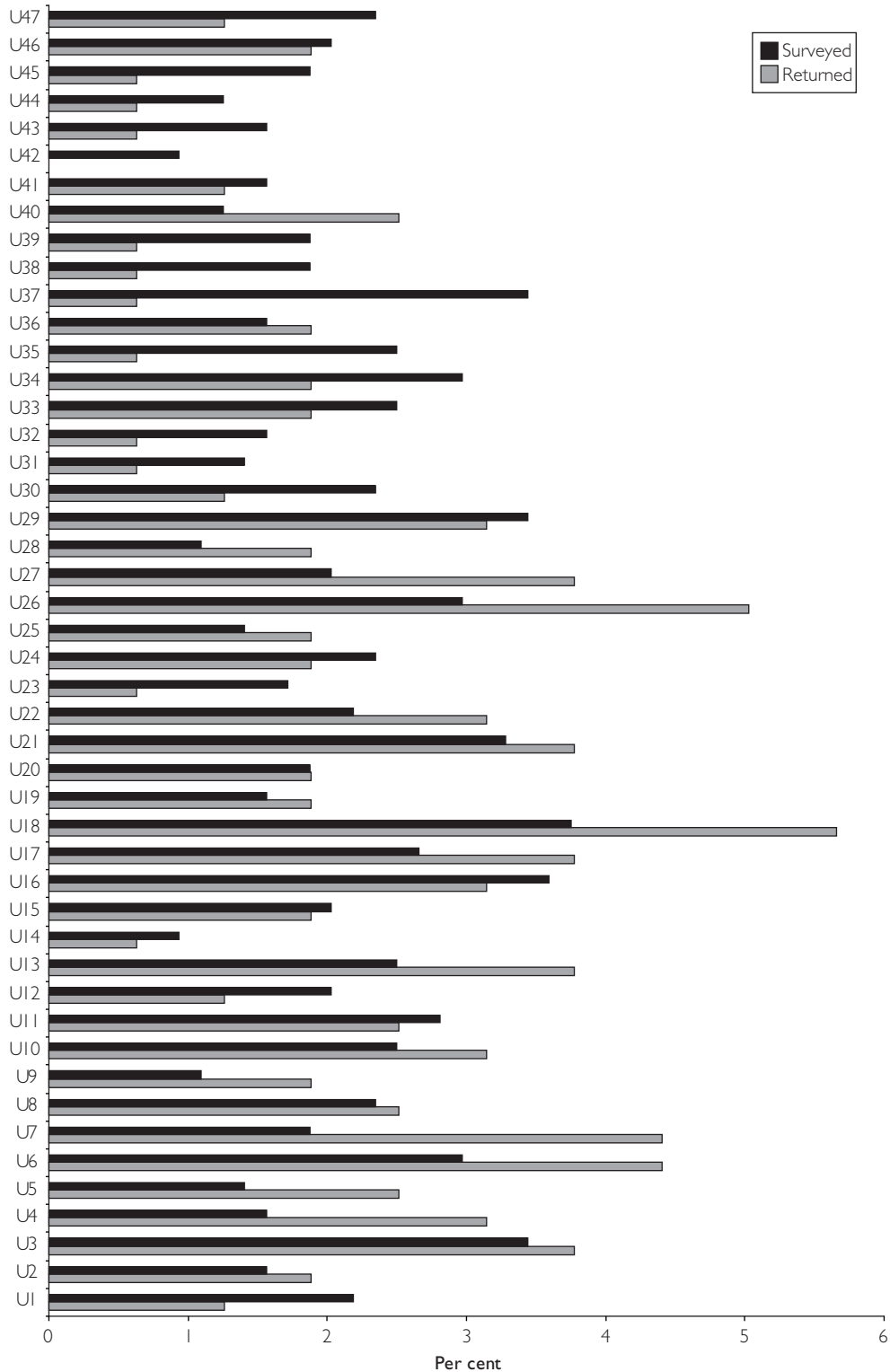


Figure 3: Distribution of population and sample by institution

As noted in relation to population specification, the titles and distribution of roles is complex and varies between institutions. An Assistant Dean at one institution may have the same duties as a Dean at another, and both may vary in terms of their responsibility and involvement with student matters and the IB in particular.

For the purposes of analysis, individuals' roles were partitioned into eight categories. These categories were based on content analysis of the role descriptions provided by respondents rather than those recorded in the population list. They were distilled from 97 different role descriptions provided by respondents. Most of these categories are self-explanatory. 'Director' includes roles such as Directors of student access, student administration, student services, admissions, planning, studies, undergraduate programs and student and community services. 'Administrator' includes those roles such as Academic Services Manager, Student Adviser, Faculty Executive Officer, Faculty Manager, Liaison Advisor, Manager of Admissions Centre, Manager of Student Administration, Manager of Student Recruitment, Marketing Manager, Prospective Student Advisers, Selection Officer, Admissions Officer, Senior Liaison Officer, Senior Policy Manager, Senior Manager of Student Administration, Senior Recruitment Officer, and Admissions Manager. 'Academic' includes those who listed roles such as Professor or Senior Lecturer.

Table I shows the distribution of the sample across these eight categories. Deans comprised around a third of the sample, administrators around 15 per cent, VCs, DVCs and PVCs just over a fifth, Heads and Directors around 16 per cent, with the remaining portion consisting equally of Registrars and academics.

Table I: Distribution of roles in the sample of respondents

	n	%
VC/DVC	16	10
PVC/VP	22	14
Registrar	11	7
Dean	49	31
Head	8	5
Director	18	11
Administrator	24	15
Academic	11	7
Total	159	100

Figure 4 compares aggregations of the eight categories against the target population figures. It shows the responses are slightly under-representative of senior university administrators, and includes slightly more administrators and people working as Deans or Heads than might be expected. The general distribution of roles among the respondents follows that distribution in the target population.

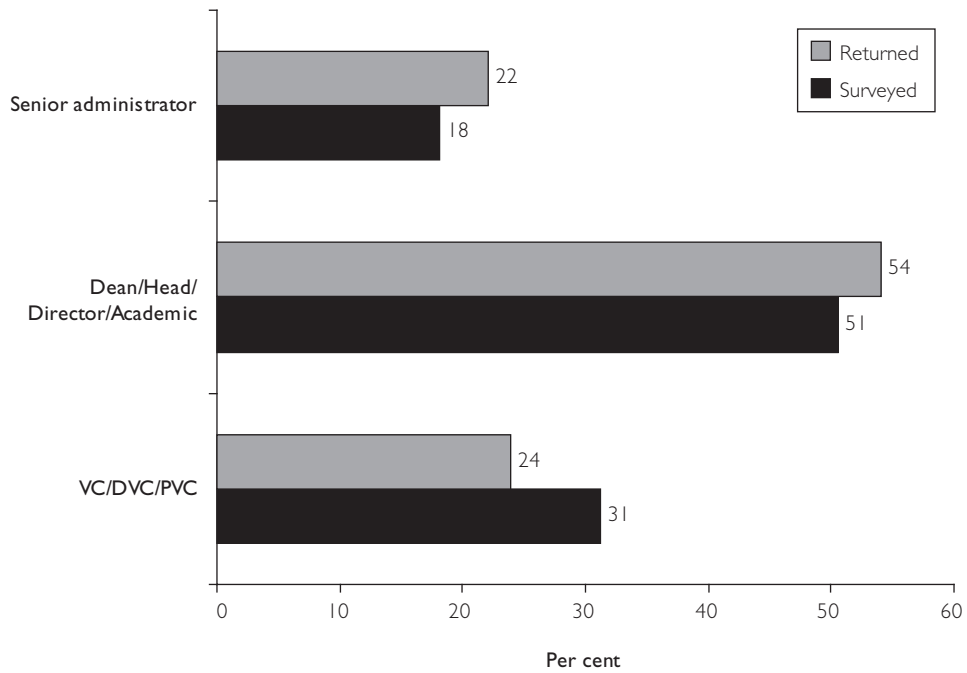


Figure 4: Distribution of population and sample by role

03

Experience with IB students

The survey sought information from respondents on their experience with IB students. Such information is of value in its own right, and for providing a context with which to interpret other feedback. This section provides information on representatives' contact with IB students, reports of any IB student preferences for choosing various fields of education over others, and reports general findings on how the IBO and higher education institutions might work to better understand the IB programs and students.

3.1 Contact with IB students

Respondents were asked how many students with an IB Diploma they have had administrative or academic involvement with in the last five years. The results are shown in Figure 5, which provides equivalent information from the 2003 UK survey. In summary, 46 per cent of university representatives in Australasia had no contact with IB students in the last five years, or were not aware that they had such contact. The figure for the UK was much lower, with only around 10 per cent of respondents reporting no contact with IB students in the last five years. This pattern might be expected given the greater number and longer history of IB schools in the UK than Australia and New Zealand.

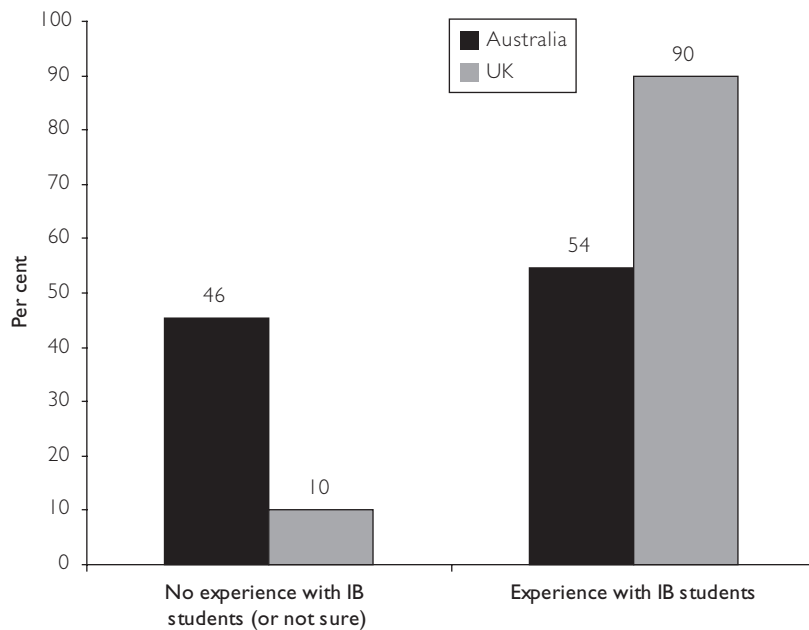


Figure 5: Overall Australian and UK staff experience with IB students

Figure 6 breaks the results in Figure 5 down by role. People in Head, VC/DVC and Dean roles are more likely to have had no contact, or not be sure if they had contact with an IB student. The contrary was true of people working as Registrars, Directors, Academics and Administrators. A similar number of PVC/VPs indicated that they had not had contact with an IB student in the last five years.

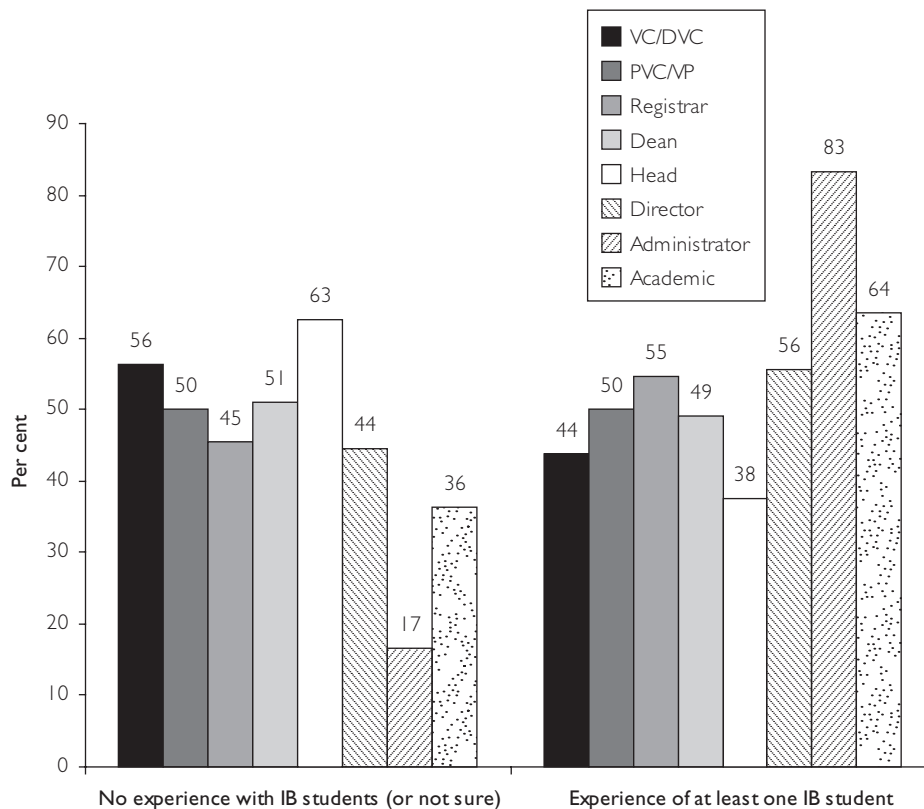


Figure 6: Australian staff experience with IB students by role

Figure 7 also breaks down the summary figures in Figure 5, and shows that of those respondents who reported having some form of contact with IB students, 50 per cent had contact with more than 20 while the remaining 50 per cent had contact with between one and 20 students.

