

STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

“Creative, activity, service (CAS) is a great addition to the Diploma Programme because it helps balance your studies. Through CAS, I enjoyed a range of activities and my volunteer project helped me to find my current job.”

Elif Vardar

2008 IB Diploma Programme graduate
British International School—Turkey
Istanbul, Turkey



Elif Vardar is an IB Diploma Programme graduate from Istanbul, Turkey. She believes the IB allowed her to take classes in areas she already had interests in, while developing skills and being exposed to subjects that she would not have otherwise known about. After completing the DP, she attended the Ontario College of Art and Design University.

Why did you originally decide to pursue an IB diploma?

I wanted to study abroad from my home country, Turkey, to pursue a bachelor's degree in a university. The worldwide recognition of the IB Diploma Programme by many universities was very appealing to me as I worked towards achieving my academic goals.

As an IB student, how did you shape your IB diploma studies to your interests?

At an early age it can be difficult to know what you really like, but I always knew that I loved numbers. I completed higher level maths, physics and Turkish literature. These courses all helped me to think critically, communicate effectively, and be open-minded. I also took visual arts because I had a passion for learning to draw and paint. I believe it was an amazing decision because I studied many different art techniques that I had always wanted to learn. I worked very hard not only to pass the course but also to get the satisfaction of learning new things.

Did the extended essay, TOK, or CAS prepare you for university?

I believe the extended essay is similar to writing a thesis in university—it makes you think conceptually about a subject. Theory of knowledge (TOK) makes you think critically on the diverse ways of knowing and different areas of knowledge. I had to take a humanities class in university and I believe TOK helped me to develop the skills I needed for that course. Creativity, activity, service (CAS) was always fun and exciting. In CAS, you can choose to do an activity you are interested in, a hobby or something new that you always wanted to do. I believe CAS is a great addition to the Diploma Programme because it helps balance your studies. Through CAS, I enjoyed a range of activities and my volunteer project helped me to find my current job.

What advice do you have for current IB students that are thinking about a career like yours?

Find what you love in terms of a career—I know it is not easy. It can take years to decide, but the sooner the better. Once you know what you love, you can study hard to achieve your goals. Professional growth is a long, challenging process that needs a strong educational foundation as well as work experience. Good luck!

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