

A Guide to Diploma Programme Authorization

The Diploma Unit

International Baccalaureate

Africa, Europe, Middle East

Version 4.1 (July 2009)

What is the IB?

The International Baccalaureate (IB), founded in 1968, is a non-profit educational organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. It offers to schools three programmes, the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) in the three official languages English, French and Spanish. The goals of the IB are expressed in its mission statement:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Further information on the IB and the Diploma Programme can be found on the main website: www.ibo.org.

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IB Africa, Europe, Middle East

The Regional Office for Africa, Europe and the Middle East (IBAEM) is located in Geneva. Its principal responsibilities regarding the Diploma Programme are:

- The authorization of schools to teach the Diploma Programme and the counselling of new schools
- The organization and implementation of subject workshops, and training of workshop leaders and school visitors
- The monitoring of schools' CAS activities
- The administration of and feedback on the 5-Year Programme Evaluation Self-Study

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Application Process Timeline

Consideration Phase and Feasibility Study

<p>18 months before planned start</p> <p>Consideration phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study all relevant documents on website • Ensure support (of all stakeholders) • Send <i>Interested Schools Form</i> to dpibaem@ibo.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult www.ibo.org/diploma/become • Find <i>Interested Schools Form</i> at www.ibo.org/programmes/interestedform.cfm
<p>18 - 16 months before planned start</p> <p>Feasibility study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain <i>Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme</i>, subject guides, past exam papers and other relevant information to continue planning • Contact/visit authorized IB World Schools • Contact regional office for Information Visit (optional) • Consider subjects school will offer and consequent resource and staffing needs • Estimate costs • Make informed decision to pursue an application • Appoint DP coordinator-designate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order publications on http://store.ibo.org • Find schools directory at www.ibo.org/school/search/index.cfm?schools_order_by=country&schools_order_by_direction=ASC • Consult regional webpage for current application fee on www.ibo.org/ibaem/diploma • Consult general list of fees on www.ibo.org/diploma/services & on http://www.ibo.org/ibaem/diploma/index.cfm • See <i>Resources & Costs</i> on Pages 9-12 of this guide
<p>By May 1st (May session schools) / October 1st (November session schools)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and send <i>Application Form Part A</i> by post to the IBAEM regional office in Geneva, ensuring all sections are completed and that documents are sent in the manner requested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find form on www.ibo.org/diploma/become/ • <i>IBAEM addresses</i>, Page 4 • <i>Application Documents</i>, Page 13

Preparation and Candidate Phase

<p>16 - 12 months before planned start</p> <p>Preparation phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start detailed pedagogical planning, eventually leading to the writing of course outlines • Consult regularly with all staff, parents and students • Register a vanguard of teachers/administrators to attend IB workshops for teachers new to the DP • On teachers' return, complete course outlines, make orders for further resources • Promote need for teachers also to be aware of the core of the programme, to understand its philosophy, and to work as a team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find workshops and conferences on www.ibo.org/events/ • Download <i>Standards and Practices</i> document from www.ibo.org/pyp/curriculum/documents/progstandards.pdf • Download <i>IB Learner Profile</i> document from www.ibo.org/programmes/documents/learner_profile_en.pdf • Appendix I – <i>Standards & Practices: what to consider as a school seeking authorization</i>
<p>Minimum 12 months before proposed start</p> <p>Candidate phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of Candidate Status from IBAEM, giving access to OCC (user ID and passwords) • Complete <i>Application Form Part B</i>, including course outlines for all proposed subjects • Respond to IBAEM's request for suggestions for Authorization Visit dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access the OCC through http://occ.ibo.org • Find form on www.ibo.org/diploma/become/
<p>Minimum 2 months before Authorization Visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit <i>Application Form Part B</i> by post to IBAEM in Geneva, ensuring all sections are completed and that documents are sent in the manner requested • Respond at the same time to any comments/queries made by IBAEM on <i>Application Form Part A</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See <i>Documentation List & How to Compile and Send</i> on Page 13 of this guide