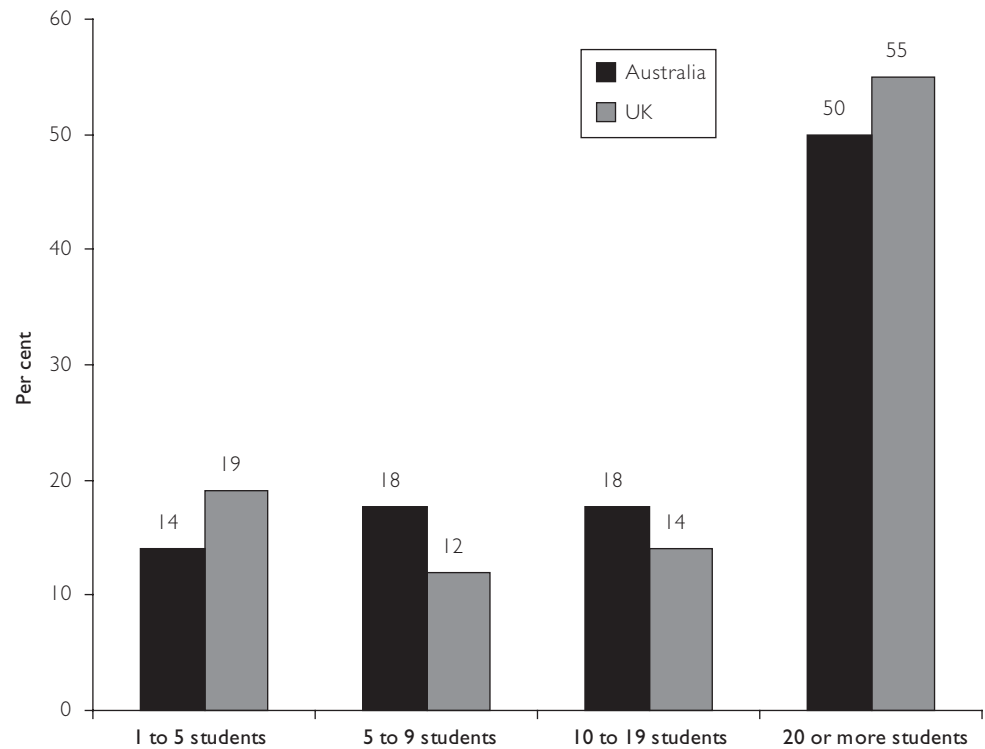


Figure 7: Australian and UK staff experience with IB students

3.2 Field of education preferences

Respondents were asked if they felt that students with an IB Diploma tended to study in any particular field of education. Twelve fields were listed, including an 'other' category, and respondents were invited to select more than one category where relevant. Figure 8 presents the percentage of selections in each category of the total number of selections. Figures for the UK are presented, although the comparison is limited by the use of different field of education classifications. The results are sorted in ascending order according to the Australian figures.

There appear to be two broad categories of disciplines. The first is those that respondents have suggested tend to be taken less than 10 per cent of the time by IB students:

- Engineering and Related Technologies
- Creative and Performing Arts
- Education
- Information Technology
- Architecture and Building
- Agriculture, Environment and Related Studies

By contrast, more than ten per cent of all responses reflected respondents' perceptions that IB students are more likely to study in the following fields of education:

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Management, Economics and Commerce
- Health
- Law
- Natural and Physical Sciences

With the exception of Information Technology (Technology) and Health (Medicine), the broad patterns are fairly consistent between Australia and the UK. In the UK, most students tend to study in the Arts, Social Sciences, Languages, Business or Management, Science or Law fields.

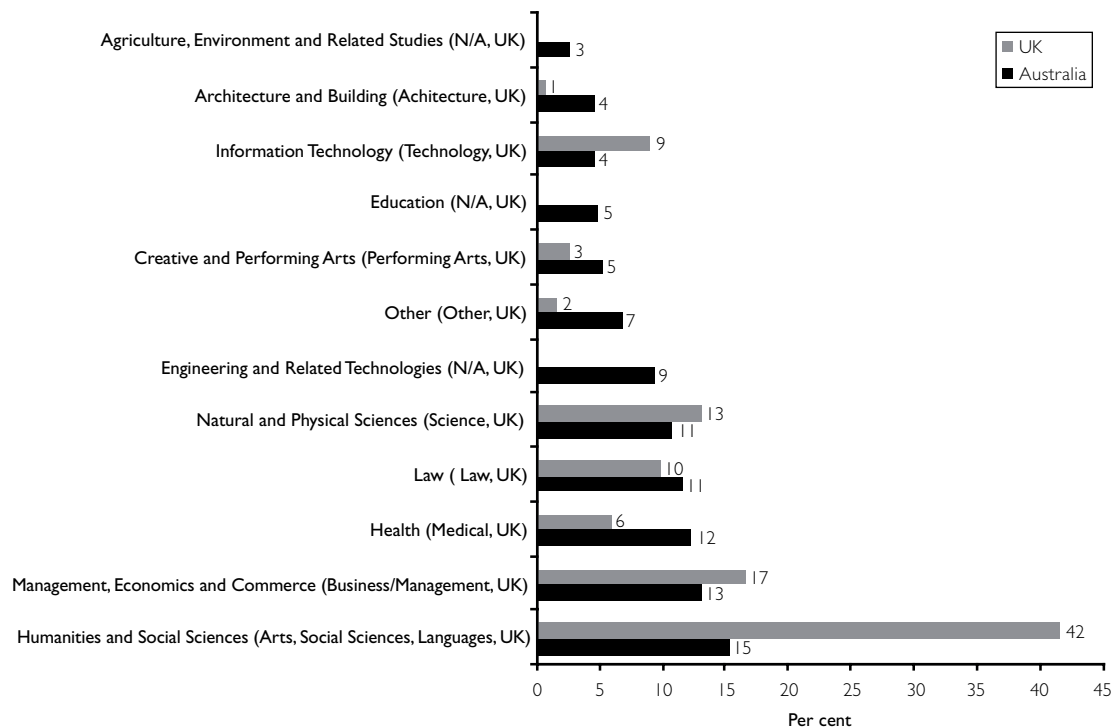


Figure 8: Australian and UK IB students' study in different fields of education

3.3 Developing an understanding of IB students

The interviews confirmed that while a small number of staff knew of students who had done the IB, many did not have specific knowledge of students who had entered the university via the IB pathway. At certain institutions, this information was very much the domain of the admissions office and once the student was admitted there was no attempt to follow their progress at university. In one instance, knowledge of a student's pathway to university via the IB was seen as private information to which teaching staff should not have access.

Many institutions, however, appeared to lack any systematic means of collecting information about the performance of different types of entering students, including IB students. Feedback in the survey and interviews suggested that much of what university representatives know about the IB Diploma and IB students is derived from anecdotal or personal experience. Respondents frequently noted that their perceptions had been formed by having children, or friends' children, pass through the IB, or from knowledge of a student, or group of students, at their institution. A repeated point raised in the interviews and survey was that universities had little or no systematic information on which to base their perceptions of the IB.

The lack of such information limits the data on which perceptions reported in the current survey might be based. It is not just a problem for the current survey, but also has broader ramifications for the capacity of Australasian universities to track the performance and progress of their students.

Suggestion 1: The IBO might consider capturing greater information on the destinations and progress of IB Diploma graduates. As universities have no specific reason to implement such a system and any such systems would be specific to each institution, such information may need to be captured by the IBO itself. One means of doing this might be through an IB Diploma alumni survey. The IBO might also consider working with, or encouraging, Australian universities to track the performance and progress of enrolled students. Such tracking would most likely require the alignment of admissions data with enrolment and achievement data.

Irrespective of any limitations in experience or information, there was a good reception during the interviews to the idea of university staff being involved in development of IB curriculum. This was particularly the case in areas where university representatives had a strong understanding of what they wanted, but were not always getting from students who come to their university and program. Few reported having visited the IBO website, or having logged in to the secure site. It could be reasonably assumed that greater involvement of academic staff in the IB Diploma would lead to a greater commitment to the program.

The IBO might consider developing strategies for engaging a wider range of university staff in the IB Diploma. Academics could play a valuable role in the development of IB curriculum, IB assessment activities, and by finding ways to support and extend the capabilities of IB students once they enter university. The IBO could work with 'early adopters' to enhance involvement in, and awareness of, the IB Diploma. This may involve working with individual academics, with departments or faculties, or perhaps even with particular institutions. An obvious possibility would be to work with education faculties and increase the training of IB teachers. Such ideas would need to be thought through carefully.

The above results, combined with feedback from university representatives during the interviews suggested that a multifaceted approach would provide the best means of helping university staff learn about the IB Diploma and IB graduates. Such an approach may involve providing senior university officials working in chancelleries with high-level summary information and newsletters about the IB, providing staff in faculties with information about how interested academics might become involved in the IB, and providing centralised or faculty-based administrative staff with information about IB operations and characteristics.

Suggestion 2: The IBO should use a multifaceted approach to help university staff learn about the IB Diploma and IB graduates. Such an approach may involve working with 'early adopters' to enhance the involvement of academic staff in the program, providing senior university officials working in chancelleries with summary information and newsletters about the IB, providing staff in faculties with information about how interested academics might become involved in the IB, and providing central administrative staff with information about IB operations and characteristics.

04

Views on the IB Diploma

4.1 Perceptions of IB Diploma attributes

The survey invited respondents to rate the level of importance of seven aspects of the IB Diploma. The results are shown in Table 2 which presents the percentage of responses in each of the six response categories offered on the survey form. The figures indicate that most people are unsure about those aspects of the course about which specific details were given on the questionnaire. These are the three compulsory elements of the IB Diploma: the extended essay; the study of theory of knowledge; and the 150 hours of creative, physical and community services component. The most responses, and the highest levels of agreement, were associated with broad statements about the IB Diploma, which covered matters such as the use of a range of assessment strategies, and the breadth and depth of the curriculum.

Table 2: Perceived importance of various aspects of the IB (per cent of responses to each category)

	Not sure	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Spreading all subjects over two years	13	1	12	38	27	11
A 100-hour course on the theory of knowledge	13	6	18	23	29	13
150 hours of creative, physical and community service activities	10	5	15	33	25	12
A 4,000 word extended essay	8	4	12	23	33	19
The use of a range of assessment strategies	8	0	2	23	50	18
A broad curriculum with subjects in six different areas	7	0	2	24	51	16
Studying at least three subjects in depth	6	0	7	14	50	23

This pattern is brought out in Figure 9 in which the axis value of 1.0 corresponds to the 'very low' response category and the value of 5.0 corresponds to the 'very high' response category. 'Not sure' responses have been omitted from this figure.

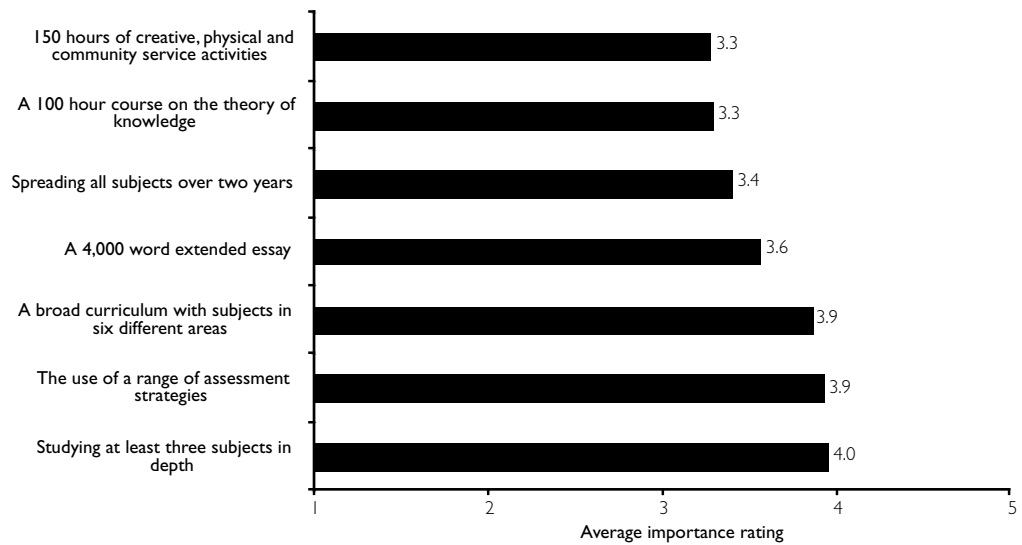


Figure 9: Importance of various aspects of the IB (average of respondents' rating)

Figure 10 compares the importance of various aspects of the IB Diploma as perceived by UK and Australian university representatives. The UK percentage is the proportion of the 122 respondents who indicated that they found that the three elements of the IB Diploma had value in the students' progress through their studies. The Australian figure is the percentage of respondents who provided a response of 'medium', 'high' or 'very high' in their ratings of the importance of these components, after excluding the 'not sure' responses.

The results show that the UK representatives tend to be more positively disposed than the Australians to the theory of knowledge and extended essay components. The reverse was true of the creative, physical and community service, however, where 78 rather than 70 per cent of respondents provided support for this component. Given that these are perceptions, it is uncertain whether these results reflect feedback about the demonstrated importance of the three compulsory elements or about respondents' feelings as to their normative relevance. It is possible too that the inclusion of specific details in these items made it more difficult for respondents to offer their principled support to these elements.

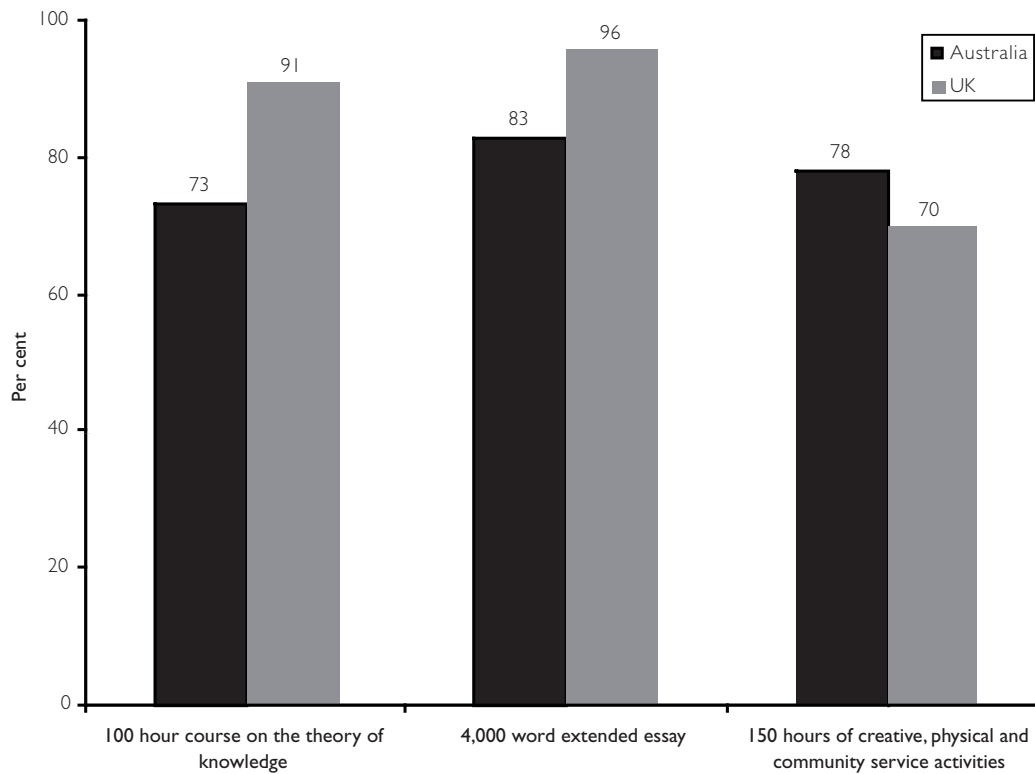


Figure 10: Perceived importance of various aspects of the IB in Australian and UK (per cent of respondents who indicated that the component was important)

Read together, these results indicate that while representatives endorse all aspects of the IB Diploma, they see slightly less value in the theory of knowledge, extended essay and creative, physical and community service activities. There would be value in the IBO enhancing university representatives' awareness of these three essential elements, as they provide much of the IB Diploma's character and value.

Suggestion 3: There would be value in the IBO enhancing university representatives' awareness of the theory of knowledge, extended essay and creative, physical and community service activities. Such promotion would help develop understanding of the full dimensions of the IB Diploma that play an important role in shaping its characteristics and value.

4.2 General perceptions of the IB Diploma

Respondents were asked whether, in general, they were satisfied that the IB Diploma prepares students well for undergraduate study. Figure 11 shows that while none of the 159 survey respondents suggested that it did not, 23 per cent said that they were not sure, as they had too little information on which to base a view.

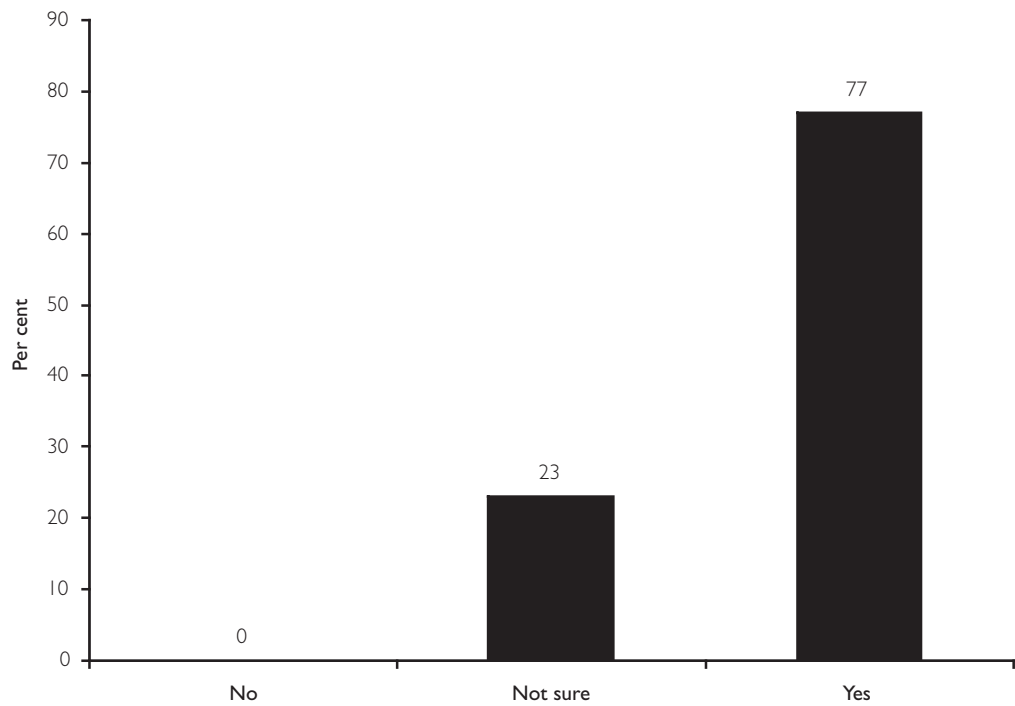


Figure 11: Views of whether the IB prepares students well for undergraduate study (per cent of responses)

Survey respondents were asked if they felt that the IB Diploma provides students with any specific advantage(s) at university. A full list of responses is provided in Appendix D. Of these, around 70 per cent of the 107 comments suggested that the IB did prepare students in advantageous ways for success at university. Of these, around 80 per cent suggested that the IB enhanced students' academic competence and capability, and hence their potential for success at university. Some examples are provided in the following box:

The extended essay gives students the opportunity to develop communication skills which are useful for tertiary study.

A strong academic base - a more reliable predictor of scholastic achievement than some other qualifications. It also gives me confidence about constancy of international comparisons for overseas students.

Better prepared to engage in all components of university life.

The students generally seem more confident than others.

Well rounded and ready to benefit from opportunities. More able to think critically and analyse.

Yes. Greater intellectual depth than local qualifications. Focuses on "serious" subjects. Expects students to think and communicate.

Students enter with enquiring, critical minds. Are self-motivated and having completed globally are aware of the field they are entering. Students know how to freely move through the intellectual, cultural field and do so with ease.

Ability to work with self direction and to tackle work at an advanced level confidently.

Applicants admitted on IB diploma qualification have done well at tertiary study.

Being high performing students and having the broad curriculum combined with community experience provides a conceptual knowledge and maturity that assists transition to university.

Many seem more mature than other secondary school students.

More advanced and more rigorous curriculum and assessment prepares the students better than state certificates for university level science.

The ability to self motivate and engage effective study patterns; Exposure to a range of assessment types; An experience of community engagement.

The students seem to be better able to cope with the transition from school to university than are many of our other students.

The work on theory of knowledge and the extended essay are valuable introductions to the demands of university-level study. We have not examined whether these components of the diploma, however, provide any measurable advantage over other qualifications.

Around 10 per cent indicated that the program offered students a senior secondary experience with greater breadth and depth:

A broader context to place format obtained at University.

Breadth and research skills.

Broad background is good in that many students are unsure of what they want to study and this gives flexibility.

There may be slightly more depth in the three higher levels of study, but this comes at the expense of having a narrower field of pre-university subjects i.e. excessive specialisation. The inclusion of a second language is useful.

A small number referred to the advantage conferred on students as a result of the international and community service aspects of the IB Diploma:

The international focus and emphasis on social issues/citizenship. There are 'generic attributes' most universities would espouse as desired graduate outcomes.

Students are becoming increasingly mobile. The IB is internationally recognised and is highly portable. The IB curriculum is far less parochial and less subject to educational fads than Australian State curricula. Note that I had 5 years experience in South Australia with K-12 curriculum reform.

International opportunities to undertake tertiary study.

International recognition/standard & transferability. Emphasis on theory of knowledge - philosophy.

The core components of the IB (is) an excellent level of training in research, comprehension and dissemination of ideas. It is also a [portable] qualification, and this allows you to move interstate and internationally. I am so impressed that I want my own daughter to do it.

The interviews also provided strong support for the IB program, and in particular the 4,000 word essay and theory of knowledge. They were seen to provide students with opportunities to learn about learning rather than being focused on specific aspects of knowledge. At a more general level, the IB was seen as a more coherent program, developed sequentially rather than vertically, than was perceived to be the case with many state certificates. The program was also generally seen as more flexible, yet as one that ensured that students had studied across a range of areas without just focusing on those disciplines in which they felt more comfortable.

Many characteristics of the IB align with those expressed in university graduate attribute or employability skills statements. This was captured in the feedback of university staff during interviews who, in keeping with the above comments, indicated that they felt that IB students came to university with greater sense of academic independence and maturity. There would be value in the IBO investigating how best to inform institutions about those aspects of the program that are commonly projected as being essential aspects and outcomes of university study.

A strong theme in the interviews was that the IB Diploma provides an excellent preparation for the highly internationalised nature of contemporary university study. This point was commonly noted by senior university representatives. The IB should provide further information on the ways in which completing an IB Diploma prepares students for an international world. On a related front, the international transportability of the IB was highly regarded by interview respondents.

Around 30 per cent of the 107 responses to the question of whether respondents felt that the IB Diploma provides students with specific advantage(s) at university suggested that it did not or that they were unable to comment. A full list of responses is provided in Appendix D. Around 20 per cent suggested that the IBO provided no specific advantage in terms of admission or success in university study:

No real advantages have been noticed with current students.

No specific advantages other than like a number of other acceptable year 12 equivalent qualifications a sound basis for admission with a likelihood of successful tertiary study.

Not from an admission and administration point of view.

It's a sound program. However, in some respects it's a pretty conservative educational package. The "discipline" and international conformity could be seen as a restraint but, on the other hand, this is likely to be attractive to a particular cohort of consumers.

Around 15 per cent of the 107 respondents to this question indicated that they had too little information to form a response:

Not able to comment

Have insufficient knowledge as to comment.

I am unable to answer much within this survey as I have no direct contact with IB students.

I do not have sufficient knowledge to comment.

I'm not in the possession of the knowledge, information to answer this question. Once students have arrived at a tertiary institution staff are unaware of their entry route, IB, TEE or through TAFE.

No specific data exists to support the assertion that IB students are specifically advantaged.

A handful of respondents indicated that it was the characteristics of IB students rather than the program that conferred the advantage:

Not particularly. The very intelligent succeed despite the system. IB students tend to come from reasonably privileged backgrounds so motivation and support, the key tenants to doing well are in place.

I think a few years ago yes but now more and more students are emerging from school with experience of self directed project based learning. I suppose these students often are intellectually highly motivated so my sense is that they would do well anyway.

The interviews reinforced several comments made in the open-ended sections of the survey form that students who have entered university with an IB had already gone through a selection process into the IB Diploma program. Therefore their perceived strengths were attributed as much to the individuals themselves rather than resulting from their having studied the IB. This perception was often coupled with comments about the difficulties in attributing university success to IB students given the strong perception that students largely self-selected into IB programs. From an evaluative perspective this is true, although it remains useful to chart the relative success of those students who hold an IB Diploma.

In addition to focusing on perceived advantages of the IB, the survey asked university representatives if they felt that there were any weaknesses in how the IB Diploma prepares students for undergraduate study. Just over sixty per cent of the 73 comments provided to this question indicated that university representatives felt that there were no weaknesses in the preparation of IB students for university study:

None that are substantial.

None that we have become aware of.

By comparison with everything else, there are none.

I am not aware of any perceived deficiencies in the level of preparation provided by the IB diploma.