Authorization Phase

<p>10 - 2 weeks before Authorization Visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBAEM acknowledges the receipt of <i>Application Form Part B</i> and confirms visit details • Plan Authorization Visit agenda through correspondence with IBAEM visiting team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult <i>Guide to Authorization Visit</i> on www.ibo.org/diploma/become/documents/edpschoolguide/authorvisit.pdf
<p>Authorization Visit (between Sept and April for May session schools)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting team spends two days in school speaking to all interested parties, including relevant senior administration, staff, governors, students and parents • Visiting team gives oral feedback at the end of the two days 	
<p>3 - 6 weeks after Authorization Visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School receives decision on authorization from Director General and an accompanying letter from the Regional Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review <i>IB Rules</i> on www.ibo.org/diploma/become/documents/dprules.pdf
<p>Remaining time between notice of authorization and start of programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to list of “Recommendations” and “Matters to be Addressed” from Regional Director and Director General, and act on the points necessary to fulfil the requirements of the IB • Send report on these to regional office before date indicated in Director General’s letter • Receive feedback from IBAEM, giving you final acceptance as an IB World School • Send remaining teachers to workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review <i>IB General Regulations</i> on www.ibo.org/diploma/become/documents/dpgenregs.pdf
<p>0 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin teaching the Diploma Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use latest <i>Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme</i> as a guide

IB Publications

General documents on the public website

Please refer to www.ibo.org/diploma/become for the documents detailed below. Before submitting any forms to the regional office, the five documents listed at the bottom of the webpage in the section “What next?” should be read carefully.

There is a more general guide listed on the webpage, which contains some useful information to be studied too. Please use the regional timeline however.

Schools should also read and discuss with staff the documents entitled *Programme Standards and Practices* and *IB Learner Profile*, to be found on the same webpage in the section “Other useful documents”. It is expected that teachers and administrators will be familiar with their content before an authorization visit. Some suggestions on how to use the *Standards and Practices* during the planning stages for authorization can be found in Appendix II below.

It is important too that schools have a policy on academic honesty. The *IB Guide to Academic Honesty* provides assistance in the development of this.

IB Store

A large number of publications relevant to the implementation of the Diploma Programme may be purchased through the website <http://store.ibo.org>.

Schools need to order subject guides (including for TOK, CAS and the Extended Essay), past examination papers, markschemes and examiners’ reports. Please note that subject guides change on a 7 or 8-year cycle. Teacher support materials, including *Question Banks* can be purchased for many subjects too.

More general documentation may also be found, including a *Guide for Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*, the *IB Annual Report*, and the *IB World* magazine.

OCC

The Online Curriculum Centre is an invaluable source of information. It contains many of the publications listed above and more, and also discussion forums in which teachers may ask questions, make points, or post resources. It is also the area used by the Curriculum and Assessments centre to communicate with teachers on matters such as subject reviews or amended guide information.

The OCC is automatically made available to schools when candidate status is conferred following the regional office’s acceptance of *Part A* of the *Application Form*.

Resources

Textbooks

The IB does not publish, nor does it recommend specific textbooks, although some approved companies are producing books written to support the DP curriculum. A variety of resources should be used for subjects rather than one text alone.

As the Diploma Programme is international in nature, textbooks may have to be purchased from any part of the world. It is suggested that schools seek advice from the OCC and from already authorized schools, and obtain inspection copies for evaluation and final choice within subject areas.

Science Laboratories

The IB appreciates that there may be local differences in the standard of facilities available for the study of Group 4 subjects but asks schools with their science teachers to evaluate their laboratories.

Facilities may need to be upgraded according to the envisaged series of experiments to be undertaken.

The subject guides published in March 2007 give details of the expectations of the IB, with reference to the statement on science education published by the International Council of Associations for Science Education (ICASE) Safety Committee.

Library

The library is central to successful completion of the IB Diploma Programme and needs to be appropriately resourced, not only for individual subjects, but also for the core of the programme.

Apart from the selected textbook(s) for each subject, the library should contain sections for general reference, non-fiction and literary works relevant to all DP courses to be taught.

It is not expected that schools will have every book for potential Extended Essays but that librarians will either be able to access these through inter-library loans or by advising students on possibilities in local city or university libraries.

Sizes of libraries vary, but it is expected that there would be clearly labelled shelves and that books would be catalogued according to a system. It is also advisable that computers and silent study areas be provided for independent research.

Schools should have a qualified librarian who should work closely with individual subject areas to ensure the provision of appropriate and up to date resources.

ICT

Access to information and communication technology is key to the delivery of the programme, and students should be able and taught to use ICT efficiently.

It is suggested that schools place relevant documents for staff and students on their own intranet.

Human resources

Teaching Staff

Teachers should be qualified to teach their subjects to Diploma level, and it is for schools rather than the IB to make this assessment.

The IB regions provide training as published on www.ibo.org/events, and it is expected that all teachers new to the programme be officially trained before teaching of the programme commences. Schools are encouraged to send a vanguard of teachers and administrators to workshops before the authorization visit.