I don't currently teach any undergraduate courses, however anecdotally, students seem to cope very well with tertiary study.

I have not noticed any.

I think the IB is a much better preparation than local qual for students who proceed to serious learning at university. It also is better preparation to be an informed and participatory citizen.

Very few IB students are not first rate students, so we aren't aware of weaknesses.

IB has a strong reputation and we are confident about the abilities of students to cope with university undergraduate degree study, who present with this qualification.

As per the question about perceived advantages, other respondents indicated that they had insufficient information on which to base a response.

Don't know.

Unable to comment

No evidence is available to me on this.

No experience in this area.

Not able to comment

Not sure

When selection for study on academic merit is made on the basis of year 12 (NZ) as the first year of the IB, there is little information available to indicate performance and for us to understand.

About 26 comments (35 per cent of those who responded to the question) provided feedback on weaknesses of the IB Diploma in terms of preparing students for university study. Some of these comments suggested that the IB is too exclusive:

A perception perhaps but a more Euro-centric focus in aspects of the curriculum?

Students have to choose at quite an early age to study certain subjects in depth. If they are mature this is fine. If not, it can be counter-productive.

The features which make the IB work for good students may make it less suitable for those who are not showing the same academic potential.

Other respondents indicated that IB students experienced adjustment problems:

It may be a function of the school delivering IB in XXX, but IB graduates (along with other first year students from private schools) are less independent and take slightly longer to adjust to independent learning and administrative self sufficiency.

One can sometimes sense a certain hubris in IB students; they've undertaken a vigorous training and they know it! This can make them less tolerant of alternatives.

A few comments reported difficulties associated with delivery of the IB program by schools, or matters associated with the scoring and calibration of IB results:

Structure of assessment; Lack of teacher education in IB

The risk is the grading system for the IB which has high threshold levels and can result in a competent student without an IB level /UIA equivalent score. The IB therefore restricts domestic choice. It is dependent on the teacher capacity more than the HSC.

Linkages between university study and high school

The balancing of depth and breadth was also recognised as an area that could cause problems:

As 2 year programme is fine for ensuring depth etc. But we have encountered students seeking admission to university who have exited at the end of their year 12 with little to show for it.

Conversely, precisely because it is broad students who excel in one area (particularly science) tend to poorly in due to language requirements and are forced to drop out.

More focus on open-ended problem solving is required, although most pre-university qualifications prepare students inadequately for this purpose.

Perhaps less chance to specialise – which may be a disadvantage in some areas.

The breadth of the qualification means that some students lack preparation in enough subjects to enter some limited entry programmes.

IB higher maths in particular, tends to overstretch many students leading to failure. Students who are not particularly academic seem unduly constrained by the IB curriculum and small subject range.

A final open-ended response question on the survey form asked respondents for any additional feedback about the IB Diploma and higher education. Several respondents commented that the IB should be more widely adopted:

I think it is a good qualification with probably the best balance of any of the options I am aware of.

I wish more students did it!

I would be in favour of Vic Gov Schools offering an IB option. At the moment only private schools do so.

Should be compulsory

Others noted further valuable characteristics of the IB program or students:

6 out of 8 of our international IB students have performed very well.

I find it on a whole a very admirable program. I wish that I could have done it myself!!! I particularly like its international orientation, which benefits law students greatly.

My contact with the IB at high schools has left a very positive impression in terms of the vigour of the program, which reflects the emphasis placed on professional development for those who teach into the program.

A small number of comments were made about scoring and calibration matters:

The main issue that I have come across is one related to the conversion of the IB aggregate score to the VAI equiv. rank. A score of 38 (IB) converts to a RAI rank of 98.30 and 39 (IB) converts to 98.8. BVSc cut-off has been 98.40 or 98.45 in recent years and this meant that IB students with a score of 38 miss out on an offer. VAI scores use 0.05 as the minimum interval and an interval of 1.0 in the IB may disadvantage applicants in some faculties.

The very coarse reporting scale (1-7 for subject results) makes equitable tertiary selection and benchmarking relative to other programs very difficult, especially for lower achieving students.

As chair of XXX's scaling committee, I have had access to several studies looking at the relative performance of IB and other students. These show that performance is consistent with the notional ENTERs, which put all passing IB students in the top 30% of the age cohort and many in the top 10%. The assignment of notional ENTERs will, from next year, involve 3 separate methods. All of which give broadly consistent results.

Further comments were made about the exclusivity of the IB Diploma, or its perceived competition to state certificates:

IB clearly stretches students more academically, which is an advantage for academically inclined students, but it is not appropriate for all students in an age cohort. Students at the edge academically can suffer negative consequences from attempting IB. Schools duplicating Yr 11 & 12 to accommodate XXXX & IB streams stretch their resources considerably.

I believe schools which receive funding from the state of NSW should offer the NSW HSC as their qualification for admission to Universities

It is a good, relevant course. Great pity that it has been setup in competition to State Certificates and is typically used by schools to appeal to elitist elements.

It seems to be a marketing tool of private schools; it is a broad program which I think is a good thing at High School, and I have heard it is rigorous (but treated very generously by UAC).

Most respondents who gave a response to the final open-ended question took the opportunity to emphasise that they had too little information on which to base a response, or that they were unfamiliar with the program:

Apologies, I am unable to comment regarding the IB diploma.

I looked at the questionnaire and found I didn't have enough information to answer the questions

I'm sorry, I am actually completely unfamiliar with this program.

We have very little experience with students who have completed the IB prior to entry into this Faculty, so I do not feel able to comment in an informed way

The low intake using IB Diploma means that my comments / rankings are idiosyncratic rather than statistically valid.

Our numbers are not significant relatively. IB students appear well prepared for first year but once into second year it appear not to confer advantage.

I am not aware of any students entering our program from an IB preparation. It has never emerged as a distinguishing feature in relation to any student success or difficulties in our course.

We do not complete any analyses on student success by their previous qualification so I do not feel I'd be able to comment accurately on the second to last question.

The faculty's experience with candidates of the IB diploma is limited to this point that some sections of this survey are kept blank.

Several themes emerge in analysis of these open-ended survey responses. Most comments were supportive of the IB Diploma, often highly so. Among these were broad suggestions that the IB had no specific weaknesses and that the program is valuable. More specifically, many respondents commented that it enhanced the university students' academic competence and capability, that the program gave them experience of greater breadth and depth, that it provided an internationalised educational experience with a greater emphasis on community engagement, and that it should be more widely adopted.

The comments also offered several uncertainties about the IB Diploma. Many commented that they had no information on which to base their response or evaluate the relative performance of IB students or the program. A similar set of responses noted that students self-select into the program and therefore that it may be difficult to separate the relative success of the students from the program. To a certain extent, this was connected to perceptions of the IB having exclusive characteristics, and being taught at only independent schools or to high achieving students.

Other responses were more critical of the program, indicating that the IB provided no specific advantage over alternative preparations for university study. A small number of respondents reported seeing IB students experience adjustment problems, problems with the delivery of the program at schools, problems with the focusing and scoping of the program, or problems with the scoring and conversion of IB scores.

Suggestion 4: The IBO might work with institutions to determine how to best align the program with the changing characteristics and demands of university study, to assist IB Diploma graduates adjust to university study, and to ensure the equivalence of IB Diploma scores with those of other senior secondary qualifications.

Perhaps one of the most concerning perceptions is that the IB Diploma is seen as elitist. This was expressed in the interviews, although those who are more familiar with course content reported that 'average' students could greatly benefit from the Diploma. This view, however, is not widely shared. While the IB is designed to be a demanding program, the program is targeted for all tertiary-bound students and there is scope to provide greater information about this to universities. To the extent that it is seen to be relevant, the IBO needs to take steps to counter prevailing perceptions of elitism about the IB. One means of doing this might be to profile students from a range of backgrounds and, to the extent that it is possible to do so, to provide information on the variety of pathways taken by IB graduates.

Suggestion 5: The IBO could work with universities to profile IB students from a range of backgrounds and, to the extent that it is possible to do so, to provide information on the variety of pathways taken by IB graduates.

05

Comparing the IB Diploma

5.1 The IB Diploma and other qualifications

The survey invited respondents to compare the IB Diploma with other forms of preparation for university study. In general, both the survey and interview results suggested that the IB was viewed as providing university preparation as good as, or better than, that of the state certificates, or of other international certificates.

In addition to the IB Diploma, respondents were asked to rate 'A' levels or the Cambridge certificate, their state certificate, the New Zealand certificate and the American APs if they had experience with the qualities of each. It asked respondents how successful they felt each of the qualifications is in developing students' capabilities in a number of areas. Six areas were listed, including: deep learning; broad learning; critical thinking; communication; research; and self management. Respondents were asked to enter a number from 1 to 5 in each box, where 1 meant 'not very successful' and 5 meant 'highly successful'. They were told to leave a box blank if they were unsure or had no experience with a particular qualification.

Summary results for the overall sample are shown in Figure 12. It must be stressed that these are perceptions supplied by university representatives and not based on academic results or objective measures. It must also be considered that perceptions of the state certificates may not necessarily relate to the certificate of the state location of a respondent's university. The IB Diploma tends to rate highly across all categories. The 'A' levels also tend to rate highly. The state certificates and New Zealand certificate tend to rate the lowest.

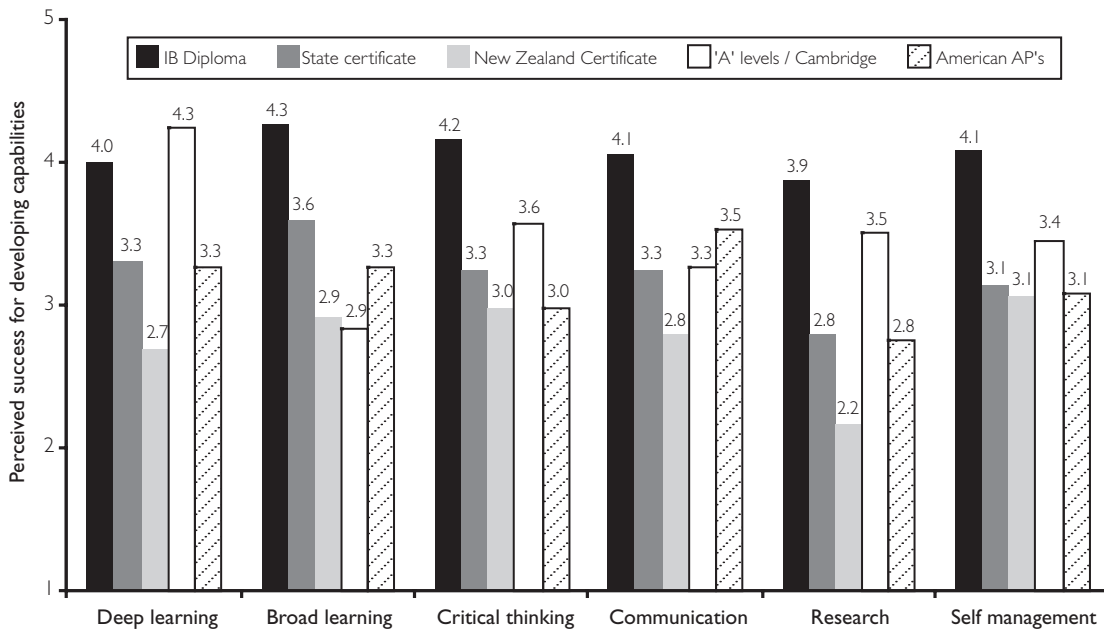


Figure 12: Perceived success of pre-university courses in developing students' capabilities (average rating for each aspect)

While Figure 12 presents mean results, the overall distribution of results is shown in Figure 13. These box plots show the distribution of response, including the range, the spread, and the median response. While ratings of the IB Diploma are relatively compact, those for the state certificate, NZ Certificate and American APs are more varied.

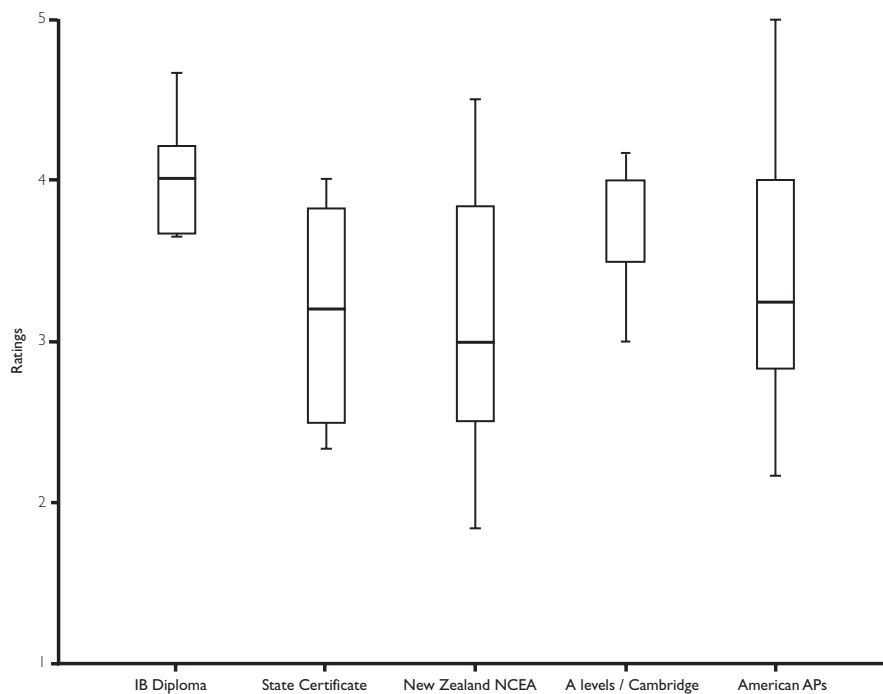


Figure 13: Perceived success of pre-university courses in developing students' capabilities (distribution of ratings for each aspect)

Figure 14 presents summary results across all six areas for each of the five qualifications. Overall, the 159 respondents have rated the IB Diploma as the most successful means of developing students' capabilities. It must again be stressed that these figures are based on perceptions of a relatively small number of university representatives. They nonetheless provide a picture of the views of such individuals.

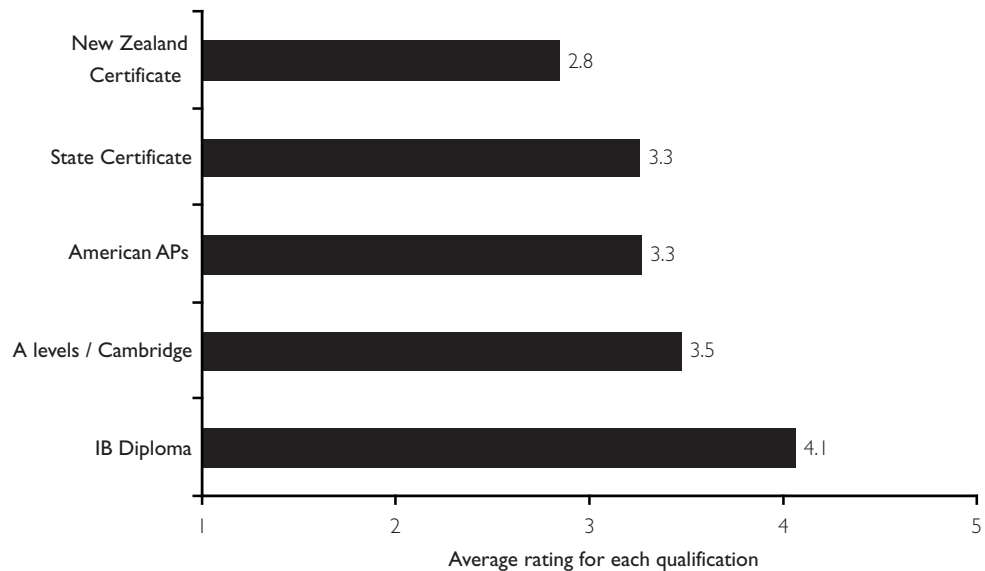


Figure 14: Overall strengths of various qualifications in developing students' capabilities (average rating for each aspect)

5.2 Comparing the IB Diploma against Australian state and territories certificates

Figure 14 provides a snapshot of all results for Australia and New Zealand combined. Table 3 breaks the results down for each Australian state (labelled A to H), and provides results just for the IB Diploma (IBD) and the state certificate (SC). The results show that the IB Diploma is rated higher than the state certificate in all states and territories but the same as or less than:

- state F in terms of deep learning;
- state E in terms of broad learning;
- states G and H in terms of critical thinking;
- state F in terms of communication skills;
- state E in terms of research skills; and
- states E, G and H in terms of self management.

Table 3: Variation in views on the IB Diploma and state certificates by state and territory

	Deep learning		Broad learning		Critical thinking		Communication		Research		Self management	
	IBD	SC	IBD	SC	IBD	SC	IBD	SC	IBD	SC	IBD	SC
A	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
B	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
C	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4
D	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
E	5	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
F	3	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	5	5
G	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3
H	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4
Total	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3

University staff reported in the interviews that there is a view amongst some staff that state certificates should be supported and that promotion of the IB will diminish support for the academic pathway that they should be working to enhance. The university representatives reported feeling a sense of competition between the IB and state certificates, and feelings of loyalty to their state certificate. It was suggested that the IB should be promoted to institutions as providing an additional qualification choice for all students who are potentially tertiary-bound, rather than as a threat to the state certificate.

Overall, most people spoken to saw the state certificates as providing a good pathway to university. To the extent that the IBO wants universities to lobby for a greater school uptake of the IB Diploma, universities will need to better identify what it is that the IB offers that the state certificates do not. At present there is general acceptance that the IB provides an alternative to the state certificate, but why that choice needs to be there is not obvious.

5.3 Preparation for success at university

Respondents were asked to indicate how well, compared with other qualifications, they felt that the IB Diploma prepares students for success in a number of areas of higher education. These aspects were: first year study; academic learning; university life; course completion; graduate employment; and postgraduate study. The five-point response scale ranged from 'much worse' to 'much better', along with a 'not sure' option.

Overall, as shown in Figure 15, the highest ratings were associated with first year study and academic learning, and the lowest with graduate employment, postgraduate study and university life. Such results suggest that university representatives see the IB as providing a good foundation for university study, but that university itself helps prepare students for experiences post-graduation.

These results, along with feedback during interviews, suggest that the IB should further align itself through change or promotion activities with the 'graduate attributes' and 'generic skills' or 'employability skills' embedded within university courses. There are close relationships between the attributes of the IB and of university study. In many, if not all, instances a greater alignment would involve bringing out the parallels and synergies rather than any change to the IB Diploma.

Suggestion 6: The IBO should further highlight existing alignments between the IB Diploma and the 'graduate attributes', 'generic skills' and 'employability skills', which are characterised as part of university courses.

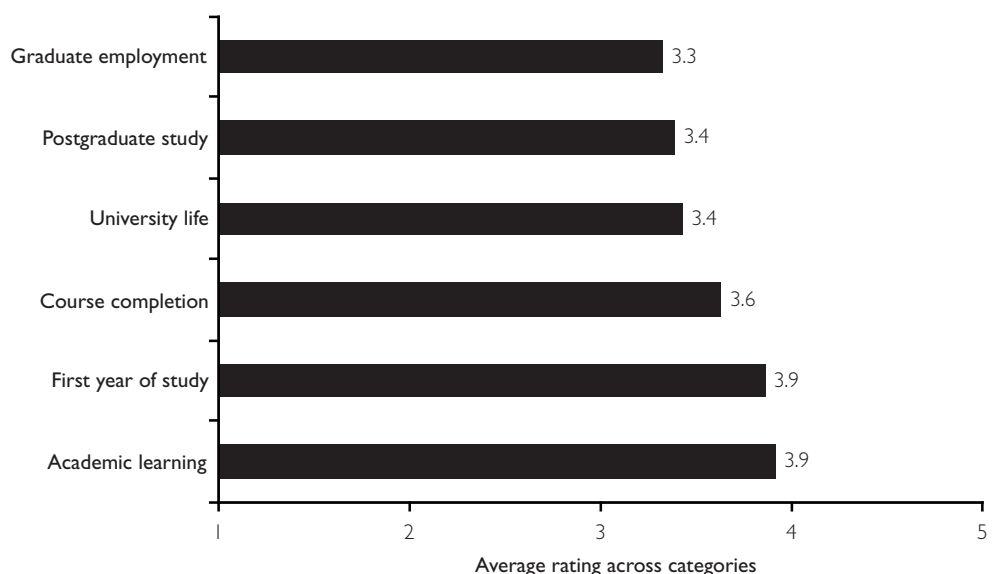


Figure 15: Relative strengths of IB Diploma in preparing students for success

Perceptions of the relative extent to which the IB Diploma prepares students for success in university study varied little in terms of role. As Figure 16 shows, while the VC/DVC group provided the lowest comparative ratings of around 3.4, the Director group provided the highest at around 3.9 on the five-point scale.

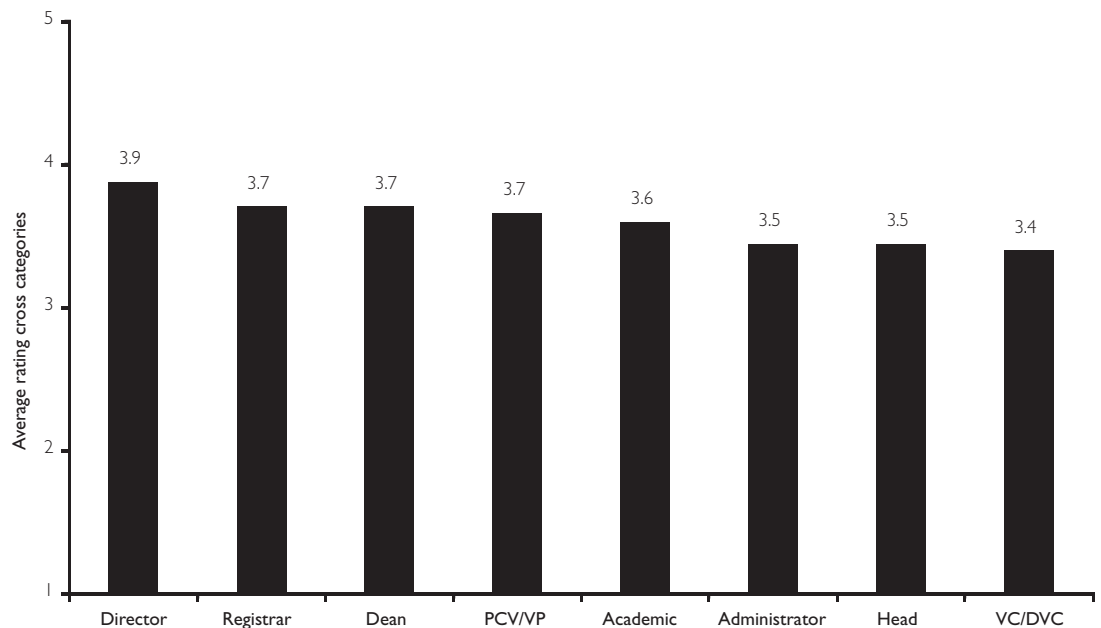


Figure 16: Relative strengths of IB Diploma in preparing students for success by role

Having experience with students who hold an IB Diploma did influence perceptions of the effectiveness of the IB. Figure 17 shows that having experience with more than five IB students in five years leads to a slightly higher rating of the IB as compared with other qualifications.

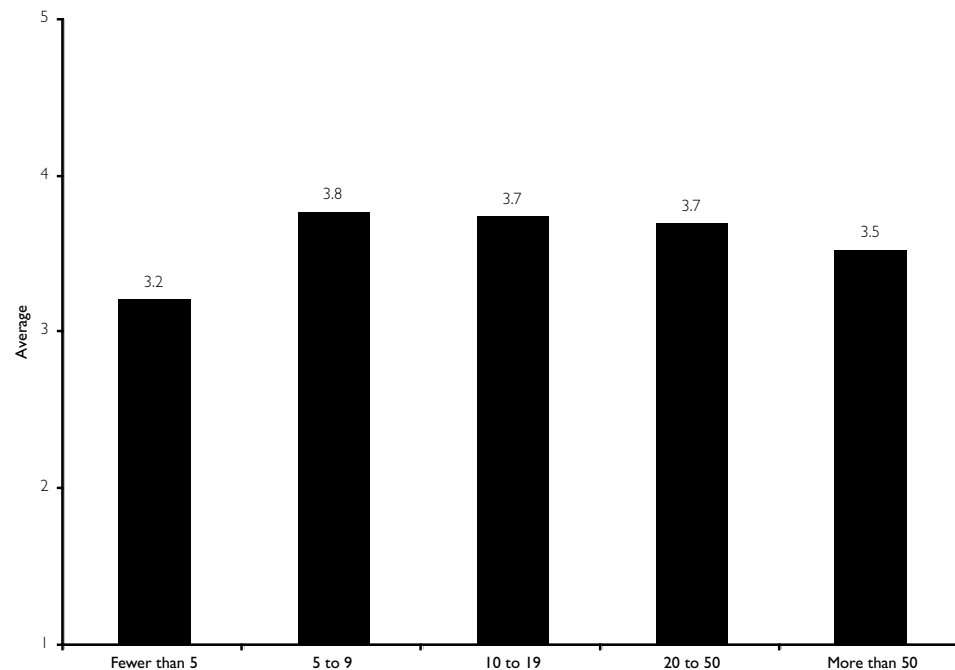


Figure 17: Relative strengths of IB Diploma in preparing students for success by IB Diploma experience

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Appendices

Appendix A The survey cover letter



Improving Learning



Thursday, 14 December 2006

Dear Participant

RE: University Perceptions of the International Baccalaureate

The number of secondary students completing an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma has risen rapidly in recent years, and the IB is playing an increasing role in preparing people for university study. The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is interested in universities' perceptions of the IB, and has engaged the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to research this area of higher education.