Schools should also budget and provide for continuous professional development through IB training. Subject training is offered on a two-year cycle in the form of workshops or conferences for experienced teachers.

Senior Management

It is important that a team approach to the implementation of the Diploma Programme be promoted and that this be administered within the management structure of a school.

The director or head is responsible for the whole school, for working alongside the coordinator to oversee the development of the programme, and to have an overview of the provision for the IB *Standards and Practices* and *Learner Profile*.

Biennial conferences are held in the region for leadership teams (heads and coordinators). In the years in between these events, an IB world conference for heads is organized. We also offer "Administrator" workshops aimed at senior management teams.

DP Coordinator

The programme coordinator is both an academic leader and an administrator, and plays a key role in the successful implementation and management of the DP.

Although a minimum time allowance of 25% is recommended in our general documents, this must be dependent on the person's teaching load, other responsibilities, and the number of potential students. Commonly coordinators in the region have 40-50% time allowance.

The coordinator-designate should normally be trained before an authorization visit.

CAS Coordinator

This person should be someone other than the programme coordinator and needs to be given an appropriate time allowance and resources. The CAS coordinator works closely with the programme coordinator.

TOK Teaching

All teachers must make reference to TOK in their preparations and teaching.

There is no one standard way to teach the TOK course, but it is advisable that there be a team approach with one teacher nominated to take the lead.

Costs

IB Fees

These are detailed in the document entitled “Fees and payments” also available on the regional webpage.

Authorized schools are invoiced annually at the start of the school year.

Preparation & Authorization

An application fee must be paid on the sending of the *Application Form Part A*. This fee includes payment for eventual access to the OCC if candidate status is conferred.

A second application fee must be paid on the sending of the *Application Form Part B*. Please refer to the separate document published on the website for further details.

Schools may request an optional consultation visit at a cost specified by the regional office, plus travel, accommodation and other related expenses.

The DP coordinator-designate may need to be given extra time allowance in the feasibility and preparation stages; some schools do likewise for teachers preparing course outlines.

Publications need to be purchased and workshops attended, as detailed above.

Teachers and administrators are encouraged to visit and make contacts with authorized schools (at home and abroad, both new and experienced).

The costs of travel and accommodation for the Authorization Visit team will be invoiced to the school afterwards, although schools may wish to pay hotel bills in advance.

Post-Authorization (before starting)

Schools pay the IB annual fee pro-rata from the date they are authorized.

There may be certain matters to be addressed identified from the Authorization Visit which will have financial implications.

As noted above, there is an expectation that all teachers will be able to attend IB training before they begin teaching the programme. Schools may need to consider release time or cover for absent teachers if these take place during term time.

The school will also need to consider internal and external marketing costs and publish their own information for staff, students and parents.

Running the Diploma Programme

Annual fee (from Year 1) and assessment fees (from Year 2)

The annual fee covers the basic services that the IB provides to schools.

Assessment fees are detailed in the IB website; there are no separate subject fees for TOK or the Extended Essay for full Diploma candidates.

Please note that fees may change each year but sufficient notice will be given.

DP and CAS coordinators

Appropriate time allowance needs to be given to both coordinators.

Many schools also provide administrative support, particularly at examination time.

Textbooks, course companions and literary works

Schools may need to purchase new books and other materials for the teaching of the programme.

Library

In liaison with both the librarian and subject coordinators, a school must seek continuously to upgrade and renew its books and general resources.

New IB publications

The DP coordinator and teachers should keep up to date with latest developments, particularly when new subject guides are published six months before teaching begins.

Language support

According to the language in which subjects are to be examined, both students and staff may require support (all key IB documents are published in English, French and Spanish).

Postage, communication and copying

Examiners and moderators are located around the world and schools need to be prepared for the costs which may be incurred annually for postage.

It is important to have good copying facilities and that the DP coordinator has access to an international telephone line.

Continuous training & conferences

As detailed above, schools need to provide for continual professional development for Diploma Programme teachers and administrators beyond the initial training stage.

Application Documents

Interested Schools Form

This must be completed in full and may be sent to the regional office by email or post at any time after the school has carried out its consideration phase. Please send it sufficiently in advance of the deadline for *Part A* of the *Application Form*.

Part A

This must be submitted by May 1st or October 1st at least one calendar year before the expected start of the programme.

Diploma unit staff in the regional office will review the form and then a letter will be sent either conferring candidate status together with some comments and questions, or giving notice that its application has been unsuccessful.

Documentation Checklist

Please refer to the list of documents in the “Important reminder” towards the end of *Part A* to ensure everything will be submitted properly and in full at the first attempt. This will allow the regional office to consider your application more immediately.