We are keen to know what you think about the IB, and would like you to help by completing and returning the survey form accompanying this letter. The form is short and takes only 10 minutes to complete. While participation is completely voluntary, we very much hope that you will provide us with your valuable feedback. It is important that we develop a good understanding of how university representatives view the IB.

The timeline for this project is tight, and we would appreciate it if you could return your form by **Thursday 30 November** at the latest.

ACER will use the results of this survey to provide a report to the IBO to help them develop the quality of their programs. The results will also be used to select around 10 people to interview in early 2007.

Completed questionnaires should be returned in the enclosed reply-paid envelope to:

Dr Hamish Coates
Australian Council for Educational Research
Private Bag 55, Camberwell, Victoria, 3124, Australia

We have asked for identifying information on the questionnaire to help us manage the survey. **Please be assured that no person or institution who takes part in the survey will be identified in any report.** ACER will keep all information confidential. Information will only be used for the purpose stated above.

If you have any queries about this survey, please contact ACER on +61 (0) 3 9835 7471 or by email at rosicka@acer.edu.au.

Thank you very much for considering your involvement in this survey.

Yours sincerely

Dr Hamish Coates
ACER Project Director

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Appendix B The survey instrument

University Perceptions of the International Baccalaureate Diploma



OVERVIEW OF THE IB DIPLOMA

Developed in 1968, the IB Diploma includes a two-year curriculum aimed at students aged 16 to 19. The Diploma aims to encourage students to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens. It leads to a qualification that is widely recognised by universities across the world.

The IB values both depth and breadth of learning. Students need to study at least three subjects at a 'higher level' (240 teaching hours), and three subjects at a 'standard level' (150 teaching hours). Subjects need to be selected from each of the following six groups: humanities, second language, experimental sciences, the arts, mathematics and computer science, and individuals and societies. All subjects are studied over two years, and involve a range of assessment strategies.

In addition to study in the six subject areas, students must complete:

- a 100 hour course on the theory of knowledge, which requires written and oral presentations;
- an extended essay of 4,000 words on a topic of the student's choice; and
- 150 hours of creative, physical and community service activities.

ABOUT YOU

Your institution:

Your position:

Your name:

Your faculty or unit:

YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH IB STUDENTS

How many students with an IB Diploma have you had administrative or academic involvement with in the last five years? *Select one box only.*

none / not sure

5 to 9

20 to 50

fewer than 5

10 to 19

more than 50

Do students with an IB Diploma tend to study in any particular fields of education at your institution?

Select all boxes that apply.

Natural and Physical Sciences

Education

Information Technology

Management, Economics and Commerce

Engineering and Related Technologies

Humanities and Social Sciences

Architecture and Building

Law

Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies

Creative and Performing Arts

Health

Other (please specify) _____

YOUR VIEWS ON THE IB DIPLOMA

What level of importance would you place on these factors in helping to make the IB Diploma a successful program? *Select one box per row.*

	NOT SURE	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
a broad curriculum with subjects in six different areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
studying at least three subjects in depth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
spreading all subjects over two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the use of a range of assessment strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a 100 hour course on the theory of knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a 4,000 word extended essay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
150 hours of creative, physical and community service activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

→please continue over the page...

Do you feel that the IB Diploma provides students with any specific advantage(s) at university?

What weaknesses, if any, can you see in how the IB Diploma prepares students for undergraduate study?

In general, are you satisfied that the IB Diploma prepares students well for undergraduate study?

Select one box only.

not sure
 yes
 no

COMPARING THE IB DIPLOMA WITH OTHER PREPARATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY STUDY

How successful do you think each of the five or six qualifications listed below is in developing students' capabilities in the following areas? Please enter a number from 1 to 5 in each box, where 1 means 'not very successful' and 5 means 'highly successful'. Leave a box blank if you are unsure or have no experience with a particular qualification.

	DEEP LEARNING	BROAD LEARNING	CRITICAL THINKING	COMMUNICATION	RESEARCH	SELF MANAGEMENT
IB Diploma						
Your state certificate						
New Zealand Certificate						
'A' levels / Cambridge						
American AP's						
Other (please specify) _____						

Compared with other qualifications, relatively how well do you feel the IB Diploma prepares students for success in these areas of higher education? Select one box per row.

	NOT SURE	MUCH WORSE	WORSE	THE SAME	BETTER	MUCH BETTER
first year study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
academic learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
university life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
course completion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
graduate employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
postgraduate study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any further comments you would like to add about the IB Diploma and higher education?

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Please return your form by **Thursday 30 November**.

Appendix C Telephone Interview schedule

INTERVIEW DISCUSSION FOR SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS TO IB SURVEY

A University Contact and Admissions Information

1. Does _____ University keep a record of students who have gained admission to the university with an IB score? YES/NO
2. If YES does the University keep any data on the future pathways of these students? YES/NO
3. If your university has collected this data did you use this as the basis for your survey responses about the IB Program or were your responses based more on anecdotal information?
4. Do you know approximately what percentage of the students entering your university with an IB qualification are international students and what percentage are domestic students?
5. Are admissions requirements for your international students with an IB Diploma different from domestic students with an IB Diploma?
6. Do you know the methodology used to convert an IB score to a UAI/TER/ENTER score?
7. If YES do you think that it is appropriate and does it appropriately recognise the long essay and the Theory of Knowledge course?
8. Is there any advanced placement and credit given to IB students enrolled at _____ University?
9. Do you know the extent to which staff access IB Diploma Guides to determine pre-requisites/minimum requirements for course entry? For example do you know of, or are you aware of staff who know that staff can access information on the IB (guides, exam papers, marking schemes etc) from secure parts of the website, and use these to inform curriculum/course development?
10. Do you know of any scholarships you offer for IB students?
11. How can the IBO better inform the university about its programs? For example is there an opportunity for information about the IB to be factored into issues related to first year students?
12. Who, in your university, is the best person for the IBO to have contact with to inform the university about its programs?

For the following questions interviewees will be asked to qualify their responses if they feel that the response varies depending on whether the student is a domestic student or an international student.

B The IB Academic Program

13. Interviewees will be asked to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the following characteristic of the IB Diploma as a preparation for university education:
 - a. 100 hour course on the theory of knowledge
 - b. 150 hours of creative, physical and community service activities
 - c. 4,000 word extended essay
 - d. Subject selection/requirements

Comments about why the nominated features are strengths or weaknesses.
14. To what extent do you understand the philosophy of the IB in terms of its intent to educate students to develop a strong sense of their own identity and culture and communicate and understand people from other countries and cultures?
15. Do you have an appreciation of the goal of the IB Diploma to educate students to “learn how to learn” and “ask challenging questions”?
16. Are you aware of any courses at your university that IB students are academically **inadequately prepared** for?

C IB Students and Their University Life

17. Do you believe that IB students at _____ University:
- Make an easier transition to university life.
 - Are more capable of **independent** research.
 - Have better research skills.
 - Have better written communication skills.
 - Have better oral communication skills.
 - Are more active in university life outside the lab or lecture theatre.
 - Are better problem solvers.
18. Do you have further comments about the experience of IB students at _____ University?

D General Comments About the IB Program

19. Do you believe that the positive/negative statements you have made about students who have studied for the IB Diploma before entering your university are better attributed to the students themselves or the schools that they have attended, rather than the program itself?
20. If there were one aspect of the IB Diploma that you believe should be incorporated into the State Certificate Programs, what would it be?
21. If there were one aspect of the State Certificate Programs that you believe should be incorporated into the IB Diploma, what would it be?
22. Is there any feature of the IB Diploma that you consider universities should be implementing into their undergraduate studies?
23. Do you feel that there is any aspect of the IB Diploma that should be changed to encourage schools to adopt it?
24. Would you have an interest in becoming involved in IB course development and assessment?
25. Would you be interested in teacher education for IB World School teachers?
26. Would you be keen to support the promotion of the IB program in schools?

Appendix D Specific advantages of IB for university study

A total of 107 respondents (67 per cent of the total) provided responses to the open-ended question of whether the IB diploma provides any specific advantage(s) for university study. These comments were coded into six different categories.

Success is attributed to students

<i>Not particularly. The very intelligent succeed despite the system. IB students tend to come from reasonably privileged backgrounds so motivation and support, the key tenants to doing well are in place.</i>
<i>I think a few years ago yes but now more and more students are emerging from school with experience of self directed project bases learning. I suppose these students often are intellectually highly motivated so my sense is that they would do well anyway</i>
<i>The characteristics above are much the same as the NSW HSC. The edge for good students lies in the inclusion of key learning areas in science and languages.</i>

Enhanced academic competence and capability

<i>Broader knowledge, better skills</i>
<i>Confidence; Research skills</i>
<i>The extended essay gives students the opportunity to develop communication skills which are useful for tertiary study.</i>
<i>The extended essay is useful to students who proceed to higher study above bachelor in (indecipherable) writing beyond the 2 - 2,500 word range.</i>
<i>The IB students at XXX, of which there are not many, tend to be confident, independent learners.</i>
<i>A greater sense of assured, communicative abilities</i>
<i>A strong academic base - a more reliable predictor of scholastic achievement than some other qualifications. It also gives me confidence about constancy of international comparisons for overseas students.</i>
<i>Better prepared to engage in all components of university life</i>
<i>Better ready for the independence of university</i>
<i>Better skills to manage study.</i>
<i>The students generally seem more confident than others</i>
<i>Well rounded and ready to benefit from opportunities. More able to think critically and analyse.</i>
<i>Yes in depth extended essay is a good preparation for humanities, law etc in particular</i>
<i>Yes, an internationally recognised program with a successful track record, it is a qualification that demands respect. The theory of knowledge component is especially praiseworthy.</i>
<i>Yes, independent study skills. High work ethic.</i>
<i>Yes, they tend to be well prepared and do extremely well.</i>
<i>Yes. Greater intellectual depth than local qualifications. Focuses on "serious" subjects. Expects students to think and communicate.</i>
<i>Only if they have had exposure to subjects and people not normally available (indecipherable) degree.</i>
<i>Our IB students have been of the highest quality. Culturally and philosophically more sophisticated.</i>
<i>Seems an excellent system for motivated students with perhaps some particular advantage compared to Enter scores with the computation of entrance scores.</i>

<i>Some advantage re initiative and skill in assignment/essay writing.</i>
<i>Students enter with enquiring, critical minds. Are self-motivated and having competed globally are aware of the field they are entering. Students know how to freely move through the intellectual, cultural field and do so with ease.</i>
<i>A colleague from another university recently commented on the spectacular success of students from a particular school in gaining access to programs that have competitive auditions for entry. I know that his school offers IB programs across the 1-12 grade range.</i>
<i>Ability to work with self direction and to tackle work at an advanced level confidently.</i>
<i>Applicants admitted on IB diploma qualification have done well at tertiary study.</i>
<i>As I work with students mainly prior to then commencing their studies, it is hard to say how they perform in their studies. However from the view point of the international office the IB Diploma provides easy comparability in our student selection process.</i>
<i>Being high performing students and having the broad curriculum combined with community experience provides a conceptual knowledge and maturity that assists transition to university</i>
<i>Engages them in a wide range of activities that require self direction - independent learners. A valuable skill in entering university.</i>
<i>Extended learning in key subject areas. Pre-coverage of first year uni work making the achievement of good first year grades relatively easy to achieve.</i>
<i>Extra rigour to deal with traditional Uni programs where 50% fail - IB puts them in other 50%.</i>
<i>General capability to research and study independently</i>
<i>Generally the IB is taken by higher quality students who are scored very highly in being given an equivalent ENTER. It is difficult to determine whether their subsequent performance is due to this self-selection or the qualities of the IB.</i>
<i>Generally the IB is undertaken by higher quality students, which then translates into higher ENTER scores.</i>
<i>High level research skills; Quality high standard curriculum; choice within subjects; Subject depth; Depth of study; language requirements</i>
<i>IB students are more independent and self-motivated, with better skills than VCE students</i>
<i>IB students have PBL (problem based learning) curricula better than many VCE students</i>
<i>IB students seem to be well prepared for independent work and ability to handle the structure of academic university life</i>
<i>In depth study provides a background to the discipline required to succeed.</i>
<i>In my classes I am unaware which students have an IB background. I suspect that taking the IB confers a general advantage, arising from undertaking a certificate concentrating on preparation for university rather than a broader qualification.</i>
<i>In my view IB students are very self-confident and self-motivated, with a broader view of the world (ie, do well in an international curriculum) they have been high performers. I suspect that students like this select the IB, not that the IB produces students like this. Learning another language is a benefit.</i>
<i>It gives students a wider breadth of knowledge than conventional year 12 programs.</i>
<i>It is difficult to assess the advantages from the experience in this faculty as all students have a VAI of >98.0 and are all at a very high academic level. Perhaps the self (indecipherable) learning and well rounded approach is an advantage in the transition to university (year 1) however, students are not identified by their secondary qualifications so it is only a perception.</i>
<i>Learning skills; Communication Skills; Deep learning</i>
<i>Many seem more mature than other secondary school students</i>
<i>More advanced and more rigorous curriculum and assessment prepares the students better than state certificates for university level science.</i>
<i>More independent approach to study. An awareness of their own learning. More balanced curriculum.</i>

<i>Much better prepared for university. Can work independently, think critically.</i>
<i>My experience in Europe with the IB is very positive. It ranks well with the French BAC, ARBiTuR and other A level qualifications.</i>
<i>Students have a broad knowledge and excellent problem solving</i>
<i>The ability to self motivate and engage effective study patterns; Exposure to a range of assessment types; An experience of community engagement.</i>
<i>The combination of a broad curriculum and intensive areas of study provides a more rounded approach to university of study. IB students tend to have a more eclectic view of university study: they are often more willing to undertake academic explorations but possess an underlying discipline that allows them to identify their particular niche more readily.</i>
<i>There is no particular advantage in being selected into our university in comparison to other qualifications. However, the IB is a very thorough preparation for university so that most students adapt well.</i>
<i>They tend to have a broader perspective, and better self directed learning</i>
<i>The engineering faculty commented that "The breadth provided by the three core requirements and the requirement for a unit from each of the six academic areas prepares a student well for tertiary study. The capacity of independent study generated by the extended essay is a good preparation for the sort of study required at University." The Faculty of Arts noted that in regards to preparation for study in humanities and social sciences, IB students are assisted in general by the focus on theories of knowledge and the extended essay they undertake. Anecdotal evidence suggests that participation in the IB increases students' research skills and self-management in comparison to the current VCE.</i>
<i>The students seem to be better able to cope with the transition from school to university than are many of our other students.</i>
<i>The work on theory of knowledge and the extended essay are valuable introductions to the demands of university-level study. We have not examined whether these components of the diploma, however, provide any measurable advantage over other qualifications.</i>
<i>Theory of knowledge etc - essential preparation for university academic literacy</i>
<i>Theory of knowledge particularly useful. I anticipate more students with IB backgrounds in education, but I'm new to the school in 2006.</i>

Experience of greater breadth and depth

<i>A broader context to place format obtained at University</i>
<i>Breadth</i>
<i>Breadth and depth of IB programme equip students well for Arts/Business/Science programs. Not necessarily any better for BE or BTech programs compared with yr 12/13 students who have taken 3 sciences</i>
<i>Breadth and research skills</i>
<i>Breadth, Theory of Knowledge</i>
<i>Broad background is good in that many students are unsure of what they want to study and this gives flexibility.</i>
<i>Broad disciplinary base; Theory of Knowledge component is an important advantage re understanding of epistemologies; overall excellence(?) and breadth of curriculum design vis-à-vis normal final 2 years' curriculum</i>
<i>The Breadth of the qualification should mean that students enter university with a more balanced range of skills and capabilities than those who have specialised earlier.</i>
<i>The balance of range and depth seems very appropriate. Much better than NZ NCGA. Not as in depth as in A levels, but the speed and balance offered by IB is an advantage.</i>

There may be slightly more depth in the three higher levels of study, but this comes at the expense of having a narrower field of pre-university subjects ie excessive specialisation. The inclusion of a second language is useful.

Internationalisation and community service

The international focus and emphasis on social issues/citizenship. There are 'generic attributes' most universities would espouse as desired graduate outcomes.

Students are becoming increasingly mobile. The IB is internationally recognised and is highly portable. The IB curriculum is far less parochial and less subject to educational fads than Australian State curricula. Note that I had 5 years experience in South Australia with K-12 curriculum reform.

International opportunities to undertake tertiary study.

International recognition/standard & transferability. Emphasis on theory of knowledge - philosophy.

The core components of the IB (is) an excellent level of training in research, comprehension and dissemination of ideas. It is also a [portable qualification, and this allows you to move interstate and internationally. I am so impressed that I want my own daughter to do it.

No specific advantage

Do not know

Don't know any

N/A

No idea

No

No

No

No

No

No - but I feel the IB is a very good program and I like the considerable breadth of studies required.

No real advantages have been noticed with current students.

No specific advantages other than like a number of other acceptable year 12 equivalent qualifications a sound basis for admission with a likelihood of successful tertiary study.

Not from an admission and administration point of view

IB diploma is becoming more popular than 'A' levels. It is not favoured if students have access to University Foundation programs in their home country. It is the easiest way to enter a university as the program is designed by the university.

In Aust, it tends to isolate these students from other - sometimes high achieving - students.

It's a sound program. However, in some respects it's a pretty conservative educational package. The "discipline" and international conformity could be seen as a restraint but, on the other hand, this is likely to be attractive to a particular cohort of consumers.

Not enough information

<i>Not able to comment</i>
<i>Not able to comment</i>
<i>Unable to comment.</i>
<i>Have insufficient knowledge as to comment</i>
<i>I am not sufficiently familiar to answer</i>
<i>I am unable to answer much within this survey as I have no direct contact with IB students.</i>
<i>I do not have sufficient knowledge to comment</i>
<i>I don't know. however IB students are widely recognised as excellent students with a high level of academic achievement so whatever is being done now is good.</i>
<i>The most valuable advantage is the independent and inquiring student the IB produces and predisposition to integrate information. From a variety of knowledge bases.</i>
<i>I'm not in the possession of the knowledge, information to answer this question. Once students have arrived at a tertiary institution staff are unaware of their entry route, IB, TEE or through TAFE.</i>
<i>We are guided by the NZVCC recommendations for recognising the IB for entries to XXX. We do have enquiries from students verifying the requirements for entrance with IB but cannot tract accurate numbers as our student management sets does not differentiate IB from other equivalent entrance standards. It would be less than 5.</i>
<i>No specific data exists to support the assertion that IB students are specifically advantaged</i>
<i>None that we become aware of.</i>
<i>Not sure</i>
<i>Not sure</i>

Appendix E Specific weaknesses of IB for university study

A total of 73 respondents (45 per cent of the total) provided responses to the open-ended question of whether there were any weaknesses in how the IB diploma prepares students for university study. These comments were coded into six different categories.

Adjustment problems

It may be a function of the school delivering IB in Tasmania, but IB graduates (along with other first year students from private schools) are less independent and take slightly longer to adjust to independent learning and administrative self sufficiency.

One can sometimes sense a certain hubris in IB students; they've undertaken a vigorous training and they know it! This can make them less tolerant of alternatives.

Delivery problems

Structure of assessment; Lack of teacher education in IB

Students sometimes struggle with continuous assessment as they are not used to this.

Subject content if it is not suitable for credit transfer purposes – aim for at least G12 credit point transfer opportunity in Uni for IB Dip graduates – articulate

The risk is the grading system for the IB which has high threshold levels and can result in a competent student without an IB level /UIA equivalent score. The IB therefore restricts domestic choice. It is dependent on the teacher capacity more than the HSC.

Linkages between university study and high school

No specific weakness

N/A

Needs wider adoption in this country.

Nil

Nil

Nil

Nil

No better or worse than alternatives - the bottom line is the ability of the student. The good ones will achieve under the IB or the usual paths. The "problem" is the lack of attraction re IB students studying overseas relative to students from non-IB paths

No major issues

No specific weakness

None

None

None

None

None - I consider the IB as the best preparation for tertiary undergraduate study.

None identified.

None in particular since the cohort self-selects for achievement. I think there is an external perception that IB is not "main stream" particularly in the hard sciences.

<i>None that are substantial.</i>
<i>None that we have become aware of.</i>
<i>None. Preferable to the HSC in many ways. If (indecipherable) I might well identify the restriction of focus (indecipherable) still the training is excellent.</i>
<i>Nothing systematic</i>
<i>By comparison with everything else, there are none.</i>
<i>I am not aware of any perceived deficiencies in the level of preparation provided by the IB diploma.</i>
<i>I am not aware of any weakness in preparation for UG study.</i>
<i>I cannot think of any. I know that quite a few students would do IB but feel that the weight toward examination style assessment disadvantages them in comparison with VCE/HSC</i>
<i>I do not have sufficient knowledge to comment</i>
<i>I don't currently teach any undergraduate courses, however anecdotally, students seem to cope very well with tertiary study.</i>
<i>I have not noticed any.</i>
<i>I think the IB is a much better preparation than local qualifications for students who proceed to serious learning at university. It also is better preparation to be an informed and participatory citizen.</i>
<i>Very few IB students are not first rate students, so we aren't aware of weaknesses.</i>
<i>IB has a strong reputation and we are confident about the abilities of students to cope with university undergraduate degree study, who present with this qualification.</i>

Not enough information

<i>Do not know</i>
<i>Don't know of any but may be gaps in depth – spread very wide across all fields, may need rebalancing.</i>
<i>Don't know.</i>
<i>Unable to comment</i>
<i>Unable to comment.</i>
<i>Unaware of any.</i>
<i>No evidence is available to me on this.</i>
<i>No experience in this area.</i>
<i>No idea</i>
<i>No knowledge</i>
<i>No specific evidence collected regarding the performance of the students</i>
<i>Not able to comment</i>
<i>Not able to comment</i>
<i>Not sure</i>
<i>Not sure</i>
<i>When selection for study on academic merit is made on the basis of year 12 (NZ) as the first year of the IB, there is little information available to indicate performance and for us to understand.</i>
<i>XXX has relatively few IB students; on the whole they perform well but it is not clear to us (given the small number of students) whether the performance is a result of the preparation gained through IB or that the students are academically strong and would have performed well at University regardless of the pre-university qualification.</i>

Problems with scope

As 2 year programme is fine for ensuring depth etc. But we have encountered students seeking admission to university who have exited at the end of their year 12 with little to show for it.
Conversely, precisely because it is broad students who excel in one area (particularly science) tend to poorly in due to language requirements and are forced to drop out.
More focus on open-ended problem solving is required, although most pre-university qualifications prepare students inadequately for this purpose.
Perhaps less chance to specialise – which may be a disadvantage in some areas.
The breadth of the qualification means that some students lack preparation in enough subjects to enter some limited entry programmes.
The broad range of subjects provides a good background for tertiary study if taken at 'higher' levels. The 'standard' level is perhaps too low for suitable background in the tertiary areas of study.
The curriculum and assessment are old fashioned in some ways.
The narrowness of the group of subjects studied as higher levels can mean that options for the applicant may be restricted compared with applicants who have studied Australian school leaving programs. There may not be the same degree of flexibility. There is some doubt as to whether the core subject. "Extended essay" adds any value – most other school leaving credentials include this type of assessment.
The structure has both strengths and weaknesses. The breadth, which is in so many respects a strength, becomes a weakness for a student preparing for engineering in that the student can only select on subject from the "experimental sciences" group. ie. the student cannot take both physics and chemistry. The structure of the course allows students to have an optimal preparation beyond that of simply science based subjects.
They are extremely academically focused and sometimes lack social skills.
Too focused on traditional academic prowess i.e. crunch the numbers, regurgitate 'the facts' where more progressive educational paradigms are utilised.
University general/liberal study is excellent, vocational non-existent. Students are aware of the nature of IB schools and know that they are part of a very small group of privileged participants. Students know participation of developed nation student body is the majority of IB graduates. The question of equity is important to students!!
Ib higher maths in particular; tends to overstretch many students leading to failure. Students who are not particularly academic seem unduly constrained by the IB curriculum and small subject range.
Often it is a very privileged experience and some find the large classes, absence of monitoring etc difficult to adjust to.
Some subjects are not relevant to Australian tertiary studies.
VCE English Language is stronger preparation for phonetics/grammar topics.

Too exclusive

A perception perhaps but a more Euro-centric focus in aspects of the curriculum?
Students have to choose at quite an early age to study certain subjects in peth. If they are mature this is fine. If not, it can be counter-productive.
The features which make the IB work for good students may make it less suitable for those who are not showing the same academic potential.

Appendix F Further comments about the IB Diploma

A total of 88 respondents (55 per cent of the total) provided further comments about the IB Diploma and higher education. These comments have been coded into the seven categories shown below.