The implementation budget should complement the strategic plan and detail any costs incurred at the various stages.

Part B

This must be submitted no later than two months before an Authorization Visit and should be accompanied by a response to the comments and questions raised by the regional office on *Part A*. Schools should only send Part B once their visit dates have been confirmed by IBAEM.

As *Part B* asks for course outlines and specific details, schools should not attempt to submit this until a number of teachers and the coordinator-designate have been trained, and certainly not together with *Part A*. Please ensure that the additional questions for each subject group are answered in detail.

How to compile and send

All forms and requested documents for *Parts A* and *B* should be sent by post with a list of contents.

All documentation which is in electronic form should also be sent on a CD but no part of the *Application Form* should be sent to the regional office as email attachments.

Please order and number both the hard and electronic copy according the “Important reminder” list. We ask you to submit an explanation if any items or answers are not available or do not apply.

Please note that any school which submits an *Application Form Part A* which is still incomplete by the deadline given above cannot be guaranteed an Authorization Visit the following academic year.

Important Notice:

Because of the requirements of Swiss customs, please only mark your dispatch “Application Documents”, or extra expenses may be incurred and there may be a considerable delay.

Appendix I

Standards & Practices: what to consider as a school seeking authorization

Although not expected in the authorization stages to embody all the aspects of the *IB Standards and Practices*, schools should still pay attention to them during preparations for the implementation of the programme. Below is a suggested but not exhaustive list of tasks which schools may wish to undertake.

Standard A1

There is close alignment between the educational beliefs and values of the school and those of the programme.

- Review school's mission statement and policies
- Review school's publications, promotional material and website
- Ensure familiarity of staff and students with the *IB Learner Profile*

Standard A2

The school promotes international-mindedness on the part of the adults and the students in the school community.

- Review school's policies, practices and curriculum documents to ensure emphasis on international-mindedness by staff and students
- Ensure that the diversity of cultures within the school is explicitly recognised and valued
- Review/develop a school language policy that makes explicit reference to mother-tongue development

Standard B1

The school demonstrates ongoing commitment to, and provides support for, the programme through appropriate administrative structures and systems, staff and resources.

- Ensure preparation of school budget that guarantees continuity
- Publish list of accountabilities in the school that make decision-making authority clear and specific and encourage a team approach
- Ensure preparation of job descriptions for DP and CAS coordinators
- Ensure all DP subjects are adequately resourced
- Check that draft timetable provides adequate hours for HL and SL courses
- Ensure provision of appropriate budget for CAS
- Ensure the school has a safe place for exam storage

Standard C1

A comprehensive, coherent, written curriculum, based on the requirements of the programme and developed by the school, is available to all sections of the school community.

- Ensure coursework planning has been completed by all DP subject teachers
- Arrange in-school time for all staff to become familiar with role of TOK in their teaching
- Review current curriculum and teaching practices with reference to the *IB Learner Profile*
- Produce CAS programme and CAS handbook

Standard C2

The school has implemented a system through which all teachers plan and reflect in collaborative teams.

- Build meeting and planning time for DP teachers into the school schedule, including prior to the Authorization Visit

Standard C3

Teaching and learning at the school empowers and encourages students to become lifelong learners, to be responsible towards themselves, their learning, other people and the environment, and to take appropriate action.

- Ensure that the school promotes critical thinking in the years preceding the Diploma Programme
- Review/develop an academic honesty policy
- Review/develop school policy to ensure adequate provision for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction

Standard C4

There is an agreed approach to assessment, and to the recording and reporting of assessment data, which reflects the practices and requirements of the programme.

- Review/develop school assessment policy to ensure relevance to DP standards
- Ensure that school's assessment policy promotes a balance of formative and summative assessment and student reflection
- Review/develop school reporting policy to ensure learning has been assessed against subject specific criteria

Standard D1

Students learn to choose to act, and to reflect on their actions, so that they contribute to their own well-being and that of the community and the environment.

- Ensure that the school's CAS programme allows for some student-initiated activities
- Ensure that the school's CAS programme has students engage in some activities outside the school

Standard D2

In the final year of the programme, all students complete a programme-specific project that allows them to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning, [...] and to demonstrate the extension and development of their learning in the Diploma Programme.

- Appoint Extended Essay coordinator (if student numbers warrant)
- Produce Extended Essay guide for staff and students
- Ensure that students are provided with adequate instruction in study/research skills
- Create timetable for the Extended Essay within school calendar