Comparison issues

<p><i>The grading of the IB is worse with 7 grades awarded for a course of study and no allowance is made for 'higher' level as compared with 'standard'. This disadvantages the high achieving student in relation to the rest of the distribution. It has been very difficult to get hard data on the IB. Systems are not set up for pick it up. It is presented by overseas students at the time of application but I would not get records of NSW or other state applications having tendered IB results. This state certificates are considered more relevant at application time. There are relatively few students who use it as a means of admission. The IB and the State HSC do not easily fit together in a secondary school not because of curriculum but because of the need for additional teaching resources (teachers, resources). Because so few were selecting it timetabling was difficult. It was of interest to high flying students in the main.</i></p>
<p><i>The main issue that I have come across is one related to the conversion of the IB aggregate score to the VAI equiv. rank. A score of 38 (IB) converts to a RAI rank of 98.30 and 39 (IB) converts to 98.8. BVSc cut-off has been 98.40 or 98.45 in recent years and this meant that IB students with a score of 38 miss out on an offer. VAI scores use 0.05 as the minimum interval and an interval of 1.0 in the IB may disadvantage applicants in some faculties.</i></p>
<p><i>The very coarse reporting scale (1-7 for subject results) makes equitable tertiary selection and benchmarking relative to other programs very difficult, especially for lower achieving students.</i></p>
<p><i>I have had access to several studies looking at the relative performance of IB and other students. These show that performance is consistent with the notional ENTERs, which put all passing IB students in the top 30% of the age cohort and many in the top 10%. The assignment of notional ENTERs will, from next year, involve 3 separate methods. All of which give broadly consistent results.</i></p>

Exclusive

<p><i>IB clearly stretches students more academically, which is an advantage for academically inclined students, but it is not appropriate for all students in an age cohort. Students at the edge academically can suffer negative consequences from attempting IB. Schools duplicating Yr 11 & 12 to accommodate SACE & IB streams stretch their resources considerably.</i></p>
<p><i>Our major issue with the IB is that students who do not qualify for the award and are therefore not eligible for selection for tertiary study as they have no qualification.</i></p>
<p><i>I believe schools which receive funding from the state of NSW should offer the NSW HSC as their qualification for admission to Universities</i></p>
<p><i>It is a good, relevant course. Great pity that it has been setup in competition to State Certificates and is typically used by schools to appeal to elitist elements.</i></p>
<p><i>It seems to be a marketing tool of private unis; it is a broad program which I think is a good thing at High School, and I have heard it is rigorous (but treated very generously by UAC).</i></p>
<p><i>I have had quite a bit to do with the. I think it's a good program, especially with regard to "potential" internationalisation (which doesn't happen at a significant level). It irks me greatly that schools offering this pathway tend to forward advanced standing for graduates and attempt to create a profile that doesn't stand up to sensible assessment.</i></p>

Miscellaneous

<i>I think I'm biased on this. (indecipherable) a demonstration of how good this qualification is.</i>
<i>Is the IB driven by a profit motive? Who benefits from large scale uptake?</i>
<i>Isn't the Scottish higher ed diplomas (End of H.S) of similar design?</i>
<i>Most of my involvement with IB candidates is in reviewing applicants for entry-level scholarships.</i>
<i>My responses are based on exposure to students involved in pre-tertiary musical activities offered by CDU. These students are always motivated and committed. There are students who have shown a talent and want the opportunity to extend it further. I am not sure of the skills these students demonstrated are indicative of all IB students.</i>
<i>XXX has a regional and rural preference scheme for year 12 HSC students living in our footprint. We are reviewing whether this scheme will be applied for IB applicants.</i>

Needs wider adoption

<i>I think it is a good qualification with probably the best balance of any of the options I am aware of.</i>
<i>I wish more students did it!</i>
<i>I would be of Vic Gov Schools offering an IB option. At the moment only private schools do so.</i>
<i>Should be compulsory</i>
<i>As above in IB weaknesses, the question of equity of access is not really a problem for IB but for the greater educational community. IB schools are wonderful places but globally there are not many! Curriculum at JYP and MYP level is little more than organised 'shelf curriculum' and product marketing. Diploma had a useful function but JYP and PYP as agents of curriculum reform is a tricky question!</i>
<i>It would be good if the principles which underlie the determination of the IB curriculum were adopted in Australian States. My experience of curriculum development in Australia is that it is appalling.</i>

No comment

<i>Apologies, I am unable to comment regarding the IB diploma.</i>
<i>I am unable to complete your questionnaire as we do not offer opinions on the various entrance qualifications accepted by XXX. However, I can tell you that the University has admitted over 50 students with the IB over the last 5 years.</i>
<i>I deal purely with international students. Not enough students to comment. Faculties should be able to provide information.</i>
<i>I did attempt to complete the questionnaire but realised that I did not have enough information or experience with the award to respond in an informed manner. I passed the questionnaire on to our academic registrar</i>
<i>I looked at the questionnaire and found I didn't have enough information to answer the questions</i>
<i>I run a graduate only program.</i>
<i>I'm sorry, I am actually completely unfamiliar with this program.</i>
<i>In the time I have been given I do not have time to consult with our student Admissions committee or to assess individual students' performances. My apologies.</i>
<i>No</i>
<i>No thank you</i>
<i>Not appropriate to complete as in a senior management role</i>

<i>Not relevant to my area, I am sorry. We have not had any students into sciences at Massey that I am aware of.</i>
<i>Our views as a graduate school are not relevant.</i>
<i>The IB is not taught in the NT and remains a rather esoteric alternative to the more traditional pathway to university admission</i>
<i>unable to provide comment to you on IB</i>
<i>We have very little experience with students who have completed the IB prior to entry into this Faculty, so I do not feel able to comment in an informed way</i>

Not enough information

<i>Our numbers are not significant relatively. IB students appear well prepared for first year but once into second year it appears not to confer advantage.</i>
<i>Comments are made on basis of discussions – The faculty has not had experience of IB students in our programs</i>
<i>XXX accept IB qualifications in the same way we accept completion of various Aust Yr 1 2 curricula (conditional upon achievement of specific results or TER outcomes for individual programs) Cannot identify specific students who have entered with specific qualification. Track which institution students last studied at and the TER achieved for the institution. We do not typically track curriculum details that contributed to the TER. Can identify students who have completed senior studies at an institution that offers the IB but not if the student completed the IB.</i>
<i>Difficult to make sweeping comments as the comparison asks for. Much depends on the individual student and his/her motivation – these factors as much as the school programme, are key areas.</i>
<i>Do not have relevant information</i>
<i>Do not hold specific data on IB student performance and therefore cannot comment. They're under pressure to take student who would not qualify for the IB. If there are IB students once they are being taught no one knows what background they came from.</i>
<i>Do not keep track of IB students</i>
<i>I am not aware of any students entering our program from an IB preparation. It has never emerged as a distinguishing feature in relation to any student success or difficulties in our course.</i>
<i>I am not aware of many students entering the Creative Arts using the IB. It seems to be used in schools for high academic achievement. I am not aware of the curriculum content in arts and whether it relates to assisting students to prepare application portfolio demonstrating drawing and creative skills.</i>
<i>I do not feel close enough to the experience with the IB to comment usefully</i>
<i>I do not feel close enough to the experience with the IB to comment usefully</i>
<i>I do not have access to the information you require.</i>
<i>I do not have any specific knowledge about this matter. My impression is that IB students are generally similar to others.</i>
<i>I do not have sufficient knowledge to comment</i>
<i>I don't know enough to be about to answer – needs to go to those who would know more. However I'm not sure who that would be as classroom teachers how no idea which students have entered through the IB.</i>
<i>I have not been involved with student selection or academic programs for a number of years. I don't have any experience of students with the IB, so can't really help you with your study.</i>
<i>I have not been provided with information from admissions that identifies whether IB students are applicants – It is only provided by Yr 1 2 or other, Therefore am not well informed I'm afraid.</i>

<i>I have received your email request for information on the IB Diploma. Perhaps there would be more useful information provided if you send the survey to the Executive Deans at our University rather than the Division of Human Resources. From my perspective the IB curriculum and qualification would suit our international student cohort however it would be more useful to ask staff that have some first hand knowledge of students.</i>
<i>I know very little about the IB</i>
<i>IB students self select to so this qualification, so the comparison I VCE isn't reliable. Because we select students on the basis of their notional ENTER and then don't analyse their progress separately, we can't provide the detailed comments requested</i>
<i>Most of my evidence is anecdotal</i>
<i>My institution has no known experience of IB Diploma entrants to our UG programs</i>
<i>Please note that all this seems to ignore the many confounding variables about the quality of the teaching, etc. The perceived advantages of the IB may be the consequence of committed teachers and the happy attraction of a small group of good students.</i>
<i>We believe that at the moment XXX university does not have enough experience of IB to comment in a useful way. We are currently reviewing our credit arrangements for IB students generally and in 2-3 years we expect we will be able to report and comment on our intake experiences.</i>
<i>The effect of an IB diploma background or any other on completion, graduate employment and postgraduate study is too tenuous to be meaningful. A variety of influences, including university learning, will have greater impacts on these than a particular secondary background.</i>
<i>This survey assumes a familiarity with IB Diploma content and it assumes that one is able to distinguish between IB students, TEE students, Diploma entry students, Group 2 students, International students.</i>
<i>Unfortunately we receive very few applications from IB students and as such we do not keep separate statistics for this category. For the same reason there is insufficient data on which to base opinions regarding the IB program. We do believe that this will become an increasingly important group of prospective students and we would be very interested to hear more about your outcomes.</i>
<i>Unfortunately the university does not track the progress of students with the IB qualification. As a result we are unable to complete the survey. Notwithstanding, I can report that the IB is generally highly regarded as an entry pathway. In addition XXX has developed an academic entry translation for the IB diploma.</i>
<i>XXX still has a relatively small number of IB students compared with SA, Vic , NSW universities. My experience has been to have exposure to the curriculum rather than the students and it seems (indecipherable) and challenging at the high level.</i>
<i>Very difficult to make comparisons as IB students are by definition from a different socio-economic context to our regular students.</i>
<i>We are not able to differentiate students on the basis of their yr 12 study.</i>
<i>We are unable to make constructive contribution to this survey as we do not keep track of this information.</i>
<i>We do not complete any analyses on student success by their previous qualification so I do not feel I'd be able to comment accurately on the second to last question.</i>
<i>We do not track this sort of information about students and what qualifications they have upon entry.</i>
<i>I can give no specific feedback on students entering our Faculty (Arts) I IB qualification. Admissions are handled centrally at this University, thus my administrative staff do not directly handle applications. The University has recognised the value of the qualification and admits IB students who have completed their studies at a suitable level to degree programs here. I strongly support this policy.</i>
<i>I have had no experience with the IB in any respect whatsoever, other than to know of its existence and to have a high respect for its standard. Over many years of giving registration advice to incoming degree students at Avondale I have never had a prospective student present with it.</i>
<i>The Faculty knows only of one student who has enrolled with us who has an IB qualification. There may be others and I have asked for assistance from the ISC to try and identify them but have thus far not received a reply. They are probably having difficulty finding them on our student system.</i>

<i>The faculty's experience with candidates of the IB diploma is limited to this point that some sections of this survey are left blank.</i>
<i>The low intake using IB Diploma means that my comments / rankings are idiosyncratic rather than statistically valid.</i>
<i>At this stage the University lacks sufficient experience of IB graduates coming to us to make a meaningful response. With the emergence of the Qld Academies and our links to those we will gain relevant experience - we will be better placed to respond in two years' time.</i>
<i>At XXX we have relatively few applicants offering the IB diploma for entry into our programs – perhaps around a dozen each year. This fact must be taken into account when considering the above comments.</i>
<i>I am a great supporter of the program and have always been impressed by the quality of the students who go onto university with an IB qualification. I find them to be well-rounded, able to handle multi-disciplinary work with confidence and appropriate background and good at the abstract thought and conceptualization which is fundamental to university success. However, I am not well placed to respond to the survey as I have now been in senior management roles in universities for ten years and do not have the immediate experience to respond to the questions posed.</i>
<i>I am not a supporter of the IB as I think it has limited usefulness for a limited group of local students. I think the folk who like it are benchmarking against their own experiences with it and not across the board. For international students it might be useful as it is transferable.</i>
<i>Please note that while XXX has dealt with applicants applying for study with IB qualifications administratively, the information provided in this survey is only relative to a cohort of less than 5 and therefore it has not been possible to respond in detail. In experience in other contexts the IB has shown itself to be an excellent school-leaving qualification, providing depth and breadth, encouraging critical thinking, world view etc. Outside Australia it is increasingly not merely accepted, but seen as a highly desirable, preferred qualification.</i>

The program is valuable

<i>6 out of 8 of our international IB students have performed very well.</i>
<i>Generally I can comment that XXX does recognise the completed Diploma for admission purposes, and that it well regarded within this institution and the sector.</i>
<i>I am very familiar with IB in three countries, have guest lectured in theory of knowledge component. Two of my children undertook IB (1 bachelor of laws HARVARD; 1 M.D. & B.Surgery DUKE). I requested it as best preparation for, and predictor of success, in undergraduate study.</i>
<i>I find it on a whole a very admirable program. I wish that I could have done it myself!!! I particularly like its international orientation, which benefits law students greatly.</i>
<i>My contact with the IB at high schools has left a very positive impression in terms of the vigour of the program, which reflects the emphasis placed on professional development for those who teach into the program.</i>
<i>My knowledge of the IB is not through interaction with students, but as a result of dealing with admissions issues relating to students who had 'failed' the IB. Despite our efforts, we recruit very few students with the IB, almost all going to XXX and XXX. My understanding of the philosophy and practice of the IB derives from the fact that a good friend of mine was formerly acting CEO of the organisation. In addition, I had an extensive conversation with this friend who introduced the IB in his time as Principal. The conversation took place at a function celebrating the IB graduating class of that year. I have a good opinion of the IB, but then I also have a good opinion of the NSW HSC. I think the IB is probably best for bright students, given its lack of 'structure'. My main concern has been with the translation into the UAI in NSW, where I think it has been somewhat privileged. Nevertheless, I think it is an excellent preparation for University study.</i>

